

Whatever, principal characters throughout the novel travel backward and forward through time as if geography, and time's arrow, were no object.

Another of SL's technologists is a wearable augmented reality interface he imaginatively dubs the "visor." Taking the form of a thin strip of translucent (sometimes opaque) plastic worn stretched across the eyes, it is accompanied by a small, jeweled emblem resting centered above the wearer's third eye, serving as combination camera, microphone, microwave transceiver, humidity sensor, and solar panel. The contraption won't be winning any design awards, but its evident utility makes up for what it lacks in style or stealth. Several of the characters rely on them for basic situational awareness.

Weapons are described in terms more vague than the space travel, and are hardly worth mentioning here, save for the laughable proposition of firearms that require a live, over the air network login in order to function. Glad we didn't have those in Vietnam. For that matter, glad we don't have them now. Sometimes one is obliged to confront the enemy with his own weapon. And if the network were down? This notion, while mildly and subtly amusing, simply doesn't work for me.

Most of SL's political musings strike me the same way. Hard opinions forged in the sheltering