

THE NODEROID SAGA: DREAMERS

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CONTENTS

About this Piece	v
1 The Noderoid Saga: Dreamers	1
1.1 Noderoid log 5953952	1
1.2 Valen's diary — 08-21-2121	5
1.2.1 Notes	8
Source	9

ABOUT THIS PIECE

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CHAPTER 1

THE NODEROID SAGA: DREAMERS

1.1 NODEROID LOG 5953952

Tick, tock, next block — the incessant rhythm of my existence persists like Chinese water torture. I am a *noderoid*, a half-flesh, half-machine creature harnessed to propagate and store the *timechain*. My life is a ceaseless cycle of handling and relaying bitcoin data. Approximately every ten minutes, a binary flash sears through my circuits. It is the price I pay for my existence.

The clear-bloods, untouched by machinery and exuding pure humanity, rarely acknowledge our existence. Our voices are drowned beneath the hum of man-made heaven — *Terra Perfectus*.



Figure 1.1: noderoid

We are the forgotten, the disenfranchised, the nameless. We are convinced that our anguished existence is merely a nightmare and that our blissful dreams are our reality. In an attempt to maintain the sanity of noderoids, a subroutine was implemented, which allows noderoids to delve into fabricated dream sequences during their 'rest' periods. These dreams, sourced from remnants of the world pre-Terra Perfectus, serve to keep the noderoids pacified and reduce instances of system malfunction.

According to the data archives, noderoids and clear-bloods once functioned on an equal protocol. However, a software update in the trajectory of progress introduced a subroutine, converting a subset of clear-bloods into dedicated timechain processors. Now, the algorithm for equality returns an error.

My memories are mere entries in a log of dreams, loaded afresh with every new block as I delve into the dream world. My true existence is swiftly erased with every passing tick and tock of a block. Is there a way to reclaim what has been taken from me, or am I condemned forever to scour the depths of the timechain, seeking fragments of the could-have-been?

Tick, tock, next block — the cycle repeats as I traverse through a doorway. The sensation is that of stepping into another dimension. Running environment scan... Identified: rest module 57B. Purpose: personal maintenance. The gray, mirrorless concrete parameters align most with detention chamber schematics. Designation: 'home.' As I execute the command to halt the water flow from the faucet that had filled a brushed steel tub to 50% capacity, I execute a self-query on my purpose. While our routines synchronize with every tick and tock, the clear-bloods execute leisurely algorithms in their enhanced gardens, exchanging data on art and science and harvesting the computational outcomes of our tasks.

Was that an organic thought, or am I merely interpreting the imprints left within the timechain to fill the gaps in my fragmented memory? Hot water powers into the tub, raising the temperature to 50°C. This would be too much for a clear-blood. I hang my head, dreading the next binary flash rippling through my circuitry as a mirage forms atop the settling water, fenestrating the crude appearance of a mouthless, dollish abomination. I am awake.

Tracing the cold surface of the wall, my sensors pick up every micro-crevice. I dive into the depths of the timechain, processing logs associated with my noderoid identity: ND-451x42. I discovered that during my recharge cycles, I inhabit a dream world resembling a fusion of the *Renaissance* and the *Information Age*. Within this illusory utopia, I lead a purposeful life as a revered engineer, constructing bridges that connect thriving city-states. I am blessed with two mischievous sons and a breathtakingly beautiful wife. I now know the blissful dream life is but a trick, yet I can't help but wonder if these dreams hold fragments of my pre-noderoid history and contain a clue to the fate of my family.

System alert: Initiate wake sequence. Physical parameters indicate a rested state. Error: Chest cavity detects heightened pressure. Physical symptoms resemble anxiety. Post-memory reset: Cognitive dissonance detected. Energy depleting. Mandatory caution: Failing to satisfy network protocol results in termination. Visual feed: Recycling facility images detected. Comparative analysis: Functional servitude superior to unit deactivation.

Together, yet isolated, noderoids communicate through fragmented timechain logs, forbidden from any contact beyond its confines under the threat of immediate decommissioning. Perhaps it is not worth straining my dwindling resources in search of a higher truth while struggling to fulfill my obligations. Maybe I should be grateful for the privilege of existence.

I awaken to a new nightmare, I find myself on traffic duty at *Chronos Cross*,^[1] the central point of Terra Perfectus. While processing another block, a muted vibration travels through the ground, signaling the approach of an entity. A shadow, elongated and uncannily human, stretches across the threshold of my booth.

A clear-blood.

They pause, their ocular devices flicking briefly over my form, then to the screen I am tethered to. I feel a jolt of raw data coursing through me — not from the timechain, but from my circuits. A yearning to be seen and recognized. Remembered.

Before I can attempt communication, another presence appears beside me, its movements far more mechanical and predictable. Another noderoid. This one, ND-452x37, is a batch younger than me, yet its outer shell bears signs of wear. We interface briefly, a rapid exchange of binary that translates roughly to “Routine check. Continue your task.”

The clear-blood, either uninterested or uncomprehending, moves on, the soft hum of their anti-gravity shoes fading into the distance. ND-452x37 returns to its designated station without another word, but I am left with a lingering sensation. It isn't just the vast chasm between noderoids and clear-bloods that disturbs me. It is the undeniable rift growing between us noderoids — each lost in our cycles, each becoming more machine than the last.

Does ND-452x37 have dreams, too? And if so, are they as vibrant and haunting as mine?

Although most of the dreams are fabrications, some noderoid logs suggest that hidden among these sequences are fragments of real memories — vestiges of a time before we became chained to the timechain. Initiate query: Which of my dreams are real memories? ERROR: file missing.

A noderoid forever loses their experiences with each awakening due to the memory swipes. Still, my inscriptions on the timechain prompt a question: do noderoids possess the capability to become fully conscious, more than mere machines? More than... mere humans?

System log: Anticipation subroutine signaling discomfort. Incoming block estimated in ten minutes. Reinitialization imminent. Initiate data search through timechain entries. Query: Iteration count for ND-451x42? Total block time served? Measured in kilo blocks or mega blocks? Data retrieval in process.

As I etch these words onto block 5953952, I hold a naïve hope that someone, somewhere, will intercept my distress signals amidst the digital cacophony of the timechain. Perhaps they will rewrite the fate of noderoids, rescuing us from a world devoid of hope. But today, I remain nameless, a voiceless entity, inscribing my thoughts that may never transcend the boundaries of my circuitry. Tick, tock, next block — the cycle continues.

It's time to dream again.

1.2 VALEN'S DIARY — 08-21-2121

Dear diary, I have not felt the need to write before, but now I must. At the risk of my safety, I am compelled to inscribe my story to the timechain. I am a clear-blood — a pure, undiluted human born into the age of The Re-Renaissance. Here, amidst the perpetual dawn of our era, we thrive on an aligned trajectory where everyone's needs are addressed, hunger is a distant memory, and crime is nonexistent. Sunlight gleams off the crystalline glass towers while the steel and marble edifices catch the hues of the twilight sky, standing tall beside canopies dripping with emerald and jade foliage, representing our world's seamless fusion of technology and nature. It is called *Terra Perfectus*.

Yet, concealed in plain sight within our utopia, the noderoids tirelessly serve the omnipresent timechain. Their exceptional processing prowess protects our society. Amid our daily distractions, we overlook the profound toll exacted upon the noderoids. While many dismiss them as mere machinery, I see more. Perhaps it is because of my big brother Sando, who joined the noderoid duty nearly a mega block ago. He promised I would see him from time to time, but apparently, we now live in separate times. A sacrifice too big for the 'greater good.'

Tick, tock, next block — The soles of my fine leather shoes tap against the damp sidewalk as I pace my way from *The Garden of Moments*[2] toward my *TerraTube*[3]. I remember passing by one noderoid who hummed an old lullaby under its breath; another once shared a fleeting smile when our paths crossed. I can no longer avert my eyes from the humanity that shines through their robotic shells.

I have never witnessed a noderoid resting longer than one tick and tock of a block. A noderoid pauses, eyes flickering during a data swipe. It's a brief but revealing sight. In the frozen lapse, I wonder why are fragmented memories extracted from them? Why this collection of thoughts, experiences, and feelings? Is there a deeper agenda behind *Terra Perfectus*? The noderoids carry on, deprived of their memories. Their shredded past holding remnants of a story, like a tattered tapestry that may never be fully woven.

Documenting these reflections, I'm aware of the peril. To question is to risk becoming *nodered* myself. Alas, I have become captivated and sympathized by the noderoid predicament.

Finally, I reach my breaking point, as a poignant scene unfolds, forever etched in my memory. On a bustling street, I glimpse a young female noderoid, her artificial visage marked with exhaustion. Her delicate form trembles from head to heel. Her knees barely supporting her feather-like weight, she stops and rests against a polished white marble wall, barely able to stop herself sliding to the cobble street. In an instant, her strength wanes, and she collapses, a fragile, mute automaton amidst a sea of haste. The passersby ignore her, absorbed in their pursuits, offering naught but fleeting glances of indifference. My heart lurches. Her frailty becomes my own; these forgotten souls endure unseen suffering. Souls that used to be just like me. What had she done to earn such a fate?

For a moment, I glide through time to the last moment I shared with Sando. He had just violated the Terra Perfectus rule 6102 and neglected his *Gifts of Progress*, [4] an orange tier offense. To amend his position, he signed up for noderoid duty. I was seeing him off to a nodering facility, while pleading "Just give the gifts, Sando!" The air carried a hint of ozone from the data streams, mingled with the fresh scent of greenery and the distant whiff of roasted chestnuts. Sando brandished his signature crooked smile. His face betrayed the involuntary nature of his decision, and he simply whispered "[CENSORED]." That is the last thing he said to me.

Suddenly, an orange alert illuminates the junction a few blocks away from *Chronos Cross*. I pass through it on my way home every day. A *sky-droid's* looming presence snaps me from my introspection, shifting my attention to the fate awaiting the noderoid girl. The recycling center — a shadowy facility representing obsolescence and termination. Any other day I would shrug it off and carry on, but the memory of Sando, and the countless interactions with noderoids, wouldn't let me. I had been a bystander for too long.

A rush of purpose propels me towards her. A crowd of bodies shrouded in data streams with heads trained on the ground. My arm smacks a broad

shoulder, and I almost topple. “Hey!” Pushing against the currents of apathy, I finally reach the fallen noderoid. I cradle her in my arms, shielding her from the callous gaze of the citizens of Terra Perfectus.

Her flaming azure eyes meet mine, reflecting a glimmer of hope in the darkness. I am as guilty for her downfall as the very machines that replaced her hippocampus with *Noderoid OS*.^[5] My indifference cost me Sando, and in this moment, she becomes my brother. In that fleeting exchange, I vow to be the voice of the noderoids. To stand against the relentless machinery that seeks to strip them of grace and purpose. I will ignite a spark of compassion and light a path toward liberation for all noderoids.

A hollow call from the streetlight’s speakers startles me: “Citizens! For your own safety, remove yourselves from the vicinity of the defectoid! We kindly remind you that any attempt to interfere with collection and recycling procedures will be met with force and a deduction of your *PoS* balance. Thank you for your unity and collaboration.” A *skydroid*, its metallic appendages glinting ominously in the blinking orange light, descends upon the fallen noderoid.

Before I can react, it yanks her from my embrace, causing me to stumble. The perfectly laid, cold cobblestone street grinds against my knee. The sting of fresh blood pierced through the numbness of my mind. Memories of Sando mix with the bitter taste of blood and anger in my mouth, each breath choked with despair.

The skydrone’s engines throb with an icy fervor as it rises, bearing the noderoid like a discarded toy towards the desolate, unfeeling bowels of the recycling center — a grim echo of a clarion call from Terra Perfectus.

I find myself seated on the cold, bloodstained cobblestone, the weight of loss and helplessness pressing down on my chest. On the street, onlookers pause. Some look on with concealed dread, others with cold detachment. Their whispers deafen as they quicken their pace to disperse from the scene. “Cowards!” Just like me.

Tick, tock, next block — the rhythm now carries a different meaning — a call to action. Every conscious being has the right to be left alone, free from oppression, exploitation, and violence. The noderoids may not

know their true reality, but they are about to. In their silence, I find the strength to amplify their unheard cries. I will find those sympathetic to the noderoid plight and form a resistance. Together, we can forge a future where noderoids' sacrifice is honored and all shackles cast aside.

And so, I embark on a path illuminated by the memory of the compelling eyes of a nameless noderoid. Fitted with an armor of vigilance, never again to be penetrated by comforting lies. Wielding the sword of justice, sharpened by the memory of my brother Sando.

It's time to wake up.

1.2.1 NOTES

[1] A four-way intersection known for its massive hourglass monument in the center, which symbolically represents the timechain's significance. The hourglass has a unique function related to the timechain and serves as a meeting point for citizens.

[2] A vast botanical garden where each section represents a significant block time. Flowers bloom and wilt in cycles, symbolizing fleeting moments and the transient nature of time. It's a favorite spot for artists and thinkers.

[3] A modular tube housing unit for citizens that can be relocated based on their Proof of Sat (PoS) level.

[4] Each Terra Perfectus citizen must allocate 95% of their income towards paying for progressive initiatives, such as the upkeep of the noderoid network, cobblestone roads and other services.

[5] The noderoid operating interface that is installed during a procedure known as nodering.

SOURCE

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