

## Excerpt Chapter I – ‘Brave New World’ – Aldous Huxley (1932)

Tall and rather thin but upright, the Director advanced into the room. He had a long chin and big, rather prominent teeth, just covered, when he was not talking, by his full, floridly curved lips. Old, young? Thirty? fifty? fifty-five? It was hard to say. And anyhow the question didn't arise; in this year of stability, a.f. 632, it didn't occur to you to ask it.

5 ‘I shall begin at the beginning,’ said the DHC, and the more zealous students recorded his intention in their note-books: *Begin at the beginning*. ‘These,’ he waved his hand, ‘are the incubators.’ And opening an insulated door he showed them racks upon racks of numbered test-tubes. ‘The week’s supply of ova. Kept,’ he explained, ‘at blood heat; whereas the male gametes,’ and here he opened another door, ‘they have to be kept at thirty-five instead of thirty-seven. Full blood heat sterilizes.’ Rams wrapped in thermogene beget no lambs.

10 Still leaning against the incubators he gave them, while the pencils scurried illegibly across the pages, a brief description of the modern fertilizing process; spoke first, of course, of its surgical introduction — ‘the operation undergone voluntarily for the good of Society, not to mention the fact that it carries a bonus amounting to six months’ salary’; continued with 15 some account of the technique for preserving the excised ovary alive and actively developing; passed on to a consideration of optimum temperature, salinity, viscosity; referred to the liquor in which the detached and ripened eggs were kept; and, leading his charges to the work tables, actually showed them how the liquor was drawn off from the test-tubes; how 20 it was let out drop by drop on to the specially warmed slides of the microscopes; how the eggs which it contained were inspected for abnormalities, counted and transferred to a porous receptacle; how (and he now took them to watch the operation) this receptacle was immersed 25 in a warm bouillon containing free-swimming spermatozoa — at a minimum concentration of one hundred thousand per cubic centimetre, he insisted; and how, after ten minutes, the container was lifted out of the liquor and its contents re-examined; how, if any of the eggs remained unfertilized, it was again immersed, and, if necessary, yet again; how the fertilized ova went back to the incubators; where the Alphas and Betas remained until definitely 30 bottled; while the Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons were brought out again, after only thirty-six hours, to undergo Bokanovsky’s Process.

35 ‘Bokanovsky’s Process,’ repeated the Director, and the students underlined the words in their little note-books.

40 One egg, one embryo, one adult — normality. But a bokanovskified egg will bud, will proliferate, will divide. From eight to ninety-six buds, and every bud will grow into a perfectly formed embryo, and every embryo into a full-sized adult. Making ninety-six human beings grow where only one grew before. Progress.