

*Q: Why is there a violin floating in space?*

*A:* AI-6W-1057-968M/Vyncent, the fictional **Vyncent**, leading male protagonist of the novelistic aspect of this history of the future, is an ‘antique musician’—a concert violinist, recitalist, and sometimes concertmeister with the Fleet Philharmonic. His major role in the Galactic Exodus of this period (the Pre-Azores Era) is to play and teach and thus help to preserve the music of the ‘Lost World.’ His extraordinary talent has earned him initiation into the Society of Philharmonians, making him one of the youngest transferentials on record.

Transferentials are rare: a group to which is granted the right (though seldom used) to suspended animation. At any point in their lives, they may elect to leave their present era and ‘sub-sleep’ forward into a relatively distant future—say a century or two, or as many as a dozen. Extending beyond a millennium, however, is risky, even using the most advanced of hibernaculae. Suspended animation is seldom chosen, because anyone who is rewarded with such an opportunity is invariably successful, highly respected, and living a quite fulfilling life in the present. The right moment never seems to arrive for taking leave of one’s ‘home-time’ and saying good-bye forever to family and friends in favor of dozing through time and awakening in an uncertain future—alone. There are exceptions, of course, as with every rule, and for one reason or another there are always a few ‘sub-sleepers’ at each of the twelve ‘eikodromes’ (world-ships), and, even rarer, an active Elder (re-animated transferential) or two from a past age (such as Mythokrates).

Vyncent’s secondary responsibility to this civilization in transit is that of ‘Watcher.’ As a junior reserve officer in UIMSACA (Ultra-Intelligent Mind-Simulator Access Control Agency), he randomly pulls duty as Officer of the Period in the control center of Eikodrome VI, MINERVA, where he monitors the activity of the UIM[S] (Ultra-Intelligent Mind-Simulator) that regulates the myriad systems of this rolling starship-city.

The very real **Vincent**, aka, **Skowronski**, a very dear old friend of mine and violinist of the first rank, was the inspiration behind ‘Vyncent,’ the leading male character of this tale. While any conversation or situation described in this book that might in any way correspond to his actual life and/or relationships is purely coincidental and unintentional, his very real music is something special to behold. As he is recognized as ‘one of the best violinists in America,’ I shall hereby shamelessly promote his work. I thought you ought to have an opportunity to hear him. He has several CDs available that come highly recommended. I have taken the liberty to include a link to his personal website, to which you will be taken by clicking on his album cover at the bottom of this page: ‘Skowronski Plays.’ From there, you will be directed to the CDBaby Site, where his recordings are actually on sale. You will find on the album, *Skowronski Plays! Avec et Sans* “Live in Concert” (among other jewels) a live recording of Ravel’s *Pavane for a Deceased Princess*—the work most prominently mentioned in the book, *COUNTERDANCE OF THE CYBERGODS*, and used by the fictitious Vyncent in a very special performance (see *Tableau IV, Reprise*; subchapter, ‘Synthesis and Pavane.’). On the album pictured (chosen here for the picture, rather than the content) is a great recording of the Cèsar Franck *Sonata in A*, and a rare encounter with Saint-Saëns’ *Sonata in D-minor*. But there are many other things from which to choose, and you can’t really go wrong.

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