



# The Evening Universe

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## The Prince of Darkness

*by Dmitry Triputin*



Mikhail Vrubel, "The Demon Seated" (1890)

\* \* \*

Leaving the X-ray room, I knocked out the agitated doctor, took away my radiograph and

destroyed all traces and records of myself.

Now I have no idea how to live further and what to do, since I discovered that I am not a human.

\* \* \*

When a fragile girl slipped and fell on the sidewalk, I ran to her, pushing aside indifferent passers-by, and helped her to her feet.

Suddenly, the girl's eyes flashed triumphantly with a dazzling red light and she clung to me with superhuman strength, while people around us screamed, drowning out the hysterical howl of sirens, "Empath is caught, empath is caught, is he really the last one?!"

\* \* \*

"Why, why aren't you afraid of us?!" vampires, werewolves and ghouls of various stripes moaned and howled in every possible way, as they approached and surrounded me.

"Because there is no one here who is more terrible than me," I replied dryly, preparing for big bloodshed, and took on my true form, the Prince of Darkness.

\* \* \*

We managed to leave the planet before all the bombs were activated, so we watched from a safe distance in space as it was shaken by explosions.

Only when Earth burst like an overripe tomato, and giant tentacles fell out of it, flailing up and down in agony, we realized that it really was a living creature.

\* \* \*

I felt so sorry for the aliens who complained to me that they lost their former immortality after contracting the disease of aging on Earth.

As soon as I got into their spaceship, they explained to me that they hoped to find a cure for this disease by using me for experiments.

\* \* \*

Dissimilar representatives of various civilizations from many galaxies eagerly awaited the start of the online conference.

There was only one question on the agenda: what to do with the inhabitants of Earth who launched the Large Hadron Collider, which could cause a chain reaction leading to destroying the entire universe.

\* \* \*

Those strange-looking aliens thought in images, which were somehow transmitted to the minds of others like words spoken aloud, so I was able to understand that they were not going to include Earth in the register of planets with intelligent life.

I wonder only why they decided to communicate with my peacefully grazing cow, but not with me?

\* \* \*

I love my family, I have a good job, and generally I am satisfied with everything.

My only worry is that the sick dog who dreams of my life, so similar to the real one, will wake up.

*Translated from Russian by Maxim Sviridenkov.*

## *About the author*



**Dmitry Triputin** is a Russian poet and fiction writer. Born in Leningrad, he lives in Vologda now. Graduated from the Bonch-Bruевич Leningrad Electrotechnical Institute of Communications in 1987, he worked as an engineer for many years and was awarded medals “Veteran of Labour” and “For Services to St. Petersburg”. Dmitry is a laureate of several International and Russian literary competitions. For his poems and prose, he was awarded the International Adam Mickiewicz Medal (Moscow/Warsaw, 2015), the medal “Fyodor Dostoyevsky—200th Anniversary” and some other awards. He is the author of four books and a member of the International Union of Writers.

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