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