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Very best wishes,

The Tor UK team & our authors

Caroline Asher

10/7/59–24/1/14

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You told me to never stop writing just some days before you died.

I'm sorry my love but I did stop.

I tried to forget everything, but now I am remembering.

War Factory (Transformation Book 2)

Composer Steve Buick has created an album of original music inspired by *War Factory*. This background music has been designed to enhance the reading experience, to be enjoyed while reading the book itself. Using long, deeply dark soundscape layers – to complement the story's atmosphere – he aims to add another dimension to War Factory (Transformation Book 2) reading without distracting from War Factory (Transformation Book 2) the action. The music can accompany any section of the book and is available as an MP3 album from Amazon, iTunes and other digital music stores worldwide. Please search for 'Original Music for Neal Asher's War Factory' and you can also find out more at [www.evokescape.com](http://www.evokescape.com).

## Cast of Characters

### **Penny Royal (the Black AI)**

An artificial intelligence constructed in Factory Station Room 101, during the Polity war against the Prador. Its crystal mind was faulty, burdened with emotions it could not encompass when it was hurled into the heat War Factory (Transformation Book 2) of battle. Running War Factory (Transformation Book 2) the destroyer that it named *Puling Child*, it fought and survived, then annihilated eight thousand troops on its own side before going AWOL. It changed into something dark then – War Factory (Transformation Book 2) a swarm robot whose integrated form was like a giant sea urchin. Blacklisted by the Polity for ensuing atrocities, it based itself in the Graveyard – a borderland created between the Polity and the Prador Kingdom after the war. There it continued its evil games, offering transformations for the right price, but ones that were never good for the recipients. It was nearly destroyed in a deal that went wrong. Later restored to function by the scorpion war drone Amistad, it apparently became a good AI . . . But now the black AI is on the move again, its plans obscure and its actions often devastating. It is regarded by the Polity as a paradigm-changing threat.

War Factory (Transformation Book 2)

### **Thorvald Spear**

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Resurrected from a War Factory (Transformation Book 2) recording of his own mind, a hundred years after the war, he is the only survivor of the eight thousand troops slaughtered by Penny Royal on the planet Panarchia. He resolved to have his revenge on the AI and to that end sought out its old destroyer, whose location he had learned during the war. War Factory (Transformation Book 2) Taking command of it, he set out in search of the rogue AI. During this search he discovered that his very desire for War Factory (Transformation Book 2) vengeance had been created by Penny Royal, for it had tampered with his memories. Nevertheless his quest is reinforced by an artefact War Factory (Transformation Book 2) he found aboard the destroyer – one of Penny Royal's spines. It is downloading memories of its victims into his mind. He now believes he is the instrument the AI, created for its own destruction.

## **Riss**

An assassin drone and terror weapon. War Factory (Transformation Book 2) Made in Room 101 in the shape of a prador parasite which has a passing resemblance to a cobra, her purpose was to inject prador with parasite eggs, spreading infection and terror amidst them. The end of the war meant she lost her purpose for being and, while searching for a new purpose, lost even more when she encountered Penny Royal. Thorvald Spear found her somnolent and bereft near the AI's home base in the Graveyard. She now accompanies him in his quest for vengeance.

## **Sverl**

A prador who disagreed with the new king's decision to make peace with the Polity. He went renegade and hid out with other prador of similar mind in the Graveyard. He could not understand how it was possible that the prador had started to lose against weak humans and their detestable AIs. He sought understanding of this conundrum from Penny Royal, but got more than he bargained for. Penny Royal initiated his transformation into a grotesque amalgam of prador, human and AI, so he could better understand each. Now he seeks some resolution to his situation and feels only the black AI can provide it.

## **Cvorn**

Another prador who joined Sverl in exile. Upon discovering Sverl's transformation, he allied with other prador to attack him. During a planetary battle he put the shell people of that world – humans who are worshipfully trying to turn themselves into prador – in danger. The attempt failed and Cvorn fled, but he still remains a danger to Sverl and the shell people Sverl has chosen to protect.

## **Captain Blite**

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A trader whose business edges into illegality. During a deal that turned sour he encountered Penny Royal, who killed his crew. His second encounter with the AI was when it used him and his ship as an escape from the world of Masada. With his ship under the control of the black AI, Blite has witnessed its obscure business War Factory (Transformation Book 2) in the Graveyard and elsewhere and come to realize that it may be correcting past wrongs. After recognizing this, he and his crew were abandoned again on Masada, but the advanced technology left aboard their ship (not to mention their first-hand knowledge of Penny Royal) means they are now of great interest to the Polity AIs. Blite also feels in his gut that his business with Penny Royal is not yet done . . .

## Glossary

**Atheter** One of the millions of long-dead races, recently revived. It was discovered that the gableducks of War Factory (Transformation Book 2) the planet Masada were the devolved descendants of the Atheter. This race chose to sacrifice its civilization and intelligence War Factory (Transformation Book 2) to escape the millennia of wars resulting from its discovery of Jain technology.

**Augmented** To be 'augmented' is to have taken advantage of one or more of the many available cybernetic devices, mechanical additions and, distinctly, cerebral augmentations. War Factory (Transformation Book 2) In the last case we have, of course, the ubiquitous 'aug' and such back-formations as 'auged', 'auging-in', and the execrable 'all auged War Factory (Transformation Book 2) up'. But it does not stop there: the word 'aug' has now become confused with auger and augur – which is understandable considering the way an aug connects and the information that then becomes available. So now you can 'auger' information from the AI net, and a prediction made by an aug prognostic subprogram can be called an augury.

– From 'Quince Guide' compiled by humans.

**First- and Second-Children** Chemically maintained in adolescence at the end of growth spurts, and consequently shed War Factory (Transformation Book 2) their carapaces on their way to adulthood.

**Golem** Androids produced by a company Cybercorp – a ceramal chassis usually War Factory (Transformation Book 2) enclosed in a syntheflesh and syntheskin outer layer. These humanoid robots are War Factory (Transformation Book 2) very tough, fast and, War Factory (Transformation Book 2) since they possess AI, very smart.

**Haiman** An amalgam of human and AI.

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**Hooder.** A creature like a giant centipede of the planet Masada. War Factory (Transformation Book 2) It was discovered that they were the devolved descendants of biomech war machines created by the Atheter throughout their millennia of civil wars.

**Jain technology**A technology spanning all scientific disciplines. Created by one of the dead races – the Jain – its sum purpose is to spread through civilizations and annihilate them.

**Nanosuite** A suite of nano-machines most human beings have inside them. These self-propagating machines act as a secondary immune system, repairing and adjusting the body. Each suite can be adjusted to suit the individual and his or her circumstances.

**Nascuff** A device that can externally adjust a person's nanosuite to suit their sexual inclination. It is mainly worn War Factory (Transformation Book 2) to advertise sexual availability or otherwise. When the libido of the one wearing it is shut down the cuff is red. When they are sexually active it is blue.

**Polity** A human/AI dominion extending across many star systems, occupying a spherical space spanning the thickness of the galaxy and centred on Earth. It is ruled over by the AIs who took control of human affairs in what has been called, because of its very low casualty rate, the Quiet War. The top AI is called Earth Central and resides in a building on the shore of Lake Geneva, while planetary AIs, lower down in the hierarchy, rule over other worlds. The Polity is a highly technical civilization but its weakness was its reliance on travel by 'runcible'- instantaneous matter transmission gates. This weakness was exploited by the prador.

**Prador.** A highly xenophobic race of giant crablike aliens ruled by a king and his family. Hostility is implicit in their biology and, upon encountering the Polity, they immediately attacked it. Their advantage in this war was that they did not use runcibles (such devices needed War Factory (Transformation Book 2) the intelligence of AIs to control them and the prador are also hostile to any form War Factory (Transformation Book 2) of artificial intelligence) and as a result had developed their spaceship technology, and the metallurgy involved, beyond that of the Polity. They attacked with near-indestructible ships, but in the end the humans and AIs adapted and in their war factories out-manufactured the prador and began to win. They did not complete the victory, however, because the old king was usurped and the new king made an uneasy peace with the Polity.

**Shell people** a group of cultist War Factory (Transformation Book 2) humans whose admiration of the prador is such that they are trying to alter themselves surgically to become prador.

**Sparkind** The War Factory (Transformation Book 2) Sparkind are an elite ECS military force, though with a name deriving from the Spartans (citizens of an ancient Greek city who were noted for their military prowess, austerity and discipline), they cannot trace their ancestry back so far. Sparkind are the direct descendants of the Special Forces that came into being during the Earth-bound wars towards the end of the second millennium: the Special Boat War Factory (Transformation Book 2) Service, the Special Air Service, Navy SEALs and the like.

– From 'Quince Guide' compiled by humans.

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**The Technician** The last of the original hooder war machines. Having existed on Masada for two million years in a state of mental somnolence, it recently woke up but was apparently killed by a machine made by the Atheter to wipe out their own civilization.

**USER:** Underspace Interference Emitter. This device disrupts U-space by oscillating a singularity through a runcible gate. It is used to push ships out of U-space into the real, or realspace.

**U-space** Underspace is the continuum spaceships enter (or U-jump into), rather like submarines submerging, to travel faster than light. It is also the continuum that can be crossed by using runcible gates, making travel between worlds linked by such gates all but instantaneous.

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