

M.M. LOGAR

# FORGOTTEN

SciFi Short Story



“Wake up Mike!”

Every time, the same sentence. I have to tell him to adjust that, he is supposed to be a superior AI after all.

“Rise and shine baby. It’s time to kick another planet in the nuts.”

“Ok, ok...I am up Elijah,” I said through the teeth.

I was just defrosted and pumped with chemicals to get me up and running, but all I wanted was a cup of coffee. Elijah knew that, so he brewed me a cup. The smell was calling me and making me stand up.

“I’ll do the physical examination while you drink your magical black potion.” He whispered and winked at me.

It was against the protocol for me to stand up before he did the full examination, but this was a little exception to the rules we made.

The first sip was glorious, as is any morning. Elijah started to scan me for the physical examination. I chose him to be my companion. He is an AI consciousness and the behavioral digital copy of my best friend Elijah. When I left Earth I knew I will never see him again, or anyone else I know. My round trip was estimated to 1500 Earth years, 11 planets, 12 defrosts. The chance of success is at 83%. Pretty high. If I manage to return I will be a very rich individual, and alone in the world with no living friends.

I am not alone on the ship. Besides Elijah, an engineer is in the cryo pod next to me. His name is Maher. He is supposed to be woken only in the extreme circumstances of a mechanical failure. My theory is that Mahir is to be woken only if I die. I don’t see how he will be able to fix our jump drive if we need a spare part million light-years away from Earth.

“What is your name Mike?” Elijah’s hologram smiled.

“Michael Adams, but you call me Mike.”

“What is your profession?”

“I am an astro historian. I gather, analyze and study past events related to human dissemination from Earth.”

“What is our mission, Mike? Try to follow the light while you answer.”

“To visit 11 colonies Earth lost contact with after the war cataclysm. If the colony is prospering, I am to establish diplomatic relations, and inform them of the current status of Earth.”

“Which is?”

“After 3500 Sol revolutions, Earth is back on its feet. There are no more nations, and the unified government is making sure that war will never happen again.”

“Excellent Mike. Now, do you remember how we did on our mission so far?”

“Yeah. We visited 10 planets, 9 had colonies, 5 colonies are dead, 4 are thriving. Diplomatic relations are set to friendly, so far the mission is a success.”

“All done. I hope you are ready for the last one.”

“I am Elijah, I am. Play that playlist of yours while I suit up.”

Music started - Band Air, album Moon safari.

“Mike, the colony seems to be thriving. It is visible with the naked eye. It is a single large city, well developed. The city is illuminated, signs of heavy industry exist in an area south of the city.

“Oh, that’s great,” I said ecstatically. “Can you establish communication?”

“I am scanning all the frequencies, there is some local encrypted communication, but I am unable to get a reply to my hails.”

“All right, is there a suitable landing spot?”



"Yes, there is a large flat area next to the city. Since the rest of the landmass is covered with woods I suspect it might be where they grow crops."

"Ok, we'll have to risk destroying some veggies. Prep the shuttle and let's go."

The landing was perfect. As Elijah predicted we landed on a large crop field. Robots were everywhere around and tended to the young sprouts.

The city was directly in front of me, a couple of clicks away. Everywhere on the horizon, we were encircled by the woods. I gathered my stuff and proceeded to the city with Elijah in my earpiece.

As I approached people started to come out of the city. They all wore large comfortable clothes, almost like a toga. One by one they appeared from the city, slowly creating a crowd. In the end, I was encircled. They all carried devices in their hands, which looked like some kind of tablets, maybe phones. Many of them got them up and pointed towards me, I guess they started to film me.

One man stepped through the crowd.

"Do you speak?" He said.

"I do," I said cheerfully, reminiscing about the Chinese colony on Repta V, where we had a language barrier until they accepted Elijah as the interpreter.

"Speak then spaceman."

"My name is Michael Adams. I am an envoy from Earth, sent to re-establish communication with the new worlds." (The psychologist instructed me not to use the word colonies).

The man looked at me with a blank look.

"We never heard of this Earth. It is clear to me from what I see that we must be of the same genus, but I assure you this is the first time we are visited by your people."

"You do not have any records of Earth?" I was surprised. "It's where all you came from."

"Come," Said the man. "You must tell us more of this Earth." He finished his sentence with a movement that looked like he took my photo with the device in his hand.

The city looked surprisingly well organized, beautiful and clean. Robots were everywhere, doing chores, running around. At first, the people followed us with the devices pointed at me, then they just disappeared.

We entered a house and my host sat me down on a comfortable wide chair. He placed the device strategically so that it could capture us both. Then it struck me.

"You are broadcasting our conversation?"

"Yes." The man said calmly. "My name is John, I am the captain of Sarkadia, the oasis of life."

"It is nice to meet you, John," I replied.

He reached for the fruit basket.

"Would you like to eat? It will replenish you."

"No, thank you," I replied.

He took a bite from a fruit.

"Tell me of this Earth then."

"It is a planet in the Solar system. It is the origin of the human race, which you belong to. I am uncertain if the passage of time here is comparable to earth's, but your ancestors left earth generations and generations ago. Like me, they arrived at this planet in the frozen state, and populated it, establishing this col...eh...Oasis."

"Mike, we have no ancestors, this land was ours for as long as we can remember."

I nodded.

"Of course, a long time has passed since the arrival. I understand generations changed, people lived and died, connection to Earth was lost..."

He smiled.

“There is no cessation of life in Oasis. We lived here forever, and yet we do not recall Earth.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“You must visit the oracle, I am sure it has answers to what you seek.”

“Oracle?”

“Yes, it contains forbidden knowledge, we do not go there. You can visit it though, no harm shall come to you. Come with me.”

He got up and led me to the roof of his house casually taking his device. He pointed his hand towards the horizon.

“You see that hill?”

“Yes.”

“The oracle is there. What you seek is there.”

With that, he left.

I returned to the shuttle. On my way back I noticed people were either watching the screens of their devices or chasing me to film me.

“Elijah, let’s go. Get me to that hill to the north.”

It was a short ride. Elijah hovered over while I roped down, and then he returned to the crop field.

The instant I landed on the hill I realized I was on no hill. This was an Orca class colony ship, and it was never supposed to land on the planet. Greenery was all over it. During the years thick lianas climbed from the woods and conquered its metallic armor. Colony ships were part of my education, but still, it took me almost a whole day to find the hatch. The ship was damaged, but surprisingly little. I navigated through the corridors searching for the bridge, and then I saw a sign which struck me like lightning. It said MADE BY ORACLE CLOUD TECHNOLOGIES. I entered the room realizing that I found what I was looking for. Data storage unit.

“Elijah.”

“Yes.”

“Wake Maher up.”

“Can you confirm that, I thought I heard you...”

“Yes, I said that I want you to wake Mahir. I need him to fix something here.”

“Is this decision critical to our mission?”

“Yes, Elijah,” I sighed and followed the correct procedure. “My name is Michael Adams, wake command is BREAKFAST FOR TWO. Now please wake him up, his set of skills is critically important for the success of the mission.”

I continued to explore the ship while I waited. Eventually, I mapped it thoroughly and found the bridge. I was resting on the top when the shuttle arrived with Maher. We greeted with a firm handshake. I was very pleased to see him although from his perspective we just left Earth.

I took Maher to the Oracle room.

“Maher, we need to power this up. I suspect that whatever is on this storage hides the answer to the fact that colonists have no clue about Earth. Doable?”

Maher touched his mustaches. “Yeah, it’s doable, but it’s gonna take some time. This looks preserved but it is incredibly old. I have to make sure everything is compatible with our gear, run tests, then try to power it up. Otherwise, I might fry it.”

“Let’s do it then.”

We worked long hours. I mostly just helped Maher by handing him the tools. Every three days we went back to the city. We welcomed their hospitality, food, and hot showers. Maher

befriended a woman, and well, broke many diplomatic protocols. I hoped that I could find out more about the history of the Oasis, but each time I steered the conversation in that direction I got the same answer - we don't remember anything about Earth.

It took us almost three months but we managed to power up the data bank, hook it to a portable computer and start digging through the data. We didn't have to dig deep, reviewing just the last entries gave us the answers. Maher and I watched in astonishment the last video entry of the ship's captain.

"This is the captain's log, I am John Bishop, captain of the Space Ship Arcadia, this will be my last entry."

"That is the same John who is running the Oasis now. This is not possible," I screamed.

"Today we all voted and decided to move on. I will explain, for future reference. We landed on Oasis 457 Earth years ago. Just as doctor Ryan proved in his research, this is an Oasis of life. The fruits we eat here repair our telomeres and will continue to repair our telomeres as long as we eat them, making us immortal. Again, doctor Ryan was the first to predict the memory problems, which we have become aware of in the last decade. Our minds are not made to store all the memories, and all the data of an immortal being, so after around 400 years we start forgetting things, as the new memories need space to be stored."

I paused the video.

"Maher, this is huge. Imagine the implication."

"They are thousands of years old," Maher said nodding. "All the original colonists are still alive. I suppose they limited the procreation in some way."

"It makes sense now. They record videos and photograph everything to create lasting memories. But why the hell don't they remember Earth?"

We continued watching the video.

"The decision is to let go. The last communication we got from Earth was to prepare us for another inevitable war. We don't want that. We choose life and peace. We choose to forget Earth. This data will stay here, and be remembered as an Oracle, in case we are visited by someone from the new worlds who remembers. In a thousand years no one will remember Earth."

We left the ship that night. I felt ashamed. Are we that bad that a part of our civilization made a decision to forget us?

We returned to the city. I thanked the Captain for their hospitality and assured him that the knowledge from the Oracle will not be misused. He didn't ask what it was. Now I understood why.

Maher was waiting for me next to the shuttle.

"Shall we?" I asked.

Maher looked at me and let a long sigh.

"I am not going back, Mike."

I smiled. "I understand."

"You do?" He asked, amazed.

"Yeah. I really do. We have nobody to go back to. You found a woman here. Even that is enough to stay. Then there is the eternal life thing and the risk of the return trip."

"You will let me stay?"

"Yes. I wish you the best possible eternal life."

Then I noticed the woman watching us. Maher went to her and put his arm around her.

"Safe travel Mike." He said.

I waved and entered the shuttle.

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Back at the ship, I instructed Elijah to delete the record of the Oasis. I entered in my log that Maher was killed during the planetary expedition. We found the crashed colony ship with no survivors. Maher tried to pull data from the ship's log but wasn't able to. He ended his life in an unfortunate fall from a high platform, after making a misstep in the wreckage.

While Elijah was preparing me for the cryosleep I checked my pocket. The fruit seeds were there. I hope I'll be able to grow them back on Earth, for the personal use of course.