

Author's note: I mention various science fiction TV shows and movies in this story. Blah, blah, blah, copyright of these shows, yadda, yadda, yadda... etcetera, ad naseum. Sometimes in my writings, I admit to patterning a character after someone in real life. In this story, almost all of my characters are totally mine, except two. Matilda, who'll you meet later, is very much patterned after Omac's cartoon drawing Scarlet Widow, even the name. And Kristine, is loosely patterned after the actress Kristin Kreuk, except taller.

Re-Colonization

Michael shown his lamp down the hall, along with the others.

"Ah!" Dr. Phillips said from a few yards ahead of him. "This looks like some kind of alcove, for valuables probably."

They were exploring the lowest levels of a temple. At least they were out of the stifling heat and humidity of the Amazon rainforest. Michael was on vacation. Every year since college, he had taken a few weeks vacation to be a part of some archeology dig. He had a career in IT, and wasn't looking for a change, but he had discovered a passion for archeology while in college. This allowed him to indulge in his hobby, and it allowed the professionals like Dr. Phillips to have a helper that was a bit more educated and experienced than the freshmen interns that needed supervising every minute.

"It looks like looters have been here and gone." Dr. Phillips said. "A long time ago."

They all pointed their lights into the little room as Dr. Phillips examined it. The room was small, about the size of a bathroom, the walls were full of little alcoves, all of them empty. The floor was covered with debris from animals.

"It doesn't look like there's anything to be learned here." Dr. Phillips was saying. "But still, we need to be thorough. Mike, would you take care of it?"

"Certainly." Michael answered. "I'll take care of it." He reached for his pack and removed his camera and notepad. The rest of the group continued their exploration, leaving Michael to his work. Over the next few hours, he worked at documenting everything about the room. He took careful notes. Each wall was photographed, then measured, the size and location of each alcove noted. He started moving the twigs and leaves out into the hallway when he found something that was interesting. It was a cube. About the size of a rubic cube, it looked to be of solid marble. He wondered at the perfection of the cutting. He measured each side to find they were all exactly the same. He put it in a cloth and put it in his bag. He'd show it to Dr. Phillips later. He finished cleaning the floor, and found nothing else.

Later that evening, after dinner had been eaten, he showed the cube to Dr. Phillips.

"I've never heard of anything like this." Michael said.

"Neither have I." Dr. Phillips said. "I've seen the round balls carved. But never a cube." He handed the cube back to Michael. "And we don't even know how old it is, it could easily be a contaminant from more recently. This sight has been known and visited by the outside world for over a hundred years."

Michael had to shrug agreement. Part of the thrill of archeology was to find something extraordinary.

"It looks like you've found your keepsake for this trip." Dr. Phillips added. They had worked together before over the years, and Dr. Phillips shared Michael's habit of keeping insignificant artifacts from their travels.

“It definitely looks interesting. Just the cutting alone makes it interesting to look at.” Michael said. “I think it’s getting time to turn in. Thank-you Doctor, and good night.”

“Good night Mike.” He responded, and Michael returned to his tent to sleep.

Two Weeks later.

“Finally...!” Michael sighed as he dropped his bags onto the floor of his apartment. The last 48 hours had been a traveler’s nightmare. His transportation from the dig had been delayed, which caused him to miss his first flight. From then on, the dominoes continued to fall against him, flights were delayed or canceled. Lay-overs were several hours, twice to overnight stays. He was thankful the airlines hadn’t lost his luggage.

His first task upon getting home was to take a shower. He then collected his mail from his neighbor, and settled in for the evening to rest and recover. He went to bed at 8:00 that night and didn’t awake until 8:00 the next morning. This day he spent catching up on the mail, paying bills, and washing the smelly clothes he had lived in for the few weeks.

He unpacked his bags and put the marble cube on a bookshelf. He placed the gift for Susan on the small table by the door and went to bed early again.

Another two days go by.

“Here you go Sue.” Michael said handing the box to her. He and Susan had met as freshmen in college. They had met in an archeology class. Susan was both the love of his life, and his biggest heartache. She stood about 5’6”, had rust red hair, and a sprinkling of freckles. She was definitely very ‘cute.’ Despite her not-so-tall frame, she had nice legs and looked very good in tight jeans. But what made Michael sweat and breathe hard were the large, firm breasts her scrubs couldn’t hide.

After college, she went on to medical school. Now, she was in the final year of her residency, and was hoping to join a private practice. Michael was hoping she would continue to work at the hospital. He had passed on more than one job offer before he accepted one nearby. If she joined a private practice, he would lose any chance to be with her. He had asked her out in college, but she had said no, and had continued to push off any contact except the occasional lunch.

Three months go by.

Michael shifted the grocery bag to his left arm, found his keys and opened the door to his apartment. He moved into the kitchen area, and put his groceries away, another Friday night and nothing to do but settle down and watch some television. Just as was reaching for the remote, he felt a tingling, and was quickly enveloped in a soft white light.

The light faded and he found himself in a different room. Being a science fiction nut, it immediately reminded him of a transporter room. Just as he was wrapping his mind around this, a light appeared across the room. It looked a little like an old television tube warming up. In a moment a translucent figure of a man was standing there looking at him.

“Hello Michael.” It said.

“Uhm.” Michael said surprised beyond words. “Uhm, hello.”

“No need to be frightened Michael.” The image said. “I am Cha-Shune, and I am here to ask for your help.”

“I. I don’t, uhm, what?”

“Please, do not be afraid. You are perfectly safe.” He said. Michael only returned his comment with an astonished silence.

“It’s a long story, Michael.” Cha-Shune said after a moment. “Please, come with me, I wish to show you something.”

He gestured to the doorway. It slid open and he walked through.

Michael took a breath, consciously swallowed, and stepped forward. He walked through the doorway and emerged into a hallway he took a step to his left into a large semi-circular room with view ports all along the front.

Cha-Shune said as they walked. “Please look out the view port.”

Michael couldn’t help but be captivated by the view. Out the window was the blackness of space, as well as the earth below him. He could see most of the North American continent.

“It’s magnificent.” Michael said breathlessly. “No words... Astronauts try, but they can never put this into words.”

“I wish I was there to see it with you, not this hologram.” Cha-Shune said ‘standing’ beside him.

“It’s beautiful. It’s wondrous.”

“I hope you will think the same of my world.” Cha-Shune said and gestured to a monitor. On it another planet was displayed. Like earth it was water covered, with blue water, landmasses of browns and greens, and various clouds.

“This is my world, Zanthia.”

“They appear very similar.” Michael replied.

“I am glad you think so. We, those of us left on Zanthia, hope you will help us.”

“I still don’t understand.” .

Cha-Shune stepped away from Michael and took up the attitude of a teacher.

“Of course, I should probably start at the beginning, nearly fifteen thousand years ago. All those years ago, a space faring race came across your world. Earth. They discovered our ancestors, barely clothed. But they saw potential. They took some of those people to our world Zanthia. There, they altered our genetics so we would evolve at a very fast pace. Every child was hundreds of years more advanced than its parents. In a few thousand years we were building housing, generating power, and even starting to explore our star’s system of planets.”

Another hologram formed in the space between Michael and Cha-Shune.

“This is our star system.”

It was obvious to Michael what it was. There were only five planets, and he recognized Zanthia as the second planet orbited by two moons.

“Two moons.”

“Yes, our world has two satellites. Maxose is the larger satellite. It has a 36 day orbit. Minuteos is farther away and has a 200 day orbit.” There was pride in his voice. Obviously some of this must have been recorded.

“But back to the story. After only a few thousand years, the genetic alterations in my people stopped, and we evolved at a more ‘normal’ pace. We had what you call wars, and peace, and quite a history. What we did not know, was that in our haste, our shortsightedness, we had poisoned our planet, and set the seeds for our own destruction.”

“We did not know until it was too late. We had caused so much toxic pollution, we had doomed all higher life on the planet to destruction. The males of all species quickly became sterile, the females were mostly unaffected, but without men, most life was doomed to die off. We eventually discovered this, but by then it was too late. The planet was dying. We searched vainly for any help. Until one day we found an ancient, ancient vault.”

The planet display disappeared to be replaced by a hologram of a room. Not unlike an Egyptian tomb, complete with hieroglyphs on the walls. As well as a pedestal in the center of the room, on that pedestal was a cube just like Michael’s. Cha-Shune walked into the display and pointed to the cube.

“Does this look familiar?”

“Yes, I found a cube just like that in the Amazon. It’s just a marble cube.”

“No, it is not.” Cha-Shune answered. “It took dozens of years to decipher what the markings said. But eventually we learned of our origins. And that the cube, like yours, was a beacon. But we did not know where Earth was. We did not know if our ancestors had survived. Meanwhile our own population was rapidly dwindling. Most of the animals on our planet were becoming extinct. We discussed it, and several ideas were brought forward. It was decided to build this ship. We couldn’t transport what was left of our world to Earth. With the world dying, and the ship nearly complete, we decided that the best chance we had, was to let our world die. We would wait for our world to heal itself; to become capable of supporting life again. Once the beacon showed us the way, the ship would come to Earth and hopefully bring more humans back to Zanthia to recolonize it.”

“That’s amazing.” Michael said. “It’s astonishing. No one is going to believe this.” He found what looked like a seat, and sat down.

“Tell me, has your people explored the stars?” Cha-Shune asked.

“Not really. We’ve managed to send a few exploration missions to our moon. And a few unmanned probes to Mars, but other than that, no we haven’t done much. This ship, this ship is extraordinary.”

“I see.” Cha-Shine replied. There was another pause, obviously ‘he’ was thinking.

“Wait a moment, you said the cube was a beacon.”

“Yes, it is.” The hologram replied and went back into teaching mode. “In the ancient vault, we discovered that the race that brought us to Zanthia left a beacon on earth. It must have been left somewhere, and eventually you found it.”

“Me, as in me personally? Or me as in mankind in general.”

“It needed a human’s touch to activate it. Some believe that it would not activate until humans had reached a minimal intelligence level. Others believed it would activate any time a human touched it. None-the-less, once it was activated, the beacon on our planet responded. The markings on the walls instructed us how to monitor our beacon, and how to decipher the message coming to it. Once that happened, this ship set a course and traveled here. Once it arrived, it started monitoring the planet, gathering information. It is how I

can speak to you in your language. It eventually found the exact location of the beacon, and it transported the nearest human, you, on board.”

Michael found a seat, and looked at Cha-Shune’s holographic image for a moment.

“This is unbelievable.” He asked.

“That is understandable. Would it help if I started over?”

“Would you mind?” Michael asked. He didn’t know anything else to say.

“Of course not. As I understand it, the thought of extra-terrestrial visitation is new to your world. It must be a great deal to comprehend in a short period of time.”

And then Cha-Shune launched to his story again. This time, uninterrupted, and adding details he had omitted the first time. When he was finished, Michael was more comfortable.

“So, this ship, it’s computer is an artificial intelligence?” He asked, his professional curiosity coming through.

“No, not really.” Cha-Shune replied. “We programmed it with thousands of possible questions and responses. “It may seem as though it has reasoning skills, but it does not.”

“I see.” Michael thought. “You asked for my help recolonizing your world. Did you develop any plans or possible plans to do it?”

“There were several ideas, but most were discarded as impractical. Let me show you the ship, and I will explain the best ideas we decided upon.” He gestured toward the hallway. There were doorways to each side. Cha-Shune pointed to the door opposite the transporter room.

“This is the medical room.” Cha-Shune said as the door slid open. “It contains all the medical equipment for any health situation that arises. Robotic surgeons, drug synthesizers, and so on. It also has the stasis units for the human eggs and sperm you will need to collect.”

“Eggs and sperm?” Michael asked.

“Yes, we will need a wide sampling of genetic material to establish a viable population.” Cha-Shune quickly replied, then pointed to the next door. “These doors are quarters for yourself and your traveling companions. The ship has 30 of these quarters.” The door opened and he stepped inside. The room reminded Michael of a hotel room. Michael guessed it to be about 15 feet square, neither cramped nor spacious. What looked to be a queen sized bed, a sitting chair, and small desk were all that was present. On one side two doors. He looked in the first to find a walk-in closet. The second turned out to be a bathroom. There appeared to be a toilet and shower and sink, not too much unlike their earthly counterparts.

They stepped back into the hallway and continued to what Michael assumed was the rear of the ship. They passed the rest of the quarters and the hallway opened into a large room that was the width of the ship and about 30 feet long.

“This is the dining area.” Cha-Shune said. He walked to a console on a wall. “This will generate food. Care to give it a try?”

“Uhm. I’m not really hungry.” Michael said after a moment.

“We can give you a scanning device. With it, you can record the foods of your world and add them to the computer’s programming.”

Cha-Shune led the way to a circular stairway in the back of the ship. It led downward to another deck. They arrived in a hallway much like the one above. It ran most the length of the ship, ending in a door. This deck contained seven storerooms, three narrow rooms on each side, and a much larger one at the end. The rooms to each side were approximately 20 feet deep, but very long. The storage room at the end spanned the entire width of the ship.

“These are storage rooms. We realized that it would be too much to ask of you to leave everything behind. So these rooms were provided so you and your traveling companions could bring personal belongings. On the deck below us, there are seven additional rooms like these.”

“You spoke of traveling companions.”

“Yes I did.” Cha-Shune replied. “It is hoped you can bring women with you. These women must be young and willing to carry several pregnancies. The rooms above were provided for them.”

“Several pregnancies?”

“Yes, on Zanthia, we had extended our lifespans to well over 100 of your years. Women would often choose to have children many years apart. If I understand the information the ship has gathered of Earth, this is not so on your planet?”

“No, it is not. Most women on my planet choose to have only a few children at most.” Michael replied.

“If that is so, it would slow down the re-colonization effort greatly.”

The questions and answers flowed.

It was late that night before Michael was teleported back to his apartment. He held what looked like a cellphone in his hand. It was simply a communicator so he could teleport back up to the ship. He stifled a yawn, and went to bed. Too excited to sleep, he tossed for a long time before finally dozing.

Saturday

Michael awoke the next morning believing it was all a dream. But there on the nightstand was the com-device. He mindlessly showered and dressed. He found something to eat, then took a walk, all the while thinking of the evening before. He thought of nothing in particular as he walked, eventually after a couple hours he wound up back at his apartment with no decision. He flopped down in front of the television and absent mindedly channel-surfed. He stumbled across a replay of “The Right Stuff.” It had been a favorite of his when it first aired. The show was just getting to the part where the recruiters were talking to Alan Sheppard aboard the aircraft carrier. He chuckled watching them being seasick. But it started him thinking again. He thought of how bravely these men volunteered for this. He wondered if there were men like them still around today. Then he realized he was being asked the same question; to take a leap of faith and do something wondrous.

He thought about his life, he had a few friends, but no family. He could leave at any time, and nobody would really miss him. He would miss Susan the most. Then he realized that Susan was an ideal candidate to go with him. She was young, beautiful, and healthy. He had come to the realization early on he needed to be secretive. At best no one would believe him, at worst something bad could happen to him. He realized he needed to be able to talk to people, get honest answers from them, yet somehow keep them from knowing the truth. It was late afternoon when he picked up the com-device, pressed the button, and found himself back aboard the orbiting ship.

“You have returned.” The image of Cha-Shune said as it materialized in front of him.

“Yes, I have some additional questions.” Michael said.

“Ask.” Was Cha-Shune’s simple reply.

“OK.” Michael said. “You said toxins poisoned your world. Is Zanthia still poisoned?”

“No. Once we discovered what was happening, we began researching methods to remove the toxins. We were successful. The toxins were removed within fifteen of your years. There are no pollutants on Zanthia, and have not been for over ten thousand years.”

“When your people learned of their fate, what was the reaction? What did you do?”

“The reaction ranged from anger and frustration to anarchy and civil war. It was a very sad time in our history. Many people were killed.”

“You said this ship was built. What else?”

“We concentrated on three things. The first was the preservation of our culture and history.” Cha-Shune’s image said. “Our scholars spent decades recording all the knowledge we could. Our history, our art, our culture, all have been cataloged and recorded. We brought all our art and history together into a central location, something similar to your museums, but on a citywide scale. Maintenance droids were built and dedicated to maintenance of the capital city and all the buildings within it.”

“Maintenance Droids?”

“Yes, the computer borrowed that term from one of your movies.” The image replied. “They monitor everything around the city, repairing and maintaining all as necessary.”

“I see.” Michael replied. “What else?”

“The second priority was the construction of this ship, and monitoring the cube in the ancient vault.”

“And the third?”

“The third is the most important.” Cha-Shune replied. “We build stasis chambers, and we found 20 of the most healthy children and women we could. They are in suspension until such a time this ship arrives back on Zanthia.”

“There are women still alive?” Michael said incredulously.

“Yes. In cryogenic sleep.”

“Do you have images? Pictures?”

“Absolutely.” He replied. “Let us go to the bridge and I will show them to you.”

They went to the bridge, and Michael took a seat in front of the monitors. Almost immediately the monitor came alive with images of a large room. The room contained sleeping chambers similar to what he had seen on various television shows.

“This is the cryogenic room.” Cha-Shune said. “It is located near the center of our capital city.”

“Can we look closer?” Michael asked.

“Of course.” Cha Shune replied. The picture changed to show a young woman apparently asleep within a chamber.

“This is Cha-Jenna Shaw. She is my sister.” Cha-Shune said. “She is the oldest of the women in stasis. She is 23 of your Earth years old. Just over 20 Zanthian cycles. On Zanthia, each cycle is 406 of your days. Our calendar is split into 14 of your months, each month of 29 days.”

Michael continued talking with Cha-Shune. He learned that Cha-Jenna Shaw was the only adult woman in stasis, the rest were 10 to 12 years old.

Sunday

Michael awoke the next morning in his own bed. He hardly remembered teleporting back to his apartment, and going to bed. He shaved and showered and dressed and went out to a restaurant for breakfast. He sat in his booth and looked at his coffee cup. It was time to try his new toy. He reached into his pocket and retrieved what looked like a palm phone, complete with LCD monitor, and qwerty keypad. He pressed a button and the LCD came to life, he focused the optical on the coffee and pressed a green button near the top. A small progress bar appeared on the screen and quickly completed its scan. Next a prompt appeared and he typed ‘coffee’ and pressed return. With any luck, he would be able to have some coffee on board ship later. When the rest of his meal arrived, he scanned everything in, making notation of the entire meal, ‘Eggs Benedict’ and each of the individual elements. He even made sure to scan the orange juice.

After breakfast he walked back to his apartment and relaxed in front of his television. He surfed channels until he came upon the sci-fi channel. He didn’t know what the show was, or what the show was about, but it had given him some ideas. He turned the TV off, found the communicator, and pressed the button.

He rematerialized on the teleporter platform a moment later. Almost immediately, the holograph of Cha-Shune appeared.

“Welcome aboard again Michael” he said pleasantly.

“Thank-you.” Michael replied. “I have been thinking, and I somehow need to ask people questions, get truthful answers, but still maintain a level of secrecy. If people were to talk openly about this ship, it could possibly cause a panic. My world is not ready for all the advances this ship represents. So, I have been wondering how I can get help. Then I got an idea.”

Michael stepped off the platform and exited the room. He crossed the hall and entered the medical room.

“You said this place can synthesize drugs.”

“Yes.” Cha-Shune replied.

“Can it make drugs that induce a hypnotic state?” Michael asked. “I want something that when absorbed through the skin, or when inhaled, makes the person strongly open to suggestion.”

“There are several drugs that will work for your purpose.” Cha-Shune replied. “You will need to be more specific regarding your needs.”

“Uhm, OK.” Michael answered. “It should take effect very quickly, a few seconds, and it should wear off quickly, say 15 or 20 seconds. It should also evaporate or dissipate after 5 minutes or so. Oh, I need to be immune to it as well.”

“There is one that will work.” A screen lit up showing a chemical formula. “It can be inhaled, or absorbed through the skin. It is most effective as a spray, but can be blended as a cream as well.”

“Good, uhm.. Can I have some in a cream, put it in a nice, small decorative jar, about so big around, and about so tall.” He gestured with his hands a jar about one and a half inches in diameter, and about one inch tall.

“Next, I need another small device. Something I can dictate several messages into, and then play them back. Something small, that fits in the palm of my hand.”

Soon he had the cream, and small recording device. He teleported back to his apartment and started making plans. First he carefully wrote down what he wanted the first hypnotic message to say. He wanted basic respect and helpfulness and support. It took him several minutes to come up with the message, and several more to practice and record it.

Next he needed to test it. He thought about who to test the cream on, and finally decided on the landlord. He had wanted to get some things fixed in his apartment for months, but the landlord kept coming up with excuses. Maybe now, Michael would get these things fixed. He knocked on the landlord’s door.

“Hey.” The landlord asked as he answered.

“Hello,” Michael responded. “I was wondering when I can expect to get the heaters fixed in my apartment.”

“Oh that!” the landlord replied. “I’ve ordered parts, but still waiting for them to arrive.”

“I see.” Then Michael saw his opportunity. “That’s a nasty looking cold sore you got there.”

“Yea, just got it today, hurts.”

Michael fished in his pocket for the cream. “I got just the thing.” He opened the cream container and held it out to the man.

“Try this, just a dab.”

The landlord took the cream and dabbed it on his cold sore. As Michael quickly closed the container and found the playback device, the landlord stopped moving and got a glazed look in his eyes. Michael quickly found the playback device, and held it next to the landlord’s ear.

“Listen to this.” He said, and pressed play. He could barely hear his own voice from arm’s length, but next to the man’s ear, he was sure the landlord heard everything clearly. After the message stopped playing he put the device back in his pocket.

“What was that?” the landlord asked as he came around.

“Oh that was nothing.” Michael quickly answered, then thought. “Just a MP3 player I wanted to show you. Think nothing of it.”

“What did you want me to listen to?” The landlord asked.

“Oh,” Michael answered surprised. “Um, just, I thought I heard the heat pipes clanking again.”

“They do that this time of year.” The landlord replied. “You know, we were talking about that weren’t we?”

“Yes, we were. You said you had to order parts before you could fix the heaters in my apartments.”

“Oh sure, don’t know why I have to order parts, I’ve got spares downstairs. I’ll stop by next weekend and fix them, how’s that?”

“Not a problem. Tell me, why haven’t you fixed them before?”

“Oh, the building owner. Doesn’t want to fix anything until it’s really broke. Doesn’t want to spend money.”

“I see.” Michael answered finally. “Well thanks. I’ll see you later.” And he left to return to his apartment.

He could hardly contain his excitement until his door closed behind him. He excitedly paced the room for several minutes thinking about all the things he could do. But after a while he finally calmed down. He saw his hypnosis script written on his scratch paper. He remembered how the landlord had seen and noticed the player. He studied the script and after a few minutes decided to change it to dismiss the player as inconsequential. Next he added instructions to listen to the recording, that way he wouldn’t have to tell the target. And third, he added additional instructions to remember nothing of the moments spent listening.

“That should do the trick.” He said to himself as he read and re-read the script. He recorded the message, and decided to make a second message. The second message instructed the listener to trust and respect him greatly. The listener wouldn’t dare spread any secret Michael wanted to share, and would always help Michael any way possible. He took time writing and rewriting that one. He wanted to keep it simple.

He considered his test with the landlord, the cream was useful, but a bit awkward. He teleported back to the ship, traded in the cream, and had a small aerosol dispenser made. It would spray a small dose in a fine mist. He felt it would be easier to use, he would not need to manipulate the jar and cap.

He rematerialized in his apartment and spent the rest of the day thinking about what he would do next.

Monday

His next opportunity came early Monday morning, his boss called him into his office to discuss some new computers. His boss was usually a good guy, but in some ways was a real stickler. Especially when it came to spending money.

As they were talking about the project Michael was getting more and more frustrated, it was obvious his boss didn’t want to spend any money on the new computers. The money had already been budgeted, so Michael couldn’t understand. Finally fed up, Michael moved around behind his boss to look over his shoulder at the document. He took the small aerosol can from his pocket, and spritzed his boss’s arm without the boss ever noticing. He put the can away, and reached for the player. He got it beside his boss’ ear just as the man grew silent and took on a vacant look. He played the first recording, and when it was finished, he put it back in his pocket. And it was done.

When the effect wore off, his boss started talking again. Michael again suggested the money be spent, and his boss readily agreed.

“So you’ll take care of all the paperwork?” Michael asked.

“Sure, I know you’re a bit swamped right now.” The boss replied. Normally all the paperwork was pushed off to Michael, even though his boss was actually responsible for it.

“Good.” Michael responded.

The meeting finished and Michael went back to his desk smiling all the way. The first message had worked flawlessly. Now, he thought, he was ready for the first big step in his plan. He picked up his phone and called Susan. He asked if she wanted to get together for lunch. Most of the time she’d decline, but luckily for him she agreed, if they could meet in the hospital’s cafeteria. He agreed.

A few hours later, they were sitting down at a table. Michael was about to start eating when he looked down at his tray.

"I forgot utensils. I'll be right back." He said and got up and left. He palmed a few extra napkins and went back to the table. He came up behind Susan and set the napkins down while spritzing her on the arm.

"I brought extra napkins." He said, as he took the player from his pocket. Susan didn't respond, just sat there as he pressed play. This time, he not only played the first message, but also the second message. He wanted Susan to be more than just a helpful friend; he wanted someone he could trust with the knowledge of the ship orbiting above. He decided to proceed cautiously, and took his seat just as Susan was recovering. Their lunch was like any other, though Michael thought Susan was a little more relaxed. She laughed a little more, smiled a little more, and talked at length more often. Michael enjoyed their time together, and Susan seemed to enjoy it too.

Michael ran some errands after work and got home late. He had another list of questions for the ship's computer, but before he could press the teleporter call button his phone rang.

"Hello?" He answered.

"Hey Michael, what's up?" Susan said.

"Uhm." Michael stuttered. "Not too much." He couldn't remember a time when Susan had ever called him.

"So, uhm. What's going on with you?" Michael asked.

"Oh, I just got back from my date with Jeff. I thought I'd give you a call."

"Wow, it's still pretty early." He said.

"I was kind of tired, and I have an early shift tomorrow, so I thought it'd be a good idea to make it an early evening."

They continued talking for another 20 minutes, continuing their lunch topics, then said their good-byes only after making promises for lunch again later that week.

Tuesday

Michael got home at his regular time. He put his mail on the small table by the door, next to his keys. He changed into some comfortable jeans and T-shirt, gathered his notebook, and the digitizer, then pressed the teleporter call button.

"Welcome about Michael." The computer's voice greeted.

"Thank-you." Michael responded stepping off the platform. His first stop was at the food synthesizer in the common room. There he uploaded his latest food information.

Then he went back to the bridge. The view made this the best place on the ship. He opened his notebook and started asking questions.

"I thought of this the other day. How do you know Earth humans and Zanthian humans are uhm compatible?"

"The computer has checked your genetic structure. While there are some variances, they are minor." Cha-Shune's image replied. "If needed, genetic alterations could be made."

Michael snapped his head up. "Genetic Alterations? You can make genetic alterations to humans?"

"Yes."

“Fascinating.” Michael replied. “And you can change the genetics on an adult living human?”

“Yes. That is correct.”

“And this change? Would the human change to match the genetics? And would these changes be passed on to children?”

“Yes to both of your questions.”

“So, if I wanted to be taller, what would happen?”

“You would be given an injection, then over time, your body would start to grow to your new height.”

“That’s amazing.” Michael replied sitting. Then another question sprang into his mind.

“Wait, you said all higher life on your planet was damaged genetically, and it all died out. If you can change humans genetically, why not just fix your genetics?”

“Our genetic decay was discovered as part of our genetic research. By the time we had learned our genetics were damaged, it was too late. After the discovery, far more genetic research was done in the hopes of finding a cure. For a time, there was hope, we had learned so much, but all our efforts proved to be fruitless. Our birth rates continued to plummet. Male infant mortality, for those that were born, soared.”

“So, you have examined my DNA, and you believe I could successfully have a child with one of the women currently in stasis on Zanthia. And the child would be healthy?”

“Correct.”

“And what changes would be needed to make Earth humans more closely match Zanthian humans.”

“Minor changes would result in lower blood pressure, higher metabolism, less fat retention, lower cholesterol, improved eyesight. A more comprehensive list can be provided.”

“No that’s enough for now.”

Thursday, early November

“This is nice.” Michael said sitting at a picnic table in a small park a block from Susan’s hospital. He had picked up some sandwiches and met Susan there for lunch.

“Yes it is.” She agreed. “I don’t get long lunch breaks very often, when I do, and the weather is nice, I try to get outside, away from the hospital.” Many had taken advantage of the unseasonably warm Chicago day. They wore their jackets and endured the 60 degree weather, knowing they wouldn’t see any more nice days until spring

“But you love your work.” He said.

“Oh, I do!” she replied. “But it can get trying sometimes. Jeff wants me to join a private practice with him and a couple partners, but I don’t know.”

Michael’s heart skipped a beat. “But?”

“Well, in private practice I can pick and choose patients. And have regular hours. And all of that, but at the hospital, not knowing what’s going to happen next is kind of exciting. You know?”

“So what are you going to do?”

“I don’t know. I’ve got a few months left on my residency, if all goes well, so I have time to decide.” She took a bite of her sandwich, chewed for a bit then spoke again.

“But what about you? What’s new with you?”

Michael desperately wanted to tell her everything, but didn’t.

“Oh you know me, Steady Eddie. Eight to Five, Monday thru Friday.” He took a drink to hide his face.

“You know that’s not true. That dig you went on over the summer. You do that every year. It’s really cool that you do that.”

“I enjoy it. It’s nice to get out of here and now, and dig into the past.”

“What do you do the rest of the year? That’s only a couple weeks.” She said. “It’s funny. We’ve known each other for years, and sometimes I don’t even know what you do for fun. Like this weekend, what are your plans?”

“Well,” he said stunned. “I was planning on going up to the Science and Industry Museum. I haven’t been there since before they moved the submarine.” (*Author’s note: The Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago.*)

“Wow, that’s been a while.” She said, paused for a moment. “Jeff’s has to work, so I’ve nothing going on. Want some company?”

“Uhm sure.” He replied. “That’ll be fun.”

“Wonderful, since we’re coming from different directions, you want to meet there?”

“That’ll be great, 10:00 AM? Or is that too early? You don’t have a late shift or anything tomorrow night do you?”

“No.” She replied. “Unless there’s some kind of emergency of course, but I’m hoping for a quiet weekend. Last weekend was a real bear.”

They talked some more as they ate, then went their separate ways. Saturday morning, Michael was waiting at the entry of the museum

“Sorry I’m late. Have you been waiting long?” She asked greeting him.

“Not at all, just a few minutes.” He replied.

“Great. Shall we?” She said gesturing towards the entrance. They spent the next few hours strolling through the museum, letting the museum’s exhibits provide conversation topics if their own stalled.”

The next few weeks were more of the same, Susan and Michael met several times for lunch, phone calls in the evenings, and a Saturday trip to an art gallery.

Then one night things changed. Michael was relaxing, reading a book (sci-fi, of course) when a knock came through the door. It surprised him, but he was even more surprised when he saw Susan through the peep-hole.

“Hello!” he said opening the door.

“Hi!” she said cheerfully in response. “Am I interrupting?”

“No!” He blurted after a moment of shocked silence. “No, please come in.”

She walked in.

“Nice, it suits you.” She replied, then stopped. The forced smile disappeared and she started crying. She turned into him and started crying into his chest.

“What’s the matter?” He said automatically holding her.

“He dumped me.” She said between tears. “He thought you and I were fooling around, that I was cheating on him. And I wasn’t. We’ve been friends forever, and we’re just doing stuff, and I wasn’t cheating.”

Michael didn’t know what to do, so opted instead to simply hold her as she cried. After several minutes she sniffled and pulled herself away.

“I’m sorry, I shouldn’t be bothering you with this.” She said wiping away her tears.

“Nonsense.” He replied. “That’s what friends are for. Sit down, it’ll be all right.” She sat on the couch; he looked around then went into the kitchen, returning a moment later with a box of tissue. She gratefully took it, and wiped her eyes.

“Thank-you.” She said after a moment. “You’re so good to me.”

Michael only smiled. He wanted to say and do so much, but hesitated. Now was not the time.

“Uhm, can I get you anything?”

“I know it’s late, but maybe some wine?”

“I have some wine, coming right up.” He left for the kitchen again, and returned with a bottle and two glasses. He poured hers and she drank. She leaned forward, her elbows resting on her knees, both hands holding the wineglass. She looked at the wine, contemplating something, then started talking.

Michael never could remember what she talked about. Only that she talked, drank, talked, and drank. Most of the wine had been consumed by the time she finally passed out. He caught the wine glass before it spilled, and set it on the table. He carried Susan into the guest bedroom and deposited her on the bed. He pulled off her shoes, and draped a blanket over her before switching off the light and closing the door.

Michael was in the kitchen the following morning when Susan stumbled in.

“Good morning.” He said. He tried not to be too cheerful, seeing her disheveled appearance. But even with sleeping in her clothes, she looked good to him.

Susan only replied with a mumbled “Coffee?”

He poured her a cup, and watched her drink the first sips, both hands holding the cups to her lips.

“You OK?” He asked.

“Hung over, but I’ll live.” She said. “I’m really sorry, I shouldn’t have barged in on you, and taken advantage of you.”

“It’s OK.” He replied. “Honest.” He topped off her coffee.

“You’re welcome here any time, for any reason.”

“I appreciate it. I really do.” She answered. “I’ve got to go home. Get cleaned up.”

“Well, you’re welcome to use the shower. I don’t have any clothes that fit you. But I could let you have a t-shirt. It’d be big, but it’d be clean. And if you would like, there’s a mall a couple blocks over. Give me a list, and I can run over.”

“No, that’s asking too much, but if its not too much trouble, I can use a shower.”

“Sure thing.” He answered. He got her a towel, and let her be.

Once he heard the shower stop, he went back to the kitchen and started some breakfast. She returned.

“Better?” He asked.

“Yes, better.” She replied. She was wearing a robe she had found. She took a seat at the small table, while she continued to dry her hair.

“Hungry?” He asked.

“I could eat, I think. Just some toast.” She ate slowly, sipping her coffee, and taking another bite. Then finally spoke again.

“Uhm Michael, I *really* hate to ask this, but if the offer of clothes still stands..?”

“Of course it does.” He replied instantly. He retrieved paper and pen. “Just write down what you need. And I’ll make a quick run. Oh, and make sure it’s something a sales person can understand, because I won’t have a clue.”

Susan laughed, and started her list.

The next week was quiet; he called Susan a couple times, to see how she was doing. She was throwing herself into her work, but she agreed to go to lunch. She looked tired, but he could see sparkle coming back into her eyes. And she laughed at some of his bad jokes.

Meanwhile Michael was wrestling with two questions, first, he wanted to ask Susan on a real date, and second he was wondering if he should really try the genetic alterations. It had been a few weeks. He had been teleporting back and forth onto the ship on an almost daily basis. He had been taking short trips to various places around the country, mostly to see the sites, and adding to the ship’s food menu. He finally reasoned, if the Zanthian science could disassemble people and teleport the parts from surface to ship and back, then the genetic changes would be pretty safe. So he teleported up and “discussed” his desires with the computer. After several minutes, the computer produced a small syringe looking device. He took a deep breath, and pressed it to his arm. There was a hiss, and a slight sting, and it was done. He teleported back to his apartment and went to bed.

The next day, he woke up early, shaved and dressed for work. The week progressed quickly, and he found each day enjoyable. Some even commented on his change of attitude. By the weekend, he knew there were changes taking place. Though he never considered himself fat, he never considered himself thin, now he could see he had lost a few pounds.

It was late in the day when his cell-phone rang.

“What are you doing tonight?” Susan asked.

“I didn’t have anything planned. Why?”

“I was wondering if you’d like to stop by the hospital and, well keep me company.” Susan hesitated. “Could you bring some pizza? Maybe some deep dish?”

“Sure, I haven’t had that in a while. What time?”

“About eight or so. Doesn’t really matter.” She replied. “Since I’m working, I could be busy or bored. So anytime is good.”

He arrived at the hospital, pizza box in hand, a little after eight. It looked quiet enough as he entered the emergency ward. He found a nurse, and she directed him to a lounge area. He found Susan asleep on a couch.

“Oh hi.” She said when he woke her. “Just catching a nap. It’s going to be a long night I think.”

“That’s OK.” He replied. “You look pretty when you’re asleep.”

“Ah. Thanks.” She said, and on impulse pulled him to her and gave him a kiss.

“Uhm.” Michael said surprised.

“I think we should make it official.” She said, and kissed him again. “Jeff was probably right. If we weren’t ‘officially’ dating, we were as close as we could get.”

“Are you sure?” He replied.

“Absolutely.” She said. “It’s not like you’re a complete stranger and I’m on ‘the rebound’. We’ve known each other for years, and I trust you.”

“As long as you’re sure.” He said. “I’ve wanted you to be a part of my life for as long as I’ve known you.”

“Maybe all the stars are aligned or something now.” She said. “I feel really good about this.”

“Me too.” He answered sincerely.

“Now, let’s eat.” She said. “I’m hungry.”

“Not yet.” He answered. “One more thing.” And he swept her into his arm and gave her a big kiss. At first she was surprised with his boldness, but she quickly returned the passion.

Over the next few weeks, despite Chicago getting mired in for winter, they managed several more dinners and activities together. It was the Saturday before Christmas when Susan found herself at Michael’s apartment.

“Hi!” She said. She gave him a quick kiss as she came in to his apartment. “What’s the surprise?”

“It’s the greatest discovery in our lifetime.” He replied. She only looked at him with skepticism.

“OK, I’ll prove it to you.” He held out his hand, she took it. Then he pressed the button the com-device, and they were teleported away.

“What the…” Susan managed to blurt out as she looked around.

“Wild, isn’t it.” Michael replied, still holding her hand.

Susan was speechless. She looked around at the teleporter room, knowing only a few moments before she was standing in Michael's apartment.

"Come on." He said gently. "Let me show you around, and I'll try to explain." She numbly let him lead her out of the teleporter room, and forward to the main bridge. She quietly looked out the view screens at the earth below, and couldn't believe her eyes. He let her walk around and look for a few minutes.

"This has got to be some kind of trick." She said after a moment. "How did you do it?"

"Suze, I swear to you, this is all real." Michael said gesturing to encompass the entirety of the ship. "Do you want to hear the story?"

She sat down in a nearby chair and still not believing it told him to give it his best shot.

"All right." He said. "Computer, please plot a course for Saturn, like we discussed yesterday."

"Ready to proceed." The computer voice replied.

"Please go ahead." Michael responded.

"Acknowledged." And the ship swung away from Earth orbit and headed for the ringed planet.

"Ok, while we wait, I should tell you this all started on the dig in the Amazon." Michael said. "I found a cube. I thought it was a simple cube made of marble, but it was actually a beacon. It sent a signal to the planet call Zanthia, where this ship was built. It's a long story, and I better let Cha-Shune tell it. Computer, please play Cha-Shune's introductory video."

The computer complied and Susan watched without interruption. In a few minutes the video stopped and the computer announced they were approaching the rings. Michael turned his gaze to the view screens as Susan was about to speak, but the view stopped her. There across the screen was all of Saturn, in all its glory. No man had ever seen the planet this close before.

"Computer, please start recording." They passed under the rings, only a few hundred yards 'above' them. They started at the outer edge of the rings and slowly arched inward. On occasion the computer would announce they were near a moon, and Michael ordered close in photographs of them as they passed by. They looped around behind the planet, and emerged on the other side.

"Computer, please take us back to our previous orbit."

"Acknowledged." And the ship made its way back to Earth. In another 45 minutes, they were back orbiting Earth, in steady synchronous orbit above Chicago again.

"I still don't believe this. This has to be some trick, though I can't think of why you'd want to go through all of this."

"It's not a trick, but I think I know how to prove it to you." Michael responded. "Let's look through the photos we just took." And they picked out over 30 good photos.

"Now, computer, can you send these pictures to all the places we discussed?"

"Acknowledged." It replied, then a moment later. "Messages sent."

"Good." Michael led her back to the transporter room. "No stand here." He said pointing to spot. "Then he said 'computer, go ahead.'" And they found themselves back in Michael's apartment.

"Now." He said holding her shoulders. "Go home, and start watching the news."

“Well, what will happen?”

“If this is a hoax, nothing. But if it’s the truth, somebody should be talking about how they mysteriously got new photos of Saturn. In the meantime, please please please promise me you won’t mention any of this, in any way, to anybody.”

“It’s all a big joke of some kind, but I’ll humor you.” She replied. “I don’t know whether to be mad at you for thinking you could get away with it, or impressed at how good the joke looked and felt.”

“And how will you feel when you realize it’s real?” Michael asked.

“Like that’s going to happen.” She said a little angry. “Now, I’m going home.” She said and started to put on her coat.

Michael could only watch her go, he didn’t know what to say until she was at the door.

“Susan.” Michael said as she looked back at him. “You’re the single most important person in my life. I don’t want to lose you.”

In that moment, her expression softened. “You won’t lose me.” She said after a moment. “I just need time to figure out what to make of this.”

He moved towards her, but he could see her stiffen, so he stopped.

“I’ll talk to you later.” She said, and quietly walked out the door.

Michael sat down on the couch and didn’t move for nearly an hour.

The next morning Michael slept in. He had showered and dressed when there was a pounding on the door. He looked through the peephole and saw Susan. He opened the door, and she lept in to his arms.

“You were telling the truth!” She said between kisses. “I can’t believe it. It’s impossible.”

He had to carry her out of the doorway, and managed to shut the door. She clung to him desperately, frantically kissing him all the way.

“Take me to the bedroom.” She said. “I want make love to you.” She said between kisses.

They fell onto the bed together, frantically they tried remove their clothes between kisses. Somehow they managed. Michael, for his part stood proud and firm, a full 12 inches, thick and heavily veined.

“Oh my, you’ll split me in half.” She said as he covered her. She guided him to her entrance, and slowly he pushed into her. “Go slow.” She said squirming under him. “Oh God!” she panted as she opened to him. “Stop there for a bit.” She panted. “It feels so good.” She adjusted, and then pulled him closer. Soon, half his length was within her, and he slowly started moving in and out.

“Oh yes!” she panted. “So thick, so good.” Those were the last coherent words for the next several minutes as his thrusts picked up pace, it wasn’t long before he was buried completely within her. He loved her even more frantically once he had reached bottom. For her part she panted, moaned and screamed out in passion all the while. Finally, feeling his fever rising, he exploded within her, she shook and trembled through her fourth or fifth orgasm of the experience as she felt him flooding her womb.

They collapsed then, trying to catch her breath, as he pulled out of her and lay down by her side.

“Oh my.” She said after several minutes. “Good thing I’m on the pill. I don’t ever want to have a condom on you. Ruin it.”

After several more minutes she rolled over and cuddled next to him.

“So, you want to hear the story again?” Michael said. “You believe it’s all real?”

“Yes, I believe it. And yes, I want to hear the story again.”

He moved to get up, but she stopped him. “No, just tell me here. I don’t want to get up. I don’t want to ruin this.”

So he did, he repeated the story as best as he could. Then he finally got to the most important part.

“They want me to find men and women, and sperm and eggs, take it all back to Zanthia, and repopulate humans there.”

Susan was silent for a while. “That’s, that’s incredible.”

“Yes, I know, but I’m not sure how to proceed.”

“So you’re going to do it? Just leave?”

“I thought I’d at least gather the sperm and eggs... But I don’t know if I’ll go there or not.”

“Why not?”

“Because of you.” He said without hesitation. “I want you to come with me. If you don’t want to go, I won’t go.”

Susan only laid there in silence. He let her think for several minutes before he continued. “I really care about you. I don’t want to go without you.”

“Hmm.” She said after a few more long moments. “That’s really something. I’ll have to think about it.”

“Fair enough. While you’re thinking about that. Think about how we can go about collecting sperm and egg samples.”

“We can’t just walk up to a man or woman and ask them.”

“Yea, can you imagine me walking up to a guy. ‘Hi, I’d like your sperm.’?”

Susan burst out laughing. “It’d either get you a punch in the nose, or a proposition.”

“I’d rather have neither, thank-you.” He said. “Come on, let’s shower, then go up. We can talk there.”

“Ooh!” She said. “Absolutely. I want to see everything again.”

“You want to shower first?” He asked. “I have clothes from the last time you were here.”

She kissed him. “How ‘bout together?” She teased.

An hour later, they were finally dressed and teleported back on board the ship. They held hands as they stepped off the teleporter and walked to the bridge. They stood and looked at the view in silence for a few moments. Then Michael’s stomach rumbled.

“Do you want to try something?” Michael said. “I’m hungry. Let me show you the food synthesizer.” They went aft and ate a late brunch and then returned to the bridge. Like Michael, Susan wondered at the view.

“So, what now?” She asked after a few minutes.

“What now?” Michael responded. “I don’t know. Somehow we have to find men and women to donate sperm and eggs, and we have find young women who are willing to travel to Zanthia and live there.”

“So, collecting eggs and sperm, just how?” Susan asked.

“The computer said that a mini-teleporter of sorts can extract what’s needed without the person ever knowing.”

“Really?” Susan replied. “Incredible.”

“I think you’ll have a lot of medical reading to do.”

“Oh my God! I hadn’t even thought of that. Maybe cure cancer! And Diabetes, and so many others.”

“Maybe, but let’s stay on task.” Michael replied. “How do we find these young men and women?”

“Well, the best place, would be...” And Susan paused to think, then her face lit up. “A college campus!”

“Great idea! Now..”

“Oh! Two birds with one stone!” Susan interrupted. “We set up an interview process.. And those we find to go with us, we invite along. Those that don’t, we take samples.”

“Perfect. That’s great.” They talked for a while longer. They arrived at a simple system. The ship’s computer would build automated interview booths. It would record the person’s interview, and somewhere in the process, take the egg or sperm sample. Everything would be stored away. In the future, anyone wanting to use the sample would have the recording along with all the data to view.

Nearly an hour later, they had reached the next impasse, just how. It would take time and money to travel to a college campus to do what they needed.

They were both sitting on the bridge as Susan looked out the window.

“What’s that?” She asked pointing to a glint of light.

“Probably just a reflection off a satellite or something.”

“It looks like it’s getting closer.”

“You’re right.” Michael replied. “Computer, we see an object that looks to be approaching. Do you know what that is?”

“The object you see is the ship’s refueling drone.”

“Tell us more.”

Cha-Shune’s hologram appeared. “The ship used nearly eighty percent of its fuel making the trip to Earth. The refueling drone has been traveling to the nearby asteroid belt collecting and processing raw materials to replenish it. It also is collecting the materials used for ongoing maintenance and repairs.”

“What materials are used?”

Instantly a periodic table came up on a small side screen. "Here is your periodic table as your science knows it today." Cha-Shune's hologram explained. Additional entries lit up. "Here are additional elements Zanthia has discovered." Finally most of the table's labeling turned gray, while several entries turned bright red. "The highlighted elements are what the refueling drone is collecting."

They looked at the graphic together.

"Gold?" Susan said after a moment.

"Yes, gold is used for many electrical instruments."

Michael thought for a moment. "Would it be possible to instruct the refuel drone to process extra gold?"

"Yes." Cha-Shune's hologram replied.

"Good. We will need about five hundred pounds to start." Michael replied. Then turned to Susan, "I think we just solved our money problems."

Christmas

Christmas was a simple affair for Michael and Susan. They awoke in the same bed for the first time in their relationship, made love again, and shared breakfast. They exchanged one gift each. Michael gave Susan a gold necklace, the first made from gold mined from space. And Susan responded with an antique grandfather clock. Then Susan, who hadn't finished her residency yet, went to the hospital to work the day at the emergency ward. The following days, Michael, with the help from the ship's computer, set up a corporation off-shore, some place that had little record keeping, and easily hacked computers. It wasn't long before the new company was legally selling small allotments of the gold the refueling drone was bringing back.

By the middle of January, Michael had quit his regular job, and became the first U.S. employee, a work-from-home consultant. He had dreamed about it for years, with his newfound income, he went out and bought a new car, a cherry red mustang. Susan thought it was a bit odd, but she enjoyed riding around in it just as much as he did.

By the beginning of March, they had arranged everything they needed for the first recruitment session. Michael and Susan had visited their old college. They arranged for a few adjoining rooms for their first test. Michael had convinced the college placement office that they wanted to test a new automated interviewing system on soon to be graduating seniors. A small donation to the college foundation, helped get permission and all the teachers were to announce the test in their classes. The students were told they would be paid for their time, and there could be a possibility of employment after graduation.

The first day Michael and Susan opened door to a nice line of students. In the first room, the students took numbers and waited. When their number was called, they were led into the second room and seated at one of a dozen booths around the room. They were told to put on some headsets, and answer the questions the automated system was asking them.

What the candidate did not know, was the headphones were pushing a small dosage of hypnotic drugs onto their skin and into their systems. The questions started with simple information like name and address, but became more personal as time went by. Eventually, the program would ask about the candidate's family. If the candidate had no close relatives, Michael would be alerted, and he would return to take the candidate onto a third room, for a personal interview.

If the candidate had relatives, their eggs or sperm would be collected. They were told to only remember the interview as a good process; they took off the headsets believing they had been asked questions about their education and skills.

The first day of interviews yielded over sixty women, and nearly thirty men. A good start on the genetic material needed to start a viable population on Zanthia. Also, Michael had interviewed three young women, and one young man.

Susan and Michael were sitting in the waiting area, reviewing the video of the one-on-one interviews when they heard a knock on the door.

Theresa and Tabitha

“Excuse me, is this where the interviews are being held?” The young woman asked.

Michael and Susan looked up and saw the speaker. Like the other college students, she was young. She was quite pretty, with long blond hair. Michael guessed she stood about five feet four. Her blond hair was cascaded in sweeping curls down onto her shoulders and part way down her back. She wore a tight black sweater that accentuated her breasts and tiny waist. Her blue-jeans were tight, but not overly so. She reminded Michael of a young Farrah Faucet, though not as tall.

“Come in.” Susan said after a moment. “How can we help you?”

She was carrying some papers, took a breath, and walked forward. “I’m Tabitha Miller. And I am hoping you could look over my resume, and hopefully grant me an interview. I will need as much practice as I can get.”

Michael sensed a bit of desperation in her voice. He could not help himself, he wanted to know more.

“Please, sit down.” He said getting a chair for her and placing it by the desk. He closed the door, took the papers from Tabitha, and then sat down beside Susan. He handed her one piece of paper, while he read at the other.

“Tabitha.” He said first. “It says here you will be graduating in a few months. You must be excited.”

“Uhm.” She said shyly. “Yes. I wanted to be a zoologist since I was a little girl.”

“Excuse me.” Susan interjected. “This paper is for a Theresa Miller.”

“Oh, no, no mistake.” Tabitha replied. “Theresa is my older sister. We’re both hoping to interview, and get as much practice interviewing as we can. We know finding a job with zoology degrees is going to be hard to do.”

“Hmmm.” Susan said. “Why don’t you tell us your story.”

“I..? I don’t understand.”

“Just talk to us, tell us your story. Like how and why you became interested in zoology.”

Tabitha took another breath. “Our Mom and Dad were zoologists. They worked for some of the biggest zoos all around the world; sometimes collecting animals, mostly doing habitat research. My sister and I wanted to do what they did. Ever since we were old enough to travel, we’ve been around the world. We enrolled here. My sister graduated last year, and I’ll be graduating this year.”

“Sounds like you have a wonderful future ahead of you.” Susan replied.

“Well,” Tabitha replied. “It was. Our parents were killed in the earthquake in Chile last year. They were researching some birds high up in the mountains. They were killed in rockslide.”

“Oh.” Susan said in reply. “I’m terribly sorry. I lost my parents when I was a teenager.”

“And now you’re here?” Michael asked.

“I’m finishing my degree. School was paid for. And Theresa and I agreed, it was something Mom and Dad would have wanted. She works at a restaurant in town to help pay the bills. Then after I graduate...”

“I see.”

“I know that there aren’t too many jobs out there for zoologists like my sister and I, but I’m hoping if I can maybe find something.”

Michael looked at the resume again.

“Other than you sister, do you have any other family that can help you?”

“A distant cousin or two, but really distant, I doubt they would even recognize us let alone help.”

Susan looked at Tabitha, and then closed down her laptop.

“You know what, I’m hungry.” Susan said. “Let’s continue this conversation over dinner.” She stood up, and stowed the laptop in her bag. “You said your sister works at a restaurant? Where does she work? Is she working now?”

“I uhm.” Tabitha replied not knowing how to respond. But then she shook her head as if to clear it. “Yes, my sister’s working now, she a waitress at an Italian place on the north side of town.”

“Great.” Susan replied. “Just wait here while Michael and I finish something in the next room.”

Michael, not knowing what Susan was thinking, looked at her questioningly. But she looked him in the eye intently. He knew that look well enough not to question. He stood and followed her into the next room.

“So what’s up?” He asked after the door closed.

“The least we can do, is buy her a good meal. And you WILL tip her sister very well. Understand?” Michael looked at her. “Can’t you see she’s desperate? No family to go to, and I bet, very little money. She and her sister might be good candidates to go with us too.”

He could see her reasoning, but didn’t have time to continue the conversation. Susan was already opening the door.

“Ready?” She asked as Tabitha stood.

“Yes, thank-you.” They left the building, and Susan volunteered to sit in the back as Tabitha sat in the passenger seat and navigated.

They arrived at the restaurant about fifteen minutes later. Susan had continued to ask questions as they drove. When they entered, they were approached by the hostess, and asked to be seated at one of her sister’s tables. They waited merely a moment after seating when Tabitha’s sister arrived.

“This is my sister Theresa.” She introduced.

“Hello,” Michael said standing. “I’m Michael, and this is Susan.” While Tabitha reminded him of a young Farrah, Theresa was a young Jacklyn Smith. Black hair instead of Blonde, and a little taller. He guessed Theresa would be very close to Susan’s height, if not a little taller.”

“Nice to meet you.”

“Your sister was telling us about this restaurant, and we thought it’d be wonderful if we tried out the place.”

The dinner went well, Theresa stayed to talk as much as her work would allow. Eventually though, the evening came to an end. As they were preparing to leave, Michael turned to Theresa.

“What does your day look like, day after tomorrow?” He asked.

“I have the day off actually.” Theresa asked.

“And you?” He asked Tabitha.

“Classes in the morning.”

“Perfect, could the two of you come by the interviewing area in the afternoon, 1:00. We will be having a group interview session with prospective employees. And we’d like the two of you to join us.”

“That’d be wonderful.” Theresa replied, Tabitha nodding along. “We’ll be there.”

They took Tabitha back to her apartment, and then traveled on to their hotel. They could have teleported aboard ship, but this was more ‘normal.’ Michael sat down at the small desk and brought out the laptop.

“Are you ready to see the rest of the interviews?” He asked.

“Just a second.” Susan replied. She pulled off her shirt, undid her bra, slipped off her slacks, and then put on a robe. She came to Michael, and having no better place to sit, sat on his lap.

“Comfy?” He asked after a moment.

She ran a finger through his hair, and then kissed him. “Yes, very.” She said, and then kissed him again.

They watched the first interview, a girl named Cheryl. Then Michael had to go to the bathroom. Susan took his place in the chair, and started the second interview. Michael returned and relaxed on the bed while Susan intently watched the remaining interviews. When finished, she brought the laptop with her and sat next to him on the bed.

“So what do you think?” He asked.

“Well, the guy, Brian, I think he’s a bit of a jerk. He’ll be in for a rude awakening when he goes out looking for a job.”

“I thought so too, but wanted your opinion.” Michael replied. “And the girls?”

“They’re OK, nothing special, but nothing bad.” She replied. “Theresa and Tabitha are still the best candidates we’ve met.”

“I agree. So, should we invite these others for the group interview?”

“It won’t hurt, and maybe we’ll learn something.”

Michael nodded agreement, then reached up for the light.

“Let’s get some sleep. Tomorrow is another busy day.”

Susan smiled and slipped off her robe. At some point she had removed her panties. She straddled his body,

pressed her lips to his. "I wasn't thinking about sleeping." She whispered. He kissed her back, and thoughts of sleeping disappeared from his mind as well.

The following day, the automated interviewing continued. Between applicants, Susan called the candidates and invited them to the group interview the following day. Those within earshot perked up hearing her talk to the candidates.

By the afternoon, the crowd had thinned to a trickle, and by 5:00 nobody was waiting. They did manage to double their collection of women donors, and almost double the male donations. They returned to their hotel room, and watched the two interviews together.

"I kind of like Jessica." Susan said afterwards. Jessica looked like the stereotypical "Farmer's Daughter." She was tall, and thin. She had strawberry blonde hair down onto her shoulders, crystal blue eyes, perfect white teeth, glowing complexion, with just a sprinkle of freckles across the bridge of her nose.

"She wants to be a teacher." Michael said. "That would be very useful on Zanthia."

"With all of the kids we'll have, definitely." Susan replied. She had put the laptop down. "So should I call her for tomorrow? And what about the other girl."

"Both," Michael replied. "Though right now, I don't have much hope for that one either."

Susan made the phone calls, while Michael cleaned up their evening meal. Afterwards they went out to a movie, and then returned to the hotel.

"I just thought of something." Michael said once the door closed. "You've been saying 'we' a lot. Does that mean you've decided to come to Zanthia?"

Susan looked him then paused to think. "I, I guess it has. I mean, over the last couple months, it just seemed like 'yea, this is the right thing to do.'"

Michael only looked at her. Then she continued.

"I never like, made a conscious 'yes' or anything. But it just seemed to make more sense as time went by. I mean, God, what an opportunity! I know it's a cliché, but this really is the opportunity of a lifetime."

Before she could say anything further, he swept her up into his arms and soundly kissed her. She heartily replied, and the rest of the evening was spent laughing and loving until both fell asleep.

The following morning, having exhausted themselves thoroughly, they slept in. Susan rose first, she untangled herself from the bedding, and went to the bathroom. Michael awoke to find her naked, looking at herself in the mirror. She noticed he was awake, and without turning from her examination took her breasts in her hands.

"Honey, do you think my boobs are too big?"

"I..." Michael stammered.

"I was thinking of getting a reduction, but I don't know."

"Dear, you're beautiful." Michael replied. He got out of bed, and walked up behind her. He had long ago traded in the cream and spritzer for a ring with a flip open top. He stood immediately behind her. He rotated the ring on his finger, and flipped the top open. He wrapped his arms around her waist, and as the exposed pad touched her skin, it sunk in, and she immediately relaxed in his arms, her eyes seemed to take on a vacant look, as he whispered into her ear.

“Susan, the more you think about it, the more you realize how much you like having large breasts.” He whispered. “In fact, the more you think about it, the more you’d like to be even larger.” He moved his hand away from her waist, and the drug wore off. He kissed her on the neck, distracting her as she came too.

“If that’s what you want to do, if it makes you happy. That’s what matters.” Michael said.

“Well, I think about it sometimes, but I’m not sure. Who knows.” Susan said. “Oh, look at the time, I’m hungry, and we need to get cleaned up.” She spun around in his arms and gave him a kiss. “Dibs on the shower.” And before he could reply, she was on her way.

Susan and Michael waited in the front room as the candidates arrived. Tabitha and Theresa were the first, and then over the next several minutes, the other women arrived. Jessica walked through the door just the clocked turned to one.

“Sorry I’m late, my class ran longer than usual.” She replied.

“You’re right on time.” Michael replied. “We’re waiting on one more. Just go in, make yourself comfortable, there’s refreshments and snacks. Help yourself.”

“Thank-you.” She smiled in reply. Michael held the door for her, then sat down at the desk, waiting.

“Late for an interview.” Susan said after 10 minutes. “Never a good move.”

“Definitely not.” Michael said, “We’ll give him five more minutes.”

“I’ll tell the rest.” Susan replied. And she left to join the candidates in the next room.

Three minutes later. The only male candidate finally came through the doorway.

“Ah, finally.” Michael said.

The young man, Brian, offered only a shrug, “Well, you know.” Was his reply.

“Well, I hope you’re ready.” Michael replied. “Let’s go in and get started.” They went into the second room.

“Everyone, this is Brian.” Michael said. He handed Brian a stick on name tag, and gestured to a seat.

“So let’s get started.” He said. The candidates were sitting around a table. Most had a bottle of water or soda in front of them. “We at HDM pride ourselves on our cooperative spirit, how we work together and communicate. So this will be a group discussion. So we need a topic that will help us. Susan?”

Susan handed a card to each candidate. “Theresa, would you read it?”

“Sure.” she replied. Michael once again was struck at how elegant her voice and demeanor was. “You have been given an opportunity to settle a previously uninhabited island. The island is very remote, and very difficult to access. For the purposes of this discussion, assume that communication with the rest of the world is all but impossible. Also, assume travel to and from the island is prohibitive. Food and shelter is available. In short, this is a one way trip. Questions to discuss: Would you go? What would you take with you? Who would you want to come along?”

The candidates all looked back to Michael and Susan.

“So, let’s start out by going around the room and answer the first question. Would you go?” Susan started. “Tabitha?”

Tabitha looked at her sister. "If you'd go, I'd go." She replied. "Yea, I think it could be fun."

"Theresa?" Michael asked.

"Me too, yea, I think I'd go."

"Well, I'd never go." Brian interjected. "I like to travel as much as anybody. But to some empty island, start a settlement from scratch? You can have it."

"I don't know." Jessica replied. "It'd definitely be a challenge, but so rewarding." The conversation started rolling from there. All the candidates were talking about it, Theresa, Tabitha, and Jessica seeing the positives, Brian seeing only negatives, while the other were somewhere in the middle.

The next few hours went by quickly. Occasionally the candidates would have a question, Michael or Susan would answer, and the conversation continued. Finally at about 4:30, the conversation was winding down.

"Wow, look at the time." Michael finally said. "I think we've kept you here long enough. If there aren't any questions? No? Then I'll show each of you to the door. Brian?"

Brian got up and Michael walked him out. He handed an envelope with some money in it, and thanked him for partaking in the experiment. Then each of the girls until only Theresa and Tabitha remained.

"Ladies, I really appreciate you taking the time to come in today. I think the conversation would have fallen flat if not for your enthusiasm. Would you wait outside a moment? Then Susan and I would like to take the both of you to dinner again."

They both nodded and gathered their things.

"So? What do you think?"

"I think we're both thinking the same thing. Theresa and Tabitha, definitely make the offer. Brian, I'll be glad to never see that jerk again."

"And the others?"

"The only one I like is Jessica." Susan answered.

"I agree. Unless Tabitha and Theresa really go off during dinner, we'll teleport up afterwards, agreed?"

"Agreed. I want to hear what they thought of the group too."

They found a Chinese place to eat that evening. The restaurant was nearly empty since it was a Thursday evening. So they lingered and talked. Theresa and Tabitha continued discussing the group scenario. But mostly the conversation bounced around. When Susan asked their thoughts on the other people in the group, they both seemed to like Jessica, but were mostly turned off by Brian.

Michael would occasionally look at Susan, but she never gave any negative signal. Part way through the meal Tabitha excused herself to go the bathroom. Michael glanced at Susan and she volunteered to go along. Michael, watched them leave, then casually flipped open the ring. Theresa was sitting next to him, and he put his hand on her arm.

"Thank-you again for taking the time." He started to say as he watched the drug take effect. He quickly retrieved the recording device and played the first message into her ear. He put it away, and then released his grip on her arm.

"It was a lot of fun." Michael finished, as the drug wore off.

“Oh! Uhm. Sure. It was fun. And thank-you for dinner, it was really nice of you.”

“You’re most welcome. Can you do me a favor?” He asked.

“Sure what is it?” She replied.

“I’d like to talk to you sister alone for a few minutes. Could you....?”

“Sure.” She replied getting up. She walked to the bathroom, and a few minutes later Tabitha came back to the table.

“Ah, Tabitha, sit here.” He said indicating the chair next to him. “I wanted to tell you how impressed we both were with the group interview today.” He said. He pressed his hand against her arm, and repeated the playback.

Tabitha moved to her previous chair and a few moments later Theresa and Susan returned.

“So, there’s one more thing Susan and I would like to show you tonight. Are you ready?” Michael replied as he paid the check.

“Sure.” Both seemed to answer immediately. They left the restaurant and drove for a few miles until they found a quiet street. The mustang’s top was up, Michael turned to the two in the back seat.

“What’s going to happen next is going to seem a little weird the first time. Don’t worry, it’s nothing to afraid of. And I promise Susan and I will explain everything in a few minutes. Ready?”

The both looked a little nervous, but both nodded.

“OK, here we go.” Michael pushed the button on the dash. The car and its occupants were bathed in soft white light, as they were teleported to the big storage hold on the ship.

“What was that?” Theresa said.

“That was a teleporter.” Susan said opening her door. “Come on, we promised we’d explain everything. And the best way to do that, is to show you.”

Michael exited his side of the car and held the door as both women made their way out of the back seat to stand beside them.

“This is a space ship.” Michael said trying to start the explanation. “And no, Susan and I are not from outer space. We’re from Chicago.”

“The ship just happens to be from another planet.” Susan finished for him.

“Right. And right now, we’re in a cargo hold. This way.” The door slid opened and they started down the hallway.

“We’re on the middle of three decks. The one below is just like this one. These are all cargo holds. They’re all empty right now. They will be for storing anything that we might need for the trip.”

“Trip?” Tabitha replied. As they started climbing the stairway.

“Yes, trip.” Susan said. “This ship was sent to Earth for a reason.” They climbed the stairs.

“This is the common room.” Michael replied. Over there is a food dispenser. And these are the cabins. There are thirty of them total. They each have a bathroom and closet. They’re not luxurious, but they’re not tiny either. This is the teleporter room. It’s for individual people to use. The car is too big, so it just put us all in the cargo hold instead.”

“But this the best view. This is the bridge.” Susan said stepping aside as she let the sisters take it all in.

Without intending to, the two women slowly moved forward to look out the view screens.

“This is…” Tabitha replied.

“Fantastic?” Susan finished for her.

“Incredible? Unbelievable?” Michael added. The women could barely nod.

“So…” Theresa tried to start a question.

“Let me guess, you want to know what’s happening? And can we prove this isn’t some kind of hoax?”

Again they silently nodded.

“Thought so.” Susan added. “I was the same way.”

“Let’s take a trip.” Michael replied. “Just a short one, and I’ll try to explain.” He moved to one of the bridge consoles, and pressed a button. “Computer, please plot a course to Mars, engage when ready. When we get there, put us in orbit please.”

“Acknowledged, altering course.” The ship replied. The view changed as the ship veered away from Earth, and headed out into space.

“So, here’s the story.” Michael started. He managed to get to “So that’s how I first got teleported aboard” when the computer interrupted.

“Orbit established.” It announced. Mars filled their view and they all looked on in silence for several moments before Susan remembered why they were there.

“Michael, you were saying?”

“Oh!” He said, not taking his eyes from the view screens. Unlike their earth orbit where they parked above Chicago, this was a lower orbit, so the scenery was slowly moving underneath them. Tabitha and Theresa never turned to look at him as he finished his story.

“And there you have it.” Michael said after completing the story. “Susan and I are going to Zanthia, to rebuild the colony. And…”

“And,” Susan spoke up. “We’re hoping you two will agree to join us.”

This last statement jerked their attention away from the screens.

“Remember the questions on the interview this afternoon.” Susan continued. “We asked those questions to find people willing to take on this challenge.”

“You both answered that it’d be a challenge.” Michael added.

“We, we did.” Theresa replied after a moment.

“But, this.” Tabitha added. “To another planet, my god, that’s...”

“That’s something incredible.”

There was a long pause, finally Susan broke the silence. “I totally understand. I’ve known about this ship since Christmas, and I’ve only now agreed to make the trip. Why don’t we take you home, and you can think about it. It’s not like we’re leaving tomorrow. Think about it, and ask questions, whatever you want.”

“Can we come back?” Tabitha asked. She turned her head back to the screen. “This is just so beautiful.”

“Absolutely.” Michael answered.

“Oh, wait until you see the rings of Saturn up close and personal.” Susan bubbled. “They’re just incredible. You won’t believe it.”

“Can we?” Theresa asked.

“Sure, but not tonight.” Michael replied. He pressed the command button. “Computer, please take us back to Earth and the previous orbit.”

“Acknowledged, breaking orbit.” And the ship veered away from the red planet and headed to space.

“So,” Theresa said after a moment.

“So.” Susan responded. “You have our phone numbers. Call us anytime. Anytime you have a question. Anytime you want to get together.”

“With this ship, there’s no place on the planet we can’t be within five minutes.” Michael replied. “But we do have a very serious request. You must not tell anybody. I mean anybody, about this. Don’t even talk about it in public. Somebody could overhear. Do you understand?”

Both Theresa and Tabitha couldn’t answer. “Just humor us OK? I know this is a lot to take in, and I think as you get used to the idea, you’ll come to understand why it so important we don’t let anybody know what this is all about.”

They didn’t have much time to respond, the ship had reestablished orbit around Earth again, and made the announcement.

“Computer, we’re teleporting back down with the car. Please find a deserted place near the previous location.”

“Acknowledged.” The computer replied.

“Come, let’s get you home.” Susan replied. “Tabitha, you have classes in the morning?”

“Yes, early.” She replied.

“Then all the more reason we get you both home so you can get some sleep.”

“I don’t know if I’ll be able to get to sleep. This is all so fantastic.”

They made their way back to the car, and were teleported to the surface below. Michael drove the sisters to their apartment, then continued onto their hotel.

“So, what do you think?” Susan asked as soon as she could.

“It went pretty well.” Michael replied. “Considering.”

“They didn’t freak out.” She added. “That’s a good thing.”

“And they wanted to come back.” Michael added.

“Yes, a very good sign.” They stayed the night at the hotel, then the ship teleported Susan back to her apartment the next morning. Michael and car were teleported to the next college town to meet with the placement office, in hopes of setting up the next round of interviews.

Shortly after lunch, his cell phone rang. Susan told him that Theresa and Tabitha had called with more questions, and were wondering if they could make a little trip. Michael suggested a breakfast date the next morning. It would be Saturday morning, and everyone would have all day to talk.

Several minutes later, Susan called a second time, confirming the breakfast.

The following morning, Michael and Susan found their way to Tabitha and Theresa’s apartment. They left the car and knocked on the door.

The door opened, and they were asked in.

“Tabitha’s almost ready.” Theresa said as she closed the door behind them.

Michael and Susan looked around the tiny apartment. It was small, but it was neatly kept.

“So, any place in particular you’d like to eat?” Michael asked.

“Well, there’s one I always wanted to go to, but it’s a little expensive.”

“Then that’s where we’ll go.” Michael said quickly.

Both Michael and Susan knew the first few recruits would be the most difficult to convince. But the more time they spent with Tabitha and Theresa, the more certain they were perfect choices to come along.

“I’m ready.” Tabitha said coming into the living room.

“Great, I’m starving.” Susan replied.

After breakfast they returned to the apartment, and were just about to sit down when Michael could see the anxiousness on the sisters’ faces.

“Are you ready for a little longer trip?” He asked. The sisters nodded. “Then stand together.” And as they did, he and Susan stood to each side. He took out the communication device and spoke. “Four to teleport up please.” And in a moment they were bathed in soft white light momentarily and found themselves standing in the teleporter room.

“No car?” Tabitha asked.

“I like this way better. I use the car when I don’t have a private place to come and go from. Now, to the bridge.”

Once on the bridge he ordered the ship to repeat the trip to Saturn he and Susan had enjoyed not that long ago. The sisters were equally awed, and eventually simply looked at the rings, and pointed out things that captured their interest. The ship’s computer would announce approaches to the moons, and they would shift their attention to look at the new sight.

“So, ready for more?” Michael asked after several orbits. “Computer, display Zanthia on monitor one.” And the computer did so.

“This is Zanthia. Not that much different from Earth. It has two moons instead of one. I’m not a geologist, but that might be why the continents are smaller, but more numerous. There’s no life above that of bugs.”

“Bugs?” Theresa asked.

“Yes, I can play the whole recording for you sometime. But the short of it is, they poisoned the planet, and every life form above that of simple bugs became extinct. They cleaned up the planet, but too late to save it. That’s why we’re here, after all.”

“Wow.” Was all Tabitha could say.

“Did you say there was a settlement?” Theresa asked.

“Yes, ZanTan. The capital city. They turned it into a city wide museum. It’s been maintained ever since.”

“So, uhm, what do we do when we get there?” Tabitha replied.

“Good question.” Susan answered. “It’s totally up to you. We’re going to rebuild a civilization, a culture. So we study what is there, and learn and apply, and build.” There was a pause as the sisters’ thought about it.

“I don’t know. I don’t know if I’d like to live on a planet without birds and animals.” Tabitha replied.

“Then don’t.” Michael said after a bit.

“Yes, what a great idea.” Susan added. She looked at the sisters’ bewildered looks. “I’ve been studying the medical information. And they’ve mastered stasis ability. I’m sure there’s enough technology in the computers that would allow you to catch and store any living animal you want. Then we transport it to Zanthia, and repopulate the planet with whatever species we want.”

“I…” Tabitha started to reply.

“Come on, this is a dream job for a couple zoologists, isn’t it? You can travel all over the world. Collecting animals everywhere you go, and repopulating another planet. You’re building a zoo on a planetary scale.”

“How would we travel around the world?” Theresa replied.

“This ship will transport you, and I bet it could manufacture anything you may need to make the capture easier.”

“There’s lots of storage space in the levels below.” Michael said. “And with stasis technology, I’d think you could really pack a lot of animals along for the trip.”

He thought for a moment, and then added.

“Actually, you make a very good point. I think it’d be wonderful to see birds flying in the skies of Zanthia again. And maybe going fishing. You could make that possible.”

“Hey, I’ve got an idea; pose a hypothetical question, in your classes. Or ask your teachers. See what they have to say.”

“Come on.” Susan said. “I can see it in your eyes. You want the challenge, don’t you.”

The sisters looked at each other, then nodded to each other.

“OK, we’ll come along.” Theresa said.

“Yes, we’ll do it, as long as I can bring some birds.” Tabitha added.

“It’s you call.” Michael replied, and Susan nodded in agreement. “But you have to finish school first.”

“Meanwhile, Theresa, we’ll help you out. We’ll pay off your existing debts. Make sure you have money, and the two of you can start your collecting as soon as you’re ready.”

They went on to explain the financials of their quest. Michael gave both sisters communication devices and digitizers, explaining how they work.

Then, they broke orbit and headed back to Earth. As the ship settled into orbit again, Michael showed Theresa the cargo hold, while Susan was talking to Tabitha about the cabins. Once he had her in private, Michael casually flipped the ring open, and held Theresa’s arm. He played the second message into her ear. Then put the playback device away before releasing her arm. Later he managed to play the same message for Tabitha.

The next week was interesting, and a welcome change. Tabitha and Theresa started out slow, with a few tentative questions, but as they grew more comfortable with querying the ship, and taking on the challenges of capturing animals, they grew more confident. By the end of the week they were developing lists of animals to acquire. Theresa put in her notice from waitressing. And Tabitha’s classes continued.

Michael had also been successful. He had lined up three more colleges for the interview process. So the upcoming weeks would be busy for all.

Jessica

Theresa took Susan’s place helping Michael during the recruitment. She wasn’t sure what she was doing, but Susan wanted to continue working at the hospital until a new intern was found. Michael continued the one-on-one interviews with everyone that was eligible. And at night they would teleport aboard the ship and review the footage. For that purpose, Michael had the computer install a very large monitor in the common room. The first time seeing it, Susan made the comment about men needing their big-screen TVs. But she none-the-less enjoyed watching it.

After three days of personal interviews, came the Thursday group interview. They were all disappointed when no-one in the group seemed interested in the challenge.

“We were so lucky to find you two.” Susan said. “The only other person we thought might be good to come along was Jessica.”

“Oh! From our group?” Theresa observed.

“Yes.” Michael “What do you two think of her?”

“I really liked her.” Tabitha replied.

“Me too.” Theresa added.

“So, let’s call her.” Susan added.

“I just realized, it’s kind of an all or nothing deal. Once we tell somebody about this ship and our trip, there’s no turning back.”

They looked at one another and nodded.

“So we call Jessica?” Michael asked. “And we invite her to join the trip?”

After a moment where all considered carefully, they agreed.

Michael retrieved her information, and made the call. He invited Jessica to a Saturday morning breakfast with himself and Susan. She agreed to meet them at a restaurant near the college campus.

They spoke of the group interview while they ate. Susan eventually asked if she truly meant what she said about taking the challenge of starting that island settlement.

“Oh, absolutely.” Jessica replied almost instantly. “Just think of the possibilities, to create something new, and hopefully better. I’m no pie-in-the-sky liberal, I know what work is. But here’s a chance to really prove yourself, you know? I imagine a hundred or two hundred years ago people were thinking more about opportunity than they were about hardship.”

“And as a teacher, you’d be called upon to teach the children.” Susan asked. “How would you do that?”

“I think I’d bring back the one-room school-house.” Jessica said. “I would think in the early years, there wouldn’t be too many children, and they’d be of varying age. You’d have to have the older children help the younger. You’d have to concentrate on general subjects for the most part, then as the kids turned into teenagers, maybe bring back the master-apprentice learning model. At least until the population got big enough to sustain more formal higher education.”

“Hmm.” Michael replied impressed. He had considered some of this as well. “Have you started looking for a teaching position yet?”

“I’ve started sending out letters. But nothing yet.”

“Interesting.” Susan said. “Well, Michael and I would like to offer you a challenge.”

“Really?” Jessica replied. “I thought HDM was a mining corporation.”

“Well, it is.” Michael replied. “But we have very diverse needs. If you’d be willing to take a short drive with us, we’d like to show you where you’ll be working.”

Michael had managed to play the first message for Jessica while Susan had excused herself. Jessica only needed to consider for a moment before she agreed.

They made their way to the car, and drove a few miles out of town to an empty stretch of road.

“It’s a little weird the first time.” Susan said.

“Here we go.” And Michael pushed the button.

Like the times before, they rematerialized in the cargo hold.

“Not a very glamorous introduction.” Susan observed as she got out of the car. “But I promise it’ll get a lot better. Come on, we’ll show you.”

Jessica, for her part was struck into silence. She merely managed to look around at everything she could as she followed Michael and Susan out of the cargo hold down the corridor, and up to the common room.

“Welcome aboard.” Theresa greeted her as she topped the stairs.

"I'm Tabitha." Tabitha said introducing herself.

"And I'm her sister Theresa." Theresa said shaking her hand. "We met a few weeks ago at the group interview?"

"Oh yes, I remember now." Jessica finally managed to speak.

"Come, let's show you the bridge and the view." Susan said. They made their way to the bridge, and like the others, Jessica was just as awestruck.

"Please, sit." Michael said offering her a chair. "We have a story to tell you, and we won't be offended if you continue to look out the window."

He told his tale, and even though he thought Jessica was lost in the view, he believed she heard and understood most of it.

"Now for the good part," Susan added. "Would you like to see the ship take a little trip?"

Jessica nodded. "Yes, it's incredible."

"Great." Michael said. "There's something I want to do on Mars." He pressed the command button, gave the order, and the ship started the twenty minute trip arriving in orbit around the red planet.

"It's beautiful isn't it?" Theresa asked. Jessica merely nodded as she watched the red landscape go by below.

"Now, if you ladies will join me in the teleporter room." Michael asked. "There's something the nerd in me wants to do."

They gathered in the teleporter room, then Michael pressed the command button.

"Computer, as we discussed yesterday, please bring the first aboard."

"Acknowledged. Commencing radio intercept and jamming." The computer voice replied. "Teleporting."

They watched as a six wheeled vehicle appeared on the teleporter platform.

"Commence cleaning and repair." Michael replied. This was the first time any of them had seen the repair droids. Three machines, each the size of a large toaster emerged from a small doorway in the wall. Each rolled on six small wheels. They approached the rover on the teleporter pad. They circled it. As the people watched, various appendages would reach out, and scan a part. Then the part would be removed and placed on the repair droid's 'back' as it were. The part would then disappear in a miniature teleporter beam, and moments later, a new part teleported in. Michael explained.

"This is the Spirit rover. It's been broken down and dormant for some time. Occasionally NASA will try to communicate with it, without luck. The machines are repairing and replacing all that's broken."

In less than fifteen minutes, the three repair droids had gone over the entire machine replacing all broken and worn parts. Then, it came almost as a surprise when the repair droids departed.

"Sending test sequence." The computer said, and as they watched the long dormant rover went through a few test movements.

"Computer, teleport back to the surface, make sure it is in the exact same place as it was."

"Acknowledged." And they watched the rover be beamed away.

“Computer bring the other rover on board.” Michael commanded, and the scene was repeated as Opportunity was also brought on board, repaired and returned to the surface.

“Now, to give NASA a mystery to solve.” He said to the women. “Computer discontinue signal interception, and send a ‘status check’ command to both machines.”

“Acknowledged, message sent.”

“What was that?” Tabitha asked.

“Well, Spirit has been broken for a long time. And NASA has stopped trying to revive it. So, by repairing it, they’ll continue to operate them. But NASA needs to be aware that both rovers are operational again. So, I sent a status check to them. The rovers will think NASA sent it. They’ll do the check and respond accordingly. NASA, will be incredibly surprised in about 20 minutes or so, when they receive the signals that both rovers are fully operational. I suspect we’ll see some interesting news come out of it over the next couple days.”

“But I’ve had my fun. We’re here for you Jessica. You probably have a lot of questions. So let’s show you the ship, and we can talk.”

They took a quick tour of the ship and ended back on the bridge. They sat down at the central table, and started talking. The conversation was much like Tabitha and Theresa recruitment conversation only a few weeks before. And eventually Jessica asked. “What will I do?”

“It’s simple.” Susan smiled in response. “You’ll be teaching our children.”

“Speaking of children.” Tabitha asked. “What…”

“Ah, I wondered when one of you would ask.” Michael chuckled. “Remember the interview process? How you were volunteering to test an automated interviewing system?”

Jessica nodded.

“Well, that machine has the primary function of extracting eggs and sperm from the people it interviews. The questions, with the help of mild hypnotic drug were better suited for a dating site, not a job interview. Once the interview was finished, the interviewee was led to believe the questions were for job interview, and went home none the wiser.” Michael answered.

“Once we get to Zanthia, we will be able to impregnate the women with the sperm of their choice. Or, we can mix sperm and egg, and implant the egg into a woman so she can be a surrogate mother.”

“We,” Susan said. “Will carry and raise the children. We’ll have to carry surrogate children as well. We’ll need to collect a lot more donors, to have a diverse enough gene pool.”

“Wait, I was hooked up to one of those machines.” Jessica replied. “Was I…?”

“Sampled?” Michael asked. “No. Once the interview determined you had no immediate family, I was alerted, and I interrupted the automated interview, and continued with the one-on-one.”

“Each of us, in the end, will need to have several children, our own, and surrogate children.”

“Several?” Theresa asked. “I didn’t really think of that.”

“Wait a second. Don’t panic.” Michael replied. “There’s something we haven’t explained. Zanthian medicine and evolution had extended our normal lifespan well beyond a hundred of our years. And most of

that added lifespan will be in our child bearing years. So you won't have to have baby after baby after baby. You can space them out quite a bit."

"I'm sorry, I should have explained that earlier. I would understand if you change your mind. But before you jump ship, please think about it for a while. You don't have to truly decide for a quite a while. The ship isn't going to be leaving tomorrow, or the next day. I doubt we'll be ready to leave for at least a year."

"But we've gone off track." Michael said after a very long moment of silence. "Jessica, knowing all that you know, and knowing the challenge ahead, would you like to join our group? Would you like to come to Zanthia with us and help recolonize it?"

There was another long pause. Michael fully expected her to go into screaming and demand he take her back home.

"I don't know. I haven't really thought about children, but I kinda want to have some someday."

"How about this.." Michael said. "Put that aside for the moment, and think of all the rest for a bit. It was a lot for me to take in. I totally understand. So just think about the traveling and teaching part of it for now, and let the children part settle in later."

"No." Jessica replied. "I can do five or six children. I did a project for an American history class. There were frontier families in the eighteen hundreds that would have a dozen children. I think we can all handle five or six."

Jessica paused for a moment, as if rethinking her decision one last time.

"I'll do it. Count on me." She said finally. "What do we do next?"

They then explained all the financial information, and gave her a communication device, and digitizer. They continued talking through the rest of the day, they ate their first meal together on board, Jessica chose her cabin, and they spent most of the day sitting on the bridge idly talking, and looking out at the view. It was finally late when they broke Mars orbit, and returned to earth. Michael drove her home, and as he was thanking her, managed to play the second message for her subconscious to hear.

Message Three

After he dropped Jessica off, he drove around town for a few minutes, the baby conversation had scared him. He hadn't thought of their reactions. He was surprised Jessica hadn't bailed out on the spot. He realized he would have to do something to ease the women's concerns and fears. The women would need to have many children, many pregnancies, not just five or six. Somehow they would need to 'want' to be pregnant. He didn't want to abuse it, but he had to admit, he would need to plant another message in their subconscious. With that, he finally decided to return to the ship.

He teleported back aboard and found the three women waiting for him in the common room. They expressed their concerns, and talked for a few more hours before finally going to their beds.

The next morning, the women were a bit less stressed as they ate their breakfast. Theresa and Tabitha huddled around their notes on animal collection, Susan teleported back down, and then went to work. Jessica teleported aboard to talk some more, she joined Theresa and Tabitha discussion about animals, and Michael was left to consider his next recruitment efforts. He watched a few of the automated interviews, making notes, the second group went better than the first, but still seemed odd.

He called the ladies over, and together a handful of changes were made to the questions the automated script would go through. As he finished, Tabitha lingered.

"Were you thinking of something?" He asked.

"I was just wondering...." She said. She reached for the screen, and scrolled through the list of names of the sperm donors. "Dang."

"What?" He asked.

"Well, I was wondering if a guy I know had been, you know, sampled." She responded.

"My sister has it bad for the quarterback of the football team." Theresa said coming back into the conversation.

"He is pretty cute." Jessica added.

"OK, let me ask you all something. If I could procure a sample from that quarterback, how would that make you feel about our trip? Would you be more likely to go? I'm thinking of our conversation from last night, I understand your concerns. I want you all to feel good about the trip, and all that it means."

The three ladies were silent for a moment then Michael continued.

"Don't worry about an answer right now. Just think about it. And while you're thinking, think about what other ways we can attract recruits and what more we can do to persuade somebody to come along." He paused a moment again.

"So, tomorrow starts another recruitment week. Theresa, I hate to take you from your collecting, but these other two have classes, and Susan has to work. I could use your help."

"That's not a problem, I'm happy to help."

"When we get some more recruits, we can free you up to do the animal collecting, and they can all help with the interview."

"Speaking about that, who decides who to invite along?" Jessica asked.

“That’s easy, we all do. We all look at the videos, we all have input with the questions, and as a group, we decide.”

Monday morning found Michael and Theresa opening the door to a line of students. The collection went smoothly all day long. Michael decided that a mere dozen interviewing stations weren’t going to be enough, the next college, he planned on doubling it. The day passed quickly, and no candidate was interviewed personally, but at least the amount of genetic samples was very good.

Tuesday, was more of the same, but luckily there were some viable candidates for personal interviews. Theresa had to handle the front by herself most of the morning, while he did the interviews. It was almost eleven thirty, when he could rejoin Theresa. He walked out the back-most office into the machine room. He saw one of the machines waiting. In moments, Theresa was escorting a boy to that machine. He sat down and started the session. Just then a young woman put her headset down, and Theresa escorted her out. A moment later the door opened and Theresa escorted another young woman in. She was an eyeful. She stood about five and a half feet tall. She had a pretty face, but what got Michael’s attention were her breasts. The massive mams dominated her entire upper body. Large, and firm, they hung to just above her waist. She sat in the chair Theresa indicated, and put on her headset. As she sat, her breasts hovered only a few inches above her thighs. She carried an extra twenty pounds on the rest of her body, but she was still attractive, and her breasts, being so large, nobody noticed. She was still quite curvy.

Theresa walked over to him and stood looking at the newest interviewee.

“I’ve never seen a woman with boobs that huge.” She whispered.

“She’s pretty.” Michael added.

“She’s a little chunky, but with those monsters, exercise can’t be easy.”

“You sound jealous.”

“Well, maybe a little.” Theresa said after a moment. “I’m just kind of curious. I mean wow.”

They went back to the first room and sat at the desk, after about 20 minutes, he looked at the watch, and saw it was nearly lunch time.

“Why don’t you head on out and get some lunch, I’ll take over in front for a while. Bring me back a sandwich or something.. OK?”

“Sure,” Theresa said, and as they left the middle room. Michael took a seat at the desk as the students waited. Theresa took her purse, and left. There were a handful of students sitting in chairs around the room as they waited. It wasn’t long before the buzzer on his desk lit up and he silenced it.

“Who’s next?” He asked, and a geeky guy sitting raised his hand.

“Excellent.” Michael said. “A machine just finished, and I’ll be right back for you.” He went back into the second room and escorted the candidate out. He escorted the geeky guy in, and got him started. But he was slow to leave. He couldn’t help but admire the watermelon sized breasts on the girl he and Theresa talked about earlier. The buzzer went again, and he escorted another candidate in. Again his eyes lingered.

Another few minutes passed, and the buzzer sounded. He went into the middle room, and the busty brunette was just starting to stand. He looked at the indicators above the station, and sadly the light was red. This young woman had family. But he could feel his arousal as she stood and faced him. He knew he was a breast man, and here was a chance to really get to know about an extremely busty woman.

“Thank you for helping with the testing today.” He said. “Would you mind waiting for a while in here? I have some more questions I’d like to ask you, but my partner is out to lunch, so I’m here alone. Once she gets back, I’d like to ask you some more questions. It won’t take long, I promise.”

“Sure, happy to help.” She replied. He closed the door behind her, and brought in the next student.

After another fifteen minutes Theresa returned with some food for him. She went back to handling the front desk, and he made his way to the third room with his meal. He had the ring on his finger flipped open as he opened the door.

The girl moved to stand but he stopped her. He set his food down and approached her, careful not to show his palm, he extended his hand. She took it, and almost immediately became quiet.

“You will listen to everything I say, and answer my questions as honestly as possible, do you understand?”

“Yes.” She replied.

“Surely you’ve notice many men looking at your breasts. Correct?”

“Yes.”

“Do you like the attention?”

“Sometimes. Sometimes not.”

“I see. Just how big are you? And are your breasts natural or implants?”

“Triple M bra, I’m naturally large.”

“Is your mother large?”

“Yes, all the women in my family are very large.”

“Tell me about your family.”

“Both my parents work. I am the oldest. I have three sisters, and one brother.”

“Big family.”

“Yes, my dad couldn’t keep his hands off my Mom.”

“When did you breasts start to develop? And when did they stop?”

“My boobs started growing when I was ten, finally stopped last year.”

“You sound relieved. Answer honestly, do you like being so large?”

“Most of the time, yes.”

“When not?”

“When boyfriends think I’m an easy lay, and we go out, and all they do is grab my tits.”

“Thank-you. You will remember nothing of these questions. You will only remember that you really want to give me a hug before you leave.”

He pulled his hand away from hers and continued his conversation.

“I’m Michael. And you are?”

“Jacky with a ‘y’.” She replied.

“I just wanted to ask you what you thought of the interview process.”

“It was fun.” She replied. “The chair could have been a bit more comfortable.”

“Well, I can’t really control that. Is there anything you’d recommend to improve it?”

“Uhm, I’m a kind of hungry, some snacks would have been nice while we waited.”

“It is lunchtime.” Michael replied. “And speaking of hungry, my lunch is waiting. I want to thank you again for coming by, and for waiting so patiently.”

She stood as he escorted her to the door.

“Thank-you again.” He said reaching for the door.

“Your welcome.” She moved into his arms and gave him a hug. He could feel her breasts against his chest and stomach, her arms around his as he held her.

“Well, uh, thanks.” He smiled genuinely embarrassed. He handed her an envelope with some money in it. “This is for your time. Every college student can always use a little extra cash.”

Jacky left and as luck would have it, Theresa was escorting another candidate out. Theresa never saw the buxom brunette behind her as she left.

Michael had to rearrange his manhood slightly after he closed the door. He ate his lunch, and started working on the next message.

After a few minutes, he paused. He pulled out his communicator, and teleported back aboard ship. He quickly stepped from the teleporter pad, and crossed the hall into the med-room. He asked a few questions, and returned to the teleporter.

It took another half hour of writing and editing his script, before he was finally satisfied with it. He just finished recording it, when a buzzer sounded. The interviewing machine had alerted him to another potential recruit.

It was after four when the waiting room was empty. He sat with Theresa, as they waited for the machines to do their work. When the last of the machines was completed, they had the ship transport them away. The tally for the day, over one hundred women, and sixty-five men were sampled.

As the last of the machines disappeared, and the genetic material was whisked away, Michael flipped open his ring, and held it against Theresa’s arm. He played back the third message.

You will listen and understand. When you finish listening, you will consciously forget hearing it, but you will come to know these words as your thoughts, ideas, and beliefs. The more you think of the trip to Zanthia, the more you realize how much of an opportunity it represents. The more you think of it, the more you realize that being pregnant many, many times will be a good thing. Being pregnant is a wonderful, noble thing, and you look forward to having children as often as you can. You welcome and relish the changes your body will go through, and will be delighted to know these changes will be passed on to your children. You also realize that having a boyfriend on Earth will be bad idea. Dating any guy that you happen to meet will only end in trouble when you leave. Michael will have to be the man in your life. You

know you will have to share him with the other women, but the more time goes by, the more comfortable you feel about it.

He put the playback device in his pocket, and released Theresa's arm.

"So, that's about all. You want to eat out tonight, or on board?" Michael asked.

"On board, let's go to the hotel first, and go up from there."

"Good idea." When they got onboard, Theresa excused herself to take a shower. He went to his cabin, to find Susan looking at the computer view screen.

"What's up?" He asked.

"Just reading through the medical data."

"Susan, we've had this conversation before." Michael started say.

"I know, I know, I'm just reading."

He took a shower and changed clothes. He emerged from the bathroom to find Susan still at the monitor.

"Still at it?" He asked.

"There's an interesting thread here on cancer." She replied as he came up behind her. He put his hands on her shoulders to give her a message and she relaxed. After a few moments, he pressed the ring against her skin and she closed her eyes in contentment. He played the third message for her, and withdrew the ring.

"You getting hungry?" He asked.

"Wow, I lost track of time." She replied.

"Come on, let's eat. And we have interviews to watch." He took her hand and pulled her to standing. He pulled her into his arms and kissed her. Then they went to the common room. Only Theresa was there.

"Where's your sister?" Susan asked.

"Don't know. She should be here by now."

"I'll go call her." Michael said. He left and made his way to the teleporter room. He contacted Tabitha, who was in the shower, and told her they were eating on board, and her presence was needed.

She teleported on board a moment later, carrying a thick notebook.

"What's this? He asked moving beside her.

"It's notes I was taking today in class. I had asked the hypothetical question 'wink wink' about reestablishing an animal population." Interesting discussion.

He moved around behind her and looked over her shoulder. He pressed the ring against her arm. She sighed, and he played the newest message for her to hear. He put the player away, and removed his hand.

"I'm glad you understand it." He said after a moment. "It's confusing to me. Susan and your sister are in the common room. We have interviews to watch. You go ahead, I'll try to get a hold of Jessica."

Tabitha left the room, and he proceeded to contact Jessica. She teleported aboard, and like Tabitha, he managed to implant the suggestions into her thoughts.

As they ate their dinners, they watched the individual interviews. None of the candidates looked promising, but they agreed a group interview would be good. Jessica, Susan, and Tabitha would stay on board, while Theresa and Michael moderated. After the videos were finished, Theresa surprised them all.

“You all have to see this.” She said. She called up the ultra-buxom Jacky’s automated interview clip.

“My god she’s huge.” Was Susan’s reaction, followed by speculation, including; Are they real? Her back must kill her. And, my god, she could feed an army.

Michael wisely said nothing, but instead observed the women and their reaction. Both Susan and Theresa seemed the most intrigued, while Tabitha said little.

Message four.

Later that night, Michael and Susan had settled into bed. They had decided to sleep on board that night, while the other women had teleported back down.

Susan snuggled up to him and rested her head on his chest.

“I hope the other girls come around. I know the talk of multiple pregnancies kind of scared them. It scared me too. I knew we would have to be pregnant multiple times, but it didn’t really sink in.”

“Does it still scare you?” Michael asked.

“Not as much.” She replied. “I’m still getting used to it.”

They slept then. Susan awoke early, he watched her dress before she left. The image of the buxom Jacky, and Susan almost overlapped in his mind’s eye. She was sitting at the table working on her hair as he watched her. She had put on a bra, but had yet to put on her shirt. Emergency room attire wasn’t glamorous, hidden as it was under scrubs.

“So what’s going on today?”

“The same as yesterday, more interviews and more collecting.” Michael replied. “I’m disappointed, not finding more potential recruits.”

“We got really lucky with Theresa, Tabitha, and Jessica.” Susan replied. “And so extraordinary lucky the two sisters want to bring animals with us. What kind of life would it be on a planet without birds and fish, and everything?”

Michael sat up, the blanket still covering his lap. “I guess I thought finding more would be just as easy. Three girls per college, ten colleges, viola, done.”

Susan looked at her reflection a moment.

“Do you think my boobs are too big?” She asked.

“Absolutely not.” Michael replied with smile, and bit humor in his voice.

“You do seem to like them.” She replied with a smile. “Being bigger, like that girl Jacky, that would be interesting too.”

“Guilty as charged. Certified breast man.” He said raising his hand as if to take an oath.

Susan laughed, pulled on a t-shirt and kissed him. “Well, breast man, save those thoughts for later. Gotta run.” And she was out the door.

Michael watched her go, and then got up, showered and ate his breakfast. He teleported down to the hotel room, and met up with Theresa. They drove to the college and went through the days sampling sessions. There were two more individual interviews, but neither looked promising. After the second one left, Michael sat alone thinking about his conversation with Susan that morning. He remembered back to earlier discussions, she had considered reduction, he had remembered planting his suggestions, now she was thinking about being bigger. The thought of Susan being larger was in his mind’s eye, he had to admit he would love to see her be bustier. He thought about her being pregnant, and realized just how much he wanted to be the one who made her that way.

“Michael?” he heard. He shook his head a bit at the surprise.

“You daydreaming?” Theresa continued.

“Uhm, Oh! I guess I was.” He replied getting his thoughts together.

“I’m going to go get some lunch. I need you out front.”

“Oh, of course. Sorry.” They went back out front together. Theresa went out to find some lunch while he sat behind the desk and processed the students as they came in. He sat thinking about a pregnant, busty Susan for a while after Theresa had left, but then realized that all the women would be pregnant. It was a good thing he was sitting behind the desk. He looked at the female candidates, and couldn’t help but picture some of them big and pregnant. The buzzer sounded, and jerked him from his fantasies, but it took a while for him to relax, especially his penis, to the point where he could get up and walk to the second room and escort the student out.

Nearly an hour later, Theresa returned with his lunch, and they switched places. He sat down in the third room to eat his lunch, and compose a fourth message.

Wednesday was slowing down early, but they still managed over one hundred and fifty samples. They all met on board for dinner and evaluations. Again none of the candidates seemed to be potential traveling partners, but none the less, they agreed a group interview could be interesting.

Theresa started calling the other candidates as they finished their meals.

“How was work today?” He asked Susan.

“Good. I heard they finally found some new interns. I’ll be able put in my notice real soon.”

“That’s great. I know you’ve wanted to dig deeper into the ships medical information.”

“And I can go with you recruiting.” She replied.

“That’s the last of them.” Theresa said closing her phone. “Five people agreed to the group interview.”

“Great, a nice sized group.”

“I’d like to see that girl Jacky in the group.” Susan said after a moment.

“But her profile said she had family. We’d never ask her to travel with us.” Jessica replied.

Silently, Michael cheered. Jessica had used ‘us.’ He hoped the suggestions from the third message were gaining in strength.

“You sure?” Michael asked.

“Sure, it could be fun. She strikes me as a bit of a free spirit. It’ll be interesting to see how she responds.”

He looked around the room, and the women were all nodding in agreement.

“OK, Theresa, call her.”

The following afternoon, the six candidates were all gathered in the second room, a table, some drinks and snacks provided. Nobody suspected the vases arranged around the room contained small video and audio equipment. Michael and Theresa had given them all name tags. Tabitha, Jessica, and Susan were all on board the ship watching it all on the big screen in the common room.

“OK, we’re all here, ready?” Michael asked.

They all agreed.

“All right. This is a group exercise to see how you communicate and interact with one another. We want to see how you express yourself, how you convey your thoughts and ideas. Theresa?”

Theresa passed out cards to each candidate.

“Don’t worry, I had to do this exact same thing.” She said.

“Now, would anyone like to read this?”

They all sat quietly, then one girl spoke up. Even though her datasheet said she was twenty-two, she looked closer to sixteen. She was small, just an inch or so above five feet. She was slender, with short black hair, a splash of bright red highlight in it. She really didn’t have much in the way of a figure, she looked so very much out of place.

“I’ll read it.” She said in quiet voice. She sat up, put her hands in her lap, and read the card. “You have been given an opportunity to settle a previously uninhabited island. The island is very remote, and very difficult to access. For the purposes of this discussion, assume that communication with the rest of the world is all but impossible. Also, assume travel to and from the island is prohibitive. Food and shelter is available. In short, this is a one way trip. Questions to discuss: Would you go? What would you take with you? Who would you want to come along?”

Since most of the candidates were women, Michael let Theresa guide most of the conversation. She went around the room. Most of the candidates answered ‘maybe’ or ‘it depends’.

“Jacky?” Theresa asked.

“I probably would. But I wouldn’t want to leave my family behind.”

“That’s understandable. Courtney?”

“Yes, I would go.” The normally quiet one said. “Could I bring my painting supplies with me?”

“Absolutely, what you would bring is up to you.” Theresa replied.

“*We’ve got to get her out of her shell.*” Michael heard in his ear piece.

“Your paintings, what do you paint?” Michael asked.

"I do portraits mostly, but they're more like candid photos, not traditional formal portraits." She replied. "I also paint scenery and animals. Just about anything."

Michael nodded.

"Interesting, and would you paint on the trip? And after you got there? And Why?"

"I often take pictures of people, and they don't even know it. Just for a reference. Then I paint them doing ordinary tasks. Like I did a professor once as he lectured in class."

"Cool." Theresa replied. "Anybody else?" she called on another candidate, asking her to think about the trip, and hypothetically, what would she take. It took some time, but the conversation eventually started to flow.

The end of the session finally arrived, Michael signaled to one of the cameras, and the women on board discussed the candidates. Only the tiny Courtney had indicated any appetite for the challenge. And they suggested a dinner get-to-know. Michael nodded towards the camera.

They showed the candidates out the door one by one until only Courtney remained.

"Courtney." Michael said sitting down at the table next to her. "Thank-you for your time today. I'm hoping you could spare some more? Could we take you out to dinner? Our treat. We have some friends we'd like you to meet."

"Uhm," Courtney hesitated.

"Ask her to bring some of her art?" came a voice in his ear.

"Personally, I'd like to see some of your artwork." He said.

"Me too," Theresa added. Both had heard the message, and Theresa understood why. Courtney seemed to speak up when she talked about her art. She recognized a passionate person under the shyness.

"I have my sketchbook." She replied.

"Then it's a yes? Are you hungry? I saw what looked like a good steak-house on the east side of town.

"Donovan's?" Courtney replied. "My Dad took me there when I moved in my freshman year."

"Great, that sounds wonderful."

"We'll call ahead." Came a voice.

Michael gathered his notebook, he turned his back to Courtney, faced one of the cameras and moved his hand in front of him. He pointed 'up' a couple times and waited.

"Oh, got it, we'll have the ship bring everything on board. See you in a few."

"Shall we?"

Twenty minutes later, they arrived at the restaurant. Michael spoke to the hostess, and they were shown to their table.

"Excuse me while I go to the lady's room." Theresa said after they were seated.

"Could you show me some of your sketches?" Michael asked.

Courtney opened her sketchbook and scooted her chair closer to Michael's. He leaned toward her to look at the sketches, which were very good, and pressed the ring against her bare arm. Holding her there, he played the first message into her ear. Once the player was back in his pocket, he released his hand and continued looking at the picture.

"I like this one. I like how you added light."

"Thanks." Courtney replied.

"Look who I found." Theresa said as she approached. She hadn't found anyone, when in the bathroom, the ship simply teleported the other three women to her location.

"Let me introduce my friends. Susan, Jessica, and Theresa's sister, Tabitha."

The dinner progressed well, and all the women enjoyed the meal. Courtney opened up to the group but still seemed reserved somehow. Finally the meal concluded, Michael and Theresa delivered Courtney back to campus, and headed back to the hotel. They teleported back aboard, and discussed the group meeting.

"Courtney was the only shining light in that whole group."

"But something's wrong with her. She seemed to be holding back." Tabitha said.

"That's what I thought." Jessica added.

"So?" Michael asked.

"I'd love to invite her, but..." Theresa said after a moment.

"Me too, maybe some more time together?" Susan added.

"I'll try to talk to her tomorrow." Michael said. "See if I can find out what's going on.

"You want any of us there?" Tabitha asked.

"No, but I'll have a bug, so you can listen in."

"Good idea, she might be too shy if there's a bunch of us."

The next morning, Michael called Courtney, and they agreed to meet for a late lunch. He was in the Student Commons open area when she approached his table. He could see she was distraught.

"Hello, how are you doing today?" Michael asked.

"I'm fine." She replied. But clearly she was not.

"Courtney," Michael started. "Please sit, and talk to me. You're upset, what is bothering you? Maybe I can help?"

Courtney sat silently for a full ten seconds before she spoke so quietly, Michael barely heard her.

"My father." She started. "My father died."

"Your father?" Michael asked. He tapped on the table top.

"*I'm on it.*" Came a voice in his ear.

“My father died last week.”

“Oh, I’m so sorry. Why aren’t you home?”

“I can’t.” She barely whispered.

“It’s Ok. Why can’t you?”

“I. I don’t have a car. I can’t go.” She finally said.

“Yes you can.” Michael said immediately. “I’ll take you.”

“Oh, no, I.”

“Yes you can.” Michael pushed his chair back from the table they had been sitting at. “I’ll drive you.”

“But.”

“Don’t worry about it. You need to be there. I’ve been in your place not that long ago.”

“But it’s, like five hours from here.”

“Then I’ll find a hotel when we get there.”

“But.”

“Please.” Michael said. “Please let me help you.”

She looked at him for a moment unbelieving.

“Thank-you.” She said after a moment.

“Great, let’s go.” He stood and she managed to follow after a minute. He led her out to his car, and then they drove to her room. He waited patiently as she packed a bag of clothes, and they went back to his car. The next few hours she sat nearly immobile as they put the miles behind them.

“Why are you doing this?” She asked finally.

Michael thought for a moment. “I talked to some of your teachers, and they all commented on how you’ve become so withdrawn lately. You’re normally a pleasure to be around. You didn’t tell anybody about your father?”

“Uhm. No.”

“Why not? Maybe somebody could have helped you.”

“I, I don’t know.” She replied.

“Well, that doesn’t matter now, we’ll get you home. If I may ask, when’s the funeral?”

“It’s tomorrow afternoon.” She had been drawing in her sketchbook for most of the trip.

“Then I have good timing. I will take you anywhere you need to go, today, tomorrow, and the next.” Michael said. “For the time being, consider me your personal chauffeur.”

“You know, when I started college, my father helped me move in when I was a freshman.” Michael said after a moment. “He was always interested in my classes, even though he couldn’t understand the technical part of it.”

“Yea, my father was the same way. He never believed my art was ever going to be practical, but he supported me anyway. And always loved whatever I painted for him.”

Slowly, over the remaining hours of the trip, he got Courtney to open up. Occasionally, one of the women on the ship would suggest a question in his ear.

Once they arrived, they went straight to her house. It was sad watching the diminutive Courtney walk around in the small house. But she was home, and he could tell it meant something to her.

After several minutes, there was a knock on the door. A few neighbors had seen her arrive, and were coming over to pay their respects. The evening and the rest of the weekend moved in a cloud. The women had an appropriate suit teleported down to him. And he stood in the crowd at the funeral. Eventually, they found themselves driving back to the college Sunday afternoon.

While she didn’t seem happy, she did seem relieved, the worry and stress of not being able to attend the funeral had been bothering her deeply.

“So, you’re back. I’m sure the teachers would understand if you decided to take a few days for yourself.”

“I’m much better now.” Courtney replied. “My father wanted me here, graduating. It’ll help me. Give me something to do.”

“If you’re sure.” Michael replied. “I have the feeling I’ll be calling you again before the week is out. Keep next Saturday free will you?”

“Uhm, OK.” She replied. She hesitated, and gave him a quick hug. “Thanks again.”

Michael made his way back to his car and drove away. Once on board the ship, he collapsed in the most comfortable chair in their cabin, which wasn’t all that comfortable.

“That was a great thing you did.” Susan said after giving him a peck on the cheek.

He stood up after a minute’s rest, took a shower, and changed into comfortable clothes. At dinner that night, the women were all aboard, and discussing Courtney.

“I think, we should ask Courtney to come along.” Jessica said after some time. The others nodded in agreement.

“Agreed.” Michael replied. “Let her have her space for a few days. Maybe call her Wednesday evening?” Susan and Michael stayed on board, while the rest teleported back down.

“I put in my notice today.” Susan said after the rest had left. “Two weeks, and I’m all yours, all day, every day.”

“That will be wonderful.” Michael replied. “I know Theresa is anxious to start collecting.”

“I’m tired, coming to bed?” she asked.

“Yes. It’s been a long day.”

Susan rolled her shoulders and yawned, then started for their cabin.

“Shoulder bothering you?” He asked.

“It’s just a little tight. I had to move a bed today, and it got a little twisted.” They entered their cabin.

“Let me loosen it up a little.” Michael said. He pointed to a chair. “Take your shirt and bra off, and sit.”

“Well, when you put it that way.” She smiled. But stripped and sat. Michael came up behind her and started working on her shoulder. She sighed and closed her eyes. After a few minutes, she was deeply relaxed. He flipped his ring open and played the fourth message into her ear.

You will listen and understand. When you finish listening, you will consciously forget hearing it, but you will come to know these words as your thoughts, ideas, and beliefs. As the next few weeks go by, you desire larger breasts, extremely large breasts. Every day, the desire will grow a little stronger. Not a mere cup or two larger. By the end of these next few weeks you will desire truly enormous, arm filling breasts. You know that other women may become as large, or even larger. You will accept them without jealousy and will consider them almost like sisters. If presented with a way to increase your breast size naturally, you’ll embrace the chance. You know Michael is a breast man. And having enormous breasts, will make him happy. Michael’s happiness is very important to you. Carrying Michael’s babies is something you very much want to do. Carrying Michael’s babies is very special, and something you’re happy to share with the other women. You’ll do almost anything for Michael.

He put the player aside, and continued the massage for a few more minutes.

“Feel better?” He asked kissing the back of her neck.

“Yes, much better.” She stood, turned, took his hand, and led him to the bed. “It’s a good thing I’m on the pill.” She kissed him, and pulled him onto the bed.

Courtney

Michael spent the next week helping Theresa with the first of her fish captures. It didn’t take long to devise netting systems, and ways to scoop up the fish as they swam by. The ship manufactured small stasis boxes, the size of trunks. Each was self-contained, and as it was filled, it was teleported aboard directly to a cargo hold.

When Friday evening arrived, Michael dressed in some nice clothes, and teleported down near Courtney’s campus. He drove to her place, and patiently waited for her to get ready.

Even though the loss of her father had quieted her, he could see her vitality start to resurface. After dinner, Michael asked if she would like to join him on a short drive. He said he wanted to show her what his company was all about. She agreed, and as he got the check, she excused herself for the lady’s room.

“Well, ladies, any objects?” He said seemingly to himself.

“*Nope, bring her aboard.*” Came Susan’s voice through his earpiece.

“I will. Wait in the common room. No need assaulting her too soon.”

“*OK, we’ll be waiting.*”

As they drove away from the restaurant, Michael tried to explain.

“HDM has many interests, though we make most of our money from mining, it’s not our primary mission.”

They pulled to a stop on a side street.

“This next part is a little weird. Just relax.” And before she could react, he pressed the button, and they were teleported aboard.

“What was that!?!” She exclaimed as soon as she realized she was someplace else.

“That, was a teleporter, and you are now onboard a spaceship orbiting the planet.” Michael replied opening his door.

She could only respond with a questioning look.

“You’re not in any danger, and no, I’m not an alien, I’m just a guy from Chicago. The ship is from another planet, but it’s a long story.” He opened her door. “And if you come with me, I’ll explain everything.”

Tentatively she got out and followed him to the cargo hold door. He pressed the button, and the door slid open.

“I know it’s not the most glamorous way to come on board. But under the circumstances, it’s the best I can do. But it’ll get better. Come.” They reached the end of the hallway, and he gestured she climb. He watched her climb for a moment, then took to the stairs as well. She was tiny, pixie like, almost no breasts to speak of, but her butt was firm, and extremely grab-able. Her legs seemed well proportioned, despite her small frame.

They stopped at the top of the stairs, and Courtney was looking around.

“Welcome aboard.” Susan said approaching.

“Yes, Welcome.” Theresa added. “I believe you know everybody? If not, this is Tabitha, my sister. And Susan, and Jessica.”

“You’re all?”

“We’re all here to help out and we’re hoping you’ll join us.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Then let’s go up to the bridge, and you can have the best view in the house.” Susan said. They walked up to the bridge, and looked around.

“So, here’s the story.” Michael started. And he told his story.

“And we’re all recruits that will go with him to Zanthia.” Jessica added at the end. They had the computer show a picture of Zanthia on one of the side monitors. They all sat silently for a moment, then Courtney turned to Michael.

“All right, I’m in.” She said.

“Are you sure you don’t want to think about it for a while?” Theresa said. “It’s a big decision.”

“Now that my father’s gone, I have nothing here.” She said quietly. “I will have to sell the house. Which is all right, I couldn’t afford the mortgage on it anyway.”

“Are you really, really sure about this?” Susan asked.

“Yes,” She replied. “How can I help?”

“Well, if you’re really sure.” Michael said. He gave her a communication device and a digitizer, and explained how to use them.

“First, finish school. After that, we’ll figure out what to do.”

“Will I have to stay on board?” She asked. “Not that I mind. I only ask, as soon as school is done, I won’t have any place to go.”

They chatted for another hour or two, then Michael suggested it was time to take Courtney home. Once alone, he managed to dose her, and play the second message for her. Now that she had a communication device, she would be able to teleport directly from her campus apartment.

After Michael returned to the ship, he found the women waiting for him in the common room. They all expressed their concerns about living accommodations once school was done. And even though the ship provided food and clothing, if they managed to recruit a full complement of women, it would be crowded.

No solution came out of the discussion, but all agreed it would need to be solved soon. Theresa, Tabitha, and Jessica teleported down, and Susan and Michael stayed aboard. After a time, they found themselves on the bridge.

They stood, looking out the viewports.

“You know, as much as I look forward to going, I’m going to miss this place.” Susan said after a moment.

“Me too. I’ve been thinking that it might be good not to cut all ties with Earth.” Michael replied. “The computer says it could build a satellite that would transmit back and forth to Zanthia. It could capture TV and radio, and transmit them. It’d be a few hour delay, but we could see what’s going on.”

“I think that’d ease the minds of anyone we could recruit, knowing we’re not totally cut off.”

“There’s something else I was hoping to ask you.” Michael said after a moment. “I was wondering, once you’re done at the hospital, if you’d move in me?”

“I’d love to.” She replied almost instantly. “But your apartment’s tiny, smaller than mine. I only took mine because it was close to the hospital.”

“How about we find a totally new place together?” Susan suggested after another moment.

An idea came to him. “You know, I’ve got an idea.” He said. “A town house. There’re those new gated communities? You know the ones that have both town-houses and apartments?”

“Yea,” Susan said.

“Well. We get a town-house for ourselves. A nice big one, so we can get together with the rest of the women, someplace off the ship. And then we get apartments for the rest of the ladies.”

“Excellent.” Susan said picking up on his thoughts. “And when we’re truly ready to leave, they can just ‘move out’.”

“That’s what I was thinking.” Michael said.

“Come on lover, let’s go to bed. I have to work tomorrow, could I talk you into a massage?” She asked.

“Of course.” Michael replied. They went to their cabin. As Susan took a shower, Michel got ready for bed. She came out, and laid down on the bed. He moved over her and starting working on her shoulders and back.

“That always feels so good.” She sighed in contentment. After a few minutes, he carefully pressed his ring against her shoulder and put her under. While she was out, he reached for his playback device, and pressed play.

You will listen and understand. When you finish listening, you will consciously forget hearing it, but you will come to know these words as your thoughts, ideas, and beliefs. As the next few weeks go by, you will start researching the genetic changes needed to take advantage of the longer lifespan and longer child-bearing years, the Zanthian evolution will give us. You will also choose to research naturally enhancing your breasts. You desire much larger breasts, but you also want your breasts to be firm and full, no matter how large. You will make larger, firmer breasts as part of the changes for all the women on the trip. You know Michael is a breast man, and making all the women on the trip bustier would make him very happy. You'll do almost anything for Michael.

Like before, he put the player away, and removed his ring from her skin. She sighed again as he continued the massage.

“Thank-you lover.” She said after a time. She got under the covers, and when he joined her, she snuggled next to him.

“I think I’m going to dig deeper into the Zanthian medical library. I want to look at the changes we need to make. Who knows maybe there will be something I can do to make my boobs bigger.” She said half asleep.

Already nearly erect, he could feel his penis jerk in reaction.

“I can see you agree.” She giggled as her thigh rubbed against it.

“What can I say, I’m guilty of being a breast man.” He replied.

She kissed his shoulder. “I don’t mind at all.” It was late, and they both knew it. So they snuggled in for sleep.

Growing Girls, Part One

The next few weeks passed quickly. Michael and Susan found and bought a townhouse. Using the ship’s teleporter, it took only hours for Michael and Susan to move in. Both were wonderfully happy to have a bigger, better place to share.

Each of the other women took apartments in the nearby complexes. They wouldn’t be moving until their classes were done, but that would happen soon enough.

And their recruiting continued. Even though they didn’t find any recruits to bring along on the trip, they did manage to surpass a thousand donations for the gene pool. Graduation ceremonies came and went. Everybody attended every graduation. Courtney, being the most recent one of the group to be without family was very emotional.

After the parties were done, thoughts turned to the trip ahead. They moved into their apartments, and started their tasks. Courtney and Tabitha paired up, collecting various birds. Jessica assisted Theresa collecting fish.

One evening Susan asked Michael to teleport aboard. She had a surprise for him.

“So what’s up?” He asked as they exited the teleporter room.

She led him into the medical room and moved to one of the computer screens.

“This.” She said indicating a drug specification on the computer screen. “You’re the only one that can authorize genetic enhancing drugs.”

“Really?” He asked.

“Yes, the ship considers you the leader, so, it won’t do it for me.”

“What’s the drug?”

“It’s for me, to make the genetic changes for me to be up to date with Zanthian evolution.” She said. Then paused, “Plus a couple extras I thought of.”

“Uhm…”

“OK, first off, most of it is the longevity, health, etcetera. But I’ve been, well, I’ve been wanting bigger boobs for a long time now, and with this I can have all natural, larger breasts. And no, I’m not saying how big. You’ll just have to wait and see. I also tweaked some stuff to make sure my boobs are nice and firm and don’t sag.” She paused. “The other thing, and I wanted your thoughts, was I upped my fertility a bit. Having one baby at a time, it’d take dozens of generations to have a good population. But if I were to have twins, and the other women had twins, then everything would go so much faster. So what do you think?”

“I don’t know what to say.” Even though he had been hoping for this, he was still surprised at the enormity of it all.

“Just press the button, and authorize the drug.” Susan said softly.

“I have a question about the fertility part. Will your daughters and grand-daughters be just as fertile?”

“I thought about it, but the population growth would be too fast. So no, OUR daughters and grand-daughters won’t be any more likely of having twins than right now here on Earth.”

He looked at her a moment, and did as she asked. A moment later, the computer produced the syringe filled with the injection, and placed it on the table. He picked it up, held it in his hand and looked at her.

“Are you sure about this?” He asked.

She rolled up her sleeve and turned her arm toward him. “Absolutely sure, I want your babies inside me. I want our children, drinking milk from my big boobs.”

He looked at her a moment longer, saw the sincerity in her eyes, and gave her the injection.

“Thank-you lover.” She said. She kissed him deeply. “Now, one more thing.” She reached for a small box sitting on the counter. She opened it and showed him a bracelet.

“What’s this?”

“It’s a fertility meter.” Susan said. “A woman is fertile for five days of her cycle. See these five stones? Each one lights as each of those five days go by. The fourth day is optimum, but the other days, there’s a chance too. I thought it’d be a good idea if all of us wear one.”

“Good idea. But if I may suggest, let’s add your name on it, and add a tracking signal. In case you’re lost or something we can locate you.”

“And get Courtney’s input. To make it pretty. Maybe come up with different designs.” Susan added.

“Exactly.”

“One more thing.” She said after a moment. “I’d rather stay on the pill, but the computer said that wasn’t a good idea, at least for the next few months. The computer cautioned against pregnancy for the next two, preferably three cycles. So you better stock up on condoms mister.”

“Hence the bracelet?” Michael asked still holding it in his hand.

“Yes. I want our babies to be perfect. So we have to be careful for a while.”

“We will be.” He said after a moment. “We will.”

They teleported back down and started the evening festivities. That night, they hosted a barbeque for the rest of the women, and invited some of the neighbors over. As the evening progressed, Susan managed to take each of the women aside and explain what she had done. She chose to omit the breast enhancement and fertility increase. They’d find out about that soon enough.

After the neighbors had left, and they had cleaned up, they all sat around the living room talking.

“So, this is a fertility meter.” Susan said finally. “It’ll show when we’re most likely to become pregnant.” She handed it to Courtney. “I know it’s not all that pretty. You think you could design a few bracelets?”

“I’m not very good at jewelry, but I know a guy from school that was. Can I ask him?” She answered.

“Just make sure it has to have the five stones in it.” Susan added.

“And a place for a name.” Michael added.

“It’s kind of like those medical bracelets I see sometimes.” Tabitha said.

“That’s what gave me the idea.” Susan said.

“Tell him we’ll pay him. If he could come up with a bunch of designs, no need to tell him anything about what it’s for.”

“Got it.”

“You know, the bracelet is a good idea and all. But what about the kids? And the guys?” Theresa asked.

“Maybe a bracelet for the guys? Or a necklace?” Jessica asked. “It only needs the locator part of it. And can have a more masculine design.”

“Or a watch?” Tabitha suggested. “Nope, never mind. It’d be too easy to take off.”

“And young girls, a simpler bracelet without the jewels?” Courtney suggested.

They all nodded.

“Good, I’ll send him an email when I get home.”

The next week, Susan and Michael continued the sampling and recruitment tour. Over the summer they concentrated on smaller two-year colleges, hoping to find kids that were working their way through school. The turn-out was low; they managed only ninety samples over the first three days, and there were no kids called in for group interviews.

The following week, the story repeated itself at another small college. But there were changes, specifically in Susan. By the end of the week, her roomiest bra was no longer roomy. She filled it beyond its maximum. And Michael couldn't help but notice.

"Definitely need a new bra." She said as it sprung off her. She turned to face him. "You like?"

"Absolutely." He said, he was relaxing on their bed watching her undress.

"They are definitely bigger, and firmer than ever." She slipped her thumbs under her panties, slid them down over her hips, and let them fall to the ground. She stepped out of them, and walked to the bedside. "Hormones are kicking in too. It's like I'm sixteen again, horny, horny, horny."

She straddled his body and kissed him.

"I'm not complaining." He said as their lips parted.

She laughed, then reached to the bed stand and withdrew a condom. "It's a cushy job, but somebody has to do it, right?" She rolled the condom down his erection, then spiked herself onto him. She got comfortable, then slowly started her up and down motions.

"Feel me. Feel my boobs." She said as she started to loose herself in the feelings. He moved his hands up the side of her body and cupped her breasts in his hands, more than a handful, he slowly squeezed them, she panted as her first orgasm was powering through her. She collapsed forward, her hands on the headboard, her breasts dangling in her face.

"Oh so good." She moaned, then started her humping again.

"You want to slow down a little?" He said between licks to her distended nipple.

"No, gotta, gotta keep going.. Feels too good to stop." She panted and her gyrations continued. "Too bad you're wearing a condom, want to get pregnant so bad!" And she crashed down on him again, her second orgasm of the night. She collapsed onto him, panting, her hips still slowly gyrating. "Please, fuck me more. I want it so bad."

He pushed her to a side, then propped her up on her hands and knees, he held her hips as he entered her from behind. Soon she was shaking through another long orgasm as he worked back and forth. Her orgasm had been so strong, she hardly had any strength to clamp down upon him as he made love to her. He could see the sides of her breasts as they wobbled back and forth. He tried to reach for them, but when he released his hold on her hips, she tended to collapse under him. Exhausted, she could not hold herself up. She could only pant and moan in ecstasy, urging him to continue as orgasm after orgasm crashed through her. Finally, Michael could feel his own passion rise. He pumped into her as fast as he could, then buried himself as deep as possible as his own sperm rose and flooded through his penis. Once he finished, he released her and she collapsed in a panting heap beneath him. He got up, wobbled to the bathroom and cleaned up. He returned a few minutes later to find Susan hadn't moved. Susan was totally limp as he moved her legs to make room.

"You were incredible." He said kissing her shoulder.

"Hormones to make boobs bigger are making me so horny."

"Maybe you better dial it down for the other women."

"Oh heck no." Susan said. She managed to move one arm to drape across his body. She pulled herself to him and flopped down partially on top of him.

“Every woman needs to know how mind blowing this is.” She said. She was half asleep as she spoke her next words. “Every woman needs to have big boobs. They’re... awesome.” And she was out.

He awoke the next morning to find Susan had managed to roll off him during the night. She lay on her side facing him, the blanket barely covering her waist and hips. He admired her perfectly shaped breasts as she lay sleeping, one neatly perched atop the other, nipples projecting almost perpendicular to her body. After a few moments of enjoying the view, he got out of bed and showered. He returned to dress to find Susan had rolled onto her back, the blanket still covering her waist, but her breasts were still proudly on display. He pulled on some jeans and a t-shirt, then went to the bed to kiss her. She awoke after a moment, and returned the kiss.

“Good morning lover.” She said after their lips parted.

“Good morning.” He replied. “How do you feel?”

“Yummy.” She replied. “Tired, happy, and all fuzzy/sexy inside. And I can’t wait to do it all again.”

“Well, we’re going to have to wait. I’m hungry, and we promised we’d help Theresa and Tabitha this weekend.” Michael replied.

“I know.” She groaned, but managed to sit up. She worked herself from bed, and slowly made her way into the bathroom and her own shower.

An hour later, Michael found himself in the middle of a wood in Kentucky. Tabitha was with him, and they were quietly setting up a tent.

“So what are we after today?” He whispered.

“Wrens.” She replied just as quietly. The birds were singing in the trees. She set up the collecting equipment, and together they sat and started looking for birds.

Time went by as they searched the trees. It took time, but their eyes grew accustomed to searching. They spied several birds, none the elusive wren.

“Why not get the other birds?” Michael asked after a while.

“They’re not on my list.” She replied.

“Does it matter?” He answered. “Shouldn’t we just get everything we can? We can always NOT release the birds once we get to where we’re going. And, besides wouldn’t all the birds in the area represent a more complete picture of the wildlife?”

“Good point.” They switched to collecting every bird they could find. Mostly small birds, but ideally suited for the first wave of releases on Zanthia.

By lunchtime, they were frustrated with their lack of success, and packed everything and left.

“There’s got to be a better way of finding the birds.” Tabitha said, venting an old frustration. “We sit in the woods for hours with a handful of birds to show for it. Theresa has it easy, she just casts a net, and gets everything, and viola, she’s done.”

They queried the ship’s computer, and eventually arrived at a solution. A device that could determine the location of any animal life within a few hundred yards, it was then connected to their targeting equipment. They teleported back down, and within minutes they were collecting bird after bird. Within an hour, they had filled nearly a dozen stasis boxes. Each the size of a briefcase, but twice as thick, would hold as many as ten small birds, or a half dozen larger birds. After a couple hours, the woods were quiet, there were no

birds left within the area. Michael suggested they leave, but Tabitha said no. They quietly waited, and after another fifteen minutes, they heard a bird chirp. They determined its location, and captured it easily.

“This is probably a mate to one we already caught.” She said after they had put in a stasis box. “I’ll have to go through them again and catalog what’s inside every box. But that part’s easy.” They stayed until evening. It had stayed quiet, and Tabitha finally conceded that they had gotten all the birds in the immediate area. The equipment was taken aboard.

After the last of the equipment was gone, Tabitha settled into the camp chair beside him.

“Can I ask you something?” She asked.

“That sounds ominous, but go ahead.” He replied with a smile.

“Why?” Tabitha started. “Why are you doing this?”

“Ooh, deep question.” Michael said, stalling for time. “Oh I don’t know, I guess lots of little things. I thought about it for a long time before I told Susan, and I think it’s the challenge. I don’t have much of anything here. But when we get there, I can do and be somebody. Here, I’m just another guy on the street. What about you?”

“I would never have gotten a job doing anything like this. Had our parents lived, we would have helped them; A family operation. Now, Theresa and I get to do something that nobody has ever done before.”

There was snap of wood and they both stopped, sitting perfectly still. Slowly from behind some brush, a deer emerged.

“Isn’t she beautiful!” Tabitha whispered excitedly. “I wish we could take her along.”

“Why not?”

“Just not enough room.” Tabitha sighed. “I’d love to take the larger animals, but we have to concentrate on the basics.”

“Yet another problem to solve.” He said with a sigh.

“Hey, it’ll be fine.” She said. She stood from her chair and sat down on his lap, before he could react, she kissed him full on the lips.

“What the?”

“I’ve wanted to do that for a while.” She said, then kissed him again. She opened her lips, and forced her tongue between his. She worked her body against his. Her passions rose, and Michael put his arms on her waist. He ran his hands down to her ass and pulled her closer. She furiously kissed him for a moment then pulled away. She reached back and whipped off her t-shirt so quickly, her breasts, bobbed and her hair flew as if wind whipped.

She leaned back, reached into her pocket, take out two condoms and hold up for him to see.

“I…” Michael started, then watched Tabitha

“Who do you think gave me these.” She said.

“I, I don’t know what to say.” Michael said.

“Fuck now, talk later.” She replied, took his hand and pulled him into the tent. She knelt on her knees, and unbuttoned her jeans, and in one movement pulled them and her panties down.

“Come on, hurry up.” She said. She reached behind her and unsnapped her bra. She fell forward onto her hands and offered herself to him.

“Come on.”

Michael couldn't resist any longer. He dropped to his knees behind her, dropped his pants and quickly put a condom on. With little ceremony, he approached her and started inserting himself into her. Insulated by the condom, he couldn't feel her moistness. But he could sense it as he slid in, a little at a time.

“Oh yea, you're so nice and big. Keep going, I want you so bad.” She panted. Soon he was totally within her and she started moving her hips against him.

“Do me now baby. Do me good.” She moaned. She leaned forward, then back again. Seeing she was ready, he took her hips in his hands and started thrusting.

“Oh yea.. just like that!” She panted. “Someday.. someday.. we'll have.. have to do it.. do it without protection.. want you.. want you.. you gotta knock me up.. knock me up.. oh!” She screamed.

He leaned forward, reached around her and took her boobs in his hands.

“Oh yes! Squeeze my tits! Oh! Yes! Feel my tits in your hands. Fuck me, cum baby. Make meeeee!” and another orgasm shook her. And he pumped on. “Oh yes.. it'll be so good... So good when I'm.. when I'm.. I'm.. pregnant.. so good... you.. you.. you can.. can do me any... anytime...”

“Ah!!” He moaned, and he released his load. The mental image she painted was too good for him to hold out any longer. He slammed into as far as he could and released.

“Feel you!” She panted with her fourth orgasm.

He pumped for several more moments, then held himself against her for a few moments, then withdrew. He noted that the condom was still intact, as he sat back on his knees. She collapsed forward and rolled onto her side.

“Oh my god.” She said after a moment. She rolled onto her back to catch her breath. He laid down beside her. After a few moments, she rolled towards him, took his penis in his hand and started working him to a second erection.

“No wonder Susan is smiling all the time.” She said. She kissed him several times while working his manhood stiff.

“Oh yes, this is mine.” She said, then quickly added. “For now.” She rolled on top of him, and speared herself onto him.

“I, I know I have to share you...” she started to pant. Already soaring through another orgasm. “So.. So.. God! Oh! Oh! Yes! Yes! Yes!” she worked with her strokes, her boobs bouncing merrily with her efforts. He held her hips as she worked.

“AAHHHH!!!” she finally screamed and squirted juice over their joining. He couldn't control his efforts any longer and exploded into the awaiting condom for the second time. She shook through her orgasm, then moved to lay beside him. Each slow movement she made, ignited aftershocks. Finally she was flat on her back, catching her breath. It took several minutes before her breathing returned to normal, and the random orgasmic quakes had subsided.

“Thank-you lover.” She said finally. “I’m thirsty.”

He looked around, found the canteen, and handed it to her. She sat up, drank a few swallows, and collapsed again.

“I suppose we should be getting back on board.” He said after she relaxed against him.

“I wish we didn’t have to, but you’re right.” She replied and reached for her shirt. Just then, the communicator chirped.

Michael reached for it, and pressed the transmit button. “Yes?”

“Michael? Are you just about done down there?” Theresa’s voice came through.

“Uhm. Yes.” Michael replied. He saw Tabitha frown and pick up her shirt.

“Good. We wanted to have dinner together on board tonight. You coming?”

“Be there in a few minutes.” Michael said. Then released the transmit button. “Sorry.”

She stood, pulled up her panties, then her pants. Michael started dressing as well.

“Sorry we couldn’t do this, you know.” He said gesturing to the tent around them.

“What in a fancy bed somewhere?” She asked. She bent down to retrieve her shirt and bra. She started to put on her bra, thought better of it, and tossed it to him, then pulled her t-shirt over her head.

“I’m an outdoor girl. I prefer doing it out here.” She pulled her shirt down, then pulled her hair out of it and fixed it in a ponytail.

“As long as I can get clean afterwards.” She added. “Come on, we better get aboard. We both need showers before dinner.” And she was out the tent. He followed her quickly. In moments they were back on board the ship, headed for their cabins and their showers. So amazed as he was by the last twenty minutes, he didn’t notice that he still held her bra until he started undressing. He couldn’t resist his curiosity as he examined the tag.

“34D. Hmm. Not for much longer Tabs. Definitely, have to make you bigger than Ds.” He said. As he showered, he thought about the girls. Each was unique, and he thought of giving each a customized dosage. He could do anything he wanted with them. He realized he had set himself up as the master of his own little harem.

He thought of each woman. Tabitha, was pretty and smart. But in his mind, she was first and foremost, extremely fuck-able. She spoke openly of how she wanted to get pregnant. He recalled seeing another woman, years ago, nearing full term, her breasts enlarged with the milk her baby would soon be suckling. It was easy to imagine Tabitha bulging in breast and belly, ready to feed the baby, or babies within her womb.

Next he thought of Theresa, taller, more refined than her blonde bomb-shell of a sister. She’d be bigger too, he decided, but not so large it’d detract from her grace.

Third he thought of Jessica. Whenever he thought of her, ‘midwest farmer’s daughter’ kept flashing in his mind. Her flaxen hair tied in pigtailed, he pictured her buxom figure in cut-off jean shorts and plaid shirt tied below her breasts. Bare midriff, and ample cleavage completed the picture.

Then, finally he thought of petite little Courtney. She reminded him of a girl he went to middle-school with. At the end of one school year, she was just as tiny, and petite as Courtney. The next fall, she came back with DDs stretching out every shirt she owned. Everything else about her stayed tiny, but her breasts

seemed huge in comparison. He pictured Courtney the same, though he had to admit DDs were too small for his tastes.

He finished his shower and joined the rest in the common room for dinner. Tabitha was excited to tell how they had changed their capture methods and Theresa had also caught her fair share of fish and river life as well.

Courtney was both sad and happy all at the same time. They finished their meals, and sat talking and laughing. Michael looked at each woman and finalized his thoughts.

“Ladies,” He said after a time. “I have a question to ask of you.”

The women all quieted down to listen.

“As you know, there are some slight genetic changes that will be needed for each of you to have the longer lifespan Zanthia has for us. It is merely an injection. I’ve already had mine.”

“And I’ve had mine.” Susan added.

“And if you’re truly, truly committed to going, I think it’s time you all got yours.” The women looked at each other.

“I know you’ve all said you wanted to go. But up until now, any of you could have changed your mind. What you’re being asked to do is no small commitment. You’ve had some more time to talk about it, to think about it. Now is the time to commit to going, or staying.”

They all sat quietly. Then quietly Courtney stood.

“I want to show you something.” She said, she turned and proceeded up the corridor to her cabin. The rest followed, curious. She opened the door, and stood to one side. They looked inside to find the room packed, floor to ceiling with boxes. The double bed had been swapped out for a small single bed. There was barely a path between the bed and the closet, and the bathroom.

“This is what Jessica and I did today. I went through my house, and packed what I wanted to bring with me. All of this, is my life; my memories of my father, of my mother, and growing up. It is here. And I am taking it with us.”

She looked up and Michael. “I’m ready for my shot, whenever you are.”

Michael looked at Susan, who nodded. The other women nodded their agreement.

“Well, since you’re all agreed.” Michael said after a moment. “Courtney, you’re first.” He led her to the medical room, and she sat on the table. Michael went over to the computer and called up the genetic drug Susan had fashioned earlier. He dialed in a G cup breast size, then considered where to set her fertility. He first considered increasing it just a little. Then realized she would want to be equal to the other women, anything less would be unfair. The injection made, he asked one last time if she was sure, she in turn rolled up her sleeve and turned her arm towards him. He gave her the injection, and put the injector away.

“Now, about the bracelet?” He asked.

“I have one picked out.” She replied. He showed her the prototypes her friend had designed, and she chose the third one. Within moments, the new bracelet materialized on the counter.

“Left or right?” He asked. And she held out her left arm. He put the bracelet on her and with a hand-held tool fastened the links so the bracelet wouldn’t accidentally come off.

“Now, it’ll take at least three months before the genetic changes are spread to your eggs.”

“I understand.” She said hopping off the table. They walked to the door, and opened it to find the rest of the women standing there.

“I’m next.” Jessica blurted before the others two could speak. And she stepped into the room.

“Uhm, OK.” He said, and pressed the lock button on the door. She sat on the table and he called up the drug on the computer again. Jessica’s C cups were obviously larger than Courtney’s Bs. So she’d end up with GGs, probably. Like Courtney, he asked her one last time. And like Courtney, she turned his shoulder to him for the shot. Once complete, she chose a platinum bracelet, and he fashioned it to her right arm.

Next came Theresa, he pulled up the same dosage as he had just given Jessica. He reasoned this would become the standard shot. There would be exceptions of course, and the first exception was the last to enter.

Tabitha got on the table and her still bra-less D-cups bounced and jiggled under her white t-shirt. Michael could feel his pulse quicken. He went to the computer and called up the standard dosage, but then altered it. Tabitha was going to get a double helping of breast enhancement. If he judged correctly, she’d end up somewhere in the J-cup size. He caught his breath as he presented her with the injection. He was almost afraid to ask.

“Well, what are you waiting for?” She said after a moment, and turned her arm towards him. He gave her the shot, and then she picked out a bracelet for herself.

“There, we’re all done.” He said as they left the medical room.

The next day, he went with Theresa to collect more fish, this time, in Colorado. It only took a few hours to collect all the fish and wildlife in the hundred yards of river they walked. Five more trunk sized stasis boxes were beamed aboard. Mid-afternoon, they were sitting at their tent relaxing. Theresa had been thinking about moving to another stream for more. But at the moment, they were sitting relaxing.

“Can I ask you something?” She said after a moment of silence.

“Sure.”

“The shot you gave us yesterday. It’ll make our boobs bigger, won’t it?”

“Uhm.”

“It’s OK if it does. I wouldn’t mind some extra up top. I noticed that Susan looks a bit bigger.” She took his canteen from his hand and set it aside. Much like Tabitha just the day before, she sat on his lap, this time sitting on both his legs as she faced him. She held his face with both hands, and then kissed him.

“I want you.” She said after her lips parted. “But I’m going to wait. Once we get to Zanthia, I’ll find someplace beautiful, and you and I will do it there.” And she kissed him again.

July 5th

All had slept at the town-house overnight. All groggily stirred awake with the sound of Michael banging pots in the kitchen. Soon the breakfast aromas made all the girls stir. All had started noticing changes in themselves, their appetites had increased and all had been complaining their clothes weren’t fitting like they should. As they sat around the breakfast table, Michael looked at them all.

“Ladies,” He said after a moment. “I think we should take the next couple days off. You’ve all been complaining about your clothes. So I want you all to go shopping. Go buy yourselves new clothes.”

“Can we take the car?” Susan asked. She knew how much the mustang parked in the garage meant to him.

“Sure, go ahead, I can do some things on board if I need to.” Michael replied. They chatted as they finished their meals. They realized they needed to stock up, so they started to plan. Michael noticed that as the last month had gone by, all the women had become even more adept at planning for the trip and life on Zanthia once they got there. They cleaned up their meal, and then Michael drove the girls to their apartments while Susan showered. Once he got back, he sat at the table reading through his notes. After a few minutes, Susan joined him.

“You sure you don’t want to come along?” She asked.

“No go ahead, you girls have fun.” He replied.

“What are you working on?” She asked.

“Oh, nothing important, just catching up on my notes.” He said pointing to his papers.

“Well, the girls are probably ready.”

“Already? I thought you women took forever to get ready.” He said joking.

“Not when it comes to shopping.” She laughed. She kissed him, and took up the car keys. “See you later.”

“See ya.” Michael replied, and she was out the door. A half hour later, he teleported up, and asked some questions, and started some of his plans in motion. He’d leave them to be surprises when the time was right. The women came home late in the afternoon, each carrying two or three bags. They found him at the dining room table sitting in front of his laptop

“Hey, looks like you had fun.” He said standing and giving Susan a kiss.

“Oh yes, great fun.” She replied. She put the bags on the table, and the rest of the women added theirs.

“This is all yours?” He asked Susan.

“Yup.” Susan replied.

“We cheated.” Theresa added. “We had the ship teleport stuff as we bought it.”

“We stocked up a little. Most of what we bought is upstairs.”

Michael, at first was astounded, but after a moment of thought reconsidered.

“You’re right, of course.” He said. “I was preparing for sticker shock for a while there. But then I realized you’re right. You’ll eventually need clothes for all the seasons.”

“Hard to get winter clothes in July.” Tabitha said. She looked at the computer screen. “What’s this?”

“Oh, I was just fiddling. I was curious to see what kind of population growth to expect.”

“You showed this to me a while ago.” Susan said.

"I changed it a little this time. Before I was assuming all the ship's cabins were full; thirty women. Considering how difficult it has been to find ladies such as you to come along, I thought I'd only count just you five. It changes the numbers a lot."

"Oh! I want to see." Courtney added. "What are we looking at?"

Michael sat down and moved the cursor to the upper left of the spreadsheet.

"OK, this is absolutely best case scenario. I'm assuming that each of you ladies has twins each year, every year."

"Best case?" Susan asked.

"All right, how about 'fastest growing case'" Michael replied. "The first column is total population, second, adult men, third adult women, and the rest children from one to nineteen. Just for sake of numbers, I am assuming that the women won't start having children of their own until they turn twenty. And finally baby births will be half boys, half girls."

He scrolled down a little.

"You can see here, for the first twenty years, the population is growing at an even ten babies a year. And we will have reached a population of almost two hundred." Michael scrolled down to show years twenty through thirty. "Now you start to see the population rate grow. As our children start having children of their own."

"We'll be grand-parents." Jessica said.

"Scary isn't it?" Courtney replied.

"So year thirty, we'll have a population of nearly five hundred. Wow." Tabitha observed.

"Yes, your added fertility isn't a genetic trait. That won't be passed down to your children." Susan said. "I suppose some of it may linger, just like it does for people today."

"Yes, I played around with this a couple months ago. And seeing the numbers skyrocketed, well, it scared me. Talk about a baby boom." Michael replied.

"Scroll down some more." Theresa asked. Michael did so. "At year forty we'll have more than doubled, twelve hundred, and year fifty, over twenty seven hundred."

"It makes you think, there's several billion on Earth now, the number of years it'd take."

"I don't like it." Theresa said. "Just twelve hundred people after forty years."

"Well, it's what we've got." Tabitha replied.

"Just for fun, what if we could recruit more women, say five more?" Jessica suggested.

"Hang on, let me..." Michael copied the spreadsheet to a second scenario, and changed the initial number. The spreadsheet recalculated.

"That's quite a bit better." Courtney replied looking at the numbers. "Population of almost a thousand by year thirty, that's ten years sooner."

"So should that should be our goal?" Jessica asked. "Should we try to find five more women?"

“I think that should be possible, right?” Tabitha said. “When were we planning on leaving, anyway?”

“The million dollar question,” Michael answered. “I don’t know. What do you all think?”

“I think we should wait until we have collected all the animals we can.” Theresa said.

“Well, at least all the ship can hold.” Tabitha amended.

“Ok, how long will that take?” Susan asked.

Nobody answered.

“Well, now that we kind of have it figured out, and we work at it full time, we should be able to do better.” Theresa said. “We have one storage compartment almost full now. And that’s only been a few months’ work.”

“We could use a few of the unused cabins for personal storage. That’d free up a storage compartment for you.”

“If we’re converting cabins, could we use one for some treadmills or something? You’re saying the trip is three months? Without some exercise, we’ll go bonkers.” Jessica added.

“Looks like a long discussion for tonight.” Michael replied hearing his stomach growl. “I think I should fire up the grill.”

“Grocery shopping.” Susan said. “Jessica and I are on it.” And she grabbed up the keys and they headed out.

Theresa looked at the spreadsheet, reached for the mouse and scrolled up to the top. “This is the problem right here.” She said highlighting the first twenty years. “The children won’t have kids of their own until they’re twenty. There are no additional adults for such a long time.”

“Not much we can do about it.” Courtney said. “I wouldn’t want to have babies until after I got there. And we’re going to be too busy with your collecting. And recruiting, it’s just not practical.”

“Jessica brought up a good point though, what to do during the trip.” Tabitha said.

“Well, I think your shopping trips have just been expanded to include entertainment.” Michael said after a moment.

“Movies.” Courtney said.

“Music and games.” Theresa added.

“Puzzles.” Courtney added.

“And books.” Michael said. “Good thing they have those electronic readers now.”

The summer progressed quickly. Michael and Susan spent the weekdays sampling on college campuses while the rest spent the time and good weather collecting animals. By the end of the summer they had sampled an additional two hundred people, but had found no additional recruits.

When the fall semester started, they turned their attention to the larger colleges. The number of samples increased, but recruitment was slow. They eventually found that the smaller colleges were the best. The bigger colleges were too large and too expensive for the type of young people they were looking for. The smaller schools turned out to be much better. By Thanksgiving they had recruited five more women.

Thanksgiving

“I think we’re going to have to slow down our sampling.” Theresa said.

They were all seated at the dinner table. Michael and Susan had hosted the holiday. Mary, the newest recruit proved to be an excellent cook, and had worked all day preparing the feast. All the women chipped in where they could. Michael, a self-confessed terrible cook, provided the muscle to mash the potatoes. They had finished the meal and had yet to summon the energy to stand and move to the living room.

“At least until after the new year.” Theresa added after a moment.

“The number of donors will probably slow down until after the holidays.” Susan agreed.

“You’re probably right. We have the week after next scheduled, but nothing after that.” Michael agreed.

“What about you?” Susan asked. “You moving south with the birds?”

“We’ll need to.” Tabitha replied. “We’ll need to get species from every climate, eventually.”

“Well, this is one bird past saving.” Jess said looking at the Turkey carcass. “Come on, let’s get this cleaned up.” They all pitched in and within twenty minutes the dishwasher was humming along on its first load of the evening. Another bottle of wine was opened as all gathered in the living room.

They laughed and talked and drank the evening through. Michael sat in the middle of the couch, Susan to his left, and Tabitha to his right. All the women were dressed nicely, ample cleavage on display by all. Courtney was the smallest of those first injected. He guessed her to be about a Double-D, though considering how well stuffed her bra seemed, she should be wearing a Triple-D instead. Theresa and Jessica, he guessed to be about E-cups, and Tabitha a well packed Double-E. Susan was the largest, for she had a few weeks head start on the rest was recently outgrown her Triple-Es, and was now happy with how her F-cups fit ‘just about right.’ At night when they made love, she would often tease him by saying, ‘you ain’t seen nothin’ yet.’ Mary, Crystal, Erin, Dawn and Jessica (Jess to her friends, and not to be confused with the first Jessica) had only just recently been recruited. They were taking a break from the studies, and would be taking their final exams, and graduating soon. They hadn’t been given their shots yet.

“So, anybody have any Thanksgiving traditions or stories they want to share?” Michael said as he sat on the couch.

“Well.” Courtney said after a moment. “Thanks-giving, it was just me and my Dad since as long as I can remember. My dad always tried to cook a meal. He wasn’t a very good cook, but he could follow recipes. He’d work all day on the meal, we’d put together puzzles or play games. Then we’d eat. He’d always set an extra plate for my Mom. ‘She is here in spirit’ he’d say. Then we’d go through our lists. We kept a list, during the year, whenever something good happened, we’d write it down. On Thanks-giving we’d read it.”

“That’s beautiful.” Jess said. “Your dad sounds like a great guy. I wish I had a dad like that.”

“What was he like?” Mary asked.

“I don’t know. He bailed on my Mom before I was born. I never knew him. Mom said he was a good guy, I guess I’ll never know.”

“That’s too bad.” Jessica said.

“I don’t have any. Thanksgiving traditions, that is.” Susan said. She leaned back in the couch, and leaned up against Michael. “I was in different foster homes most of the time. They tried to make it like a family, but it just wasn’t ‘real’ you know? But I learned one thing.”

“What’s that?” Courtney asked.

“To appreciate what you have ‘right now.’ Never take it for granted.” The others in the room nodded. They were all without close family, they had all learned that hard, hard lesson.

“So, it’s time to get sappy. What are we thankful for?” Theresa said. Everybody moaned. “I’ll start, I’ll start, that’s fair right?” She raised her wine glass. “To my sister, we argued and fought growing up. But you’re my sister. And you’re my family.”

“Thank-you.” Tabitha replied. “You were always big sister, after Mom and Dad, I would have lost it, if it hadn’t been for you.”

“I’m next.” Courtney said. “To you Michael, Theresa, Susan, Tabs, Jessica, you were there when I thought I had lost everybody. When my dad died, I didn’t have anything. But you were there. My dad always said ‘family is what you make, not just what you’re born with.’ Thank-you.”

“We’re all family now.” Jessica said.

“To the family we make.” Michael proposed.

“The family we make.” They all chorused back.

As it turned late, the women took turns teleporting back to their apartments. No one was safe to drive. Finally only Tabitha remained.

“I suppose I should be going too. It’s late.” She was more than a little tipsy. As she tried to sit up she lost her balance and half fell back onto the couch. She landed mostly on Michael.

“Ooph!” She moved a hand to get leverage, but placed it firmly on his crotch. “Ooh! Sorry, don’t want to damage that!” She said, then giggled. She collapsed onto him again and kissed him firmly on the lips.

“Ahem!” Susan said after a few moments. She had been snuggled against him on the other side and witnessed it all.

“Oh sorry.” Tabitha said, but she didn’t remove her hand from his chest.

Susan’s reaction wasn’t what Michael expected. She rolled her body toward his, brought one leg over his and with her left hand turned his head to kiss him.

“Just let him come up for air once in a while, OK?” She said after a moment.

Tabitha rolled towards Michael and mirrored Susan’s position.

“Good advice.” Tabitha said, then kissed him just as passionately. Michael, not believing his great fortune was dumbfounded for a few moments, but then got into the flow of the passion. He wrapped his arms around both women, and pulled them to him. He was rewarded with more kisses, and then ‘oohs’ as he reached down and cupped both women’s butts.

“You’re mine tonight lover.” Susan said as she kissed him.

“And mine tomorrow.” Tabitha said a moment later. She kissed him again, then struggled moved away. She worked herself to standing. “I better go before I get too worked up.”

Susan pulled away and stood, Michael stood too. Susan put an arm around him then pulled Tabitha into a hug. She kissed Tabitha on the cheek. Then Tabitha pulled Michael into another full kiss.

“Try not to tire him out too much.” Tabitha said.

“No promises.” Susan smiled back. Tabitha reluctantly moved away, holding his hand as long as she could, then she signaled the ship and was teleported to the apartment she shared with Courtney.

Once she was gone, Susan took his hand and led him to the bedroom. She turned to him, put her arms around his neck and smiled. “Now, where were we?”

The next morning Michael awoke first. He knew Susan had a few more than usual, as did most of the women, so as he showered and dressed he let her sleep. He finished dressing when she stirred.

“Good morning, how are you feeling?” He said.

“A little hung-over.” She said. “But not too bad. Last night was wonderful.”

“Yes it was.” He said sitting the bed beside her. He leaned over and kissed her.

She kissed him several times. “You should head over to see Tabitha right away. Surprise her before she wakes up.”

“That was uhm, interesting.” Michael said.

“It was fun.” Susan replied kissing him again. “I don’t mind sharing you with the others. But I don’t see any point to the whole ‘ménage à trois’ thing. It must be a guy thing. There’s only one guy, only one fun-gun.”

Michael laughed, and Susan giggled.

“Now you better go.” She said.

He kissed her and stood, moved away from the bed and took out his communicator.

“Oh! Wait a second.” she said whipping off the covers. Still naked, she hustled into the closet and returned with a bag. “These are too small for me now. Give them to Tabitha. She looks like she’ll need them next.”

She stood back, put both hands above her head and shimmied back and forth. “Just a reminder, big things are waiting for you when you get back.” Then she put a hand to her temple. “Oh, moved too fast.” She kissed him and got back under the covers.

He teleported directly to Tabitha’s bedroom. He found her still asleep, half under the covers, and at least topless. Her boobs were firm and stood proudly on her chest. He quietly put the bag on a nearby chair, and undressed. He slid under the blankets beside her. Still in her sleep she immediately rolled towards him and wrapped one leg between his. He slid one hand down her back to find her naked butt, the other hand cupped the nearest boob.

“Ooh!” she sighed “When did you get here?”

“Just now.” He said.

She kissed him, then straddled him. She rolled a condom onto him, then spiked herself on his manhood.

“This is the best way to wake up.” She said. She lifted herself up, lowered herself and repeated. He held her hips, while she steadied herself by putting her hands on his shoulders. Soon she was frantically pumping up and down upon him. He held himself back as long as he could, the condom deadening the sensation. She slammed down upon for her first orgasm.

“Oh God that’s good.” She panted in his ear. For his part, he let her rest just a little while slowly moving in and out of her. “Scoot up.” She said as she lifted herself off of him. He slid up so he reclined against the headboard. She straddled him again this time holding onto the headboard. He held onto her boobs this time as she worked herself along slowly. “Oh yes, suck my big tits. That feels so good.” She bit her lower lip and held back a yelp as he took one nipple, suckled, then moved to the other nipple. She started rolling her hips to maximize the depth of each stroke but soon she broke away from him and concentrated on riding to another orgasm. Her boobs bounced frantically as she worked herself up and down as quickly as she could. He couldn’t hold back any longer, he rocketed to orgasm, shooting his load into the waiting condom. Tabitha could feel him exploding within her and crashed to her own orgasm. She collapsed on top of him, his penis still buried within, and caught her breath.

“One day lover, we’re not going to have a condom, and you’re going to make babies in me.” She leaned back. “And these, are going to get even bigger.” She leaned forward and let him kiss and suckle her breasts again. After a few moments, she relaxed and they enjoyed several minutes of kissing and cuddling. He softened and eventually came out of her.

“I better get cleaned up.” She said. She climbed off and took a shower. She came out several minutes later with her hair wrapped in a towel.

“Are you hungry?” She asked. He swung his leg off the bed and sat up.

“Very. Susan decided to sleep in. Otherwise we would have had breakfast.”

“A little hung over?” Tabitha asked as she slipped on some panties. “I know the feeling. Get cleaned up, and I’ll make us some breakfast.”

“Sounds good. Oh, Susan asked me to deliver these.” He handed her the bag of now too small for Susan bras.

“Ooh!” she said looking into it, she pulled out a lacy red bra and held it up to her chest. “You like?”

“Very much.” Michael replied.

“Well, you’re going to have to wait until later.” She said. “Go shower. Wait.” She put the red bra aside and pulled a white bra from her dresser. She put her arms through the straps. “Strap me in first.” She said turning her back to him. He strapped her bra together, and before she had a chance to dismiss him, he reached around her, grabbed her boobs, pulled her to him, and kissed her on the neck.

“All right, you’ve had your fun. Now, go shower.” She said laughing. He released her and took his shower. After getting clean, he dressed and left her bedroom to find Tabitha in the kitchen. She had chosen a simple, though pleasingly tight t-shirt and blue-jeans. He sat at the table about to speak when the other bedroom door opened.

“Tabs, white or black?” Courtney said. “Eek!” Courtney had charged out of her bedroom wearing nothing but a bra and panties. She was wearing white, but held black in her hand. She squeaked when she saw Michael sitting at the dining table. Then she froze.

“Oh sweetie.” Tabitha replied when seeing Courtney standing there. “Relax, you’ve shown more wearing a bikini.”

Courtney still looked nervous, but she relaxed a little bit. Seeing her in her underwear, it was obvious she had outgrown her bra.

“But it’s obvious you need some new bras. Come on, let’s find something that will make Michael’s eye spin.” Tabitha said. She led Courtney back into the bedroom, and a few minutes later she returned. “I thought she looked a little overfull last night, but I didn’t know she had gotten so big.”

A few minutes later, Courtney came out of her bedroom. She was wearing blue jeans, and another tight t-shirt. She had truly blossomed in the six months that he had known her. She seemed to bubble with life and hope.

“What do you think?” She said turning around.

“You get prettier every time I see you.” Michael replied. She blushed and smiled. “So what’s the plan?”

“Me and some of the others were going to hit the malls.”

“On Black Friday?” Tabitha said. She put a plate on the table. “It’s going to be chaos.”

“Oh, I hadn’t thought about that, but we’ll be fine. It’ll be fun.” They ate breakfast and Courtney said her good-byes.

“So, what do you have planned?” Michael asked.

“I thought we’d hit some woods in Georgia today. It’ll be cool, but not too bad.” They teleported aboard ship first, found a spot with no-one around, then teleported down with their equipment. It didn’t take long to work through the birds in the immediate area. The scanner only had a range of about three hundred yards. Within a half hour, they had collected all within the radius. Now they sat and waited for any other birds to come into their area.

“I’ve got a question.” Michael said quietly.

“What’s that?”

“These birds have a lot bigger range than three hundred yards, I mean in their daily flying, they fly a lot farther than that radius, right?”

“Well, yea, they can fly a couple miles away from their nests. Why do you ask?”

“Because I think we’re really limiting ourselves.” He picked up small rock. “This is us.” And he put the rock on the ground in the dirt. He picked up a stick and drew a circle around the rock. “And this is the range of the scanner.” He poked the ground far outside the circle. “A bird could have a nest way over here, and only fly into our circle by sheer accident.”

“So?”

“Well, What if we were to put the scanner here.” He said pointing to a spot on the edge of the circle. “Then collect, wait a while, then move it here, and repeat.” He pointed to spots all around the first circle’s edge. He drew a new circle twice as big as the first. “We’d cover this entire area.”

“You want to try it?” She asked.

“What have we got to lose, right?” He picked up his hand-held GPS marked his current location as the endpoint. He then took the scanner tripod and took off through the woods. When the GPS said he was three hundred yards away from the starting point, he stopped, set up the tripod and switched it on. He found a rock to sit on and he waited. It wasn’t long before Tabitha called him on their radios.

“More birds are coming in.” she said. Another fifteen minutes later she said that the collection had stopped. “Move southeast and set up again.” He did so. For the next two hours he set up, waited, and moved onto the next spot. He returned to the starting point and sat down.

“That was great.” Tabitha said. “We nearly tripled the capture.” She picked up a stick and poked a spot on the edge of the larger circle. “Should we extend out another ring? How much area would that be?”

“Hang on, let me do the math.” Michael called up the calculator on his laptop and did the math. “OK, first circle has a radius of three hundred yards. For an area of two hundred eighty thousand square yards, give or take. Second circle, 600 yards, is over a million square yards. And third circle would be two point five million square yards.”

“Let me check on something.” He said. He did some more calculating. “If my math is right a circle with a 900 yard radius covers over 500 acres.”

“Wow.” Tabitha said.

“I don’t even want to guess how much walking that’d be, or how many places you’d have to stop and collect.” Michael replied. “I think the mid-size circle should be enough.”

“Yea, you’re probably right. C’mon, we need to pack it in, it looks like rain.” Tabitha observed. They teleported back to the ship and queried the ships computer. Soon little flying machines were being produced, each the size of a microwave, carrying the scanner, transmitter, and teleporter beacons. Once the central campsite was chosen, they’d fly out to form a grid, and the scanning/collecting would begin. Once the collecting was done, everything would be teleported back on board. Tabitha was excited by the idea, but bummed that it would take a few days for all the machines to be built. None the less, she happily led Michael back to her cabin for an afternoon of fun.

December 6th

It had been another long week of interviewing and sampling. Jessica and Courtney had volunteered to handle the front room, shuffling people through the automated interviewers, and occasionally shunting a promising candidate to the rear office where Michael and Susan handled the more in depth interviews. They had collected over three hundred samples.

“That puts us at over 2000 women.” Susan observed as she watched the last of the interview stations teleport away.

“And over 1200 men.” Jessica added.

“At least that’s encouraging.” Michael replied. “I just wish we had found another teacher to make the trip with us.”

“Me too,” Susan agreed as Courtney nodded. “We’ll manage somehow.” Susan volunteered. She had said it several times over the last two months. All the women were getting anxious. With winter starting to settle in, it was getting more and more difficult to keep their spirits up, no matter how much Michael tried to encourage them. Jessica was the only formally trained teacher among the travelers. All were intelligent, but they knew being able to teach their children would be important. There was going to be a baby boom on Zanthia that Jessica alone couldn’t handle.

“Well that does it.” Susan said as they watched the last of the hardware be whisked away in a glow of white teleporter light.

“Would you mind if I took a drive?” Michael said. “I just want to see some scenery.” He too was getting tired.

“Sure.” Jessica said. “I’ll see the candidate information is entered into the database.”

“I’m going back aboard; I want to work on my painting before I eat.” Courtney added. She reached for her com-device, and both were quickly teleported away.

“You going to be OK?” Susan added.

“Yea, I’ll be fine. The teleporter kind of takes the joy away from driving.” Michael said. “I just want to head out and drive somewhere.”

Susan knew he needed some time alone. “Drive safe. OK?” She kissed him as well then backed away.

“See you in an hour or so.” He said. And she vanished as well. He picked up his briefcase, and headed out to his car.

The mustang started instantly, and he rolled out of the parking lot. Navigating the city traffic made him regret his decision, but luckily it didn’t last long, and he soon found himself driving on an open interstate. The suburbs thinned out, and soon he was enjoying the sun setting over the Tennessee scenery. After nearly an hour he found he was a good distance from any major city. His stomach rumbled for his attention, and he decided he’d try to find someplace to grab a bite to eat. None of the fast food places piqued his interest, but he realized he’d probably have to settle for it. He saw an exit sign and saw that there was a café listed as a food choice. He thought to give it a try, and switched on the blinker. A few miles off the interstate, was a small town, he drove down the main street and saw the “open” sign. He parked, grabbed his briefcase, and headed inside.

The first site that greeted him was the back of an incredible set of legs, a perfect butt, and what looked like a lean upper body. Long wavy black hair cascaded down most of the back, held together in a ponytail. The

waitress turned, and he was shocked at just how pretty she was. Deep dark eyes and thin arching eye brows. She smiled a warm smile.

“Wow,” was all Michael could think. All the women on board were pretty, beautiful, sexy, seductive, in any number of different ways. But this woman generated warmth he had rarely seen.

“Welcome to Joe’s Diner.” She said.

“Thanks.” He replied. It was stereotypical small down café, a counter with some stools, a few tables scattered around, and various local knick-knacks hung on the walls. The place was spotlessly clean, and also completely empty.

“Take any place you’d like.” She said getting a glass of water, and a simple two-page menu.

He had carried in the briefcase totally out of habit, and he felt it again in his hand. He chose a table by the front window and sat down.

She followed him to the table, placed his water, and set up his silverware. “I’m Matilda.” She said, “but most folks call me Mattie. Can I get you something to drink? Coffee maybe?”

He looked at her again. There was no wedding ring on her hand, or any sign she normally wore one. She wore a simple blue and white checkered shirt and blue jeans, but she wore them well. As he had noticed when he had entered, she was thin, but not unhealthily so.

“Uhm, It’s a little late in the day for coffee, do you have some lemonade?”

“Yes, I’ll get that for you.” She smiled and walked away. He could see Joe in the back working away in the kitchen, probably cleaning up from the day. Joe was an older man, probably in his late 50s. Small, a little portly, mostly bald, but he wasn’t a slob. The apron he wore was clean, as were his clothes. The kitchen too, what he could see of it, was clean and organized.

“Here you go.” She said placing the glass on the table. “Have you decided on what you’d...”

She was interrupted with the sound of a beaten down pickup rumbling to a stop in front of the diner.

“Oh dang it. Not again.” She said as she watched the young man get out of the truck and head for the door.

“Who’s that?” Michael asked.

“My ex-boyfriend. He won’t leave me alone. Every payday, he gets a couple beers in him, then he comes and bothers me.”

“I told you I wouldn’t stand for any more trouble Mattie.” Joe called from kitchen.

“I know.” She replied.

Before Michael realized what he was doing, he got up from the chair and moved towards the door. He pivoted the ring on his right finger and flipped open the top. The ex-boyfriend had just entered and had zeroed in on Matilda.

“Hi my name is Michael.” He said extending his hand. Almost instinctively the man took his hand to shake it. Almost instantly the man stopped his forward motion as his eyes glazed over. But with the alcohol he had been consuming, it would be hard to tell the difference.

“What’s your name?” Michael asked not taking his hand away.

“Ted.” The man said automatically.

Michael leaned in and whispered in Ted’s ear. “Ted, listen to me and do exactly what I tell you. You will apologize to Matilda for bothering her. Then you will leave, and never contact her again. Do you understand? You will not bother her in any way ever again. It’s the right thing to do, and you know it. Do you understand?”

Ted blankly nodded. Michael released Ted’s hand and casually flipped the ring shut and returned it to its normal position.

The drug wore off after just a few moments. It looked like Ted was thinking about something. Then he cleared his throat.

“I’m sorry for the trouble I caused you Mattie. I, I won’t, I won’t bother you no more.” He said. Then he turned and left the building as quickly as he could. They all watched as he got back in his truck and drove off.

“Oh, wow.” Matilda said as Michael returned to his chair. “What did you say to him?”

“Just that it wasn’t right to bother you where you were working.”

“Well, uhm, thanks.” She said after a moment. “Ever since my dad died, I haven’t been able to keep him away. It’s just me, and I can’t do anything.”

“Don’t you have any family that can help you?”

“Nope, it’s just me and my little boy Billy.” She replied. “But you don’t want to hear all that. Thank-you. How can I repay you?”

Michael looked at her, he held the menu in his hand, glanced at it, then looked at her again.

“First, you can tell me what’s the best thing on this menu.”

She smiled. “That’s easy. The meatloaf and potatoes, and if you want to splurge, the cornbread is home made.”

“That sound perfect. I’ll have that.” He said handing the menu back to her.

“Anything else?” She asked.

“Yes, you can join me.”

“Uhm.” She hesitated.

“At least let me buy you a glass of lemonade.”

She bit her lip for a moment, then nodded. “OK, it’s pretty quiet, and we’re almost ready to close anyway.” She wrote down the order. “I’ll get this to Joe.” And walked away.

Michael watched her go a few feet, then opened briefcase, he retrieved his com-device and brought it to his mouth and whispered. “Anybody on board? I have a possible recruit. I’ll feed in from my laptop.”

He set the com-device down, and opened his laptop. He opened it up, and opened the link to ship. The camera started recording the chair opposite his, as he put a receiver in his ear.

“Hi Michael,” he heard almost instantly. “This is Jess, you got a live one?”

He typed. "Yes. Can't talk."

"OK." Came the reply. "We're gathering in the common room. Susan and Jessica are here now too."

"Here you go." Matilda surprised him. She set the plate in front of him. The aroma alone made his mouth water. "Joe has a secret recipe for the gravy, and a few special ingredients in the meatloaf." She then set the side plate of cornbread. She then slid into the chair opposite his.

"I'm not supposed to do this." She said. "But we close soon. And I do owe you a favor."

"She's pretty." Came a voice in ear.

"This looks really good." Michael said. He took out his digitizer. Even though it looked like a camera.

"You're going to take a picture of the food?"

"Yes." Michael responded. "Sometimes I write critiques of places I visit. I put it up on a couple food-based websites. And pictures are always helpful." He put the digitizer away, typed in some information into the laptop, then put the laptop aside.

"There, all done." He replied picking up his fork and trying a bite. "Wow, this is really good."

"I know its simple fare, but the people around town seem to like it."

"I can't blame them." Michael replied. "I was going to settle for some fast-food place, but I'm glad I saw the sign for this place."

"I don't mean to pry," Michael said. "But you said you had no family?"

"No, it's just me and my little boy Billy."

"Billy?" He asked.

"Well, yes." She said. "He's four and a half." Then she paused. "Ted is his father. An accident on prom night."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have brought it up."

"It's OK. Ted shows up, just to make my life miserable." She said. "I've been fired from five different jobs because of him."

"Does he do anything with his son?" Michael asked.

"No." She replied. "He doesn't want anything to do with him. He held him once, right after he was born, but he hasn't visited or seen him in years."

"What about family?" He heard in his ear.

"What about family?" Michael asked. "Surely you must have family around that can help you?"

"My mother died when I was a little girl." Matilda said. "So it was just my dad and me."

"Jake was a good friend of mine." Joe said as he walked up to the table. "He passed a couple years ago. Since then my Mrs and me help where we can. My wife's watching little Billy now."

“And I work here.” Mattie added.

“I want to thank you for that.” Joe said, gesturing toward the street. “Ted’s an idiot. Has been all his life, but his family never reined him in when he was growing up. Now he don’t know no better.”

“I see.” Michael was more than a little surprised at the openness of these people, especially Matilda. “I have to say, this is really good. I don’t think I’ve had better.”

“Thank-you. I always could cook. Started in the Navy, then came here after I put in my 20 years.” He turned to Mattie. “It’s close enough to closing time. I’ve cleaned up the kitchen, just lock it up will you?”

“OK Joe, I will.” She replied. He got up and headed for the door. He shut off some of the lights, flipped the sign to closed, and locked the door behind him. He walked by the window and waved and disappeared down the street.

“So tell me about Billy?” Michael replied. Her face lit up.

“Good question.” He heard in his earpiece.

They talked for nearly an hour as he ate his meal. She talked him into some blueberry pie. And that too was digitized. Finally, he could think of no more reason to stay. She cleared away the dishes, and showed him to the door.

“I know I shouldn’t ask this, but can I ask you a favor?” She hesitated as she locked the door.

“Sure.” Michael quickly responded.

“Can I ask for a ride home? I’m afraid Ted might show up again.”

“It would be my pleasure.” He replied. He opened the car door and she slid into the passenger seat. He slipped the earpiece into his pocket as he walked around the car and got behind the wheel. She directed him to a house on a back street a few blocks away. He stopped in front of the house, and put the car in park.

“Thank-you again for what you did with Ted. Joe is a great friend, but I don’t think he would have tolerated another scene. You saved my job, at least for a couple more weeks.”

“If you don’t have any reason to stay, why don’t you leave this place? Go someplace where you can start over?”

“To be honest. I’m broke. I don’t have a dime to spare on anything. Otherwise I would.”

“I see.” Michael said. He already knew what he wanted to do, but he wanted to talk it over with the other women before he acted.

“Thank you again. And if you’re in the area again, please stop by.”

“You can count on it. Maybe sooner than you think.” He replied.

“Bye now.” She said as she opened the door. He watched her walk to the door and unlock it. She turned and waved. He waved back, and pulled away. He drove for only a mile until he was out of town before he pulled over, shut off the engine, and pressed the transport button on the dash. He was greeted the instant he stepped out of the storage compartment where his car was normally kept.

“Please tell us she can come along?” Susan asked.

“When I think of that little boy.” Jessica added. “We have to help them.” They climbed the stairs to the common room where the rest of the women were gathered.

“We came as soon as we could.” Theresa said.

“Once she started telling her story, I just felt everybody needed to see this.” Courtney added.

“So you’re all agreed?” Michael asked. The women all nodded, they wanted to help Matilda and her son. All wanted to invite her along.

The next afternoon, a small contingent of Michael, Susan, and Jessica got in his car and teleported back down. They drove to Matilda’s house to find her outside playing with a little boy. She waved as she recognized the car come to a stop. Michael got out, and starting walking towards her, then Susan got out of the passenger side. Matilda couldn’t help but be surprised when she took in Susan’s entire figure. Then Jessica followed, and Matilda was doubly shocked. Even though both women were dressed down, clothing couldn’t hide everything.

“Matilda.” Michael said approaching her. “These are my friends Susan and Jessica. We’re wondering if we could talk to you.”

“Uhm, sure.” She replied.

“Is this Billy?” Jessica asked as the little boy came running up.

“Yes, this is my son Billy.”

“Hi Billy. My name’s Jessica, how are you?”

“Fine.” He answered.

“That’s a nice ball you have there. Can you throw it to me?” She asked. He looked at her, then cocked his arm back and tossed the ball in her direction.

“Wow that’s great!” she replied. She took the ball and gently tossed it back to him. He almost caught it too. “Nice try.” And Billy laughed, and ran to pick it up. Seeing that Jessica had Billy occupied, Susan and Michael turned their attention back to Matilda.

“Matilda.” Susan started. “Michael told us about your situation, and we want to help.”

“Uhm. OK.” She said. She gestured to a picnic table. “Would you like to sit down?”

They sat and Michael started.

“First, I need you to promise me two things. One, what we are about to tell you is absolutely true, and we ask that you keep an open mind. And second, you must absolutely promise not to tell anyone, absolutely no-one.”

She looked at both Susan and Michael skeptically. “All right, I promise.”

“Good.” Michael responded. “It all started over sixteen months ago. I was assisting at an archeological dig in the amazon.” He went on to tell the story how the ship transported him aboard, and the challenge he and the other women had taken.

“We’re hoping.” Susan said after Michael had finished, then paused for effect. “We’re hoping you’d like to come with us. Both Billy and yourself.”

“You’re kidding me, this has to be a joke.”

“Would it help you believe if we showed you the spaceship?” Susan asked. “I didn’t believe it at first either.”

“Yea, like you can do that.” She said.

Michael looked around the neighborhood. “If we could step inside for a moment?”

Matilda looked at him for a full five seconds, then answered.

“Fine. I don’t believe you. But if this is what it takes, we’ll go inside.” Billy was laughing and having a great time playing with Jessica, so Matilda led them inside. Once inside the door, Matilda turned and looked at them. “Fire away, whenever you want to admit this is all some sick joke, go ahead.”

“Teleporter for three please.” Michael said into his com-device. And instantly the three were whisked away to find themselves standing in the teleporter room.

“Please, let me show you something.” He added, holding his hand out to her. Matilda was in surprised shock, but somehow reached out to take his hand. He led her forward to look out the bridge viewports.

“Michael tells me I had the same look on my face.” Susan said reassuringly.

“Is that?” She asked, not taking her eyes away from the view.

“Yes it is.” Michael answered. “We’re currently in stationary orbit above Chicago. Susan I are both from there. Oh, and check this out.” He pushed a button and one view screen changed to zoom in on the International Space Station. As they watched, the large solar panels rotated to catch more sunlight.

“Now do you believe us?”

“This is incredible.” Matilda said after a few moments. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Billy is asking where his Mommy is.” Came Jessica’s voice over the ship’s speakers.

“Oh I better get back!” Matilda said.

“We’ll take you.” Susan said instantly, and they headed back to the teleporter room. Once back on the ground, Billy appeased, they sat at the picnic table.

“So,” Susan asked. “Now do you believe us?”

“I,” Matilda hesitated. “I guess I have no choice.”

“It is rather fantastic, isn’t it?” Susan replied. Matilda only managed a nod.

“What we offered is true.” Michael answered. “There’s more to the story, but the short version is, we’re going to re-colonize Zanthia. It’ll be a great challenge, a great adventure, and we’re really, really hoping you will want to come along and be a part of it.”

“I can’t think of how you could have faked all of this. But I still can’t believe it either. It’s a lot to take in.”

“I understand.” Michael said. “It took me weeks to really start to wrap my brain around it and accept it as possible.”

“Me too.” Susan replied. “But it’s amazing. To prove it to me, Michael and I flew the ship to Saturn, around the rings and back.”

The remainder of the afternoon passed by quickly, Billy playing, while the rest talked. As evening approached, they moved inside.

“Say.” Michael said during a pause. “I’m getting hungry. How about we show you something else the ship can do.”

“I could eat.” Susan replied. “Matilda?”

“Uhm, sure. I’m a little hungry.”

Michael touched the com-device again. “Ladies, could you all teleport down some dinner? Say, something Italian?”

“We’re on it,” came a voice in reply, and barely three minutes later, they saw the first of several plates of food appear on the dinner table.

“Oh wow.” Matilda said looking at the feast.

“Dinner time Mommy?” He managed.

“Yes Billy, dinner time.” And she put him in a chair. Soon all were eating.

“This is all really good.” Matilda said after several minutes. “Where did this come from?”

“Remember me taking pictures of the food last night?” Michael asked, Matilda nodded. “I call it a digitizer. It analyzed the food, and stored its information in the ship’s computer. The ship can now create that exact meal whenever someone wishes it. One of the things I’ve been doing since the ship came to earth, is collect all the different foods and meals I can manage. As I travel, I carry the digitizer with me all the time.”

As the meal went on Matilda would ask a question, and the others would answer. Finally, it was late, and Billy was put to bed.

“We should be going too.” Jessica said. They put on their jackets for the walk to the car.

“I’ve got an idea.” Susan added. “Why don’t you and Billy come on board tomorrow afternoon? You can meet everybody, and talk, and get to know us better.”

“That’s a great idea.” Michael added. “You can sleep on it tonight, and tomorrow, if you have any questions, we’ll answer everything we can.”

“Uhm, OK. Sure.” Matilda answered. “How do I?”

“Oh!” Jessica said. She handed Matilda her com-device. “You can use mine. Just push here and talk.”

“Now we better let you go. Don’t want to overstay our welcome.”

They left, got in the car, and drove out of town far enough to be undiscovered when teleported back to the ship.

The next afternoon, still wondering if Matilda would join them or not, Michael and Susan anxiously awaited her call. Finally at about 2:30, her voice came over the ships overhead speakers.

“Hello?” She asked tentatively.

“We’re here.” Michael immediately responded. “Are you ready to teleport up?”

“Not yet.” Matilda responded. “I just got home from work. I need to get cleaned up, and get Billy ready.”

“Take your time, we’ll be here when you’re ready.”

“Thank-you.” Came Matilda’s reply. “I’ll, I’ll call you when I’m ready.”

“OK. Talk to you then.”

“OK. Good-bye.”

“bye.”

“She still sounds nervous and scared.” Susan answered.

“I caught that too.” Michael replied.

“Then we need to make her feel welcome and wanted.” Jessica answered.

“Agreed.” Susan said. “and I think it’s time for a party.”

They all pitched in transforming the common room. Much of the furniture was removed to make an open space. A buffet with snacks and drinks was set up on one side. They hung decorations, and started some music playing. All was ready, when Matilda called again.

Michael and Susan and Jessica awaited her when she materialized in the teleporter room. She was holding Billy in her arms. He looked around in wonder for a few moments.

“Hi Billy.” Jessica said immediately. “Remember me? We played ball yesterday.”

Billy leaned into his mother in a fit of uncomfortable shyness.

“Welcome aboard, again.” Susan said. “We thought we’d throw a little party. Come on.” And with that they guided her out of the teleporter room and down the hallway to the common room.

All the women were gathered there, each smiling and welcoming. They even thought to wear nametags. Soon Billy was squirming in his Mother’s arms, and she put him down. Jessica took charge of entertaining him, but she did not lack for volunteer assistants. They introduced her to each woman in turn, talking about where they were from, what degree they had earned. Then as conversation opened to more free form, they all talked about how excited they were about the trip, and what they hoped to do when they arrived. As the hours went by, Matilda grew more and more comfortable with her surroundings. And Billy was quickly the center of attention of all the women aboard.

As the evening continued on, Matilda was laughing and sharing stories of Billy’s adventures. But the time finally arrived when it was time say goodnight.

“So, what do you think?” Michael finally asked as they made their way to the teleporter room.

“Everyone’s so amazing.” She replied. Billy was holding her hand and walking beside her.

“If you don’t mind, I’ll teleport down with you. I won’t stay long. I just wanted a few minutes in private.”

“I’d like that very much.” She replied. They rematerialized in her living room and Matilda took Billy to his room and put him in bed. After a few minutes, she came back out and sat in a chair across from him.

“I have to ask you something.” She replied. “Why? Why do you want me to come along? Everybody else is all educated. They have these big plans. What can I do?”

“That’s easy.” Michael said. “Everybody loves Billy.” Then he smiled.

Matilda couldn’t help but smile and laugh.

“Serious.”

“Seriously.” Michael responded. “Everyone seems to like you a lot. While you were mingling, everyone came to me and told me how nice you were. Everyone said how much they admired you, raising Billy by yourself, holding down a job. That takes a lot of character, I like that, and so do the others.”

Matilda only sat in silence. After a long awkward pause Michael had to ask.

“So what do you think? Would you like to come with us? Leave this world behind and take on the challenge of traveling to a new one?”

“Yes.” She said after only a moment. “I have very little here. Nothing is keeping me here.”

“Wonderful.” Michael said. He stood, and Matilda stood as well. Next he reached into his pocket and brought out another com-device. “This is yours.”

She took the com-device.

“Welcome to the adventure.” He said. Then she hugged him. She held him for a few seconds, and Michael couldn’t help but enjoy the feeling in return. She pulled away only far enough to look in his eyes. Then she moved forward and kissed him. It felt wonderful. He felt his heart skip as he returned the emotion. The kiss was a calm one, but in moments it escalated to deeply passionate. They collapsed onto the couch as the passion soared. Then abruptly, she pulled away.

“I’m sorry. I…”

“It’s OK.”

“I want to.” She replied back. “It’s too fast.”

“I know. There will be a time.”

She kissed him again, tenderly. “Thank-you for understanding.”

“I try.” Michael replied. “Sometimes I even get it right.”

She laughed again and withdrew. They stood again, and she moved to him, this time lingering in a hug. She laid her head on his shoulder.

“So what do I have to do next?” She said.

“Well,” he replied. “First you have to quit your job. Don’t worry about finances, we’ll make sure all your bills are paid, then after the New Year, you’ll pay your taxes like normal, then you’ll ‘move away’. You’ll fall off the grid, nobody will come looking for you.”

“Just like that?”

“Yup, just like that. We’ll get you and Billy an apartment, like the rest of the girls. Then when it’s time to make the trip, you’ll just move out.” Part of him didn’t want to do it, but Matilda reminded him of a porn cartoon he’d seen, even had the same name, he couldn’t help himself. Without her noticing, he flipped the top of his ring open and pressed it against her skin. As she leaned against him, he reached into his pocket with his left hand and withdrew the recorder. He placed it by her ear and played back the standard first and second message, then proceeded to play the third and fourth messages as well. Thinking it over, he replayed the third and fourth message each a second time. Then he returned the recorder to his pocket, and took the ring away from her skin. She stayed in her arm a moment then spoke.

“I want you to stay, but, I know you shouldn’t. And I have to get be at work tomorrow. I’ll give Joe my notice.”

“Is that going to be a problem?” He said pulling away a little.

“I don’t think so. The other waitresses have been asking for more time. I think Joe keeps me on as a favor to my dad.”

“I see. I’ll stop at the café for lunch tomorrow, if that’s all right?”

“You better. You better visit a lot.”

“I will, we have a lot to talk about.”

“Now, get going before I change my mind and do something foolish.” She kissed him again. Then again. And a third time.

He pushed away, and stood only a few inches away from her. Then he stepped back and called the ship to take him away.

When he returned on board Susan was waiting for him.

“Well?”

“She said yes.”

The next few weeks were a blur for Matilda. Every two or three days, Michael would show up at the café. Matilda was glad to see him walk through the door. Almost every night when she wasn’t working, he and sometimes Susan, would be at her house. Every day seemed like new questions would come up, but were just as quickly solved. The rent on her house was paid. The bills were all caught up. And it was only a matter of time. After the New Year, she stopped in at the café again and got her tax papers. She told Joe she was moving away to a neighboring town, to get a little farther away from Ted, and a new job. He was happy for her and gave her a hug before she left.

She got home to finish her packing. Michael and Susan and Jessica helped her, and only a couple boxes were remaining. They were beamed away and they stood in an empty house.

“Well.” She said finally. “That’s it. I guess it’s time to go.”

They looked around the empty house. She called her landlord and told him she was leaving the keys. He wished her well, and she said her good-bye.

“Would you do the honors?” Michael asked pointing to her com-device.

“Uhm, OK.” She pushed the button. “Uhm, five to teleport up please.” She said. They left the teleporter room and walked down the hallway, the sixth door on the left had a new nametag beside it.

“This is yours.” Michael said, and pushed the button. The door slid open and she entered to find a few boxes stacked along one wall.

“Of course, you have your apartment too. I suspect you’ll want to spend most of your time there.” Susan added. Matilda nodded and put Billy down.

“You know, through all the excitement, I never asked, what am I going to do?”

“We’ve been thinking,” Jessica started, “and we realized for all of our planning, none of us have any parenting experience. So you’re our resident expert.”

“And,” Susan added, “We realized that we need to think about all the things we’ll need once the babies start coming. As you surely know, it’s one thing to get pregnant and deliver a baby. It’s a whole other thing to actually raise the baby. So, if you’re up for the challenge. That should keep you busy. Right?”

Matilda spied a box labeled toys, and opened it. Billy immediately set to digging out every toy inside, and started playing.

“We’ll let you settle in.” Michael said. “When you’re ready, we won’t be far, find me, we’ll talk some more, OK?”

She nodded, and they left the room.

A hour or so later, Matilda and Billy came into the common room. Billy was instantly approached by a few of the women. He was a little shy, but soon warmed up to them. Matilda found Michael sitting in a corner reading a book.

“You moved in?” He asked as she approached.

“Yes, I’ll be tripping over toys all the time, but I’m OK with that.” She said. “I figured out how to adjust the lights low enough to act as night lights, so I’ll be OK.”

“It’s only temporary. Think of it as a second home. As you know, most of your things are in your apartment. We’ll go there in a few minutes.”

He showed her to the ‘den.’

“We converted a cabin so we could have a quiet place.” Michael said. The room had a couch, and a pair of comfortable chairs, and was decorated with warm browns. It was cozy and quiet. She could feel herself relaxing quickly. “Speaking of which, we can decorate a room more appropriate for Billy. That’ll make the trip go easier.”

After the door was shut, Michael turned towards her. “You really OK? Remember, we can get you just about anything you might need.”

“I’m wonderful. This is still so wondrous to me.” She crossed the room and into his arms. Their lips met. They kissed for several minutes, then moved apart. “Sorry, got carried away there.”

“I don’t mind you know.” Their lips met again. “But as much as I’d like to continue, I did want to talk to you.”

“OK, fire away.” She said as they sat.

“Did Susan explain to all the medical stuff?”

“She tried. But I don’t understand a couple things. How can we get pregnant so many times?”

“Well, that’s where I come in.” And Matilda giggled.

“Not that way.” Michael said.

“I wouldn’t mind you know.” She said. “I thought you would have figured that out by now.”

“I.. I uhm.”

“Why don’t you go on.” She said trying not to giggle again.

“OK. On Zanthia, they figured out how to extend our life expectancy many, many years, and most of those years we are in our prime for having children. I am told that some women were capable of having children well into their 60s, even 70s and 80s.”

“Wow, I just can’t imagine a grey haired old lady pregnant.”

“Then don’t, imagine a healthy 40-year-old. From what I’ve been able to tell, most men and women in their 80s would look and feel like we normally would in our early 40s.”

Matilda tried to process this.

“So, I have to ask you, one last time, if you really, really want to come with us. Once I give you the shot, there’s no turning back.”

“Don’t worry about me. I’m here to stay.” She replied almost instantly. “But I do have one more question. Everybody on board, well, they all have pretty big... they have big boobs.”

“I’ll have to plead guilty as charged. The shot I give women also can make their breasts larger. And I like large breasted women.”

“And they all agreed to this?”

“Yes they did. Do you?”

“I always wanted to be bigger than these B-cups.” Matilda said looking down at her chest. “My Mom was good sized, I have her old wedding dress, but I never grew to her size.”

“See, here’s what makes you special. Most women, I give a generic shot, it grows their breasts substantially larger. But you, you can be any size you want.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really, I kid you not. And there’s more, fertility. The shot will make the ‘normal’ pregnancy be twins, not just one. Still game?”

“Susan told me all of this, but it was hard to believe. But I guess, here I am on a spaceship, orbiting the planet, and we’re going to travel to another world. I should believe it.”

“So you want to figure out your new figure?”

“Uhm sure, what do I do?”

“We need to go to the med room. You ready?”

“Sure, let’s go.” She and Michael walked forward to the med room. They entered, and Michael closed and locked the door.

“OK, stand here, and don’t move while I do this.” Matilda complied, and Michael went to a console. A few buttons later, Matilda was bathed in a purple scanning light.

“OK, you can move now. Check this out.” And he pushed a button. Matilda watched as an image, an exact duplicate of her, appeared.

“Hologram.” Michael replied.

Matilda walked around the hologram to looking at it.

“OK, for modesty sake, let’s remove the clothes in favor of a bikini.” And it happened as he pushed a button.

“Now, This is what you would look like if I gave you the regular shot.” Her image changed, she couldn’t help notice the larger, G-cup breasts on her image.”

“Wow, Those look great on me.”

“Now, about fertility. Just for fun. This is what you would look like, at full term, with one baby.” The image shifted.

“Yea, that looks about right, but I was fatter, when I carried Billy.”

“Benefit of the shot, weight gain other than needed for pregnancy itself is a lot less. Susan even thinks they solved all the swelling, and nausea associated with pregnancy. So weight gain is minimal.”

“Cool, morning sickness isn’t fun.”

“OK, now here you are with twins.” And the belly expanded.

“Oh wow, that’s amazing. But so big.”

“Yet another side effect, pregnancies usually go full term, no matter how many babies, speaking of which. Quads.” And the belly expanded again. Even from the back her prominent belly spread out and was visible from every angle.

“And for the fanatical, Octomom.” And the belly doubled in size again. The hologram’s expansive belly was as wide as her shoulders, projecting up, down, out, and side-to-side. The hologram changed position to lean back for balance.

“Oh my God! That’s insane!” Matilda looked at all angles. “I’d be all baby-belly!”

“For the pregnant lover, it has a certain appeal.” Michael replied.

“You think this is hot?” Matilda asked astonished.

“Yes and no.” Michael replied. “For me, a woman is never more beautiful than when she is pregnant. Creating life is the most beautiful thing in the world.”

“You sound like you practiced that.”

“I’ve said it to every woman taking the trip with us.” Michael said. “So yes, I’ve practiced it.”

“What about the ‘no’ part?”

“If a woman is miserable, if she can’t move and be active and enjoy being pregnant, she’s not happy. So there is a thing as too pregnant. And this, as extraordinary it looks, at least to me, looks too pregnant.”

Matilda looked at him astonished. “I don’t think I’ve ever heard a man speak so passionately. It’s really sweet.”

“Well, I try.” Michael replied. “Now from a totally practical perspective, where we are going, octobabies isn’t practical. Look how many people Octomom had helping her. One baby is a lot of work, as you know, but eight? No, not practical. But, we also have to consider that we’re recolonizing a planet, we need people, a lot of people, fast. The population needs to grow fast enough so it can sustain itself genetically.”

“That’s where the surrogacy comes in.” Matilda said.

“Yes, genetic diversity. That’s part of it, but that’s also where the twins factor in. Susan and I both thought that twins wouldn’t be too bad. Still a lot of work, but manageable.”

“If you stayed at home all day and raised kids, I suppose.”

“Ok, so back to twins.” Michael said, and the hologram’s body returned to the twin look.

“Wow, that looks so small now.”

“Now, you said you’d like to be bustier. Are these big enough for you?” Michael said gesturing to the hologram’s G-cups.

“Hmm. No, I think I’d like to be bigger. Can I see what I’d look like with boobs the size of Tabitha’s?”

“Sure.” Michael responded. It made sense, Tabitha was the second largest woman on the ship. He pushed a couple buttons. “There.”

“Wow, really big.” She said as she walked around her hologram double.

“Oh, if you want, you can step into the hologram, and get first person perspective.”

Matilda looked at him, then carefully put her feet where the hologram was standing, and literally stepped into the image. She looked down at her bikini clad Double-Js.

“Oh neat.” She replied. “I wish I could feel them, and feel how they moved.”

“Sorry, can’t help you there.” He replied, “You’ll have to ask Susan and Tabitha.”

“I don’t have to ask, Tabitha is quite proud of her girls.”

“So you like this?” Michael asked.

“I *like* it.” She responded. “I don’t *love* it. Bigger please.”

“If you say so.” Michael responded. And more buttons. “This is Susan’s size.”

“Yes, better. But bigger.”

“Really?” Susan’s breasts were slightly larger than Chelsea Charms.

“I know it’s not politically correct, but I want to be really, really huge.”

“You sure?”

“Absolutely. Blow me up.” She said with conviction.

“Ok, here we go.” He pushed a button. “This is double the mass.”

“Oh yea, so much better. But more.” Michael didn’t even respond except to increase the hologram’s breast size to triple Susan’s jaw dropping bust size. The hologram’s breasts now extended up and out, the hologram’s pregnant belly supporting much of it.

“Without the belly.”

“Oh, sure.” He replied. And the pregnancy was removed. Now, the hologram’s breast extended down to its waist, covering the entire upper torso.

“I gotta do it, just to see, once more.” And Michael complied.

“Oh my God!” Matilda exclaimed as she walked around the image. “I don’t think I could move with these.” She stepped into the hologram again and looked down at herself. She tried to reach around the holographic breasts and couldn’t really do so.

“I don’t think I could breast feed like this.” Matilda said. “I kinda like this, its just so ‘out there,’ but I think I like the last one better.”

“Let me back that down.” And Michael took the hologram back to the previous setting. “You like that?”

“Yes, this is absolutely perfect.”

“Well, before you commit, let’s make you pregnant again.” Michael said. She watched her breasts perk up as the hologram’s pregnant with twins lifted in front of her.

“Ooh, this is so hot. But I want to see the quads.” Michael looked at her, and pressed the button.

“Oh yea, I want this.” She said admiring her figure. She stepped back out, and looked at the hologram. “But I don’t dare. Go back to twins.” And she watched as Michael made the change.

“Yes, that’s perfect. I’d really like the quads, but it’s just too much.”

“Ok, if you’re absolutely sure.” Michael replied. “Really think about it.”

Matilda looked at her hologram some more, walking around it several times. Finally she turned to Michael.

“Yes, I’m sure, this is what I want.”

“Ok, let me do this.” Michael turned to the console and started the process, but then reconsidered. He tweaked the fertility just a little bit. Giving her a little a better chance of having triplets, then pressed the button. The machine chirped a moment later, and the injection appeared in the slot. Michael took up the injector and turned to Matilda, she had climbed onto the med-table.

“Are you absolutely, positively, one hundred percent sure?” Michael asked one more time. “Last chance.”

“Do it.” She replied instantly.

“Ok.” He replied and gave her the injection. “Now, I have something new for you.” He turned back to the counter, and retrieved the sample bracelets.

“Pick one.” And she did. A few moments later, he held the finished customized bracelet in his hand.

“This is yours.” He said. “Which arm?”

She looked at the bracelet, and then held out her right arm. He put the bracelet on her arm. She saw her name inscribed, and five jewels imbedded just under it.

“It’s beautiful.” Matilda said looking at it.

“It’s also functional.” Michael replied. “First it has a locator beacon in it, so we can find you if we need to. But you see these stones. These are actually fertility indicators. They light up each day you’re capable of becoming pregnant.”

“I noticed all the women having them.”

“It was Susan’s idea. She thought it’d be helpful for everybody.”

“So, uhm, how long?” She asked.

“Susan said she started noticing a difference after four or five days. You should probably talk to her if you have more questions.”

“And what about?” She ask holding her new bracelet.

“Oh, At least two cycles.” He said. “And then the genetic changes will be passed on to your children.”

Matilda only nodded. She pulled him to her. As their lips met, she wrapped her arms and legs around him.

He slipped one hand down her back and over her butt. She felt this and pulled her body up closer to him. Her tongue slipped between his lips as he squeezed her body as well. She quickly started moving her hips forward, as her kisses became even more passionate. Several minutes later, they finally broke apart. And she relaxed back to sitting on the med-bed.

“We are definitely going to take this all the way, someday.” She said recovering her breath. “I promise you that.”

“I look forward to it.” He replied and gave her a quick kiss. “But I think we better be getting back.”

“Yea, we better. Billy will be wondering where I am.”

February 25th

Susan and Michael sat at the restaurant. They were celebrating his birthday. All week long she had been hinting at his surprise present. And now they sat together in this beautiful Paris restaurant.

They quietly talked of the work all the women were doing. Most were actively researching and collecting information onboard ship. Tabitha and Theresa were the most obvious exceptions. Even though they were busy, they believed they would fill the cargo holds in a few months.

Susan only smiled and laughed. She didn’t take any notice of the stares she was getting. Her enormous breasts were on generous display. Firm and high, well over a foot of cleavage projected from her ribcage, her saucer sized areola barely covered by the red spaghetti string dress she wore. There was no possible way to cover any type of bra under the backless dress. She didn’t need one.

When the dinner was over Susan called the waiter over for the check.

“It’s Michael’s birthday today.” She said handing the waiter a credit card.

“He’s going to be a very lucky man tonight.” She added with a purr in her voice.

They left the restaurant and found a cab. Once alone in their hotel room, their lips met in a passionate kiss. Clothes were removed and soon Susan was on the bed, ready for the sexual pleasures she had been building up to the last few days. She pressed her body against his as they kissed. Passions increased as his hand roamed her body. He could feel her upper leg over his, and bent his leg up between hers. He slid his hand up to the side of her breast.

“Oooh” she purred. Unlike the first time they had made love, she could feel her passions rising from his touch on her breasts. She had become so sensitive, she could induce multiple orgasm just from stroking their sides.

“Make love to me.” She sighed.

Michael kissed her and started to retreat, he reaching for his pants to retrieve a condom, when she stopped him.

“Not tonight dear.” She whispered, only to be met with a questioning look. “Not ever again. Tonight, we make a baby.”

She took his hand and pulled him to her. As she laid back, he covered her. She spread her legs beneath him, reached down and guided his member into herself.

She hadn’t felt this for months. Ever since the shot, they had always used a condom. Not wanting to become pregnant too soon. But now she was ready and willing to start the family, HUGE family, they were both hoping for. He slid into her a little at a time, knowing she preferred it slow and gentle at this stage. A few inches in, he stopped, pulled out a little, and then back in a little further.

“So good.” She sighed again. Already she was in a dreamy state, her instincts taking over. He pulled out, then back again, each time sinking deeper and deeper. Finally he was totally buried, and she wrapped her legs around him, fully ready to continue. His strokes continued, and her breathing became pants of ecstasy. It wasn’t long before her body started shaking around him. He felt the vibrations along his shaft as her first orgasm of the evening.

“Don’t stop.” She managed after a moment. “Please don’t stop.” And he continued on. Even though her womanhood was clenching around him as tightly as her orgasm could make her, she was well lubricated, and he continued to move in her. Her body continued to shake and he could feel her clenching again.

“OOOH!” she mewled. “So fast, so hard.” She whimpered. He continued on. Again and again, orgasm rippled through her, and he could not hold back any more. He felt the energy rising within him, and soon he pushed himself as deeply into her as he could, and released.

“Ah!” She cried. “Feel.. Feel.. feel you inside.. feel it in me!” She panted as he pumped his sperm into her fertile womb. Once he was done, he collapsed, barely managing to move to her side. She was panting as well, hardly moving while she tried to catch her breath.

Finally after several minutes she spoke.

“That was incredible lover.” She managed. “Make a baby sex is the best.” She managed to turn to her side, and kiss him. “I could feel you inside me. I could feel you cuming inside me. It was incredible.”

He managed to pull her closer and kissed her again. He brushed some hair away from her face, and moved his hand down her body, over her shoulder, and finally resting at her waist. She snuggled her head down and closed her eyes to relax.

“Michael,” She spoke softly. “Do you want a boy? Or a girl?”

“It doesn’t matter.” He replied just as softly. “As long as he or she is healthy, I don’t mind either way.”

“And besides, we can have more.” She half chuckled.

“There is that.” He replied.

“There is something we do need to talk about.” She opened her eyes to look at him. “I want this baby, or babies, to be born on Zanthia.”

“Me too.” He replied. “So I guess, we’re kind of locked in. We’ll have to leave in the next few months or so. March, April, May, June, July...Assuming you’re pregnant, the end of July you’ll be five months along, three for the trip, and a month to get settled once we arrive.”

“So no later than the first of August?”

“Agreed, no later.” Michael said. “It’s just that...”

“What?”

“I just feel like we need one more. But I can’t put my finger on it.” He replied.

April 1st

Susan awoke and stretched. She enjoyed the comfortable bed. She loved sleeping naked. And she loved the loving she and Michael shared the night before. She was only five weeks along, her stomach a long way from starting to bulge, but she rubbed it with her hands anyway. She moved to the bathroom and showered, relishing the soap on her body. She pulled on some shorts and sat down at her table. She brushed her hair, then examined her breasts in the mirror. They had become even firmer as they expanded, milk glands enlarging in preparation of feeding the babies she carried. Her areola, once a medium dark color had swollen and turned a dark, dark red. Her nipples had gotten slightly larger, now fully as large as the end of her pinkie. They were thick, and nearly always firm. She brushed her hand across her areola and felt the excitement shoot through her body.

“And way more sensitive.” She said to her reflection. “As if I needed it.”

She smiled to herself. She was tempted to go back to bed and pleasure herself, but she had a lot of medical documentation to go through. Instead she reached for her clothes. She opted for a bra today, then pulled on panties. Next came the light sweat pants, and t-shirt.

“The biggest boobs on the ship.” She said twisting her torso side to side just to watch them bounce.

Susan first went to the bridge. She never tired of the view. Usually one or two women would be up here reading, or just enjoying the view of Earth floating below. But today it was empty. She then went aft to the common room. A few of the women were there, either eating a meal or taking care of little Billy. He had single handedly captured every heart on board. She absent-mindedly rubbed her stomach again, then made her way to the food dispenser. She took her meal and sat down next to Tabitha and Theresa.

“What brings you on board?” She asked.

“Showers.” They both said laughing. “And the food.”

Both had been busy collecting samples and were getting to a point where they had filled all the storage units. They were nearly finished with their list of ‘first priority’ collections, and were now working on ‘second priority’. The holds would be filled in another month or so.

“Has Michael said anything yet?” Theresa asked.

“Nothing.” Susan said. “But we can’t sit here in orbit too much longer. Michael promised me my babies would be born on Zanthia, so we can’t wait too much longer.”

“And remember, he said he wanted us all to be preggers before we left, so we have to get busy.”

“Have you decided on a daddy yet?” Susan asked.

“I still want my quarterback.” Tabitha said, then added a little giggle.

“Is Michael going just to decide? How are we going find out who we get?” Theresa asked.

“I don’t know that either.” Susan replied.

“Where is Michael anyway?” Tabitha asked again.

“He’s down below.” Susan answered. “He promised Matilda another shopping trip.”

“What for this time?”

“Toys for Billy. For when he’s older.” Susan replied. “She’s going to work on clothes next.”

“I hope they’re going to digitize everything.” Tabitha said. “The holds are almost full.”

“She promised she would.”

“So, I have to ask.” Theresa said. “How big is she?”

Susan looked down at Theresa’s breasts. Like most women, Theresa carried a pair of Double-Gs. Susan had gotten used to the larger breast size on all women. Theresa, at 5’7” had become “normal” looking. Her ‘little sister’ Tabitha was larger, carrying Double-J cups.

“Oh, I’d say around an E-cup, maybe double.”

A few hours later, on the planet below.

As in the past, Michael and Matilda were placed in a secluded parking lot, Michael started the car and drove a few blocks to their destination. Transporting directly into a store was possible, but always risky. Michael insisted on them being low-key. They had spent the last few hours shopping the biggest toy store in the Chicago area. They had slowly worked their way up and down each aisle. Carefully looking over every toy, scanning and digitally recording many of the items. In the end, Matilda had bought a few hundred dollars of trucks and tractors for Billy to play with. They had stuffed them into the car’s trunk and were about to leave when Matilda put her hand on Michael’s.

“Can we go to your place? The town house?”

“Uhm sure.” Michael responded and started the car. Half an hour later they pulled into the otherwise empty garage and the door shut behind them.

“So.” Michael said. “Come on in.”

They walked into the home and Matilda sat down on the couch.

“Come, sit down.” She said patting the cushion beside her. “I want to snuggle for a while.”

Michael sat down and relaxed, Matilda curled up in his arms as he leaned back.

“This feels so good.” She sighed after a moment. After a few minutes Matilda finally took a deep breath and started to talk.

“I really asked you along so I could talk to you.” She said quietly.

“OK.” Michael said.

“I can’t thank you enough for choosing me to come along with you. It means a lot to me and Billy.” She raised herself up, gave him a kiss, and settled back down again.

“If you hadn’t come to the diner that night, we’d still be there. We had no future. My life was going nowhere.”

“You’ve been a wonderful help with everything. While all the others are thinking about their professions and all the grand theories, you’re keeping us grounded. That means a lot.”

“Thanks, I want to be more than the only mom with previous experience.”

“Everyone has been so glad you’re coming along. And they all just adore Billy.”

She kissed him again, then looked into his eyes. “Uhm, I know this is asking a lot, but I have a huge favor to ask.”

He looked at her. “I ah.. OK. What’s the favor.”

“Well, uhm, I want to keep a promise. And I need your help.”

“I don’t understand. Why don’t you just start from the beginning?”

Matilda slid down and laid her head against his chest.

“OK, I’ll try. You met Ted, Billy’s father.” Matilda started out after a moment.

“Yes.”

“Well, Ted and I were high-school sweethearts; Cheerleader, football player, the whole thing. We dated, for a couple years, sex was OK. Frankly, for big guy, he’s not much of a ‘big’ guy, if you know what I mean.”

She laughed a little.

“But still, it was OK. I got pregnant the night of our senior prom. I wanted him to wear protection, but he didn’t have any. We took the chance. When I first found out I was pregnant I was scared, but I ‘just knew’ everything would be wonderful. Ted said we’d get married, and everything would be great. We started planning a wedding after graduation. Ted said he’d get a job, and we’d settle down. To his credit he found work and he started right after graduation. Anyway, wedding plans continued, and as my belly started getting big, Ted kept pushing back the date. Finally he pushed it back until after the Billy was born. When Billy came everybody seemed happy. Ted wasn’t there for the birth. Looking back I should’ve known something was wrong back then. He did finally show up late the next day. He said he’d been working hard, and a lot of overtime. He held Billy, and I thought everything would be wonderful.”

“After I got home from the hospital with Billy, I started looking at wedding plans again. As the days went by, Ted continued pushing the day back. Finally, I got so upset, I decided to go to his place.”

“Uh-oh.. I think I know where this is going.” Michael said.

“You guessed it.” Matilda said, “I was so hurt to find him with another woman. At least it wasn’t anybody I knew. At least it wasn’t any of my friends. I don’t know how I found the strength, but I told him to never call me again, and I walked out of there. Every time he would stop by where I worked, he’d cause a scene.”

“I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be.” She said shifting around to look at him. “Because of all that, it was easy for me to leave everything behind when you asked. It was getting hard to keep him away after my Dad had died.”

“I’m glad I could help. You’ve been wonderful to have around.”

“So, there you have my story.”

“I wish it could have been better. But I can guarantee, he’ll never find you.”

“I know. But I’m not done. I need to tell you about the promise.”

“Ok, I’m listening.”

“Right after Billy was born, I was still in the hospital. I was feeding him when Ted came in. Anyway I was holding Billy and I told him that someday, he would have a little brother or little sister. I promised him that. Come to think of it, Ted was in the room at the time, and left right after I said it. I think Ted was scared to death of being a father, and the thought of having more helped him run away.”

“Then you’re in the right place. You can have all the children you want, and they’ll be Billy’s brothers and sisters. Well, half-brother and half-sister.”

“That’s the problem. I don’t want him to have a half-brother or a half-sister. I want him to have at least one full blooded brother or sister.”

“Oh. That means..”

“Yes, that means I’d have to go back with Ted.” She looked him in the eye. “And I don’t want to go back there. I don’t love the man, and I won’t have sex with him, just to get pregnant again. The only man I want to have sex with is you.”

“I..”

She planted her lips against his for several seconds before pulling away.

“I know I’ll have to surrogate my share of babies. But I want to carry your babies too. And I made a promise to Billy that I’d like to keep.”

“So you want my help doing?” Michael asked the open-ended question.

“I want your help getting me pregnant with Ted’s sperm.” Matilda said. “That’s all he is to me, a sperm donor. But I thought you could get his sperm like all the other men’s and I could get pregnant that way.”

Michael looked at her a few moments. He saw that she was serious. It wasn’t such a farfetched idea; Ted’s sperm would be just as useful as any other.

“I can’t see why we can’t do that. It wouldn’t be too much trouble at all.”

“Really?” She kissed him deeply again. “Can I ask you something else?”

“Sure.”

“Can we do it right away?” She asked. “It’s been three months since you gave me that shot.” She showed him her bracelet, the fourth diamond glowing brightly. “Right now, I’m perfect. Can we go right now?”

“I can’t see why not.”

“How can I thank you?” She said. “You do remember me saying I wanted to carry your babies... I promise, and I keep my promises, I’ll carry as many of your babies as you want, whenever you want.” She kissed him deeply again, rubbing her thigh against his crotch.

They kissed for a few minutes then calmed down again for a while.

As he laid there he enjoyed the feel of Matilda’s body against him. While Susan, Theresa, and Tabitha all had more curves than a country road, Matilda’s long body exuded sensuousness. She moved with a grace that many of the other women did not possess.

“I’ve got an idea. Or rather, I’ve got a favor to ask of you.”

“Anything, you know that.”

“OK, as you know, I collected eggs and sperm from a lot of people. Well, I also collected DNA samples from a few, uh, older women, that I admire. They were beautiful in their day, and even now many of them have a grace younger women just don’t. The ship’s computer said it would be a simple matter of placing that DNA in a woman’s egg, and starting the process of creating a baby with the same DNA as the donor.”

“You mean a clone.”

“Yes.” Michael replied. “I was wondering if you’d like to be a part of that process?”

“You mean, donate an egg, carry the baby. Everything?”

“Yes.” He replied.

“Who are some of these women?” Matilda asked.

“Let’s see.” He said. “Sophia Loren, Rachel Welch, Ann Margaret, Ursula Andress. One of the women I have samples from is Julie Newmar, she was the cat woman on TV’s Batman. A very elegant, and intelligent woman, I’d like to see her young and beautiful again.”

“With huge boobs, of course.” Matilda chuckled.

“Well, bigger, anyway.” Michael said with a bit of a smile.

Matilda took her hand away and unbuttoned her blouse, she shook it off one shoulder, then undid her bra hooks.

“I’m bigger than my Mom now. When I got old enough I thought I’d get boobs like hers, but didn’t. And when I got pregnant, I thought for sure I’d get bigger.” She pulled the scrunchie from her ponytail and worked her hair free. She guided his hand to her breast.

She kissed him again as she felt the passions rise. She opened her mouth slightly, and pushed her tongue against his lips. Passions heated up quickly as she pressed more of her body against his. After a time, they separated. She sat up and finished removing her shirt and bra. She looked at him, then quickly stood and dropped her pants.

“Matilda.” Michael started.

“I know. I could get pregnant and we can’t do that this time. In the meantime...” She moved down his body and unzipped his pants. She worked his penis free and started stroking it. She then straddled his body and lowered herself until a breast was at his lips.

“I know my boobs aren’t as big as Susan’s.” She kissed him. “But they’re all yours.” She enjoyed the sensation as she felt him take her nipple into his mouth. She stroked his hair as she felt her pulse quicken. He had one hand wrapped around her lower back while the other found her free breast.

“Oh yea,” she cooed. “Oh so good!” The passion continued to build. Suddenly Matilda pressed herself into him tightly and shook through an orgasm.

“Wow.” She sighed as the wave of pleasure ebbed. “Orgasm from boob-play. I can’t wait to have you inside me.” After a moment she added. “I’ve wanted you from the moment you walked into the diner.”

“Really?” he asked as pleasure built.

“Oh yea. It was lust at first sight. Now, it’s full blown love.” Before he could respond she kissed him again. She pressed her body fully against him as she ground her thigh into his crotch.

Michael slid one hand around to her waist, she lift her body as she felt him slide it under her panties.

“Oh yea, do me good.” She panted, she parted her legs slightly as he moved his hand lower. His hands found her wetness, and pressed one finger into the crease. She moaned in response, and started moving her hips back and forth. Soon he had a second finger deep within her as his palm rubbed against her clitoris. She moaned and ground her hips against him faster and faster.

Orgasm after orgasm overtook her and after several minutes, she finally collapsed on top of him.

“OK. You have a deal.” She said after a few minutes. “I’ll carry the clones. As many as you want. But on one condition, every clone pregnancy is followed by one of yours.”

“Uhm.” Michael couldn’t believe his ears. Before he could respond she slid her hand down his pants.

“And I want this inside me as often as you can manage. Pregnant women can often be very, very horny. We need as much loving as our man can give us.”

Michael only nodded and kissed her.

“I’ll do whatever I can to keep you all happy.” He smiled.

“I know you will.” She said and snuggled down beside him again. After a few moments she spoke again.

“Can I ask you something?”

“Sure.”

“Will my boobs really get as big as we planned?”

“Pretty sure, it seemed to work on all the other women.” Michael said. “Why having second thoughts?”

“Oh no, not at all.” Matilda replied quickly. “And the fertility part, will I always have twins?”

“Not ‘always’.” He replied. “Twins will be ‘normal’ for you. But you could have singles or triples or more too.”

“Cool. I hope I have twins more often. Tabitha and I have a bet.”

“Really?”

“Yea, who can have the most babies. I actually think all the women are thinking about a little friendly competition.”

“Really? That’s amazing.”

“Don’t be fooled, we women can be pretty competitive sometimes.”

“I’ll have to remember that.” He looked at the clock at the wall.

“I really hate to break the mood, but if we’re going to visit Ted, we should probably get going.”

“I know.” She sighed. “If you don’t mind, I need a shower.”

“Go ahead, I don’t mind at all.”

“Good.” She said getting up. “As much as I like our time together, I don’t want to go out smelling like it.” She went to the bathroom and returned later clean and dressed again. She handed him her bra.

“Keep this, it’s getting too small anyway.” She kissed him. “Now, you need to shower too.” She went back into the living room. He watched her turn on the TV, then went for his turn under the water. After they cleaned up, they went back out to the garage and got in the car. As Michael reached for the button, Matilda stopped him.

“I meant what I said.” She said quietly. “I do love you. All of us women love you.”

“I... I don’t know what to say.” He responded.

“You don’t have to say anything.” She said. She kissed his neck, then laid her head on his shoulder.

Michael communicated with the ship, and soon they found themselves on an empty road in rural Tennessee.

“It looks like spring isn’t far way.” Matilda observed looking out the window.

Michael started the car and started driving. She directed him to Ted’s place. They drove past it once, then went around the block and parked up the street.

“You sure you don’t want to come along?” He asked her.

“I’m sure. I’ll wait here.”

“OK.” He took the sampler from the briefcase and walked to Ted’s house. He knocked, and Ted opened the door. “Hello Ted, remember me?”

“Uhm, yea, I think so, Matilda’s friend. How is she doing?”

“She’s well. Do you mind if I come in?” Ted moved out of the doorway and Michael came in. “Your wife home?”

“No she’s at work. Should be home any minute now.”

“Good.” And Michael reached out and took his arm. He had flipped the ring inward and opened the top. Ted’s eyes glazed over. “Ted you will listen to me and do exactly what I tell you. I want you to go over to your favorite chair, sit down and get comfortable. Close your eyes and fall asleep. You won’t wake up unless I wake you. Now go.”

Ted wordlessly moved to a recliner, sat down and closed his eyes. Immediately he started to snore lightly. Michael thought, at least it wasn’t a loud obnoxious snore. He quickly moved in front of Michael, and used the sampler. He finished entering Ted’s name and information then sat there looking at Ted. A part of him wanted to inflict some kind of hurt on the man. He saw a picture of Ted’s wife, a relatively pretty woman, if sort of plain; nowhere as stunning as Matilda, but pretty. He thought of several options from him having sex with Ted’s wife to making her become a baby making nymphomaniac. Finally he stopped his thoughts of vengeance. Enough was enough.

“Ted, wake up.” He said.

“Uh? What?” Ted said started. “I’m sorry shouldn’t have fallen asleep. Why is it you stopped by?”

“Only to give you a message. Matilda’s doing fine, and she doesn’t want anything from you. She hopes someday you’ll be happy.”

Michael started moving towards the door, and Ted followed him. "Well, that's awful nice of her. I didn't treat her as good as I should have. Tell her I'm sorry. And hope she'll be happy too."

"I will." He stuck out his hand and Ted shook it. "Now I really better get going. Gotta get to Nashville yet tonight."

"Thanks for dropping by." Ted replied. Michael nodded and stepped out the door. He walked down the street and got into the car.

"You do it?" Matilda asked.

"Yes Ma'am." He replied as he started the car. He drove away, and in a few minutes they were alone again, and beamed back onboard the ship.

"Come on, I think it's high time we start you on that promise." Matilda smiled, and made their way upstairs to the main deck and found Susan.

They found Susan in their room, the door held open, sitting at the desk reading something on the screen. "I hope you're refreshing your memory on how to artificially impregnate women."

"Uhm, no, cancer research." Susan said. "Why?"

Michael showed her the sampler in her hand. "Matilda is ready to get pregnant, and here's the donation to do it."

Susan's eyes light up in excitement, "All right!" She jumped up and gave Matilda a hug. "Come with me." She led them across to the med-room.

"Just lie down." She said patting the bed.

"Do I?"

"Get undressed? Oh no, just unbutton and unzip your jeans." She took the sampler from Michael. "You need to step outside so we can have some privacy."

"He can stay." Matilda said. "I don't mind."

"As you wish." Susan turned back to the counter worked a few buttons, and then looked at the screen. "Well, sample is viable. I'll just store this in case more is needed. Then a little here in this little gizmo, you know we really need a better name than gizmo. Now we open your pants up a little." She spread the flaps of Matilda's jeans, and placed the device on Matilda's lower belly. It wasn't very big, about the size paperback book. "Now, just relax, take slow even breaths." Matilda bit her lower lip in nervousness, and tried to comply. Susan pressed a button and a light started a strobing green. "It's calibrating, finding your egg." Then the light stayed solid green. "And there, it's found it, and teleported the sperm around it." The light stayed solid for a nearly a minute, then flashed rapidly a dozen times, and went dark." Susan removed it. "There, all done, fertilization confirmed. You can button up now."

Matilda buttoned up her jeans and sat up, while Susan put the device away. Susan turned back to Matilda.

"Now you already know the drill, nothing crazy, we'll keep an eye on you for a couple weeks, make sure everything is OK."

"Thank-you." Matilda said and gave Susan a hug. "This means so much to me."

Susan returned the hug. "You're very welcome." She looked at Michael. "So does this mean I'll be using that gizmo again soon?"

“Absolutely.” Michael responded. “We agreed we’d leave no later than August 1st.”

“What’s August 1st?” Matilda asked.

Susan patted her own belly. “Michael promised I’d deliver these on Zanthia. So we’ll have to leave before August to get there in time.”

“So you’re?” Matilda asked.

“Yes I am. So I guess welcome to the club.” Susan replied. Matilda smiled and hugged her again.

April 2nd, the next morning.

The buzzer woke Michael from a sleep. As he stirred Susan rolled away from him. He rolled over to his side of the bed and pressed the button.

“Yes.” He said.

“Come on’ get up. We gotta be there before sunrise.” A woman’s voice replied.

“OK, OK. I’m up.” He said, and released the button. He sat up and took a shower. He went back into the cabin and dressed.

“Where are you going today?” Susan asked.

“I don’t know. That’s up to Tabitha to decide.” Michael said. “She’s the expert.”

“And super horny.” Susan said. “If you don’t let these women get pregnant pretty soon, you’ll find yourself strapped to a bed while we take matters into our own hands.”

Susan pulled the blankets away, her enormous breasts fully exposed. She put hand on each breast and pushed them up and together.

“That actually sounds fun.” She giggled. “Now come here and kiss me goodbye.”

He bent over the bed and gave her a quick peck, then started to move away, but she grabbed his arm.

“That’s not a kiss.” She pouted.

He sat on the bedside and bent over. They started kissing passionately, then he reached for her breast. He didn’t have to reach far, as large as she was, he would have to try hard to touch anything but boob flesh. Once his hand found an erect nipple he moved his lips to the other breast and started suckling. In moments she was squirming in orgasm after orgasm. She collapsed in exhaustion as he stopped.

“That’s a kiss!” she breathed.

“I better get going. Tabitha’s probably pacing by now.”

“Go have fun.” Susan said and relaxed a little.

Michael stood but a hand held his.

“And Michael.” Susan said. “Make sure to kiss her a few times, will you.” Emphasizing the word ‘kiss.’

The surprise on his face was obvious.

“Seriously?”

“Absolutely.” Susan said. “Maybe a few orgasms will take the edge off.”

“So where are we headed?” Michael asked as he came into the transporter room.

“Alaska, here’s your coat.” Tabitha said and step onto the pad. Michael followed.

They rematerialized on a tree filled hillside overlooking a lake. He couldn’t see anything but a few stars.

“What time is it?” He asked in a whisper.

“Just after 5:00 AM.” Tabitha replied just as quietly. As she said this another transporter beam deposited a camouflaged shelter. Beside it were a dozen small containers. Michael recognized them as small cryogenic containers.

“You wanted eagles.” Tabitha said opening the flap for the shelter. “We’re here for eagles.”

Michael went inside and fastened the flap closed behind them. Tabitha set up what looked like powerful camera on a tripod, then plugged in a connection to a monitor while Michael set up a small lantern for bit of light, and spread a blanket.

Tabitha joined him on the blanket.

“Now we wait for sunrise.” She said.

“We can find something to do while we wait, can’t we?” She said and pulled him to her. She laid back and beckoned him for another kiss. He leaned down and kissed her full on the lips, then took a breast in hand. Like Susan earlier, they were very hard to miss. Once locating a nipple, he pulled his lips away.

“This is part two of what Susan thinks is a good kiss.” A bit of nibbling, a little licking, and a little suckling had Tabitha squirming in pleasure.

“I like how you kiss!” She panted, then shook with an orgasm.

After several minutes of additional cuddling, the communicator chirped.

“Yes?” Michael replied after activating it.

“How are things going Sis?” came the voice of Theresa.

“Good.” Tabitha replied. She looked outside. “The sun is up, and the birds are coming in.” She replied seeing hundreds of bald eagles perched on the trees below.

“Great to hear, good luck.” Theresa replied. “Later.”

Tabitha found her shirt and pulled it on.

“I better put these away. Or else I might start that baby whether you want me to or not!” Then she laughed and shook her breasts back and forth for emphasis.

“I can only say one thing.” He replied reaching for his shirt. “I have to be the luckiest man on this planet.”

“You got that wrong.” She replied looking through the sight finder. “You’re the luckiest man on *two* planets.”

“I.” Michael started, then paused. “I don’t have anything to say in response.”

“Good.” She said. “It’s time to work now. Check this out.”

Michael looked at the monitor. Pictured was a teenage bald eagle. Its head had yet to turn white, but it was magnificent none the less.

“Beautiful.” He replied. “But he’s not bald.”

“Bald eagles don’t turn bald until they’re adults. Which takes a few years. So this one is a teenager. Perfect for our needs.”

Tabitha pressed a button while Michael looked at the monitor. Instantly a small cloud of dust appeared around the eagle’s head. The sleep agent took effect and the eagle’s head drooped. Another instant later, the eagle disappeared and was in the shelter with them, peacefully asleep.

Tabitha looked the bird over.

“Oh yes, a nice specimen, probably a female.” She observed. “Get a cryo box.”

Michael quietly stuck his head outside the shelter, and dragged a cryo chamber into the shelter. Tabitha attached a small locator beacon to one leg, and a small diagnosis scanner to the other. She carefully placed the bird in the cryo chamber, sealed it, and pressed a button. She moved back a couple feet and the cryo chamber disappeared in a sparkle of light.

She went back to the viewfinder looking for another bird.

“This portable teleporter is a dream. Makes bird capture so easy.”

“How do you know that bird was a female? And why young adults?”

“Females are larger than the males.” She replied without taking her eyes from the viewfinder. “Teenagers will be able to adjust the easiest. With adults, we don’t know if we’re getting both mates of a pair. We don’t know if we’re getting an adult that’s too old and cannot have young.”

“I see. I’m glad you know these things.” Michael said setting up his own stool and starting to look out at the lake through binoculars.

“Ah!” Tabitha exclaimed. “Another candidate.”

Michael looked at the monitor and watched the capture process again. Once the bird was in the shelter with them, he could see this was smaller than the first.

“A male?” He asked.

“Probably.” Tabitha agreed. And in moments it too was safely in a cryogenic sleep.

“So when we get to Zanthia, will we be able to release them?”

“Not for a couple years at least.” She replied. “Eagles are mostly predators, usually eating fish. We have to let the fish population build up first.”

“That’s where Theresa comes in.”

“Yup.” Tabitha said. “Say, I’ve got a question.”

“Shoot.”

“When are the rest of women going to get pregnant?” She replied. “I’m more than ready. And I heard about Matilda.”

“As soon as I can figure out how to be fair about it.”

“What do you mean?”

“Matilda was a special case. The donor was her ex-boyfriend. She wanted Billy to have full-blooded brother or sister. As for the rest of you, well, some women have asked for the same sperm. I almost regret that trip to Hollywood.”

“Oh, that’s easy.” She said. “Just have a drawing. Like concert ticket sales.”

“So I put numbers in a hat, and have each women pull one out?”

“Yup. And whatever the order, that decides who gets to pick.”

“That’s a great idea. Everybody will be on board tonight, we’ll have the drawing tonight.”

“While you’re at it, you better start letting some of us actually get pregnant, and decide when we’ll leave. Theresa and I will have the holds filled in a few weeks.”

“Susan said the exact same thing this morning.”

“Oh, I have a food request.” Tabitha added.

“OK... What is it?”

“Candy bars.”

“You’re kidding.”

“Nope serious.”

Later that afternoon

“It looks like we’re done for the day.” Tabitha said as the last of the cryo-boxes disappeared in the teleporter beam.

“Do you think any more birds will come?”

“Probably not.” Tabitha replied. “I think we caught all we’re going to on this trip.”

With that she sat down on the blanket beside him. The day had warmed their shelter enough that their coats weren’t needed. She reached for the bottom of her shirt and pulled it over her head. She laid back and stretched.

“We’ve got a lot of time before we need to be back on board.” She giggled. “Now come here and kiss me.”

Dinner that night

Everyone was nearly finished with their meals when Michael finally cleared his throat.

“OK. I promised I’d tell you what these chips mean.” He said. “You all took one red and one blue chip right? Well, everybody has been asking when we’re leaving for Zanthia. And the answer is as soon as everyone here is confirmed pregnant.”

That got an intake of breath, and he could see they were all about ready to ask questions. He held up a hand to silence them.

“The blue chips and red chips are numbered. The blue chip is the order of pregnancy attempt.”

“I got a 1!” Theresa said excitedly. She had been sitting across the table from him, explaining her day’s collection of animals.

“And the red chip determines the order in which you will choose your donor.” And everybody started talking at once. He had to clear his throat to get their attention again.

“Susan and I have been talking about it, and here’s the deal. Once you choose the donor, he’s yours exclusively until you’re sure you’re through with him. Let me explain. As I promised, your first pregnancy will be from your egg. But we thought it’d be nice if you had the choice. If you want, you can choose to have more children from the same donor. Susan thought, and I agreed, that it would only be fair to you if you wanted your children to have siblings.”

“We’ll still have to be surrogates as well.” Susan added.

“Now, I will ask this for whomever has the last red chip. Those of you before her... PLEASE be as quick as you can deciding.”

“Is trading allowed?” Tabitha asked.

“Uhm, sure.. if you want to trade chips, I can’t see why not.”

“Great.” She said. “I’ve got a number 3 red chip, and a number 4 blue chip. If anybody is interested in trading, see me later.” Talking started again amongst the women. She leaned across the table a little. “I told you this was a good idea. But I didn’t think of blue chips.”

“That was my idea.” Matilda said. Billy was playing with a car and truck beside her.

“OK, I’ll bite, why?” She answered.

“Susan’s already pregnant. So she’ll deliver first. But can you imagine the confusion, and the work, if all the rest of us delivered all at the same time?”

“And you know we would.” Theresa said. “We would need a lot of help.”

“So, we spread conception out over a couple months.” Matilda said. “Those that deliver first get help from the rest. By the time the last of us deliver, the first can help. Trust me. I had a good friend help me after Billy was born, I would’ve been lost without her.”

The chatting between women continued for a little while, but it didn’t take long for most of the women to go back to their cabins and start looking through the donors again.

A couple hours later, Theresa found Susan and Michael sitting at a table in the common room.

“Mind if I join you?” She said.

“Sure, pull up a chair.” Susan replied.

"I've been thinking, and I've got an idea."

"OK, shoot." Michael said.

"Nope. Not until I get a promise from you." She stated. She was met with a questioning look. "If my idea is a good one, you have to do me a favor."

"Uhm. It depends on the favor, but if it's do-able, probably yes, sure."

"You'll like it, trust me."

"What, the idea?" Susan asked. "Or the favor?"

"Both."

"Ooh, intriguing." Susan smiled. "Idea first."

"Simple really, we adopt a few girls from orphanages. Maybe seven or eight."

"Why?"

"Easy," Teresa said, "we get some girls maybe ten or twelve years old. Take them with us. They'll be old enough to help with the babies, and in a few years, they can start having babies too."

All onboard talked about it for a few minutes, and all agreed it was worth pursuing. A plan was sketched out. Michael and Theresa would travel below, and with Michael's help, they could quickly get through the any paper work. Young boys and girls, after they get older, are rarely adopted. Susan had spent her teenage years in foster homes, she knew they could probably find children. They agreed that for each child they adopted, an adult woman would have to be willing to be a guardian.

"So," Susan asked. "What's the favor you want in return?"

"Well." Theresa replied a little hesitant. "You know the shot you gave me when we came on board? I want another."

"What?" Susan asked.

Theresa cupped her breasts in her hands and pushed them up. "I know that shot made my boobs grow. Just like the rest of us. I want a booster shot. I want bigger boobs."

"Are you serious?" Michael asked. "Why?"

"I've always been the big sister, or the 'little' big sister. Tabitha was always a pretty girl, and when puberty hit, she got lots more boobs than I did. She was always getting the attention from the boys. Whenever I brought home a boyfriend, he'd look at her once, and I knew it wouldn't be long before we'd break up."

Michael and Susan only listened.

"So when you gave us our shots, you only reinforced the big boobed blond by making her way, way bigger."

"But you're a beautiful woman." Michael replied. "One of the smartest I know too."

"Thank-you. I know you mean it." Theresa replied. "But this is for me. I want to be the big sister, both in age and boobage."

“Are you absolutely sure?” Susan asked. “Have you really, really thought about it?”

“Yes. I was going to come to you earlier. That’s why I’ve been working so hard collecting so many animals. I thought if I worked really, really hard, I could ask.”

Susan looked at Michael and simply said. “Do it.”

Theresa smiled and was about to respond when Tabitha walked into the room.

“Hey, there you are.” She said.

“The ship’s not that big. Not too many places we can go.” Theresa said kidding a little. “What’s up?”

“Well, it’s my turn to choose a donor.” Tabitha said display her red chip with the number three on it. And I was wondering if you might want to do some trading.”

Theresa looked at her chips, she would be the last person choosing her donor. But she had a number one blue chip. “You want to trade both?”

“Yup.” Tabitha said. “Courtney chose Brad Pitt. Like that was a surprise. And Jessica chose Johnny Depp. And I know just how much you drool over George Clooney, so I thought we could work a deal.”

“But you’ll have to wait.”

“Don’t worry about it. Why do you think I made sure Michael interviewed the quarterback for our college. He’s so cute.”

Theresa looked at Michael who nodded, then slid her two chips to her sister. “Thanks sis.”

“So you for sure want George?” Tabitha said giving her chips to Theresa.

“Uhm. Sure.” Theresa said blushing.

“Good, I’ll tell Dawn, so she can choose.” Tabitha said standing. “I sure hope the others have choices in mind.” She added brandishing her red chip. Then she left the room.

“So I take it I get that favor?” Theresa asked.

“You seem sure.” Michael said. “So why not.”

“Good.” Theresa said. “No time like the present. Come on.”

“Go.” Susan said. “I’m going to get a snack and turn in. Theresa, don’t keep him all night.”

“I won’t. I promise.” She said, and Michael followed her forward. He noticed there was no one around until he got to the medical room. Matilda and Billy had already gone down to their apartment, Billy needed space to run and play, and the ship wasn’t very big for a little boy.

Theresa sat on the table and removed her blouse.

“It’s only a shot, you don’t need to be topless.” Michael said.

“I know. But I want you to get a good look at the ‘before’ boobies.” She said smiling.

Michael pushed the 'lock' button by the door and moved to her. She wrapped her legs around his as their lips met. She ground her still clothed crotch against his. She could feel his thickening penis against her thigh.

"Hmmm." She said breaking away. "We have to continue this in my cabin."

"Definitely." Micheal answered. He pulled himself away and turned to the computer console against the wall. In a few moments, there was a hum, and he turned back to her with the injector.

"This should make you the same size as Tabitha." He said approaching.

"No." Theresa said holding up her hand.

"No?" Michael asked. "Having second thoughts?"

"No." Theresa said. "I'm not having second thoughts. I want you to give me the same shot you gave Susan."

Michael was stunned into silence.

"I want you to give me the *exact same* shot you gave Susan." She repeated.

"Do you know what that'll do?"

"Absolutely." Theresa said. "It'll give me huge boobs, and increase my fertility."

"You don't understand." Michael said. "Everybody's fertility is increased. Do you want to take that even further?"

"So what were you going to give me?"

"Just the breast growth." Michael answered.

Theresa thought about it a moment.

"Do it anyway." She said. "Triplets or quads could be fun."

"But why?"

"Because I want to be special." Theresa said. "I want the history books on Zanthia to talk about me. I want history to know me as one of the people who did the most to repopulate the planet."

"Well, OK." Michael said. He put the injector aside and went back to the console. A new injector, loaded with the new dosage was produced in moments.

"Last chance." He said holding the injector an inch away from her arm.

"Do it." Theresa said without pause.

"Here goes." He said, and pressed the injector to her arm. There was sting and a hiss, and it was done.

Immediately, Theresa pulled him close again. She pressed her tongue between his lips, and slid one hand down his shirt to his pants.

"Thank-you." She panted. "Let's go to my cabin so I can thank you more fully." She pulled him behind her to her cabin next door. Once inside, she pushed him onto the bed. Still topless, she quickly pulled off her

shorts and climbed on top of him. She straddled his face, while she leaned forward to free his manhood. Once free, she took him into her mouth. She spread her legs apart, lowering her hips, as Michael started applying his tongue to her womanhood. It wasn't long before the excitement got to both of them and they relished the orgasms they shared. She only paused a moment to collect her breath. She turned around and faced him. She moved down between his legs and knelt over his penis again. This time she engulfed it between her breasts. With a hand to each breast, she nearly covered it within her cleavage.

"When my tits get really huge, I'll really be able to give you a great titty fuck." She panted. "Please promise me when I'm pregnant, you'll fuck me. I know I can't right now, but I want you inside me so bad."

"I promise." Michael gasped. "I'll.. Ungh!"

Theresa pressed her breasts together, feeling his sperm splash against them. After she was confident he had finished, she pulled her breasts apart and used it as a lotion, rubbing it into her jugs as she moaned in pleasure. She dived back onto him for a third helping.

"My belly is going to get so big." She said coming up for air. "Imagine how horny I'll be. You'll have to do me doggie style. Just picture it. My huge tits, getting bigger with milk, my belly huge. And you can come in, and slide right into me. Just think of that, over and over."

She bent back down and found his penis as fully erect again. She fondled his balls with one hand, stroked his cock with the other, while sucking the top few inches with her mouth. Soon she was rewarded with another copious load. She swallowed it down then fell limp beside him.

A minute later, she had caught her breath, she got up and took a quick shower. She returned to the bed and snuggled up against him. One hand slid down his stomach and started stroking him again.

"I want to make sure you're warmed up for Susan." She said quietly. In response he moved his free hand to her breast. She sighed in response.

"Just think, in a few months, we'll be able to do more than just this." She kissed him deeply. He had reached near firmness. "Come on. I'll walk you back to your cabin."

They left the bed and Theresa bravely walked out into the hallway and crossed to his cabin door. Michael only shook his head in astonishment and joined her. She pressed the door button, and kissed him.

"Have fun." She whispered as their lips parted.

"Thanks." He smiled back. Then entered his quarters. Susan was still awake waiting for him.

Theresa waved at Susan, who waved back, and the door slid shut. Theresa looked down the hallway and up towards the bridge. Seeing nobody, she crossed to the medical room. She quickly entered and found the two injectors. She put the empty injector in the recycler and held the unused injector in her hand.

"I better not." She said after a few moments, and put it into the recycler.

April 3rd, The next morning

Theresa was dressed in a nice pantsuit as she entered the common room and got her food. She got her breakfast and joined Michael and Susan at their table. Most of the other women had teleported back down to their apartments to continue their research, or in many cases, shopping.

"I knocked on Tabitha's door, she didn't answer." She said sitting down.

"She and Courtney are in the amazon today. Trying for some of those big blue parrots." Susan said.

“Ah, those are so beautiful, I hope she gets some.” Theresa responded.

“She said she’d take any parrots she can find.” Micheal said. “According to her, she’s almost done.”

“She was always more fascinated with birds than I was.” Theresa replied. “She loves them so.”

“So why the civies?” Susan asked. They had taken calling clothing they’d normally wear on the surface below as ‘civies.’

“I made a call to an adoption agency, Michael and I have an appointment in an hour.” Theresa said.

“Oh!” Susan replied. “You work fast.”

“Have to. When I called them, it could take months before we actually take custody of the child. I’m sure Michael will be able persuade people to speed up the process. But it will take time to find some girls.”

They chatted a few more minutes while they ate then Michael excused himself to change.

“I hear you’re going to be a very, very big girl.” Susan said. Theresa smiled.

“I hope you don’t mind. When I see you, I just can’t help but want to be huge.”

“I don’t mind. The sex is mind blowing. You’ll find out soon enough.”

Another woman, Jessica, approached.

“Yes Jess?” Susan asked. Jessica brandished her blue chip. “I’ve chosen a donor Susan.”

“Really? Who?”

“Timothy Dalton.” Jess replied with a blush. With her tall frame, long black hair, and jutting breasts, she could easily have been a bond girl. She had actually financed her way through college doing modeling work.

“Nice choice.” Theresa said. “That means its Tabitha’s turn.”

“Do you think she still wants that football player?” Susan asked.

“She always was a sucker for the jocks.” Theresa replied.

“Uhm Susan?” Jess responded brandishing the red chip, it had a ‘two’ on it.

“You ready?” Susan replied.

“Soon.” Jess replied blushing. She showed them her bracelet, no stones were lit. “Any day now.”

“We’ll have to wait for Tabitha.” Susan replied. “I don’t know how soon she’ll be ready. I’ll contact her.”

“You better not.” Theresa replied. “She’ll drop everything and come back. Wait until she comes back on board.”

“OK. You’re her sister.” Susan said. “Besides, I doubt she’ll force you, or anybody to wait.”

Theresa displayed her own bracelet, the fourth stone shining brightly. “Her and I are usually in sync. I doubt you’ll have to wait long.”

Jessica smiled with excitement.

Michael had just stepped into the common room as Susan and Jessica left. He wore a nice casual suit and made his way to her.

“So *dear* are you ready?” She said. She slipped a wedding ring onto her finger and held one out to him. He took it and put it on his ring finger.

“Let’s go.” He replied. They made their way down one deck and to the forward hold where his car waited.

The ship teleported them, car and all, under an overhang a few miles from their destination. Michael started the car, took directions from the GPS and they found their way to the adoption agency. Michael retrieved his briefcase from the back seat, and they went inside. They found the receptionist, and took their seats to wait.

After a few minutes, the receptionist called their names.

“This way please.” She said. She turned and led them down the hallway. She led them to a doorway, knocked, and opened it.

Whatever they were expecting, Kristine O’Hara definitely wasn’t it. The woman was tall and lean. She had some mix of Polynesian and oriental features. She had long black hair, so black and straight it sparkled in the light. She came around the front of her desk and held out her hand introducing herself. Michael and Theresa shook her hand.

“So I understand you’re looking to adopt.” She said gesturing to a loveseat near her desk. She picked up a clipboard and sat in a nearby chair.

“Yes.” Theresa said. “We’re hoping you can help us.”

“As you probably know adopting infants is a long process.”

“We realize that, but we were hoping to adopt a child that was older.” Michael said. “Frankly, I don’t know how good I’d be with an infant.”

“I see. People usually want infants, for obvious reasons.” She started. “I’m sorry, I just assumed...”

“That’s perfectly understandable. Might I ask you something?” Theresa said.

“Of course.” Kristine replied.

“How did you come to be here?” She said. “Pardon my bluntness. Doing this job must be rewarding, but I doubt it pays well.”

“My parents died when I was 13.” She said. “I had no other family. I became a ward of the state. I was taken in by a wonderful set of foster parents. They tried to find families that would adopt me, but I was too old. So I grew up in foster homes. I went to college, got a sociology degree, and took this job on purpose. There are so many children out there needing good homes.”

“Do you have a boyfriend?” Theresa asked.

“No I don’t.” Kristine answered. “They see my girls and leave.”

“Your girls?” Michael asked.

“Yes, I foster three young girls. Boyfriends don’t want to get involved with that.”

“That’s too bad.” Theresa said. “You’re a very beautiful woman.”

“Thank-you.” Kristine replied. She glanced down at Theresa’s ample bust line, then looked back up.

Theresa had to blush a little.

“So we’re here to adopt, and we want to do so as quickly as possible. By summertime, if possible.”

“You mentioned adopting an older child?”

“Actually,” Michael said. “We represent ten women, many are willing to be a guardian and mentor to a young girl. We’d like to adopt several girls, between 10 and 13 or so.”

“Several?” Kristine replied. “That’s highly irregular.”

“I can understand.” Theresa replied. “But all of us are very serious. We’re all college graduates with good careers ahead of us. We know we’re not the typical candidates for adoption, but we believe we can provide well for young girls that would be forever stuck in foster homes.”

Such a passionate response, Kristine was stunned. Then spoke. “I understand. I wish more people shared your thoughts. I know what it’s like to grow up in a foster home. Let’s see what we can do, all right?”

They discussed things for a few more minutes while Kristine took notes.

“Let me enter some search criteria into the computer and see who we can find.” Kristine said. “But I can tell you, the three girls I foster are ideal.”

She went back to her desk and sat down at her computer. She printed a list then stood.

“Let me pull their files, I will be right back.” She crossed the room and left.

Theresa put her hand on Michael’s arm as they watched her walk out the door.

“I don’t know what you’re thinking, but she is definitely coming with us.” She said as soon as the door shut. “She’s like a supermodel. She doesn’t have much in the way of boobs, but we can change that. Can you imagine her with boobs like mine? Or as big as I’m going to be? Her belly big with babies.”

“You’re really serious about this.” Michael said.

“Absolutely.” Theresa said. “Close your eyes and image her with huge tits a bulging belly, and try to disagree.”

Kristine came in at that moment carrying a large stack of folders. Instantly the image Theresa had described popped into Michael’s head and he had to agree. She would be stunning. And the sociology degree could be useful.

“Let me open my laptop.” He said as Kristine took her seat again. Michael opened his portable scanner while Theresa started looking through the folders. Like it had been with Matilda, the women on board would soon scrutinize Kristine.

“So which ones are the girls you foster?” She asked.

“The three on the top.” Kristine replied.

Meanwhile the scanner had made a connection to the ship, and was showing Kristine in one window. In a text window he typed. “What do you think?”

"She's beautiful. Is she married? Does she have a family?" Came a reply.

'None.' He typed in return. 'She fosters out three girls that are good candidates'

And so the discussion continued for the rest of the morning.

"Let's break for lunch." Michael suggested. They had accumulated a pile of fifteen girls they believed would be good choices.

"Let us take you to lunch Miss O'Hara."

"That would be wonderful." She replied. "And please, call me Kristine."

"Michael, let's take these folders with us." Theresa said, indicating the possibilities.

"Yes, that would be a great idea."

"Normally we don't allow documentation out of the office." Kristine said. "But I'm sure we can look at them over lunch. I'll just put the rest of these away, and get my coat."

'Should we bring her on board?' he typed.

"Absolutely!" Came the instant reply.

'Be there ASAP. Wait in the common room.' He typed a reply, and closed the scanner, and returned it to his briefcase.

"Ready?" Kristine asked reentering the room.

"Absolutely!" Theresa said.

They packed up the folders and made their way to the parking lot. They got into Michael's car and drove away. In a few minutes they were under an overpass and no traffic was in sight. Michael pressed a button on the dash and car and passengers were transported aboard ship.

"What was that?" Kristine exclaimed from the passenger seat.

"Don't worry. It's nothing to be concerned about. We'll explain in just a moment."

Kristine could only look around her in amazement.

"Please, come with us." Michael said as he opened his door.

They guided Kristine to the stairway, climbed and emerged in the common room. Kristine was surprised to see several women waiting to greet her.

"Michael," Susan said as a greeting. "It seems you've found another one."

"Sorry, just lucky I guess." He replied.

"Don't be. She's gorgeous." Matilda said. Matilda was the tallest of the women on board, Kristine matched her height almost exactly.

"What's going on?" Kristine asked. Even though she was trying to stay calm, she was getting scared.

“Please.” Michael said. “Let us show you around. We’ll try to explain.” He gestured toward the front of the ship. Theresa and Susan led the way.

“Let’s give them some space.” Matilda said to the rest of the women. Then there was a moment of silence, and all the women giggled.

“What’s going on?” Kristine asked again. “I don’t understand.”

“It was a lot for us to take in at first.” Susan replied. “But this should help you.” And they walked onto the bridge. Kristine was silent, but slowly walked forward to look at the view.

“We’re in space?” She asked after a moment.

“Yes, in orbit above Chicago.”

“What kind of ship is this? Who are you people?”

“It’s a ship from the planet Zanthia.” Michael said. “And we’re humans, just like you. In fact, Susan and I are from Chicago. Just like you.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Let us explain. But first, we’re hungry, so let’s go back to the common room and eat. The food on board is quite good.” Michael said.

They guided her back to the common room and sat her at the main table.

“What are you in the mood for? French? Italian? Greek? Chinese? Japanese? Korean?”

“Uhm. I don’t know. Just a salad, maybe?”

“Great.” Matilda said and came back with a plate only a few moments later. “Chicken Ceaser Salad. I requested this one myself.” And sat with an identical salad beside her.

“Where’s Billy?” Michael said.

“He’s down for a nap.” Matilda replied. She took a bite of salad.

“This is a great story. You’ll love it.” She said after a moment.

And Michael commenced telling her everything. She sat in awe for several minutes, then started eating. Not even aware she had started.

When they had finished their story, Kristine only looked at them in wonder.

“So you’re going to go to this other planet, and recolonize the human population?” She asked.

“Absolutely.” Susan said. “And more than that. Theresa has been collecting different types of fish so we can reseed the rivers and lakes.”

“I’m a zoologist.” Theresa replied. “My sister is too. She specialized in ornithology. She’s been collecting birds. She’s in the Amazon right now collecting parrots.”

“She got some too.” Susan said. “They’re beautiful.”

“Susan was the first to agree to the trip. Theresa and Tabitha were next.” Michael said. “Since then Theresa and Tabitha have been collecting animal life to take with us. I’ve been helping where I can.”

“He also collected all us women.” Theresa said.

“Well...” He started.

“OK ‘collected’ is probably the wrong word.” Susan said.

“‘Recruited’ is better.” Theresa interjected.

“The point is,” Susan continued. “We take this very seriously; we’ve tried to gather women from different professions so we could take our knowledge with us. We’re going to use our brains, not just our wombs.”

“And we want you to come with us.” Susan added. “And we want you to help us find several so young girls to come along too.”

When lunch was done, Theresa excused herself and changed into her working clothes. She and Jessica then left to collect some lake trout. Michael then escorted Kristine to the car and teleported back down. He drove to her office and stopped outside the door.

“You have to promise me two things.” He said.

“Two?” she asked.

“Yes.” He answered. “First, you must promise to tell no-one what you’ve seen today. No one must know what we’re doing. The world is not ready for this kind of information. If you think about it, I think you’ll agree. It could be very bad for us, and for the rest of the world if something like this got out.”

“I understand. Besides I don’t think anyone would believe me.” She said half joking.

“I’m very serious.” Michael replied. “It could be bad for you; you could lose your job, the girls. Everything.”

Kristine looked at him a moment, and realized how right he was.

“You’re right.” She said after a moment. “I won’t tell anybody.”

“Good.” Michael smiled. “Also, I need you to do whatever you can to make the adoptions happen as quickly as possible. We’re planning on leaving this summer.”

“I’ll have to arrange visits. Have each of the guardians meet the girls, see how they get along.”

“Good.” Michael said. “Thank-you again.” He said holding out his right hand. She shook it, and her eyes glazed over. Michael had been afraid she would panic, but she had been more accepting than he expected. None-the-less, he played the first two messages for her subconscious mind to absorb. He released her hand.

“It means a lot to us.” He said as her eyes showed awareness. “And one more thing. Please, seriously consider coming along with us. It’ll be a great adventure. Something you’ll be able to tell your children and grandchildren.”

“I will.” She replied. She smiled and moved to open the door. “Thank-you for, err... everything.” She replied.

She took her papers and got out. Michael waited for her to get to the door, and waved goodbye when she turned around.

“Candy bars!” Michael said as he turned onto the street. The car needed fuel, so he found a convenience store and took care of both problems.

Later that evening

“So, you think Kristine will help us?” Theresa said sitting at the dinner table.

“Yes I do.” Michael said. “Whether she’ll come with us, I don’t know.”

“I hope she does.” Theresa said.

“Who are we talking about?” Tabitha said sitting down.

“A new recruit.” Theresa replied, and proceeded to fill her sister in on the day’s activities.

“So, you think bringing along young girls will help? And this Kristine?”

“If she agrees to come, yes.” Susan answered.

“Which reminds me. Where are we in the selection process?”

“Your turn.” Theresa said. “I told Susan you wanted the football player, but she wanted to hear it from you.”

“Absolutely” Tabitha said without hesitation. She looked down at her bracelet, it indicated she was ‘perfect’ as well. “Can we try for pregnancy now? This says I’m ready.”

“Of course, it’s a pretty quick procedure.” Susan said. “Just a couple minutes, tops.”

“Great.” Tabitha said getting up. “Let’s go.”

Five minutes later, Tabitha and Susan reentered the common room. The smile on Tabitha’s face said it all. But they had to ask anyway.

“So, I assume everything went well?” Theresa asked.

“Yes, Auntie” Tabitha grinned back.

“Insemination confirmed.” Susan added. “We’ll wait a couple weeks to see how everything goes.”

“So am I the first?” Tabitha asked. “I mean, other than you and Mattie.”

“Yes, Jessica’s next.”

April 23rd

“So where are we going this time?” Michael asked Tabitha as they walked into the teleporter room.

“Venezuela.” Tabitha said. “Other than that, it’s a surprise.”

“Uhm, OK.” He said, and stepped onto the pad.

A moment later, he was standing in deep forest, there was a loud roar, and a mist in the air.

“Where are we!” He shouted to Tabitha right beside him.

“Angel Falls!” She shouted back. Indeed they were on a ledge about halfway up the world’s tallest waterfall.

Michael took a few moments to look around. He could overlook the jungle below, then strained to look up. He was over a hundred yards away from the water itself, but still the sight was awe-inspiring.

“It’s unbelievable!” he said.

“I know!” Tabitha said in return. “That’s why I brought you here. Come on.”

She took his hand and guided him to small domed structure that the ship had teleported down. This shelter was a little different than the tents he was used to. This had solid walls and an actual door. They stepped inside and closed the door. Instantly most of the noise of the rushing water was diminished to background noise.

“So, what are we after today?” Michael asked.

“Nothing.” Tabitha said. She sat down on the blanketed floor and gestured Michael to join her. “There’s something important I want to ask you.”

Michael sat down beside her. Once there she reached around his back, and slowly pulled him to her. This was the gentlest he had ever seen her. They kissed tenderly and slowly laid out on the blanket.

Tabitha snuggled up against him, intertwining her leg between his as their kiss continued. She pulled away slightly to look at him. She gently ran a finger through his hair and he returned the gesture.

“Susan has confirmed my pregnancy.” She said after a moment. “So far so good.”

“Baby?” He asked.

“Maybe babies.” She smiled. “Too early to tell. Hopefully.”

She leaned down and kissed him again.

“Do you know what this means?” She asked suggestively. “It means we can do something I’ve wanted to do for a long time.” She pulled away far enough to separate her body from his. She reached up and slowly pulled the zipper on her top. As the zipper lowered, her bountiful cleavage emerged, eventually a black lacy bra revealed itself.

Michael was used to the women going braless so this raised an eyebrow in surprise.

“My boobs have gotten more sensitive the last two weeks. Without a bra, I bounce around too much.” She pulled the top off and kissed him again.

Michael was captivated. Her breasts had taken on a glow. He could see thin blue lines of veins just under the skin. She removed her top, cast aside the bra, and leaned into him again. This time, her large breasts directly in front of his face.

“It’s been too long.” She pressed her body against his and kissed him. It wasn’t long before passion dominated their beings, and they stripped themselves of their remaining clothes. As he entered her, she welcomed him, panting and moaning lust with every thrust. Tabitha experienced orgasm after orgasm as they made love. After a half-hour, she was totally exhausted, but nowhere near done. She snuggled up next to him while they caught their breath.

“I want to ask you something.” Tabitha said after a few minutes. “Theresa and I were talking about it, and there is no way we’ll ever be able to take enough animals with us.”

“I was wondering about that.” Michael answered. “I know you two revised your lists. Even with your new lists?”

“Not even close. We have a good start, but will need a lot more.”

“So...?”

“We’ll need to make several trips back and forth.”

“Oh.” Michael replied. His voice disappointed.

She raised herself onto an elbow, her breasts covering most of his torso. “I was wondering. If we make a second trip, if you’d let me come back with you? I want to share my bed with you. And well, I know Susan would want to come along. And you’d want to sleep with her. But, well, I want to fall asleep in your arms, and wake up next to you each morning. And with Susan on board, I wouldn’t ask... but...”

“Well,” Michael replied. “That’s uhm. I don’t know how to respond. I’ve never been asked anything like that before.”

She kissed him full on the lips. Then pulled away. “Don’t answer, just promise me you’ll think about it?”

“That I can promise.” Michael replied. Tabitha replied by kissing him again. She swung a leg over his body again, then sat up. Her body trapping his manhood under her’s. Slowly, she started sliding her hips up and down his shaft, pivoting her hips to entice him. Like most women on board, she had let her hair grow longer. Now that hair, grown to the middle of her back, hung all around him.

“That’s it baby.” She huskily prompted. “Get big and hard for me.” She purposely kept her upper body as still as possible, so her breasts could rest on his chest and under her chin. “See how big my boobs have gotten. You love ‘em big. Suck on them. See how big my nips are.” Her face hovered above him as she continued sliding her hips up and down. “You’re getting there baby. Nice and big.” Feeling that he was ready for her, she slid far enough forward so his manhood sprung upward. She slid back down, only to find his penis at just the perfect angle to enter her again. “Oh yes. I’m spoiled.” She said as she accepted him into her again. “This is so good.” She panted. Her stroking started anew, she slid deeper onto him with every down stroke. “Come in me again baby.” She panted. “Oh yes, suck on my boobies. Yes, that’s it. Come in me. I need to feel you come in me.”

May 15th

Theresa made her way to her cabin. It had been another long day, this time in the rivers of Washington. She and Jessica had spent the entire day collecting sperm and eggs from Pacific Salmon during their annual run upriver to spawn. There were literally gallons of fertilized eggs in cryogenic suspension now in the storage hold. The ship’s storage rooms were nearly full. It wouldn’t be long now before they would have to halt their collection efforts. She took a shower, then dressed in the casual clothes normal on ship. She combed her hair in the mirror and looked upon her reflection. She put the brush down and turned sideways to the mirror. She thrust out her chest and hefted her breasts in her hands. She moaned as this simple act sparked the pleasure centers in her brain. She slid one hand between her legs, she was sopping wet, her other hand started squeezing and working a nipple. Her hips rocked as the intensity increased. Her hands weren’t large enough to cover her areola, but it wasn’t for lack of trying, she kneaded her nipples, taking deep handfuls and squeezing over and over again. Sweat broke out on her body as she rocketed higher and higher. Just before her orgasm hit, she took a deep breath and leaned back. Her body started shaking as the orgasm consumed her. She screamed then, exulting in the feeling as the lightning coursed through her body for several seconds.

She leaned back to catch her breath. She took her trembling hands away from her nipples. One hand gently stroked the expanse of the top and side, while the other slid between her thighs again.

She relaxed for a few minutes, both hands now idly stroking her boobs.

“That felt so good.” She said to herself.

She made her way to her bed and lay down. Her hands slid back down to her nipples again and started to feel the energy building within her. It was three hours later, when she finally took another shower.

She had the ship to herself for the moment. She went to the common room and ordered a meal.

As she ate she looked at her bracelet, dark. She had ovulated twice since her booster shot. All the other women had gotten pregnant while she waited. She wanted to absolutely sure her sons and daughters would be healthy.

She had just settled in for a movie when her cell phone rang.

“Hello?” She answered. She was used to everybody she knew calling on the com-devices.

“This is Kristine O’hara.” Came the voice on the other end.

“I have some news, can I, uhm, you know.. talk to you?”

“Uhm, sure, where are you? Are you alone?”

“I’m at my house. I’m alone.”

“I’ll be right there.” Theresa’s reply came. “Don’t hang up.”

“OK.”

Theresa went to the teleporter room, and traced the call.

“I’ll be there in a few minutes. I need to change.” Theresa said.

“I’ll be waiting.”

A few minutes later, Theresa teleported down to Kristine’s house.

“Wow!” Kristine said in welcome. “I still am amazed with that.”

“Me too.” Theresa replied. “You said you wanted to talk?”

“Yes.” Kristine said. “I have some news. All of the adoption papers are clear except for one.”

“That’s great news. So when can we start picking up the girls? And what about the last one?”

“That’s what I was hoping to talk about. Uhm, the girls will be home from school any time now, and I hoped I could talk with Michael, and, well, uhm, all of you?”

“I think I understand. Hang on.” Theresa took out her com-device and called to Michael. Fifteen minutes later, he pulled up to the curb in front.

As he was getting out, the three girls Katherine was fostering were walking up to the house.

“Hello ladies.”

“Hello.” They all said together.

“I’m here to see Kristine.”

After they entered, Kristine took time to talk to each of the girls, talking about their school day. Then sent them to their room to do their homework.

“I was hoping to talk with you.” She said to Michael after the door had closed. “I’ve decided, I’d like to come with you. But I have a request, I’d like to take Sadie with us.”

“I..” Michael started to reply.

“Oh!” She interrupted. “All the other adoption papers are ready. Everyone can start picking up the girls after school is over.”

“Well, do you think you can get the paperwork through in time? We’ll be leaving in a couple months.” Theresa replied.

“Oh absolutely, because I’m already a foster parent, I’ve cleared most of the checks already. I was stuck. I wanted to go with you, to help look after the girls, but I couldn’t leave Sadie behind either.”

“Do you know what I think?” Michael said after a moment. “I think we have our crew.”

Theresa and Kristine both smiled.

“I know it’s a school night, the weekend is coming up. Can we get all the kids, and all the parents together, say this weekend? We’ll fire up the grill. And the kids can start to get to know one another, and their guardians better.”

“That’ll be wonderful. I’ll start on the paper work tomorrow.”

“Well, we better get going, so you can tell the girls the news.” Michael replied. “Theresa, would you wait for me in the car? I have just one more question for Kristine.”

“Sure, don’t keep her too long.” Theresa said, and saw herself out.

“I want to thank you for all you’ve done.” He said. He held out his hand to her, she shook it and her eyes drooped. He quickly pulled out his playback device. Like Matilda, he played the third and fourth message. He thought of Matilda, now grown as busty as Tabitha. He replayed the third and fourth messages each a second time. He held her a moment longer, and replayed the third message a third time. He wanted to see if playing the messages multiple times truly made a difference in how strongly the women believed them. He put the player away, and removed his hand.

“You’ve been a great help with everything.” He continued as he saw her eyes start to flicker open. “Having you and the girls come along will be a wonderful benefit to all.”

“Thank-you.” She said. “I’ll start making calls, and arrange things for this weekend.”

“You’re very welcome. Now, I promised I wouldn’t keep Theresa waiting long. I’ll leave you to your evening.”

She gave him a hug, then he saw himself out.

“You know, we’re going to have to give all the girls a shot.” Theresa said after they had pulled away.

“I know.” Michael said.

“So have you decided how big these little girls are going to be?” She asked.

“I thought I’d make it random, within a range, and let chances decide.”

“That seems fair.” She said. Her own bust line had expanded considerably since the latest shot. She was still a bit smaller than Tabitha, but she was catching up. By the time she was impregnated, she would be larger. She turned to Michael and hefted her breasts in both hands.

“Just as long as you don’t make any bigger than these.” Theresa laughed and gave her breasts a squeeze.

The rest of May passed quickly, and as June passed into its second week, each of the girls started living with their guardians. Kristine put in her work notice, and moved into the townhouse with Susan and Michael. Every day all the kids were put together to spend time with each other and their guardians.

July 1st, One last shot

“Kristine, do you have a few minutes?” Michael said as they finished clearing the table. The town house now held four, Susan and Michael, and Kristine, and little Sadie.

“Sure, Sadie, could you take this out to Susan?” Kristine asked handing the little girl a glass of lemonade. “Then stay outside and play for a while. Michael and I need to talk for a while. OK?”

“Sure.” The little girl cheerily replied. Over the last few weeks he had seen her and the other children brighten. The security of a good home, and good friends had raised their spirits. Sadie left, and Michael and Kristine went into a bedroom, and locked the door.

“Susan will keep her occupied for a while.” Michael said as he reached for his com-device.

“Two to teleport up please.” He said, and they were taken away.

“It’s been hard keeping secrets from Sadie and the rest of the girls.” Kristine said.

“Yes it has, but not much longer.” Michael replied. “I asked you here, because I wanted to give you your shot. All the other women have had them, and you’re the last.”

“Susan was telling me about it.” Kristine said as she sat on the medical table.

“It’ll alter your DNA slightly to match that of Zanthia. You’ll have longer life, be able to have more children and carry them more easily.”

“And give me bigger boobs?” Kristine interrupted.

“Yes, that’s one of the effects.” Michael replied.

“Cool, I look at all the women and think ‘I want boobs like that.’” Kristine replied.

“There’s something else, all the women but Theresa is pregnant. But it takes at least three cycles for the genetic changes to be passed onto your children. So, you won’t be able to get pregnant until we’re almost there.”

“That’s OK.” Kristine said. “I may start a few months after everybody, but I’ll catch up.”

“Seriously?” Michael replied.

“Absolutely.” Kristine replied. “But you could have given me this shot a month ago.”

“I thought of that, but you’re too visible. I didn’t want the, uhm, changes, to become too apparent before we left.”

“So we’re leaving soon?” Kristine asked.

“Yes, I promise Susan August 1st, but I think it’ll be sooner than that. As soon as Theresa is confirmed pregnant.”

“So, I’m getting my shot today?” Kristine asked returning to the topic.

“Yes. Since you’re the last, I thought I’d give you a choice on just how busty you would like to become. Extra fertility is not a genetic trait, so even if you have twins, or more, with each pregnancy, that won’t be passed down to your children.”

“Oh, that’s easy; make me as big as the biggest. I want to be huge.” She said quickly.

“You sure?” Michael asked. Even though he had planted the suggestions, every time they manifested in the women’s words and deeds was still a surprise.

“Have you really thought about it?”

“For the last couple months that’s all I’ve thought about. Looking at all the women boobs everywhere. Not only boobs, but huge boobs. Oh yea, I want that. So, give me your best shot.”

“Well, you definitely sound sincere. It’ll just take a moment for the computer to generate the shot.” He turned to the medical computer, and called up Matilda’s shot. He eased the fertility down from Matilda’s “twins (plus)” to the standard “twins” setting he gave most of the women. The computer worked for a few moments, and produced the injection.

“Ready?” He asked holding it in front of her.

“Absolutely.” She replied. She put her hand over his and guided it onto her arm. “Do it.” She said, and he pulled the trigger.

“There. Done with the adults.” Michael replied.

“So you’re going to give the same shots to the girls?”

“Not the exact same shot.” Michael said. “I think its best to leave the fertility part out of it. By the time the girls are old enough to start having children of their own, we’re going to want a more normal birth rate.”

“What about the boobs?”

“Since we have no idea how these girls are going to end up, we’re not going to do anything custom, nothing like you just got.”

“So what are you going to give them?”

“Just a standard shot, with breast increase randomized.” Michael replied. “They should all end up in the range of the rest of you women. We’ll wait until we’re all on board, when they’re asleep. I don’t want to scare them.”

“You are a serious breast man, aren’t you?” Kristine laughed.

“Guilty, let’s see twelve women, and six girls, guilty eighteen times over.”

“Let’s get back down.” Kristine said. “The rest of the girls should be showing up any time now.”

They teleported back down, and went to join Susan and Sadie in the yard. The day progressed like any other summer day at the town house. All the guardians, and children were there playing. Theresa, Tabitha, Jessica, and Courtney were out and about capturing more animals. They truly hoped to have each storage room stuffed to maximum for the trip. As evening approached they arrived as well.

“Look!” Theresa said holding her bracelet out for the rest to see. The first diamond shining brightly.

“Looks like fireworks won’t be the only thing popping on the 4th of July.”

“Oh yea. I can’t wait.” Theresa replied.

“Good thing too.” Tabitha patting her belly. She was just finishing her first tri-mester, and her belly had just started to show.

The evening was festive, as were the next two weeks. But it was now time to start saying good-bye. Each guardian had to tell their girl they were moving, and going on a long trip. The kids were initially upset, but once they learned they would be traveling with the other girls, they were only concerned about the trip. The hard part was calming the children’s nerves as each child saw their belongings boxed up, and the teleporter effect take the boxes away for the first time.

“It’ll be just like on TV.” Some said as the last was taken away, and it was their turn to go. Once on board, each child got her own room, and their things were unpacked. Over a week, each guardian and child were brought aboard. Michael shut off the water in the town-house, set the alarms, and automated delivery handler. It was the night of the 20th. All was done. He and Susan climbed into the car one last time, and pressed the teleport button.

“I’m sorry, I just can’t leave the car here.” He said as they made their way to common room.

“I understand honey. Tomorrow is the big day.” Susan said holding his hand.

Later that night, before the girls went to bed, he gave them their shot. Michael had sort of fibbed when he told Kristine and Theresa he would randomize the shots. For the most part it was true, two of the six shots were special; one had a dosage similar to Tabitha’s, and the second had a dosage similar to Susan’s. He didn’t know which, but that would be half the fun.

After the last shot was given, he gathered the adults in the common room.

“From this point forward, every son born of a non-Zanthian father will have to have the standard male enhancement shot. Any daughter born of a non-Zanthian mother will likewise need the standard female enhancement shot.”

The women all agreed.

“Now, tomorrow morning, we leave. I suggest you go over your notes and plans one last time. If there’s any emergency needs, I’ll take care of it before breakfast.”

July 21st, Departure

Susan rolled onto her back as she awoke. Immediately her hands went to her bulging belly. She sighed in contentment as she caressed herself. Today was the day. She got out of bed and took a shower. Then she dressed and made her way to the common room. Everyone was there, anxiously, nervously eating their breakfast. Every woman except Kristine was confirmed to be pregnant. Every item they believed they would need was either stored below, or digitized. The fuel bunkers were full. There was nothing left to do but leave. Michael walked in, got his meal, and sat down next to her. He had been spending most of the last week on the bridge, talking with the computer, trying to understand all that was about to happen. All eyes were on him as he ate.

“I guess we had better be doing what we came here to do.” He said finally. “Everybody, if you’ll join me on the bridge.” He led the way and stood at the front of the bridge, the backdrop of space in the view screens behind him. Billy and the teenagers gathered in front, the women crowded behind.

“We’re all here to start a great adventure. So it’s time we start it.” Michael said. “Computer, would you please display a Zanthian clock and calendar next to the Earth calendar please?” On each side display, a second calendar appeared.

“Now, computer, please set a course for departure point please, follow the course we discussed earlier.”

“Acknowledged.” The computer’s voice replied. And instantly what had been the horizon of Earth’s surface shifted from the screens to be replaced by stars.

“Please display Earth on view screen one for the next twenty minutes.” Michael said.

“Acknowledged.” The voice said again, as the view screen displayed the receding planet.

Michael looked at the women, more than a few were tearing up. Then the ship had completed its turn, and starting its journey towards the moon. The moon was centered in the front view screen. And slowly got larger as the ship accelerated.

“This is something man hasn’t seen in many years.” He said. The moon dominated the view screen now, then slid off to the left of the ship as the ship moved around it. Then the blackness of space filled the view screen as the ship headed towards something new.

“There are a couple secrets I have been keeping from all of you.” Michael said after a few moments. “As you know, the ship has replication machines that let it create our food, clothing, and other essentials. But those same machines allow it to build new parts for the ship itself. After talking with Theresa and Tabitha, there would be no way to seed Zanthia’s animal life with merely one ship, on one trip. So, in a few years, once we have settled and established ourselves on Zanthia, some of us will come back, hopefully recruit more women to help the colonization effort, but also to bring back more animals to live on Zanthia. To that end, I have asked the replication machines to start building another colony ship.”

It was at that time they came upon Mars, its red color starting to dominate the screens. The ship made a close pass by the planet, and slowed to almost motionless near the moon of Phobos. They could make out a small object on the screen. As they came closer they could see scaffolding surrounding the beginnings of another ship duplicating the one they were on. Only the main bridge area looked to be complete.

“Computer, please magnify the picture near the bridge windows.” The computer complied, and they could all see the name Michael had chosen. He turned to the women.

“I hope that name is a good choice?” he asked.

Susan spoke first.

“I think it’s a perfect name.” She replied.

“Good.” Michael said. “And now, it’s time we do what we intended to do. Computer please lay in course for departure point.”

“Acknowledged. Course established.” And again the ship swung away and blackness of stars filled the viewscreen.

“Mayflower,” Michael said as the new ship shrunk from view. “We will see you again.”

“Departure point reached.” The computer announced.

“Ok, here’s the last chance. Any change of heart?” He asked.

Even though more than a few of the women were starting to cry, every one shook their heads ‘no.’

Nodding his approval Michael finally said the words.

“Computer, set a course for Zanthia, best speed.”

“Acknowledged. Course set. FTL translation process commencing, FTL in five, four, three, two, one.”

They watched the monitors as the stars slowly blurred. The blurring effect quickened, and within moments they were looking upon what looked like a tunnel of light. The walls of the tunnel were smeared with whites, blues, yellows, reds, and occasional greens. The tunnel shrunk to a small point nobody knew how far away.

“Faster Than Light speed reached. Arrival scheduled for 87 days, 18 hours, 37 minutes,” The computer announced. Two clocks lit up above the main screen, one was counting down, and the other started at 0 and was counting up.

There was a cheer from all, and those who had not been crying before openly started crying now.

They were all captivated for a few minutes, but soon the kids grew bored. Jessica took them back to the common room to start their morning class. Eventually most drifted away.

“I suppose somebody should stay up here, just in case.” He said to nobody in particular.

“We’ll keep you company.” Matilda said. “But we can do something while we’re here. I’ll be right back.”

She returned a few minutes later with a deck of cards. She sat at the table and started dealing.

Michael took a seat beside her, then Susan, Tabitha, Theresa, and Kristine all joined him.

Half-way:

Michael was standing on the bridge looking forward as Jessica approached.

“I have some news.” She said. Michael didn’t take his eyes off the clocks above the main view screen.

“Uh? What?” he finally said.

“I have some news.” Jessica repeated. “We have another woman on board.”

“What?” He said, still distracted.

“What are you looking at?” She asked turning.

“The clocks.” He replied, and as they watched for a few moments, both the countdown clock, and count up clock reached the same numbers, then continued on.

“There.” Michael said. “We have just passed the half-way point. We are now closer to Zanthia than we are to Earth.”

There was an audible intake of breath from the women on the bridge.

Then Michael shifted his look to Jessica again.

“I’m sorry. You were saying?”

“Oh!” She said recollecting her thoughts. “I was saying we have another woman on board.”

“Not a stow-away.”

“Oh no, nothing like that.” She said. “Nola has started her monthlies. That makes her a woman now.”

Nola was the oldest of the teenagers they had adopted. At just over 13 years (Earth years) she was due. Michael remembered her hair, strawberry blonde. She was good with kids, and spent a lot of time playing with Billy. She was of average height for her age. She was cute, and pretty, and always smiling. She would grow up to be a very pretty girl.

“Uhm. I’m terrible at this..” Michael said after a moment. “What should I..”

“Don’t do anything, or say anything.” Jessica said after he paused. “It’s just informational. She’s no different today, then she was yesterday, or the day before. So treat her the same as you always have.”

“Oh. Ok.” Michael said. “Thanks.”

“Now, I’m going to go back and tell everybody we’ve passed half-way.” She gave him a quick kiss, then headed to the common room.

He went to sit down at the table, Susan leaned in and gave him a big kiss.

“You’re a goof sometimes.” She said smiling. “But an adorable goof.”

Then the quiet was dispelled as women came forward to see the clocks for themselves. They didn’t stay long, as there really wasn’t much to see. Then they headed back to the common room, or their bedrooms, or to take their turns on the treadmills.

The next ‘big news’ came two weeks later, when they the countdown clocked dropped below 29 days, two-thirds there, less than a month. Each following week saw more and more activity on the bridge, people visiting more often, staying longer, and looking at the countdown clock as the days disappeared.

Arrival:

It was late in the evening, everybody was fidgety. Everybody knew the time was growing close. They had settled in to watch a movie in the common room, mostly from nervousness, but they stayed up to watch. The ship’s computer surprised them all when it announced “Arrival in 30 minutes.” Everybody jumped, even though they were expecting it. Some women took chairs forward and took up watch. More women joined them at the 15 minute mark, and by the time computer announced 5 minutes, the bridge was filled. Most women chose to sit, even though most were only into their second tri-mester, sitting had become preferred.

Michael took his seat at the center console, Susan sat beside him.

“Transitioning into normal space in five, four, three, two, one.” And the light tunnel slowed to smudges for a moment, then disappeared, to be replaced by the black of space and stars.

“Transition complete.” The computer said. “All systems normal.”

“Thank-you computer. Please set course for Zanthia. Put us in orbit 10 degrees behind ZanTan. I wish to be able to see it through the front viewers.”

“Acknowledged.” The computer replied. “Orbit in 3 minutes.”

“You’ve probably heard this before. ZanTan is the capital city. In fact, it is the only city left on Zanthia. Zanthians have accumulated their knowledge and history there. It has been maintained ever since. It will be our home.”

As he spoke, Zanthia came into view, and started filling the screen. Even though he had seen holographs of it, seeing it in person was astonishing. Like Earth, it was a water planet with oceans and seas, land masses of various shapes and sizes. He could see mountain ranges, and ice at the poles. Land masses were under each ice covered pole, but unlike Earth, the land masses extended into the high latitudes. One large and four medium sized land masses made up the middle latitudes. There were also three island continents that reminded Michael of Australia, and various island chains were scattered around the oceans. There was no single large ocean like Earth’s Pacific. Instead there were several bodies of water that reminded Michael of the Indian ocean.

“Orbit achieved” the computer announced. “Transport shuttle approaching.”

“What is the purpose of the transport shuttle?” Michael asked.

“It is tradition that first transportation be conducted by shuttle.” The computer replied.

“Understood.” Michael replied. “The teleporters can still be used, correct?”

“Yes, teleportation is perfectly safe. Shuttle arrival in two minutes.”

Michael turned to face the women. “When we left Earth, I told you I had been keeping two secrets from you. The first was the building of the Mayflower. But everyone forgot to ask about the second. The second secret is far more important. There are still Zanthians on the planet below us. Before the population died out, twenty women, most young girls, were put into stasis chambers. They have been sleeping ever since.”

The women all started talking excitedly with the news.

“Computer, please show the stasis room, and the first chamber please.”

The computer responded and the first monitor showed a sleeping woman.

“This is Cha-Jenna-Shaw. She is the oldest of the women, 23 Earth years, 20 Zanthian years old. I want to say this one more time. We were invited here, to save this race, to save this culture. So as we move forward recolonizing this planet, we must always consider how we can learn and blend Zanthian history and culture into our own. She will be our source. Please, be considerate of her.”

“Shuttle is docking at port airlock.” The computer announced. Michael moved to that side of the bridge. Just ahead of the teleporter room, were the double doors of the airlock. Through the small windows they could see the shuttle docking. It was about the size of a full-size van, with gullwings mounted high on the

back, and small canard winglets mounted low on the front. The back butted against the ship's airlock. A light turned green as the ship announced docking was complete.

Michael looked at the doors, and read the instructions. First he opened the inner door, then paused.

"I'm going with you." Susan suddenly said. "No arguments."

Michael recognized he wasn't going to talk her out of it, then turned to Matilda.

"If something happens down there, do not follow us, do you understand? Let the ship refuel and then return to Earth." He looked at her as she was about to protest. "No argument. Promise me." She stopped before speaking, then nodded.

They stepped through the first door, and Michael closed it, then opened the outer door, and stepped into the transport shuttle. The interior had four chairs, two in front, and two more behind the driver. Susan sat in the passenger seat, while Michael closed the airlock and shuttle door. Then Michael joined her.

Michael looked over the controls and found one button he knew the meaning of. He pressed it, and spoke. "Computer, we're ready."

"Acknowledged." Came a crisp male voice. They were expecting the familiar female voice of the big ship, but they were surprised. There was a small jolt, then the voice added. "Undocking complete. Proceeding to landing coordinates." While artificial gravity prevented them feeling a swoon, the shuttle quickly rotated and headed down. Their view changed from stars to planet in moments. It was enough to unnerve them.

Michael pressed the button again. "Computer, can you send a video feed of the front video to the others?"

"Affirmative."

Susan stifled a giggle, then a moment later, Matilda's voice could be heard.

"We're receiving. We're all watching."

"Good." Michael replied, "I thought it'd be nice to share."

"Thank-you." Another voice replied. Probably Theresa's Michael thought. In moments they were hitting the upper atmosphere. The ship's descent was a little bumpy, but nothing compared to what they were expecting. After a few moments the wings had taken on some of the flight controls and they were flying in the dark.

"Hey, the sun's coming up!" They heard another voice, one of the girls this time.

"It's still dark for us." Susan replied. But she could see the eastern sky lightening. Michael took out a small electronic translator, about the size of a MP3 player and went over the controls with Susan.

"This is a translator." He said. "Press this button to record."

"Do I speak into it?"

"Yes, whatever it hears, be it English or Zanthian, this button outputs Zanthian, this third button English." He replied. "Really simple."

Then they broke through the clouds and flew on. The sun peaked over the eastern sea and they could see the first outlines of ZanTan's skyline. They flew straight for the city as the sky brightened. All below them green. Then they crossed over the city limits and flew down what Michael assumed was a major highway. The outer buildings were less than 10 stories tall, but the closer they got to the center, the taller the

buildings became. Soon they were flying between buildings nearly 80 stories tall. They passed through a ring of these buildings, and into an area, nearly a mile in diameter, where the buildings were smaller again. None over ten stories tall. At the eastern edge of these buildings, they could see the sea. The shuttle slowed and landed in an open plaza in the center of the city.

“Landing complete.” The terse computer voice replied. They heard the engines shutting down.

“Well, let’s look around, shall we?” Susan said breaking the silence. They had been sitting looking at the city in front of them. Realizing at last, that they were on a different planet.

Michael shook his head to regain his own thought. “Right, let’s go.” He went to the back of the shuttle and looked at the controls, pressed a button, and the door unlatched. It swung inward. Then he pressed another button and a ramp extended from under the ship, and angled down to the surface.

“Ready?” He asked Susan.

“You first.” She replied. “You should go first.”

“Uhm. OK.” He said, and stepped down the ramp onto the ground. He stepped a few paces away, then Susan joined him.

They walked together a few paces, when they saw four small vehicles approaching them. These vehicles were about the size of kid’s toy truck; two feet long, a foot wide and about a foot tall. Michael could imagine Billy wanting to ride one. Three stopped about ten feet away, the fourth kept coming a few more feet, and stopped as well. A light formed on the top of the first three, then above each a holograph formed. One man and two women appeared. He recognized the man as Cha-Shune.

“Greetings travelers.” It said. “Welcome to Zanthia. I am Cha-Shune, chief scientist of Zanthia. Though you should already know that, having traveled here aboard our ship.”

Michael and Susan could only nod.

“I am Gre-See Gene.” The second hologram said. “Chief historian of Zanthia.”

“And I am Kail-Lana Dane, senior consoler. Let me offer my welcome to Zanthia.” Unnoticed, another vehicle had approached behind them. It looked similar to a golf cart in size, shape and function.

“Please, be seated.” She said. And Susan and Michael looked to see the cart behind them. There were a handful of folding chairs stored in the back. Michael set two in the shade of the cart. They sat and returned looking at the hologram.

“Speech time,” Susan whispered. Michael only nodded and was grateful for the seat. They sat and listened for nearly twenty minutes as the senior consoler expounded on the Zanthian accomplishments and the hopes that they would someday continue on. She spoke their hopes of saving the society and culture. And finally she concluded by thanking them for undertaking such a great challenge.

Gre-See Gene’s hologram started speaking next, talking about all the things that had been transported and saved in the city. Mercifully her speech was only a few minutes long. She concluded with her own thank-you’s and hoped the city’s past could help them build a future.

Then finally Cha-Shune’s hologram spoke. Another short speech talking about the technology preserved with the city, and how it was all set up to help them rebuild. He added his own thank-yous. And then the three holograms fell silent.

After a moment of silence, Susan nudged him. Michael looked at her, then stood, took a few paces towards the center of the area.

“I didn’t prepare any kind of speech. The truth is, I really did not know what to expect. But we are here, and are eager to start learning even more about your people and your beautiful city. We will do all we can to preserve your culture. And hopefully someday, we and our descendants will contribute to growing and building a new civilization here.”

Susan clapped. The only clapping in the area, but it seemed to suffice. Two of the holo trucks turned around and headed back the way they came. The third, Cha-Shune’s stayed.

“I think we would like to go to the Stasis room now.” Michael said.

“Of course.” Cha-Shune replied. “The cart will take us there.”

Susan moved to the cart while Michael put the chairs away. Once he took his seat, the cart started moving. The two trucks escorting them. The cart drove to the edge of the plaza and stopped in front of a two-story building. The building was entirely of tinted glass, the second story overhanging the entryway. They got out, Cha-Shune’s holo truck leading the way, a few paces ahead of Michael and Susan while one truck followed a few paces behind. Cha-Shune’s hologram appeared.

“This is our central medical facility.” Susan eyes lit up. “The stasis room is this way.” They moved to the center of the building, through two more sets of doors, and then entered the room itself.

“I have a question, what’s this other vehicle?” Michael said gesturing to the truck following them.

“It’s a camera.” Said Tabitha’s voice. “We’re seeing everything that’s going on.”

“It was my idea.” Said Kristine.

“Oh wow..” Michael replied. “Great idea.”

“I wish I had thought of it.” Susan added.

They moved to the closest stasis chamber.

“This Cha-Jenna’s chamber.” Cha-Shune’s hologram said. “To awaken her press the green button on the side.”

Michael gestured to Susan, who did so.

“As the system revives her, you will see status bar.”

“Yes, it’s at about half now.” She replied. “Now three-fourths, and now complete.” The top of the chamber slid down.

“This looks like a pulse indicator, its coming up. She should be reaching consciousness any moment.” And as if on queue, Cha-Jenna’s eyes fluttered, then opened. Her eyes moved a little then, blinked several times, then focused in on Susan.

“Hello,” Susan said. “My name is Susan.” She put a hand to her chest. She was met with a questioning look.

“The translator.” Michael said.

“Oh!” She said and tried again. And the translator did its job as she pressed the button. Then she handed it to Michael.

“And my name is Michael.” Michael said, also putting a hand to his chest. The voice translated.

Cha-Jenna opened her mouth to speak, but nothing came out.

“Oh!” Susan blurted and Michael passed her the translator again. “Are you thirsty? Would you like some water?”

Cha-Jenna looked at them. Then Susan continued. She nodded her head. “This means yes.” Then waited for the computer to translate. Then shook her head. “And this means ‘no.’”

Cha-Jenna looked at them then managed a weak nod.

“Good.” Susan replied. “Let me ask again, are you thirsty? Would you like some water?”

Cha-Jenna nodded, a little stronger.

“Good.” Susan responded. Michael looked around and recognized a food dispenser on the wall nearby. He went over, ordered the water with a straw, and returned.

“Here,” He said holding the straw into her mouth. “Try a sip.”

She managed a small drink and then a smile.

Cha-Shune then spoke. “The rest of the stasis chamber can be removed by pressing the blue button.” Susan pressed it. The rest of the chamber hinged upward.

“This can’t be very comfortable.” Susan said, then paused while the computer voice translated. “Let’s get you into a more comfortable bed. Would you like that?”

Again Cha-Jenna nodded, and managed a second smile. Susan looked around and saw the Zanthian equivalent of a wheel-chair, she pointed to it, and Michael quickly rolled it over. “Let’s try to sit you up.”

After several minutes, Cha-Jenna was in the wheel chair and they were rolling out the door, Cha-Shune’s holo-truck rolling alongside speaking to her, occasionally giving directions to Michael and Susan as they moved to a nearby room. Like so many hospital rooms Susan had seen before, this looked similar. As soon as they got her in the bed, they could see she was weak, and exhausted.

“You look like you need a nap.” Susan said. “We’ll let you get some sleep, and be back in couple hours. All right?”

The translator barely finished as Cha-Jenna managed a nod before drifting off to sleep again. Michael and Susan stepped into the hallway, the holo-trucks following.

“Let me show you to your homes. The truck led the way back outside to the waiting golf-cart. Michael took up the driver’s seat.

“I might as well start to learn how do drive these things.” The labels had already been changed to include English. The steering and pedals were similar to Earth vehicles, but the buttons, switches, and gauges were arranged differently. He found the start button, then with a few jerks and jolts managed to get the small vehicle moving forward. In the length of a block he was slowly guiding the vehicle in a straight line, and a nice walking pace, the holo-trucks leading the way. They made their way to a thirty-story building a few blocks away. They stopped and got out, walked in to the lobby area, then to what were obviously elevators. The trucks pulled in beside them and Cha-Shune’s image spoke.

“Press thirty.” It instructed, and Michael obliged.

“Just like elevators on earth.” Susan volunteered.

“I believe you will find many similarities.” Cha-Shune’s holograph responded. “After all, we Zanthians are humans, just like you, and our technology was shaped with the same needs as yours.”

The door opened and the holo-trucks pulled out into an open area. “Each floor has four apartments. They are all the same. Which one would you like?”

Michael and Susan looked at each other. Then Susan answered. “I noticed the ocean to the East, does one have a view of the ocean? Could we look at that one.”

“Of course.” The truck pulled to one door and Michael looked at it. He pushed a button on one side, and the door slid open. They walked in to an enormous living area. Beyond it, they could see an open balcony. They looked at the beautiful furnishings. They both looked around finding eight generous bedrooms to one side, a large kitchen, a dining area, and an office area to the other side. They walked out onto the deck and could see most of the city. They could see the plaza and the parked shuttle below them, and beyond that, the sea.

“It reminds me a little of Boston.” Michael replied.

“This is beautiful.” Susan responded.

“Are you seeing all of this?” Michael asked to the recorder-truck that had been following them all around.

“You bet.” Came Kathryn’s voice.

“Speaking for everybody up here, we want to come down there.” Came Theresa’s voice.

“Yea, right now.” Added Tabitha.

Michael looked at Susan and she nodded.

“I can’t see why not.” He replied. He looked at Cha-Shune’s holo. “Would you instruct the shuttle to return to the ship?”

“Absolutely.” Came the reply. They were still on the deck and looked back to the plaza. In a moment, they could see the shuttle’s door closing, and it lifting off.

“Let’s be fair. First on, first off.” Susan said.

“That means Theresa, Tabitha, and Jessica are next.”

“I gotta pack my stuff!” came Theresa’s exclamation.

“Me too.” Added Jessica. “I’ll bring Nola along.”

“Could somebody pack our stuff?” Susan asked.

“We’ll take care of it.” Came Matilda’s prompt reply. Yet again, Michael was grateful he had found Matilda, and recruited her to join their trip. Her no-nonsense confidence and real-life experiences had shaped her into a capable woman. Everybody on board had come to respect and admire her.

They had the food synthesizer produce a pitcher of lemonade, and were sitting on the deck an hour later when they heard the noise of the shuttle fly overhead. They watched it fly past, fly a sweeping arc around the inner city, then come back towards their building.

“It looks like they’re landing on the roof.” Susan said.

“Let’s go greet them.” They returned to the elevator and ascended to the rooftop just as the shuttles engines were winding down. The rear door opened, and Theresa stepped down first, followed by Tabitha, then Jessica and finally Nola.

They greeted each other, the ladies pulling some luggage behind them. They all crammed into the elevator, and went down one flight and went back to Michael and Susan’s apartment.

“Wow, the maintenance machines are fast.” Theresa said noticing Michael’s and Susan’s name already engraved on the plaque beside the door. They came in and looked over the apartment for a while, then met back in the living room.

“Can you believe it?” Tabitha said. “Eight bedrooms. And they’re huge!”

Susan patted her belly. “Oh, I think we’ll all need them, sooner or later.”

“It makes sense, I guess.” Jessica replied, her own belly bulging nicely into her 5th month.

“I’m going to check out the place next door.” Tabitha added.

“Oh! Good idea!” Theresa added.

“And I think, I’ll go down a floor and look around.” Jessica offered. “We talked about it before we left the ship, and decided we’d save an apartment for Cha-Jenna up here on the top floor.”

Tabitha and Theresa spent five minutes in each of the north and south facing apartments before deciding which they wanted. Theresa chose the southern apartment and Tabitha the northern one.

After thirty minutes or so, they heard the shuttle passing overhead on the third landing.

“I’ll go and greet them.” Michael volunteered.

“I better get going back to the hospital and stay with Cha-Jenna in case she wakes up.”

“Hey, wait for me.” Tabitha said. “I want to go with you.” Tabitha and Susan left for the hospital just as the next group of women emerged from the elevators to look around. They heard the shuttle taking off again for the fourth trip.

“Why not use the teleporter?” Michael asked as the room slowly filled with women.

“We all wanted to experience the ride.” Nola replied handing him a fresh glass of lemonade.

“I’m going to check out the science building.” Theresa said after a few minutes. “I want to see if they have capacity for all the stasis trunks on board.” She went to the computer console, pressed a button, then started talking. She returned to Michael a few moments later.

“It seems this building has a garage below it, three levels. And a dozen golf carts, they all have a computer on board so we can drive around and get a tour of the city. I’m heading out to look around.”

Michael continued to welcome the women as a second transport shuttle was being employed. It was late in the afternoon when Matilda and Kristine came walking down the ramp.

“We brought some of your stuff.” Matilda said gesturing to a pair of suitcases, as she pulled her own suitcases. “Be a dear, and carry Billy down? He fell asleep as we were landing.”

Michael went inside the shuttle and gently picked up the boy. He'd return for the suitcases later.

"So what's open?" Kristine asked as they stepped into the elevator.

"There's one facing west on the 28nd floor." They made their way down to the floor, and entered the western apartment.

"It's huge." Matilda said softly. "This living room is bigger than any apartment I've ever had." She pointed to the couch, and Michael carefully put Billy down. They spent a few minutes looking around. Every apartment had identical size and floor plan, but each was decorated differently. This apartment obviously pleased Matilda as she was all smiles everywhere she went.

"It's beautiful." She pronounced after a while.

"It looks like you'll have a beautiful view of the sunset." Kristine said from the balcony.

"I think you're right." Michael said as they joined her.

"Never in my wildest dreams have I ever imagined living in a place like this." Matilda said wistfully. Then she caught herself. "I mean, not on a different planet. But this apartment is so incredible."

After a moment of silence, Kristine finally spoke. "I guess that leaves me. Help me pick out a place, OK?"

They left Matilda to start her unpacking and went down a floor. She looked at the south and western apartments, but did not like either. Then they went down to the 26th. The eastern apartment was taken, but the rest were empty. She looked at each in turn, then finally chose the Western apartment, only after Michael reminded her, she could probably decorate it to her liking.

Sadie picked out her bedroom, and she started unpacking. Kristine led him to her bedroom, closed the door, and pulled him into a deep kiss.

"I wanted to thank you for bringing us along. This will be a wonderful home for us all."

He leaned down and kissed her again. He was about to reach for a boob when his comm-device beeped. He pulled away and pressed the communicator button.

"Yes?"

"We found the building has a dining room and meeting rooms on the 2nd floor. We're all getting hungry for dinner... Thought we'd go there." Theresa said.

"Sounds like a good idea. I'll meet you there as soon as I can."

"OK." Came her reply, and the connection was cut.

They left the apartment together and waited as the elevator came to carry them down to the 2nd floor.

Michael noticed that Susan had not returned, and Tabitha had informed him that she had stayed at the hospital to watch over Cha-Jenna. After dinner, he and Tabitha returned to the hospital. They had only been there for a few minutes when they noticed Cha-Jenna stirring.

Susan picked up the translator and spoke. "Hello. Feeling better?"

She managed a weak smile then tried to speak. Even as weak as she was, her voice was beautiful. Susan barely managed to press the record button in time, the few words were recorded and Susan had the machine translate.

“I am a little better, yes.” Came the translation.

“Are you tired? Are you hungry? Are you thirsty?”

“Thirsty, a little hungry.”

Tabitha took the translator. “We saw a food replicator down the hallway. If you could tell me what you would like, I will get it for you.”

“Sing-sa-nah, uut mah-nee-baat.” She spoke in untranslated Zanthian. Tabitha smiled, took the recorder and left the room. Susan gave her another drink of water while they waited. She could move her arms some, and managed to turn her head when Tabitha came back in with what looked like a bowl of soup and a glass of some liquid. They found a portable table, like its Earth counterpart, and set the tray down.

Tabitha looked at Cha-Jenna, then took the initiative. “Let me help you.” She said sitting on the bed beside her. She picked up the spoon and ladled it full. With a gesture, Cha-Jenna knew what she meant, and opened her mouth. A little soup was followed with the liquid, then more soup. As she ate, Michael and Susan slowly told her of how they came to be there. She managed to eat most of the soup, but fatigue was catching up with her again.

“I think we need to let you sleep.” Susan said. She nodded.

“I’ll stay here overnight.” Tabitha volunteered. “That couch looks comfortable enough.” Michael took the tray away.

“We’ll be back in the morning. Sleep well.” Susan said to both women. They left the translator unit, and made their way to the door. Susan lowered the light, and she and Michael returned to their apartment.

Beginning

Even though the ship time, and the Zan Tan’s time were different, and many were tired, they stayed awake a few hours to look around the city. Some even took the golf carts all the way to the water’s edge to look at the ocean. The children found themselves yawning, and the women, all pregnant, found themselves tired as well.

After a long night’s sleep, Michael and Susan returned to the hospital in the morning. They found Cha-Jenna already awake, and sitting up. Tabitha was sitting beside her.

“Good morning.” Susan said. “How are you feeling?”

Cha-Jenna listened the translator, then spoke haltingly. “Good Morning. I...” then she spoke into the translator, and it translated. “I am feeling better. I was very tired.” She looked at Tabitha for approval.

“Very good. That’s a good start.” Tabitha said.

“You should have waited for us.” Jessica said from the doorway, Courtney was standing beside her.

“This is Jessica, and Courtney.” Tabitha said introducing them.

“Good Morning.” Cha-Jenna said. Then she spoke into the translator, and pressed the translate button. “I am Cha-Jenna Shaw. Please call me Jenna, ‘Cha’ is a title.”

“It is very nice to meet you.” Jessica replied coming to the bedside.

“You have a beautiful world. I am looking forward to seeing it. I am an artist, and would love to paint as much as I can.”

After a lengthy wait for the translator to finish, Jenna spoke into it.

“I will be happy to show you. There are some very beautiful places I wish to see again. I imagine they look much different now.” Jenna spoke thru the translator again. “You also are pregnant? How many have come with you? I wish to meet them.”

“We can take you to our apartment building. We have a room open for you.” Michael excused himself while the women helped her dress. She was still weak, so she leaned on Michael as she got into the wheel chair. Jessica and Courtney followed in the second cart while they made their way back to the apartment building. They spent the rest of the day in her apartment. Everyone, one or two at a time, stopped by to meet her. For her part, Jenna tried to listen to each of them, trying to understand their English. Tabitha and Jessica were with her at all times, trying to explain what some of the words meant.

After the birth:

Everyone had interrupted their activities to come see the children. Michael, like the billions of proud fathers before him was happy to show off his daughters. Theresa was holding Jessie when he heard the moaning from the next room.

Michael entered the next room where Susan had been resting.

Susan’s already huge breasts were significantly larger. She was groaning in discomfort, rubbing her breasts, trying to sooth her pain.

Michael rushed to her side. “Suze, what’s happening?”

“Boobs!” she grunted, “Boobs feel.. Aahhh!” She tried to say more but only moaned.

Michael went to the door. “Mattie?”

Matilda was in the next room instructing the soon-to-be mothers how to hold the babies. She worked herself to standing and came into Susan’s room.

“So, you’re milk’s coming in hard.” She said. She moved the cart sitting nearby. She opened the storage area and unpacked a collection of tubes. She pulled it to the bedside, and pulled up a plastic cone. She quickly applied to moisturizer to the cup, pressed it one of Susan’s breasts, and flipped a switch with her other hand. Instantly a vacuum formed and held the cup in place. She quickly repeated the procedure with a second cup.

“Try to relax.” She instructed. “I know it hurts, but try to relax.” Then suddenly, milk could be seen through the clear cups exiting Susan’s nipples and flowing down the tubes. It took about 20 seconds before Susan noticeably started to relax. Her discomfort eased, she finally looked around

“That was intense.” She managed to say. She looked down at her breasts, then at Michael and Matilda. “I never knew it was going to be this bad.”

“The first time was bad for me too. But now you know, you’ll be OK from now on.” Matilda replied.

The crisis averted, Susan’s thoughts immediately returned to her children, only a few hours old.

“My babies.” She asked.

“They’re probably hungry. I’ll go check.” Matilda replied, and left for the next room.

Another moment passed while the milking continued. Then Theresa and Jessica came in carrying the little girls. Jessica approached first, and handed little Jamie over to Susan.

Susan took their daughter into her arms and pulled the blankets away from the tiny face.

“Hungry sweetie?” She cooed. She looked at Matilda and nodded. Matilda switched off the breast pumps and took the hoses away. Susan placed Jamie to a nipple and instantly the child started suckling. In a few minutes, Jamie released a nipple and seemed to relax.

“Jessie is probably hungry too.” Matilda said as she took Jamie.

Susan reached out for Jessie, and held the little girl to the other breast.

Susan moaned. “What a rush!” And for a few more minutes reveled in the sensation.

“OK. Mommy lesson number one.” Matilda said. “Burping.” She instructed Jessica and Tabitha to each take a child and proceeded to teach them on how to burp, then rock the little girls back to sleep.

Susan tried to stay awake to watch, but drifted off to sleep after a few minutes.

Emergency call

A beeping awoke Michael from a deep sleep. Susan stirred away too. Michael picked up the comm-device sitting on his nightstand.

“Yes?”

“Michael, its Mattie, come down here right away! Ungh! I need your help.” He heard.

“What’s happening? Anybody hurt?” He said. “Should Susan come too?”

“No, just.. Oomph.. need your help.”

“OK, be right there.” He gave Susan a look, shrugged, and put on his robe and slippers. He took the elevator down to Matilda’s apartment and pressed the doorbell. The door slid open immediately and he stepped into the dark apartment.

“Mattie?” He called out quietly. Matilda’s little girls, Natasha and Jennifer were only a couple months old, he didn’t want to call too loudly and awaken them.

“In here.” He heard. He went down the hallway to her bedroom. The light was on and he stepped in. What greeted his eyes was incredible.

Matilda was struggling with the cups and hoses for her breast pump. Her breasts had swollen so firm with milk, she could no longer bend forward enough to reach the pump. The hoses and cups had detached from the machine.

“Oomph! Help me.” She said struggling.

He quickly assembled the pieces and handed the first cup to her. He flipped the switch as she held the cup to her nipple. Though she could reach her own nipple, her breasts were so large and swollen it was a near thing. He repeated the process on the second pump and soon both breasts were expressing milk.

After another twenty seconds passed she relaxed. He sat on the bed beside her.

“Thank-you lover.” She sighed.

“What happened?”

“I didn’t wake up in time.” She said. She carefully moved herself so she could lean back against the headboard. The pumps continued to pump.

“I never would have imagined it.” She said after a while. “Boobs so big I can hardly move.”

“Not to sound, ah, uhm.”

“Like a breast obsessed man?” Matilda suggested with a smile.

“OK, guilty, as you already know.” He smiled back. “But uhm, how do you manage to breast feed?”

“Well, they were just so full, I couldn’t bend them. So I couldn’t reach. When I breast feed, I lie down and put Nat or Jen on the bed beside me. Then kind of bend my upper boob over and hold it to them. It actually works really well.”

“Except when you’re extra full.” Michael replied.

“Right except then.” She stroked her breasts slowly. “Want some?” She asked.

He looked at her and she nodded verification. He leaned over and gently pulled a cup off, then took her nipple into his mouth. He cupped the nipple in his tongue and suckled.

Matilda moaned. “Oh yes. Drink lover.”

He willingly complied. He drank several more mouth’s full. Then pulled away.

“Don’t want to get too carried away.” He said after a moment. He took a tissue to wipe her nipple clean and replaced the pump.

“I wish we could, but not today.” She replied. “We both need our sleep.”

“I do have a question. Do you think this will happen again?”

“Probably, the twins are getting bigger and sleeping longer.” She said. She was still in a dreamy state.

“I’ll have to remember to make sure the pump is ready to go before I go to bed.”

He leaned over, taking both breasts in his hands and kissed her.

“You going to be OK?” He asked.

“I’ll be fine. Thanks for coming down so fast and helping. Now go home before I change my mind and pull you into bed with me.”

“OK. I’ll stop by after breakfast.”

“Thanks.” She said giving him another kiss.

When he returned back to his apartment, he stopped in the kitchen to get a glass of water before going to the bedroom. Susan was still awake waiting for him.

“What happened?”

“Matilda needed to pump desperately, but was having problems with the pump.” Michael responded getting back into bed. “She overslept between feedings.”

“I know how that feels. She OK?”

“Yup, the pump was working its magic when I left.” He settled down and she curled up beside him.

“That’s good.” She said. “I’m so glad she came along.”

“Me too.” He said. He turned out the light and they both quickly fell back asleep.

Surprise

“Do you know what today is?” Susan said as they ate their lunch. She was feeding the girls.

“No, other than its Sunday.” Michael replied.

“Well, it’s Father’s day.” Susan replied. “Come on, help me with the girls. I have a surprise for you.” They put the girls in their strollers, made sure they had toys to keep them occupied, and headed out. They buzzed Jenna’s apartment, and Jenna answered.

“Everything is ready.” She said by way of greeting.

They got into the elevator, and Jenna pressed the G2 button. They descended, as they came to a stop Susan instructed Michael to close his eyes. The elevator doors slid opened and they guided Michael a few steps forward.

“Now, open them.” Susan replied.

Parked a few feet in front of him, was a cherry red Mustang. The top down, it looked more than ready for the road.

“You had it brought down.” Michael replied. “But Zanthia doesn’t have the fossil fuels. There’s no gasoline.”

“Oh, we didn’t have your car brought down.” Susan replied. His Mustang was the only thing from Earth still onboard the ship orbiting above.

“But?”

“This is a copy.” Jenna explained. “I am an engineer; we adapted a Zanthian power source.”

“So its..” Michael said walking around it.

“It’s all yours, and ready to go.” Susan replied. “Happy father’s day.”

“I don’t know what to say. Thank-you.” Michael replied.

“Go on, get in.” Susan urged.

Michael needed no further prompting, he opened the door and slid behind the wheel. The dash was mostly what he remembered, there were some Zanthian changes, but they were subtle.

“I will watch the girls.” Jenna volunteered. “You should try it.”

“Thank-you again.” Susan said. She gave Jenna a hug, and hopped into the passenger seat. Michael pressed the ignition button, and they heard a subtle hum as the motor started. He put the car in gear, and slowly pulled away. Up through the garage level he went, then emerged on the street. They drove around the plaza area for a few minutes, and then drove along the one-time harbor area. They parked found a park area and stopped to look at the sea.

“There are still so many places in the city to see.” Michael replied.

“At least you’ll be able to get around a little better.” Susan replied. “Make sure you give Jenna a ride next. Everybody will want one.”

“I will. I can’t thank you enough.”

“I know how much you loved your car back on Earth.”

“It’s a wonderful gift. So what about Mother’s Day? Anything special you want?”

“I already have my gift.” She replied, and then patted her stomach. “It’s right here.”

“You’re?”

“Yes dear, two months along.” She smiled.

He reached for her and drew her close for a deep loving kiss.

“We better be getting back.” She said after a moment. Though she didn’t move too far away.

“I think we can spare a few more minutes.” He said. He kissed her again. His hand slid down her side, then outward over the expanse of her breasts, he slowly circled her nipple with his fingers, lightly touching her.

Suddenly her eye shot open, and she caught her breath as an orgasm lit through her.

“Oh my!” she replied. “I’d forgotten how sensitive my boobs can be. We have to continue this back home.”

“Absolutely.”

“Now, dear, now!”

“Yes ma’am.” He replied and started the car, and drove away.

Drive in the country

“Have a good time dear.” Susan said.

“Are you sure about this?” Michael replied standing at the door.

“Absolutely.” She replied. She gave Michael a kiss. “Now go, I’ll see you in a few days.”

Michael bent down and gave Jessie and Jamie kiss. “Be good for Mommy.” Joseph and Jacob were sleeping. He stood, and gave Susan another kiss.

“I’ll be back.”

“Love you.”

“Love you too.”

And he was out the door. He went down a few floors and buzzed the door. A few moments later, the door slid open and Nola stood on the other side.

“Hi!” she replied and stepped aside. At sixteen she had grown into quite a pretty girl.

“So you’re doing the baby sitting?” Michael said stepping into the entryway.

“Me and some of the other girls.” Nola said. “We thought we’d make a bit of a slumber party out of it.”

“Just don’t get carried away.” Matilda said coming out of her bedroom. “Remember you’re here to watch over the children first.”

“We’ll remember. Jessica and the others said they’d help.” Nola replied.

Matilda said her good-byes to her daughters, Nat and Jenny. And tucked in baby Sophia and Marie.

“You can call us if you need us.” Matilda said. She gave Nola a hug, and pulled her suitcase behind her. They went down a few more floors to ‘the schoolroom’. There Jessica was working with Billy, currently her only student. Jenna was also there. Over the last four years she had become fluent in her English, and was now spending time in the school helping teach, and to learn herself. The teenagers had finished for the day, and only Billy remained. He saw his mother come in, and put down his book. He ran to her with a drawing he had made. Matilda fussed over him, but eventually managed to say her good-byes. She told him that she would be gone for just a few days, and would be back soon.

“It’s just a little trip Michael and I have to take.” She explained. “Nola will be staying with you, you be good for her?”

“I will Mom.” He said. Over the last few months, he had dropped “Mommy” in favor of “Mom.”

She gave him another hug, and they left.

They made their way to the parking garage. The bags went in the trunk, and they headed out.

“Put the top down.” Matilda asked as they stopped at the exit.

“Sure.” Michael replied. It was a nice day, and Michael was happy to lower the convertible roof. Once secured, they started driving.

“Where to?” He asked.

“South on the coastal highway.” Matilda replied.

“You got it.” And Michael turned south. All marks of civilization outside the city limits of ZanTan had been removed over the centuries. But now, a few were beginning to be rebuilt. The first was coastal highway. It followed the coast south out of ZanTan. A six-lane super highway, it once served as major artery, now it was just a road for Michael to get out on and stretch the mustang’s legs. After fifteen minutes, the skyline was falling behind them. The southbound lanes were higher up the hillside compared to the north bound lanes, they had an unimpeded view of the sea as they drove. After an hour they were coming to what Michael thought was the end of the highway.

“This is new, I think.” Michael said.

“Yes, new last month.” Matilda replied. “Just another twenty miles or so.”

They drove on.

“Now take the exit.” She instructed. The six-lane had left the coast and continued south, while the coastline had curved east. Just beyond their exit, Michael could see that the highway came to an abrupt stop. He took the exit down to some stop lights. To the right more signage signifying the end of the road. He turned left, and went under the six-lane. Another set of lights, had he turned left he would have gotten back on six-lane heading north. But Matilda instructed him to go straight. They followed the two-lane for several miles until they found themselves in a heavily wooded area, and the road started twisting and turning through the trees. They went over a bridge, and through another few miles.

“There should be a driveway soon.” Matilda said. And indeed after just another mile an obvious driveway emerged from the wood.

“This it?” Michael said slowing.

“Yes.” She replied.

Michael turned onto the drive and followed the narrow lane a few hundred yards through the trees. He rounded a curve and emerged into open area. To the left had to be the largest house he had ever seen, to the right, a large garage. A garage door was opening and Michael pulled into it and shut down the car.

They retrieved their bags and headed for the house.

“Wow, this is quite a place.”

The house was huge. It looked like log cabin on the outside. A porch, complete with chairs and benches spanned the entire front. They stepped through the front door and paused to look around. The living room was nearly twenty feet wide and twice that deep. Typical of Zanthian design, there was a hallway immediately to their right, Michael could only assume there were bedrooms behind each of the doors he saw.

“There’s four bedrooms down that hallway.” Matilda said, then pointed to another archway on the far right hand corner. “And down that hallway, are a master suite, a nursery, and a guest suite.”

To his left, was a kitchen and dining area and a den. Off the kitchen was a small glassed sun-room for more intimate dining. Michael’s eyes followed a stairway up to a loft above the kitchen area.

“That’s a family room up there.” Matilda said pointing to it. There were catwalks that crossed over the living room on each end. “And on that side six more bedrooms.”

“Amazing.” He said.

“Come I want to show you the pool.” They left their bags and crossed the living room. On the wall there was not one, but two large fireplaces. Each had a different setting in front of it, One setting had five single high back chairs, suggesting a group to sit and enjoy the fire, the other, a single loveseat, with end tables, suggesting more private conversation. What caught Michael’s eye next was the enormous painting that spanned from one mantle across to the other.

“Is that?”

“Yes, Courtney did that.” Matilda said. It was painting of ZanTan’s skyline, a red sky in the background.

“It’s beautiful.” He replied.

“She said she’s got a whole series of nature canvases she wishes to paint.” Matilda said as she paused to admire it. “She said, since Zanthia is so pristine, so unspoiled, she can go almost anywhere and paint. Jenna has been suggesting places.”

Patio doors spanned the entire back wall of the living room. They emerged into another glassed in area. Michael could see a large pool directly in front of him, to his right he could see what he guessed was a sunken hot-tub, and a smaller wading pool.

“For the little kids.” Matilda said. “Now, look at this.” She pressed a button on a control panel, and Michael heard the sounds coming to him from all around. As he watched, all the windows on the side walls opened, a fresh breeze started coming in.

“Is that salt?” Michael replied.

“Yes..” Matilda said. “Just one more thing to show you, come on.” She took his hand and led him past the pool out a door and down a path through the trees. As they walked they could hear the surf of the ocean. Michael saw a birdhouse hanging from a tree.

“Has everybody been out here except me?”

“Not everybody, but a few.” Matilda replied. “Tabitha put those up, still no residents though.”

They walked a total of a hundred yards, the trees cleared, and at the edge of the trees stood a large gazebo. Like the pool area, the windows were screened. They walked beyond it and looked south. Their view was spectacular. A long semicircular bay lay before them. The beach was of beautiful sand, stretching out over a mile. In the distance, another bluff formed the southern boundary.

“Jenna said this beach was a popular vacation spot for the people. Eventually, the entire beach area was turned into a park, so nobody could build there. This house and its property is the closest anyone could get.”

They went up into the gazebo and looked out over the beach.

“Beautiful isn’t it?” She replied. “So peaceful, so pure, I know people have been here, but it’s been so long ago, it’s like it never happened.”

“I know, everywhere I go, I’m amazed.” Michael replied. He moved up behind her and put his arms around her waist. As flat, and trim, as if she had never gone through three pregnancies.

“I know how you feel. It’s like I’m dreaming.” She leaned back into him. She held her hands over his. Slowly, they started swaying, her hands never leaving his, after a few minutes she guided his hands downward, under the top of her shorts. She unbuttoned the cut-offs, and let them fall to the floor. Her panties quickly followed. She stepped out of them and stood with her legs slightly apart.

“Make love to me.” She sighed. She leaned forward, hands against the window frame, as she presented herself to him.

He opened the front of his jeans, and let his manhood spring free. He was more than ready to make love to this beautiful woman. They had made love multiple times in the past, but this time, it was with the intent of impregnating her. He pressed into her womanhood, slowly he entered, stroke after stroke. Soon he was fully into her, and stroking quickly.

“Oh!” She started panting. “Love me, yes, again, love.. ah.. laaahh!” she moaned, her vagina clutched as her first orgasm came through her. He couldn’t hold on much longer, he pushed himself as deep as he could and released his sperm deep into her. They stood there for a few minutes while they caught their breath.

“That was wonderful love.” Matilda sighed. He pulled out of her, and she turned a partially around to kiss him. In her heels, she and Kristine were the only ones tall enough to kiss him without his bending over too much. Of course, kissing Matilda had other enjoyable complications. Her breasts were so large she often had to be sideways, and kiss sort of over her shoulder.

“Sit down, we’re not done yet.” She said. He sat down, half reclined, in a deck chair. She pulled her remaining foot out of her clothes and sat down on the few inches to his side. She leaned over him, one of her enormous breasts covering his stomach and chest as their lips met.

After a moment she sat upright, her breast still resting on him. She was wearing a red scoop neck, sleeveless t-shirt, nearly twenty inches of deep cleavage was visible before the cleavage disappeared under the cloth. She pulled her arms back into her shirt, only to bring them back out under the bottom. Then she pulled the shirt over her breasts, and over her head. She looked over the horizon of her breasts down at him. She was wearing a bra, the light fabric barely covering her areola.

“To keep from wobbling too much,” She volunteered. “Chasing the kids around, my boobs sometimes bounce all over the place.” She then rose partially, and swung a leg over him. She straddled his body, trapping his penis under her crotch. She reached behind her back, and released the bra strap. Her breasts barely lowered as the bra was released. She pulled it forward, then off to the side, wearing only her shoes and a smile, she reached under her breasts, pulled them apart, and leaned in for another kiss.

He had his hands on her hips, he moved them up her sides, then down the sides of each beanbag sized breast. She leaned back and swooned with delight. He took her breasts in his arms and started squeezing. Her breasts were as sensitive as ever. She started sliding her hips forward and back, using her pussy, to ride along his cock. She threw her head back, her black hair flying as she moaned and let herself be carried along on the sensation. He moved his head to a side, and a plate size areola and erect nipple presented itself. He stuck out his tongue and licked a long swath across the surface.

“Ahh!” she screamed. Had he been paying attention, he would felt her release a good amount of lubricant upon his thickening cock. Though she tried to put forth a façade of control, in these moments she was totally without control. He moved his mouth over the nipple, and swirled around it with his tongue.

“Yes!” She bucked her hips. He knew he was ready to penetrate her again.

“Lift up.” He instructed. She obliged. She took one hand away from her boobs to guide him. Once she had fully speared herself upon him, she put her hand back. He moved his head back to center, and looked up through the valley of her cleavage and went back to squeezing her boobs. He squeezed her boobs together, and released, then repeat. Soon she was pumping her hips up and down upon him as her passions rose.

It didn’t take long for her to work herself into a quick pace, with yips of excitement in among the panting. On three occasions she slammed down upon him to shake through an orgasm, only to start again within moments. The fourth orgasm he couldn’t hold back any longer, she collapsed upon him, draping herself atop her immense breasts. She shook in orgasm, her pussy clenching him, and he in turn exploded deep with her.

She couldn’t move for several minutes as she collected her breath and wits. He had other ideas. He slid his hand down the sides of her breasts until he had each attempting to cover her areola. He slowly brought his fingers together against his thumbs, meeting at her nipples, then apart again.

“Ooh, I love it when you do that.” She managed to say. She had no energy to move. Again he moved his fingers, and again. A slow, sensual massage, it caused her to slowly start moving her hips again. His softening penis eventually slipped out of her.

She shuddered softly one last time, then relaxed. He stopped his actions and let her rest. It was nearly thirty minutes later before she stirred again. She kissed him, sat up, then stood taking her weight off him. She brought her leg back over, and sat on the side chair again.

“Thank-you lover,” she said. She leaned over and kissed him again. “If I’m not pregnant after all that, I never will be.”

“Well.” Michael started. He had one hand behind his head, and with the other he reached out and stroked the top of her breast. “I hope you don’t mind, but I think I’d like to make sure. I just need to charge my batteries a bit.”

“I was hoping you’d say that.” She looked out the windows, noticing the light was weakening, the sun setting. “But we better get back to the house before the bugs get too bad.”

“Good idea.” He replied, “I’m getting hungry.”

Matilda found her clothes piled on the floor, ignoring her bra, she dressed, and they made their way back down the path to the house, and entered into the pool area.

“Tomorrow, we need to go swimming.” Matilda said.

“I didn’t bring a suit.” Michael said.

“I didn’t either.” Matilda said with a laugh.

They ate their meal in the sun-room, enjoying the darkness fall in the woods. They moved to a fireplace, and kissed a few more times.

Matilda pulled away and stood.

“I’m going to take a shower, why don’t you start a fire.” She said. She sauntered off and he watched her every step of the way.

Starting a fire was no effort, simply pressing a button, but Michael also took the time to pour a glass of wine, and relaxed looking at the flames.

After a few minutes, Matilda re-emerged, wearing a fluffy robe. She slowly took the glass from his hand, then bent over and kissed him.

“Your turn lover.” She sipped the wine. “Hmm, now go, don’t keep me waiting.”

Michael stood and kissed her again. “I’m going.” And he went to take his own shower. After getting clean, he put on a robe, and returned to the living room. He found Matilda stretched out on the floor in front of the fire. Her robe had fallen almost completely open. She was looking into the fire and didn’t notice his entering. He took a moment to admire her. Her breasts piled up in front of her blocked almost all of her upper body. Only a small part of her hips could be seen. Only from the rear could the heart shape beauty be seen and appreciated. Her long, shapely legs though, were on full display. Her long hair was spread across the floor behind her.

“Deep in thought?” He said after a moment. Matilda jumped a little.

“Sorry.”

“It’s OK. Just thinking.”

He settled down in front of her, just inches from her body.

“About what?”

“Mmm” Matilda sighed. “I’m just thinking, boys or girls. And I can’t decide.” She moved her hand to her belly. Her arm, brushing the bottom of her breasts caused them to jiggle, her robe falling a little bit more open.

“Do you really want one or the other?” He brushed some hair away from her face, then gently caressed her face.

She reached up and held his hand. “I want to give you both.” She said. She kissed his hand, then guided it down the front of her robe onto her breast, her robe finally falling completely open.

“Then I guess we’ll have to keep trying and trying.” He said with a mischievous smile. They made love again in front of the fireplace. Then, after catching their breaths, made their way to the bedroom, and fell asleep together.

The next morning, Matilda woke to find the bed empty. She could hear the shower start. She quickly reached into the nightstand and removed two objects she had stashed there the night before. The first was a hand held mirror, and the second was the inseminator Susan had been using to impregnate the women. Her boobs were so big she couldn’t really see her own stomach. Using the mirror to look over her boobs, she placed device on the flat of her stomach just below her belly button. Like the first time it was used on her, she pressed the button, and watched the light slowly flash, then it went solid green, she watched it nervously for nearly a minute, then it flashed a few times, and went dark. Only this time, instead of a man’s sperm finding her egg, it was her egg, saved from her cycle the month before. She put the machine and mirror away, and laid down, both hands on her belly. She could only imagine what the next 9 months or so would bring. She had wanted to stack the odds in her favor.

The rest of the weekend was filled with swimming in the pool, soaking in the hot tub, interspersed with multiple sessions of love making. One highlight was taking a golf cart down a trail to the beach. The sand was pristine, and the water tickled their toes as they walked barefoot in the surf waters.

Sunday evening, they sat in the sunroom off the kitchen eating their evening meal. It wouldn’t be long before they would have to make the drive back to the city. Michael looked out the window at the woods, and the small clearing.

“You know,” He said. “I think a bird bath and a feeder would be perfect in that clearing.”

“Hmm.” She replied after looking at the area he had pointed to. “I think you’re right. Hopefully the birds will spread here soon.”

“Tabitha says the population is growing.” He said after a bit.

“Are you still thinking about going back?” She asked after a moment of silence.

“We all knew we’d have to make another trip.” Michael said. “But I don’t really want to go.”

“Because?” She asked drawing out the word.

“Because I would miss you, and Susan, and the kids, and everybody else.” Michael said. “This has become my home.

“Then go, and come back as quick as you can.” She replied. “But promise me one thing. Don’t go until after our baby is born. OK?”

“Oh! Of course, I wouldn’t dream of it.” Michael replied. His plate was empty, as was hers. He gathered them up, and put them in the cleaner.

“But for now, we better be on the road back to town.”

“I know. It was so pleasant here. I love everybody, but it was nice to be away from it all too. But I miss my kids.”

They had already packed their clothes, and had their bags sitting by the door. They took one last walk around the house, making sure all was in order, then headed out to the garage.

“Looks like rain.” Matilda said looking at the western sky.

“I better put the top up.” He replied as he put the bags in the trunk. They made their way back in the rain. By the time they pulled into the parking garage it was pouring.

They first stopped at Matilda’s apartment. Just outside the door, Matilda stopped short and turned to Michael.

“I’m thinking, Ann Margaret should be next on the list of clones.” She said.

“You like to plan ahead, don’t you.” They kissed one final time.

“I’m planning further than that.” She teased. And kissed him again. She reached for the door release, and entered her apartment. Michael heard just the first bit of two little girls squeals of delight before the door slid closed.

Speaking of little girls, he had his own waiting for him. He took the elevator up to his apartment, and let himself in. He found the girls all dressed in their PJs curled up on the couch as Susan read to them.

“And they lived happily ever after.” He said interrupting.

“Daddy!” They squealed.

“Sssh girls, your brothers are asleep.” Susan said. Even though the doors to bedrooms were soundproof.

Michael and Susan had three sets of twins; two girls, two girls, and then two boys. The two boys, named after their fathers, were just under a year old, had mastered crawling, and were about to embark on the larger challenge of walking. Michael knelt down to be smothered with hugs and kisses, then settled on the couch with Jessie and Jamie on his lap. Susan continued to read, and soon had both set of twins asleep. Michael slid a girl off his lap, then carried the other to bed. He returned and carried all the girls to their beds. Once snuggled under the blankets for the night, he and Susan went to their bedroom where for Susan, sleeping was last on her list of things to do.

Ten weeks later

“I’m glad you could see me.” Matilda said entering Susan’s office.

“It’s no trouble. I’m not swamped, yet.” She replied. “But in a few years, and the girls start having children, I think I’ll be busy.” They were talking about the teenage girls they had adopted. Nola was the oldest and now nearly twenty.

“Has any of them said anything?” Matilda asked.

“Not that I know of, but I’m not around them as much as their guardians.” Susan replied. “But, we’ll cross that bridge when we get to it. What can I do for you?”

“Well, I’m a little concerned.” She replied. She lifted her breasts away from her stomach and turned sideways to show Susan her profile. “I’m showing already, and I’m barely ten weeks.”

“Hmm, sit down.” Susan said. She gestured to a reclining chair. Then picked up her scanner and calibrated it for her purpose.

Matilda sat down, and then leaned back. The chair, resembling a lounge chair, was higher off the ground, but otherwise allowed Matilda to lean back, her upper body slightly elevated, and her legs also raised. Arms were hinged into position to allow the occupant to be comfortable. Susan, having already experienced three pregnancies found the chair to be extremely comfortable for expectant mothers.

“I’ll do a quick ultrasound.” Susan said. “Just open your pants a little.”

Susan pretended to press a few buttons on the scanner while Matilda unbuttoned her jeans, and lowered the zipper. Once she was done, she held her breasts up a little for Susan to work. Susan held the scanner against Matilda’s baby bump for a few seconds while it worked, then withdrew it.

“Done,” She replied. She sat at her desk, and pressed a few buttons and looked at her screen.

“Well, that’s definitely a baby bump, and there’s a perfectly good reason for it.” She said with a smile. She pressed a couple buttons and the large monitor on the wall lit up with a magnified view of Matilda’s uterus.

Magnified many times, it was clear to see the fetus’s.

“Here are your reasons.” Susan said pointing to each in turn. “One. Two. Three. Four.”

“Five?” Matilda finished. “Oh my.”

“I guess dropping that extra egg was more successful than we thought.”

“Apparently.” Matilda replied. Matilda went to her bag and retrieved the inseminator, and handed it to Susan.

“I think we better keep this ‘egg dropping’ to ourselves.” Susan replied.

“Absolutely.” Matilda agreed. “Can you imagine if Theresa found out? She’d want to be Zanthia’s first Octomom.”

“Or more.” Susan agreed.

Matilda put her hands to her bulging belly. “Am I?”

“I think you’ll be fine. We’ll monitor you more closely than before. Just because of the quints, but you’ve had two sets of twins so far, and you were fine.”

Relieved, Matilda relaxed. “And what about you?”

“Twins again.” Susan said putting her hands on her own baby bump. She was six weeks further along than Matilda, her own pregnancy progressing well.

“So, you gonna egg drop next time?” Matilda asked a bit mischievously.

“I don’t know. I’d kind of like to. Maybe I’ll just live vicariously through you.”

“We’ll have plenty of time to talk.” Matilda said. Then stood to leave.

“I really can’t thank you enough for this.” Matilda added patting her stomach. “It means a lot to me.”

“I know.” Susan said. She stood also and in a surprising move, pulled Matilda into a hug. Being as busy as they both were, it was closer to holding hands.

“There is one thing I wanted to ask you.” Susan said. “If anything were to happen to me, would you?”

“You know I would.” Matilda said. “I’d help with your kids.”

“More than that, take care of them and take care of Michael too.” Susan said seriously. Matilda stood silent for a moment, then agreed.

“Of course. And if anything happened to me?”

“Absolutely.” Susan replied immediately.

“Now, too much seriousness, lunch?” Matilda asked.

“Sure, it’s nice out. Let’s take some sandwiches out into the courtyard.”

Four Months Later

“I’ll be glad when these two arrive.” Tabitha said lowering herself into her chair. “I can use a break from having to pee every hour on the hour.”

All of the women at the table chuckled. Most had gone through multiple pregnancies, and all knew the last few weeks were the most trying. Tabitha was less than two weeks away from delivering her fourth set of twins. She would be the first to do so. Kristine had almost caught up to the rest, even though she had joined the colony last, she was well into the third trimester of her fourth pregnancy. Susan’s fourth pregnancy was equally advanced. Which of the two would deliver first was anybody’s guess. Matilda smiled from the other side of the table. Her quintuplets had made her enormous. She seemed to enjoy every minute of her pregnancy. Theresa, had taken a slower pace. She had delivered quads her first two pregnancies, and was barely two months into her third.

The only non-pregnant woman at the table was Jenna. She sat next to Susan.

The group would meet once every two weeks to discuss the happenings on Zanthia. This ‘council’ of sorts would talk about the latest news, and health of the children, and what they should be doing next. They were sitting on the balcony of Michael and Susan’s apartment. It was a beautiful day, with a slight breeze. Inside, the younger children played while Jessica had the oldest children in school.

“There’s a couple things I wanted to talk about.” Michael said. “As you may remember the ‘Mayflower.’ I think it’s about time I go back to Earth. Collect more animals, and hopefully recruit a few more people to join us.”

Even though it had been talked about loosely for a while, discussing it at the council meeting was a bit more formal.

“I’ll go with you.” Susan volunteered.

“No, as much I want your company. You need to stay here. Zanthia needs it’s only Doctor here, more than I need you on the trip.” Michael looked at her and she nodded. He looked across the table at Matilda, she had been about to speak, but understood, nodded, and kept silent.

“Besides, the children need their mothers.”

“So will anybody be going with you?” Theresa asked. “And when will you be leaving? And how long will you be gone?”

“I ...” Michael started.

“I’m going with you.” Jenna interrupted. “I wish to see your world.”

Nobody could argue against her statement. She had no children, and the Zanthian girls were still in the stasis chambers.

“Me too.” Volunteered Tabitha. Michael was about to object but she stopped him. “No, it makes sense. Somebody has to collect more animals. And that’s the main reason we’re going back right?”

She looked at her sister and continued.

“You have to stay and continue with the fish hatcheries. Me, I’ve released all the birds I can, I can only keep track of their populations and how their territories are spreading. Kora and Mandy can do that while I’m gone. And my kids, they’ll have their Aunt and cousins here.”

“She makes sense.” Theresa said after a moment.

Michael looked around the table and all the women seemed to agree.

“All right.” He said after a moment. “But I think that should be it.” Again he looked around the table and seeing no objections, he continued.

“So, when to leave.” He said. “I think it should be relatively soon. A few months or so.”

“At least let me deliver these.” Tabitha said patting her stomach again. “Ooh! Kick.”

“And I think you should wait until these are born.” Susan said.

“Mine too.” Matilda added.

“I think it’ll take at least that long before we’re ready.” Michael responded.

“So you’re planning on recruiting women too, right?” Kristine said.

“Yes. I know Jessica is starting to feel the pressure of being the only teacher, though I know you’re all helping whenever you can.”

“But you’re not going to do any genetic collections.”

“I wasn’t planning on it.”

Susan leaned forward and said in a low voice. “You may have to make an exception to that. It’d be a nice surprise for some of the girls.”

The other women nodded agreement.

“Good idea.” Theresa said. “We take them for granted sometimes. They’re young women, not that much younger than us. And they will start to want families of their own. This will be a nice thing for them.”

The other women agreed as well.

“Now, how long will you be gone?” Kristine asked.

“Another good question, I think that will depend on what we want to collect while we’re there. The more things we absolutely need, the longer it’ll take.”

“Theresa and I will have to go over our lists again.” Tabitha replied. “And if we’re going to spend some time interviewing, that’ll add.”

“And sightseeing.” Kristine added gesturing to Jenna.

“I think that’s going to take most of our time between now and then. Making shopping lists. Prioritizing.”

All agreed. Michael was going to bring up the next topic, then Tabitha spoke.

“One last thing, would it be all right if we made some changes to the ship? Make it a bit more cozy? More comfortable?”

“Like?” Theresa said.

“Well. Uhm.” She thought a moment. “It’d be nice if the common room had more comfortable chairs. We can keep a few tables and chairs for eating. But the others, something a bit more comfy, like couches, and recliners. And the walls, they’re all boring. Maybe something to brighten the place up.”

“Well, sure. Go for it.”

“Cool. I’ll get Courtney to help.”

“Anything else?” He asked, but got silence. “I’m sure we’ll talk about it more. But there’s one other thing, that’s kind of important too.”

They all looked at him with anticipation.

“Surrogates.” He said after a moment. “Up until now, all the babies born have been from our genes.”

“Accept for Sophia and Maria.” Matilda said.

“Right, accept for Sophia and Maria. You’ve definitely been doing your part.” He said. “You all agreed to also be surrogate mothers. I think it’s time you ladies seriously consider starting to do so.”

They all looked at him seriously. But he continued. “I’m asking you all to consider it. If you have surrogate children, then the other women will consider it as well.”

Silence followed for a few minutes. They had agreed, but being reminded was still a bit of a shock. Michael realized it would take time for it to sink in. He’d have to talk to each of them individually, he thought, to convince them.

“It’s really not bad at all.” Matilda said after a bit. “The procedure is nothing. Not even worth talking about.”

“It’s not that.” Theresa started.

“Ah, I know what it is.” Matilda replied. “Let me tell you. I love Sophia and Maria like they were my own. While I may not be their mother in blood, I’m as good as their mother in heart. I’ll never hide from them who they are. And they’ll grow up knowing that I wanted to bring them into this world. Just as surely as I wanted Billy and his sisters.”

Michael had come to understand the women’s thinking. They all had come to realize that they were just like the colonists that had landed at Plymouth Rock. This was a big deal.

“Sophia’s and Maria’s birth certificates show Matilda as their surrogate mother. A thousand years from now, their descendants will be able to trace their family tree all the way back to this table, and to you Matilda.”

There was more silence, and Michael decided to leave it lie.

“Anyway, I’ll let you think about it.” He paused. “So, let’s talk about the trip some more.”

The conversation started back up again. Plans and ideas tossed about. They talked for another hour, but it was turning dark. Michael called for the meeting to end. Michael helped Kristine take her children home, while Jenna helped Theresa and then Tabitha. He returned in time to help Matilda. He entered the apartment to find the two women sitting at the small table in the kitchen. He sat down to join them.

“So, what did you think?” He asked.

“I wish I could go with you .” Susan said.

“Me too.” Matilda added.

“I know. But I need both of you here. Everyone looks to you. You’ll be in charge while I’m gone.”

“Promise you won’t leave until after our babies are born.” Susan said. And Matilda nodded. Michael reached out and put a hand on the belly of each woman.

“That I promise whole heartedly.” He said. “I wouldn’t miss it for the world. Or rather two worlds.”

Without removing his hands, he turned directly to Matilda.

“Thank-you for speaking up about surrogating, I don’t know if it convinced anybody. But it may have helped.”

“I know I should surrogate, but I love carrying your babies.” Susan said.

“I know. But think of it this way. After these are born, I’ll head to Earth. Then you can surrogate, or clone, while I’m gone. By the time I get back, you’ll have had the babies, and…”

“We’ll be able to carry yours again.” Matilda finished for him.

He turned to Susan. “I think, if you do it, the rest will.”

“I know. I’m just thinking. Let’s say one of our daughters were to marry one of Tabitha’s boys. That’s a new genetic combination. But chances are none of our other children will marry any of Tabitha’s. So now they have to choose from the others. Each pairing creates a new genetic combination, but eliminating a possible pairing at the same time.”

“Simple math, really.” Michael said. “There are only so many different combinations possible. And each woman has, or is going to have, more children than there are combinations. All the women need to start having surrogates to increase the number of combinations possible.”

“Considering how long we’re supposed to live, there’s nothing stopping us from having our own children again somewhere down the road.” Matilda added.

“Very good point.” Michael said. “That would help persuade people, right?”

“I’d think so.” Susan said.

“Daddy?” Jessie said interrupting them. “Can you read me a story?”

“Sure sweetheart.” Michael replied.

“I better get mine home.” Matilda said.

“No, stay, I want to walk you home.” Michael said.

“Yes, relax. They’re asleep, and Michael can help.” Susan added. “Just give us a few minutes.”

Matilda leaned back in her chair and relaxed. She watched Michael and Susan each take the five-year olds by the hand and guide them to bed. Twenty minutes later they re-emerged. They put Sophia and Marie in a stroller and headed for the door.

“You OK?” Michael asked Susan.

“I’ll be fine. I think I’ll take a soak in the tub. Let our babies float a while.” She kissed him. “Later.”

“I’ll be back in a bit.” Michael replied. They entered the elevator, then started down to Matilda’s floor. Matilda, used to kissing and hugging sideways leaned into Michael as the elevator descended. Then she looked up at him and kissed him. His hand rubbed her stomach.

“That was nice.” She replied as their lips parted.

“Yes it was.” He replied, one hand rubbing her pregnant belly.

“It’s been a while since we’ve made love.” She purred. “Up for some fun lover?”

“I think so. With any luck everybody will be asleep.”

“Billy will probably be awake, staying up until I get home.” The elevator opened on her floor, and they went to her apartment.

“Nola, the kids asleep?” Matilda asked once they entered.

“Billy wanted to stay up, so we made a deal. He’d lie in bed, with the lights on and read and you’d come in and tuck him in as soon as you got home.”

“The girls.” Matilda asked, referring to Natasha and Jennifer.

“They’re asleep. I put them down an hour ago.”

“Good. I better let you get home. I know it’s been a long day.” Matilda said.

“Goodnight.” Nola said then. She picked up her bag and headed out the door.

“I really should ask one of the younger girls to watch the kids. But Nola’s so good with them.” Matilda said after locking the door. “Come on, I need to see to Billy.”

Michael waited outside the door as Matilda went in. Less than a minute later, she came back out, shut off the light, and closed the door.

“He was asleep, but woke up when I opened the door.” She whispered. Next they put Sophia and Maria in their beds. They snuggled on the couch for a few minutes, then Matilda led him to the bedroom. They sat side by side, each undressing. Once naked, Matilda laid back.

“Now, lover, feel my belly.” Matilda purred. “Feel how big your babies are making me. Feel my boobs. Feel how firm and big they’ve gotten. They’re filling with milk to feed our babies. When our babies come, I want you to drink from me too.”

Departure Two:

Twenty people were gathered on the rooftop to see Jenna, Tabitha, and Michael on their way. The shuttle, unused in over five years sat on the landing pad, the rear hatch open and ramp leading down. They said their good-byes. Michael kissed Susan and Matilda deeply, as well as the other women. He hugged the kids, especially his little girls. They were old enough to know he was leaving and would be gone a while. Tabitha spent time with each of her kids, and her nieces and nephews. Jenna, though she had no children of her own, was hugged by all.

Eventually they had said their good-byes, and made their way into the shuttle. Michael pushed the button, and the ramp retracted and the door swung shut. Michael took up the driver’s seat, Jenna sat beside him, and Tabitha sat behind.

He looked out the window, seeing the people moving to the doorway.

“Everybody is clear.” Came Susan’s voice over the radio. “Come back to us.”

“We will.” Michael replied. He pressed the power button and the shuttle’s engine starting making a bit of a whine. He pressed the command button and ordered the shuttle aloft. This time, he chose to take his time. The shuttle rose, then did a slow circle around the building. They could see people on the balconies waving to them. Next he did a slow loop around the central courtyard area of the city, then loop around the outskirts. Finally he directed the shuttle back over the building one last time before accelerating up and into space.

The shuttle docked and Michael cycled the airlocks and they stepped onto the bridge.

“It doesn’t seem as big as it used to.” He said as he closed the airlocks behind him.

“I know the feeling.” Tabitha said. “But it hasn’t changed, much.”

“These are beautiful.” Michael said looking at the walls that formed the back of the bridge. The two walls displayed the ZanTan skyline. He moved to the front of the bridge and pressed the command button.

“Computer, once the shuttle is clear, please plot a course around both moons, then proceed to the departure point. Please transfer the shuttle’s recording, and record our departure.”

“Acknowledged.” The ship’s computer replied. “Shuttle is clear, breaking orbit.”

They watched as the view in the front monitors changed. Soon they were looking at space, and the approach to the first moon. Then they passed it and traveled for a few more minutes before the smaller, more distant moon came into sight. Once they passed it the ship announced another ten minutes before reaching departure point.

They each took seats in front of monitors and opened up channels to Zanthia. Michael’s conversation was with Susan and Matilda, and the kids, gather in their apartment.

Everybody was crying as they spoke, said yet even more good-byes. The ship announced their imminent arrival.

“It’s time to go now.” Michael said. “I love you all.” He said to the image.

“Love you too.” They replied.

“See you as soon as I can. I’ll send a message as soon as we arrive. I promise.”

“Be safe.”

“See you later.” He said and waved. He cut off the transmission after a few moments. He looked and Tabitha and Jenna were doing the same. They waved and turned off their transmissions as well.

“Computer, when you are ready. Set course, best speed to Earth.” Michael ordered.

“Acknowledged. FTL Translation commencing. FTL in five, four, three, two, one.. activate.” They watched the images on the view screens turn into the light tunnel, then the computer announced, “FTL translation complete. Arrival scheduled for 87 days, 18 hours, 38 minutes.”

“And so the trip begins.” Michael said.

“Hopefully it’ll be a little more comfortable this time.” Tabitha said. “Come on, let us show you what we did.”

They proceeded down the center hallway. “We didn’t change the teleporter or medical room, not much to do. But check this out.” She gestured to the murals on the walls of the hallway. Each portrayed a scenic area of Zanthia. Then Tabitha gestured to the lock pad on Michael’s cabin. He pressed it, and the door slid open. He entered and Jenna and Tabitha followed.

“It’s bigger.” Michael replied.

“Yes, half again bigger.” Jenna replied. “All the cabins are bigger. We thought it would be nice to have a bit more private space. And these were Susan’s idea.” The wall was covered with photos and mini moving photos of Susan and their children. There were pictures of Matilda and her children as well. The room was also decorated more comfortably. The extra space was filled with a couple comfortable chairs. Warm colors covered the walls. Even the bedding had new color and texture. He could see, through the closet door, a variety of clothes hanging.

They retreated and moved down the hallway. At the end of the hallway, Tabitha pushed the lock pad on the last door on the left. They entered to find a comfortable room.

“Now this is what I call a den.” Tabitha said. The original den had been one converted cabin. Now, it consumed what were originally three cabins, it had big comfy chairs, a nice carpet, and a holographic fireplace on one end. Michael imagined some quiet piano in the background would make it complete.

“And look at this.” Jenna added. They crossed the hall to see the exercise room. It too had been expanded. It contained a larger variety of exercise equipment.

Next they made it into the common room. Three dining tables with five chairs each sat on one side. On the other side, the large monitor remained, but the seating had changed to more comfortable chairs. Two tiers of raised flooring had been added. He would have to stoop to stand on the top tier, but it would make for better viewing of the monitor.

“One last thing.” Tabitha said. They descended the stairway to the first storage level. Here the walls were covered with pictures of people on Zanthia. Each one labeled and dated.

“I thought it’d be nice to have these to look at.” Tabitha said tearing up again.

“We won’t stay long.” Michael replied. “I miss my kids already.” They went back upstairs, and sat at the center table on the bridge.

After watching the monitors for a few minutes Jenna commented.

“It’s hypnotic. It keeps changing.”

“Yes it is.”

“I need to tell you something.” Jenna said after another moment. “I wanted to be included on this trip to see Earth, but I had another reason.”

Michael and Tabitha sat silently, waiting for her to continue.

“I wish to find a mate.” She said after a moment. “I wish to find a man that will come back to Zanthia with us.”

Tabitha only smiled.

“I, uh.” Michael started.

“Am I not attractive enough?” Jenna continued. “Do you think I can attract a man?”

“Oh! Absolutely.” Michael said in surprise. He sometimes forgot that Jenna wasn’t even thirty years old. Sometimes, Michael would consider her long stasis sleep, and life on Zanthia in much greater terms. He often considered her much older than she really was.

“I’m sorry, I should have answered better, faster.” Michael said after a moment. “You are a very beautiful woman, and you’ll find many, many men on Earth attracted to you.”

It seemed to ease her mind for a moment, but then she spoke again.

“I have watched some of your Earth ‘television shows.’ The women have breasts no larger than mine. Yet all the women you brought to Zanthia are much, much larger.”

Tabitha and Michael looked at her for a few moments of silence.

“I have to take some responsibility for that, when I gave the women the genetic altering shots, I increased their breast size.”

“Genetic altering?” Jenna asked.

“Sure, some alterations were needed to make Earth humans more compatible to Zanthian humans.”

“I had heard rumors of Genetic testing.” Jenna said.

“So you didn’t know?” Tabitha asked.

“No, only rumors.” Jenna replied. The conversation stalled for a moment, then Jenna continued.

“So, do men of Earth prefer larger breasted women?”

Tabitha giggled a response. “Oh yes. Most will never admit it, but they do.”

“I have to admit to being guilty.” Michael said after another moment of silence. Tabitha openly chuckled. She put her hands on her breasts and lifted them slightly.

“Kind of hard not to, considering the evidence,” she said smiling.

“Uhm.” Michael said in reply. And Tabitha laughed harder.

“You’re funny.” She laughed again. Michael could only raise his hands in surrender.

“But back to what you were saying,” Tabitha continued after a moment. “I won’t guarantee you’ll find somebody. But we’ll try.”

Michael nodded. “The postings have been sent, there will probably be men answering the adds, so we’ll see what happens.”

“Nothing we can do until we get there.” Tabitha said. “Come on, you promised you’d teach us Zanthian games. Let’s try one.”

Jenna brought out a deck of cards, and started teaching them the first game. They played for a couple hours, then broke for lunch. After lunch Jenna started to teach them more of Zanthian language. They had been neglecting it but now they had nothing to do but learn. They all agreed, they would probably stick with English, but conceded Zanthian words would need to be added in. They watched a movie after dinner, then sat in the common room just talking. Eventually they turned in.

The next day, they awoke and started their morning with a light breakfast, then all took a walk on the treadmills. Once showered and clean they returned to the bridge.

“I have been thinking.” She said all of a sudden. “I wish to have the genetic treatment, and enlarge my breasts.”

Michael and Tabitha sat stunned for a full ten second before Tabitha spoke.

“Are you sure? You’re incredibly beautiful, you don’t need larger breasts.”

“I am sure.” Jenna said after another moment.

Michael couldn’t believe it, she was incredibly beautiful, and he guessed, C-cup breasts, was more than curvy enough to draw attention. He waited for a bit before making his decision.

“If you’re sure.” He said after several seconds. “Come with me.”

He led her into the medical room, then familiarized himself with the computer. It had been almost five years. He finally found the ‘standard shot’ and had the computer generate the shot. He brought it to her and looked her in the eye. She turned a shoulder to him, and he gave her the shot. Next he explained the bracelet, and she picked one.

They went back to the bridge where Jenna showed the bracelet to Tabitha. They sat down and starting playing cards again. Within a week, Jenna would notice a size difference, in another two weeks after that, she was about a cup size larger.

Arrival Two:

They emerged on schedule, just beyond the orbit of Saturn, they transitioned back into normal space-time.

“Wow, nice to see normal stars again.” Tabitha said after transition completed.

“I know what you mean.” Michael replied. “I think we should show Jenna a little of this place.”

He pressed the command button and issued orders. The ship complied and started making a turn toward the ringed planet.

“Ooh, great idea.” Tabitha said.

“Downloading messages from satellite,” The computer announced. “One priority message.”

“Priority?” Tabitha asked.

“Yes, Susan and I discussed it. She could send a priority message if something came up and wanted our immediate attention.”

“Something happened?” Jenna asked.

“Hopefully not,” Michael replied. “Let’s find out. Computer, play priority message on this screen.”

The small screen lit up and Susan’s face appeared.

“Hi Michael, no emergency here, everybody’s OK. But I wanted to give you some news right away.”

A screen split, and a picture of a man appeared in one half while Susan continued speaking in the other half.

“This is Doctor David Hester. He was one of my professors at med school. I want you to go see him and talk to him. I am hoping you can bring him back to Zanthia.”

“He’s handsome.” Tabitha volunteered before Susan’s recording could continue.

“I should give you a bit of the story. He’s fifty five years old. He was married, but his wife died shortly after their son was born. He never remarried. His son grew up and married about twelve years ago. Last week, I found out that his son and daughter-in-law were killed in a car accident. Doctor Hester is retiring from teaching to take care of his ten year old grand-daughter. She’s the only family he has left.”

“I sent some emails, and you have a meeting with him for Tuesday, the twenty third.”

“That’s next Tuesday.” Tabitha supplied looking at the dual clock/calendars on each side of the bridge.

“If my math is right, you should be arriving with a few days to spare before the meeting. We’ve talked about getting another Doctor here on Zanthia, and I think he’d be perfect. He’s a teacher and he could help build an education system. Let me know what you think, and get back to me as soon as you can. Hope you’re safe, love you.” And the message went blank.

“Oh look.” Jenna said looking out the front monitors. They had just started their pass around Saturn, just under the rings, and they watched in awe at the beauty. They passed around the dark side of Saturn and emerged into the sunlight again, swinging away and headed for Mars.

“So, the Doctor?” Tabitha said bringing them back to the message.

“Oh, yes, the Doc,” Michael replied. “It wouldn’t hurt to go see him.”

“Can I go with you?” Jenna asked.

“Uhm, better not. Neither of you.” Michael said. “Let me talk to him first, I’ll take my laptop, and we’ll relay the interview here, I’ll wear an ear-plug, and it’ll be like you’re there.”

Tabitha agreed, but it seemed Jenna was disappointed. He caught this, and spoke to her. "If it looks good, and we all agree, I'll take you along for a second conversation, all right?"

Jenna brightened and agreed. They were approaching Mars now.

"Computer, relay to the Mayflower to join us."

"Message relayed. Mayflower complies." As they circled Mars and headed to Earth they watched the red landscape fade away to the side.

"Mayflower approaches." The computer announced.

"Please ask the Mayflower to take the lead; we want to see her through the front view ports. Put us in orbit above Houston please."

"Acknowledged." The computer replied.

"Now, let's record a response to Susan." He sat back down in his chair, Tabitha and Jenna brought chairs to sit beside him. He pressed the record button, and sat back.

"Hi Susan. The trip was uneventful. We just now arrived and are headed into orbit. We just got your message and I'll go see the Doctor Tuesday. I'll take my laptop along and record the whole thing, and relay it to you. In the meantime, I want you to record a personal message to the Doc. Keep it simple, nothing specific. Say hello, express condolences, etcetera. Just a few minutes, but it'd be a nice gesture. Oh, you better film it from the neck up, you know?"

"Oh!" Jenna gasped. Michael looked up and saw the Mayflower come into view just as they were settling into orbit.

"Orbit established." The computer announced.

"Better go, we just went into orbit. We'll all send more messages soon. Love you." Micheal said, and reached up, and pressed the button.

"Computer, send that message right away."

"Message sent." The computer replied.

"Well, now what?" Tabitha asked.

They looked at the clock, and it read barely 10:00 AM, on a Saturday morning, Houston time.

"Well, I think, instead of starting collections. Tabitha, you will take Jenna shopping. You have the wish lists?"

"Good idea." Tabitha agreed. "Get out and stretch our legs. But I want to check for personal messages first."

"Go ahead. I have to make a quick trip to the town-house before we can do anything." Michael replied.

Jenna and Tabitha each went to their cabins while Michael went to the teleporter room. He would work on the messages later that evening. He materialized in the kitchen. From where he stood, he could see the living room and dining room filled with boxes.

"Mail order," Michael said to himself. "I didn't think Susan had bought so much." He went to work, he carried a bag filled with teleporter beacons, each the size and shape of a quarter, he set to tagging the boxes

closest to him. For the next half hour boxes were tagged and beamed aboard to storage. He had managed to clear some of the dining room, and made his way to what he was after. The mail, he found the letters containing the mustang's registration papers, and teleported back aboard.

"Hey, you're back!" Tabitha said meeting him in the corridor.

"Yup, I needed the paperwork for the car." Michael said showing her the envelope. "You look to be in a good mood. Good news from home?"

"Indeed." Tabitha replied. "Theresa delivered quad boys, all healthy. She even sent some pictures."

"Good to hear." Michael replied. "You'll have to put that up in one of the frames below."

"I will." She replied. "I still think she's a little jealous of Matilda. You know delivering 'only four' instead of five like Matilda did."

"She's always complaining how much work quads are." Jenna volunteered when she joined the conversation.

"She forgets that part." Tabitha replied. "So, are we ready to go down?"

"Do you have your purses and things?" Michael replied.

"I got mine." Jenna said. She and Tabitha were both dressed in t-shirts, and jeans.

"Let's see." Tabitha said opening hers. Jenna did as well. "Digitizer. Com-unit. Wallet. Teleporter tags. Cell-phone."

"I have the same." Jenna replied. They had made it to the common room. They went down the stairs, and headed forward. Michael took a minute to update the mustang's license plates then they got in, and teleported down to a quiet street.

"Hopefully this will work." Michael said as he twisted the key. The engine turned over and started. "Whew. I was worried a little, sitting for so long." He consulted the GPS, and they headed for a nearby mall. He stopped in front of the door to let the women out. "Stick together, and keep it low-key, we don't want to attract undue attention."

"We'll try." Tabitha replied. "But with boobs like these, it won't be easy."

"I know, but try anyway."

"We will." Jenna answered. They walked through the doors as Michael drove away. He had a different shopping list to attend to. For the rest of the day Michael visited two of the local auto dealerships. He didn't buy anything, but he took test drives, and pictures. At least the salesmen thought they were pictures. He explained he was trying to find his girlfriend a car for her birthday. In actuality, he was working his way through the list of vehicles the women had given him, digitizing them as he went. Most of the vehicles were SUVs and mini-vans. But Theresa had surprised him requesting a big pick-up truck. Some had gone so far as specifying specific makes and models. Jenna would be busy converting them to Zanthian powertrains and specifications. It was nearly six that evening when he returned to the Mall. He waited only a few minutes outside before the two women appeared again, each carrying handfuls of bags. He popped the trunk, and once the bags were secured, they were off to find a restaurant.

"I think I've created a monster." Tabitha said once they were seated.

"How's that?" Michael replied.

“Shoes.” Tabitha answered. “Jenna must have bought at least two dozen pair of shoes.”

“I, well, all right, I confess, I did.” Jenna said after a moment. “But the variety was such a surprise.”

“It’s perfectly all right.” Michael replied after a moment. “Just as long as you’re willing to share the designs. I presume you had them taken upstairs?”

“Oh!” Jenna replied remembering what ‘upstairs’ meant. “Yes, it’s almost all upstairs.”

After the meal was complete, they spent a couple hours driving around town, top down, just talking and laughing, and letting the open spaces help ease the three months of confined space travel.

They eventually arrived at their hotel. The hotel would be their home away from the ship. They had reserved two two-bedroom suites, some office space for the upcoming interviews, and some single bedroom rooms for the candidates.

Once settled in, Michael took his laptop and started reviewing the personal emails that had been sent while they were in transit. Many were simple things; video of birthday parties, etcetera, news of births, and confirmed pregnancies.

One of the last messages from Susan brought a smile to his face.

“Hi Michael. Well, I’m pregnant again. Just confirmed it. I know I need to do it, but it’s still kind of weird, being a surrogate and all. Both parents have natural blonde hair. I thought, since you and I both have dark hair, there won’t be any doubt these babies aren’t naturally ours. I’m making sure I tell everybody about it. Hopefully the others will start following my lead. You probably heard Theresa had her four boys, so it’ll be a while before she’s ready. Matilda hasn’t come to me yet, and I think that’s good. Those five are a handful. I don’t blame her for taking her time before starting her next pregnancy. She’s thinking Ann Margaret this time. I better let you go. Gotta tuck the little ones in. Love you.... Miss you.”

Michael pressed the record button.

“Hi honey. I’m working my way through the personal messages. Thank-you for starting the surrogating. I’m sure the others will follow. If you want I’ll send any of them a message, just let me know. Pass along my congrats to Theresa. We got settled into our hotel. You picked a good one. We went shopping today. Jenna is now officially a shoe addict. I went car shopping. I digitized several, and once we get into a routine, I’ll get Jenna started on them. Between you and me, I hope when we get back, Jenna will agree to awaken the other Zanthian girls. I know she’s been reluctant, but hopefully she’ll change her mind. Better go. I’m getting tired, it’s been a long day. Give my love to the kids. Miss you and love you too.”

He closed the message and sent it off to Susan, it’d take a few hours for it to make the trip. He looked at the laptop clock function. It was the middle of the night in Zantan. The message would be waiting for her when she got up.

He pressed the record button again.

“Matilda. I’m glad you’re doing well. Thanks for the pictures. Did you know about the picture walls on the ship? Well, I added the baby pictures to both my cabin wall, and the hallway pictures. Susan tells me you’re taking your time before your next pregnancy. I whole heartedly agree. Take your time. Do what’s right. There’s no need to rush. Once we get settled into a pattern, I’m going to try to talk Jenna into waking the Zanthian girls. They’re all about Billie’s age; he needs kids his own age to play with. I’m dead tired. I’m going to bed. Love you.”

Once the messages were on the way, he went to bed. Asleep in five minutes.

The next morning, after a leisurely breakfast, Michael dropped the women off at another mall, while he went off to another auto dealer.

Monday was the first work day for the three. Tabitha and Jenna started their collecting, while Michael spent the day calling candidates and arranging travel. Many of the candidates, especially the recent graduates, couldn't believe someone was willing to pay their travel expenses. As evening rolled around Michael teleported back to the town-house and spent another hour of tagging boxes. He was back aboard reviewing Susan's message when Tabitha and Jenna arrived.

"Is this the message to the Doctor?" Tabitha asked.

"Yes. Susan did well. She kept it simple, didn't tell him any specifics."

"It'd be hard to explain some things." Tabitha said. "What are you going to tell the doctor?"

"I've been thinking. We moved to a small town, Susan's the only doctor for miles, she couldn't get away."

"That should work. I better shower and change. Chinese tonight?"

"Sure. We'll go down when you two are ready."

The next morning, while Tabitha and Jenna sat in the common room aboard ship, Michael would meet with Doctor Hester. He teleported down, then drove to the university. He found the building, and made his way to the offices. He told the secretary who he was meeting.

"Ah, you're Susan's friend? Go right in. Doctor Hester should be back from his lecture in a few minutes." She gestured to door, and Michael went in. He set his briefcase on a chair and looked around the office. The office was very nice, leather chairs, wood finishing. He looked at some of the pictures on the wall. The doctor obviously had a passion for sailing. There were several pictures of the doctor on sailboats, in some he was wearing scuba gear.

"You must be Michael." He heard. The doctor had just entered, closing the door behind him.

"Yes." Michael replied. "Nice to meet you." They shook hands and instantly the doctor's eyes glazed over. Michael quickly pulled out the recording device, and played the first message into the doctor's ear. He put the playback device back in his pocket, and removed his hand.

"Susan has told me of how you helped her through school."

"She was a good student, she didn't need much help. Please, sit down." He replied sitting behind his desk.

"Oh, I have a message from her." Michael replied. He took out his laptop, called up the message, and played it for doctor. Once the message completed, he spun the laptop back around, and started the transmission to the ship.

"*It's about time.*" He heard in his earplug. "*We've been waiting forever.*"

"How is she doing?"

"Wonderfully well. Very busy." Michael replied. "We're very happy."

"So you're?"

"Living together." Michael finished. "We haven't done anything formal. But everyone knows we're together."

“Children?”

“Oh yes, the oldest, twin girls, are almost five. And the youngest, also twin girls, are just over five months.” Michael thought he’d wait to explain the two sets of twins in between.

“Busy is right. And twins to boot.”

“Just lucky I guess.”

“It’s a shame she couldn’t come along. I would have loved to see her.”

“She couldn’t make the trip, the kids, and she’s the only doctor for miles, so she’s always busy.”

“I can imagine. So what brings you here?”

“Susan has been hoping to lure another Doctor to our area. She read about your son, and your upcoming retirement, and thought you might like the challenge. We live in a small town, it’d be a wonderful place for your grand-daughter. No hustle and bustle of the big city.”

“That’s interesting. I don’t know. I’m retiring so I can spend time with my grand-daughter. I don’t know if I want to dedicate myself to a new practice.”

“I understand. But I hope you don’t mind if I continue to try to convince you.” Michael said laughing.

“You’re welcome to try.” The doctor replied joining the laughter.

“I noticed some of the pictures. You’re a sailor?”

“Oh yes. I used to own a third share of a boat. Sailed all the time.”

“Lake or ocean?” Michael replied. “I used to work with a guy that sailed in races on Lake Michigan.”

“Some lake sailing, but the boat we had was strictly for the oceans.”

“I went out with my friend a couple times. He loved it.”

“I’d like to go sailing.” He heard Jenna in his ear.

“Do you still sail?”

“I sold my part of the boat, but I still sail sometimes. It’s a nice way to get away from everything. You go out a few miles, and all you see is water. It’s peaceful.”

“I understand. I do that on the highway. Cars are my passion.”

“Really? I always wanted a Mercedes gullwing, but they’re very rare.”

“They have a new one now, have you seen it?”

“Oh yes, but I’ve been afraid to drive it. If I did, I’d probably mortgage the house to buy it.”

“That I can understand when I bought my mustang, I wanted to spend the money on a cobra, but I settled on GT instead. I did get the convertible though.”

They continued talking for another two hours when they were interrupted by a knock. The secretary opened the door.

“Excuse me.” She said. “But you have lunch with the dean in ten minutes.”

“Oh thank-you Rose.” He replied. “We got talking about boats and cars, and lost all track of time.”

“*Ask him to lunch!*” he heard.

“I guess that’s my queue. I’ll be in town for a few days. Maybe we could get some lunch later in the week?”

“That’d be great.” Doctor Hester said.

“I’ll call you tomorrow or Thursday, Doc.”

“I look forward to it.” Both stood. Michael started packing his laptop. “Now, you must excuse me, I better not be late for the Dean.”

They parted ways and Michael drove away. He found an empty street, and teleported back aboard.

“So what do you think?” He asked once he entered the common room.

“So far so good.” Tabitha replied. “He fits everything we need.”

“I want to meet him.” Jenna added.

“When we go to lunch, I’ll introduce you. Let’s see what the other ladies think before we invite him aboard.”

They agreed. They sent the recording of the conversation to Zanthia, and then spent the afternoon reviewing the candidate interviews for the following week.

Later that night, after they had finished their meals, they sat about their Houston hotel room.

“I was wondering. Should we offer any kind of incentives for joining on?” Tabitha asked.

“What do you mean?” Michael asked.

“Remember last time? We were worried, once we showed somebody the ship, we were afraid they’d say ‘no’ and spoil the secret to the world.”

“So…”

“So we offer each candidate something they normally wouldn’t or couldn’t have.” Tabitha replied.

“It is a good idea.” Jenna added.

“We’ll have to give it some thought. Maybe add some questions to the interviews.”

“In the meantime, I’m going for a swim.” Tabitha replied. “Anybody want to join me?”

“I do!” Jenna replied instantly.

“You two go ahead, I’m going to catch up on my messages from home.” He said and headed back to his suite.

“Hi Michael.” Susan’s voice said from the latest message. “I’m glad the talk with Doctor Hester went well. Some of the girls are coming over to watch it. I noticed Jenna is packing some serious boobage. Was that her idea? Or did you talk her into it? My pregnancy is going well. It’s only been a few weeks, but my boobs sure know I’m pregnant. I wish you were here. Do me a favor? Kristine has scheduled an appointment. My guess is she wants to start another pregnancy. Could you send her a message? Remind her about surrogacy? I don’t want to be the only one doing this. Well, me and Matilda. OK? Better go tuck the girls in. Love you.”

And the message ended.

He pressed the reply button and recorded a response.

“Hi honey. Yes, the talk with the doctor went well. Once you see it, I think you’ll agree. Tabitha had an idea. Maybe we should entice the candidates with some kind of bonus. Something special above what we’ve done in the past. What do you think? But I don’t think we’ll have to worry about the doctor. It seems pretty obvious to Tabitha and me, Jenna is interested. Oh, speaking of Jenna. Her boobs were her idea. After we left, she said she wanted to come along to ‘find a mate.’ And I think she’s set on Doctor Hester. She wanted larger breasts because she thought larger breasts would make it easier for her to attract a man. Anyway, if consensus approves, Jenna and I are going to meet him for lunch in a couple days. Let me know as soon as you can. Thanks for the heads up on Kristine, I’ll send her a message momentarily. Give the kids my love. Love you.”

Next he sent a message to Kristine. He wished her well, and asked her to continue to consider surrogacy. He hoped it would be enough.

Then he sent a message to Matilda. He wanted make sure she knew he was thinking of her.

There were no new messages waiting for them when they awoke, so they spent the day collecting fish. Tabitha didn’t particularly like fish collecting, but having two people to help, and to talk to, helped pass the day. Over the years on Zanthia, they had continued to prioritize their lists of animals to collect, and noted just where to go to get them.

They returned to the ship late in the afternoon. Once he showered, he checked his messages.

“Hi honey.” Susan said. “A bunch of us watched the meeting. Most of us were pretty bored. A lot of guy talk, but it was obvious you enjoyed it. We picked up a few things that we liked here and there. If you’re right about Jenna, I’m sure she’ll have no trouble finding a guy, and if it’s Doctor Hester, great. I’m sure she’ll have him wrapped around her finger in no time. It’s good to hear he still likes sailing. Once in a while he’d tell us a story before starting his lecture. Say, remember you talking about enticing him? Ask Jenna about sailing on Zanthia. See if that was something they did. Maybe we could recruit him if he knew there’d be a boat, and willing deck hands, to help him sail. Anyway, as far as we’re concerned, go ahead and take him out to lunch, and if you can manage a recording, send it to us. Better get going, I’m going to ‘do my rounds.’”

“Hi Michael.” Kristine said. “Thanks for the message. I know I should surrogate. I wasn’t going to, but I thought about it. I have eight kids. I think my genes are safe. Sadie is doing well. I got to thinking, it’s just as Susan said, genetic diversity. Every time one of us surrogates, that makes the genetic pool just a little deeper. Who knows, I could surrogate my own son-in-law, or daughter-in-law. I know that’s probably not going to happen, but who knows. At some point descendants from my surrogate children and from my natural children could intermingle. Look, three lights. Tomorrow is my appointment with Susan. I’ll let you know how it goes. I hope you get home before they’re born. I love having sex with you when I’m pregnant. We haven’t done it when I’m really big. I can’t wait. Love you.”

“Hi Michael.” Matilda’s voice said. But the screen was dark. Soon there was a little light, then he could see Matilda, or rather Matilda’s cleavage as the camera moved back. The camera continued to move back until it revealed Matilda on her hands and knees on her bed. She pressed a button on her remote and the camera

stopped. "I wanted to remind you of what you're missing." She was wearing a tiny lime-green string bikini. She got off the bed, stood, and pirouetted in front of the camera. She stopped to give him a side view. "Not bad for a mother of ten. All the kids are doing well. Our five our wonderful, they're keeping me busy. I finally got them all to sleep; most of the time they sleep through the night now. I'm going to wait a few more months before I get pregnant again. I understand now about how much work so many kids are. And quint, I love them dearly, but as soon as I have one settled, the next needs attention, around and around I go. I better go before this video goes beyond PG. Love you."

He shut down the laptop, and was reviewing the candidates' paperwork when he heard a knock on the door. He opened it to find Tabitha standing there wearing her robe over her swimsuit.

"Good swim?" Michael asked. Tabitha's hair was still wet.

"Great swim." She replied. She ran her fingers through her hair in an effort to straighten it out a little. Normally she kept her hair shoulder length, but since leaving Zanthia, she had let it grow. It was now down to between her shoulder blades.

"What are you doing?" She sat in one of the chairs in the "office" area of the suite. One leg curled under her.

"Just finishing up on the messages, they watched the recording with the doctor, and OK'd a lunch." He sat down in a chair next to hers.

"Going to take Jenna?"

"She'd never let me hear the end of it, if I didn't." Michael replied.

"You got that right. She hasn't stopped talking about it."

"You'd think she'd want some guy that was more her age." Michael said. "I mean, apparent age. Doctor Hester is in his fifties."

"I mentioned that. But I suppose, if your life span is so long, age difference doesn't mean as much."

"I guess. Oh, I got a message from Kristine, she's got an appointment with Susan tomorrow, she said she'd surrogate. I hope the other women follow along. Susan and Kristine setting an example will help."

"Genetic diversity." Tabitha said. "Maybe we should get something 'special' for the women back home."

"We've got the shopping lists." Michael replied.

"We do, but that's all work related, or 'day-to-day.' We should ask them for a real wish list, things that are totally frivolous."

"It'd be fair. If we're going to offer a bonus to recruits, we should get something for the women at home."

"And the girls." Tabitha added, mentioning the teenagers they had adopted. "Even though they're not really girls anymore."

"You know what. We will! Shopping trip, and I know just the spot. Rodeo Drive."

"Really!" Tabitha squealed. She bounded from her chair and landed in his lap. Kissing him soundly. She pulled away after a moment. Then kissed him again, this time passionately. She pressed her tongue passed his lips as she ran her fingers through his hair. His hands were busy as well. One hand pulled her closer to him, while the other slid down her body, to find the robe's belt. She leaned back as he opened her robe.

One hand still in his hair, he kissed her neck, then kiss after kiss down her upper chest. He untied one knot from her bikini top, and freed her breasts as he continued planting kisses along its expanse.

“Oh!” She sighed as he finally arrived at her nipple. “Yes, take me to bed lover!” She managed. She stood and reached into the robe pocket to retrieve a condom, then shrugged the robe off. Michael responded by pulling off his shirt and dropping it to the floor as well.

At the door to the bedroom, Tabitha untied the bikini top and dropped it. She posed for a moment, one hip turned to him, and like a show girl, one arm up, and the other down to her side. Michael managed to drop his pants and hop out of them without falling.

At the bedside, she untied the bikini bottoms and sat on the bed. Michael dropped his underwear and kissed her, pushing her back onto the bed.

“Roll over lover.” She said after a moment. Michael rolled onto his back. Tabitha sat up and rolled the condom onto his manhood.

“Not today lover. Not today.” She straddled him, then slowly spiked herself upon him. “I want your babies so bad. But not today.”

She started working herself up and down. He held her hips as she moved faster and faster. Her boobs bounced wildly as she worked to her fist orgasm. She calmed down, caught her breath, and managed to kiss him again before starting over.

It was over thirty minutes later when he finally exploded into the condom. He stayed hard enough to finish her fourth orgasm of the evening, and then he collapsed beside her.

“I needed that.” Tabitha said after catching her breath.

“Me too.” Michael replied. “It’s a great way to work off stress.”

“Oh yea, couldn’t agree more.” Tabitha unwrapped herself from his arms. “I better get cleaned up and back to my room. I don’t want Jenna thinking I got lost or something.”

She rolled out of bed, and took a shower, she put her swimsuit back on, just in case, and put her robe on as well.

“So, meeting the doctor.” She asked. “You and Jenna?”

“That’s the plan, sorry. I think one beautiful busty, blonde per lunch is the limit.”

“I understand. Jenna is really keyed up to see him, so I don’t mind. Will you wear earpieces, so I can suggest a question?”

“Absolutely, both of us, I’ll need you to keep Jenna out of trouble. If you know what I mean.”

“Good idea.” She crossed to the bed and kissed him. “I’ll see you in the morning.” And she was out the door.

Michael took a shower, then went to bed. He slept very well.

After breakfast the following morning, they teleported up to the ship. Tabitha helped Jenna get ready. Michael continued reading the candidate information. Eventually it was time to go. Michael selected a nice charcoal suit jacket, light blue shirt, and blue jeans. Jenna was stunning. She chose a white pant suit, the strapped two inch heels made her long legs look even longer. Her hair was lightly curled down upon her shoulders. Makeup tastefully applied. She wore small hooped earrings, and a simple silver chain around her

neck. Her shirt was sky blue, with a plunging neckline. Deep enough to show some cleavage, but still tasteful.

Tabitha, even though she wasn't going with them wasn't giving anything away. She wore a skintight black tank top, and white shorts. The top was probably too small for Tabitha's breasts, very little was left to modesty.

"You look great." Michael said meeting them in the common room.

"Doesn't she?" Tabitha said proudly.

"Absolutely." Michael answered. "Camera?"

"In my pin." Jenna said putting her hand on her lapel, a small rose shaped pin located there.

"My idea." Tabitha said. "I thought about a pendant necklace, but the thought of looking at the world from between some other woman's boobs? No thanks. Here are your ear plugs." She held out her hand. Each took a plug and put it in their ears.

"Well, it's time to go." Michael replied. They got in the car and teleported down. Driving to the restaurant, they verified video and signal were working. They went in and waited.

After a few minutes Doctor Hester arrived.

"Doc," Michael said standing and shaking his hand. "Glad you could make it."

"My last lecture was today. I needed to get out of there before I dig into grading finals."

"I understand. I want you to meet a co-worker of mine. This is Jenna Shaw."

"Pleased to meet you." The doctor answered taking her hand. Jenna stood at nearly 5' 8". The heals made her two inches taller. She looked the doctor straight in the eye.

"Susan has spoken so well of you." She said. "I am so glad to meet you."

They sat and had their meal, a long enjoyable lunch. Only once did Jenna stall on a question, but Tabitha helped her out. After they parted ways, they teleported back aboard the ship.

They sent the video off to Zanthia. Then the three discussed. All three agreed to invite the doctor along. But to be totally fair to the others on Zanthia, they would wait for the other's response.

Friday was another day around the rivers. Jenna actually enjoyed the time, her memories of Zanthia were of a dying planet. Now she was seeing Earth with life and Zanthia coming back to life. She worked as hard as Michael and Tabitha. When they returned to the ship at the end of the day, they cleaned themselves up and caught up on messages.

"Hi Michael." Kristine's voice came through. "I had my appointment with Susan today. It went well; I chose a pair of red-heads for my surrogate parents. Susan told me about her choice, and I thought it was a good idea, so redheads. Everything went well. Susan said we'll see what happens. Better get going we have to watch the interview with the Doctor. Later, love you."

"Hi Michael." Matilda's message started. "I had 'the talk' with Billy today. I didn't go into any details but it was still odd. I know this day was coming, but still. Anyway, I think it went OK. I don't think I have much to worry about for a while. All the girls think of him as a boy, so it'll be a while before they think of him as a young man. I hope Jenna decides to bring the Zanthian girls out of stasis. It'll be good for him to

have kids his own age to play with. He needs to learn about girls growing up. Our kids are doing great, laughing all time. A handful, but I love it. I miss you. Love you. Later.”

“Hi Michael.” Susan’s message began. “We all finished watching the lunch. We’re all in agreement, try to recruit Doctor Hester. Let us know how it goes. Kristine’s impregnation went very well. It’s really pretty simple. We’re keeping track of each surrogacy. To be sure when the babies are born we can properly document their parentage. Time to put the girls to bed. I’ll talk to you later. Love you.”

“So everyone on Zanthia thinks we should try to recruit Doctor Hester.” Michael said while they were eating.

“How do you want to handle it?” Tabitha asked.

“I’ll meet him alone, and come up from there.”

The following morning Michael drove to the doctor’s house and knocked on the door. When the doctor opened the door, Michael shook his hand in greeting. The ring’s drugs did their thing, and Michael took the opportunity to play the second message for the doctor’s ear.

“So, you wanted to show me something?” The doctor said once the drugs wore off.

“Yes, may I come in?”

“Oh, absolutely.” He said stepping out of the way.

“First, where’s your grand-daughter?”

“She’s staying with a friend. It was so close to the end of the school year, I didn’t want to pull her out of school to move her here. I might even sell this place and move there, so she can stay in the same school. I don’t know yet. I had just finished talking with her when you called.”

“So when’s school done for her?”

“Just two more weeks.” Doc replied.

“So you’re free for a couple weeks then?” Michael asked.

“More or less. What’s this about?”

“I’ll show you. Just stand still for a moment.” Michael replied. He took out the com-device and pushed the button. “Two to teleport up please.” And before the doctor could respond they were bathed in soft white light and teleported up to the ship.

“What was that?” He asked once the surprise wore off.

“Teleporter.” Michael replied. “Just like on TV. But it’s real. Come on, I want to show you something.”

Michael stepped towards the door and pressed the button to open it. The doctor thought for a moment then stepped off the platform, and went through. They walked into the hallway, and Michael gestured forward to the bridge. The doctor’s eyes were drawn to the view screens. He moved forward paying no attention to the women sitting at the table.

“Spectacular.” He finally said.

“Yes, it’s our favorite place on the ship.” Michael replied. “If I may, you’ve already met Jenna. And this is Tabitha.”

“Nice to see you again.” Jenna replied.

“Very nice to finally meet you.” Tabitha added.

“This is all just incredible. What...” He trailed off, a loss for words.

“Sit and relax, we’ll tell you the whole story.” Michael said. “The short version is. ‘No, we’re not aliens. Yes the ship is from another planet. No, we’re not going to hurt you.’”

“The long version is better.” Tabitha volunteered.

“I can’t wait to hear it.” He replied, a bit nervously.

“This is the planet Zanthia.” Jenna started. She pressed a button on a small control board in front of her and a small hologram of the planet appeared above the table.

They spent the next few hours telling the doctor about the planet, Michael finding the beacon stone, and their re-colonization efforts.

“So why am I here?”

“Obvious isn’t it?” Tabitha asked. “We want you to join us. Come to Zanthia with us. Both you and of course your grand-daughter.”

“I..”

“I’m hungry.” Tabitha interjected. “Let’s go back to the common room and eat, we can talk and ask questions while we eat.”

They got up and turned for the rear of the ship.

“That’s Zantan.” Jenna said pointing to the painting on the walls. “It’s our capital city, where we currently live.” They continued back. “That’s Shahallah Falls. Tabitha says it reminds her of your Niagara Falls.”

“What’s?”

“Oh these are our cabins.” Tabitha replied. She pushed a button and the door opened on an empty cabin. “We have nearly twenty.” They went back to the common room. They showed the doctor the food dispenser and settled in to eat.

“We have what Michael calls digitizers.” Jenna replied. “It allows us to analyze something down to the atomic level if needed. Then store that information in the computer. We can then replicate that pattern here. Once stored we can create any meal we want at any time.”

“Amazing.” They ate their meal while the doctor slowly opened up and asked more and more questions. After a while, lunches finished, the doctor leaned back and spoke.

“I have to ask again, why me?”

“Like I said the first time we met. Susan is the only doctor, we’d like another. But you are also a teacher.”

“I don’t know.” Doc replied.

“We totally understand. No need to answer right away. We only ask that you do not talk about this to anyone. I’m sure you understand the magnitude of this; to know that there are other humans in the universe? To know a ship from there is in orbit? It’d be disastrous.”

“I totally agree on that.” He replied. “You have my word.”

“So take some time to decide. If you decide to come along, We’d love to have you.” Michael could see Jenna looking a little worried.

“In the meantime, I’m sure you have questions, and I have a huge favor to ask of you. I need somebody to show Jenna our world. Literally. Can I ask you do to that? Take her anywhere you want. Take her sailing. Take her scuba diving off the barrier reef. Go anywhere. Don’t worry about expenses; we’ll take care of it. Just keep her safe.”

“Please?” Jenna asked. She looked the doctor in the eyes and Michael knew the doctor wouldn’t be able to resist. After a moment the doctor nodded.

‘Hooked.’ Michael thought. “Great. Why don’t we show you one of the other reasons we’re back on Earth. Tabitha, do you have another spot picked out?”

“Oh! Sure.” They teleported down to a tropical river.

“Where are we?” The doctor asked.

“Hawaii. One of the smaller islands.” Tabitha replied.

“With the ship’s teleporter, there isn’t any place on the planet we can’t be in just a few minutes.” Jenna added.

They set about collecting fish. Tabitha took the lead explaining the efforts of establishing animal life. The Doctor mostly looked on but lent a hand here and there. Mostly he asked questions, and mostly Jenna replied. After a few hours, they returned to the ship. The women cleaned themselves up, while Michael showed him the ship in more detail.

“So you’re going to try to reestablish life on Zanthia?”

“We’re going to try. But I’m not really gung-ho on making what could be dozens of trips back and forth. The trip is three months, one way.”

“Wow. So what are you going to do?”

“I don’t know. We’ll think of something.” Michael replied. “I have to repeat, it would be very good to have you come along. Next week we’ll be interviewing more potential recruits, teachers. As you know we’re experiencing a bit of a baby boom on Zanthia, and we need more teachers.”

“And in the meantime, it would be very, very good of you to help with Jenna’s tour. I’d take her myself. But if we manage some recruits, we’ll be working as hard and fast as we can on collecting as many animals as possible.”

“You said you were collecting for over a year before?”

“Yes, but we were playing it by ear. We were just guessing where to go to, what to collect, and how to do it. And there was only Tabitha and her sister. This time, we have a plan. We know what, where and when. But I promised we wouldn’t spend as much time here this trip. So we don’t expect to have the cargo rooms full.”

“Sounds like you’ll be busy.”

“Very.” They had returned to the bridge and were looking at the view screens. Jenna and Tabitha emerged from their cabins and joined them.

“It’s getting late.” Michael replied. “Why don’t I get you back to your home.”

“If you don’t mind, could I join you?” Jenna asked. They teleported back to the doctor’s house. Michael gave the doctor a com-device, and Jenna thanked him for spending time with them. Then Jenna and Michael returned to his car and made their way back to the ship.

“What do you think?” Tabitha asked, once they had settled into comfortable chairs in ‘the den.’

“I think he’ll join us.” Michael replied. “Eventually. What do you think, Jenna?”

“I think he’s very nice.” She replied a little bashfully.

“Let’s go back down to the hotel.” Tabitha said. “I want another swim. I’m betting that the good doctor will be calling by the end of the day tomorrow.”

Jenna blushed, but couldn’t help smiling.

They returned to the hotel where Michael took a long shower, then relaxed. He sent messages back to Zanthia, then turned in.

Sunday they spent the day in New York City being tourists. They took a ferry to Liberty Island for a tour.

“It’s magnificent.” Jenna said as they walked about the island.

“You mean there wasn’t anything like that on Zantha?” Tabitha asked.

“No. My brother explained our history. I am beginning to think we may have skipped over many things.”

“Wait until the Doc starts showing you around. You’ll be amazed at the pyramids, and the great wall.” Michael replied.

“Speaking of which, I’m surprised he hasn’t called.” Tabitha said. Just then their com-devices chirped.

“Talk about timing.” Michael replied pulling out his com-device. “Hello.”

‘Good afternoon.’ They heard. ‘I’ve been thinking and I’m wondering if we could get together and talk? I have so many questions.’

“That’d be wonderful. We’re in New York right now, we’re about to go up into the Statue of Liberty. How about we meet for dinner? Say about three hours?”

‘That’d be great.’ Doc Hester replied. ‘See you then.’

“Later.” Michael replied.

“Say Michael? Jenna?” Tabitha asked. “Isn’t there a small island in the bay by ZanTan?”

“Yes, Shing-La Island.” Jenna replied. “It means ‘Peace’.”

“You have a digitizer on you Michael?”

“Of course. What are you thinking?”

“I was thinking it’d be nice to build a statue just like this one. And have it put on Shing-La Island.”

“It would be a nice reminder of home.” Michael added. “But it’s your decision Jenna.”

She thought for a moment. “Yes, I think that would be nice.” She held a tourist pamphlet in her hand. “This says that this statue is one of the most recognized statues in the world. And if I understand the meaning correctly, it has come to symbolize so much. I think it would be appropriate.”

He took out his digitizer, and captured the statue and the base upon which she stands. They took the tour, and then went to Ellis Island. They eventually returned to the ship. They downloaded the digitizer’s content, and Jenna put her engineering skills to work. She was deeply involved she didn’t even notice the time.

“What are you working on?” Doc Hester said over her shoulder.

“Eep!” She chirped in surprise.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to startle you.” He smiled.

“It’s fine, I, it’s fine.” Jenna said composing herself. “We saw your Statue of Liberty today. And we believe it would a good thing to build one on Zanthia.” She pressed a few buttons on her pad, and a holographic projection appeared. “I am analyzing the structure, and adapting Zanthian technology to it.” She went to a console along the front of the bridge, and pressed some buttons. An aerial view of ZanTan appeared on the screen. “This is ZanTan, from above. We are planning on putting the statue on Shing-La Island. Shing-La means ‘peace’ in our language.”

“Very appropriate. The statue faces southeast, to welcome ships coming into the harbor. The statue has a sister statue in Paris, smaller, but none-the-less beautiful.”

“Will you take me to see it sometime?” Jenna asked.

“Absolutely.” He replied. He turned back to the holographic statue. “You’re an engineer?”

“Yes, my specialty is what you call electronics, but I have knowledge in structural and mechanical engineering as well.”

“So have you worked with our, I mean Earth’s, technology before?”

“Just once. I adapted Michaels automobile for Zanthian fuels and power.”

“So your car?” He asked turning to Michael.

“Oh, no, it’s normal. She digitized it, and my Mustang on Zanthia is reengineered. It was a father’s day present.”

“Since then we all made requests for things like vehicles.” Tabitha supplied.

“I am afraid I will be busy on the trip home.” Jenna added.

Monday found Jenna knocking on the Doctor’s door as Michael waited in the car. She was nervous, but she went anyway. Michael and Tabitha visited another tropical island, catching fish in one trip and birds in another. Michael asked why tropical animals, and Tabitha reminded him the tropical areas of Zanthia would need its own collection of animals.

Tuesday arrived a rainy morning in Houston, but the hotel had provided excellent facilities. With cameras in place, Michael waited for the first interviewee to arrive. The first woman arrived promptly at 9:00. Haley Albright was a pleasant young woman. She had chestnut brown hair and brown eyes. She stood about five foot six, and weighed, Michael guessed, about two hundred pounds. Despite her size, she moved well, and seemed happy and comfortable with herself. He shook her hand, played the first suggestion for her, and started up the camera. The video would be recorded, and sent on to Zanthia. Once the interview was complete, he asked her to join him and his co-workers for dinner that night in the hotel's restaurant.

At 10:30, the second interviewee walked in. Sally Kellen was tiny, not even five feet tall. She had blonde hair and big blue eyes. Throughout the interview, even with the help of the hypnotic aids, she seemed illusive and vague. Michael privately doubted she liked children. He wondered if she would want any of her own. Michael went through the questions he had wanted to ask, and as before invited her to dinner that evening.

After lunch, Marie Hernandez arrived for her appointment. She reminded Michael of Paula Garces. She had the same smile, dark eyes. She stood at five foot six, was quite thin. Michael greeted her with a hand shake and the first message from his recorder. The interview went well, she spoke of how she made extra money baby sitting as a girl, and teaching seemed to be a natural decision.

At 3:00, Annabelle Smithson arrived. The tall blonde spoke with a decided southern drawl, seemed pleasant. She had decided to be a teacher because her mother had been a teacher. Her father had left before she was born. Her mother had taught up to her death only a year ago. Michael invited both women to join them for dinner.

After the interviews were complete, he returned to his hotel room to shower and change. Tabitha had already returned from her collecting and met him in the hotel's restaurant. They were seated only a few minutes when Marie joined them. Over the next several minutes Jenna and the Doctor arrived, then the other candidates.

They sat and talked for over two hours. The food was good, and the wine helped relax everyone. Most were talking and laughing the entire evening. At the end of the meal, Michael gave each woman some money, and suggested they spend their Wednesday site seeing. There were more interviews scheduled for the next day, but they would be needed for a group workshop on Thursday.

Once they had went their own way that evening, the four gathered in Tabitha and Jenna's suite to discuss.

"They all seem like viable candidates. They all have the credentials to be teachers." Doctor Hester said.

"We need more than that." Tabitha said. "These women need to get along. I didn't much like Sally. She seemed a bit snotty to me."

Michael nodded.

"Snotty?" Jenna asked. "I do not understand."

"It's a slang word. In this instance it means arrogant." Doc replied.

"Oh, yes, I agree. She seemed ah 'snotty', definitely."

"Let's see what tomorrow brings, shall we?" Michael replied. "I'm going to check my messages and turn in. Goodnight."

The next morning, the next candidate arrived at 9:00. Abigail Bingham was a big woman. At nearly five ten, and maybe two hundred and fifty pounds, she was used to getting her way. She had black hair and brown eyes. Even after Michael had shook her hand, and played the message, she seemed to have a perpetual frown on her face.

The woman who walked in at 11:00 seemed no better. Justine Vascoe seemed to have a fiery disposition to match her red hair.

The first afternoon interview, Dawn Swenson, looked like the stereotype her name implied. Blonde with blue eyes, she had smooth voice. She seemed genuinely outgoing and friendly.

The final candidate, Emily Dickenson didn't seem to know what she wanted. She had gone from one subject to another in college. When he asked about her family, she told him that she didn't get along with her parents very well. That alone was a deal-breaker for him. But to be fair she was invited to dinner that evening as well.

Like the night before, the day's candidates were treated to dinner. By the end of the evening, Michael had his list of who he thought would work out, but kept it to himself.

Thursday, all eight candidates met. Tabitha joined the conversation while they went through group discussions. Lunch was brought in, and conversation continued. For the most part many of the women enjoyed it. Since all were teachers, along with 'colonizing a remote island' discussion. Michael, at Jessica's suggestion added discussion around creating a school. Doctor Hester and Jenna watched the video feed onboard the ship.

It was mid-afternoon when he bid them all a good day, with instructions to meet again Friday afternoon. He and Tabitha teleported aboard ship to discuss.

"Well, I know who I'd like to invite along." Tabitha said after a bit. "I really liked Haley. She just seemed so much fun. And Dawn, she reminds me of Jessica."

"You too?" Michael interjected. "I was thinking the same thing. I liked Marie too. She just seems to be a natural. Doc?"

"I'm not sure why you're asking me. I haven't committed to going with you." He replied.

"We want this to be a consensus." Michael answered. "We want your opinion. If you join us, these women will be teaching your grand-daughter."

"I remember meeting some of my son's teachers when he was growing up. There was a biology teacher he spoke of the most. Dawn Swenson reminds me of her. Of course, that was high-school, and I suspect my son had a bit of a crush on her. Even after college he spoke of her. I remember, at my son's funeral, she had made the trip to be there."

"Well, I hope Zanthia gets back to us soon."

"Let's go out someplace to eat." Tabitha suggested. "How about some Mexican?"

They all nodded and went out to dinner. Tabitha managed to digitize almost everything the waitress brought them.

The following afternoon, Michael waited as the eight candidates eventually made it to their temporary office. Michael had been chatting with each as they waited. Once the final candidate arrived he cleared his throat.

"Well, ladies, I want to thank you all for taking time to come here for these interviews. My friends and I all enjoyed your time. I'd like a word with each of you privately if I could? We'll keep the same order of the interviews. Haley?"

Haley stood and followed Michael into the next room.

“Haley, during the group interview, you seemed excited about building a school out of nothing. Is that really true?”

“Oh yes. I like trying new things. We just can’t repeat doing the same things over and over again.”

“That’s what I wanted to hear. We’d like to continue discussing your future with us, if you don’t mind.”

“I’d like that very much.” She replied.

“Good.” He held out his hand, and she instinctively took it. Her eyes glazed, and he played the second message for her. Once he put the player away he withdrew his hand. “Now, if you’ll rejoin the others. Just don’t say anything for a bit, OK?”

“Oh, I understand.” She replied. He led her out and she took her chair.

“Sally?” Michael asked.

“I want to thank-you for coming here. I hope you enjoyed your time in Houston?”

“It was all right.” She replied.

“I’m sorry, but we can’t use you and your talents. I hope you understand, and I hope you have good luck in your career search.”

He could see her eyes welling up. He handed her a small envelope. “We’d like to compensate you for your time. Your travel arrangements have been made, and waiting for you at the front desk. Again, I’m sorry, and we wish you all the best.”

She sniffled, “Thank-you.” And headed out the door.

One by one he talked to each of the women. Some he sent home, others he invited to stay. Like Haley, those kept behind had the second message played for them, and waited for each conversation to complete. When he was done, four women waited for him. He was not surprised who they were. Haley, Marie, Annabelle, and Dawn stood waiting as Emily left the room on her way home.

“So, ladies, are you ready for the next part?” Michael asked. All nodded. “I have to swear you all to secrecy. You will understand in a moment. Agreed?”

Even though they seemed a bit apprehensive, they all nodded agreement.

“Good.” Michael replied pulling out his com-device. “Five to teleport please.” And like Doctor Hester, they opened their mouths to respond but were teleported away before they could say anything.

“Welcome aboard our ship.” Michael said stepping off the teleporter platform. “I’m sure you have many questions. Please come with me, and we’ll answer everything we can.”

They all stood motionless for a moment. Michael pushed the button and the door opened.

“Come. I promise not to hurt you.” Seeing them all standing stock still. “We’re not here to hurt you. If want the real story, you’re going to have step down from there and follow me.”

He stepped into the hallway and waited. Finally after a few seconds, they each stepped forward off the platform and into the hallway. He gestured ahead to the bridge, and each woman, just like the others were fixated on the view, and walked further onto the bridge.

"I'm sure you remember Jenna, and Tabitha, and Doctor Hester?" He said re-introducing everyone.

Annabelle was the first to look away from the screens. The others quickly followed.

"Please, sit down and we'll tell you the story." Michael said.

"So you've come back to earth? To collect more animals?" One surmised after they had told the story.

"That's part of it." Tabitha answered. "I miss my children so much. But we need teachers. We want you to come with us. We want you to come stay with us on Zanthia."

"We have one certified teacher, Jessica." Michael added. "If you agree to come with us, she will be able to tell you the details better than we can."

"And we can offer you much more than that. A place to stay, free medical help."

"Most importantly, a much longer life." Jenna added. "Average life expectancy is well over one hundred years."

"Let us show you something." Michael said. He crossed to a console and pressed a button. "Computer, would you take us on a tour, as I described last night."

"Acknowledged, breaking orbit." The ship moved into space. First they headed towards the moon, then towards Mars. They then looped out towards Jupiter and Uranus. They returned to settle into an orbit just under the rings of Saturn.

"There are many wonders you will be able to teach the children of Zanthia" Michael said as they looked out the view screens. "It's time for some dinner, let's eat."

They ate on the bridge, with the rings of Saturn as their backdrop. All the while they talked about Zanthia. Jenna tried to answer as much as she could. Michael and Tabitha tried to fill in the areas about what to do there. Finally it was late in the evening when they returned to orbit above Houston again.

Michael teleported back down to the office area with the four young women.

"Before you go back to your rooms, there are just a few more things I wanted to go over. First, I want to remind you, do not discuss this with anyone outside of those you've already met. I know I sound paranoid. But I'm sure you understand. Can you promise me that?"

They all nodded.

"Good. Second, our customary table is available for you for any meal. You're welcome to join me or the others at any time. I will be available all weekend if you have any questions. The others won't be far away."

"Finally, I want you all to take the weekend and think about our offer. Talk amongst yourselves if you wish. Just not out in public, OK? Let's plan on meeting again Monday afternoon, and we'll go from there?"

"So, any questions? I know it's a lot to take in." None of the women spoke.

"All right. I'm sure you'll come up with something later. Have a good night and I'll see you later." He gave them each an envelope with some spending money, and bid them goodnight.

He watched the women leave, then made his way to the elevator. He stopped at Tabitha and Jenna's suite. The other three were already there. They talked for a few minutes, then he excused himself. He checked his messages, left a quick note for Susan, then went to bed.

The next morning, they were sitting at their breakfast table when Marie joined them.

“Good morning.” Tabitha said. “Sit by me.”

“Thank-you.” She said sitting at the large table. The waiter came over and took her order. She took a sip of her water then started. “What will you be doing today?”

“David has promised me some horseback riding. It sounds like fun.” Jenna replied.

“I’ll be making phone calls.” Michael replied. “We have another round of interviews starting Tuesday. I have travel arrangements to make.” He saw Marie stiffen slightly. “Oh no, don’t worry. There’s no competition going on here. We made our offers, the offers stand, these next interviews will be for additional recruits.”

“Oh.” She replied. “Thank-you. I was wondering if you were going to take the first person that said yes.”

“No, that’s so not the case.” Tabitha answered. “The only limit we have is cabin space, and we’re really not expecting to fill them all.”

“So, you’d take us all? If we all said yes?” She asked.

“Absolutely.” Michael said instantly. “The more the better.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really.” Tabitha assured her.

“Wow, I wasn’t sure.” Marie replied. The waiter arrived with her meal.

“And how about you?” Michael asked. “I presume you’ll be shopping?”

“We talked about it. I think so.”

Once Jenna and Doc finished their meals, they left. Then Marie excused herself. Tabitha scooted over to sit by Michael.

“I think she’s a yes.” She said.

“I think so too. I hope so.” Michael replied. He took one last sip of coffee. “I don’t think any of the others will be joining us this morning. I suppose I better start making phone calls.

They left for the elevator.

“What about you? What are your plans?” Michael asked.

“The Amazon.” Tabitha said. “More birds.”

“By yourself? You sure?”

“I’ll be fine. I’ll take my time. I’ll be careful.” She replied. “You have to stick around here, just in case.”

“Remember to check in once in a while, OK?”

“I will.” The elevator stopped on their floor and Michael walked her to her room. She kissed him. “See you later.”

Michael returned to his room. He went through his messages.

“Hi Susan. Well, we had the four candidates on board yesterday. I think it went well. They were all nervous, but none panicked. Marie joined us for breakfast this morning. I think they were all thinking we were only going to take one. I’ll have to explain that better in the future. Tabitha and I agree, we’re both sure Marie will say yes. The others, I don’t know. I’m about to start making phone calls for next week. I miss you all. Give the kids hugs. Love you.”

The weekend passed quietly. Tabitha spent the entire weekend moving from place to place in the tropical jungle, collecting every bird the scanners could find for her. She was excited and confident she had gotten enough to release some species once they returned.

Monday afternoon, Michael sat in the ‘office’ the hotel had provided. He had spent the morning writing and adding a new message to his player. Just in case.

Marie was the first to arrive.

“So, how was your weekend?”

“It was good. We had fun. We talked a lot.”

“Good. And?”

“I, I think I’d like to go with you.” Marie replied.

“You’re not sure?” Michael replied. “It’s OK if you have reservations. It’s a big decision.”

“Pretty sure, just nervous I guess.” She replied.

“That’s a perfect answer. There’s nothing wrong with being nervous. How about this, you tag along with Tabitha, she needs some help with her collecting. She can answer any questions that may come up. After a couple weeks, if you change your mind, no harm done. How’s that?”

“Thank-you, that would be wonderful.” She smiled.

“Congratulations.” Michael replied holding out his hand. She shook it, and her eyes glazed over. He pulled out his player and played the third message for her. He had considered each woman and what he would do if they had agreed to come with him. He played the third message a second time, then put the player away. Then took his hand away.

“And as they say, welcome aboard.” He continued. “I am very glad you decided to come with us. Why don’t you head upstairs, and talk to Tabitha. I have to warn you. She’s a task master. She’ll put you to work.”

Marie smiled. “I’m used to it. Thank-you.”

“You’re welcome.” He replied as he opened the door to the inner office.

Dawn was waiting for him.

“Ah, Dawn, come in.” Michael said. “So Marie said you all had a good weekend?”

“Oh yes, very. You’ve been very generous. I, I must say your offer is tempting. But I’m just don’t know.”

“Do you need more time? This isn’t an iron clad decision. You’re more than welcome to think about it for a couple weeks.”

“I appreciate that. I have my friends. I don’t know.”

“I understand. It’s a big decision. I want to thank you for your time.” He shook her hand and played the newest message into her ear.

You will listen and understand. When you finish listening, you will consciously forget hearing it, but you will come to know these words as your thoughts, ideas, and beliefs. As you travel home, you will understand how incredibly important the work Michael and his companions are doing. You will understand how important it is that it remains a secret. You will continue to think about it, considering how challenging and rewarding it could be, weighing it thoroughly. In two or three weeks, if you change your mind and wish to travel with Michael, you will embrace the decision fully. If you conclude you’d rather stay, your time with Michael and his friends will fade from your memory quickly. You will think of it as nothing more than a nice trip, the details lost.

Once played he continued. “Please keep my phone number. If you have any questions, or change your mind, please do not hesitate to call me. The offer stands. I want you to firmly believe that. OK?” She nodded. “I’ll see to your travel arrangements.”

“Thank-you.” She said. “I will always treasure this week.”

“You’re very welcome.” Michael replied. She made her way out the door, and Michael sighed, a little disappointed.

After a time, Annabelle came to see him. She too declined, she had friends, and a sometimes boyfriend she didn’t want to leave. He played the message for her, and sent her on her way.

He was sitting in the chair, wondering what he could do to improve things, when Haley walked in.

“You looked bummed.” She asked.

“Oh, sorry, Dawn and Annabelle said no.”

“It’s their loss. If the offer still stands, I’ll go with you.” She said.

“Really?” He said. “You sound so sure of yourself.”

“I’m nervous as all get out. But wow, to see the stars? To learn new things? Who could resist.” She smiled.

“Well, then, congratulations and welcome aboard!” Michael replied. Like Marie before, he played the third message. “Let’s go upstairs and find Marie and Tabitha. And see what they’re up to.”

“Marie is coming along?” Haley replied. “That’ll be great.”

Once settled in Tabitha and Jenna’s suite, they started looking at the candidates for the next day.

“Oh, I almost forgot.” Michael said after a moment. “We’ll have to get you moved into your own suite. You two don’t mind sharing?”

Haley looked around at the room. “Is it like this?”

“Yes, just down the hall.” Tabitha replied.

“Hmmm, a two bedroom suite in five star hotel?” Haley said. “I think I can handle it.”

“Me too.” Marie agreed.

“Why don’t you two pack your things, and we’ll get you settled.” Tabitha said.

“OK.” They left leaving Michael and Tabitha alone.

“They’ll do great.” Tabitha volunteered.

“I hope you don’t mind, I want you to take them along on your collecting. Show them how things work, answer any questions.”

“Oh no problem. They’ll be good company.”

Michael arranged the change in rooms then called Jenna and the doctor. He requested they be back for dinner that evening.

Celebratory dinner was Italian that evening. They had fun sampling the variety of food, as well as digitizing samples.

The next few days, the interviewing continued. Sadly only two women were asked to join: Diane Taggart, and Stephanie Jacobs. Both had worked their way through college and were eager for the challenge.

All together on board the ship the eight people sat around the bridge’s table.

“Now we collect.” Michael replied. “We’ll split into teams, and collect as many animals as we can.”

Tabitha, was not excited.

“What’s the matter?” Marie asked.

“There’s just no way. We could collect for another year, and we wouldn’t be close to finished.”

“You and Theresa came up with a list of priorities, right?” Michael asked, and Tabitha nodded agreement. “What if you stick with the most important? How long would that take?”

“With all of us, two or three months.”

“We’ll do what we can.” Michael said. “We’ll start tomorrow. We’ll split up. Tabitha, you take Haley and Diane. I’ll take Marie and Stephanie. And we’ll get to work. We’ll split into teams of two later.”

“I feel like we should be helping.” Doc Hester replied.

“You are helping.” Michael replied. “Jenna deserves to see our world, and you’re best suited to guide her.”

“About that, I wanted to ask you something. My grand-daughter is done with school, and will be living with me. I, well, I was wondering.”

“Take her along.” Michael said. “Of course, you’ll have to use conventional travel. But spend the summer traveling. If you decide to come with us, it’ll be a wonderful experience for her.”

“Just make sure to take com-devices.” Tabitha said.

“And check-in.” Michael added.

“Thank-you.” Doc said. “I’ll do my best.”

“Before you go, Jenna, could I have a word?”

“Yes.” Jenna said. They went into the den and Michael shut the door.

“What’s your progress on the Statue?” He asked.

“Good. I will have it finished soon.”

“Good, as long as we can start construction on Zanthia before we start back. I’ve got a surprise in mind for the good Doctor. Something that may help persuade him to come with us. I’ll get you some digitized info.”

“I will pack a computer with me.” Jenna replied.

“Actually, have it teleported down to you when you need it. You’ll learn about customs when you travel. Better to not raise any questions.”

“I want to thank-you. It has been wonderful to see your world.”

“You’re very welcome. Now, let’s get you back to the Doctor.”

Over the next week, Michael and Tabitha took the latest recruits out collecting. They taught everybody how to use the equipment. Michael wanted to eventually get three teams out collecting instead of two. Each evening, Jenna would contact him and tell him of the day’s travels.

Saturday evening, having dinner in the hotel’s restaurant, Michael’s cellphone rang. He answered and talked for a few minutes then hung up.

“Who was that?” Marie asked.

“That was Annabelle. She wants to get together.”

“Do you think she changed her mind?” Haley asked.

“I hope so.” Michael replied. “I’ll go see her tomorrow. You’ve all worked very hard, this past week, why don’t you relax tomorrow. We still have the shopping lists to fill, don’t we?”

Tabitha nodded her head.

“Good. Hopefully we’ll get another recruit.”

The next morning Michael found Annabelle’s apartment building and buzzed her room. He climbed the stairs and knocked on the door. Annabelle opened the door and he stepped into what had to be the smallest apartment he had ever seen. The kitchen was nothing more than a few cabinets in the corner. There really wasn’t a dining room, the one interior door was to a small bathroom. He sat on an uncomfortable couch, guessing it was also a fold out bed.

“So, how have you been?” Michael asked as she sat next to him.

“I’ve been fine. Looking for work.”

“Any luck?”

“Nothing yet. But I’ve been thinking, I had an opportunity for a great job, and I’m hoping that it’s still available.”

“It surely is. So you’d like....”

Annabelle cut him off with her finger to her mouth.

“You’d like, to, to discuss it more?” He said changing what he was going to say.

“Very much.” She replied. “But it’s stuffy in here, could I trouble you for ride? It’d be nice to get out in the fresh air.”

“Absolutely.” Michael said. “It’s getting close to lunch. My treat.”

They left the building and started down the road.

“Sorry about that, but the walls are paper thin, and the neighbors can hear everything.”

“I see. Let’s find someplace a bit more private.” They drove a few miles out of town, then Michael had them teleported to the garage of his town-house.

“Where is this?” Annabelle asked.

“My town-house, mine and Susan’s. Come on.”

They entered into the kitchen.

“You have a town-house?” She asked.

“Yes, technically Susan and I are residents here. We even have jobs. The company is fictitious, but we live here, make payments, pay taxes. And use it as a base for buying things.” He showed her the piles of boxes filling the living room and part of the dining room. He had the computer send down a supply of teleporter beacons, and they set to work tagging boxes as they talked.

“So, you seriously want to rejoin our group?”

“Yes, I think so. If you’ll have me.” She replied.

“I can’t see why not. We managed to find two more recruits last week. But the more the merrier.” He replied.

“Will I have to meet with their approval too?” She asked.

“Oh, I don’t think so. I mean you were already approved. Why? Has anything changed?”

“No, nothing has changed. It’s just that it’s been so hard finding work.”

“And you’re still not certain about going?”

“I’m pretty certain. Just scared, I’ll be a long ways from everything and everyone I’ve ever known.”

He looked at her for moment, and then set down at the table.

“Believe me, I’ve been there before. My dad died when I was Senior in college. I had no other family. I was forced to sell the house and most of our possessions. I took the job in Chicago, packed all I owned, rented a U-haul and drove. I left everything and everyone I knew behind. The first couple years, I went back, visiting friends I grew up with. But after a while, I settled into my new home, and the trips back home became less and less important.”

“I guess that makes sense. I’m just…”

“Scared? Nervous?” She nodded. “So are the rest. If it makes you feel better, none of the others, including the doctor have officially said ‘yes’. So they’re thinking and talking and asking questions. Come back with us, and you can spend a couple weeks with us, and see. We’ll go from there. Fair enough?”

“Fair enough.” She said smiling. She stood. “So who bought all this stuff?”

“Susan did. I don’t know what’s in these boxes. But we’ll send them up, and they can unpack them when we get home.”

They worked for another couple hours, tagging boxes and talking. When they went for a late lunch, they had cleared the dining room, and managed a small dent in the packages filling the living room. They traveled back to Annabelle’s place and she packed some bags. They drove away again, and found an empty road.

An additional suite was prepared for her and once she got her bags into her bedroom, Michael managed to play the third message for her and let her unpack.

He returned to his car, he had an errand to run before dinner.

Wednesday evening, he had just sent his last message to Zanthia when there was a knock on his door. He opened it to find Marie.

“Marie, come in.” he said. “What can I do for you.”

“Well, I’ve been thinking, and I decided that I want to come with you.”

“All official and everything?” He asked smiling.

“Yes, all ‘official.’” She replied with her own smile. “What’s next?”

“Well, that depends. Did Tabitha explain some of the genetic changes?”

“You mean, bigger boobs, fertility, long life? Then yes.”

“And you’re OK with all of that?”

“It was a little weird at the beginning, but I’m OK with it.” She replied. “She told me she has eight kids? Is that true?”

“Yes. Since then at least two more have become mothers of eight.”

“Wow, four sets of twins. And her sister, three sets of quads. That’s incredible.”

“Did she explain about how she got pregnant? And about the, ahem, donor?”

“A little bit.” Marie said. Here he could tell she was uncertain.

“Let’s go upstairs, OK?” He suggested.

“Absolutely!” she agreed quickly. Always anxious to go aboard the ship, if only to spend a few minutes looking out into space.

“Computer, if you please, two to teleport up.” He said into his com-device. A moment later they stepped off the teleporter pad and went out into the bridge.

“So, we were talking about pregnancy.” Michael said.

“Yes, Tabitha tried to explain.” She replied then blushed. “I just choose a sperm donor?”

“Pretty much, you can look at who we have sampled. Or if there’s someone specific…”

“Harrison Ford.” She said quickly. “I watched Star Wars the other night, and he’s cute. He’s so handsome and distinguished now.”

Michael looked in the computer records. “Well, it looks like I need to make another trip to Hollywood.”

She looked at him questioningly.

“I posed as photographer at a movie premier. And just ‘took pictures.’ It’s OK, I have a few specific requests from some of the girls.” He paused for a moment.

“But that’s months away. We have to give you your shot first. Come on.” And he led her into medical room. He scanned her, and found no abnormalities.

“Now, normally I would give you a standard shot, like Jenna. But if you’d like something special, I could do that too.”

“Uhm, what about Tabitha? Could you give me the same shot you gave her? Would it make my boobs the same size?”

“Uhm, yes. If that’s what you truly want.” Michael replied.

“That’s what I want. When I first met her I thought, damn, she’s huge, but she doesn’t seem to even care, now that we’ve hung out, I want to be that size. I think it’d be cool.”

“Well, the computer says there are no health issues. No surprises, that is.” Michael said. He went to work and called up the formula he had used on Tabitha and an injector was produced.

“Ready?” He asked. She nodded, and he pressed it against her arm. “Done. Now, you need to pick out a bracelet.” He showed her the samples, she picked one, and a personalized bracelet was produced within seconds. He fastened it to her right wrist, and explained how it worked.

“One last thing: no unprotected sex for the next three months.” He said. “We don’t want to deal with any unintended pregnancies, at least until the changes have made their way to your eggs.”

“Gotcha.” She said.

“On that note, I think we need to go back down.” Reluctantly she agreed and they went back down to his room, and she returned to hers.

The rest of the week Michael spent his days with Marie and Haley. They were collecting fish. Meanwhile, Tabitha and Annabelle as well as Diane and Stephanie formed two teams collecting birds.

He knew he shouldn’t have been prejudiced, but Haley’s weight made it difficult to for her to keep up. She tried though, she never asked to take a break, and worked as hard as she could. He had to respect her for that. She had such a fun personality, such an infectious laugh, she was wonderful to be around. They spent the days talking about Zanthia. Marie had additional questions, which he tried to answer. By the end of the day Saturday, Haley made the commitment to join the crew. Once the last of the stasis boxes and supplies were teleported up to the ship, the three followed. In the medical room Haley’s scan revealed a minor heart problem. Seeing it, she said that she had always suspected something, but never had it checked. The

condition caused her to tire quickly, contributing to her extra weight. Michael dialed up the standard shot, and the computer added in the repair for the heart condition. She eagerly rolled up her sleeve to accept the injection, and chose a bracelet.

They teleported back into Marie and Haley's suite, he went to his room and showered. They went downstairs for a group meal. This night, Jenna and Doc Hester joined them.

"So how's your grand-daughter?" Michael asked.

"She's fine. She's sleeping over at her Aunt Rose's."

"Aunt?" Michael asked.

"Rose isn't her real aunt. She just calls her that. We thought it'd be a good time to see how you were doing."

"We're doing well." Michael replied. "Marie and Haley have agreed to 'officially' join us."

"That is wonderful news." Jenna replied. "The children need teachers."

"What about you two, what are your plans?" Tabitha asked.

"We're taking a break for a few days." Doc Hester said. "Sabrina needed a break. And honestly, so did I."

They laughed. "Is she being difficult?"

"Oh, no, but she's ten, and not a lot to do during the plane rides, and her patience can wear down. She's still adjusting to everything. We're getting there."

The next day they all took a break. They spent the morning going out to breakfast, then settled into Jenna and Tabitha's suite to talk and relax. After a couple hours Doctor Hester announced he needed to get back home, to be there when his grand-daughter returned.

Monday morning, they were planning on another day of collecting. Michael was waiting for Jenna to get ready, for she insisted on helping, when his cell-phone rang. He answered and talked for a few minutes. Tabitha and Jenna were waiting for him by the time he hung up.

"What was that?"

"That was Dawn Swenson. She's reconsidered, and was hoping to re-join us."

"Really?" Tabitha replied. "I thought for sure, once she said 'no' we'd never hear from her again."

"Me too, but the economy the way it is, jobs are hard to find." He replied.

There was a knock on the door, and Tabitha let the other women enter. Michael caught them up.

"She asked to see me, so I better go. Will you ladies be all right today?"

"Absolutely." Jenna replied. They paired up and each team teleported away, Jenna taking his place with Marie and Haley.

He took his car for a drive, and met up with Dawn an hour later. After talking for a couple hours, she asked if they could go up to the ship. Car and passengers were teleported on board as soon as he could find a secluded location.

“I thought about it a long time.” She said after they had made their way up to the bridge. “I wanted to be absolutely sure, one way or another, before I called. So here I am.”

“Well, let’s give it a couple more weeks. See if it’s truly something you want, and we’ll go from there.”

“That seems fair.” She replied.

“In that case, congratulations.” He offered his hand. She shook it and played the third message on his device. He thought about playing the fourth message, but instead played the third message a second time. He released her.

“I think we should go back to your place, pack some clothes, and get you back to the hotel. We’ll put you in with Annabelle. It’s a nice suite, two bedrooms. You should be fine.”

At dinner that night, he introduced her to Diane and Stephanie.

Now they had enough people to have four teams collecting. Tabitha’s spirits climbed as the next two weeks progressed. Michael kept shuffling the teams, so everyone had a chance to work with everyone else.

One evening, Michael was sending the last of the updates to Zanthia, when Tabitha knocked on his door.

“What’s up?” he said as she entered.

“I am wondering if I could get some private time with you next week or so?” She pulled him to her and kissed him. “Just you and me?”

“I’m certain of it.” He said kissing her back. He slid his hand down her back and cupped her butt. She sighed and wrapped her arms around him. Just as she leaned in for a more passionate kiss, his laptop beeped loudly, an incoming message.

“That’s probably Jenna.” He said.

“She can wait a moment.” She kissed him again, licking her tongue against his lips. Then reluctantly she pulled away as the laptop beeped again.

He sat in front of it and accepted the message.

“Sorry if it’s late.” Doc Hester started. “But the time difference, we thought this would be the best time.”

“Don’t worry about it. It’s not that late.” Michael replied. He could see Jenna sitting by the Doctor. “Where are you?”

“New Zealand. We’re working our way west; A few more days here, then Australia, China, and Japan.”

“Sounds like a good time. I hope you’ve been using your digitizers?”

“Absolutely.” Jenna replied. “Some of the food here is so wonderful.”

“So the trip is going well?” Tabitha asked.

“Oh yes. We took your suggestion we went scuba diving yesterday.” Doc Hester replied. “It’s just unbelievable. But we didn’t take any kind of camera. The digitizer is great for stills, but any motion, not so much.”

“I had something in mind.” Jenna said. She pushed a button on her computer and an extra window popped up theirs. “What do you think?”

“It looks like a regular video camera to me. Have the ship fabricate one and send it down to you.”

“Good, thank-you.” Doc Hester said. “We’ll be doing more diving today. It got me thinking. What about Zanthia? What ocean life is there? And shouldn’t we be taking some back with us?”

“We’ve talked about it.” Tabitha replied. “But my sister and I aren’t qualified. We’d need marine biologists.”

“Some of the people I used to sail with would know people.” Doc replied.

“Are we all thinking we should try to recruit some?” Michael asked.

“I am.” Tabitha said. And Jenna and Doc both agreed.

“We could run adds, just like we did for teachers.” Michael volunteered. He explained the advertisements they had run to recruit the teachers.

“That worked quite well.” Jenna replied. “Six teachers in just two weeks.”

“We’ll have to assess what ocean life is on Zanthia. Theresa could supervise, but I’m not sure what we’re looking for.”

“I believe there are designs for submersibles that could be used to sample and analyze. I will start looking tonight.”

“And I’ll send some emails, and get a list of people and places to you.” Doc added.

“Sounds like a plan.” Michael said. “When will you be back stateside?”

“Two weeks. We’ll hit China and Japan, then a quick stop in Alaska on our way back.”

“Take your time and have fun. When you’re in Alaska be sure to take lots of pictures. It’s too beautiful there to ignore.”

“We will.” Doc said.

“Talk to you soon.” Jenna replied. And they cut the transmission.

“Well looks like we’ll be even busier.” Michael replied.

“Did you notice how Doc kept saying ‘we’ ?” Tabitha remarked.

“I did.” Michael replied. “I think I need to let Susan and the rest know.”

Tabitha got up and took his hands, pulling him from the chair. “I think that can wait a couple hours, don’t you?” She led him into the bedroom, the messages waited three hours.

The following days, calls were made, and money spent. Adds appeared on scientific websites and flyers were sent to some of the oceanographic institutes. By the end of week a half dozen applications had been received. Evenings, Michael spent time checking each application. Just like teachers, he was hoping to find young women with no family ties. He made phone calls and travel arrangements.

The next week started with more of the same, more applications came in, he made plans to start the interview process the following week.

Angel Falls, Again

It was late Wednesday afternoon when Tabitha knocked on Michael's door. They had spent the morning collecting, but called off the afternoon trip. Tabitha reminded Michael of his promise, they teleported aboard the ship first, then Tabitha guided them back down.

Michael immediately knew where they were. The roar of the water nearby, and the mist in the air was all he needed to know they were back near Angel Falls. Tabitha took his hand, and they went inside the dome shaped tent. The roar was muted as soon as the hatchway was closed. The tent wasn't large enough to stand in, so they knelt instead.

"It's just you and me lover." Tabitha said pulling him forward as their lips met. It didn't take long for the passions to rise and clothes to be removed.

"I've been waiting for this for a long time." She said as she rolled him onto his back. She swung a leg over him and positioned herself above him.

"Wait," he said.

"No waiting." She replied and started to slide herself down him. "No protection this time lover. Or ever again. We're here to make babies. Oh, that's nice." She hit bottom and settled for a moment.

"Are you sure about this?" Michael asked half-heartedly. Her magnificent breasts hung just inches from his face.

"Absolutely lover." She replied. She leaned forward, taking her first stroke, then back down. "Give, oooh, Give ah, me, ah, Give me babies! Oh yes, so much better. Bare back is the best." She had started slowly, but he knew she'd speed up. With her hands on either side of his shoulders, he held onto her hips

"Knock me up lover." She panted as her pace increased. "Oh Fuck! Ah! Ah! Yes!" Her pace quickened as she set arched her back and bucked her hips forward and back. He could already feel the clenching of her pussy against his cock. He could feel his pressure rise, but he held on and continued the session. Soon she was lost in the passion, each down thrust met with excited moan. After another few minutes, she quickened her pace and slammed herself down on him as she shivered through her first orgasm.

"Oh God!" She moaned, and held herself as she tried to catch her breath. She collapsed on top of him for a moment and kissed his neck. With each hand, he traced a finger up the side of her body, and down the side of her breasts. She lifted herself away from him so he could access her nipples. He lifted her nipples to his lips and as he nibbled on one then the other, she started moving her hips again.

"Oh, you're going to.. nnnngh.. you're gonna make me cum again." She sighed. "Oh! Oh yes, play with my tits lover." She slammed herself down on him again as her second orgasm erupted out of nowhere.

She collapsed on top of him again.

"Roll over babe." He said. She managed to slide off of him and onto her back. He rolled on top of her, positioned himself, and slid fully into her.

"Oh, yea, do me lover." She moaned as she wrapped her arms and legs around him. "Mmm, so good." She sighed and his pace picked up. "Yes! Yes! Yes!" She screamed and clamped down on him for a third orgasm. He pounded through it and soon she was squirming under him. Her arms lost their strength and flopped to the bedding under them. She dug her fingers into the fabric with each of his thrusts. Her legs weakened as well. She laid there, being pounded, and lost in the carnal lust of it. Soon he could feel his testicles tighten and he pushed himself as deeply as he could, and released his load. She could only sense it. She was too lost in the constant orgasm galloping thru her body to understand. Once he was exhausted, in

both ways, he managed to pull out of her. He had enough foresight to move an arm and leg out of the way, then collapsed beside her.

It was some time before they stirred again. They could tell that it was dark out. They each took drinks of water, then pulled a blanket over themselves.

“Do you realize, we’ve been back on Earth for two months?” Tabitha asked.

“Really? It doesn’t seem like it.”

“I know, time flies. Another couple months and we need to head home.” Tabitha said. She managed to raise her tired arm rub her belly. “Hopefully I’ll have a couple passengers of my own.”

“With any luck.” He echoed. He pulled her to him and kissed her. “You want to head back?”

“No, let’s stay the night, head back in the morning. Though I think I might sneak back up to the ship to pee.” She giggled.

“I’m not too keen on stepping outside.”

“At least you can do it standing up.” She laughed. She settled in next to him again. “For now, I just want this.”

“Good idea.” He replied. He pulled her tighter to him.

“I wonder if any of the others will commit to coming with us.” She said after a time.

“We’ve got Marie and Haley.” He replied.

“And probably the doc.” She added.

“Probably.”

“You should ask the others. Maybe they’re just afraid to step forward. Maybe there’s something holding them back.”

They lay together for several minutes. Then Tabitha spoke. “I want to go home.”

He responded by turning to look at her.

“Zanthia, I want to go home to Zanthia. I miss my kids, and once we get back to Zanthia, I’m not leaving again.”

“I have to agree with you.” He replied. “The trip is just too long. And I miss my little ones too. Jamie and Jessie are such a great age right now. Susan sent me videos yesterday.”

“I know. I play the videos Theresa has sent me over and over.”

“We’ll be heading back soon.”

They spent the night and teleported back aboard ship the following morning. Following showers and fresh clothes they went back down to their hotel rooms.

Later that evening, Tabitha paid another visit to Michael’s room. “Practice makes perfect.” She smiled as she escorted him into the bedroom.

The next night at dinner he asked how the women were doing. Haley beamed.

“I’ve never felt better. I’ve lost weight, it’s been wonderful.” She said.

“I know we’re asking you all to do a lot of physical labor, but surely you understand why. We’ll be heading home in about eight weeks, so it won’t be for much longer.”

“I thought we’d be here doing this for as long as, you know last time.” Annabelle said.

“Oh, no, not at all. Sorry for the bad communication. Next week we’ll be doing more interviews, I’ll want you all upstairs to watch. I’ll want everybody’s input.”

“We still need to collect as much as we can.” Tabitha reminded them. “It’s hard work I know, but it must be done, and as quickly as possible.”

“If any of you have any questions, or concerns, please come talk to me. Marie and Haley have already committed themselves to going. I’m hoping the rest of you will as well. Let me say this part again, if there’s anything special you’d like.”

“Jenna has bought almost every shoe she’s seen.” Tabitha interrupted with a smile.

“If there’s anything you’d like, think of it as a signing bonus, or an incentive.” Michael said. “If it’s reasonable, repeat reasonable, we’ll do what we can.”

“We’ve already taken care of Marie and Haley’s financials.” Tabitha added. “We’re more than prepared to do the same for you. Remember. I’m a Mom, and you are the teachers I want teaching my children.”

“I second that.” Michael added. “We chose you because we want you to teach our children. So we’ll do as much as we can to help you.”

The women sat silently for a moment, almost stunned by Michael and Tabitha’s conviction. Then Michael spoke again.

“So, I think it best if we take a break from collecting. I’ll get you some money to go shopping, enjoy your weekend, and if you have any questions, any at all, please, talk to me, and we’ll work out what we can. Make your own private ‘wish lists’ if you’d like. And we’ll see what we can do.”

Even though the others had the weekend off, he and Tabitha went out. They left early, and returned to their hotel rooms late.

Saturday night, Michael had finished his messaging, and was about to turn in, when there was a knock on the door. He opened to find Annabelle.

“Please, come in.” He said.

“Thank-you.” She said. “I’ve been stopping by all weekend, but you haven’t been around.

“Tabitha and I have been collecting.” He said sitting.

“Why didn’t you ask the rest of us to help?” She asked.

“Because we’ve been working you all too hard.” Michael replied. “We can’t expect you to know our world. Only lately have birds been flying in the sky, and fish in the rivers. But there’s so much more to do. You can’t imagine it.”

“So you think we’re not committing to go because of the work?” She asked.

"I don't know what to think." He said. He and Tabitha were exhausted. They had traveled to four different sampling sights each day, twice the normal number. The work wasn't physically demanding, but still, over twelve hours collecting was tiring.

"I'm sorry, I'm tired, and I'm being rude. What can I do for you?" He said after a moment.

"I was wondering, you spoke of wish list. We all talked about it. And I don't understand. What kind of things would be on these wish lists?"

"Anything, just about anything." Michael replied. "We've been buying things expressly to take back with us. We've been buying movies, and music, and books. Jenna's become a shoe junkie. And it's all going back to Zanthia with us. All that stuff you helped me tag? That'll go back too."

"So if I wanted some clothes?"

"No fur coats, or custom designer dresses, but you could buy yourself quite a wardrobe. In fact, clothes are something I truly encourage. It's good to have varied tastes. Once we have something, it could be replicated for others."

"Wow." She said sitting back. "I just realized. Wow." She sat silently for a moment.

"Did you know I play piano?"

"I think I remember reading it." He said. "Is that something you'd like?"

"I know they can be very expensive." She said tentatively.

"That's not a problem. Tomorrow, you and I will go piano shopping. We'll get the best we can find."

"Seriously?"

"Absolutely." He said. "To be honest, musical instruments should have been on our list."

She smiled with delight.

The next morning, he and Annabelle found the best music store in the Houston area. They weren't disappointed when they walked in the door. They entered a room full of pianos and drum sets, guitars and trumpets. Every musical instrument they could think of was there.

"Can I help you?" The sales person came up.

"Yes." Michael replied. "We're looking to buy two pianos. The first, the very best grand piano you may have. The second; something still very good quality that would be more suitable for young students."

The salesperson gleamed and showed them around. The Steinway grand was beautiful, and even to Michael's untrained ear, sounded noticeably better than the rest. Annabelle was positively glowing when she played it. The second grand was also of good quality, and met with Annabelle's approval.

"One more thing." Annabelle said. "We need music."

Michael saw the wall of music. "Knock yourself out. Get what you'd like. Meanwhile, I think I'm going to take pictures of these other instruments." Then to the salesman. "Let's get the paperwork on the pianos done first shall we?"

"Where would you like them delivered?"

“Oh, nowhere. We have transportation on the way. If you could take them out to your loading docks, we’ll pick them up.”

“Right now?” he said.

Michael pulled out the plastic. “Yes, as soon as this clears, right now.”

When the credit card was approved, the moving began. The pianos were moved to the moving dock, and Michael waited for the fictitious truck to arrive. Once he was alone, he put transport tags on them, and had them teleported aboard. He reentered the store to find Annabelle still at the wall of music books.

“I don’t know what to get, this one or that one?” She asked.

“Get them both.” He replied. Then bent down and whispered into her ear. “Remember, you’re getting music for a whole new world, splurge.”

“Oh! OK.” She smiled, realizing again the magnitude of what she was doing.

Michael returned to the salesman. “I’m wondering, if you could point out the good and bad of these other instruments. I’m not sure everything we’ll need yet, but if I could take pictures of what you recommend, I could at least take that list back with us.”

After a half hour of ‘taking pictures’ with his digitizer. He pulled out the plastic and paid for the stacks of music Annabelle had purchased. They carried the boxes out to his car and drove away. Once clear to do so, they teleported aboard ship and went into the den to find the piano’s waiting.

“See, just as promised.” Michael said. “He put his hand on the Steinway. When we get to Zanthia, we’ll have this teleported down to your apartment. This is yours.”

Annabelle stood silent for moment. “I can’t believe it. It’s, oh my, it’s. Oh gosh.”

“So, what else is on that wish list of yours.” Michael said sitting on the bench.

“Oh, uhm, nothing that important.” She stammered. “I’ll have to pack my personal things.”

“So I take it you want to make it official?”

“I.” That question stopped her. She sat down hard on the other piano bench. “I, uhm, wow, What you did here today. How can I refuse? The, the, magnitude just never hit me before. But these, this ship, my God, it’s just sinking in. It’s just incredible. Yes, sign me up. I’ll go with you.”

“Great.” He replied. “I know the trip is long, and it will be boring at times. But you’ll see once we get there, you’ll be glad you decided to come along.”

“So what’s next?”

“Come with me.” They left the den and started toward the front of the ship. “First you pick out a cabin. When we pack your things, we’ll have them teleported directly.”

They took a few steps. “They’re all the same, but you can decorate a little.” She picked out an empty cabin, and Michael entered it into the ship’s computer. Then they traveled onto the medical room.

“Next, I give you a shot.”

“Like you gave Marie and Haley?” She asked.

“Yes, stand here a moment while I do this.” The scanner ran, and found no trouble areas. Michael debated what shot to give her, then decided on a standard shot. Bracelet chosen, they teleported back down. They spent the afternoon packing things in her apartment. They cleared up her rental agreement, and she moved out. She didn’t have many things, and what she didn’t carry, was taken aboard.

That evening, they were joined by Jenna and the doctor. Annabelle happily told of their shopping trip that morning and proudly showed off her new bracelet. After the meal was completed, the doctor was taken back to his house while Jenna returned to her and Tabitha’s suite.

Michael took time to catch up on his messages. He took time to send a message to both Courtney and Susan.

“Courtney, Susan.” He started. “Annabelle has made it official, that makes three teachers coming back with us. We’re starting interviews with marine biologists tomorrow. I don’t know why we didn’t think of advertising last time, it’s been way more successful than what we did last time. Anyway, Annabelle asked about life on Zanthia, and it got me thinking. I was wondering if you could do something for me. Get a video camera and do a video tour for me? Go into one of the empty apartments, and show it off. Then maybe out onto the deck and look out onto the city. Maybe a few points of the city. Oh! Drive down to the house and show the beach. Whatever you can think of that’d help show people what awaits them. If you could get that to me in the next few days, it’ll be great. I’ll be able to show it to the recruits, and it’ll help. Better be going, I need to talk to Jenna before they turn in. Love you all.”

He then went to Tabitha and Jenna’s suite.

“Tired from the traveling?” He asked Jenna.

“Very much.” She replied. “But I managed to finish those projects I was working on.”

“Oh, great, I was here to ask you about the statue.”

“Oh yes, completely finished, cement foundation to torch tip. How do you say, ‘top to bottom’.”

“That’s perfect.” Tabitha said.

“I was reading about Shing-La island. As I understand it, a rather important peace treaty was signed there.”

“Oh yes, it marked the end of the one our most violent times. The monument should still be there.” She opened her laptop and worked for a few moments. She showed them a picture of the stone monument.

“Is that it?” Tabitha asked. “The marble spire was visible through the overgrowth.”

“Yes, on the Eastern side of the island.”

“Perfect. Here’s my idea. We should put the statue on the western end of the island, looking out to sea, but also overlooking the spot of the signing. We clear the area of the peace signing monument, and have the whole area a nice flat open area for people to walk.”

“A beautiful idea. I have seen similar monuments here on Earth. I am glad.”

“I remember what Michael told us when we arrived at Zanthia. We wanted to mix our culture with yours, not replace it.”

“And this is good.” Jenna replied. “Should I send this to Zanthia, so construction can begin?”

“Yes, please, but make sure the lights aren’t lit. I want to save that for our return arrival. Kind of a surprise.”

Both Jenna and Tabitha smiled.

The next morning, almost all were aboard ship, waiting for the interviews. Michael stayed below.

The first person was a young man named Alex Lofton. He seemed a good candidate, but he hoped to get married soon. Michael wasn’t against having another man on the trip, per se, but when additional family was mentioned, Alex was reluctantly eliminated.

The second candidate was Lorna Albright. She also seemed qualified, but she had a husband, children, and could reasonably expect grandchildren soon.

The first candidate of the afternoon was Timothy McCarthy: Even though he seemed intelligent enough, it was obvious he had no creativity, or imagination. Both would be needed in great amounts meeting the challenges ahead of them.

Michael had little confidence the fourth candidate would be any better. But when she walked in the door, he couldn’t help but be interested. Deanne Miercer stood about 5’7”. She had red hair. Michael couldn’t put a name to it. It wasn’t ‘strawberry blonde’ nor was it the medium red that make you think ‘carrot top’. Instead it was about half-way in between. She wore it shoulder length, with only a few curls at the ends. A few lighter highlights framed her face. Her body was incredible, and he could guess either D or double-D breasts. He shook her hand, and gave her the first message, like he had done the other candidates, and led her into the next room where they talked. He had an earpiece in his ear, and Tabitha would relay down questions. As the interview progressed Michael had to admit she was impressive, at least as much as he could tell. When he got to asking about her family, she told him she had none. Then he asked her about leaving home for long periods.

“Well, some of my research trips have been three or four months at sea. It’s been wonderful. Megan and I had a great time.”

“Megan?”

“We share an apartment in Miami. We met a few years ago on a sampling mission in the gulf. Being the only other women on the trip, we became good friends. The next trip, we met again, and the trip after that. So we got an apartment together, and ever since, if one of us interviews for a job, we agreed to mention the other.”

“So tell me about your last, er, trip.” Michael said.

“Oh we were in the gulf again, we were trying to sample animal life in the wake of the oil spill. We’ve been trying to evaluate long term effects.”

“Anything interesting?”

“Oh yes.” She said leaning towards him. She had chosen a semi low-cut shirt, and her lean helped give Michael a better view of her bust line.

“The lower forms of life, seemed to be hurt the most, but they also seemed to rebound the quickest. But as you climbed the food chain, the effect seemed less, but the recovery was slower too.”

“Did anyone give thought or voice to possibly transplanting animals from elsewhere to help out the local population.”

“Some of us did. Even a few healthy specimens from each species would have given the local population a boost.” She said. “But we were shot down, I can understand why, the cost would have been enormous, and it really wasn’t a part of our original project.”

“Interesting.” He replied. “I want to get back to your friend, Megan, you’ve worked well with her before?”

“Oh yes, it’s been great.” She said. “She’s a ball of laughs, but when it comes to work, she dives right in. Once, we had engine trouble, and she was the only one small enough to get into a couple tight places, she climbed in like a monkey. I was next smallest, so I handed her stuff. She stayed in there bent up like a pretzel for three or four hours. She came out oil and dirt from head to toe. But laughing, and the engines were fixed.”

“She sounds like somebody I’ll have to meet.” He said. “In fact, if you have contact info, I’ll call her as soon as I get back to my room, and get her here.”

“You won’t be sorry. She can do just about anything on a ship. Don’t let her fool you.”

“Now, I think I’ve raked you over the coals long enough for one day. We have a table downstairs in the restaurant. Dinner at seven? Two of my co-workers will be joining us. Tomorrow you have the day off, but here’s a bit money, go shopping if you’d like. Then Thursday we have a group workshop.”

“I look forward to dinner. It’ll be wonderful.”

After she had left he heard Tabitha in his ear. “*If she flirts any harder, she’ll pull a muscle.*”

“Ha Ha.” He replied. “I may be slow, but I’m not that slow. Besides, if she’s qualified, she’s qualified. If she isn’t, she isn’t. Should I call her friend and make arrangements?”

“*Might as well.*” Came the response.

“Meet you all in your room? Send the recordings home will you?”

“*Already done.*” Tabitha replied. “*See you in a bit.*”

He returned to his suite, then made a call to Megan. She cheerfully answered. He mentioned the interview with Deanne, and asked if she’d like to come to Houston as well. She agreed. Next he arranged her flight, first class on the next available flight, and called Megan again telling her the ticket would be waiting at the check-in desk.

Next he went to Tabitha and Jenna’s room. Everyone was there, and discussed the candidates so far. He took a little good natured teasing over Deanne’s flirting. But all seemed to agree with Michael’s initial assessment. Only Deanne seemed a possible candidate. Doc Hester and Jenna left for a private dinner date, with only a little teasing involved. He asked Tabitha and Diane to join the rest for dinner.

“I don’t want them feeling like they’re on trial.” He explained.

“This time I get to wear the hidden camera.” Tabitha volunteered. The rest went off to dinner elsewhere.

At the dinner table, conversation started off sluggish. The two guys spent most of their time looking at Tabitha’s chest, even though there was no cleavage showing. The two women biologists talked about some of their work. Michael would throw a question in once in a while. Like “How much time do you spend at sea, compared to dry land?”

“For me, maybe half.” Deanne replied. “I get the feeling I’m paying my dues, doing the leg work. Then when I get more established, I can get the research grants, then I can stay land-bound more.”

"I've been there." Lorna replied. "I'm waiting on a couple grant applications now, but going out to sea once in a while is good. If you're not in the water, the world tends to forget about you. Going out to sea is good."

"I got a cousin that's in the Navy. And sea duty is what gets you promoted faster. Sea duty makes a difference." Alex mentioned.

"I think I'm going to head out on the town, see if I can find a place to dance." Timothy said. He looked directly at Deanne and then Tabitha. "Anybody want to join me?"

"I'll pass." Deanne said quickly. Tabitha merely shook her head. And Lorna said "No thanks."

"I'll go, I could use a drink or two." Alex stood.

As the two young men walked away, the women fought to keep still. Lorna rolled her eyes, Deanne choked back a giggle, and Tabitha only shook her head.

The conversation picked up after the two young men had left. Lorna and Deanne enjoyed a glass or two of wine. Talking and enjoying themselves. At 9:30, Lorna excused herself for bed. It was very nearly 10:00 PM when Deanne's cell phone rang.

"Megan?" She answered. "Yea, I'm in the restaurant. You're what?" She stood and looked around, then waived. "Oh my God!"

A few moments later they were joined by a young woman.

"You must be Megan." Michael said standing, extending his hand.

"And you're Michael?" She asked. He nodded and introduced the rest.

"Please sit. Are you hungry?"

"Oh no, I'm on Miami time. I should be tired, but I'm just running on adrenaline." She replied. "I can't believe it." She looked at Deanne. "He calls me up, asking if I'd like to come out and interview. I said sure, why not. He says he'll call me back. Not even ten minutes later he calls again, says I'm booked on the next flight out, there's a taxi on the way, and that my ticket is waiting for me at the airport. I throw a bag together, and I'm out the door. Next thing I know, I'm at the airport and flying here. First class no less."

"Deanne suggested we interview you." Michael replied. "And we have an interview opening tomorrow afternoon. So, you're here."

"But first class."

"Everything that Michael does is first class." Diane said.

"Have you checked in yet?" Tabitha asked.

"Yes, the bell hop offered to take my bags up to my room."

"We should let you two talk." Michael said. "If you'll excuse me, I have to be up in the morning. If you're hungry in the morning, this table is available to you at any time. Feel free to get breakfast, or lunch or whatever, whenever you like. Your interview is at 3:00 tomorrow; don't forget to change your watch."

He left with Tabitha and Diane, after Diane went into her suite, Tabitha walked with Michael back to his suite.

"I think I know where this is going." She said once in his room.

“Oh yea? Where?”

“I predict two pair of very, very large boobs. And sooner or later, you’ll be making their bellies big with your babies.”

She pulled him into a kiss. “Just remember, I expect you to make my belly big now and again.”

He cupped her butt and pulled her closer. “And was I successful this time?”

“Maybe.” She said then kissed him. “But we can keep practicing if you’d like.”

He picked her up and carried her into the bedroom. They practiced some more.

The next morning, the interviews started again. The first candidate, Melissa Hubert struck Michael as very intellectual. Behind a pair of big, thick glasses, she had a pretty face. She had black hair in waves a third of the way down her back. She had nice figure and a very pretty voice. She didn’t have the ‘dangerous curves’ Marie or Tabitha possessed, but she would still look very good in long slinky dresses. By any standards, she would be considered very pretty. Michael’s initial thought proved true, she had a nearly encyclopedic recollection of her work, and who she worked with.

The second candidate was another young man. Samuel Jennings. When asked why he was applying for a job that’d take him away from friends and family for months at a time. He responded. “Well, my parents want me to get a job, so here I am.” Michael continued the interview as long as politeness allowed, but he was still very early to lunch that day.

The third candidate was a middle aged woman, Beth Walters. When asked the same question, she replied. “Oh, I couldn’t do that. I just had a baby. I couldn’t be away from my husband and kids. But if there was a place for me land side, where I could coordinate and gather data, I’d love to help out.” She was smart, and interesting, and as the interview continued, Michael was certain she could be an asset in that capacity, but he knew it wasn’t something they were looking for.

Finally at 3:00 Megan came in. Deanne entered with her. Michael observed many similarities, and a few differences between the women. Megan wasn’t quite as tall, at about 5’5”. She had rare yellow hair, with a few streaks sun bleached to a light yellow. She had blue eyes, while Deanne’s were closer to hazel. She had a very good figure, though not quite as busty. Michael guessed to be a nearly perfect C cup. Michael suggested Deanne wait in her room, and after she left, managed to play the first message for Megan. The interview went well.

“I see you changed majors three times?”

“Yes, I didn’t want to be tied into any one thing. So I did some engineering, some architecture, some electronics, some mechanics, then I went into the sciences, biology, physics, mathematics.”

“A Jack, er Jill of all trades.” Michael replied. She laughed.

“That’s me. It’s really been fun though. When I’m out with Deanne, I’m all over the place. One minute I’m working the bait boxes and winches. The next I’m identifying the day’s catch. The next day I’m piloting the Robot sub.”

“Deanne tells me she doesn’t have family. You?”

“No, my mother passed away when I was a kid. My dad and I, we were a team. He had a crab boat for a long time. But crabbing is hard. He wanted me to get through college, but I just couldn’t stick to one thing long enough for a degree. But when I got my first job working a research ship, he was proud. He died of

pneumonia a few years ago. He caught it while at sea, and by the time he got back there wasn't much anybody could do.

"I'm sorry to hear that. I lost my father my senior year of college, it's a tough thing to go through."

"So you pilot those mini subs?" He asked after a moment. "I see them on TV, it's fascinating."

"It's harder than you think; you've got a sub on a tether, and any move you make could be disastrous. They're expensive. But it's so rewarding, you're right there in the middle of everything."

They talked until well past five. Then Tabitha whispered in his ear it was getting late.

"Well, wow! Look at the time! I intended to only go a couple hours, but it's been quite a bit longer." He closed down his laptop, and got up.

"Dinner at 7:00?" They walked down the hallway to the elevator. "We'll have the other people there, and tomorrow we'll have a group exercise. I think you'll have an interesting perspective."

The door opened on her floor, and Michael proceeded to his room. "What do you think?"

"I stand by my earlier prediction." Tabitha's voice came through the earpiece.

"Har har, send the recordings off and get down here for dinner."

"Recording sent. I'll pass the word to Diane." Tabitha added.

"Ask Haley if she likes to join us too. I think Haley and Megan together, and we'll be laughing all night."

"I think you're right. I'll pass it along. See you at seven."

That night Haley and Megan did not disappoint. Everyone was talking and laughing and enjoying themselves. Some a little too much. Timothy drank his share, and a couple of other's shares as well. So much so Michael asked if a couple of the bell-hops would take him to his room. Once he had been removed, the rest cut back on their own drinking, but the talk and stories continued.

The following morning, none were surprised to see Timothy be the last to arrive. Michael, Tabitha, and Diane were on hand to answer questions and help the conversation along. They were first asked the standard 'if you were starting a colony' question. Some said yes, some said no, but the conversation was the important thing. How each listened and interacted with the others. They broke for lunch, and then returned for the afternoon exercise.

"Since you're all in the same field, let's try something that's right up your alley." Michael said. "Let's assume that a large body of water, say the Mediterranean Sea, was somehow stripped of life. There are corals, plant life, maybe some small things like plankton. But other than that, nothing." They all looked at him curiously. "The danger has passed, and the sea can sustain life again. What would you do? How would you go about reseeded the eco-system?"

"It couldn't be done." Alex Lofton replied quickly. "We'd have to let nature take its course."

"You're talking about hundreds, if not thousands of species of animals." Timothy added.

"It's an interesting scenario, but I do not think the technology exists, and the manpower required would be huge." Samuel said.

"Fair enough." Michael replied. "But we're talking the Mediterranean Sea, there's dozens of countries surrounding it. All of them rely on the sea to some extent. If something like this did happen, they'd all

commit resources to it. Money, Science, man-power. So let's assume there are technological breakthroughs. And the man-power would be available. What would you do?"

"It'd be one heck of a paper." Lorna joked.

"Is this why you asked me about reseeding the Gulf of Mexico Tuesday?" Deanne asked.

"A bit. Did I tip my hand?" Michael smiled.

"In hindsight, yes, but this is still a challenge." She replied. "I think there's no way to completely repopulate the entire Mediterranean. Even if we could, we wouldn't want to. To do so, would likely cause an imbalance from wherever we got the specimens from."

The rest of the table nodded.

"But, if we could gather bunches of samples from around the globe, never taking too much from any one area, we could then jump start nature." Megan added.

"Start small." Melissa suggested, "And work your way up to larger species."

"It'd take years to do." Beth added. "You'd have to let each introduction get established and let the population build up before going onto the next."

From there the topic took off. They got into specifics of animal species, and even suggested rough timelines. The afternoon went quickly. They even continued the conversation over dinner that night. As they were finishing their meal, no wine this time, Michael gave each an envelope.

"Tomorrow you all have the day to yourselves. Please meet me in the meeting room Friday morning at 10:00, we'll go from there. It's late and I need to take care of next weeks' arrangements, stay if you wish, enjoy."

"Goodnight." Deanne volunteered. Megan quickly echoed the sentiment. As the elevator doors closed Tabitha spoke aloud.

"Oh yea, I stand by my prediction." She giggled.

"What?" Diane asked.

"Nothing, just a private joke." Tabitha replied. Michael returned to his room and sent his messages.

The following afternoon all were meeting in Tabitha and Jenna's room.

"So, this is how it works. We look at each of the candidates. We A, send them home with no further discussion. We B, tell them nothing about 'upstairs', but we interview them more. Or C, we take them upstairs right away and tell them the whole story. Everybody back home has been watching the interviews, and is doing the same thing. We should hear from them later this afternoon."

"I think it's pretty clear who fits under group A." Tabitha replied, and there seemed a general nodding of agreement around the room.

"I don't know about you, but it's pretty clear. I don't have anyone in group B." Haley replied. "But I must say, I was really impressed with Melissa, one of the smartest people I've ever met. She'll look so much better when her eyes are fixed." She looked at Michael. "The shot, that should fix her eyes, right?"

"Uhm, yes, it should." Michael replied.

“What do you mean?” The doctor asked.

“You mean you didn’t know about my heart?” Haley replied. “Well, when Michael scanned me, for my shot, the computer found a small heart issue. The shot fixed it. I’ve never felt better. I’ve lost weight, I’ve got more energy. It’s been a miracle, a true miracle.”

“I’d really like to see that information.” Doc replied.

“Absolutely. We can go upstairs later. Would you mind coming along Haley? Do another scan?”

“Oh absolutely.” She replied. “Really girls, if you haven’t yet, you really need to do it. Take the chance. I guarantee you won’t be sorry.”

“Michael got me a piano, I’ve wanted one of my own for so long.” Annabelle replied. “Can we go back up now?”

“As soon as we’re finished with our evaluations.” Michael said.

“Oh, in that case.” Haley said. She took her piece of paper and marked her evals, and handed it to Michael. Annabelle quickly followed. The others took just a little more time. But after he gathered them he only smiled.

“Well, it looks like we have a consensus.” He said. “Does anybody feel a need to discuss this? Remember this is serious stuff. We’re about to ask these people to join a community. Your children will be growing up with their children. You are all teachers. You will be teaching their children alongside of your own. Are you totally sure about this?”

They all looked at him carefully. “I’m sure.” Tabitha said. “I am as well.” Jenna added. And one by one they all agreed.

“Very well. I just wanted to be sure. But I’m glad. I have the feeling everybody back home will think the same as we do.” He stepped over to an open area. “So, Doc, Haley, Jenna if you’d step over here, we’ll go upstairs. Tabitha, would you bring the rest in a couple minutes?”

They all made their way aboard. Michael took his group into the med room. They watched as Haley was rescanned. The doctor was shown the before and after tests. “Well, according to this, the defect is all but gone. In another week or two, it’ll be totally gone. Amazing.”

“And I’ve lost nearly twenty pounds.” Haley said looking at the information.

“So this thing scans us?” Diane asked.

“Yes.” Michael said. “Stand here.” Michael ran the scanner.

“Do me next.” Dawn volunteered. Some were watching from the corridor, for there just wasn’t enough room in the med room.

The doc was amazed. “This is incredible. What this can do, is truly amazing. I could study it for years, and never understand it all.”

“So, does that mean you want to make it official?” Michael asked. “Do any of you that haven’t done so, want to make it official?”

“Count me in.” Dawn said after a moment. “What do I do?” She stepped back into the room.

“It’s really simple.” Annabelle said. “It just a shot, and it doesn’t hurt at all.”

“Really?”

“Cross my heart.” Annabelle assured her.

Michael had the computer make a standard shot. “Ready?” She nodded, closed her eyes, and he gave her the shot.

“Wow! It really didn’t hurt.” She said. “I felt it, but it didn’t hurt.”

“Now, pick out a bracelet.” Marie said showing her own. Michael showed her the samples. She picked one. The computer generated one with her name on it. And Michael fastened it to her right wrist.

Dawn hopped off the table and went out to Marie, Annabelle and Haley, showing the bracelet to them.

“Anybody else?” Michael asked. There was a moment. Then Stephanie stepped forward. He gave her the standard shot. Then all eyes turned to Diane. She looked at the others, then smiled, and stepped forward. He gave her a standard shot as well. Now, only one on board didn’t have a shot.

“Doc?” Tabitha asked. “You want to make it unanimous?”

“Please?” Jenna asked. “I really want you to come. Join us?” But it was obvious to all she was asking a far more personal question. He looked her in the eyes, then nodded. She beamed, and kissed him full on the lips. He was surprised for a moment, but wrapped his arms around her. There were claps of encouragement from all.

“Just one thing.” He said after they parted. “There’s some questions I have for Michael, in private. If you don’t mind?”

The women laughed and joked a little, but they reluctantly filed out. Even before the door shut, Michael could hear the Annabelle playing the piano from down the hall.

“So, Doc, stand here.”

Once that was completed, Michael pointed to a screen on the wall. “Look at it yourself, what do you see.”

Doc Hester looked at it. “Blood pressure is a little high. Wow, borderline diabetic. Good thing I eat right.”

“Diabetic?”

“I’m not surprised. Both my parents were. Let’s see. It shows where I broke my arm when I was a kid. I’ve said it before, but I’ll say it again, this is amazing.”

“Well, the good news, I can fix everything. Blood pressure, everything.”

“Susan tried to explain it. Changing one’s genetic code is incredible.”

“It boggles the mind doesn’t it? I’m no scientist, but I know this is scary stuff.” Michael replied. A injection was prepared.

“Don’t worry. This is about the same shot I took myself.” He said. “I never felt better. And the changes are genetic.”

Once the shot was given, Doc picked out a bracelet for himself. “Oh, one last thing. No unprotected sex for the next three months. It takes that long to assure the changes will be passed down to your children.”

“Oh, and I added a little surprise. Trust me, you’ll like it. And when the time comes, Jenna will too.”

“But..”

“It’ll be our secret.” Michael said. Then he opened the door. “Come on. We better get to party.”

They went to the den where Annabelle was playing. Some of the women were trying to sing along. But all were happy and having a good time. Jenna pulled him aside.

“Thank-you. David has been so wonderful.” Jenna said pulling Michael and Tabitha aside.

“You’re welcome.” He replied. “To tell the truth, I’m surprised it took this long. Tabitha and I both thought you had him hooked after he agreed to show you around the world.”

“I..” Then she paused and blushed.

“Don’t worry Jenna.” Tabitha said moving up close. “Guys usually are slow to realize they’re hooked. Congratulations by the way.”

“Thank-you.” Jenna smiled.

“There is something we still have to deal with,” Tabitha said. “We’ve got the underwater footage from Zanthia, but just how are we going to capture sea life like we talked about yesterday?”

“I think we can use what you were using for birds. We can make an automated submersible, it could collect the animals, teleport them directly into onboard stasis boxes, and the box would be brought aboard. I’m pretty sure I can have something in a few days. And another few days to build it.”

Dawn came in the room with a tray of snacks, Marie following with drinks. Soon everybody was talking and laughing having more fun than any of them could recall. It wasn’t too long before Jenna and Doc wanted to leave. Michael walked them down hall to the teleporter room explaining the financials. Doc’s grand-daughter, would be brought up the day before leaving, even though some of her things could be brought earlier. Michael spoke to each women in turn, telling them about what their next steps would be. Annabelle had already completed her move. The others would quickly do the same.

The next morning, the eight candidates came into the temporary office at 10.00. One by one he called Alex, Lorna, Timothy, Samuel and Beth into the second room and wished them well. He thanked them, and gave them each some additional money for their time. Their travel papers were waiting for them at the front desk. Once they had left, he went back out to the outer office.

“Ladies, I must say, all of us were very impressed with all of you. Before we go any further, I must tell you, you are not competing for a single spot. I must also insist that what you see and hear from this point forward must be kept in the strictest of confidence. Can you agree to this?” They all nodded.

“Good, please stand.” He instructed, and then brought out his comm-device. “Computer four to be brought up please.”

Like the others before him they were shocked to find themselves on the teleporter platform. And like the others, it took some convincing to get them to step off and onto the bridge. It took most of the afternoon to tell their story. Finally as they ate dinner in the common room, Michael and the rest explained that they had been recruited for a good reason. Plates put away, they sat in the comfy chairs in front of the big monitor. Tabitha stood.

“This is Zanthia.” She started. “You’ve already seen the holographs. It’s truly beautiful. Even though it was once a populated world it’s been so long, it’s as though it has been washed clean and fresh. You can walk on beaches knowing that no one has stepped on the beach for thousands of years.”

“This is footage we recorded when we first arrived just over five years ago. It’s beautiful isn’t it, but it was devoid of animal life. Before we left earth, my sister and I, with a lot of help from those that traveled with us, collected as many birds and fresh water life we could. Since our arrival we’ve been releasing the birds and repopulating the lakes and streams. It’s been going very well. We have a growing bird population, and the fish have been multiplying. But we neglected the ocean. That’s where you three ladies come in. My sister shot this footage last week.”

The screen changed to an underwater scene. Immediately the three women’s eyes were glued to it. Like children watching a cartoon, they sat nearly motionless as the footage played. The screen showed corals and plants, and some very small critters crawling and swimming around. After it was finished Tabitha spoke again.

“You see, the exercise we gave you Thursday was real. This is our reality, and we need your help.”

“In exchange, we’re offering a life on Zanthia. Be aware, for you and the rest of us, it’s a one way trip. We will go to Zanthia and live. Our children will grow up and take over, and so forth, and so on.”

“I know it is a lot to take in. We chose you, unanimously by the way, because you are young and creative. You seem to embrace a challenge, and you seem to have an adventurous spirit. There are many other things we can offer. For example, research ships, we can have them built. You’ve seen the computer make meals. We’ve been traveling all over the world collecting food dishes. If there’s anything you want to add to the library, we can do that. Oh! I almost forgot. I asked Susan and Courtney to help you see more about life on Zanthia.”

New footage started on the screen. Thankfully Susan was behind the camera and Courtney was talking. She showed the camera around her apartment, ending the tour on the terrace, overlooking the center of the city and the ocean beyond. Next they were seen flying above the city from a shallow altitude. Not very fast, but it was still a spectacular view. They traveled by air north up the coast and turned to follow a wide river upstream. After a time they climbed over wide water falls.

“Shahallah Falls.” Jenna said. “It’s one of my favorite places on Zanthia.”

Finally the footage climbed higher and raced straight back to ZanTan. Then the screen went dark.

“So ladies.” Michael said. “Thoughts? Questions?”

“Can we see the underwater footage again?” Deanne asked.

“Absolutely.” He replied. Jenna produced a remote and started the footage again. “Here, if you want to zoom in, press this. Then point to what you want to see, then this controls the zoom.”

It took a few flawed attempts but soon the three women were engrossed in looking at everything closely.

“I swear that’s a sponge.” Melissa observed.

“Sure looks like one.” Deanne agreed. After another several minutes Megan stepped away and approached Michael and Tabitha. Jenna and the Doc had left for the night, and the teachers had retired to the den.

“What’s up?” Michael asked.

“If I know Deanne, she’ll be engrossed in that for hours. I don’t know Melissa very well yet, but I doubt Deanne will be alone.”

“Alluring, isn’t it?” Tabitha asked.

“More like addicting. Can I ask you? How do you plan on pulling all of this off?”

“Let’s go up to the bridge and we’ll talk.”

“First, let’s show her the ship a little.” Tabitha suggested. They opened the door to the den to find the teachers looking through the collection of movies and music. Then they went across the hall to the exercise room. “The trip, just one way, is nearly three months. So without entertainment, and something to do, we’d get bored.”

They walked forward and Megan stopped at one of the murals. “That’s ..”

“Shahallah Falls.” Michael volunteered. “I must admit, I’ve never seen it in person before. But it is magnificent.”

“Did they have a plane or something?”

“My sister calls it an air car.” Tabitha replied. “She messaged me last week about finding it. It seems most people on Zanthia used regular old automobiles. But some, like officials, used air cars. There seemed to be some kind of air transport, but most ‘flights’ were shorter. Telecommuting was highly popular. You saw the holograms, no need to be there in person when entire rooms could be projected holographically.”

“So you communicate?”

“Yes, it takes about three hours for a message to make a trip. We have satellites her around Earth, and also orbiting Zanthia. Every TV show, every radio broadcast, is relayed to Zanthia.”

“Here, check out a cabin.” Tabitha said opening the door to an empty cabin. “We have nearly twenty cabins. You can have your own, you’ll need your own space on the trip.” They arrived at the bridge and looked out at the stars.

“We need to take you all on a tour.” Tabitha said.

“I think we should wait.” Michael said. “We’ll have to pry those other two away from the TV first.” The tongue-in-cheek delivery was not lost on the two women.

“So, how are you going to pull this off?” Megan asked again. Tabitha explained how she caught birds, and offered to show her the storage rooms. But Megan declined; she was captivated by the view.

“Look there.” Michael pointed slightly up and to the right. Then he pressed the command button on the console. “Computer, please relay to Mayflower, request she close the distance between us to approximately two hundred yards.”

“Mayflower acknowledges.” The computer voice replied. As they watched, the small cylindrical object grew larger until it was quite clear to them.

“That’s the Mayflower, it’s an exact copy of this ship. The ship has the ability to repair itself, so I had the repair machines manufacture the Mayflower. In case we needed a second ship.”

Tabitha yawned. “Wow, I didn’t realize it was getting this late.”

“You’re right, Tabitha, why don’t you take the teachers back down, I want a quick word with the others.”

They walked back to the common room, Tabitha stopping at the den.

“So ladies, your initial thoughts?”

“It’s all just incredible.” Melissa offered.

“It is, trust me, I was just as astonished as you are. Now do you understand why this all must be totally secret? Can I be assured you will not speak of this to anyone you’ve not already met here today?”

They all nodded.

“Good. Now you all know why we asked about your family, we would never dream of splitting a family.”

“Finally, I want you all to think about it. Take your time, and do not hesitate to ask questions. Except be careful how you talk while in public. I will be around all weekend if you have any questions. We haven’t scratched the surface on the wonders this could be for you. I want you to feel free to ask questions. Truly, I beg you to ask. No question is too small or too silly. Ask myself, or Tabitha. Now, it’s getting late, let me get each of you back to your rooms. Megan?”

“Don’t worry, it’ll only be a few minutes and the others will follow along.”

He walked Megan down the hall and into the teleporter room. “You also need to understand, we have money we can use to take care of any financial obligation, like rent or school loans, whatever you need. Understand?”

“Yes, that’d be great.”

“Wonderful.” He said and held her arm. Her eyes glazed over, and he played the second message for her. Once he released. “Now, if you’ll step onto the platform.” Once she was in place she teleported down to her hotel room.

“Melissa? A moment?” He said entering the common room area. He repeated the same message to her and had her taken down.

“Deanne? You ready to go down?”

“Yes I think so.” He touched her arm, and played the message for her as well. Then released.

“What do you think so far? Gut reaction?”

“It’s all amazing, and so cool. I think it’d be cool to do, but it’s all so, big, it just too much to think about all at once.”

“I was the same way; it took me weeks to really get my head around some of it. It still seems like a dream, landing and living on another planet, wow, its heady stuff.” Here step up. And she was teleported down. Michael followed her to his own room.

“Less than two minutes later, there was a knock on his door.” Tabitha was standing.

“Wow, that was great wasn’t it?” She asked.

“Yes it was.” Michael replied. “I promised Susan I’d send a message. Let me do that real quick.”

“No problem. Bathroom for me.”

“Hi Susan.” He started recording the message. “The three we chose, I think, will work out well. They were delighted, and awestruck, like everybody else has been. But just like everybody else, they started asking questions and really getting into it. I’m thinking all three will agree to come along, hopefully sooner rather than later. Another bit of good news, great news really, Doc agreed to come along. And Jenna has him firmly hooked. The remaining teachers also committed. I gave Doc and the other girls their shots and

bracelets. All that's left is the three women today. The video you and Courtney made was really great; I think it really helped everyone see what waits for them. Hopefully some of the group we interview next week will work out, but honestly, if none of them do, I won't care. I never imagined we'd recruit three or four people, and now we have six teachers and a doctor, and maybe three marine experts, Wow, way better than expectations. I'll keep you informed if anything changes. I know we've been here eight weeks, and we have another seven or eight to go, but it just seems like it so close now. Give the kids hugs. I'm wired up, but I'm totally exhausted. I'm going to bed. I'll send some more messages tomorrow. Love you lots."

"You're wired, but exhausted?" Tabitha said from the bathroom door.

"Weird, I know." He replied.

"No, it makes perfect sense." She took his hand and pulled him from the chair. "There something I want to do. I want to go to bed, a real bed this time, and wake up next to you tomorrow."

"Tabitha...."

"Relax. No sex, I'm too tired too." She said. "But in the morning, no guarantees."

The weekend went by quietly. Michael had gotten the teachers started sending messages to Jessica. She in turn started filling them in on what she had been doing. They seemed excited again, now that they were about to have students, and start teaching again. They even asked when the animal collecting would resume. Doc Hester reported that he had told his grand-daughter that they would be moving soon. That it'd be a long trip, but Jenna would be traveling with them, and she'd be meeting new friends as they went. He would start the process of selling his home. Some of his more personal belongings were already being teleported aboard ship. Tabitha played packing coordinator. The teachers each picked out cabins, and some had started their moving processes.

Saturday dinner was a group of half dozen. The mariners were all in attendance along with Annabelle, and Haley. The others were out and about. Jenna was with Doc Hester, and Tabitha was with the other teachers, packing and moving. Haley and Megan were a pair, the entire table was laughing and enjoying themselves. Haley seemed ever more confident as her body trimmed down. She was happy to tell the others how she felt better, and had lost weight.

Sunday was more of the same, but this time, Deanne and Megan joined Michael for breakfast. They had the restaurant almost entirely to themselves, so Michael took the time to answer some of their questions. He found himself answering similar questions when Melissa joined him for lunch.

Monday and Tuesday were more interviews, three each day. Wednesday was the group exercise. Even though none of the candidates were recruited, they did have an interesting discussion on how to collect the marine specimens.

Wednesday evening they agreed to have dinner aboard ship. It was a chance for all thirteen adults to talk openly.

The three mariners were asking questions. Haley talked openly about her heart defect being corrected, and how she was feeling more energetic and losing weight. Melissa hung on her every word, then asked Michael and the Doctor if her vision could be corrected.

"I'm not an optometrist, so I can't say for sure." Doc Hester replied.

"We could scan you, see what the computer says." Michael offered. "Deanne, Megan? Care to watch?"

They all went forward to the med room, the three mariners, doctor and Michael crowded into the room. The others tried to watch from the door. Melissa stood and was scanned. The doctor read the screen.

“Well, looking at this, other than your eyesight, you’re in perfect health.” Melissa was relieved.

Next Deanne and Megan were scanned, both were in excellent shape.

“I think it’s time for a tour.” Michael said. He led them to the bridge and issued the command. The ship broke orbit and this time headed towards the sun. The monitors darkened but then the ship turned and they settled into orbit around Mercury. The ship made recordings for several orbits, then broke away, only to settle into orbit around Venus. They visited the other planets one by one, they skipped Saturn on the way out, but after Pluto, they started returning and settled in under the rings.

They spent most of their time in wonder, looking out the view screens, and that was perfectly fine with Michael. The more curious the mariners were, the more likely they were to agree to join the trip. The ship was slowly moving from the inner edge of the rings to the outer edge and back, occasionally breaking away to see some of the moons. Everyone was well occupied. Melissa broke away from the group and approached Michael.

“Can I ask you something? In private?”

“Sure. Let’s go back to the den.” They retreated down the hallway, and took seats in the den. “What can I do for you?”

“I’m still curious about the shot, can it fix my eyesight?” She asked. “I’ve been wearing glasses since I was a kid. I can’t get contacts.”

“You’ve seen how it’s helped Haley. The doctor has looked at the scans, and he seems to believe it will.”

“So if I go with you, I’ll get a shot and it’ll fix my eyesight? Will it hurt? What will happen?”

“The shot doesn’t hurt at all. And the changes will be gradual.”

“And if I decide not to go?”

“Well...” he started than thought better of it. “I’ll make you a deal, help us as much as you can for the next few weeks. At the end of that time, if you decide to stay, I’ll give you a shot that fixes your eyesight, nothing more. If you decide to come along, I’ll give you the full shot. Either way, I bet by winter time, you’ll be glasses free.”

“Deal?” he asked holding out his hand.

“Deal.” She replied as she took his hand in return.

They rejoined the group on the bridge.

“Jenna?” He asked. “You’ve been working on something? Care to show everyone.”

“Of course.” She said. She moved to the table, and sat. She pressed some buttons on her keypad and the holograph projector lit up and displayed a long tube shaped item. The item expanded until it hovered above the table, about four feet long. It looked like a typical submarine, a long tube with rounded ends and sides. Eight thrusters, at each corner at each end, provided propulsion.

“This is the robotic marine sampler.” Jenna started. “These thrusters rotate to allow extreme agility.” Jenna continued. She pressed a button and the hull became a cutaway. “Inside are eight stasis trunks. As the ship descends, it collects animal life from the sea around it and puts it into the stasis trunks. Once everything is collected from one location, it is teleported to the next.”

Michael was watching from a few feet back.

“She’s something, isn’t she?” Doc Hester said standing beside him.

“Absolutely.” He replied. He had to admit, it was quite a view. Jenna’s bust line was nearly fully developed, nearly four inches of cleavage on display, while another two or three inches was hidden.

“So this will collect the ocean life?” Megan asked.

“Yes, it’s fully automated. It is being built aboard the Mayflower.” Jenna replied. “I thought it best to build it there. There is a limitation. The ship must be overhead for the transport to work efficiently.”

“So ladies, you were part of the discussion, do you think this will work?” Michael asked. The three mariners looked at each other, than back at him.

“Yes.” They said almost in unison. Then they started talking very fast amongst themselves.

“I think we have three new recruits.” Doc Hester said, still standing beside him.

“I won’t bet against you on that one.” Michael replied. “How goes things in your world?”

“I think I have the house sold. We’ve been packing.”

“Well, let us know when you’re ready; I’ll have a double suite ready for you at the hotel. I’m looking forward to meeting your grand-daughter. Jenna has said she’s really a sweetheart.”

“Thank-you, I appreciate that. I was wondering how we were going to work the logistics.”

“Most of the ladies have completed their moves. Their cabins are ready for them. Speaking of which, you need to pick out cabins for you and your grand-daughter.”

“That’s right.” They walked down the hall, found two empty cabins next to each other, and Michael logged it into the computer.

“There, now you can have your belongings teleported directly.”

“Ah, there you are.” Tabitha approached them as they returned to the bridge.

“What’s up?”

“Those three are just going to town. They’re planning sampling spots, and everything.” Tabitha explained.

“It seems like we have the problem of ocean gathering well in hand.” Michael commented.

“But doesn’t help solve mine.” Tabitha replied.

“We can start sampling full time now.” Michael replied. “I’m not planning on any more interviews, and only a few side trips. We should be able to get five or six teams out and about.”

“It’ll never be enough. Even if we filled this ship, it won’t be enough.” Tabitha said.

“Looks like you’ll have to make more trips.” Doc said.

“Could you leave your grand-daughter for nine or ten months?” Tabitha asked. “I have eight children back home, I miss them so much. I’m not going to leave them again.”

“It sounds like you need somebody here, to be your hands.” Doc said. Then he snapped his fingers. “And I know just who.”

Michael and Tabitha looked at him, the obvious question unasked.

“You met her.” He said. “The day you first visited me. Rose. She was the aid at the desk.”

“I still don’t understand.” Tabitha replied.

“Rose and I have known each other forever. I’ve seen how you collect animals. She’d be perfect to act as your agent here on Earth.”

Michael and Tabitha looked at him questioningly.

“I better start over.” Doc said. “Rose was a nurse when I started my residency. It was her first job, so neither of us knew what we were doing. Somehow, we became good friends. I introduced her to a friend of mine, they eventually married. She introduced me to her friend, who I married. They were my son’s god-parents. And we were theirs. She stuck with me ever since; from hospital to hospital, to my teaching career. She adores my grand-daughter. My grand-daughter calls her ‘Aunt Rose.’ I would’ve asked we bring her along on our trip. But she has two kids, one grandchild, and a second grandchild on the way. You said you would never split up a family.”

“So are you suggesting we tell her about all this?” Tabitha asked.

“Yes, and teach her to use the equipment. After we’ve left, she can collect what you ask of her.”

“We could leave the Mayflower here.” Tabitha said.

“Then once we get home and unloaded, send this ship back empty.” Michael added. “Once it arrives, the Mayflower comes back loaded.”

“And back and forth.” Doc finished.

“Hmmm, at first blush it seems like a good idea.” Michael said. “Let’s think on it a while, ask the others. I’ll send a message home, see what they think.”

Their conversation had gone totally unnoticed; the three mariners were still discussing, and the teachers were mostly back at the view screens.

“Ladies.” He said to the three. “Time to put your toys away.” But he smiled as he said it. The three, especially Megan caught his thought, and responded with a bit of playful pouting. He proceeded to the front console and pressed the command and ordered the ship to return to Earth orbit.

“If I could have your attention for a moment more, I’ve got a couple pieces of business. First, we resume animal collecting tomorrow morning. I know it’s late, but we have a lot to do. Everybody meet in Jenna and Tabitha’s room at 8:30. Our new hopefuls, you’ll be learning. Then we’ll send you out on your own. Tabitha says we have a lot of collecting to do. So we’ll have to work very hard. But we’re almost done; just another six or seven weeks. I promise.”

“The second piece, I’ll be doing a little ‘special’ collecting. So if you ladies have your eyes on some special fellow. Let me know, and I’ll do what I can. Come talk to me in private later.” That was met with a few giggles. They talked and chatted for another fifteen minutes, until the ship announced they had arrived in orbit again.

“Tabitha, please take the teachers back down. Ladies, please sit.”

He sat at the table, the three mariners, Jenna, and Doc Hester.

“So, do you now think it’s possible to do the collecting?” He asked.

“We think so.” Melissa said.

“We know we have to collect animals at different depths.” Deanne said.

“Start on the surface.” Megan said. “Collect, descend to a hundred feet, collect, descend again, collect, and so on.”

“Because of the water pressure.” Doc said. Being a diver he understood this.

“Exactly.” Melissa confirmed. “We have some details to work out, but I think we can start collecting very soon.”

“In the meantime, would you like to see the sampler?” Jenna asked. They all instantly said yes.

Michael went to the console and pressed the command button. “Computer, does the Mayflower have full atmosphere?”

“Yes, all systems working properly.” The computer voice replied.

“You know, I just thought of something.” Tabitha said. “Does this ship have a name?”

“Jenna?” Michael asked.

“Yes, it was named the Zanhallah.” She replied

“Let me see if I remember this right.” Tabitha said. “Zanhallah means ‘Our Hope’ ?”

“That is correct.” Jenna replied.

“It’s a perfect name.” Tabitha commented.

“So, would everyone like to go over?” Everyone eagerly nodded.

They went to the teleporter room, then transferred over to the Mayflower.

“The sampler is being built in the forward cargo hold below.” Jenna said. They walked towards the rear of the ship.

“The Zanhallah, was it like this?” Doc Hester asked looking at the barren walls.

“Yes, pretty bland, isn’t it.” Tabitha replied. “We did a little remodeling before we left. We had one cabin converted into the den, and another converted into the gym. But both are even bigger now.”

They went down the stairs, and then started walking toward the forward cargo hold.

“Hang on, I want to check something.” He opened a door to a storage room. The door slid open, and all they could see were what looked like small chest freezers. Each trunk was about waist high, three feet deep and four feet wide. Each was numbered, and had a small display screen imbedded into the front.

“These are the stasis trunks.” Jenna replied. “The ship has been building them since we arrived at the design of the sampler.”

They continued forward to the larger cargo hold. A half dozen maintenance machines were busy moving around.

The sampler was about one-third complete. Michael guessed it was about eight feet wide, and twenty feet long and end up about five feet tall. The bottom of the hull was complete and construction was currently working on the sides. The lower thrusters were in place at each end. It was perfectly white, and reminded Michael of a giant claw foot bath-tub.

Two large arms, and two smaller arms, were suspended from the ceiling. As they watched, a piece of hull, about two feet square, and partially curved was moved into place by one arm, the smaller arm swung into place and moved over the joint. It followed the joint, a soft white light along the joint. Once complete the arms retreated, and the new piece was in place.

“Can I touch it?” Michael asked.

Jenna pressed a button on her tablet, and all activity stopped. “Go ahead. It is safe.”

Michael walked up to it, and tentatively touched it, ready to pull his hand back if it was hot. It wasn't. He touched it more confidently, and then moved his hand over the surface.

“There's no seam. If I didn't see it, I'd never believe there were two pieces, now joined into one.”

Everybody came and looked more closely, each running their hands over the impossibly smooth surface.

Jenna explained how the stasis trunks would fit inside. Then they stepped back, and Jenna instructed the machine to resume. From around the sampler, everything sprang back to life.

“It's getting very late.” Tabitha said looking at her watch. “I think we all better get some sleep. I don't want people falling asleep tomorrow.”

They made their way back to surface, the Doctor to his home, the rest to their hotel rooms. The next morning, though tired from the late night, all were assembled. Tabitha took two of the mariners with her, while Michael took Marie and Melissa with him. The rest split off into groups and spent the day collecting. They all made it back in time for showers and dinner.

“Let me show you something.” Tabitha said to the mariners as they rode the elevator up to their floor. She sat at a table, and opened her laptop. “I have to do this every night after collecting. Megan and Deanne, you were with me when we were in Australia today, remember?” They nodded. She pressed a couple buttons. A bird showed up on her screen. The bird's head and belly were bright red, the wings and tail was mostly blue. A scale drawn along its length showed it to be about 14 inches long.

“I remember that one, it's really pretty.” Megan observed.

“And the computer doesn't know what it is. But the computer thinks we have twenty of them.” She said. She pointed to a small window on the display.

“I happen to know what this is.” She said. “It's a Crimson Rosella. Specifically a male.” She looked up the classification and added it to the information. “Now, from this point forward, whenever we capture one of these, the computer will know what it is. Also the computer knows what stasis boxes each and every one is in.” She clicked OK, and went on to the next picture. “Ah, just as I hoped, the computer tries to match, but it lets me confirm. It has determined this bird is close to one it already knows, but not quite. Notice how it is smaller? This is the female of the species.” She entered the data. “And it says we have fifteen of them.”

“I won't bore you with the details, but once the sampler starts doing its thing, you should do this same thing.”

“That’ll take forever.” Deanne said.

“I thought so too. But once you identify something, you won’t be asked again. Today was our first day in Australia, so there’s a lot of new species, so I’ll be busy tonight. But tomorrow, there will be quite a bit less. After a few days, there might be one or two species a day showing up. So it gets a lot easier.”

“You’re probably thinking, why keep track. There’s thirty five examples of this species. Not enough for a stable population. Once we get a few hundred more, and they have an adequate food supply, I can release them.”

“That’s incredible.” Melissa observed. “I can see how that’d be incredibly useful. But you don’t need us talking over your shoulder, we need to get busy figuring out how we’ll do our thing.”

Friday and Saturday was marked by continued sampling, by the time they returned that evening Deanne and Melissa were quite proficient at using the collection equipment. In the evenings they worked on the plan to sample ocean life.

They took Sunday off, to rest and enjoy the beautiful weather. That night, at dinner Jenna informed them the sampler had been completed. The teachers passed the invitation, but Michael, Jenna, and the three mariners teleported up to the Mayflower and looked it over. The cargo hold was cleared of any of the maintenance machines. The sampler gleamed alone in the room.

“Well, do you approve?” He asked. The three women could only stare in amazement and slowly nod.

“So you’re ready to let it start?” And they anxiously nodded.

“The sampling program is entered and ready.” Jenna said, you need only instruct it to start.

“Computer, start the ocean sampling program.” Michael said after pressing a command button.

“Acknowledged.” Came the reply. “Moving into position now.”

“Once it’s directly above the first point, it should teleport the sampler down.” Jenna volunteered. And no sooner had she said it.

“Teleporting ocean sampler.” It said, and the sampler was bathed in white light and disappeared. They looked over Jenna’s tablet and watched the status. It took nearly a full three minutes and the status showed a stasis trunk as full. “Teleporting stasis trunk.” The computer announced. In the corner of the storage bay, the first trunk materialized.

“There you have it.” Michael said after a moment, the first trunk.

“Teleporting stasis trunk.” The computer announced again. They stepped back and another trunk was teleported in, sitting atop the first.

They went back to the bridge, Michael had the computer manufacture three laptops similar to what Tabitha was using. Once back on the surface, the three biologists started their identifying.

The next morning, three tired women managed to make their way to Tabitha and Jenna’s suite. Some coffee and light breakfast later, they along with the other women continued their collecting. This time Michael took Deanne and Megan with him. He found he sort of enjoyed the fish collecting part of their task, and the women weren’t afraid to get wet and handle potentially slimy river animals. Like Melissa, they asked of Zanthia and what it was like. As the week passed, he grew more and more confident the two would join the group.

Friday morning, he had to excuse himself from collecting, he was expecting one last interview. He waited in the temporary office, at 9:00 the door opened. Rose Hurley stepped in. He knew her to be just under fifty years old. She stood about average height. She had jet-black hair, but he could see a few greys. She wore glasses, probably bifocals, though they weren't the thick lenses like Melissa's. She carried herself professionally. He guessed she carried an extra thirty pounds. Though not a world class beauty, she was probably quite pretty in her youth.

"Are you Michael?" She asked.

"Yes, we met some time back." He said shaking her hand. Her eyes glazed and he played the first two messages for her. As her eyes focused, he continued. "I came to see Doctor Hester."

"Oh, yes, now I remember. You're a friend of Susan's."

"Yes, a very close friend." He replied. "I hope you don't mind the call. I'm hoping to interest you in a very important job opportunity."

"How important?" She asked.

"Let me show you." He said. He took out his comm-device, and moments later they were standing on the Zanhallah's teleport pad. Like all the other women before her, it took convincing to get her over the shock, and took a few hours to give a history. But unlike the other women, she came to accept it as truth significantly more quickly. It wasn't until mid-afternoon that he had finished and she had started asking questions.

"So you're collecting animals, like a giant science-fiction ark."

"Yes." He said. "Let me show you the rest of the ship." As they were in one of the cargo holds, a stasis trunk materialized into its place. He went on to explain the women's activity.

They made their way up to the common room, and he served her a snack.

"So, we get to the good part." He said. "We are planning on leaving in just a few weeks. But there is no way we will be able to collect everything we need. So, we'd like you to take over that task."

"Me?" She said. "You've got to be kidding."

"He's not." Came a voice from the hall. Doctor Hester had teleported aboard.

"David?" She asked recognizing him.

"Yes, I suggested you." He sat beside her. "I haven't been totally honest with you. It's true that I'm moving away. But I'm going with Michael and the rest."

"I can't believe it." She said.

"Oh, it's true. All I have is my Sabrina, and this is a fresh start." He said.

"We don't split up families." Michael said. "Otherwise we would've asked you to join us."

"But we can offer you something very special." Doctor Hester replied. "Come, let us show you." They went forward to the medical room. First they scanned her, and then showed her the results. "Look at this, see anything you didn't already know?"

They talked for the next fifteen minutes, every diagnosis the scan had revealed. Finally he dropped the bomb on her.

“All of these things, we can fix; even the arthritis.” He said.

“And what do I have to do? How am I expected to catch birds? Or fish?” She asked.

“Tomorrow I’ll show you.” Michael replied. “But for now, I think we need to be getting back down.”

“Oh, I better go too. Sabrina’s at the neighbors while ‘I run an errand,’ I have to be getting back. Rose, I’ll call you later?” She nodded and he left the room.

“Before we go down, I must ask you again, do not speak of this to anyone other than Doc and myself. And if you do talk to him, keep things general. Who knows who’s listening, and I’m sure you understand our need for secrecy. If word of what we’re doing got out, it’d be very bad.”

“This is just so unbelievable.”

“Let’s take you back down, we’ll get dinner, and tomorrow you’ll see.”

The following morning, Michael took Rose to a small tropical island. They spent the morning collecting birds for Tabitha. They had lunch teleported down to them, then spent a few hours collecting fish for Theresa. All the while they talked.

As the last of the stasis trunks was teleported away, they sat and relaxed.

“So, what do you think?”

“It’s incredible.” She replied. “I think I could do this, but I’m not young anymore.”

“You won’t be doing this 40 hours a week, I don’t think.” Michael answered. “You can work your own hours, as long as we get what we need.”

“Now, for the big question.” Michael said after a moment. “I think we can afford to at least double your current pay.”

“I,”

“Before you say anything, let me show you show something else.” They went aboard the ship. They went to the bridge and Michael crossed to the console and pressed the command button.”

“Computer, is there a fueling drone in the asteroids?”

“Yes, it has nearly completed its work cycle.”

“Tell it to pause its activity. Then break orbit and take us to it. We need to see it complete its cycle.”

“Acknowledge, breaking orbit.” They swung away from orbit and headed into space.

“The ship has small refueling drones. These drones travel to the asteroid belt to collect and refine the materials the ship needs for fuel, and to manufacture replacement parts.”

“It’s actually pretty cool.” He added after a moment. “Computer what is our fuel status?”

“Fuel reserves at ninety five percent. Estimate ten days required to maximize reserves.” The ships computer replied.

"I guess there won't be any more joyrides for us." Michael said aloud. "If we're late in leaving, Susan's going to be mad."

They arrived at the asteroid belt, outside the front view screens, they could see the refueling drone hovering just a dozen or yards or so in front of them.

"Computer, instruct the drone to continue. Does it have any gold on board?"

"Acknowledged, cycle resumed. Affirmative, drone is carrying 2.5 pounds of gold." They saw the drone start moving, Using its lasers and grappling hook like arms to move across the surface of the asteroid like a spider.

"Have the gold transported aboard to this table."

A moment later, a small light appeared upon the table, and when it dissipated, a small block of gold remained.

"Pick it up." Michael replied. Rose stepped forward and carefully picked up the shining object. "There you have it, gold."

"It's heavy." She replied. "It sure looks real."

"And it's how we finance things." He replied. "Computer has the drone offloaded?"

"Drone has unloaded. Starting new cycle."

"Very good, return us to Earth orbit as before." He instructed. "Long story short, the drones collect extra gold, which our company 'mines' and sells. We don't do a lot, but more than enough to pay for things. We can afford to pay you well."

"I'm flattered." She replied. "Really."

"You need to think about it, I understand."

"Orbit achieved." The computer announced.

"Let's get you down, and we'll talk more tomorrow." He said.

Once he got back to his hotel room, he went through his message, and then pressed record.

"Hi Susan, it won't be long now, just a few short weeks before we head back. Have you been collecting the frivolous wish lists? Get them to me soon. We have a few weeks of collecting, then a week of shopping. Bigger news; I took Rose out collecting today. She seems OK with everything, but seems reluctant to take us up on our offer. If you can think of anything we could do to persuade her, please share as soon as possible. I've got a few messages to go yet. Give everyone my best. Love to you and the kids."

He sent messages to Matilda, Kristine and Theresa, as well as a few others then went to bed.

The following morning, he awoke to find one message from Susan.

"Hi honey, good to hear Rose looks capable. But she doesn't see willing or excited? Hmm. You said she has kids and grandchildren? Well, if it was me, I'd be worried about my kids too. Offer a shot to her family too. If she agrees, you'll help out her family. There's a hand-held scanner you can use. Better get going. Gotta get Jessie and Jamie to school. Love you."

He met with Rose and they set about collecting birds again. They switched places, letting her run the equipment, while he watched. After lunch they collected fish. When they had finished Michael had a chance to talk with her some more.

“I got a message from Susan this morning. She suggested, that if you agree to help, I offer the same benefits to your family. Your husband and children.”

“That’s very kind.” She replied. “I’ll need to think about it.”

Just then her phone rang, she answered it and spoke for a few minutes.

“Can we go now? I need to get home.”

“What’s happened? Nothing bad I hope?” Michael started picking things up.

“Oh no, I’m a grand-mom again. My daughter-in-law just delivered.”

“Well congratulations. We’ll get you there as quick as we can.” Michael replied. They teleported back to their hotel rooms. Then Michael drove her to the airport.

As they drove Michael thought about his offer.

“You know what, I’m putting a big burden on you.” He said. “I’ll tell you what. I’ll give your entire family shots, free and clear, no strings attached. If you decide to help, great, the job is there. If not, you’ll at least have a longer healthier life to enjoy your new grandchild. By the way, boy or girl?”

“Girl, she came a couple weeks early.” She said. “Thank-you for your offer, it means a lot.”

They pulled up to the curb. Michael popped the trunk, and then helped her with her baggage.

“You have my phone number? Give me a call anytime you have question. But I have to warn you, you only have a few weeks. We’ll be leaving after that.”

“I’ll call you soon, I promise.” She said. She picked up her luggage and headed into the airport.

Michael returned to the hotel in time for dinner with the rest. He explained his time with Rose, and hoped she would accept their offer.

The following morning, they continued sampling; Jenna was spending the day with Doc Hester and his grand-daughter. That left eleven people, five teams went out. Michael took Deanne and Megan with him again, while Tabitha took Melissa. He hoped they would commit to the trip soon.

Thursday evening, Doc and Jenna joined them aboard the Zanhallah for dinner. Doc asked Haley if he could get another scan of her. She happily agreed.

“I see it, but I don’t believe it.” He said. “If I hadn’t seen the previous scans, I’d never believe you had any heart condition. Looking at this, no one would ever know.”

“I feel great Doc. I’ve never felt this good.” She had continued to lose weight and was now into down to ‘plump but not overly fat’ stage. She had lost weight everywhere but her bust, which was getting firmer and more prominent.

“OK, you’ve convinced me.” Melissa said. “Give me the shot. I’ll come with you. Just please fix my eyesight.”

Melissa came forward and stood to be scanned. Michael called up the standard shot, then as the doctor watched, the computer suggested the fix for her eyesight. He confirmed, and the injector was created. She was leaning against the exam table and he gave her the shot.

“There, did it hurt?” He asked.

“Not at all, not even a pinch.” She replied. He asked her to select a bracelet, then she chose a cabin. They went into the den and celebrated.

Friday they were back out in the wilderness, all working hard at their collections. Both Deanne and Megan had more questions, but he could tell from their tone, they were leaning towards going. They had just finished their second fish collection of the day, and were relaxing as they talked.

“So, that shot you gave Melissa, that’s really going to fix her eyesight?”

“Every shot so far has delivered exactly as promised.” He replied. “And you see it wasn’t painful. There’s no needle.”

“Let me ask you something. What are your leanings? Just a percentage, you’re under no obligation. I’d just like an idea, and if there’s anything I can do to help you decide.”

Deanne and Megan looked at one another. “Oh, what? 70-30?” Deanne asked her friend.

“Yea, 70-30. Maybe 75%.” Megan replied.

“That’s good, I’m assuming 70 percent in favor of going.” The two women nodded. “I’ll be honest with you, I was nervous as everything before we left, and during the trip, and even after we arrived. But seeing the place, it wasn’t but a couple weeks and I was so glad I did it.”

“We better get onto the next site.” Deanne said after a moment.

They moved on and went to work. They watched the last of the stasis trunks and equipment was taken away, and relaxed for a few minutes. Michael’s phone rang.

“Hello?”

Hello Michael? This is Rose. I was thinking about the offer.

“It’s still open, I promise you.”

Everything? The offer to help my family?

“Of course, what’s up?”

My son’s coming over with their baby girl, could we do it now?

“Absolutely. You’re home now? Alone?”

Yes, my daughter is at a friends and my husband is out running an errand.

“Good, I’ll call you in a few minutes.” Then he turned to Deanna and Megan. “We need to get picked up. Rose asked me to visit. So we better get going.”

They picked up their things. He had the ship teleport Deanne and Megan back to the hotel. Then he teleported up. He spent a few minutes in the med room, then called Rose back.

Hello?

“Hi Rose, are you still alone?”

Yes, but I expect my husband any minute now.

“I’m sending down a small bottle of liquid.” He said, and pushed the button on the teleporter.

Got it.

“Good, do not drink it. Make sure your husband and kids drink some of it. It won’t take much.”

What does it do?

“It just makes them sleepy and when they sleep they’ll sleep very deeply.”

My daughter-in-law is breast feeding.

“I asked, it won’t affect her milk at all. Just make sure everybody drinks some. It doesn’t have any smell or taste, so you can add it to water or wine or whatever else.”

I can do that. My husband is pulling up.

“No problem. Just call me when they’re all asleep. OK?”

Got it, bye. And she hung up the phone. He put together a briefcase with the hand-held scanner and laptop, then went back down to the hotel.

It was late that evening. He was sitting in his room watching a movie, when his phone rang again.

They’re all asleep.

“Very good, I’ll be there in a second.” He took out his comm-device, and a few seconds later, briefcase in hand, he teleported down to Rose’s home.

“How did it go?”

“I was nervous they’d taste it or something.” She replied. “I’ve seen enough of the spy movies, I was so nervous.”

“But they’re all asleep?”

“I think so.”

“OK, your husband first.” She led him to their bedroom. “Try to wake him.” He whispered.

She shook his arm, but he didn’t stir. Michael stepped forward and ran the scan the length of his body. He wasn’t surprised at some of the results. The man had to weigh over four hundred pounds. Heart disease, high blood pressure, clogging arteries, high cholesterol all were ganging up on the man. Next they went to Rose’s daughter. She seemed a pretty enough girl, ready to start her senior year in high-school. Finally they went to her son and daughter-in-law’s room.

“I’ll be back in a few minutes.” He said as they stepped back into the hallway.

“What about my grand-children?”

“They’re too young.” He replied. Rose’s grandson was over four, and the infant just a few days. “When they turn ten, we’ll scan them, and do what we can. I promise. You’ll have to remind me of course.”

“I will.”

“Now, let me get the injections ready, I’ll be back as soon as I can.” He teleported up, then went to the med-room and loaded in the scans. Rose’s was already in the computer. He had the computer project an image once the changes were complete. She was a pretty woman, as he had earlier guessed. But he just couldn’t leave her so plain. He dialed up her breast size to a very nice double D. Then rejuvenated her reproductive system; she’d be as fertile and able to have children as she was when she was seventeen.

Next he worked on her husband. It was a simple matter of correcting all the immediate issues. He upped the testosterone and metabolism levels to that of young man. The obesity would take care of itself.

Third the daughter; like her mother, she was pretty. She was in above average health, but there were genetic prepositions to the maladies that were present in her parents. He cleared them up and like her mother boosted her breast size. She was average B cup, but he upped it to a Double D, then he thought about, and slid it over a couple more sizes.

The son’s was straight forward, very similar to the husband. Then the daughter-in-law quickly followed. He wanted to significantly boost her C-cups, (though she was a D-cup while she breast fed) but he increased them to full Ds, with a bit added firmness.

Injections labeled and in his case he teleported back down.

“So this is it?” Rose asked.

“Yes it is.” He replied. “You want to go first?”

She nodded, and he gave her the shot. He then went to the others and did the same. Once he was finished they walked to the living room.

“Remember, first, we’ll have to scan and give shots to the two little kids when they turn ten or so. Second, for yourself, no unprotected sex for the next three months, the scans show you are capable of having children, so, you know, be careful.”

For her part, she blushed.

“You should notice a difference in a couple weeks. When you do, give me a call, and we can talk about the job.”

“I will, and thank-you.” He could tell by her tone that she was relieved. Remembering her husband’s condition, and her own he quickly arrived at the conclusion. “I think you and your husband will have many, many more happy healthy years ahead of you.”

He teleported back to his hotel room, and then made a late night call to Doc Hester to report on what he had done. Doc Hester had confirmed his thoughts; he had talked with Rose’s husband about his health issues.

The next morning he met with Deanne and Megan and headed out collecting. They talked about many things, he mentioned how he had digitized automobiles, so they could be produced on Zanthia.

“You could do ships too, right?” Deanne asked.

“Of course, though I suspect there are ship blueprints already in the Zanthian computers. If you want, pick out a couple research ships, and I’ll digitize them. Doc Hester did a lot of sailing, so we could go sailing.”

“That’d be wonderful.” Megan said happily.

The following week went much the same way, Tabitha was happily collecting, and messages from Theresa were also positive. It was late in the evening on Wednesday night when Deanne and Megan knocked on his door.

“Come in, what can I do for you?”

“Well, we’ve decided.” Deanne said.

“We’re in.” Megan said.

“Really? That’s wonderful news. From the first moment you came in for the interviews I hoped it’d work out.”

“So, you want to go upstairs now? Make it official?” They both nodded and Michael took them up.

“Who’s first?” He asked as they stepped into the bridge area.

“I’ll do it.” Megan said.

“Wait here.” Michael said. Michael led her into the med-room, and shut the door. He went to the computer and called up the standard shot, but then changed his mind. He had been thinking about this for a week or so. He called up the shot Susan had originally taken. It was a good start, but slid the breast slider over even further. While not as large as Matilda and Kristine’s lap filling wonders, Megan would be noticeably larger than Susan or Theresa. He had the computer create the shot. Megan nodded as he approached, and he gave her the injection. She picked out a bracelet. Then they went down the hall where she chose a cabin. They went inside.

“You can decorate. We’ll be leaving soon so you better get started.”

“I will.” She said.

“One last thing.” He said extending his hand. “Welcome aboard.” She shook his hand and her eyes glazed. “He pulled out the recorder and played the third and fourth messages for her. Then he repeated each message a second, third, and fourth time.”

Next he called Deanne into the med-room. He gave her an identical shot, and once she had her bracelet and cabin picked out, repeated the same messages. He couldn’t resist, from the moment he laid eyes on them, he wanted them both. Tabitha had pegged him right. He would be making these to ladies’ bellies bulge, happily.

They went back down, and the next morning they proudly displayed their bracelets for the rest to see.

“Now, I think we have our contingent.” Michael said raising a glass of orange juice in way of a toast.

“Here here.” Tabitha said.

The rest of the week went quickly, collecting and sampling. Michael made a few trips with Deanne and Megan to Miami to clear their apartment.

The following week the last two members joined them in Houston. Doc Hester had closed on his house, and he brought his grand-daughter with him. While most continued the collections, Doc and Jenna spent their days with Sabrina. Marie and Haley also spent a great deal of time with her. It would be a long trip, and as teachers, they would be teaching her and keeping her occupied.

Week fifteen came and went much the same way. Michael had gone to his town-house and finished the tagging. He had set the mail handler to start sending packages to whichever ship was in orbit.

Other trips around the country were taken. Some needed to finalize 'moving out'. Others needed bills paid and accounts closed. All gave Michael's town-house as a forwarding address.

Friday night, while working with Deanne and Megan, his phone rang another time.

I can't believe it, I've lost nearly ten pounds, I haven't felt this good in years.

"Congratulations. Have you been considering our offer?" Michael asked.

How could I not take it. I promise, I won't let you down.

"I know you won't." He replied. "We're out collecting at the moment, when we're finished, I'll call you. I need to get you set up."

I'm looking forward to it. Then she hung up the phone.

"That was Rose, she's agreed to be our collection agent here on earth." Both Deanne and Megan both smiled with delight.

Once they returned to the hotel that evening, Michael showered, and then took his car for a drive. He teleported up to the ship, and got an extra com-device, digitizer, and laptop for Rose. Then teleported back down, and drove up to her house. He spent several minutes in small talk with her husband, then he and Rose went into the den so they could talk privately. He gave her the equipment, suggesting she keep them locked and hidden away most of the time. She took them and locked them in her desk. Then she stood, and gently gave him a kiss on the cheek.

"Thank-you." She said. "I can't tell you what it means."

"You're welcome." He said smiling. "And mind what I said. You have another two and a half months to go."

She blushed again, but smiled. A few minutes later, he was on his way again.

Once he got back to the hotel, he sent off another message.

"Hi Susan. Only two weeks left. We're collecting like crazy next week, and then we're going shopping. I visited Rose today. She's agreed to be our agent here. I gave her a laptop, and she'll be checking it every day. I think we should wait until we're safely back before we start her on her tasks. Let her get stronger, let the changes take full effect. Thanks for the frivolous lists. The ladies here don't have a clue what's going to hit them. I can't wait to get started back. I miss you and the kids so much. Give all my love."

Monday morning, Michael made sure to tell everyone this would be the last week of collecting. He had done the sampling he needed to, and he had a special surprise in store for everybody, but would only reveal the surprise at the end of the week.

Everybody worked hard that week. The breaks between collections were much shorter; most teams managed three, sometimes four collections per day. When Saturday night rolled around, they all met at the hotel's restaurant.

After their meal was done, Michael picked up the stack of envelopes he had sitting on the table.

“Everyone, our time at this hotel is almost done. I have a surprise for you.” He handed the stack of envelopes to Haley, who was sitting to his left. “Find the envelope with your name on it, and pass the rest along.”

“Can I open it?” Haley asked.

“Of course.” He responded.

“Tomorrow morning, we’re all getting on a plane, we’re all going on a little shopping trip.”

“What the?” Haley said. She had opened her envelope and pulled out a credit card and a piece of paper.

“That’s your spending bonus.” He said. “And that’s a shopping list. Each of you has been working very hard. So you’re to spend your money on whatever you want. But, the lists you hold are requests by our friends back home. You need to fill those lists too.”

“But where are we going?”

“Rodeo Drive.” It was met by stunned silence, then an explosion of excited chattering.

The next morning, Michael and the rest checked out of their hotel at 9:00. Two limousines were parked out front to take them to the airport. Michael had the car teleported aboard ship, and rode in the limo. The flight was uneventful. Different Limos were waiting for them when they arrived. They commenced shopping at a torrid pace. Neither driver could understand how the trunks of their vehicles could hold so much, oblivious to the teleporter markers signaling transportation as soon as the trunk lid was closed.

He and the Doc got in the act with a few suits of their own. The women insisting they get more.

The week came to a close and all were happily laughing discussing their purchases over dinner that Saturday evening.

“Tomorrow, we start home.” Michael said toasting again.

“Home.” Tabitha echoed. “I can hardly wait to see my children again.

“Home.” Jenna added. “Summer’s almost done there. It will be beautiful when we arrive.”

“Our new home.” Doc added. And the other ladies echoed those words.

Departure Two

The next morning, Michael went to each room, seeing them all teleported aboard with the last of their personal belongs. Sabrina was amazed at the sight of her suitcase disappearing right in front of her eyes, but held her grand-father’s hand as they two were taken away.

Michael was the last. He then went down to the front desk and settled the bill. He ducked into a bathroom, found it empty, and joined the rest on the ship. When he arrived all were on the bridge. He crossed to the console and pressed the command button.

“Computer, request the Mayflower pause it’s collecting and join us.”

“Mayflower acknowledges.” Came the reply.

They waited only a few minutes, and the Mayflower took up position in front of them and slightly off to one side.

“Computer, have Mayflower start transferring its cargo over to our holds. Fill our holds.”

“Mayflower acknowledges.”

“No point going back half empty.” Michael replied. The three marine biologists smiled. Sabrina was at the table, Doc Hester, Jenna, and Haley were all there with her explaining what was happening. Even though she was ten, she seemed to understand. She had seen enough movies to comprehend. It was real this time. It took a few minutes before the transfer was complete.

“Thank-you.” Michael said. “Pass to Mayflower to continue the collecting as per program.”

“Mayflower acknowledges.”

“Very good. Break orbit and set course for the departure point.”

“Breaking orbit.” The ship swung away from Earth and headed out into space.

Michael sat down at the console, and sent out two messages. The first to Rose, telling her they were heading out, and would contact her once they had arrived. The second was to Susan, saying much the same thing. He sent the messages and then stood. He looked at the room. Each woman had become special to him in the last few months. Tabitha, of course was now pregnant with his children. The teachers each had grown more confident, none more so than Haley. She had lost weight and was now down to ‘trim’. She along with rest were in the best physical shape of their lives. He couldn’t help but look at their developing bust lines; Tabitha the largest with her Double-Js. Jenna with her G-cups, the rest with Ds, double and even triple Ds.

“I know the next few months are going to get boring. But we’ll get there.” Michael said. He pressed the command button. “Computer, initiate FTL translation when ready.”

“Acknowledged. FTL translation in six, five, four, three, two, commence.” They watched the monitors blur and form the light tunnel some had seen before.

“Faster Than Light speed reached. Arrival scheduled for 87 days, 18 hours, 37 minutes.” The computer announced.

“And that’s it.” He said. “We’re on our way.”

Tabitha came forward and gave him a hug, while Jenna wrapped her arms around Doc Hester. They made their way to the den, talked and relaxed. Occasionally someone would go to the common room for snacks. Over the next few days, they settled into a routine. Exercising, watching movies, playing games and puzzles. It didn’t take long for Tabitha to fall back into wearing the more customary stretchy outfit. As bust lines increased throughout the ladies, more and more adopted the stretchy fabric. As opportunity presented itself, Michael managed to play the third and fourth messages to Marie, Deanne and Megan. Sometimes more than once.

At the halfway point, they did a ‘check-up’ on young Sabrina. She was in excellent shape. He had been discussing with Doc Hester how she would eventually need to have a shot like the rest of the women. Doc wanted the barest of shots, ‘let nature take its course’ he would say. But Michael continued to explain. ‘Sooner or later, she’s going to grow up. She’s only ten now, but someday she’ll be a young woman.’ The Doc then eventually relented, ‘just not too big.’ He eventually said.

Another indicator of their progress, some of the women had passed the ‘3 months’ rule. Susan had recorded a video of the process, and Doc was more than willing to help Marie start her first pregnancy.

The third indicator was Tabitha’s baby belly starting to show. There was a bit of a surprise at the news, but soon all were happy for her.

As they crossed the two-thirds mark groups were firmly formed. Everyone would take time alone in their cabins to relax or to simply be away from the rest. Michael was relaxing in his chair when the chime sounded. He opened the door to find Marie.

“Hi, busy?” She said.

“No, just chilling out.” He replies. “Please, come in. I have some lemonade, care to join me?”

“Yes please.” She said. She took a sip while he took a seat in the big couch.

“Is there anything I can do for you?”

She carefully put her glass on the table then turned to him. She took his glass and put it down. “Just don’t say no.” She said. She sat on his lap, and then pressed her lips to his. He pulled her tighter to him. She parted his lips with her tongue. He ran his hand down her back and then under her top. She leaned back and unclipped the front of her shirt. Her breasts had been swelling ever since the injection, and had a long way to go before reaching Double-Js. But in two weeks into her pregnancy her breasts had become more spherical, veins could be seen under the surface of the skin, and her areola and nipples had swollen, and become darker red, all of this preparing for milk production. She raised her body and drew him to her bosom. He nibbled her nipples triggering her first orgasm. She kissed him, and then stood. She dropped her shorts. She straddled his body as he freed his penis. She positioned herself over him, and then lowered herself down.

“Oh I need this.” She panted. Her body plastered against his she worked up and down against him as she worked herself through two more orgasms. He couldn’t hold out much longer, and released into her. She shook with another orgasm as she felt it and then collapsed on top of him. He held her for a few minutes as they collected their breath.

“Thank-you for that.” She said into his ear. She affectionately ran a hand through his hair.

“I should be thanking you.” He said with humor in his voice.

She kissed him again. She lifted herself off him, spun around and sat down.

“Wow.” She said after a bit. They sat for a few more minutes, and then she got up and dressed. She sat on his lap and kissed him again.

“Only a few weeks left.” She said. “Uhm, so, uhm”

“It’s OK, we’ll find a way. We all realize that we need to adjust our social thoughts, at least for a while. We’ll get together when we can.” He slid his hand up her stomach, and reached inside her shirt to cup a breast. “I presume you want get together?”

She put her hand over his and held it there.

“Absolutely.” She smiled. “But I know I’m going to have to share you with the other women.” Then she kissed him again, they snuggled for several more minutes, then Marie reluctantly left for her cabin.

The last few weeks of the trip were the hardest. When Michael learned that Melissa knew how to dance, he and many of the women started lessons. The night before arrival they had their own ball. The ladies dressed up, Michael and Doc put on suits, and danced. It was clear from the beginning; Doc’s dance card had only one name on it. Michael tried to dance with everyone. Haley and Melissa took particular care to include young Sabrina. It was quite late into the night when the last of women went to bed.

The next day, Michael was up early, too nervous to sleep in. He had finished his breakfast and was sitting at the front table when Deanne found him.

“Today’s the big day.” She said coming up behind him. She wore a short terry cloth robe. Her cleavage now made up of double-Es, on generous display.

“I thought everyone would be sleeping in.”

“Couldn’t.” She replied. She looked at the clock. “I guess I should’ve tried.”

“It’ll be a while. But at least we all have time to pack.”

“I better get cleaned up.” She stood and started to leave, she stopped, turned around and came up behind him. She and wrapped her arms around him. She kissed him on the cheek. “When we get a chance, we’ll go sailing or something. Some one-on-one time.” She kissed his cheek again, and was gone before he could turn around.

The day seemed to drag, everyone kept checking the clock. As the hours wound down, everyone spent more and more time on the bridge. Michael suggested a game of cards to keep Sabrina entertained. He intentionally put her at the table so she could see the screen from her seat. Jenna, who was teaching her the card game sat to one side.

As the clock clicked down to a few minutes, everyone spoke nervously. They watched the clock closely. Talk dwindled to next to nothing as the final minute passed.

“Transitioning into normal space in five, four, three, two, one.” And as they watched the tunnel of light disappeared and was replaced by the black of space and the twinkling stars.

“Transition complete.” The computer said. “All systems normal.”

“Thank-you computer. Please set course for Zanthia. Please put us in our standard orbit above ZanTan. Convey to ZanTan to launch shuttles.”

“Acknowledged.” The computer replied. “Orbit in five minutes.”

Michael had been sitting at one of the front consoles. He sent a message to Susan, and then another message to Earth. He promised Rose he would as soon as they arrived.

Susan’s response was almost immediate.

“Michael!” She smiled on the screen. “We missed you all so much!”

“We missed you too. We’ll be there soon.”

“We’ve got everything set up in the courtyard. The weather’s beautiful, I can’t wait.”

“We’ll be there as soon as we can.” He replied.

“Orbit achieved. Shuttles approaching.” The computer announced. They looked out the view screens and within a few moments, they saw three objects approach them. The objects grew larger and took the familiar ‘van with wings’ look of the shuttles. One stopped in front of them while the other two continued and docked on each side. Once they finished, Michael opened the inner airlock doors.

“Jenna if you take that one?” He said pointing the starboard airlock. “I’m sure Doc and Sabrina would appreciate the ride. Melissa, Diane, please go with her. Tabitha if you’ll take the other? Megan, Stephanie,

Haley and Annabelle, please go with her. Once you're clear, I'll take the rest, wait for me, and we'll all go down together."

Tabitha came up and gave him a passionate kiss. "See you on the ground." He patted her bulging stomach and closed the airlock behind her. As Dawn watched through the portals, Marie came up to him. "One of these days, you're going to do that to me."

"Me too." Deanne added. They watched as the two shuttles undocked and moved away. Once clear the third shuttle moved in to dock. Michael opened the inner airlock door, and the rest stepped in.

Once he had undocked, the other shuttles joined him on their decent. They passed into the atmosphere and then descended over the continent. They approached the city from the northwest; everyone in his shuttle looking ahead in wonder as they passed overhead then continued past the city and out to sea then circled around. They lowered altitude and slowed until they were only a few hundred feet off the surface of the sea. The sun had slipped below the horizon, and as they approached the city, the darkness was closing in. They slowed until they were only going only a few miles an hour. Michael saw the silhouette and approached, and finally stopped. The other shuttles were hovering beside him.

Michael opened communications with the other shuttles.

"This is the surprise I wanted to show you." He pressed a button, and the signal was relayed, and all the lights on the island came up.

Standing in front of them, bathed in warm light, in all her glory, the freshly completed Statue of Peace welcomed them.

There was complete silence for nearly three full seconds, then everyone erupted cheering. Deanne and Marie gave him passionate kisses. Dawn also gave him a hug.

"We thought this would be a great way to welcome you to our new home." He said after the cheering calmed a little. "Now, I think we better land. We're keeping people waiting."

They started on their way again. They flew into the city, and found the courtyard, the very courtyard Michael and Susan had landed in not that long ago, ablaze with lights. A large tent was put up to one side. They landed near it. People were already filling in the area as the doors opened and Michael, Jenna, and Tabitha stepped down.

Susan greeted Michael with a hug and a kiss, immediately repeated by Matilda. Jamie and Jessie were there as were some of the older kids. Slowly, the others made their way down the ramp. Michael introduced his passengers. He was sure Jenna and Tabitha were doing the same. The welcome lasted only a half hour before the children were starting to yawn. It was getting late, so with regret, Michael led them back to the apartment building. It took time to get the women settled into apartments of their own. But once they did, they had the ship transfer down their belongings.

Despite the late hour for the children, several of the adults gathered at Michael and Susan's to continue the reception festivities. Jenna and Doc were there along with Sabrina. Many of the new recruits were there as well. Susan, nearing the end of her second trimester stood to his right. Matilda had just started her pregnancy, and had yet to start showing, stood to his left. He had one arm around each, and they had in turn had an arm around him. Eventually Matilda called it a night. Michael walked her down to her apartment. He spent a few minutes with the quints, even though they had slept through most of it. Then he spent a few more kissing and holding Matilda. A more intimate welcome would wait for the next day. Upon his return to his apartment, the others had departed for their apartments. He crawled into bed beside Susan, the two snuggled up together, and quickly fell asleep.

The next morning, Michael woke to find Susan curled up beside him. He kissed her cheek and took a shower. Her surrogate pregnancy was progressing well, her belly and breasts bulging beautifully. He kissed

her awake, stroking her tummy. He spent several minutes just watching his children sleeping. He then went into the office and started taking care of business. He had the Zanhallah teleport everyone's personal belongings and purchases, as well as the stasis boxes. Then he set the Zanhallah's refueling drones to work. He was more than a little surprised to find a message waiting for him.

"Michael." Rose said excitedly. "I just can't thank you enough. I've been waiting and waiting to hear from you. You arrived safely, that's just so wonderful. I have such news. First, I can't remember feeling so good." She stepped back from the camera so he could see her from the knees up. She looked trim, her breasts larger and firmer.

"Look at me. I've lost thirty pounds. And I can admit this now, I don't need to color my hair, no gray anymore. And I don't need my glasses. It's been incredible." She sat back in her chair. "I had to wait until everyone was out of the house. My husband is also feeling better. He's lost nearly forty pounds so far." She leaned in and whispered. "He can't keep his hand off me. Not that I mind. I was good though, no unprotected sex. I had to use a diaphragm, I didn't want to ask him.. well, never mind the details. It's been wonderful. We're planning on buying a new house. Now that I've got a better paying job, we can afford it. I've been telling everybody I'm a medical consultant, and I can work from home. I hope everyone is well. And I'm ready to start helping you whenever I can. Just let me know. I better go, I need to send a message to David. Thank-you again. Bye."

He smiled and recorded a response.

"Rose, I'm glad all are doing well. I'm glad we could help each other. I know, having been away from my children so long, I just don't think I'll be able to leave them again. We're all counting on you to help us. Once Tabitha and Theresa get a chance to come up with a plan, we'll let you know. I'll tell Doc to expect a message. Thank-you again, bye."

"Honey, it can wait." Susan said from the door. She wore a long robe. "Come back to bed."

He looked at her for only a moment. "Of course."

The next few days seemed to be a continuous 'get together.' It seemed the entire first group of women was taking turns hosting parties for the newcomers. Michael and Tabitha and Jenna spent most of their time invited to these to bridge the gap between new and old. Jessica spent a lot of time with the new teachers, setting up the new classes. Michael, Doc, and Jenna, took the mariners to the north side of town one day to see the first research ship being built.

Two weeks after their homecoming, Michael found himself standing once again in the courtyard at the center of the city. He wore a charcoal gray suit, with a white shirt, and interesting red, green, and blue tie. Behind him a large white tent stood. In front of him were two dozen chairs, six rows of four chairs each, an aisle down the middle. At the back were two smaller tents; one on each side. Around the area was a ring of pedestals, with vases of flowers on each. At each tent opening one of the teenagers, now young women, stood. Each young woman would occasionally look inside nervously. After several minutes, both women looked at him and nodded. Annabelle, who was sitting in the last row, was looking over her shoulder at both women, she looked at him, he nodded, and she smiled. She picked up her small tablet, pressed a few buttons, and music started playing.

Not the wedding march. Michael thought. *But beautiful, none the less.*

The two women at the tents opened flaps, and a woman came out of each tent. Denise and Jessica wore yellow dresses, around the waist a loose red ribbon about three inches wide, the ribbon was clasped together above their left hip, and then extended down their leg. They carried a bouquet of flowers and walked up the aisle. They approached Michael, then split apart, standing one to each side. Next, Mary and Dawn came out of the tents, their dresses had green ribbons. Third came Tabitha and Courtney, both visibly pregnant, their dresses had blue ribbons. Once they had taken their places, the escorts left their tents. Billy came out of one tent, as Sabrina came out of the other. Billy was dressed in a nice black tuxedo, while

Sabrina was pretty in a nice white dress. They each carried a pillow with a ring held from falling by a small ribbon. They walked to the front of the aisle, then stood in front of the empty chair reserved for them. Next came the bride and groom. Doc Hester wore a black tux. Instead of a cummerbund, it was a red, green, and blue sash, wrapped around his waist, and extending down his left leg. Jenna wore a white dress with a wreath of small flowers in her hair. Around her waist, she wore a small belt, also of red, green, and blue. It was loosely hanging on her hips, tied, and dangling down her left side. The crowd stood as they held hands and walked up the aisle together. They stopped in front of Michael. The music faded to nothing, and the crowd sat. Matilda and Susan reminding the two children to sit and wait.

“Ladies and Gentlemen.” He began. “Ten years ago, if you had asked any of us where we’d be on this date, none of us would have imagined any of this. But I believe all of us are glad we are here. We are here to celebrate a new beginning. We are here to bring two worlds together. When we were planning this celebration, we all chose to meld our two worlds together. Here today, we see red. It represents the past. For the past is what teaches us. The past is what we lean on. The past will always be there to give us comfort and security. We see green, which represents the present. It reminds us to live in the moment, to cherish what we have in our hands today. The present is there to tell us to live. And finally, we see blue, which represents the future. The future is where all our hopes and dreams await us. We must always cherish our past, our present, and especially our future. Now, David, Jenna, take each other’s hands.”

They turned to face each other, holding each other hands.

“David, do you come to this celebration with an open heart, with no reservations, ready for commitment?”

“I do.”

“And Jenna, do you also come to this celebration with an open heart, with no reservations, ready for commitment?”

“I do.”

“David, do you accept Jenna into your life, into your heart. For now and ever more?”

“I do.”

“Jenna, do you accept David into your life, into your heart. For now and ever more?”

“I do.”

Michael then took a long red ribbon and loosely wrapped it around their arms, starting with David’s lower arm, then around his hand where he held Jenna’s then up around her lower arm.

“May the past teach you.”

Next he wrapped a green ribbon around beside the red.

“May you cherish the present.”

Finally he wrapped a blue ribbon.

“May your future be full of love and hope.”

“The rings please.” Matilda and Susan prompted the children who stood and carried their burdens forward.

“David?” David, with his free hand, carefully pulled on the ribbon and freed the ring.

“This ring was made of gold from Earth. It represents my love and commitment to you. May you wear it always, knowing my heart is always yours.” David said as he put it on her finger.

“Jenna?” Jenna took the other ring and placed it on his finger.

“This ring was made of gold from Zanthia. It represents my love and commitment to you. May you wear it always, knowing my heart is always yours.” She repeated.

“All of us gathered here today have a responsibility as well. It is our responsibility to help them, to encourage them, to support them. Do we promise this?”

“We promise.” Those sitting all responded.

Michael took the ribbons away.

“May I now present David and Jenna Hester. ‘Ka Sing latta si-mano esk Ja plinn Cru, Hi plinn Flo.’ ‘May you stand together in sun and rain, now and forever.’”

The music started, and Tabitha pressed a button on a small remote device no one could see. Behind the hedges to one side, dozens of doves were released. The crowd applauded and they all came forward to congratulate them.

“Well done.” Susan said to him. They went into the large tent where they cut the cake, and David and Jenna led the first dance. Michael and Susan joined in. Matilda even tried to dance with Billy. They ate and after a while Michael and David switched partners for a dance.

“Thank-you for a beautiful ceremony.” Jenna said as they danced.

“You’re very welcome.” He replied. “There is something I have been meaning to ask you. Once you get back from your honeymoon, I think we should start reviving the girls from stasis.”

“I agree.” She said quickly. “We will need adults to guide them, as you say, guardians.”

“I believe we can find them. But we do not need to worry about that now.”

“I also want to thank you, for letting us borrow your car. The flying car just doesn’t have the same experience.” They were planning on spending the next few days at the house.

He noticed her bracelet, three gems glowing. “I’m glad to do it. Your surprise will be more welcome, and fitting next Father’s day.” He noticed Doc and Susan had stopped dancing.

“And I think that is our queue.” They stopped dancing, and shook David’s hand. “Go have fun.”

They made their way to the car, while the rest cheered. They drove off. They watched them go, Susan stood to one side, Matilda to another. Tabitha and Theresa were close by, as were the others.

“You know.” Michael said after moment. “I think we’re going to be OK.”

The End

Epilogue One: The Sky Car

“So, you ready to go?” Theresa asked.

“I’ll give it my best.” Michael replied. They got into the nearest gulf cart and headed out. They drove down the empty street and Theresa gave direction.

“It was a beautiful ceremony yesterday.” She said.

“So the recording was good?” Michael asked. “I was worried about that.” There were recording devices in each of the flower stands, recording the entire wedding from every angle.

“Oh, yes, very good.” She replied. “Up here, on the left.” She said pointing to a five story building. It was mostly stone grey, but had blue tinted windows. They stopped under the overhang.

“The rain is supposed to hold off, but I’m not so sure.” Michael said looking at the clouds.

They entered the building and took an elevator up to the top floor. The doors opened to an open area, several sky-cars were parked along each wall. The sky cars were about the size of a sedan. Instead of wheels, the front had small canard wings near the floor. On the back, instead of small air foil like he had on his Mustang, it was deep front to back, extended out beyond the sides of the body then went straight down.

“Just like the shuttle.” Michael observed.

“Just smaller.” Theresa added. She stepped to the passenger side and pressed a button on the access panel. The passenger compartment was completely enclosed with a tinted glass canopy. The canopy folded up, while the door swung open. She stepped into the car and sat in the seat. She pressed a button and the door started closing. Michael followed suit on the driver’s side.

“Let’s see if I know how to do this.” He said. He had been spending an hour or two each day in the simulators. He pressed the power button. Once the lights lit, he pressed the hover function. The sky-car lifted a few inches off the floor. The controls were more like an airplane’s. He steered the car forward and out onto the open roof. What looked like a hand break to his right, he slowly lifted, and the car gained altitude. Once several feet above the roof, he pressed a button on the end of the control and released. The car would now keep that altitude. Now he concentrated on left, right and forward. He pressed the yoke forward and the car started moving, a twist and it turned.

“Pretty good.” Theresa observed from the passenger seat. They made their way out of the city and turned north. They followed the coast for some time, then turned up a long river.

“You’ll want some more altitude.” Theresa observed.

“Oh, right.” He said. He made sure he was flying straight and level first, then took the altitude stick in hand, pressed the button, and lifted it some more gaining altitude in the process. Once he was high enough, he pressed the button again, and continued on. They followed the river some more, and then slowed to a hover to look upon Shahallah falls.

“This is truly magnificent.” They increased altitude again, then continued on upriver, roughly westerly. After some time, they turned north again, following a smaller river. They followed it for over two hours as it climbed into the foothills. The foothills turned rougher, more jagged and mountainous. They finally flew between two hills, and found themselves looking at a large valley. The valley was easily several miles wide, and just as deep. They followed the river across the valley floor. At the far side the river opened up to form a large, large lake, easily half a mile in diameter. At the far end of the lake was another water fall. The curtain was fifty or sixty feet wide and the water fell nearly a hundred feet.

“Incredible, isn’t it?” Theresa said proudly.

“Absolutely.” He said as they hovered. Theresa pointed to their left. Michael turned the car and headed towards the western shore. He saw a dock and small boathouse on the shore, he headed towards them. As he crossed the shoreline, he spotted a clearing where a small cabin and a two car garage stood. He lowered the car to the ground, and drove it into the garage.

“You did a lot better than I did.” Theresa said getting out.

“I tried to keep it simple. And the simulator helped a lot.” Michael said. “This place is beautiful.”

“Get in, and I’ll show you the rest.” She said getting into the golf cart sitting in the other bay of the garage. They drove past the cabin and down another path a bit further into the woods. They rounded a corner and were face to face with five long narrow buildings.

“These are the hatcheries. Water is routed from the river above, down through them, and out to the lake below. I couldn’t stand the idea of ruining the view so I had the fewest trees removed as I could, and built the buildings between them. I had the roofs colored browns and green, you can hardly see the buildings from the air at all.”

They went into the first building and saw the large tanks of fresh water life in them. Each had different specimens. Theresa explained that she would transfer fish and other water life into the tanks, let them multiply, and then transfer them into other rivers and streams. After that, they returned to the cabin. It was small, two small bedrooms, a bath, and an open area that served as kitchen, dining and living room. It was rustic and warm.

“I bet it gets cold here at night.” He observed as he hung up his jacket.

“Absolutely, but it’s just so beautiful. I wouldn’t want this area ruined with too many people.”

“I agree.” He replied.

She came up to him and wrapped her arms around him. She kissed him, and without pulling away. “Remember back on Earth? When we kissed for the first time?”

“Yes.” He said, his hands on her lower back.

“This is the time and place.” She said. “Make love to me.”

He led her into the bedroom where they slowly took off each other’s clothes. She lay back on the bed, and welcomed him into her loving embrace.

“I’m already pregnant lover, so no need to worry.” She told him. From there, she welcomed him deep within herself. There wasn’t much coherent talking for the next few hours as they moved thru multiple climaxes together.

After a time, they got up, put on robes, and ate. They curled up together in front of the fire.

“So, pregnant?” Michael asked.

“Yup.” She said. “Susan confirmed it last week. These are mine. I plan on surrogating next time.”

“I remember you saying you wanted lots of children.”

“I still do.” She said. “But I’m thinking, after these, I think I should dial back on the fertility.”

“Really?”

“Yes, getting pregnant, and being pregnant with quads is great. Even though there are times in the last month or so that are a pain. But it’s raising them, that’s the challenge. So I think if I could be dialed back, like the rest, that’d be good.”

“I’ve actually been thinking to make the offer to everyone. If we all keep this up, there’ll be a population explosion.”

“I’ll have sixteen. I could have a hundred grandchildren.”

“Maybe two or three hundred.” Michael replied.

“My god, you’re right. Definitely want to slow down a bit.”

“I remember Kristine saying how she was confident her genes would live on.”

“Exactly.” Theresa replied. “I think I’m going to be a surrogate for a while. Then, well, I think I’d like to find a different father for my babies.”

She opened her robe and crawled onto his lap.

“What do you say? Wanna make babies someday?”

“Absolutely.” He replied cupping a heavy breast in her hand. “In the meantime, we can practice.”

Epilogue Two: Bracelet Day

“Today’s the day.” Jenna said.

“Excited?” Doc said.

“It’s still school.” Sabrina said.

“Ah, but I happen to know you have a special day ahead of you.”

They took the elevator down to the third floor where Jessica had set up the school. Some of the other teachers and their assistants were working with the five year olds. Marie had a group class with the younger Zanthian girls. Jenna opened the door and Jessica, along with three other Zanthian girls of age were waiting.

“Good morning.” Jessica said. All the Zanthian girls carried translators. Jessica made sure all were introduced. And once the guardians had left, she started her lesson.

“Today we have a surprise for you. Please all come together and stand by me.” Once they were all standing Jessica took out her com-device, and before any of them could react, they were teleported aboard the Zanhallah.

“Welcome aboard.” Michael said waiting for them.

“This is the Zanhallah. As some of you know, it means ‘Our Hope.’” She said, the translators keeping up with her.

“Michael and I came to Zanthia six years ago. Just a few months ago, it brought Sabrina as well. Now, this is the bridge area. You can see Zanthia floating in space below us. We’ll come back to that after we’ve seen the rest of the ship.” Jessica led the children through the ship, showing them the med-room, then back to the den, and then the common room. They took the steps down to the storage hold and saw the stasis trunks and then headed back up to the bridge.

“Now for the real fun.” Michael said. He gave the ship the command, it broke orbit and headed out to orbit Maxose. “Someday, we hope to take advantage of the observatory built there.” The children stood with rapt attention as one monitor displayed the facility built there. They traveled to Minuteos next. There was a second site there as well. They broke the orbit of the moons and headed out to the larger gas giants. Jessica was explaining how large they were.

They settled into orbit around the outer most planet and Michael instructed the girls to sit at the table.

“We have one last surprise for you.” Jessica said. “See my bracelet? Today, you will be getting your bracelets. As you can see, it does not have a clasp, so you cannot take it off. As you grow older, we can add links to it. But it takes a special tool.”

“If you’re ever lost, we can find you by your bracelet. It’s very helpful.” Michael said. “We also need to give you some medicine. It won’t hurt.” Michael added.

“I promise, it doesn’t hurt.” Jessica said. “I had the same shot when I came here.”

“Come, let’s go to the med room.” Michael said. They followed him into the med room, Jessica standing outside.

“Who’s first?” None of the girls moved.

“Oh come on, it won’t hurt a bit. Surely somebody’s brave enough to be first.” Michael said.

The smallest of the girls stepped forward. She spoke broken English. "I will, tr, try."

"Very good." Jessica said from behind the group. There was no need to translate the smile on the girl's face.

"That's the spirit." Michael said. "Now, just stand right there for a moment." She tentatively stepped forward to the spot. "If you want, you can close your eyes. Just stand still." The girl was scanned.

"Perfect." He went to the console and called up a Tabitha sized shot. He had already discussed it with Susan and the rest of the adults. No one would have the heightened fertility. But he was going to continue adding to the bust line of the female portion of the population. The computer processed the scan and determined her to be of good health. An injection was created, and he took it up to her. "Ready?" And she nodded. She closed her eyes and nodded. He gave her a shot in the arm.

"There did it hurt?" And she shook her head no, and smiled. "Now, for your bracelet." He showed her the bracelets, let her pick one, then fastened the new bracelet onto her arm.

"Thank-you for being so brave." He said. "See, that was easy. Who's next?"

Another girl stepped forward. She was the tallest of the children, and Michael chose for here the biggest breast size. When she grew up, she'd be a very, very big girl. Next Sabrina stepped forward. She got Susan sized shot. And the fourth got the standard shot.

"And just like that, we're done." He said cheerfully. "Now we head back."

They went back to the bridge and the ship made its way back to Zanthia.

"Do you want to know something else?" He asked the girls. They all nodded. "Tomorrow, this ship heads back to Earth. There is another ship at Earth, called the Mayflower, it's just like this one. Once this ship gets to Earth, the Mayflower will come here. Its full of stasis trunks like you saw before, but these trunks are full of animals. We wanted you to see the Zanhallah because it's such an important ship."

"Now, it's time we go back down to our class-room." Jessica said. "When we get there, I'll show you what Earth looks like. Would you like that?" They all beamed down together. Jessica showed a video, the very video they recorded before leaving Earth just six months earlier.

"Are there any questions?" Michael asked. The littlest girl raised her hand. She spoke into her translator, listened and then spoke.

"Will anyone go to Earth?" She asked haltingly.

"No, it takes a very long time to go." Michael said to her.

"How long?" another girl asked.

"Almost ninety days." He replied. He could see the astonishment on the girls' face once the translation completed.

"What was it like?" A third asked.

"Ask Sabrina." He answered. "She came back with us."

"It's time we let Michael be on his way. Thank him for the trip."

"Thank-you." They chorused. Jessica followed him out the door, as the door closed, he could see the three girls talking to Sabrina.

“Thank-you for that.” She said. “I was wondering how to get Sabrina integrated with the others.”

“It’ll take time.”

“Once the girls get more proficient at English, it’ll be better.”

He moved closer to her and put his hand on her belly.

“By the time these are ready for bracelets, it will be as if they’ve always been together.”

She kissed him. “I think you’re right. Ooh! Baby kicked.”

“Are these Seven and Eight?”

“Nope, Seven, Eight, and Nine.” She smiled.

“Congratulations.”

“Thanks, I’ll do some surrogates next. At least for a while.”

“That’s wonderful to hear. We need all the surrogates we can get.”

Epilogue Three: Catching up

Kristine waited by her car. She looked at her watch, and then at the two jewels shining on her bracelet. She had been waiting for this day for weeks. Her fourth set of surrogate twins was six months old. She had done as Michael asked. She had carried two sets of twins from two different sets of biological parents. She'd done her part. The sex with Michael had been wonderful, especially when she was near to delivering. But for the next few days, she wanted more. She wanted to start making babies with him, and she had found a great spot to do it.

Finally Michael came out of the elevator.

"What kept you?" She asked nervously. Her hormones were raging, she knew it. She was anxious to get started.

"Sorry, I had to say good-bye to the kids." Michael replied. He put his bags behind the passenger seat, and then got in.

"What's with the plants?" He asked. The back of the SUV was packed with different house plants.

"Yes, it's a surprise. I get your for the next four days." She said as she turned onto the street.

They drove to the western most edge of ZanTan. There they found an incredibly large low building, surrounded by a large open area.

"Is this an airport?" He asked as they drove through a large door, into a building where a few shuttles were parked, along with what looked like the Zanthian version of airplanes.

"Their idea of one." She said. She parked next to one of the shuttles.

"We're going up the Mayflower?" He asked.

"Not exactly." She replied. The Mayflower was currently orbiting Zanthia. The Zanhallah was currently back orbiting earth. Rose was diligently trying to fulfill any request Theresa and Tabitha might have, while the sampler would occasionally collect samples of ocean life for Deanne, Megan, and Melissa.

"Help me load these." She said, and they spent the next several minutes transferring all the plants, and their luggage to the shuttle. Once that was done, Kristine moved the van several yards away and walked back. This time, Michael sat in the passenger seat of the shuttle as Kristine worked the controls. She put the shuttle in hover mode as they moved out of the building, once on the tarmac, she pressed more buttons, and the shuttle lifted higher. She kept the ship low to the ground for a long time, then they went skyward. Up and up it went the speed increasing, eventually it broke the atmosphere and was in low orbit. It took a few minutes as they approached the Mayflower.

"I'd forgotten how big it is." Michael said as they flew past it slowly. He expected them to dock, but instead Kristine turned the shuttle, and they headed further into space. It didn't take long after that to figure out where they were headed. In a few moments, Maxose was centered in the forward screen.

"Yup. I thought we'd check out the observatory there." She said. The shuttle picked up speed.

"And these plants?"

"Well, to help keep the air fresh." She said. "I asked the computer, and it speculated that the air might be a bit stale. They kept plants like these there before. But they've long since died. So these are new plants."

"So there's going to be air.. right?" He asked. "I mean, this is a moon base."

“Oh yes, we’ll be fine. We’ll make sure before we open the hatch. But we should be just fine.”

“So you’ve never been there.” He asked.

“Nope, it’ll be the first time for me too.” She answered. The shuttle was traveling very fast now, it took less than two hours for them to find themselves in a high orbit. It took three orbits for them to slow their speed, then they drifted down to the surface, the shuttles automatic pilot guiding them. They traveled over the surface, the moon was marked with craters.

“So you think earth’s moon looked like this close up?” Kristine said nervously.

“Probably.” Michael said. He too was apprehensive. They eventually came to the moon base. It was a large collection of domed buildings. Each dome was about 100 yards in diameter, connected by tubes. He guessed these tubes were about twenty feet in diameter. Off to the side he could see a hundreds of solar panels spread out.

“The computer told me there are five of these solar panel sights all around the circumference of the moon.” She said.

“Probably to get power even when this place was not in direct sunlight.” Michael said.

They approached a smaller building. It was obvious what it was for. It looked like an airplane hanger, though smaller, more than sufficient to hold a few of the shuttles like the one they were in. Doors were opening, and they passed through and before landing, rotated one hundred eighty degrees. They could see the doors closing out the front view screen. The shuttle moved backwards a few yards, and then settled down. The shuttle’s engines stopped, along with artificial gravity.

“Ooh!” Kristine exclaimed as she felt the loss of gravity.

“Very weird.” He said. He unbuckled his belt and stood. He was expecting to launch himself into the air, but didn’t, only feeling a bit lighter. They went to the back of the shuttle, and found they were attached to an umbilical tube from the main area. They looked at the controls, and verified there was breathable air on the other side.

“Shall we?” She asked.

“Might as well.” he said, and pushed the button. There was just the slightest hiss as the pressure equalized, but otherwise nothing. They walked down the ramp onto the umbilical’s floor.

“The computer said the base is about ½ gravity. She said.” She jumped, her beanbag sized breasts bouncing with her. She came back down in slow motion, when she landed, it was like watching a sea of boob drop below her waist line, then back up, then back down again.

“Oh!” She exclaimed and put a hand to each boob to try to settle it.

“You OK?” He asked.

“Oh yes, my boobs are full of milk, and more than a little tight. Bouncing around like that, not a good idea.”

“Did you bring a pump?” He asked.

“Yea, but I figured you’d help me with that.” She giggled. “Come, let’s find... Ah here it is.” She had turned a corner, and waiting there was a cart. “Let’s get the plants loaded.”

In a few minutes, they had the plants, and their bags, loaded onto the cart, and had set off on their way to one of the habitation domes.

“How many people could live here?” he asked.

“Nearly a thousand, normally, but they could support over twice that if they needed to.” They went down one of the tubes and entered a dome. They moved down a main corridor, they could see a few smaller hallway to each side, curving away, following the curve of the dome.

“It’s kind of like the pentagon on earth, except circles.” Kristine explained. “Imagine four circular hallways, with a big cross intersecting it. The level above us has three rings. The one above that only one. And the top only has four apartments.”

“For the VIPs I bet.” Michael said.

“Probably.” They had made it to center cross of the main hall. There was an open area, and two elevators, and two sets of stairs. “Come on, time to put out some plants.” There were four pedestals in the area, each had a pot with a dead plant in it. They removed the dead plants and put on new living ones. They wheeled the cart into the elevator, and repeated the task on each floor. They only had two plants left when they opened one of the apartment doors and entered. By the door another pair of pots needed replacing.

“You know, the air isn’t too bad.” He said as he sniffed. “I thought it’d be worse.”

“Me too.” She said putting the last empty pot on the cart.

“This is impressive.” He said looking at the room. The living area was spacious, getting wider as it filled the out the circular area of the dome. Unlike apartments on the planet, this was more ‘modern’ looking. Still comfortable, but obviously meant to serve a purpose as much as be functional. The most impressive sight was the view. The glass dome formed the outer wall and bent over to also be their ceiling. They had an equally splendid view of the moon scape all the way up the stars above. The fireplace to one side, was obviously a hologram, but it still was a nice ‘homey’ touch. The kitchen area, just to the left of the door, was small and utilitarian, but still nicely sized. They looked around and found only two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a small office.

“Obviously this wasn’t meant to be a living colony, but more of a base.” Michael said.

“They didn’t expect people to raise a family here, that’s for sure.” Kristine replied.

“Still, with a thousand people, they probably had some children here.”

“I’m hungry, let’s get something to eat.” She said moving into the kitchen area.

After dinner they decided to explore a little. First, they moved through the tubes to the telescope. It looked like any other large telescope Michael had seen pictures of, except for the scale. This machine was easily ten times the size of any earth bound telescope he’d seen pictures of. They could only look at it from a glassed in observation deck. Still it was massive in all respects. They would have to compare it to the hubble telescope, just to get a scope of its size. From there they looked at three smaller observatories. These were similar to those he’d seen on earth. Next they traveled through another living quarters, and finally onto one of the laboratory domes.

The computer system wasn’t as helpful, or advanced, compared to that aboard the Zanhallah. But they managed to make their way around. There we labs, class rooms, and what looked like libraries. They found other communal areas such as a cafeteria, and an entertainment room. They finally came across one room that grabbed their interest.

“This says it’s a null gravity simulator.” Kristine said deciphering the Zanthian language.

“Want to try it out?” Michael asked. The half gravity had a positive effect on Kristine bustline, her beanbag sized breasts projected nearly straight out from her body. He secretly wondered how they behave in zero gravity.

“Yea, this should be interesting.” She pressed a button to activate the chamber. Immediately a drawer emerged from the shelf. On it, looked to be a half dozen watches.

“What’s this?” He asked.

“I bet I know.” She said handing him one. “I bet it’s to control the room. Face it, if we’re floating around we couldn’t exactly be sure we could reach a control panel.” She put hers on her wrist.

“Makes sense.” He said as he put his on. They opened the door to see a padded floor. “We better take off our shoes.” They entered the room, and closed the door. “Well, here goes.” He looked at his watch and saw the display read 0.6. He could see the dial could rotate, so he turned it to the left. The markers on the outer rim counted down and disappeared. As he watched, the display counted down. As it clicked to 0.0, they could feel themselves leaving the floor.

“Oh my.” Kristine said. Her hair was everywhere, her arms and legs spread as she slowly lifted from the floor. Michael followed suit. They moved up, then pushed against the ceiling. They pushed off and bounced around the room.

“Wee!” Kristine sang out in glee as she summersaulted across the room.

Michael followed her example. They were laughing heartily when they collided in space.

“Whoops.” He said as they caught each other. They looked at one another and they moved towards each other to kiss.

“Hmm lover. Want to make love in zero G?” She asked.

“I thought you’d never ask. They drifted apart to undress. Clothes floating around the room, they eventually managed to find one another in the floating mess. They found that zero-G sex wasn’t quite as romantic as they envisioned. The cool part, Kristine’s breasts were at full attention and unhindered by anything. They tried maneuvering, but really spent more time and effort just trying to keep in contact with each other.

“Argh, this isn’t working.” Kristine finally said. “We need some gravity. Just so we don’t bounce off each other.”

“Hmm.” He agreed. “Let’s try this.” He reached for the control and turned the dial just one click to the right. They slowly drifted to the floor under one-tenth gravity.

“Oh, this is better.” She said. He approached her, pressing his lips against hers. She was so light he held her hips, and lifted her. She spread her legs and he slid into her.

“Oh! Yes!” she screamed from the other side of the walls of breast flesh in front of him. He held onto her hips as he started to pump into her. She was parallel to the floor, her breasts projecting straight into the air, swinging and swaying wonderfully as he stroked into her. It was easy to hold her, there were several hand rails around the room, Kristine held onto one to keep herself steady, meanwhile Michael held her hips. Parallel to the floor, she wrapped her legs around him, her enormous breasts projecting upwards and outwards.

“Ugh! Ugh! Ugh!” she panted over and over again. Her boobs starting swinging and bouncing as their passion rose. Kristine was one of the most passionate women Michael had known and she was totally consumed by the raging hormones, and active feeling racing through her.

“Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!” repeatedly she scream and pant. Her whole body was shaking and vibrating with a nearly continuous orgasm.

Finally, he couldn't take it anymore and released into her fertile womb. She felt his release and tightened the grip with her legs, trying to force him deeper into herself. The near weightlessness had provided a nearly perfect alignment of their bodies. He couldn't get any deeper.

He lowered her to the floor, and he laid down beside her.

“Wow, that was incredible.” She said as she collected herself.

“You're telling me. I think we're going to have to spend a lot of time in here.” He replied.

“No arguments. I wonder if there's a zero-g lab like this on Zanthia.” She said.

“We'll have to find out.”

“After.. after we get back.”

The next few days, they spent much of their time in the apartment, they looked out at the stars, cuddled on the couch and talked. Many a time, their love making also happened there as well. When their cuddling got a bit steamy, they'd merely remove whatever clothing they might have been wearing, or move it aside, and soon Kristine's womb would be bathed in another load of sperm.

They also spent time exploring the facility. They looked in each of the labs. Found, and had fun in two other zero-g rooms, and checked out every door they could. They even found the space suits. The computer assured them that the suits were working perfectly. And they were tempted to actually go outside. But Kristine looked at her suit, then down at her lap-filling breasts and concluded the suit wouldn't fit her.

“We'll have to get some made that'll fit.” Michael said.

“I really wanted to try out that buggy.” She said pointing to the moon-buggy visible on the other side of the air-lock.

“Yea, me too.” He replied. “Come on.. I want to try something.” They made their way to one of the smallest observatories.

“I'm willing to bet this was one of the first units put here, and they used it for looking at the other planets and asteroids. You know things close by.”

“Makes sense.” She agreed.

He looked at the controls, and found a button to open the observatory doors. Like earth's large observatories, two large doors slid apart. From their observation deck they could see the moon-scape through the widening gap. He found another button and the telescope started moving.

“Let's see if I can do this. A monitor lit with the star field. In it, they could see Zanthia in the lower right standing out against the star studded back-ground. Carefully, he moved the big telescope until the planet was closer to the center.

“Oh wow.” Kristine said. “Can we increase the magnification?”

“I think so.” He rotated a dial and Zanthia grew larger in the monitor, nearly consuming the screen. He moved the telescope a little and got Zanthia centered.

“I think this takes a picture.” She said, and pressed a button. “And this transfers it.” Like many of the others on Zanthia, Kristine’s bracelet now had a small fob attached to it. About the size of sugar cube, the data storage device was similar in function to USB jump drives on earth. She held her cube to the reader, and transferred the image to it.

“I bet the teachers will love to have this in their class-rooms.” Michael said. Kristine nodded.

“I’m sure there’s a way to transmit the image directly.” Kristine said. “But until the machines change the labels, I don’t know have the foggiest on how.”

“And I think we better quit while we’re ahead. It’ll take a lot of reading and learning to figure out how to fully use these.”

He found the buttons needed to shut down the telescope and close the outer doors.

“I think the computer system here is a lot more primitive than the ones we’re used to. We’ll have to ask Jenna if it can be upgraded; At least the human interface parts.” Kristine said.

“That’d be nice.” Michael agreed.

“So, hungry?” She asked.

“Absolutely.” They made it back to the apartment. “You know, the air is better in here. I could notice a bit of a difference in some of the other spaces.”

“Me too. We’ll have to keep bringing plants.” Kristine pointed out. She took a bite of her food.

“Yup.” Michael agreed then counted off on his fingers. “First, some of the other apartments, second the laboratory dome and the hallways between, and then the observatories, littlest to smallest. I’m probably missing something. We really haven’t explored too seriously.”

“I bet there’s blueprints and floor plans back home.” Kristine replied. Before Michael could reply, her face brightened with excitement.

“You know what would be REALLY fun?” Kristine asked.

“Hmm.” He replied shaking his head.

“Field trip for the kids.” She replied. “Could you imagine the bunch of them bouncing around in zero-g? Or looking through the telescopes?”

“Some of them are old enough. Give them something to do beyond basic learning.”

“Oh yea, what a wonderful idea. I wonder if we could find Earth’s sun amongst all those stars out there?”

“I don’t know. Be fun to find out. A worthy goal....” He looked up at the stars. “Someday.”

“Hmmm. Yea.” She agreed.

“You miss it? Earth I mean?” He asked.

“Sometimes.” She said. “Maybe it’s more nostalgia than missing it. If you’re asking if I want to go back; heck no. But I still kind of miss all the people. You know, all the variety of things happening on Earth. All the cultures, the movies, the sports, the music, just billions of people all doing their thing. And all the variety they all create.”

“We’ll catch up.” Michael replied. “We have a world to explore and populate. We’ll catch up.”

“Speaking of catching up.” She said. She led him into the bedroom and for the next two hours they did their best to add to the Zanthian population.

“So... you think?” Michael said later, his hand rubbing her belly.

“Hopefully.” She replied, putting her hand on top of his. “I really want to be. I’ve caught up with everybody but Tabitha and Theresa.”

“Unh?”

“Don’t you remember? Some of us girls from first landing had a little competition going. And I got started late. I’ve caught up to everyone except Tabitha and Theresa. If I’m pregnant, then I’ll be ahead of Tabitha.”

“It’s not a race.” Michael said.

“We know. We’re not having babies, just to have babies.” She said. “And after these are born, I’ll have some more surrogate kids, I think.”

They spent the night in each other’s arms, and spent one more session in the zero-g area. Then finally, after Kristine’s bracelet went dark, they reluctantly loaded their things back on the shuttle, and headed back to Zanthia.

Once they had established a course, a bit slower on the return, Kristine turned to Michael.

“I want to thank you.” She said. She moved from her chair and Michael pushed his back as she straddled his legs and kissed him.

“No point in Susan, Tabitha, and Matilda having all the fun.. right?” She said. She pulled her shirt up, and let Michael drink from her milk laden boobs.

“Wait a minute. I thought breast feeding stopped women from getting pregnant.”

“Hmmm.” She cooed. “Only slows the return of menstrual cycle. Doesn’t prevent it. Besides, I like breast feeding, so I keep going longer than some.” She arched her back and relished the feeling of his lips on her nipples.

“Besides. I love when you do that.” She said. “Ooh!” Another orgasm sprung from her loins.

Epilogue: Sailing

Michael pulled the car to a stop on the pier and looked at the ship docked there. It was long and sleek, over four hundred feet. It was fast, with graceful lines and luxurious furnishings. There was an air-car on the upper deck. Over the stern, two motor boats were suspended in their davits. From outward appearances, it more closely resembled a luxury yacht, than a research ship. It had been three years since the ship had been launched, the second of three research ships made specifically for Deanne, Megan and Melissa. The harbor had a few boats tied up. The three research ships were all there, as well as Doc Hester's sailing ship.

He popped the trunk on the Mustang, and retrieved his luggage.

"Hey, that's new." He heard over his shoulder. He turned to see Deanne looking down on him from the yacht's second deck.

"Yes, it is." Michael said closing the trunk lid. His new ride was brand new, black mustang. Rose has been kind enough to secure a digitized scan of it, and Jenna, now well practiced with converting automobiles to Zanthian power, had worked her magic. Nola was now happily driving his older red one. Deanne's own pick-up was parked just a few feet away.

"I like it. Very sexy." She replied.

"Thank-you." He replied. "Permission to come aboard?" he asked?

"Absolutely, come on up." She replied.

He carried his bag aboard and left it at the base steps on the main deck. He started climbing the steps upward, hoping to find Deanne on the bridge. He turned around just in time to see the gang plank automatically raise up, fold upon itself, and secure itself along the side railing.

Two sets of steps and one ladder later, he was on the steering bridge. Deanne was waiting for him there.

'Speaking of sexy.' Michael thought as he looked at her. He took in the view for a moment.

The years had been wonderful for Deanne, shortly after their arrival, she started her first pregnancy. She had decided she didn't need a celebrity donor for the father of her children, instead she chose one of the two thousand donors Michael and Susan and the rest had collected before making the first trip. She quickly followed that pregnancy with two more. Now, eight months after her third pregnancy, she was back on the oceans.

She was wearing a too small T-shirt, a pair of cut-off jean shorts, and her customary heeled sandals, wedges, he thought she called them. Since arriving on Zanthia, she had let her blond hair grow longer, it now cascaded down her back over her butt. Her perfectly flat stomach (had it been visible) showed just a hint of well-developed muscle tone just under the surface. Nobody would look at her and think she had already gone through three pregnancies; each time delivering twin daughters. But all that beauty aside, could not distract the eyes from her enormous breasts. Twice the size of Susan's, though incredibly firm, they hung to just above her waist. Her red t-shirt had "BIG" boldly written on the front, and a great deal of reverse cleavage was visible under it. From the dents her nipples were making in the stressed fabric, it was clear she wasn't wearing any kind of bra or swimsuit underneath.

She crossed the deck to him, wrapped her arms around his neck, and kissed him passionately. For his part, he pulled her to him, his hands on her lower back.

"Hmm." She purred. "Definitely welcome aboard."

They parted enough for her to turn and go back to the ship's controls.

“Who’s got the girls?” He asked.

“Megan is watching them. Along with some of the other girls.” She replied. Megan and Melissa were at home, Megan expecting her third set of twins in the next two weeks, while Melissa’s little ones were barely a month old.

“And we’re headed?” He asked.

“South mostly.” She said as she started prepping the ship for departure. “You said you wanted to see how the ocean seeding worked, so that’s what we’re going to do. At least, some, of what we’re going to do.”

She smiled and winked at him as she worked. The ship’s power generator was already running and the console’s lights and gauges already operating. She pressed a couple buttons and a display came to life. He could feel the barest of vibrations through the hull. The ship had position keeping thrusters at both the bow and stern, these now were spinning up, and held the ship at its current position. Once the display lights turned green, Deanne pressed another button and turned to look over her shoulder. At the stern of the ship, a robotic extending from the dock released its grip on a mooring cleat. The arm raised itself, and retracted away. Next she pressed another button, and the mooring arm holding the bow in place released and retracted. Now free to move, she moved a joystick slowly forward. The ship slowly crept forward. She rotated the wheel slightly, and the ship turned ever so slightly away from the dock. Once clear of the dock, she shut down the position keeping thrusters and moved the throttle ahead just a little.

“Nicely done.” He said. At this point, he could feel a gathering breeze on his face, as they turned and made toward the southern side of Shing-La island.

“Oh look.” She suddenly said pointing to the dock on their right. He turned and could see a SUV stopped by the Doc’s sail boat. Both doors were open. As they watched, they could see the doctor get out and open the rear hatch. From the passenger seat, they could see Jenna emerge, and make her way to the boat. Deanne found a button, and gave a blast on the air horn. The people on the dock stopped their activity, looked and waved. Michael and Deanne waived back.

A moment later, Doc’s voice sounded through the radio.

“Hey, where are you guys headed?”

Deanne picked up the microphone; it was her ship after all. “We’re going south, to do some more seeding.” She said.

“Good to hear. We were planning on going up the coast. Jenna said there used to be a small village up there with a nice little harbor. Thought we’d camp out over night.”

As they watched, they could see Sabrina, the Doctor’s grand-daughter, now a teen-ager, and a couple of her class-mates emerging from the SUV, grab a few bags and carry them aboard the sailboat.

“Sounds like fun. Looks like you’ll have nice wind for it.” Deanne replied. “Talk to you later. Be safe.”

“We will. You too.” They could see Doc and Jenna waving again. They waived back

“Wow, when Jenna gets pregnant, she doesn’t mess around.” Deanne observed. Jenna was near to term with her third pregnancy. She carried twins, like many of the women often did. But in her case, it looked like she actually was carrying triplets.

They passed Shing-La island and Deanne opened the throttle as they headed out to sea. As they passed the outer buoys, she opened the throttle to three-quarters, and the ship gathered speed. The ocean was relatively calm today, so for the next few hours they made excellent speed, over twenty-five knots, to their destination. Even though they stayed on the bridge, Deanne had put the ship on autopilot. As they

approached the designated spot, the ship automatically slowed down and came to a stop. Deanne shut down the main engine, and engaged the position keeping thrusters.

“Come on, let me show you what we do.” She led him down to below decks to an area in the middle of the ship. The moon pool was a large room with doors on the bottom of the ship that opened to the sea. At the front of the moon pool there was a stack of over thirty stasis chests. Next, he saw two submersibles suspended above the doors. The first looked almost exactly like the sea sampler they had used on earth. This one had an open hatch at the top. The ship's computer was currently loading in the familiar chest sized stasis chests into it. The second submersible looked more like what he was used to seeing on earth's TV shows. A glass domed front for viewing, Manipulator arms, and various looking arms and tools adorned its sides and front.

“I hope you're not claustrophobic.” She said, as she made her way to the top hatch of the second mini-sub. She started climbing down the hatch, but actually had to squeeze her boobs into the narrow passage. Once inside, she moved out of the way so he could climb in. Once in, she instructed him how to close and secure the hatch. Then she made her way to the pilot's chair. The sub's space was limited, but not too bad. They both had to walk bent over, but still more than Michael was anticipating.

Deanne pressed some buttons, and the power system came on line. Next she relayed some commands to the ship, and they could see the moon pool start to fill with water.

“No, the ship isn't sinking.” She joked. Once the area was filled, the water was half way up their mini-sub's observation window. He could see two sets of doors under him start to open.

“All right, here we go.” She pressed a few more buttons, and the first submarine was lowered into the water. Arms like he had seen on the dock released the sub, and it submerged. Next it was their turn. The arms lowered them further into the water, then released. His ears popped with the pressure, but they then sank under the water. They followed the other sub down to a depth of one hundred feet, there, it paused.

“OK, watch.” She said. They pulled in rather close and once they took position, Deanne relayed some instructions and they watched. Along each side of the sub was a row of trays, each about the size and shape of a large kitchen sink. As they watched, above one tray, a light came out of no-where, and a fish appeared. The mini-sub had just teleported a fish from one of the onboard stasis chest to the water above the tray. The fish, still unconscious, drifted into a tray and settled.

“The tray is so the fish doesn't sink.” She supplied. Several fish were teleported into the water and floated down to the trays. Michael could not see the other side of the sub, but could only assume the same was happening there as well. They watched for nearly fifteen minutes, then the first fish started to stir, then it would groggily swim a little, then up and out of the tray, and eventually out of their site. As soon as it had left, a new fish was teleported into its spot. They watched for another hour as fish after fish was teleported into the waiting trays, to wake up, and swim away. Once the trays were empty, Michael expected the mini sub to go lower, but instead it climbed.

“The Sub's chests are empty. It's going back for another load.” She replied. “Want to head back up?”

“Sure.” He replied and they too went back up to the ship waiting on the surface. Deanne expertly piloted her sub to under the ship, and into the moon pool area and then surfaced. Once on the surface, the arms reached out, found the anchoring points, and lifted the sub to its storage location. Once there, the doors under them started to close. There was still water in the moon pool, but as they watched, the first mini-sub opened its hatch, and the ship started off-loading the now empty stasis chests, and putting in full ones.

“That was awesome.” He replied as they made their way out of the mini-sub, to the gangway above. There they watched as the first mini-sub completed its loading, and sank again under the water.

“Let me show you something.” She said, took his hand, and pulled him back up to the main deck. They climbed made their way to an open area under the bridge. There were monitors around the room, some had

images of the moon pool, others relayed images of the seeding sub's fish trays. Deanne pointed to two maps, one of Earth's Atlantic ocean, the other of Zanthian's Eastern Sea. She pointed to several spots in an area of the Atlantic ocean.

"Here's where we collected the fish we're seeding today." Then she pointed to their location on Zanthia. "And we're here. We're combining several sample sites so we can deliver a bigger population into one spot on Zanthia. We hope the fish will stick close enough together to find each other, and eventually propagate."

There were many such groupings from around the Earth's maps.

"I presume you'll repeat that with these other groups?" He said gesturing to them.

"Yes." Deanne replied. "It'll depend how this all goes. We tagged a lot of fish, we'll see how they survive." The seeding sub had reached depth again, and had started off-loading the fish.

"So we're just going to seed this one spot?" Michael asked.

"Yes, it'll take a while. Let's get something to eat." She replied and they got some premade sandwiches from the frig, something to drink, and relaxed on the bow. After nearly another hour, the ship gave a chime, and they went back in to see the seeding sub emerge from the water.

"Looks like we're done for the day." Deanne said. Deanne went back to the controls, and started the doors to closing. Once they were sealed, the water pumps started.

They watched the water go down. Just as the moon pool was almost empty, they climbed down and looked at the water, no small fish were found. Deanne returned to the control panel, and completed the water drainage. Next they climbed to the upper bridge, and Deanne plotted a new location, and engaged the auto pilot. The ship turned south, and picked up speed.

"Where to now?" He asked.

"Oh, just a nice, tropical island." She said. "Quiet lagoon, sandy beach. You and me." She pressed her body against his and kissed him.

"Sounds wonderful." He said. The ship sped across the ocean, the bouncing making it difficult to do more than hold hands while holding onto whatever railing was nearby. They spent the time talking, and looking as the ship continued on. As evening approached a speck of green appeared on the horizon ahead of them, growing larger as they approached. Deanne disengaged the autopilot, and continued the course, she dropped the throttle to half, then to barely moving as they approached.

"There's a reef ahead, can you go up to the bow? Make sure I'm not going to hit it?" She asked.

He made his way forward, and looked down into the pristine waters. He could see small fish cavorting around the reefs, but directly underneath him, and a ways ahead, he could see the path was clear.

"Looks OK!" he called back. And he continued to watch as she threaded the large ship into a deep lagoon. Finally satisfied, she dropped the anchor, and cut power.

"I could see fish as we crossed into the area." He said. He joined her amidships and they made their way aft.

"Good. That a great sign." She said. "Megan seeded an area on the southern side of this chain. It's good to see they're spreading. They made their way aft, and took the launch into the beach. It didn't take them long to set up a tent above the tide level. Then they set up a beach umbrella and a blanket on the sand.

"Isn't this wonderful?" She asked as they settled down.

“Incredible.” He said.

“Want to get into the water?” She asked.

“Sure!” he replied. He took off his t-shirt, his sandals already gone, and waded into the water. For her part, she dropped her jean shorts to reveal she was wearing bikini bottoms underneath. Then flipped her shirt off to reveal the matching bikini top was somewhere else.

“Wow.” He said. “Topless?”

“Sure, why not?” She replied. She held her boobs from bouncing too much and ran into the water.

He couldn't argue, and ran to catch up. They splashed and swam, the water warm and soothing, but the sun was almost down, so they didn't stay in the water long.

“Let's get something to eat, heh?” She suggested.

They made their way back to the shore and to the tent. They dragged their chairs to the fire pit, roasted some hot-dogs and relaxed.

“Did you have a good day?” She asked after a while.

“Wonderful day.” He replied. “I might have to have yacht built, not as big as your ship of course, so I can take Susan out.”

“She'd like that, so would the rest of us.” She replied. “But I think I'll stick to my girl.” She replied looking at her ship resting at anchor a few hundred yards off shore.

“Can't blame you there.” He replied. He poked at the dying fire.

“Put that out, and come inside.” She said throwing her roasting stick into it. She got up and went into the tent. He threw some sand onto the fire, making sure it was out and followed her.

The tent was small, closeness was must. She had already removed her shirt and was in the double sleeping bag. He snuggled in beside her.

“This is nice.” She said kissing him. “You know, I've got you for the next three days. Three whole days of nothing but you and me, and, well, just you and me.”

“I think I can manage.”

“I hope so. I plan on a lot of you *in* me for the entire time.” She trailed an arm down his body and into his shorts. “Speaking of which, let's get rid of these pesky clothes.” She accepted him into her embrace, and his manhood into her body. Again and again that night, they both enjoyed the passion of their lovemaking.

The following morning, as the sun came up, they both were pleasantly surprised to hear birds chirping and singing in the trees.

“We have to tell Tabitha about the birds.” Deanne said.

“After we get back.” He replied. And he pushed her over onto her back and buried his face into her bountiful cleavage.

“Oh!” she panted. Her breasts were extremely sensitive, and he knew this. She loved it when his hand and lips fondled her boobs.

“That’s it lover. Make me cum again!” She panted. “Oh yes, yes, Yes! Aaah!” and she shook with her first orgasm of the morning. But he wasn’t finished. He quickly mounted her even before the aftershocks had a chance to calm down.

“Oh!” She started panting as she felt him slide into her. “Oh! Oh! Oh! Nnn! Oh!” She’d pant and scream, her legs wrapped around him, her arms pulling him tighter. “Fuh! Fuh! Oh God! Oh God!” He could feel her whole body shaking through a nearly five minute orgasm as he continued to stroke into her. Finally he released his seed into her womb and collapsed beside her.”

“Thirsty.” She managed to squeak out.

He found the canteen and handed it to her. She took a drink and relaxed.

“So, I thought we’d try doing a little exploring.” She said after a few moments.

“Agreed, maybe catch a glimpse of whatever birds we’ve been hearing.”

“From what I understand, Tabitha released the birds on a different island, a ways away. She’ll be happy to hear they’ve expanded their territory.”

“What’s all this?” Michael asked. “I’m missing something.”

Deanne rolled over covering his upper body with her breasts. She kissed him then went on to explain.

“Well, first this is a fairly good sized island chain. We’re on the northern island. The three of us were looking at the maps, and decided just south of this chain would be a good place to seed the first round of small fish. Megan was the one who did it. Anyway, she told Tabitha and the rest of us about these islands, and how beautiful they looked from the ship. So, some of us went to look at them a little closer. Tabitha thought it’d be a great place to start seeding her tropical birds. So she started on the southern island too.”

“Ah. I’m glad you all are getting along so well together.”

“We talk about a lot of things.” Deanne teased. “What we’re doing, our work. You.”

“Me?”

“Of course you.” She replied. “You are the main man in our lives. We all figured we’d have to share you, at least a little. We know Susan’s your ‘wife’ and all. But she doesn’t mind us having our fun too.”

They swam in the ocean, to remove some of the sweat, then started walking along the beach. They reached a rocky outcropping to the south, so headed inland. The underbrush was thick, but not too bad, the birds had already cut down the bug population somewhat, and the walking was pleasant. They ran into a fresh water stream, and decided to follow it upriver. Around noon, they reached a large pool, easily a hundred yards wide, at the far end a picturesque waterfall.

“It’s beautiful.” Deanne said stripping off her clothes. “Let’s swim.”

He joined her. The water was warm, and clear. They cavorted under the falls. Feeling refreshed, Deanne turned her back to him, and presented her naked womanhood to him.

“Another round lover?” She asked. And there, in the open area behind the falling water, they coupled again. After he had deposited another load into her waiting womb, and they had time to recover, they went back into the water, and swam to a clearing on the shore. They pulled their clothes over their wet bodies and looked at the water falls.

"I don't see a way up there." Deanne said.

"Me neither." Ted said. "It's getting late, let's get back to camp and get something to eat."

"Good idea." She said. "You need your energy. I have a lot more sex planned for tonight."

"You know." He said before turning to leave. "This place reminds me a little of Theresa's fish hatchery place up north. Maybe we have her check it out."

"Hmm. I don't know. It's just so pretty here. I'd hate to ruin it."

"She had her other place pretty well hidden, couldn't see it from the lake. I'll have to take you there sometime."

She looked at him askance.

"You, me, alone in a rustic cabin in the woods, no one around for miles. We could find something to do.. couldn't we?"

"Well, when you put it that way." She replied putting her arms around him. "Sounds wonderful."

"We'll have to plan on it."

They made their way back to the campsite. After eating, they spread a blanket out on the sand, put up a beach umbrella for shade, and relaxed the rest of the afternoon.

They ate another late meal as the sun went down. They had put out the fire, and were using a lantern for light. They laid out on the blanket, and looked up at the night sky. Maxose was bright in the western sky, and Mineos a dull light off just above the eastern horizon.

After a time, Deanne stood, and removed her clothes. She turned, swung a leg over him, and settled down on his lap.

"You want to know something." She said getting comfortable. "I'm hoping to be pregnant before we leave here." She showed him her bracelet, three jewels shining.

"I ah, I have a confession to make too." He replied. He could feel her hips slowly moving against him, his manhood thickening in response. "Ever since I first met you, I've wanted you too."

She lifted her hips, and he freed his manhood. Together they guided it into her. She slowly started stroking. "And when my boobs are huge with milk, I want you to drink of me." Her pace quickened. "Ah, that's it, give me babies. Oh! Ugh! Ooh!"

"I thought you were going to be a surrogate?" He managed. He had a hand on each breast, pushing them together for and even deeper cleavage. He buried his face in that welcoming cleavage, kissing and licking every square inch he could.

"I.. I.. I will.." she panted. Her pace had increased to the point where coherent talk was about to be eliminated. "I.. I.. promise.... Right.. After.. these."

At that point, she didn't say much for the next hour as she panted encouragement. After several orgasms on her part, he finally exploded deep within her fertile womb. She screamed out in ecstasy as she felt his seed release, then collapsed on top of him.

He stayed within her for several more minutes as they caught their breath. Finally he slipped out of her, and she slid to his side.

“Thank-you.” She said after a while. “I want your babies so bad.”

“And me having babies with some of the others...?” He asked.

“Doesn’t bother me a bit. We all agreed to share, and to take turns if we had to.”

“Oh really?” He said surprised.

“Oh yea, I think between us, there will always be someone for you to love.”

Epilogue : Booster

“Sweetie, can you watch the little ones for a little while?” Susan said. The infants were both asleep,

“Sure Mom.” Jamie replied.

“Your father and I won’t be gone long.” She replied. “Please teleport Michael and myself aboard.” She said into the communication device. They found themselves on the Zanhallah’s teleporter pad.

“So what’s the surprise?” Michael asked.

“Come with me.” She said and took his hand. She led him out and across the hallway into the med room. She hopped onto the table.

“OK, I’m confused.”

“It’s simple.” She said. “I want a booster shot. Just the boobs. I don’t want to be like Theresa was, having quads all the time. But I do want bigger boobs.”

“You’re kidding right?”

“Nope, totally serious.” She said. “I want to be bigger. Not huge like Matilda, but bigger than Deanne and Megan, at least.”

“You, you are serious.” He replied astonished.

“Absolutely.” She replied. “Tell you what. Surprise me. You choose. It’s only fair. I surprised you first time, you choose this time.”

“Well, all right.” He replied. He went to the station and called up Susan’s medical record, and then the code for the genetic enhancements. He moved the scale indicator, and her projected size was on the screen.

“You want me to change the fertility at all?” He asked.

“No, I’m fine right where it is. Twins just seem ‘normal’ for me now.” She replied.

“Are you really, really sure?”

“I was watching some television from home the other day, and thought how small all the women looked.” She said. She hefted her breasts up. “I used to be a double-D, and I thought I was big. Now, it seems like a good start.”

He turned away from the computer and looked at her again.

“Just for sake of discussion, if you could choose any size? What would it be?”

“You mean like fantasy?” She asked.

“Yes. Not worrying about anything. Just you.”

“Well, if I could, I’d be enormous, like down to my knees huge.”

“But...?”

“But, I don’t think I could carry them. And our daughters would have boobs that big too. All we could do is lay around all day, making more babies, a slave to our own boobs.”

“But you want to get bigger.”

“I’ve gotten used these, and I think I can handle bigger boobs.” She replied. “So, stop asking questions, give me my booster shot.”

“Ok.” He said turning back to the computer console. “One booby booster coming up.” He pushed a few buttons, and the injection was made. He approached her, she nodded, and he gave her the shot.

“Can I ask?” She said as they left the med room. They walked forward and stood looking at the forward monitors.

“If I did it right, you should end up about halfway between Deanne and Matilda.”

She reached for and held his hand.

“Thank-you.”

“You’re welcome.” He replied.

“I mean, for everything. For bringing me here, for this adventure, for the children we have, and the ones to come. For everything.”

“I love you too.” He said squeezing her hand in return. “It wouldn’t have been worth it, if you hadn’t come along.”

“Come on, let’s get back down. The girls are fine for a few minutes, but I don’t want them there alone for long.”

Epilogue: Egg Drop

“That was wonderful lover.” Susan said snuggling up to him. The early morning sex was just as wonderful as the night before. Her bracelet told her she was perfectly timed to get pregnant again. She had spent the last twelve years carrying eight surrogate pregnancies for three different sets of parents. Many of the other women had done the same. She loved being pregnant, and now she was hoping she was pregnant with Michael’s children again. She rolled onto her back and ran her hands over her stomach; just as flat and firm as it was seventeen years ago before her first pregnancy.

“You hungry?” Michael asked. “I’m going to take a shower then get us some breakfast.”

“Sounds wonderful.” She replied. “I want to lay out by pool afterwards.”

Michael kissed her then went into the bathroom.

As soon as the door closed she rolled over and slid open the drawer on the night stand. She retrieved the inseminator and a mirror. Her larger boobs had taken her time to get used to but now she was familiar with the shifting as she rolled back onto her back. Like Matilda had done, she positioned the device on her stomach just below her belly button.

Over the years, the women continued to get pregnant. Most women had chosen to ease up on their baby making. They had lowered their fertility to normal levels, as well as taking as much as a year off between pregnancies. Their homes had filled with children, and only lately had some of the oldest moved out to find their own homes.

There were some exceptions, and Michael was happy to see his favorites were among them. Susan, Kristine, Matilda, Tabitha, Deanne, and others all continued to carry surrogate children, usually twins, or in Matilda’s case, the occasional set of triplets. But it seemed there was always at least one of the women carrying his children. Matilda has been the most productive. Matilda had continued having clone girls, alternating with Michael’s.

Susan, was especially anxious. She was determined to catch up, even surpass Matilda. Matilda had given him twelve children in all, while Susan had only given him eight.

“Michael is mine. I’ll show Zanthia what making babies is all about.” She said quietly.

Using the mirror to look over her boobs she pressed the button and watched the light. The light cycled slowly, then went solid for a minute, then flashed rapidly. She smiled. Impregnation. She stole a glance at the bathroom door, the water was still running in the shower.

Her finger hovered over the button, she could do it, press it a second time. Go for septuplets.

“No.” She said to herself. She put it back into the nightstand drawer. “Next time.”

