

Not Killing Time

By Pete Clark

Herman Goquart was a small man with a large brain which had made him one of the richest people in the world. He had developed a computer security system that would attack and permanently erase all hard drives in systems operated by any hacker. The main program contained AI to constantly recognize the new processes and to track and destroy all of a hacker's information, no matter where it was stored.

One morning, while performing his ablutions, Herman noticed a few wrinkles and a gray hair on the head staring back at him from the mirror. The reflection in the mirror told him he had to halt the march of time with its hideous effects of aging. The question was, how would he accomplish this assault? Then came his eureka moment. He needed the help of someone who was involved in the dark practices of the occult.

Herman called in his Chief of Security, a hulking ex-Navy Seal. He told the chief to find a bonafide, practicing fortune teller and find a place for Herman to interview the fortune teller. Herman told the chief to pay whatever it took to buy the fortune teller's knowledge and a private place for her to share the information with him.

The next afternoon, Herman's chauffeur drove him to a business address in a scruffy part of town. Herman stepped out of his limousine, onto a concrete sidewalk strewn with litter and through the door of Smart Time Pieces, LLC. He thought the place was rather dimly lit for a watch and clock sales and service business. He walked through the shop, past the rear counter and into the shop's small office.

The office walls were overlain with antique clocks of all sizes and décor, but Herman's attention was riveted to a large round chronometer, hanging near the ceiling on the rear wall. The face of the clock bore the head of a goat with black horns, black eyes, black goatee and a face of red fur, or was that red skin? Next he noticed the bedraggled looking woman, sitting at a desk beneath the chronometer.

"You want to stop time?" the fortune teller said.

"Yes," mumbled Herman, shaken by that horrible looking clock, but still determined.

"I am but a go-between. What you desire is available only from the Evil One and you must agree to his terms," said the woman, as the creases in her face floated like ripples in a pond.

"I will agree to nothing until I have read the contract."

There were just two terms in the agreement. Herman must forfeit his soul and he must adopt a pastime. Herman Goquart was looking at eternal life and figured his soul would always be with him, so he signed.

The Evil One did not wish to kill time and lose all those future people he could tempt and corrupt, but he did grant Herman's wish for eternal life. Herman found himself strapped into the seat of a go-kart, living and breathing, but needing nothing as he raced around the interior

perimeter of a building, sealed off from the world, driving for eternity, but never aging.