# Dr. Kjella Berg MD, PhD

**Prologue - Text Message (received within the last hour)**
**Age: 30**

> TEXT FROM TORE MAGNUS: Kjella, they've found out about the seeds. I don't know how, but they're searching everywhere for the two of us. They know. How could they know? I don't know if I can hold out when they find me; I can hear them coming in the distance, and I'm almost at the bottom of the vaults. I am so afraid. I should have married you when you asked me, but I wanted to grow up a little more, first.

**End of Prologue**

**Scene 1 - Kjella is "Abducted"**
**Age: 30**
**Note:** The "j" is silent - the name is pronounced "Kell-ah"

You were given a bribe to steal some crates of seeds and move them safely aboard ***Alexandria***. It wasn't a great or nice thing to do, but it was a large sum of money. You thought to yourself, 'other people have done more for even less. Am I so much better than everyone?'

Besides which, you had heard that the Svalbard Global Seed Vault was going to get some major cuts in the near future. And your supervisor loathes you for - of all things - political disagreements that are completely unrelated to work. You, with both a medical degree and a doctorate, a practical doctorate in genetics, living paycheck to paycheck; you have the exact skill set needed to work at the Seed Vault!

The European Economic Directorate was supposed to be one of the advanced economies of Earth. It's not, and that could be because of all those refugees and economic migrants depressing markets, like everyone says nowadays. You don't buy it. Even on the remote island of former Norway, where you live, there are people fleeing from the sweltering heat on other areas of the planet, caused by global warming run amok. Svalbard got as warm as *thirty-five* degree Celsius last August, which is far too hot for that far north. You constantly vote for positive change, but the candidates you favor never seem to win, or survive long after winning.

So you took the job from **Morgan Lee**, who you'd never heard of, but found (through internet searches) was an actual multi-billionaire. You would have thought the money would come in a more indirect way, or through some sort of front, but no; it was pretty much as direct a deposit an illegal bribe could get. You were now semi-officially fairly well to do instead of just getting by. Which you should be really thankful for, because just looking at any of the recent news reports makes you feel bad for how bad you feel for "only" getting by - a lot of people can't even do that.

So feeling a bit foolish, you crated everything he asked for and bought yourself a commercial ticket to escort the packages to a particular UEC Military station in orbit. A hassle, for sure, particularly on your meager allotment of vacation days, but you were going to be fairly well off as a result, so why not? You did tell one friend (Tore. Don't think about that awkward proposal you made! Old history.) in case this was some sort of weird, targeted abduction, which are rumored to happen to uniquely skilled foreign contractors such as yourself.

The crates were going to go on one of these fancy new ships, called the ***Alexandria***, and you were busy stowing the "goods" away on it - admiring the ship's quite massive DNA database, and wondering what it was built for (when you searched, you had read that it had an operating artificial intelligence running day-to-day operations - and there was a medbay that beats any hospital you ever worked in) - when there was a lurch.

Why is this ship moving? *Alexandria* warned you to get on an acceleration couch, which you did. A series of strong jerks threw you about. There was something about a missile? What was happening? You received text messages, and other comms, and rode things out as best as you could. **Dr. Kjella Berg**, abductee, you suppose. The ship stopped moving around. Hopefully no one was seriously injured.

> **Author's Note:** Despite all of your (somewhat rusty) surgical skills and all the equipment in the amazingly stocked medbay, you can patch up the bumps and bruises, but you're

going to lose the most seriously injured crewmember. The best you can do is ease their pain before they pass.

**End of Scene 1**

# Dr. Kjella Berg MD, PhD

**Scene 2 - Pitter Patter of Little Feet**
**Age: 40**

You've been aboard ***Alexandria*** for the past ten years, and it's become a home to you. You found love with the ship's engineer, **Sasha**.The two of you share a love of using technology and knowledge for mending and tending to the things and people that need it. Of course you fix humans and **Sasha** deals with ***Alexandria***, but there's a surprising amount in common, especially plumbing work.

Of course, being a doctor, you know that everyone has a time limit. **Justice Qazi** is the oldest member of the crew, and won't be with you much longer. It's hard to lose a patient, and worse to lose someone you've known for the past decade. **Justice** seems philosophical about it, though, and at this point ***Alexandria*** is really the one to turn to regarding talking about the nebulous future.

Little **Rowan** is currently the protege of **Justice**, as far as an eight year old can be, learning to tell weeds from the useful plants. Everyone helps to raise **Rowan**, though, so hopefully the death of **Justice** won't hurt as much as it might. **Aria** has become a full grown adult at 18.

You love having kids around, but it's not enough. You want to have a child yourself, made of your genetic material. You've always wanted to feel *your* baby snuggled against you, holding the stethoscope to feel its heart beating as it draws its first breaths. **Sasha** doesn't feel the same way, especially since you had your standard psychiatric appointment with ***Alexandria***, who clinically informed you that if a child had to be formed in the original manner, that **Aria** and **Santos** were the best possible candidates. Yes, they are younger, and will be able to do more when you *eventually* reach a new world, but you're only 40. Sometimes you sigh when **Rowan** is out of earshot, just looking at the little child. You want to have your own. Your genetic material should be perfectly healthy. The ship will need another crew member soon, and your clock is ticking.

**End of Scene 2**

# Dr. Kjella Berg MD, PHD

**Scene 3 - PITTER PATTER PITTER PATTER**
**Age 50**

No one can deny it - **Tarachand** was a beautiful baby. And at around eight years old, pretty well-adjusted to life aboard ***Alexandria***, too. Maybe there'll be another chance for you again, soon.

You were anxious when **Sasha** was sent down with Morgan's kid, **Aria**. You'd both become tired of virtual reality games, you and **Sasha**, and had gone back to spending time with one another. Eight, eighteen, twenty-eight, WHATEVER - ARIA IS TOO YOUNG TO LEAD.

**Aria** came back from that planet with something, but it wasn't **Sasha**. Was it a demon or a ghost or some sort of spirit thing in **Sasha**'s body? You had plans with **Sasha**, for another child! Sure, you were getting older, but your genes were clean. ***Alexandria*** had advanced technology, and you were a fantastic doctor! You could easily raise *your own NEW child*. Why can't you ever get something you want? **Sasha**'s dead!

But **Sasha**'s right here, and there's not much physically wrong with **Sasha**, even after getting that big cut down on the planet and bringing back some OOKY SPOOKY GHOST to take over their body. Spooky is not a setting on the scanners, BUT IT SHOULD BE.

It's aliens, yes. You can see that. And that's a miracle - to have had contact with alien life. Wasn't that one of humanity's great dreams? But who are you going to tell all the way out here, anyway. Yes, you're completely happy with **Sasha**, although you'll miss **Sasha** and certainly can't have a baby with **Sasha** now. It's fine. You accept things. There's nothing medically wrong, really, and it's pretty amazing to have some alien entity on board and ALONG THE RIDE ALL THE WAY TO THE END. It's fine. You're naturally a little upset at these changes, and who wouldn't be? You think they'll understand that. You can help them understand that. Is **Rowan** okay with it? Is **Tarachand** okay with it? Is ***Alexandria*** okay with it? Is **Aria** okay with it?

You, of course, are totally fine.

> **Author's Note:** No, Kjella is not fine. Kjella is losing it after all this time, in a confined space, with the same people, every agonizing day after agonizing day. It will only get worse, much worse, by the next scene.

**End of Scene 3**

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**Scene 4 - Not My Baby!**
**Age: 60**

Years, a bunch of uninhabitable planets, whatever.

You made yourself a new child - that's what the DNA machines are for - and then you and **Tobie** will be together happy on the ship together and happy. Three months along! **Little Tobie**, right here with you, well, hidden away carefully in a gestational unit deep in the storage area where only you can find it. Just stay in the VRs, no one will notice how happy you are. In a few more months, as bright and happy an arrival for everyone as **Tarachand** ever was, a baby to hold and coo over, a baby to sing to sleep, a baby who will love you unconditionally. *Your* NEW baby. A doctor of your age and station, who, at 60, (pretty much a 50 or a 40, all things considered) was certainly still young enough to raise a child.

**SANTOS**, of course, wasn't having any of that when they found the machine with **Tobie** in it. (And you had to start a schedule moving **Tobie** around so no one else would be able to find **Tobie**.)

So what happened was really **Santos**' own fault. They went on and on and on about the limits of the environmental systems and browbeat you so cruelly until eventually you had to agree: there was only enough environmental support for six people - five and a human-like alien instead of poor, dead **Sasha**. No! Not **Tobie**! It was like **Santos** was strangling your own baby! **Santos** had to go.

**Santos**' DNA was easy to look up. And the DNA matrices could make custom fatal viruses so so easily. (Bioweapons!) **Santos** will be dead in a few days and no one, not even ***Alexandria***, can do anything about it. They probably don't even know how to find out exactly what happened without a trained doctor's eyes.

After all, **Santos** spends all of their time in the company of those unnatural engines, the one that keeps you in the darkness of deep space for year after year. It must be emitting "some kind of radiation" that's killing **Santos**. Or maybe it's some virus carried by the **Alien Sasha**, who also spends most of their time in the engine room with **Santos**. You can tell the crew anything and they'll believe you. You're the doctor, after all. Who's going to prove you wrong?

As long as **Tobie** lives, that's all that matters. You don't matter. **Santos** doesn't matter. **Alien Sasha** (ha!) doesn't matter. Although it wouldn't be terrible for someone else to die, because **Tobie** would really like having someone else of the same age to play with.

**End of Scene 4**

# TOBIE

**Scene 5 - It's Greenish and Blueish**
**Age: 10**

They're going to let you go outside to help, even though you're only ten. And it is a planet, like the planets you saw in virtual reality, except it was real instead of VR.

It's very green, which might be from the same chemicals that make hydroponic plants green. Although the sky is blue. It looks like it'd take a lot of paint to keep all of the things that color. ***Alexandria*** says that the air seems nice. And the space seems bigger, too. You can probably fit a lot of stuff around, if you wanted to.

This is *SO* much better than VR. You can't wait to do all the crazy things you do in VR, but with real things.

You wonder what your sibling **Phoenix** thinks. ***Alexandria*** and **Sasha** are **Phoenix**'s parents. That's really weird, and it makes your head hurt thinking about it.

You're not really sure who your parents were; you think it's probably like it is for **Rowan** and **Tarachand**, where people don't talk about it for some reason. (Because they don't know?) **Tarachand** said you'd be told when you were older, though - and you're looking forward to learning more about that. Maybe they'd tell you now!

## End of Scene 5