

Cyberwar in 2037

Chronicles of Linnea Borealis

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Cyberwar in 2037

For humanity

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**Chronicles of Linnea Borealis
Part 2**

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Vocabulary

Vanamo	Twin flower, <i>Linnaea Borealis</i> . Androgynous name.
Orvokki	Violet, the flower. Female name.
Toivo	Hope. Male name.
Onni	Good fortune. Male name.
Sumu	Fog. Androgynous name.
karhu	Bear. Family name when ends with 'nen'.
Männistö	Pinewood Forest. Family name.
Nordström	North stream. Family name but refers also to the gas pipeline at the Baltic Sea.
sisu	Finnish concept of strength of mind which has no direct translation in any other language. It includes i.e. grit, gut, willpower, resilience, focus, and motivation. Sisu may get one killed or aid in great victories if taken to the extreme.

S P R I N G 2 0 6 7

“Hi, Vanamo”, the familiar voice of a woman greeted me delightedly, as her high heels made a muffled sound on the floor of the assembly room.

“Hi! It is really nice to meet you again, Agatha”, I replied, shaking hands with the petite, fair-haired director of the foundation.

“I’m receiving a guest here later today who asked about the war against artificial intelligence in Finland”, she said as she sat down on her favourite couch.

I noticed how her cheeks flushed faintly and there was an ever so tiny increase of her pulse in the carotid artery. I guessed who she was going meet.

“Ah... I can search for markings and entries from files, but could you narrow it down just a little?” I asked, smiling.

Data from the events of 30 years ago was vast and it was scattered all over the country, and abroad.

“Hmm... Let’s try look at the data of my guest’s family. That is, if I’m authorized”, she suggested.

“Yes, that sounds reasonable. Just a moment, please”, I replied and started going through the huge servers located at the storey below ground.

Fortunately, data from customers and their families had been transferred onto servers of the foundation.

I suddenly heard two soft thuds. Two beautiful high-heeled shoes bounced delicately on the floor. She folded her legs up beside her on the couch, her fingers found the sore spot at the ball of her foot. She closed her eyes and waited, while massaging her foot with small movements.

Part of my mind tried to find a word to describe her. Elegant? The word fit her even after a long week of work and travelling. I coughed subtly to get her attention. Agatha lifted her head with curiosity.

“I’ve found a legend based on diary notes during the Cyberwar”, I said.

“Oh?”

“They are from a family member of your guest. She compiled a whole story of the events afterwards”, I told her.

“How beautiful that some people discovered ways to heal and had the strength to deal with the trauma”, she replied with sadness in her voice.

“Indeed”, I said softly and started reading aloud.

O R V O K K I

“The command came”, Toivo said, with a pale face, as he returned from the front door.

My spouse was holding a piece of paper – a paper! In 2037, only the National Defence Forces delivered such things. A piece of paper and a messenger was the safest way these days.

I too felt the blood drain from my face. I was glad to be sitting at the breakfast table already. I growled with frustration and anger. I had woken up in his arms just half an hour ago and had enjoyed the warmth of his body. Soon he might be gone for good.

“Aaaah”, Onni demanded attention, and I remembered to spoon some oatmeal porridge into the baby’s mouth.

The ingredients of a conflict had hovered in the air for about a year but until this moment I had been hopeful that scientists and data experts would defeat the power-hungry artificial intelligence, AI, with their skilful fingers and minds. Now someone had decided that the AI had become too powerful and had to be conquered by force.

I got up from the table and hugged my spouse. My best friend, companion in life, was leaving for the front-line and there was no certainty of tomorrow. I hugged him a little tighter.

“Think of it just as an operation, darling”, he said as he replied to the hug.

His voice was deeper than usual, more affectionate. I burrowed my face into his neck, allowed my fingers to play with his black hair, and nodded. That was all I could do. Our baby whined in his chair, having a hunch that something was amiss. I detached myself from my spouse.

“I will run some errands”, I stated.

Toivo nodded as he sat down at the table next to our son. We had agreed to this before. I would complete some ordinary tasks

until Toivo left, since the AI was watching every move outside of people's homes.

"Daddy will take you to the playground today", I said to Onni as he extended his chubby little arms toward me.

I held back tears as I searched for a spot on his little face that was not covered in porridge. I discovered a clean patch on his forehead, and I planted a kiss there.

When would baby and father meet again?

I focused on my routines. I got dressed and went to look in the bathroom mirror. My long blonde hair and blue eyes looked familiar, but my skin was pale. I applied some makeup – which felt like protective armour to conceal my emotions – and ordered a vehicle to our flat. I didn't try to talk to my spouse as I gave him one final kiss before I left. Everything I needed, I saw in Toivo's brown eyes – the love and care. We were ready for the battle.

"It begins", stated the handwritten note that I showed my mother as soon as she opened the door of their home.

She lifted the virtual reality glasses and looked at me, her head slightly tilted. This, a wink with both eyes and the piece of non-digital paper, was our sign which the AI could not decipher. She nodded, pouting. My father joined us by the door. I hugged them both and left.

I went to Toivo's parents' home and repeated the procedure. The look on his mother's and stepfather's faces gave us strength.

"You and Onni are always welcome here. It might be nicer here, on the outskirts, than in the city", his mother said.

I thanked them, said I would consider the offer, bid my farewell, and wondered when we would meet again. With sorrow, I stepped into the vehicle once again.

Regardless of all the great planning, anything could go horribly wrong. It was going to be a vast compilation of puzzle pieces – or that's how I felt. After all, I was only a civilian nowadays. Nothing essential was revealed to me.

"How come you're shopping today?" a voice startled me.

Damn, I was spotted! It was an acquaintance from a mothers' group. She had noticed that my routine was broken, and I needed a plausible reply. My eyes wandered between the shelves and found the sign reflected above a corridor saying: baby products. I almost laughed when I realized that I could make an excuse with my darling baby.

When the choice for the future must be done.

On a sunny August weekend, a mother, a schoolkid, a leader of exoplanet pioneers and a conscript face the consequences of poor leadership as a power-hungry AI wants to decide who may live and who shall die. Should humans become puppets of cruel AI or accept an electromagnetic pulse, EMP, which will take societies throughout the globe decades backwards?

Why does the other AI conveniently happen to come to the aid of those in the most dire need? Is Vanamo really a well-meaning entity or a destroyer in disguise?

In midst of the darkest hours, it is love and friendship that carry on until tomorrow, perhaps even stronger than in grey everyday life. Is a new affection just a disturbance of brainwaves or something more tangible?

Allow these four tales take you into the year 2037!

M. K. Malkki is an ordinary scientist, spouse and parent by day but writes when the family quiets down. Storytelling and writing have always been an inseparable part of the author's life. The stories are spiced up with Malkki's real life experiences from historical fencing and volunteering as a lifeguard by the sea. *Cyberwar in 2037* is the first novel translated by the author.



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