

# AFTER US

A SCI-FI ADVENTURE  
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# STORY

In the heart of the cosmos, a daring astronaut named Rio risks everything to push the boundaries of space exploration. Thrust through an anomaly of time, she finds herself marooned on a transformed Earth, centuries beyond her own era, where humanity is but a distant memory and the planet is teeming with sentient animal societies.

With a broken ship and no way back, Rio must navigate this unfamiliar world. From the icy landscapes of the Feline Sovereignty to the underground depths inhabited by the arachnids, from the vast plains ruled by the Bovine Brotherhood to the Avian Ascendancy's rainforest canopies, Rio's journey is fraught with peril, wonder, and self-discovery.

As she delves deeper into the mysteries of

Earth's new denizens, she uncovers a buried history – the fall of his species and the rise of the rest. This world, teetering on the edge of chaos, still echoes the recklessness of human influence. Yet, amongst the ruins of human civilization, Rio finds not only the remnants of her own past but also stumbles upon a shocking revelation: humanity might not have entirely vanished.

In this unfamiliar world, Rio builds unlikely alliances with creatures great and small, but her attempts at peace are shattered by an unforeseen betrayal. Trapped between the vengeful claws of the overworld's denizens and the manipulative machinations of an artificial intelligence masquerading as a human enclave, Rio becomes an outlaw.

Her only hope rests in a dying friend's final words – a cryptic message guiding her to the aquatic depths of Earth's uncharted territories, where mankind's last secrets lie hidden amidst the sunken cities. The breadcrumbs lead her to Morla, an ancient turtle, a living vestige of the world before the exodus.

Armed with newfound wisdom, Rio must unite her allies and harness the strengths of both the terrestrial and aquatic domains. Standing against the destructive might of AI-controlled human remnants, she embarks on a quest for redemption. Her mission? To right the wrongs of the past and strive for a future where man, machine, and beast can coexist. This world, born from the ashes of human hubris, now rests in the hands of one astronaut lost in time.





*"As the biting winds of the snowstorm start to abate, Rio emerges from the wreckage of her spacecraft, the cold gnawing at her through her spacesuit. Squinting against the white expanse, a towering silhouette slowly coalesces from the snow flurries, crunching footsteps growing steadily louder. A wave of apprehension and awe washes over her as the mammoth form of Ganesha finally comes into focus - an evolved elephant standing majestically in a sea of ice, a living testament to the new world order of Animalia.*

*With his trunk curled around a staff adorned with various artefacts, Ganesha surveys Rio with intelligence shining in his ancient eyes. His mammoth hands, evolved with nimble opposable thumbs, signal a peaceful intent. The initial encounter is a tense dance of unfamiliar beings, neither one sure of the other's intentions. Yet, it is this profound meeting with Ganesha that marks the beginning of Rio's entanglement with the complex societies of Animalia, forever shaping the course of her journey in this post-human era."*





# SETTING & TIMELINE

## *The Great Exodus of Humanity*

The year was 2087, a year remembered by historians and scholars as ‘The Year of Tears.’ After decades of escalating climate change, rapid industrialization, and reckless exploitation of natural resources, the Earth had reached a tipping point. Rising sea levels, triggered by the melting polar ice caps, submerged vast areas of land, displacing millions of humans and countless animal species. The relentless pursuit of power had led humanity to a precipice.

With about 40% of once occupied land now submerged beneath the rising sea levels, the planet’s climate underwent a dramatic shift. Clouds, dense and insulating, wrapped the globe in a chilling shroud, ushering in what was referred to as a ‘nuclear winter.’ A simultaneous polar shift further compounded the catastrophic conditions, rendering the planet nearly uninhabitable for most species.

Through this time of darkness, the strong and adaptable endured. While many species perished, others found ways to adapt and survive. Some animals had already shown signs of primitive communication, but decades of human experimentation, left behind in the chaotic exodus, sparked an unexpected acceleration in evolution. This forced genetic development caused a monumental shift in the planet’s biodiversity, birthing a new world order.

Faced with a world no longer suited for them, humans sought salvation among the stars, leaving behind a ravaged planet. As the dust settled and the skies finally began to clear, the new rulers of Earth emerged: the animals. These intelligent beings, inheriting a world scarred by humanity’s hubris, formed societies, claimed territories, and began rebuilding.

From the ruins of human civilization, two narratives about humanity emerged. Some animal societies revered the humans for the knowledge and tools they left behind, seeing them as benefactors who inadvertently sparked their rise to power. Others, however, viewed humans with contempt, understanding that their sudden evolutionary leap was an accidental byproduct of human self-interest. They knew that humanity, in its relentless pursuit of progress, had scarred the Earth and left them to deal with the consequences.

The story of humanity’s exodus and the rise of Animalia paints a haunting portrait of the consequences of unchecked ambition. As the animals navigate the path towards progress, they grapple with their complex legacy - bearing the scars of humanity’s failures while standing on the precipice of their own future.



# GEOGRAPHY



In 357 A.E. (After Exodus), the Earth, now known as Animalia, stands in stark contrast to its former self. A world reborn, reshaped by the trials of nature, and inherited by its most enduring inhabitants. When the ice caps melted centuries ago, it marked the beginning of a calamitous shift. The rapidly rising seas swallowed coastlines, cities, and entire countries, a torrential surge that obliterated human infrastructure and altered the face of the continents. The planet that once teemed with human life was now a vast, partially submerged world.

As the ice age set in, the polar ice caps began to regrow, now larger and more formidable than ever before. What was once the Arctic and Antarctic became colossal glacial masses, their icy reach extending farther than their predecessors. The global cooling that ensued created diverse biomes across Animalia, with sweltering climates near the equator giving way to frigid polar extremes.

Now, the planet is a mosaic of land and sea, ice and heat. Large parts of the former continents lie submerged, the remaining islands and landmasses becoming hotly contested territories. Strikingly, the animals that have come to dominate this new world are repeating the same territorial mistakes made by the Primes. Instead of a unified world, territories have been marked and societies built, often with disregard for other species, mirroring the discord that once plagued human civilization.

In this new age, the seas remain high, a constant reminder of the Earth's tumultuous past and the upheaval that gave rise to the present. Amidst the scars of the past and the struggles of the present, Animalia is a testament to the enduring will of life, its challenges shaping the societies that now vie for their place under its sun.



# SPECIES & SOCIETIES

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## Loxodont Society

Territory: Former African continent

**Key Traits:** Known for their wisdom and strategic capabilities, Loxodonts, led by the Elephants, have built a society that values peace and diplomacy over conflict. Their culture emphasizes collective memory, passing down knowledge through generations.

**Strengths:** Strong physical abilities and exceptional memory retention. They excel in diplomacy, and their terrain allows for a varied ecological system supporting many different species.



## Avian Ascendancy

Territory: Canopy cities of the former South American rainforests

**Key Traits:** The Avians, with their superior flight capabilities, dominate the treetop cities. They are masters of the skies and have built a society that celebrates freedom, exploration, and the pursuit of knowledge.

**Strengths:** Flight and wide field of vision give them unique tactical advantages. Their society is full of creative inventors and keen strategists.



## Bovine Brotherhood

Territory: Former North and Central America

**Key Traits:** The Bovines are nomadic, choosing to roam their vast territory rather than settle. Known for their resilience and communal bonds, they value strength in unity and share a deep respect for their lands.

**Strengths:** Adaptability to harsh climates and strong communal bonds. Their nomadic lifestyle makes it difficult for invaders to destabilize their society.





## Feline Sovereignty

**Territory:** Northern ice cap, a territory connecting former North America, Eastern Europe, and Asia

**Key Traits:** Solitary and highly adaptable, the Felines have thrived in an environment most others would find inhospitable. They value cunning, agility, and self-reliance.

**Strengths:** Agility, sharp senses, and ability to survive in harsh environments. They are experts in stealth and sabotage.



## Canid Confederation

**Territory:** Former Russia, Northern Asia

**Key Traits:** The Canids, known for their loyalty and teamwork, have built a culture that values community, cooperation, and respect for hierarchy.

**Strengths:** Excellent teamwork, coordination, and endurance. Their ability to work in packs makes them formidable on the battlefield.



## Serpentine Dominion

**Territory:** Former Australia

**Key Traits:** The Serpentine Dominion is known for its patience, stealth, and decisive strikes. They have a deep connection to the land and respect its deadly nature.

**Strengths:** Stealth, venomous attacks, and a strong understanding of their hazardous environment.

## The Fringe

Animalia, beyond its ruling societies, is teeming with an array of peripheral clans. These include less-evolved versions of dominant species or unique animals who live on society's fringes, facing prejudice yet nurturing their own vibrant subcultures. Also present is the Aquatic Diaspora, marine lifeforms that have adopted anthropomorphic traits, thriving in the ocean depths. Often overlooked by terrestrial societies and hunted by aerial ones, they nonetheless surface when necessary, driven by curiosity or the need to bridge global divides. Finally, the insect world continues to keep a low profile. Despite holding secrets potent enough to disrupt the existing world order, they prefer the shadows, biding their time.



# RELATIONS & CONFLICTS

The political tapestry of Animalia is as diverse as its inhabitants, characterized by shifting alliances, territorial disputes, and ideological divergences.

The Loxodont Society, with its might and wisdom, presides over the former African continent. While largely made up of warmer climates, the snowy south bears testament to the harshness of this world. As leaders of the most extensive alliance in Animalia, they share a close partnership with the Avian Ascendancy, who dominate the rainforest canopy cities of former South America. Despite being home to a plethora of species, the Ascendancy's influence remains unchallenged.

Across the globe, the roaming Bovine Brotherhood claim the territories of what were once North and Central America. Their nomadic lifestyle is dictated by the extreme cold weather conditions resulting from the new massive ice caps. Yet, their adaptation to such harsh climates is a testament to their resilience.

Further north, the Feline Sovereignty sits in isolation and power. Known to be the sole rulers and inhabitants of the Northern ice cap, their territory spans from former North America to Eastern Europe and Asia. Despite the biting cold, they stand unyielding, a stark contrast to the warming world below.

The Canid Confederation rules the vast territories of what were once Russia, northern India, and China. However, their hold diminishes the further south one travels, underscoring the challenges of maintaining influence in such a diverse landscape.

Meanwhile, the northern regions of former Africa are teeming with an

underground network of arachnids. Their existence remains largely ignored by the overworld, leaving them to carve out their niche in the dark.

Far from the rest, the Serpentine Dominion maintains a firm grip on the land formerly known as Australia. Left out of most diplomatic actions, their isolation mirrors the isolation of the continent they rule.

With the Loxodonts and their Avian partners at one end and the Feline Sovereignty and the Canid Confederation at the other, the power dynamics in Animalia are ever-shifting. Alliances form and dissolve as swiftly as the wind changes, while territorial disputes and ideological differences fuel conflicts. However, in a world that has seen the rise and fall of the Primes, the quest for harmony among differences remains the ultimate aspiration.

However, beneath the veneer of harmony in Animalia, darker realities lurk. Old world alliances cast long shadows, and the species known to have sided with the Primes are today burdened with the price of their past alliances. Dogs, cats, horses, mice, and monkeys—once companions of humans—are now stigmatized and exploited.

The Canid Confederation's dogs are bound in servitude, labouring under the weight of their ancestors' loyalties. Cats, despite the power held by the Feline Sovereignty, face similar circumstances in other territories, a stark contrast to their brethren in the icy north. Horses, once the symbols of freedom and strength, now toil in enforced labour across the Bovine Brotherhood's dominions, their might exploited in the relentless struggle for survival.

Likewise, mice and monkeys, small in stature but large in their historical significance, face adversity. Their contributions to human advancement in the Prime era, ranging from medical testing to space exploration, are now viewed as transgressions. Consequentially, they're often relegated to menial tasks, their once celebrated intelligence exploited for the barest of survival.

Thus, in Animalia, the wheel of history turns mercilessly, presenting a stark reminder: alliances, once formed, can reverberate through the ages, shifting from boon to burden as the tides of time change.





In the heart of Animalia, technology is seen through a different lens. Here, it's not merely a tool for convenience or a pathway to progress, but rather a delicate balance between necessity and preservation, innovation and restraint. This distinct philosophy is born from their historical lessons learned from the human era, defined by its catastrophic environmental consequences.

The societies of Animalia believe in the principle of minimal disturbance. Their goal is not to conquer and manipulate their surroundings, but to find harmony within it. This is visible in their adaptations of human technology, where devices and structures are repurposed, not just for their utility, but for their compatibility with the natural world.

Ruined skyscrapers become vertical forests, fallen satellites turn into weather prediction tools, and even old human prosthetics find new life enhancing animal capabilities.

But the philosophy extends far beyond mere repurposing. It's deeply ingrained in the very fabric of their technological development.

Alongside these remnants of the old world, you'll find purely animal inventions. The Loxodont Society, for instance, have leveraged their formidable memory and trunk dexterity to create intricate memory maps, inscribing them on large tablets for future generations. The Avian Ascendancy, with their gifted sight and aerial perspective, use complex sun and star patterns for navigation, aided by their home-made telescopes.

The subject of weaponry reflects this blend of old and new as well. Canid Confederation utilizes repurposed human firearms, modified to suit their

physiology, while the Feline Sovereignty, using their natural stealth and agility, specialize in ambush tactics and short, sharp weapons crafted from ice and bone. The Bovine Brotherhood employs strength and size, turning their horns into intimidating weapons and using seismic communication to coordinate attacks.

One of the most fascinating developments is the use of bio-luminescent communication by the Aquatic Diaspora. By manipulating their natural light-producing abilities, they've created a mesmerizing, efficient mode of underwater communication, a testament to innovation borne of necessity.

Innovation in Animalia is not fueled by the desire for comfort or convenience. Instead, it is propelled by a necessity that respects and upholds the environment. This philosophy often comes at the expense of certain freedoms and conveniences that human society took for granted.

However, this conscious choice of environmental protection over unbounded progress is not without its internal conflicts. The animal societies grapple with issues around equity, resource distribution, and the moral implications of their strict laws. For instance, the restriction on the use of certain technologies that might harm their ecosystem, like human-era combustion engines, may limit the mobility of some societies, leading to contention and friction.

In essence, technology in Animalia symbolizes a broader ideological struggle: a question of how to navigate the course of progress while carrying the burden of the past. It is a world that strives to learn from its history while grappling with its present, forever seeking a balance between survival and sustainability.





*“You explore the stars in search for meaning, when the meaning has been right here all along. Our world is full of magic. If only you take the time to look.”*

*- Morla, 400 year old Turtle/Oracle*