

After their moment of silence, Sendi asked. "Are we changing the future?"

Matu looked at her. "What do you mean?"

"Well, we're here now. But, we weren't here before and we're here now. So, are we changing the future...I mean, where we came from?"

He thought for a moment, then added. "Well, yes, we are here now. So, whatever we have done here has influenced the chain of events that has, or had, or, I guess, will, bring or brought about the future. So, the then us is a result of what we are doing now. Is that a problem?"

"Uh...I'm not sure. I think I'm confused." She paused. "Have I changed who I am, I mean, who I will be, in the future?"

He considered a moment. "Yes, probably, you are the result of the event stream that brought you to where you are now...then...or wherever...uh, whenever."

"So...?"

"So, you are what you are, no matter how you got here. OK, let's say that another way...you are still you, but you have experienced some things, learned, evolved, and made yourself different, better, we hope, but, still different. But, all in all, you are still the same basic you that you have always been, and will always be. The basic you-ness hasn't changed." He looked at her. "Are you OK with that?"

She looked at him for a moment, considered, then said. "Yeah...I guess. It just feels kinda strange."

"Well, I guess it would...wouldn't it?" He laughed. "You aren't who you thought you were. But then, who did you think you were?"

She just stared at him and blinked. "I...uh...don't know. I guess, just, me."

He stared back, comically rocking his head back and forth. "So...well? Then, you're still you, aren't you?"

She stared at him for a moment, blinked a few times, then stared some more. "Yeah, I guess."

"OK, maybe you're different in a few ways...you've had some experiences, you've learned some new things...that happens all the time. Are you still you?"

"Uh...yeah."

"So, what's the problem?"

She sighed. "I still don't know what to think."

"Matu?" Rexx interjected.

"Yes?"

"What's with you? You're starting to sound like the Time Police."

"Am I?" He thought for a minute, then shrugged his shoulders. "Maybe he's putting thoughts into my head."

Rexx laughed. "Yeah. He does that."

"Well, he's been a bit quiet lately. Maybe, I'm just being a temporary go-between." He paused. "Have I been saying anything useful?" He laughed. "Or just really stupid?"

"No." Sendi said quietly. "It's been useful." She nodded. "It's been the kinds of things that prompt deeper thought."

"You know..." Rexx started. "When we get to where we want to be, how do we become part of this country?"

"What do you mean?" Matu asked.

"Well, you're Australian and we're American. Um, we have to somehow become residents or citizens or something if we want to live here, don't we?" He paused. "Wow, this is all so new to me. I don't even know how we've gotten through all the traveling that we've done."

Matu went silent for a few moments. "I'm not too sure either. So far, it's just happened. The company handled all of the visas and necessary papers." He paused. "But, we're on our own, now. I guess, we wait and see and deal with the problems as they come along."

"Yeah, that's a bit scary." Sendi said.

Matu looked at her. "Really!?"

"Huh?"

"What have we all been through? We're dead to our previous lives and 'born again' into new lives thanks to the Time Police and you're worried about citizenship?"

"Oh. Sorry, you're right. I guess, I just got lost in the current needs." She shook her head. "Why is it so easy to lose track of what the bigger issues are when you get tied up in minor details?"

"Well, the thing that's in front of your face is always the most important...right? Everything else is just something to deal with later."

"So what is first on our agenda? Is it finding our place, resolving these adjendas of differences in politics or wars, becoming citizens, or what?" Rexx asked.

"Oh, that's a bigger question than I have any answers for." Matu sighed. "We're sitting on a roadside...we don't have a home or a destination...politics, we haven't a clue. All we can do is get back on the road and drive on...where to, we don't know."