

HEMO SAPIENS AWAKENING

Excerpt: Chapter 5

RIDLEY PARK

Homo Sapiens: Awakening

Copyright © 2024 Ridley Park

All rights reserved

Independently published

ISBN (Paperback): 979-8870961422

ISBN (Hard Cover): 979-8872481942

a, b

Visit <http://RidleyPark.wordpress.com>

Table of Contents

1. Manchester under Surveillance 1

2. Behind the Disguise 3

3. Cover of Darkness..... 17

4. Calm before the Storm 25

5. Shattered Sanctuary 33

6. Into the Unknown..... 37

7. Unearthing Secrets..... 41

8. In Search of Clarity..... 51

9. The Genetic Labyrinth..... 63

10. Converging Truths 79

11. Ethical Boundaries 83

12. Tangled Realities..... 89

13. Navigating the Tempest..... 97

14. In the Eye of the Controversy 101

15. Repercussions Unravel..... 109

16. Tangled Ethos..... 123

17. Judgement in the Balance 127

18. The Weight of Decisions..... 147

19. Under Watchful Eyes	155
20. Homecoming and Healing.....	161
21. Adjustments and New Realities	173
22. Embracing Uncertainty	191
23. Reunions and Revelations.....	197
24. Consequences and Controversies	205
25. Growth and Transition	209
26. Renewal and Departure.....	215
27. New Beginnings, Hidden Truths	223
28. Visits and Decisions	229
29. Dilemmas and Ethics	233
30. Testing Boundaries and Norms	237
31. Transition and Anticipation.....	249
32. Becoming Educated	253
33. Clash of Convictions	257
34. Conflict and Disillusionment	263
35. Clashing Worlds and Rising Tensions.....	267
36. Aftermath of Vandalism	283
37. Building Walls	287
38. Changing Paths	297

CHAPTER 5

SHATTERED SANCTUARY

Emily goes a different way – to Ben’s bed, where her daughter sleeps tonight. ‘Sweet dreams, my little star. Tomorrow will be as sunny as your smile,’ Emily says, leaning down to kiss her four – almost five – year-old, Grace. She smiles warmly, smoothing a few hairs back from Grace’s forehead. After tucking her in, Emily lingers and watches her drift off, the girl’s sleeping face looking so peaceful Emily thinks, *not an ounce of worry in your thoughts, I hope. Such a sweet girl.*

Everything is in its place. The room is dim, nightlights casting soft glows on the walls. The air is filled with quiet chatter as other parents tuck in their own children. It smells like warm milk and laundry fresh from the dryer.

A hush falls as Emily walks back to her bed, humming softly to herself nothing in particular. The night’s sacred, a calm oasis in a stormy world. Emily sinks onto her bed, crawling under the covers. Wiggling her toes against the cool sheets, she sighs, her mind dissolving into a haze of comfort as sleep takes her. The last image in her mind is that of Grace’s slumbering smile.

Crack! The door splinters open, no warning, just a loud-arse bang. Chaos floods in – uniforms, torchlights, boots stomping.

‘Armed police. Stay where you are!’ someone shouts, too damn close. ‘Keep your hands in sight.’

Emily dives over Grace, instinctively shielding her from the sudden intrusion. ‘What the –?’

‘Metropolitan Police. Just remain calm and follow instructions!’ comes the reply, muffled by a face covering.

By now, the room’s a shambles – footsteps, radio talk, kids whimpering. It’s like a bad dream, but Emily is wide awake.

Ivy and Finn are still cuddled in her bed.

‘You can’t come in here,’ she says, pulling on her dressing gown. ‘Keep your hands off of me.’

‘Bloody hell, you’re all mad,’ Finn spits.

A tactical officer reaches for Finn. ‘Outside,’ he commands, gripping him by the arm. *Why are two teens sleeping together naked?* he thinks. *Looks like we got here in the nick of time.*

Just then, a screaming woman rushes in. It’s Daisy, still naked from her bed. ‘What’s this then? Leave us alone and get out of here!’

‘We’re giving the orders here. Stop what you’re doing and get some clothes on.’

We just need to clear this place out, the officer thinks, but he’s caught off guard, lost in his thoughts.

Daisy charges him, and he fends her off, tossing her onto Finn’s bunk bed. Another officer assists the first.

‘Calm down. We’re just doing our job,’ he rationalises.

‘You’re in my home!’

She stares menacingly.

‘You need to relax. Get some clothes on, and we’ll get this sorted out.’

Daisy springs up again at the uniformed officer. She bites into the only flesh she sees – his throat –, and she sinks her teeth in.

Instinctively, the other officer whips out her taser and uses it on Daisy, who drops instantly face-first to the floor, writhing. The bitten officer reflexively grabs his neck. Then he stares at the blood on his hand.

A third officer joins to cuff Daisy and lifts her to her feet. Someone drapes a blanket over her body and escorts her out. She's screeching, 'You've got no right,' the entire time.

'How many are in here?' a tactical officer shouts. 'So many children.'

'And all these babies,' says another, shining a torchlight at an array of cots, as the older occupants, presumably parents, are ushered in the other direction. 'One, two...' she counts. 'Let's get Child Custody Service people in here as soon as it's safe.'

'There's blood all over the kitchen,' one calls out, 'in empty bags.'

'Just mark it for evidence. We'll be back later today to run through this place,' says another.

The tactical squad order the occupants outside. They flow outside to form a sea of lookalike dressing gowns. Rain mists the courtyard, cold against the fear.

'Let's get these babes with their parents,' an officer shouts. 'Anyone who's got a baby in a cot, please get it, so you don't get separated.'

No one moves.

'They're scared,' says an officer. 'Get someone from Child Custody.'

A woman from Child Protective Services appears and begins querying the older members. Some have youngsters in tow. 'Who here is a mother or father of the babies still inside?'

'No parents, mum,' says one holding an infant. 'Just siblings.'

Homo Sapiens: Awakening

‘Is that your child?’ she asks, indicating the babe in arms.

‘Yes, mum. But not the rest.’

The woman signals her peers to retrieve the stragglers. ‘Do we know their names?’

Emily’s yanked up, losing her grip on Grace. She scans the place – family clumped together, kids bawling, officers everywhere. More police vans pull in, headlights cutting through the rain.

‘What’s your name?’ An officer barks.

‘Emily,’ she chokes out. ‘Emily Alpha.’

‘Alpha? Like all these?’ He waves a hand. ‘Fucking Alpha reunion here.’

Emily clenches her jaw.

‘No moving! No talking!’ The officer shouts. Silence falls, broken by kids’ sobs. ‘Get into the van,’ she orders. ‘We’ll forego the zip ties if you coöperate.’

‘Mummy, I’m scared,’ Grace’s voice shakes.

‘Me too, baby. Me too.’

‘Look, twins?’ An officer nudges his mate. Emily passes two women, spitting images of her.

‘Twins? Nah, mate. Quadruplets there,’ he points.

‘Quads? Are you daft? Another pair. What’s happening? Nearly three dozen looking alike in all sizes.’

‘Oi, no IDs. And it’s all Alpha and Beta. Science experiment?’

‘More like a clone farm,’ he says, not realising the truth of the matter.

Emily’s fists tighten. ‘Clone farm?’

‘Mummy, will we be alright?’ Grace’s voice is a thin thread.

‘We have to be,’ Emily murmurs, catching the eye of another sibling in the van. ‘We just have to.’ Ivy must be in another van. She hopes they’ll remain together through the ordeal.

‘Tape off this scene,’ a supervisor shouts. ‘We’ll pick this up when it’s light.’

The police van doors slam shut. Engines growl, drowning out her spiralling thoughts. Darkness inside, darkness out.