

MORTALITY

TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSCENDENCE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btbbE-w72gY&t=457s>

In his science-fiction film *Prometheus* (2012), director Ridley Scott poses the question of technology's relationship to human mortality. In this text, an entrepreneurial visionary begins to imply that technology is superior to mortality, provocatively stating humanity is "god now."

Peter Wayland speaks:

T.E. Lawrence, eponymously from Arabia but very much an Englishman, favored pinching a burning match between his fingers to put it out. When asked by his colleague, William Potter, to reveal his trick, how he so effectively extinguished the flame without hurting himself whatsoever, Lawrence just smiled and said, "the trick, Mr. Potter, is not minding it hurts."

The fire that danced at the end of that match was a gift from the titan Prometheus, a gift that he stole from the gods who were terrified of what we might do with it were it to fall into our hairy little paws. When Prometheus was caught and brought to justice for his theft, the gods, you might say they overreacted a little. The poor man was tied to a rock as an eagle ripped through his belly and ate his liver over and over, day after day, ad infinitum. All because he gave us fire, our first true piece of technology. Fire. Such a very long time ago. Which begs the question, what have we done? 100,000 B.C., stone tools. 4,000 B.C., the wheel. 800 B.C., the sundial. Ninth century A.D., gunpowder. It was a game changer, that one. 1441, the printing press, only slightly less impactful. Nineteenth century, the steam engine, railway, eureka the light bulb. Twentieth century, the automobile, television, nuclear weapons, space craft, Internet. Twenty-first century, bio-tech, nano-tech, fusion and fission and m-theory. And that was just the first decade.

We are now three months into the year of our Lord, 2023. At this moment in our civilization, we are on the verge of terraforming planets undiscovered just a decade ago. We have identified the genetic chain of events behind 98% of cancer, a chain we have broken.... We can create cybernetic individuals who in just a few short years will be completely indistinguishable from us. Which leads to an obvious conclusion. We are the god now.

I haven't been struck down. I take that to mean I'm right.

We wield incredible power. The power to transform, to destroy, and to create again. The question, of course, before us what the hell are we supposed to do with this power? Or more importantly, one should ask what are we allowed to do with this power? The answer to that, my friends, is nothing. Rules, restrictions, laws, ethical guidelines. All but forbidding us from moving forward. But where were the ethics during the Arabian Conflicts? Why are rules forbidding us from feeding impoverished cultures? How is there a law that states if we build a man from wires and metal, a man who will never grow old, who will never feel the heat of a star or the cold of the moon? How is the creation of such an incredible individual considered unnatural? The answer to all these questions is simple. These rules exist because the people who created them were afraid of what would happen if they didn't. Well, I am not afraid!

For those of you who know me, you will be aware by now that my ambition is unlimited. You know that I will settle for nothing short of greatness. Or I will die trying. For those of you who do not yet know me, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Peter Weyland, and if you indulge me, I'd like to change the world.