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MOX

'Poor man...'

'May he rest in peace!'

The Blue eyes are scrutinizing the black ones. A youngster is talking with the oldster who has nearly reached the end of his days due to advanced age. According to the laws of nature and the average index of mortality, the youngster is going to survive the oldster by half a century at least, which is twice as long as the former has lived so far; while the latter, in his turn, has already lived three-times longer than the former. The black eyes answer the youthful curiosity with total indifference.

The youngster is not going to capitulate and adds one more phrase, "Poor man", to the previously uttered "May he rest in peace". A mere wordplay. The black eyeballs know that the two addends can be turned around and the sum will remain the same. So it cannot shake their indifference. These two black eyes have seen a lot, and the couple of ears, set along them, have heard a lot as well. Nevertheless, there is a slight difference between these organs: the old man's eyesight is perfect but he has been a bit hard of hearing lately. The youngster knows it, and he is well aware of his boss, too. The oldster is a very experienced doctor. He has been working at this asylum for 45 years, and has been its head for the last 25; "Mr. Director", as he is addressed by the hospital staff.

'Mr. Director, everything is here... everything concerning our case, I mean.'

Saying the word "our" is just a trick of the beginner who cannot be considered a real professional yet. They taught him at college that this sort of little tricks make the conversation sound more intimate. And indeed, it really works when you are talking with the "mentally disordered", as Mr. Director qualifies his patients, but not when you are having a conversation with him. The Director realizes that the youth is not going to surrender, and if the latter turns to be bold enough, it might result in wasting a couple of precious minutes on talking with him. The old man is going to retire before long, and he has decided not to burn the remaining daylight on trifles.

'Here is my final report and the records made by the patient himself...'

The young man lapses into silence; he lacks experience to find the exact term describing the patient's text – can it be qualified as an essay? Is it a story, or rather a sort of delusion? Can it be considered an autobiography?..

'Deplorable occurrence,' concludes the Director picking the two files. There is a hard copy of the e-version in one of them, and a handwritten notepad in the other. No doubt which is which. The Director looks through the notepad first; not out of curiosity, of course, but in honor of the deceased.

'Poor man! He wrote a lot...'

'Deplorable but pretty ambiguous case, sir!'

Holy Moly!.. Why did he add that damned "ambiguous" to the old man's comment?! He has always been good at choosing the right words and always minded his Ps and Qs... So what the hell is going on with him right now?!

Shit!

'What do you mean?'

'His manuscript, sir, his illness... He was reading all day long, using the computer only occasionally, just to get some information.'

'Many in our organization live in a fictitious world, you know.'

The old man is impregnable, but his impregnability is nothing compared to the perseverance of the youth.

'His world took its origin in his room, sir, fancy that!.. In an ordinary, dark room...'

'His sequential memory', the Director corrects him.

'Absolutely! Our life is our sequential memory, sir, I know.'

The young man pretends to retreats, but the Director is well aware of such strategic maneuvers. He looks at his watch. One more hour is left till the end of the day's work. So he'll go home in an hour and enjoy the coming weekend, the two days' rest. He will soon take his longest holiday by retiring, and the eternal one after departing to the better world. He smiles. The young man notices it and takes the subjective smile for an objective green light given to him.

‘Well, his sequential memory may have come into play in that very room, but it was followed by a bonus of some information settled earlier in his mind.’

The word “bonus” sounds irritating again. It was malapropos in the given context. He should have used the word “present” instead... But what’s the use of crying over spilled milk?..

‘Emmm... I mean, despite claiming that he was from the ideal world MOX, the patient had certain information about our world as well.’

‘And how did he explain it?’ The Director inquires.

A total capitulation! Mr. Director is ready to listen to the humble doctor’s assistant for the whole remaining hour... But not a minute more!

‘He was sure that the information about our world was installed in MOX. You only imagine, sir, his world where there is no sorrow, no fear, no pain, no ageing, no death...’

‘The last three are the same’, again the Director interrupts him smiling. The assistant smiles back making no comments; after all, his interlocutor is suffering from all the three problems.

‘And he had to adapt to all those disastrous things, poor soul.’

‘So he might have found himself in hell after being in paradise’, admits the Director smiling again, this time rather sadly.

‘His world MOX looks like a real Eden, Mr. Director. One cannot imagine a better Heavenly bliss. There, in the Biblical Garden of Eden, the Holy Substance rules everything, whereas in MOX it is the omniscient and all-mighty Supercomputer. If in Eden it’s God who is in charge of perfection, in MOX it is the privilege of the Computer.’

The Director steals a quick glance at his closed laptop. The assistant does not notice it and fails to infer the proper sense implied in the Director’s words: ‘I know nothing about Eden, but I’m sure that someday this computer will develop further and gain a victory not only over us, but over God as well.’

‘That’s exactly what our patient thought’, the assistant smiles an innocent smile.

Both the doctor's assistant working at the asylum and the Director of the asylum are sitting silent for a while. Their silence is disturbed from outside: somebody is pleading for help.

'What does *that* patient believe in, I wonder?' The Director asks still keeping an eye on his laptop.

'In nothing special, sir. He suffers from hallucinations. A typical case of schizophrenia: he keeps calm all day long as a rule, but later, all of a sudden, he has visions – spots demons that are chasing him to kill him.

'So he, too, believes in something', the Director utters in a low voice, as if admitting it to himself. His indifference is already extremely irritating for the young assistant. And as it is the inexperienced young man who is irritated and not the experienced old Director of the asylum, the former stands up determined to leave. This is a final capitulation on his part.

Before his demonstrative departure, while he is still thinking about some closing phrase or a word, the Director outruns him, saying: 'Good-bye and good luck! I'll look through the papers this evening. I hope you won't be offended if I start with the manuscript of the deceased.'

'No, of course not, sir! Thank you!'

The assistant feels that he has hurried with capitulation, for the victory was clearly his. However, he seems pleased to have kept the promise given to the patient by executing his will.

The door of the Director's office closes behind the young man. The agonizing appeal for help is still heard from the corridor. The insane man is repelling all the orderlies coming to his rescue. Soon several other patients follow in his footsteps. The Director is packing his briefcase. He puts his laptop and several other things into it, puts on his coat, gets into his car and hits the road. Today he has left the asylum fifteen minutes earlier than usual.

A bit later, to his own amazement, Mr. Director keeps the promise – opens the half-torn notepad with the handwritten sheets and starts reading them.

The user M000000000000013, or simply M13, returns to his world from a regular trip. The fatigue from the journey disappears at once. Now he is in his ideal world. Unlike the other worlds, here, in his own world, he is almighty. Here he can initiate and determine anything he wants. M13 is the creator, the god of his own world, and anyone, who visits him, has to adapt to his reality, abide its laws in the same way as M13 always does during his visits to some other worlds.

The world of M13 is marked with the same symbol among the infinity of ideal worlds existing in the program MOX. Each of those worlds has its own ruler, and even such phenomena as those that were once called the laws of physics by humans are ideal there, for they are established after the individual will of the ruler.

The rulers of the ideal worlds are aware of the fact that MOX is an artificial, user-operated reality; it's a gigantic network of numerous virtual worlds. The users themselves exist in those worlds virtually, but thanks to the Supercomputer – the Mega Mind – they can satisfy any of their needs as easily as their ancestors from the planet Earth could in the material world.

Each of the users also knows that they are obliged to the German philosopher Karl Mox, living in the 21st century, for all the luxury they have.

An impressive beginning indeed for a good novel, a real sci-fi! The idea, too, is quite fresh. If it wasn't clear to you at the very start, and you still consider it an ordinary trite fantasy, you are wrong, your mind deceives you, believe me. I'll finish it, publish it, win the Pulitzer Prize or even the Nobel Prize, and get out of this Bedlam!.. No, no! You may call Bedlam any scene of madness, chaos and confusion around you, but I'm in a real Bedlam with the primary meaning of the word – in the insane asylum, I mean... Well, someone might be able to produce something cool and crazy even here, but my case is different... The thing is, that I myself represent a product, so I can't start my narrative in the usual form as given above; I mean, with the great opening paragraphs, pages and all...

I am a mere particle. Now here, now there! I can bake a fantastic cake and, at the same time, be the cake myself. You may have already guessed (I hope, you are quick in comprehension) that it was due to my “cake” that I have been sent here. A patient to be cured! An insane who is writing about his insanity in the insane asylum! And when they let him out, he’ll be awarded the Noble Prize. Great, isn’t it? If it really happens, I’ll write another book: “An Insane Who Was Awarded the Nobel Prize in the Asylum”. Or maybe the journalists will outrun me and publish a black-and-white photo of mine in a newspaper (where my withered face will seem even more withered and dry, of course) under the same title... Well, I’d better take out a patent for the title in time. But first, I have to write the book. A Clever and logical decision! In it I’ll have to confess that I was the prototype of my protagonist, i.e. my protagonist wasn’t fictional. I wrote about myself, about the creature that once was *me* existing somewhere...

Yeah, *I* am M13, but I don’t know who *you* are. However, I know that you are going to be my first reader who will introduce this madness of mine to the whole world. It won’t be difficult: you’ll only have to give my manuscript (after you’ve read it, of course) to someone more influential than you are. In short, you are going to be my first block in the domino principle.

A lot of water has flowed under the bridges since I was first locked in the room for months, and later, having been promoted, in the building for years. If my speech locked me in the room, my silence let me out of it. Thus, the silence proved to be the means of promotion. I feel that the chances of my final release are increasing. But what am I going to do after that? What can a man do if his life (or rather his “consequential memory”, as the doctors say) is switched to the totally strange environment? Silence can release me from the asylum but where will it take me? Whose friend will it make me? The whole material universe around is quite unknown to me; the universe that combines the smallest particles, with the trillions of combination of pixels. Even the matter itself is an alien element... But I can do nothing; I have no other way out... Little by little, I’m getting used to it all.

The creature existing beyond the matter, in the ideal world under the great symbol of M13, is an ordinary pile of matter now, under the name of “matter”. One of the doctors here gave this wonderful name to me. At first, my name was a subject of general ridicule, but at present the word “matter” is my identity.

I am not complaining about the doctors here. On the contrary, I am at the ideal place where a creature from the ideal world can ever be. I have everything: books, a TV-set, and

even a computer (true, for only 3 hours a day, but still) which is under the internet censorship. The doctors keep an eye on what I'm doing, but those 3 hours (even under the internet censorship) are quite enough for the internet to expose the whole universe to anyone. The main things are the user's desire and curiosity, the rest is up to computer... In short, I became a freeman of the 21st century very easily and practically in no time. The only problem is that I have no past. The doctors can't explain it; they can't access any data about me. But what can be more incredible – a person without any previous data, who is sent to the insane asylum for treatment, or a person appearing from nowhere, from the artificial future – a dematerialized world – who suddenly found himself on the blue planet?

Yeah, there are lots of drifters all around these days, especially the crazy ones...

I even suspected that I had fallen victim to the time travel quite by chance. MOX hasn't been created here yet. Consequently, this world is still a past... But nothing, be it the theory of relativity or quantum mechanics, can help me to find even a hypothetical explanation of how someone, without any specific reason, can appear on the 21st century earth from the virtual world existing beyond time and space. Maybe the unification of the laws of physics can be of any help, huh?.. No way! Despite the fact that the unification had taken place before MOX was created, nobody there took any interest in physics, especially in its senseless, limited laws.

I know what you're going to say: "Share your knowledge about the future with..." Future, you say?! The future in which everything is possible except being scared?! You must be kidding! Here, on the earth of the 21st century, 99 percent of the population hasn't got the slightest idea how the computer functions; a primitive computer, I mean, an electrical device with a bit storing just a 0 or 1!.. If the 21st century businessmen, lawyers or journalists happen to find themselves back in the middle ages, they will have to acknowledge the fact that they were born in the dark epoch, don't they? And if they don't, let them blame their own stupidity, not the inquisition, for facing the music!

Yes, I have surrendered; I've adapted to the new world, and it, too, is trying to adopt me. I even notice that I have been gradually getting older, so my looks are changing a bit...

Anyway, let's go back to my past, i.e. to your future.

Actually, it was not the user M000000000000013, or simply M13, who came back to his world after a regular trip; it was poor *me*, who returned there! It must be clearer now why I can't write in the same way as I wrote at the beginning.

To put it in a nutshell, it all started from that very point. So I'll start my narrative from there as well.

I felt very nostalgic about my own world, as I was not much of a traveler while staying in MOX. On my return, I immediately connected to the central server and found no important changes. Only the number of users was increased, and I had much more visitors. Like the majority of the users, I preferred a quiet life to an adventurous one, so my own world was a perfect resting place for a serene user like me.

My world, one of the infinity of worlds, had never been short of visitors, and I had always been content with it. I had an ideal own world in the ideal universe! True, it's difficult to perceive it, but this was my maximum, and I had never wished anything more. Even if I had, it would come true immediately.

I got in touch with a friend of mine. I did it like you do when you send a message to a friend. In your case, you get the answer in the form of a text message on your monitor, but in mine, it was my friend who appeared there, because my "monitor" was my world. In the material world you call such occasions acts of "teleportation."

R8 was my intimate friend, raising some sexual feelings in me. Looking back now, I see that those feelings, which we called "orgasmic games" in our language, in some way resembled the phenomenon which you define as "monogamous relations" in the material world.

The sexual relationships typical for the material world are pretty familiar for the population of MOX users, but everything there is simplified, and therefore much more refined. In MOX there have never existed such things as fertilization or an unwanted pregnancy (neither has the wanted one, I must admit.). The creators of the program have thoroughly obliterated this terrible, poignant and inevitable system peculiar to the material life or, to be more precise, to the evolutionary cycle. Karl Mox considered it a sexual paradox. According to Mox, "the apogee of pleasure (sexual intercourse) which results in an unbearable pain of childbirth and the born child bearing the inevitable potential of death while still an embryo, is a mere mockery". For him it proved to be a practical joke played on the living organisms by their senseless and cruel physical world leaving them no other choice. "There is no real Siziph. He exists solely in order to be condemned forever to roll a huge stone up a hill not only to have it roll down again but also to crash him under its weight. There are not such notions as rolling up and down or going up and down; both are illusions. There is only crawling and crashing." Such was Mox's philosophy.

For the creators of the program MOX, as well as for the philosopher Mox himself, the only mission of reproduction was to pass the knowledge accumulated in the mortal human minds to their successive generations. The users of MOX are well aware of the fact that in the antique (material) world, it would be impossible without reproduction and successive generations. But in MOX (being as ideal and perfect as it is), in its worlds with no death and no loss of the accumulated knowledge respectively, fertilization, successive generations and reproduction are useless and out of place phenomena.

In MOX anyone can have sexual intercourse with anyone, and that happens pretty often there. But it mostly happens only once with one partner. Nevertheless, there are partners who get so used to each other that they have sexual intercourse mainly with each other. For instance, R8 and I could easily be regarded such a couple.

I, like any other user, was ideal in sex in my own world. It was a rare case when I played orgasmic games during my travels to other worlds; I preferred to satisfy myself with the fictitious orgasm in my own. Please don't be confused by the term "fictitious orgasm"; it means the same as "masturbation" in your reality.

Well... I've said that having sex is a familiar thing in MOX, but it's not as popular as in the material world. In MOX it is free of narcissism, and its only function is to give pleasure to the users. Actually, the sexual narcissism and its subsequent complexes are unknown there. The aesthetic marathon is also neglected. One can't come across the concrete standards and forms so much characteristic of the material world either. Unlike the material world, MOX is not inhabited by the biological populations that have survived in the process of natural selection and evolution. Hence, you can't find in the program the aesthetic forms typical to the material reality. The users can choose their appearance as they please, and, after a certain period of time, they can even renew it. This has totally destroyed all the visual-dogmatic standards dominating the material world, thus further weakening the phenomenon of narcissism theoretically and practically.

I've been too fascinated by speaking about sex and making comparisons... So now let's go back to the time when I was beyond the time.

Having reached orgasm, R8 got up, sipped some water out of a glass and stared at me sarcastically.

‘You were ideal as always.’

It was difficult not to identify sarcasm in her statement. R8 was showing more and more likening to the females of the material reality, but I was not able to guess it then. I had a very superficial idea of the material world and too little information about it.

‘I’m always ideal.’

‘Stop playing the fool, will you!’ R8 grumbled. ‘I’ve known you for quite a while now, but we have never had an orgasm out of our world. You don’t enjoy playing the orgasmic games, I think... I’ve suggested playing them many times, but no... Nothing interests you anymore... We could travel, at any rate; there are lots of worlds around created only for orgasm.’

I smiled stealing a quick glance at her body. Her forms were ideal for me, and mine were ideal for her as well. I don’t say that we had a great choice, and we had found each other among myriad users. In MOX it happens as a matter-of-course. Any user switching to the program has more or less innate individual abilities and needs, which can be translated into the language of the material world as “dispositions”. But those dispositions never stir up conflicts. In MOX even the dispositions are determined in advance in order to prevent conflicts. As for our personal dispositions, I’ll explain them to you in simple terms: we were born for each other like those other partners who, at some particular stage, shifted over to frequent sexual intercourse.

Despite existing in the ideal world of MOX, the users argued from time to time. But their arguments never had serious negative consequences; it was a sort of entertainment too. In the world free of competition and domination, there can never be a spirited argument which can grow into a serious conflict. Where there are no winners, there can’t be any losers, you know.

I approached R8, hugged her, buried my head in her teats and kept still for several seconds. R8 perceived this as the end of the argument and looked at me with a satisfied impression on her face. At the same moment she felt a pleasant touch near her clitoris... Frankly speaking, I didn’t mean to apologize. My gesture simply signaled the beginning of another game. Orgasmic games are much more pleasant after arguments.

I felt I was quivering together with the body of my partner. We had to make our long way to a pleasure trip experiencing the cherished thrill which, I must admit, in MOX (as well as in the material world) can last for only a couple of seconds. At this point I'll show great boldness and assume that it is the above mentioned long way leading to orgasm that is the greatest part of the sexual intercourse; in other words, the whole act of coitus is the prelude that (unlike Siziph's fruitless attempts) leads to a happy end – orgasm!

At that moment something strange happened to me. Maybe that was the very reason that stimulated your origin, my *potential* readers, who are going to be my *real* readers in the future.

At present, for the people living in the material world, it might not seem strange at all, but for those in MOX it was an anomaly they had never known before: I went on arguing instead of making love... But Why?.. Maybe I'll find the answer to this question someday.

'I really don't understand how they could use the organs designed for orgasm for excreting waste! Suppose they had no other way out... but then I don't understand how they could admire them. The more information I get about the material world, the more confident I am that such nonsense must have been absolutely unbearable. It seems to me that the process of evolution (I mean, what the people from the material world meant by that) was a real paradox. Isn't it strange that humans have survived it? Can you imagine that one excretes some filth, offensive refuse from an organ and then uses the same organ for such a pleasant thing as orgasm?!

Don't be amazed at my talent for public speaking (or *be* if you feel like that) but believe me, it was a speech of a real orator, that of Julius Caesar delivered at Kennedy's funeral! Though with a slight difference – I was the ruler of my world, a real creator, whereas Julius Caesar was only an imitator.

I left R8's clitoris alone, rushing in desperate haste towards my beloved hole. I poked my fingers softly in the female vagina, which excited me further, but couldn't suppress my newly revealed talent for public speaking. I had a terrible attack of logorrhea and uttered myriad foreign words, reanimating the meanings which were long forgotten in MOX, and I enjoyed it immensely.

'In the material world the people called orgasm "sex", fancy that! Their imperfect world couldn't even guarantee those poor creatures an orgasm! There, in the material world,

many representatives of your sex didn't even know what orgasm was. But they had too much sex... Okay, let's leave that orgasm alone for a while...'

That was too much. I didn't know myself what I was striving to achieve. Now I know it, but I didn't then. I got up abandoning the hole which kindled the flame of lovemaking in me and met all my needs; I abandoned it unemotionally, without even coming; I left it wide-open and suspended in the air. R8 must have been terribly disappointed. Several minutes later, I was holding a glass of water in my hand, or rather with the fingers that had been poking blissfully in the vagina.

'Can you imagine that drinking water was vital for them? They wouldn't survive without it! Then they processed it and excreted... What's more important, they took pleasure in drinking. They enjoyed the process of eating and excreting the digested food as well. The same can be said about sex. But why? It was all due to that damned evolution. It made them enjoy everything that was necessary for their existence, survival and fertilization. This damned evolution seems very kind at first sight, doesn't it? But we know what stood behind this kindness – nothing! A real nonsense and disastrous disappointment! Their bodies dilapidated while eating and shitting; they decayed until in the end they stopped functioning. And their brain did the same. This was why everything that the humans (chained to the material world) did during their miserable existence was lost. It was the world of great eaters and shitters, and it might even stink with the odor of their poop, which, as we know, was far from being fragrant. That was why we confronted the nature and evolution – the two chief monsters. And we have defeated them, as you see. These two cruel tyrants, the mother and her offspring, exist no more! We have even discarded the Mater-Filia relationship as a notion... Look, now I'm drinking this water not because I need it, but because I like it! I like the taste, but I don't depend on it. I'm the creator of my own world; here I am someone whom the humans in the material world could only dream about in their abstract dreams or imagined from time to time; I'm the god, my friend! And you're insisting on my travelling more often!.. Frankly speaking, I'm not keen on those travels; they look like anachronism, a filthy remnant of the material world!

Majestic! If the Supercomputer were there, it would applaud me, and Karl Mox would kiss my hand. In the material world, where you've been raised, it would be appraised as admiration, but to my mind, it was a stupid familiarity, a mere lunacy. In MOX, where people don't say such silly things, nobody even thinks about them... What had happened? Why did I start to discuss that issue? I don't know... The only thing I know for sure is that I said all that bullshit. Even so, I couldn't stop and proceeded further.

'I don't support the idea of locking oneself up in one's own world, but I'm not for perpetual travelling. Why should I waive the honor of being a god? I'd rather take care of my own world than visit different ports. I'd better make it more and more popular and have more visitors. You only check the statistics – the number of my visitors increases daily! My ideal world is really ideal for the lovers of a peaceful reality.

Anomaly again, a mere absurdity! R8 should have compromised at that point, or simply come and suck my penis not understanding anything I said, but no!..

'Okay, let's assume that you are right, you are a god like any of us in our own worlds. We've all made the dreams of the physical beings come true. Moreover, we've become those long-wished objects which they had been dreaming about all their lives, but being helpless and miserable, they couldn't contact them and only admired them with an abstract admiration. Excellent turn of events with an excellent end! But just observe what's going on: you are drinking water in my world in order to get some pleasure! You know for sure that you can only imagine the real pleasure of drinking water in the material world. For that you need a glass, because only after sipping it out of it you are able to enjoy it. "So what?" You may ask me, "What's the dilemma?" It's simple, my dear: we both get the same pleasure, but we get it in different ways. I also have to drink water out of a glass in you world to get pleasure. It seems illogical and pretty irrational to me, and too far from being ideal. But such differences always stir up the desire of travelling. You've spoken derogatively about evolution, but what about the fact that all the pleasures and emotions that we have in program MOX are from the material world? And those pleasures, their essences, have nothing to do with the creators of the program; they are the consequences of evolution. So, here comes the conclusion: MOX is ideal indeed, but you cannot ignore its basis, its roots. It's also quite clear that the initiators of the program MOX wanted us to know everything about the material world, though it was possible to forget the whole history of the material reality and begin everything at the very beginning, without any information about the past.'

Marathon running was now in full session! I was ready to face the challenge! I was not going to retreat! It seemed that R8 had learned the history lessons about the material world pretty well. As for you, my dear readers, you have to follow me with strained attention, for the argument, which is an ordinary speculation for you, was a real anomaly in the world where it took place.

'Our idea of the material world is based on historic memory, not a sequential one. It was so awful that we, the creators and users of MOX, thought it useless to install our

personal memories, feelings and emotions from the material world into the program. It's pretty simple. Every user of MOX knows that when the program was being created, he or she was an ordinary material substance who deliberately refused to continue their material existence. I don't support neglecting real affairs; I simply want to say that MOX was not created by abstract gods, it grew out of some already existing concrete reality. So it couldn't and wouldn't neglect everything. Taking along all the best and neglecting all the worst gave us divinity and free will. Consequently, we must make use of our divinity. I prefer to be a god; travelling and drifting do not appeal to me!

At that very point I had to triumph my victory but, it seems, R8 regained her senses and did as anyone from MOX would do – she tried to avoid the conflict. So my self-satisfied gaze sank into the void – my world lost one of its visitors. I wasn't able to explain the essence of my emotions when I came face to face with that fact, but now I can. This “argument” of ours was meant to be “a game of the settled information”, opposing several different opinions based on the same fundament; the argument should have grown into entertainment, and the entertainment should have turned into the successful rolling of a huge stone up by Sizoph, i.e. into experiencing orgasm. But, unfortunately, it didn't happen.