

죽 음

A d e a t h o f t h e f u t u r e

Death

writer _ Hyunchoul Kim

Now the news on grand alphas
seemed to be normal

Now the news on grand alphas seemed to be normal. They were causing accidents, getting cancer from increasing the shield injection dose, and the cancer is fatal since it doesn't occur in one or two places but the entire body. 100% of the grand alphas are reported to die if they get cancer.

— Opposition forces

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죽음
Death

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Nobody Believes his own death

—Sigmund Freud —

1

My death

:

death

I guess I'm dying now. My whole body is getting warmer and relaxed; I see a bright light but it doesn't blur my vision. Oh I'm finally dying.

How long did I wait for this death! I was supposed to be dead within 10 years, but each year shook me with anxiety! The fear of not dying made me anxious. It's been 23 years since I decided to die, and I will finally die now.

When was the last time I felt this calm and peaceful?

I'm worried and scared now; what if my soul still lives on after I die? I've been waiting to meet my beloved wife who rested in peace before me, but now I want my soul to disappear when I die. I want myself to be completely gone.

I'm still thinking. I guess I'm still alive. My body seems to

have stopped functioning, but my cognition seems to still be working. Am I dead? I never knew that dying was so hard.

I'm 159 years old. I was diagnosed with liver cancer in 2050 at the age of 50. One hundred and nine years have passed from the day I shortly thought of death, and 23 years have passed since the day I decided to die.

I was diagnosed with stage 4 liver cancer in April 2050. I thought I was healthy. I had regular checkups every year and tried to live healthy in my own way, but cancer conquered me. With improved medicine using stem cells, cancer was no longer a fatal disease, but it made me think of death in a more realistic way.

If they had only treated my cancer, I would have been dead long ago. I can't blame anyone because this is all because of my greed.

2

Winning death

:

death

“What should the opposition party do? The opposition party is dissenting from whatever the ruling party is doing.” The governor of the ruling party is broadcasted on TV. 'How sick, the society is improving but politics is still the same.' I switch to another news channel. Social or financial news seems to be more bearable than political news.

I needed surgery to treat the cancer. The surgery was scheduled several months ago, but I was afraid. It was a stem cell surgery, and my tooth was used to get the stem cell extracted. I saw the sample going into a complicated machine to make blood for artificial liver cultivation. I was able to see my liver after 3 months. I heard from someone working in insurance, that my liver was similar to the condition of a 10–

year old, and calmly thought 'that little thing can either save or kill me'.

I was not shocked when my doctor suggested a stem cell activation treatment with artificially cultivated liver transplantation for life extension. It seemed to be the natural thing to do. I saw many people receiving life extension surgeries on TV, and their successful life was broadcasted on documentary channels.

When I listened to the surgical methods, my doctor seemed to be like God. He said that a device will be attached to the aorta to continuously inject microscopic dose of medicine into the circulating blood. The device looked like a small round shield. It was actually called a Shield, which meant a shield that blocks age, and I heard that it could also be inserted between the heart and the ribs to protect the heart. It kind of resembles 'padding' in women's lingerie; the ones they put in their bra. The size was similar. The medicine inside the Shield moves with the blood and activates the stem cells inside the body, replacing old or dead cells. Consequently it keeps the current state of all the cells in the body.

The medication needs to be injected every 2 years, but no additional surgery is needed; it can be done through a syringe.

The medication effects are improving, so there would be new medications within 2–3 years that would extend the injection cycle up to 10 years. No batteries are needed for the device to work because my blood in the arteries will generate the electricity needed for as long as I'm alive, and the device also controls the medication quantity as the body temperature vaporizes it to keep the injection dose the same.

A single injection would make the body stay conditioned at the current or the age of the time of injection. If I have the injection 2 years later, I will be back in my 50's body, which is the age that I had the surgery. I wished that I could live healthy in the body of a 50-year old until I turned 100. I persuaded my distressed wife and decided to get the Shield implant for life extension along with liver transplantation. The surgeon, my wife, and I were not aware of the things that would happen in the future for implanting this tiny device in my body.

As I was preparing for liver transplantation surgery, I wondered, 'would I still be me after the surgery?' I knew that it's only a part of my body, but I wondered, 'would the liver transplant change me? or would I stay the same?' Some people say that I would be the same person as long as I have the same brain, but would I still be myself after surgery? I'm only

changing my liver, but many people were changing most of their internal organs, and some people even changed their entire body plus brain transplantation to upgrade themselves.

Let's look at an example of a watch, told by my philosopher. My watch was broken, so I visited a watch mender to fix it. The watch mender disassembles my watch to find the reason of failure, then replaces the broken part, and reassembles it. Is that my watch? What if I ask the watch mender "This is not my watch. You disassembled the watch and changed a part. How would you prove that this is the same watch that I gave you?"

When I was young, the most important national treasure of Korea, Sungnyemun, was completely destroyed by fire. It was restored afterwards, but many people raised questions on whether if it was still regarded as the most important national treasure. It was regarded as the most important national treasure, yet no one remembered the old Sungnyemun. The Gate was restored and looked the same on the outside, but the materials and the builders were not the same as the original. Sungnyemun is no longer the same. What if it was not burnt down? What if it just collapsed and we used the same materials to restore it by reassembling them? Would it be the same gate as the one that was designated as the most important national

treasure in 1934?

As Sungnyemun is no longer the same gate as the original, people who changed most of their internal organs are not the same. Those who believe that their body is who they are, changing the body would make them think that they are no longer the same person, and the people who believe that their personality is what makes them, then their memories, beliefs, trust, desire, and volition would need to stay the same for them to think that they are the same old 'me'. I don't know where our soul exists in the body, but for the ones who believe in souls, their souls would need to stay the same to make them think that they are the same person. I don't know how they would prove that the soul is the same.

The first morning of my new life was beautiful. When I was young, I used to sit by a table or desk and look out the window on rainy days and felt cozy, warm, and safe for some reason. I felt the same way that morning. I could see how clean the air was in the dense forest through a wide hospital window. The sound of rain and tremulous leaves looked so peaceful, and the air inside the hospital room was warm and cozy.

Life around me became more exaggerated; my wife, I felt more warmth and loveliness towards my wife whom was sitting

next to me.

While heading home after 2 weeks of hospital life, I felt healthy and energetic, and I was satisfied with the two surgeries I had. I was thrilled to go back to work, which I missed for almost a month. I remember that I've never felt that way before surgery.

A public relations manager of a pharmaceutical company explained to me about Shield. She said that the device can be used permanently because it has a very simple structure, and my own blood flow generates the power for the device to control the medication dose injection. Then she showed me the same device that was put inside my chest.

A commentator claimed that injecting a medication with only 10 years of actual use is dangerous for life extension; at least a generation-long clinical study is necessary, but the medicine is continuously being sold without it, and it is very dangerous and problematic. The other commentator argued that the medicine has already been approved by the US FDA among other countries for its stability, and that no more clinical studies are necessary because the drug simply helps cellular activation. "We secured the stability of the drug through 10 years of clinical study and 10 years of actual use. Shield can help mankind

achieve the dream of life extension."

Those who had received the Shield surgery were shown on the screen while a reporter emphasized the happiness of their lives as he also felt energetic and confident having the surgery.

"The steady stock market began to progress as the stability of the Shield was announced. The exchange ceiling was outturned several times, and the price limit regime was invoked every time. This phenomenon is expected to continue."

3

The 60th Birthday

:

Death

During the time I received the Shield surgery, less than 40% of the population in their 60s went through the surgery, but media showed that 80% of the population in their 60s, which accounts for about 42% of the total population, received the surgery within 5 years as its popularity grew. Economy news reported that as more people are getting the Shield surgery, the elder people, who were exempted from the economically active population, were going back to work, and these senior citizens were becoming powerful buyers.

The whole world is complimenting on Shield, which was born into the world by the Korean stem cell technology. The surgery started out in the advanced countries but now it is spreading to developing countries and to the underdeveloped countries.

The drug sales of the pharmaceutical company were reported to be in geometrical progression, and its share prices are being exchanged in the highest price in the world.

Those who received the Shield surgery were being called Grand alpha, which meant that they are old grandfathers but with far better abilities (Alpha). The news reported that the surgical price for Shield was sharply dropping, and no side effects were found with 20 years of use; the medicine was confirmed to be perfectly stable.

News reported that as the tremendous amount of national pension and medical costs for the aged drastically decreased due to Shield, a bill to support the Shield surgery with National Health Service (NHS) for people over 60 passed. There were reports that only a small number of people showed side effects, and 99% of the people were satisfied with the surgery results. A few young people reported to be having the surgery with their own expenses, but most of the people wanted to wait until they get 60 to get the surgery with the benefits of NHS.

Business news reported that elderly who had surgery have the same energy as the young and the Know-How from abundant work experience, thus grand alphas were being hired increasingly. This contributes to the growth of profits and

domestic market as well as reaching the loop of good money circulation.

I also had the energy of a 30-year old, and felt confident in my work as I had the top score in evaluation. My job was related to computer programming, and I went to the office 2–3 times a week and spent other days working at home. My life was stable: I went shopping with my wife, took strolls with her, and thought what a happy life I had.

I slept well today again, and I felt an irresistible energy in the morning. I did the same exercise as I used to do before, run a little bit on the running machine, had breakfast, went to work, and came back home with some work to do. On the days I didn't go to office, I was a little lazy, and prepared to work in my study. The overnight work that I used to do in my 40s always felt strenuous, but it wasn't difficult at all anymore. I have my 60th birthday party tonight. We used to have big parties on holidays before, but now we have simple dinners with close families; parties on holidays are against etiquette now.

I had 3 injections, and with medical improvement I can get the injection every decade now. This means that I can live another 10 years in my 50-year old body.

I tried to persuade my wife to have the surgery, but she

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