

CLONER HUMANITY

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DEDICATION

For Emma Lorant, whose vision made this possible.

Emma Lorant was the pseudonym of my sister Madeleine Warburg (1955-2015), and my mother Tessa Lorant Warburg (1929-2024).

Draft concepts for this sequel to their work “Cloner” were drafted by Tessa prior to her death and provided a basis for this story.

It is in honour of their lives well lived and loved.

It is also dedicated to my one true clone, my identical twin Colin Warburg, for whom I am happy to be an organ donor should the need arise.

And for all those who choose autonomy over comfortable control.

CONTENT WARNING

This novel contains mature themes including:

Adult sexual content and relationships

Discussions of social control and systematic oppression

Themes of psychological conditioning and behavioural modification

Medical experimentation and ethical dilemmas

Political resistance and social transformation

Some violence in historical context

This book is intended for mature readers.

Survivors of violence may find portions of this narrative particularly challenging.

Reader discretion is advised.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

CLONER—HUMANITY explores themes of personal autonomy, authentic relationships, and social transformation through the lens of speculative fiction. While set in an imagined society, the novel examines universal questions about the balance between individual freedom and collective security, the nature of authentic human connection, and the courage required to challenge established systems.

This story is ultimately about the fundamental rights of conscious beings to determine their own fate, even when asserting that autonomy requires tremendous personal risk and sacrifice.

PROLOGUE: THE PERFECT MATCH

The boy lay still on the medical table, chest rising and falling in peaceful sleep. Twelve years old. Brown hair, serious expression even in sedation. Small for his age. Tubes and wires monitored every vital sign.

“Subject 47-D ready for manifestation induction,” the nurse reported, checking his clipboard. “All monitoring systems active. Sedation levels optimal.”

Dr Hendricks observed from behind the glass partition. “Legal status confirmed?”

“Yes, documentation complete: voluntary research participant, State Medical Authority guardian.”

“Why such deep sedation?” a new nurse asked a technician quietly.

“Standard protocol to keep the boy from seeing his manifestation expire.”

“Also eliminates interference—originals sometimes attempt to intervene when they see their manifestations conscious and talking.”

“I’ve wondered about the after-effects if the children see some of what’s happening.”

“Exactly. Much cleaner when the primary subject has no memory of the process.”

Hendricks nodded approvingly. “The psychiatric evaluations showed significant improvement once we implemented pre-manifestation sedation. Proceed.”

The sedated boy stirred slightly as the manifestation began. A shimmer in the air beside the table. Reality bending. Then—two identical boys where there had been one.

The duplicate’s eyes fluttered open despite the sedation. Alert. Aware. Confused.

“Where... where am I?” the manifestation whispered.

Its vitals appeared on monitoring screens. Heart rate elevated. Blood pressure rising. Neural activity showing distress patterns.

The medical team exchanged glances but said nothing as they provided further sedation. Standard protocol. No interaction with manifestations beyond medical necessity. Sedation to reduce trauma.

“Manifestation awareness confirmed,” Hendricks noted. “Begin countdown protocol.”

“Time of manifestation: 14:23. Estimated viability: forty-seven minutes.”

“Genetic compatibility confirmed,” the technician noted, scanning each boy with a handheld device. “Ninety-four percent match to the recipient. Exceptional results for Type-C classification.”

Thirty minutes later, the changes began.

The manifestation’s breathing became laboured. Skin pale. Cardiac rhythms irregular.

“Liver failure initiating,” the lead technician announced. “Proceeding according to predictive models.”

The boy—the duplicate—woke from the sedation, looked around, then directly at the observation window, as if he could see through the one-way glass. “Please,” he mouthed. “Help me.”

Hendricks made a note on his tablet. “Manifestations show consistent awareness patterns until final stages. Remarkable neurological persistence.”

“More sedation?”

“Negative. We want clear organ function data during natural decline.”

The manifestation’s vitals continued deteriorating. Heart rate climbing, then dropping. Respiratory distress increasing.

“Please,” the boy whispered again, though no one in the room acknowledged him. “Please help me. I’m dying, aren’t I? I don’t want to die.”

“Eighteen minutes remaining,” the technician reported, eyes firmly on his device. “Kidney function optimal. Heart showing stress but viable. Liver developing expected complications.”

In the adjacent bed, the original boy slept on, unaware that three feet from him, his twin was dying.

“Prepare surgical team,” Hendricks ordered. “We’ll want the kidney the moment viability ends.”

The flatline alarm sounded at 15:16.

“Time of natural expiration confirmed,” the technician noted. “Fifty-three minutes post-manifestation. Within normal parameters.”

The kidney was remarkable.

Dr Hendricks held the organ in his gloved hands, studying it.

“Outstanding specimen,” he noted. “These clone-derived organs continue to exceed expectations.”

Through the window, he could see the manifestation's body being wheeled toward the disposal unit. "Just biological waste now," he said under his breath.

"Transport to Theatre 3," Hendricks instructed. "Mr Wexford is prepped and ready."

Harold Wexford, CEO of three pharmaceutical companies, lay unconscious on the operating table. Net worth approaching nine figures. Currently dying of kidney failure.

Soon to be living with a healthy new organ.

"Patient is stable," the anaesthesiologist reported. "Ready for transplant."

Hendricks positioned the kidney in the cavity. Perfect fit. Perfect colour. Perfect function.

"Any concerns about organ viability?" his surgical assistant asked.

"None whatsoever. As usual, these clone-derived organs show minimal rejection risk. Genetic compatibility is almost perfect."

The kidney pulsed to life. Pink and healthy. Worth every penny of the half-million fee.

"How long until full recovery?" someone asked.

"Six weeks. Mr Wexford will have better kidney function than most twenty-year-olds."

"Remarkable."

"Indeed. And completely ethical. No living donors harmed. No medical interventions denied to save lives. The manifestations die naturally—we simply maximize the medical value of the biological material."

The surgical team worked efficiently, connecting vessels and ensuring proper organ integration.

In a recovery room down the hall, the original boy was beginning to stir from sedation. A different nurse sat nearby with a clipboard and recording device.

"Subject 47-D awakening from post-manifestation sedation," the technician noted. "Initiating standard debrief protocol."

The boy's eyes fluttered open, confused and groggy.

"Where am I?" he whispered.

"You're in recovery. The procedure went very well. How do you feel?"

"Tired. Was I... did something happen?"

“You participated in a routine manifestation study. Nothing to worry about. Some subjects experience temporary disorientation.”

The boy tried to remember. Fragments of dreams. Shadows at the edge of consciousness. “Did I manifest?”

“The session was successful. You provided an excellent addition to our medical knowledge.”

“I don’t remember—”

“That’s normal. The sedation can affect short-term memory formation. It’s actually beneficial—it reduces any potential psychological stress you might otherwise feel from the research procedures.”

The boy nodded hesitantly. “When can I go home?”

“Tomorrow morning, as scheduled. Your participation period is nearly complete.”

What the nurse didn’t mention: the boy was scheduled for another manifestation in eighteen hours. The sedation protocol would ensure he remembered nothing of this conversation either.

“Am I helping with the research?”

“Very much so. Your contributions are making a real difference in medical science.”

The boy smiled weakly and closed his eyes, unaware that his twin had died. Unaware that part of himself now lived inside a pharmaceutical CEO.

Unaware that the “medical research” was a carefully designed system to harvest organs from his conscious clones while protecting him from the psychological trauma of witnessing their deaths.

“Close him up,” Hendricks instructed back in the operating theatre, stepping back from the successful transplant.

Through the operating room windows, dawn was breaking over Birmingham. Another day. Another life saved through cutting-edge medical technology.

Another manifestation would die before sunset.

Just like they always did.

The future of medicine had arrived.

And it was perfectly legal.

CHAPTER 1: THREE YEARS OF GHOSTS

The Isle of Islay had given them exactly what Lisa had hoped for—invisibility and distance from the memory of James, her lost Jiminy.

Their stone cottage sat tucked into a fold of the Bowmore, where morning mist rolled off Loch Indaal and sheep wandered the ancient moorland like white ghosts. But no ghost haunted Lisa more than the memory of the boy who had lived for just two years, and her twin girls who never drew breath. All murdered by the company now bankrupted by Alec's careful accounting, though he'd never admit to his quiet sabotage.

Alec flew to Glasgow twice a week for Laplow Distillery, leaving Mondays and Fridays for remote work from their converted barn office. "Perfect setup," he'd said when they'd first viewed the property. "Close enough to civilization, far enough away to breathe."

If only he knew how much breathing room she really needed. How much space would it take to forget a two-year-old crying out for "Daddy" in Jiminy's final moments on the Tor, while Lisa lay sedated in a Bristol hospital bed, unable to hold her son as he died? Her silent, frozen horror as she learned she'd lost her tiny unborn twin girls after the lorry struck.

Lisa watched five-year-old Janus trudge up the hill path from the village school, his small frame struggling with an oversized backpack, favouring his left leg slightly. The leg that had been broken in the accident on the Tor that had taken Jiminy from them three years ago. The leg with the plastic pin that should have been removed after six months but had been forgotten in the chaos of their escape to Scotland.

Behind him, seven-year-old Sebastian kicked at stones on the path, his school bag slung carelessly over one shoulder. Sebastian had grown tall in their years on Islay, all legs and elbows, but he still had the careful way of moving that came from being the big brother who'd learned to watch for impossible dangers.

Holding his hand, as always, was Jeffrey—identical in every way except for the small scar above his left eyebrow from a childhood tumble. Jeffrey, who had arrived three minutes after Janus, who shared his twin's serious dark eyes and thoughtful manner, but who somehow always knew when Janus was troubled before Janus himself realised it.

Three years without the strange episodes. Three years without Janus suddenly going tense, eyes distant, whispering about things that hadn't

happened yet. Three years without Sebastian asking why Jiminy had to die, why they couldn't save him.

"How was school?" she called from the kitchen window.

"Fine," Sebastian answered first, as he always did. "That leg was bothering Janus again during football."

"I felt it too," Jeffrey added quietly, still holding his twin's hand. "Like a deep ache. Is that normal for twins?"

"I can speak for myself," Janus protested mildly, dropping his bag. "It's just growing pains, I think. Though..." He paused, that distant look crossing his face that Lisa had learned to fear. "Though something feels different. Like something's trying to wake up."

Lisa's chest tightened. Those words, that expression—it was how Janus had looked in the days before Jiminy appeared. Before everything went wrong.

Jeffrey squeezed his twin's hand tighter. "I feel it too, Jan. Like pressure building."

"Maybe we should have Dr MacLeod take a look," Lisa suggested, forcing herself back to the present.

"Yeah, maybe. Can we eat? I'm starving."

Inside, both twins raided the refrigerator with the enthusiasm only five-year-olds could muster, while Lisa prepared dinner. She watched them move in their uncanny synchronization—Jeffrey reaching for the milk just as Janus thought about wanting it, Janus handing Jeffrey the biscuit tin before Jeffrey asked. They'd always been like that; from the moment Jeffrey had opened his eyes in the hospital three minutes after his twin.

The perfect family. Two healthy boys, one protective older brother, parents who loved them. Everything she'd dreamed of after losing the girls.

Everything built on the grave of poor Jiminy, who'd lived two full years before the accident took him away.

"Mum," Janus said suddenly, settling at the kitchen table with Jeffrey beside him, "I had the dream again. About the brother we lost."

Sebastian looked up sharply. This was dangerous territory they rarely discussed.

Lisa's hands stilled on the vegetable peeler. "What dream?"

"The one where there were four of us. Me and Jeffrey and Sebastian... and another boy. A little one who looked like us." Janus furrowed his brow in concentration. "But sad. Like he was sorry about something."

Jeffrey nodded solemnly. "I dream about him too. He feels... familiar. Like family."

Lisa's breath caught. Neither twin should remember Jiminy—they'd been barely two when he died. But Janus had always been different, prone to knowing things he shouldn't know, seeing possibilities that hadn't happened yet.

"A brother we lost," Sebastian said carefully, setting down his fork. "You mean Jiminy."

Both twins looked at him with sudden focus. "Jiminy?" Jeffrey asked.

"Our baby brother. He died when you were very small. In an accident on the Tor."

Lisa felt the careful walls of protection crumbling. "Sebastian, we agreed—"

"They're five now, Mum. Old enough to know about Jiminy. And if Janus is having the dreams again..." Sebastian's voice held a weight beyond his seven years. "Maybe it's time they remembered."

"Remembered what?" Janus asked, but his eyes were already distant, that strange knowing look that meant he was seeing something beyond the present moment.

"Jiminy lived with us for two years after you were born," Sebastian explained gently. "He was your little twin. But he was real. He was our brother."

Janus tightened his grip on Jeffrey's hand. "I can almost see him. Dark hair like ours. But scared. Always scared."

Lisa remembered it all. Jiminy's two precious years of life. His first steps, his babbling words, the way he'd clung to Jeffrey's hand and followed Janus everywhere. His bright curiosity about the world, his joy in simple things like puddles and butterflies.

Until Alec had taken the boys for a walk on the Tor, and only two had come home alive.

"He fell," Janus whispered suddenly, his eyes now completely unfocused. "But not by accident. Someone pushed him. Someone who meant to push me."

Lisa nearly dropped the peeler. Janus had been unconscious when Jiminy died, his leg shattered from his own fall. He couldn't possibly know that Jiminy had been pushed.

Unless his gift for seeing was stronger than she'd realised.

“Janus—” she started.

“There was supposed to be another baby too,” he continued in that distant voice. “Two more. Girls. But they died before they could be born. When the lorry tried to kill us.”

The kitchen went completely silent.

Lisa sank into a chair, the weight of buried grief crushing down on her. Her twin daughters, lost at six months when Flaxton’s people had tried to eliminate her and Janus. The accident that had been no accident, the truck that had aimed directly for her pregnant belly.

“How can you possibly know that?” she whispered.

Janus blinked, his eyes focusing back on the present. “I don’t know. I just... see things sometimes. Things that happened. Things that might happen.” He looked at her with too much understanding for a five-year-old. “You still miss them, don’t you? The girls.”

Jeffrey reached across the table to touch her hand. “We do too. Even though we never met them.”

“That’s impossible,” Lisa said, but her voice broke on the words.

“Is it?” Sebastian asked quietly. “Janus always knows things he shouldn’t. And Jeffrey always knows what Janus is feeling. Maybe some connections last past dying.”

That evening, after all three boys had gone to bed, Lisa sat in the living room with her knitting, listening for any sounds from upstairs. Sebastian’s room was quiet—he’d grown into the steady, dependable older brother who helped keep the family’s impossible secrets.

But from the twins’ room came the soft sounds of whispered conversation.

“Do you think we’re ready?” Jeffrey’s voice, barely audible.

“Not yet,” Janus replied. “But soon. When we go back to Somerset. When the pin comes out. I think it will be different without the pin...”

“Will he come back? Jiminy?”

“Someone will come. Maybe not Jiminy, but someone. And this time, I don’t think we’ll lose him.”

“How do you know?”

“Because I can sort of see it. Like a path through the fog. It’s going to hurt, but it’s going to be worth it.”

Lisa’s knitting needles stilled in her hands.

Alec emerged from his home office, stretching and yawning. “Long day. How are the boys?”

“Fine. Sebastian’s fine. The twins are...” She searched for words. “They’re starting to remember things.”

“What kind of things?”

Lisa chose her words carefully. “Jiminy. The accident. What we lost.”

Alec’s face grew sombre. “Maybe it’s time. They’re old enough now to understand that sometimes terrible things happen to good people.”

If only it were that simple. If only Jiminy’s death had been just a tragic accident, instead of part of a pattern that might soon begin again.

“I think we should make an appointment with Dr MacLeod for Janus, about his leg,” she said finally.

“The pin’s probably ready to come out. Should have been removed months ago, really. We just got so caught up in the move...”

Lisa forced herself to keep knitting. Normal stitches. Normal conversation about normal medical care for their son.

But if the pin was removed, would the strange episodes return? Would Janus start having more than just dreams and premonitions?

Would they lose another child to forces they didn’t understand?

“I suppose we’ll see what the doctor says,” she managed.

Outside, the ancient hills of Islay stood silent under starlight, keeping their secrets as they had for millennia. But Lisa’s secrets felt heavier tonight, weighted by the knowledge that her sons remembered more than they should, knew more than was possible.

And that somewhere in the darkness of memory, Jiminy waited for his story to be told. Along with her daughters, her lost girls who had never had the chance to draw breath, but who somehow lived on in the impossible visions Janus saw.

Later, lying awake beside Alec’s sleeping form, Lisa stared at the ceiling and listened to the wind across the moor. Three years of peace. Three years of the normal life she’d dreamed of giving her surviving children.

But children’s bodies grew. Medical hardware became obsolete. And memories, even suppressed ones, had a way of surfacing when the time was right.

In the early hours of the morning, she crept to the twins’ door and peered through the gap.

Both boys were sleeping, but they were holding hands across the space between their beds. And in the moonlight, Lisa could swear she saw the shadow of a third small figure curled up beside them.

Jiminy, she thought. Still watching over his brothers. Still part of their family, even in death.

Just as her daughters were still part of her, carried in the secret chambers of her heart where guilt and love intertwined like DNA strands, creating something that was both beautiful and terrible.

Something that would soon demand to be born again.