

THE DEMON IN THE SCANNER

A second body
can save a life,
or set a demon free.





Doctor Leona Vale
flew to Bulgaria because
the future of transhumanism
was being argued in public.



Doctor Elias Dawes had
been invited to speak,
and he studied every
machine like it had
a secret.



Outside the window,
Protector Paul kept pace
because enemies of
transhumans had learned
to strike early.

The Crossmarked cell came from the clouds with stolen jet packs and laser rifles.



Paul burned the first engines before their rifles could cut the fuselage.



Two attackers spiraled toward the water, their packs smoking and dead.



But the cell had planned for one guardian, not mercy.



Too many lasers found the plane at once.



Then Bulgarian wings
split the storm.



Biter fired one wide taser pulse,
and every remaining jet pack
became dead weight.



The plane landed safely in Bulgaria,
carrying witnesses who had seen
two monsters save them.



Biter knew Protector Paul's name.
Paul had never heard of Biter.



At the conference,
Doctor Moreau introduced
Project Animax to the world.



Biter had once been
Petar Marinoff, a Bulgarian
air force pilot lost in
a fatal crash.



Animax scanned what remained
of his brain into a beetle android
body built for flight and armor.



Dawes admired the bodies.
Vale studied the immortality.
Something inside Paul
studied the exit.



The scanner saw what everyone else had learned to fear around.



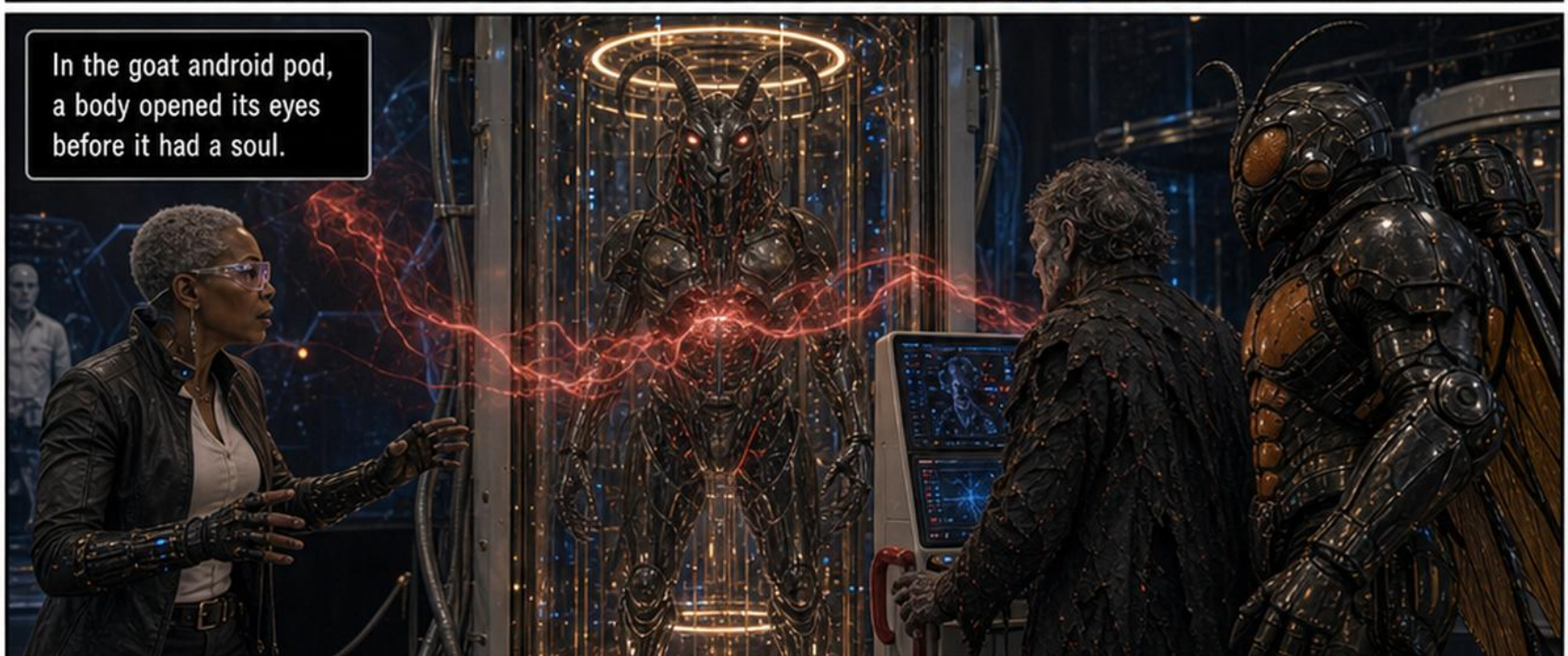
Two minds lived inside Protector Paul.



The darker mind used Paul's hands and told the machine to ignore the human half.



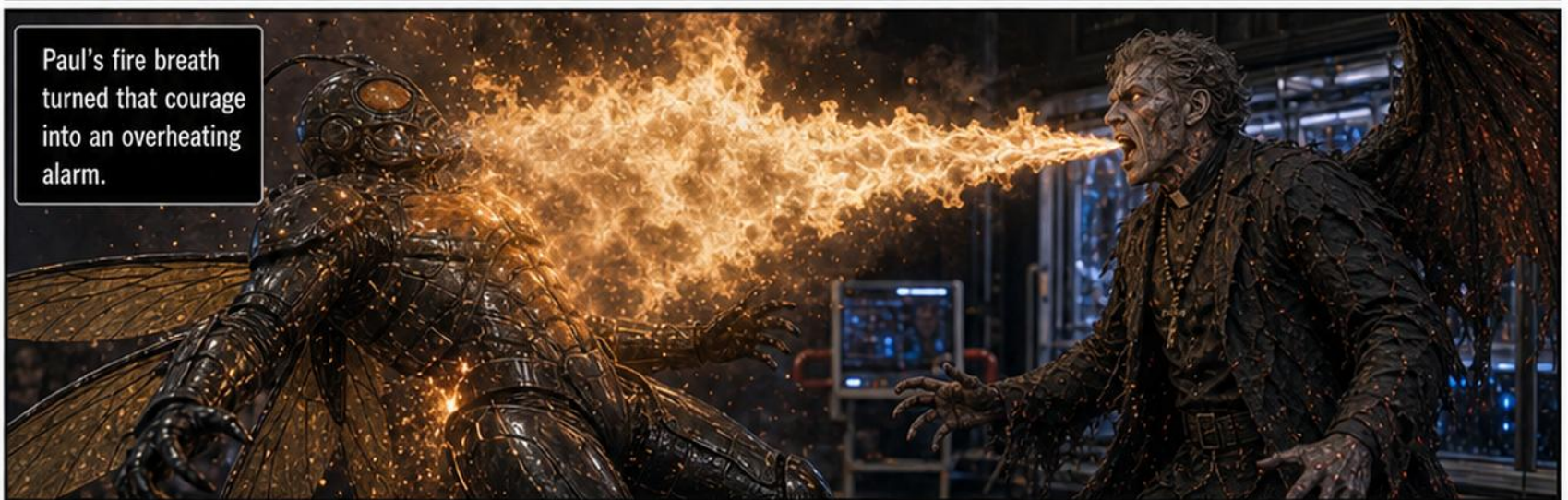
In the goat android pod, a body opened its eyes before it had a soul.



Biter lunged first, trusting armor that had survived bullets, claws, and black-market knives.



Paul's fire breath turned that courage into an overheating alarm.



Leona ran toward the stage without armor, wings, or metal skin.



Her voice gave Paul's human half something to pull against.



While demon and man fought inside one body, Dawes and Moreau reached the terminal.



The scanner shut down, and Protector Paul heard silence where the demon had always whispered.



Dawes and Moreau knew too late that the upload had already finished.



Goat-Bot escaped into the Bulgarian night with Paul's demon copied into steel.



When Biter rebooted, Paul promised they would find the runaway demon together.

