scene 5

A New Hope

Kjella Berg died shortly after Santos Rojas.

Tobie was allowed to come to term. There was a discussion amongst the adults and *Alexandria*, and it was decided that a second child should also be created. While it would make life harder in the short term, it would mean that there would be a full crew in fifteen years. Given the way this journey was going, you might still be in space fifteen years from now.

Alexandria was doing their best to train Rowan in the necessary medical skills. Between the two of them, they managed to create a child using DNA *Alexandria* chose. Phoenix came to term and was born, happy and healthy. Oddly, Sasha took a great interest in the child. Everyone else joked that maybe Phoenix was *Alexandria* and the Alien Sasha's child, somehow. Sasha did not understand this humor.

Ten more years passed. 17.6 more light years from Earth. There was a long maintenance stop at Dante, a scorched moon of a rocky super-Earth orbiting uncomfortably close to its star. Everyone was thrilled to leave, especially when Sasha got the ship back above the speed of light. There were several other stars, each with large families of planets - but none were close to Earth norms.

Then there was a system, around a star with a yellow-orange glow, filled with planets and moons. One of them, in the Goldilocks Zone, was promising. The readings were almost too good to be true. The atmosphere was clear and blue, with oxygen and nitrogen levels almost identical to Earth. As *Alexandria* flew closer, the telescope pulled in images of lush continents ringed by salty oceans. Every new measurement was intriguing and hopeful, matching closely to *Alexandria's* records from Earth. There was hope, but it was moderated by the memories of all the other worlds they had passed.

Alexandria settled into orbit, doing a deeper and wider scan. The world was alive with plants and animal life. All signs indicated that the biochemistry was compatible, and that there weren't detectable toxins in the air. It might even be possible to eat and digest the plants; that also meant that bacteria and virii might be a problem. A closer scan was needed to be sure.

The orbital parameters and the slightly cooler sun meant the planet was a little cool, but refreshingly so. No one wanted to stay behind - so everyone came down on the shuttle. *Alexandria* is controlling drones and robotic probes around the landing site, to test the environment, to stay in communication, and to protect everyone.

Under a strange sun, with a cool breeze rustling alien plants, Aria spoke for everyone. "We must be careful. But, we have to see."

> The scene takes place on the surface of this new world. There is a primary robot (and several secondary drone units) controlled remotely by *Alexandria*, so it is as if *Alexandria* is right there. You are ALL together in this place.

TYPICAL MESSAGES FROM EARTH

WEAK TRANSMISSION REPEATED OCCASIONALLY ON ONE BAND

This is the Islands Government trying to reach Morgan Lee and the *Alexandria*...has stabilized but so many have died. We are still dying here, clinging to these islands but...aboard the *Alexandria* would do much to restore some of what has been lost on Earth. We beg you to return to Earth...reach Morgan Lee and the *Alexandria* in deep space. The water level has stabilized but...soil but there are so few crops and animals left. The information aboard the *Alexandria* would...