

# The Cost of Immortality

By Robert Miranda

Adrenaline made time speed up as if it just didn't matter anymore. The constant rushing had finally paid off. It was as if the hard, painfully long years he had spent on this project was just a dream. It felt like a different lifetime altogether. All that mattered was the present. He didn't even have to think about what he was doing, he just did it. His hands flew over the seemingly incomprehensible piece of machinery. This genius finally had come up with another great idea for the world to look forward to, but this wasn't just going to bring him fame and fortune, it was going to make history!

Tristan was a rich twenty year old man that everyone looked up to. He loved money and didn't really care about who he stepped on to get it. He was always the best in university, that's what convinced MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) to give him the scholarship that changed his life. If it wasn't for that scholarship he'd still be the lonely geek back in high school that everyone hated.

His first big idea, the first fully robotic flying car, revolutionized the tech world, but this idea was so much more, Tristan was going to weave the fabrics of the universe, he was going to make humans immortal.

The device he had worked so hard on was called the Cx3, a supercomputer that with a single command could make a human immortal, cure all disease, or could tell you how many gold bars are in Fort Knox. To make a human immortal, the pocket size computer would send out ultrasonic waves mixed with a rare gas. The two would mix at the speed of light creating a

mixture that could make any living thing immortal or cure all diseases but the Cx3 could also reverse the effects of immortality. That's what made it so special. At least that was what it was supposed to do but Tristan's experiments almost never turned out right since his first big idea. This one had caused more than a few fires. His family and friends kept telling him to give up but he insisted the Cx3 would be the next big thing.

Now those years of persistence had finally paid off. Tristan forgot about everything else. He just couldn't believe he had finished. After all those years of setbacks he had finished building this pocket sized computer. He could finally confront his family and show off his invention. He would prove them wrong. All he needed was for this work of art to pass the final test. If this worked he could finally give the world what they had been waiting for. "Rejuvenation" Tristan exclaimed mightily proud of himself.

Tristan had had a sick dog that he loved almost as much as money, but it was dying from an incurable disease. That's why he had felt so rushed while he was making the Cx3. If he made it correctly he could cure the disease by making the dog immortal. So now he would give the command and if this worked he would not only be rich, he would have a loyal companion to give him support.

Time seemed to slow down. As he walked over to his testing site (the vet's office) he couldn't help thinking about Hunter. Hunter would be back to jumping around happily. He would no longer be waiting to die as if death was the cure to this incurable disease. He would be free from the dark cold prison this world had seemed to be. As Tristan neared the vet's office he was rudely interrupted from his nostalgic memories by the car horn of a bad driver, but since he lived in New York he couldn't really expect any less. It was New York after all, one of the

busiest cities in America. When he got there he was greeted by the howls of all the sick or injured dogs, but he was too excited to care. Tristan could save all the dying dogs, but first his dog. He asked the secretary if he could see his dog. The secretary smirked when he saw the Cx3 and said “Just don’t light anything on fire.” because the stories of the Cx3 failures were quite famous. Tristan went into the special room that held his dog and was immediately discouraged by the long, lifeless moan of the dying dog. Tristan had made it just in time. The vet had told him his dog was likely to die today so he couldn’t fail. He didn’t have time to try again. If he failed then it was game over. His dog would die. The once proud dog greeted Tristan with a woeful cry and an unhappy moan.

Tristan quickly started up the Cx3. A small crowd started to gather around him. The new high tech machine started almost immediately. The soft whirring of the computer’s fan was the only sound to be heard. It was as if even the dogs knew how important this moment was. When Tristan gave the command there was a pin-drop silence. Suddenly a bright blue light shot out from the microscopic hole in the back of the Cx3. The blue light, charged with energy, surrounded the dog. “It’s working!” exclaimed Tristan. The blue light became so bright that he shielded his eyes. Then everything was still. The smell of ozone wafted through the air. A dog so full of energy leaped around for joy. The new Hunter stood before Tristan fully restored to his former glory. Hunter was back!

After that life was great. He was richer than anyone could imagine. Everyone wanted to be immortal. Sure it wasn’t good for the environment, but who cared. He was rich, people were immortal, and business was good. The world became a barren wasteland but nobody cared, they were immortal right? Tristan kept second guessing himself and he realized making the Cx3 was a big mistake. People had to die or this world would not survive, but Tristan wasn’t willing to go

up against the world to make things right or give up his wealth to save the species of animals of this world. He knew the Cx3 could take all the things it had done back and all the after effects it had done but was he up to it?

The next day Tristan held a large meeting hosting all of his sponsors. He took a deep breath and announced “I’m shutting project Cx3 down.” Gasps of surprise echoed around the room.

“Why?” asked one.

“What!” demanded another.

“It’s the right thing to do.” sighed Tristan.

“Since when do you care about the right thing to do? Are you okay?” asked the vice president sincerely hoping that his boss was going crazy with pressure.

“People have to die. Death is a natural part of life and through death life is created. I understand that now. Look at the barren waste land our once beautiful world has become.” Tristan said in a convincing tone. “I can take it all back. The Cx3 is the only machine that can take what it has done and the after effects back. I just can’t stand the idea of all those animals dying because of me.” Tristan told them with a hint of pride in his voice. “You won’t lose any money though. I’ll be able to convince the world that we are doing the right thing. Then they will reward you for shutting it down.”

Then Tristan realized that no amount of convincing was going to change their minds and so he said “I created this company. If I want to I can shut it down.”

So the next day that is exactly what he did. He went to the media and his speech was broadcasted all around the world as he was quite a celebrity. What he told the world was so inspiring that he managed to get the message out about why he was shutting the company down and not only that, Tristan managed to convince everyone that it was a good idea and they all supported him. Some even thanked him. Then as Tristan had predicted, he and all his shareholders were rewarded.

The next morning on national TV he gave the command and the Cx3 once again produced a bright light, but this time the light surrounded the whole world. The light was so bright that he closed his eyes entirely. Then all was still. Tristan looked around and gasped at what he saw. Lush green trees and field surrounded him. The grass was so green that it looked like a child's drawing. The air was as fresh as Tristan could ever imagine. Then he saw everyone gathering around him. They were all here to support him and when he saw the smiles on their faces he smiled too. Earth was once again the world it was meant to be. It was once again paradise.