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The Star

Beyond the forest, far away, you could still hear the sound. It seemed the further you travelled from it the more the star penetrated your brain. Could anyone escape such torment? There was daily reminiscing of the minuet complaints suffered by turbines in the old days, paling those experienced by Star Energy workers. The Star emitted a refluxing low-frequency sound waves that physically altered the heart beat, and it was overlapped with a high-frequency, which pierced the mind. The Star required constant monitoring. The maintenance and engineering was ongoing. Relentlessly checking temperatures, catalysts, and compounds - no ear protection was sufficient. It moved through your body, felt in every cell and molecule.

Micheal was through. Being the supervising engineer he was proud of his accomplishment in contributing in the creation of this new age energy source. Developing this source seemed desperate, frantic, and no one wanted to let possible repercussions stop the plan. The world was frenzied about new sources of energy. Inky Oil reserves were depleting, and burning the oil was said to be making the earths ecosystem weaker, and the climate warmer. Solar power panels were being compromised by the large areas needed to collect the energy. The real estate was more desirable - fiercely competitive. Owners of the solar farm land could not resist selling, it offered more profit than the marginal income of selling sun energy. There had been a mid 21st century population boom, which increased the number of people by 20 billion. Nuclear power plants were in the process of being shut down due to the explosion of 2056, the consequences were comparable to a horror science fiction novel. People exposed, began mutating with cancerous appendages, and new births lacked appendages and symmetry. Hydro dam infrastructures were ancient and did not produce enough energy. When the worlds largest, Hoover Dam collapsed, sending a small scale tsunami through the desert in 2072, there was no doubt a new energy source must be created. Endorsements and investment flooded in to build the star.

Yet, for Micheal, the most important challenge was fixing or alleviating force field side-effects. He had worked toward this desperately but could not ignore the facts. People within a 1000 mile radius of the energy source were going crazy. There also was no wildlife at all. The nearby forests had been deserted by woodland creatures, birds, and insects. When Micheal went for

walks he saw a one dimensional landscape lacking rich diversity. The ecosystem had been destroyed. The more resilient plants were now showing the effects of no pollination and surging atmospheric pressure. This lay on Micheal's conscience like a breathless vice grip. He had played one of the largest roles in creating this anomaly. He was horrified. To what lengths would people go to satisfy their need to consume energy? It was well known what suffering scientists and engineers faced ever day, even while sleeping their dreams revolved around deep washing waves and screaming. It had already sent many to the mental hospitals. Micheal was sure if he stayed he would suffer the same fate.

Turning from the view with a bowed head, he walked away for good, his step quickened at each pulse of sound droning within his head. This was not an easy decision. The effects of his departure would be great. The result of his guilt would be less dramatic, than if he stayed.