

TROUBADOUR

I

AWAKEN

EXT. THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

Fade in. The City-Ship emerges into view as it traverses space, accompanied by solemn, quiet, otherworldly music in the underscoring. The title TROUBADOUR appears in the corner of the frame, and then fades out. The City-Ship is a large vessel comprised of domes and more angular sections. The vessel is large enough to house three hundred people comfortably. It moves dimly, quietly, as if asleep.

INT. VARIOUS INTERIOR SPACES, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

We move along empty corridors and through empty work and communal spaces, still accompanied by the underscoring. With the introduction of each room and corridor, the lighting comes up as if on an empty theater stage.

INT. CORRIDOR AND TI-KAL'S CABIN, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

We travel along an empty corridor until we turn through the open doorway of one of the City-Ship's many cabins. TI-KAL sits cross-legged in a lotus position at the foot of the bed. The music ebbs in the underscoring, replaced by ambient sound.

TI-KAL stares forward with a somnolent gaze, as if he has just woken up and is still unsure of his surroundings. He turns and gazes out the cabin window.

The cosmos glistens through the glass.

A 2-dimensional holographic image flickers into view in the air a few feet from TI-KAL'S face.

TI-KAL turns to face the hologram.

The image is the face and shoulders of the MISSION DESIGNER.

MISSION DESIGNER

Felicities. I am your Mission Designer. You are the first to have awakened from stasis, signaling that stage one of your journey is complete. I have programmed this recording for your aid and understanding, as by now you are no doubt aware of a loss of memory - specifically your name, your past, your place of origin. This is an unfortunate effect of the stasis. Be not afraid - your minds will survive the journey intact.

TI-KAL stares blankly at the hologram.

MISSION DESIGNER

It is thought best by those acquainted with the faculties of mind that no attempt should be made to fill these voids left by the stasis. These lost memories will be found again through a natural process, with clarity and comprehension. Though this lost time be but an aberration, it will better equip you and your crew to complete your mission fully, without the distractions of sentiment . . .

INT. CORRIDOR, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

A door slides open and DEL-PHI stumbles out of her cabin. She gazes around the corridor in sleepy confusion.

A pair of CREW MEMBERS walk slowly by, stretching their arms and rubbing their temples. They nod and smile in greeting at DEL-PHI as they pass. DEL-PHI, staring at the floor, fails to acknowledge them. All of the CAST and CREW MEMBERS wear the same sleeping garments: short-sleeved shirts and pajama-like trousers. All are barefoot. Each has a unique numerical character on the top left corner of their shirt, alongside a colored dot.

After the other CREW MEMBERS pass, DEL-PHI remains standing, staring at the floor in somnolent limbo.

INT. CORRIDOR, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

A cabin door slides open and PAL-MYRA, a foggy gaze in her eyes, emerges.

PET-RA, rubbing her forehead, comes down the corridor. She and PAL-MYRA collide with one another. They both grab each other's arms and laugh.

PAL-MYRA

Oh, forgiveness!

PET-RA

Goodness, no! 'Twas I who clamored upon you! My mind was adrift.

PAL-MYRA

'Tis a heavy void to return from. Let us go and find swift nourishment to reclaim our wits.

PET-RA

Yes, forthwith!

PAL-MYRA and PET-RA laugh and proceed down the corridor together.

INT. TI-KAL'S ROOM, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The MISSION DESIGNER completes TI-KAL'S briefing.

MISSION DESIGNER

Go forward. Share the knowledge I have given you with the others on your journey. Acquaint yourselves with one another. Your course is set and your destination already determined. The operation of your vessel is entirely automated, and your power is self-rejuvenating. I will reappear at your arrival, at which time the nature of your mission will be revealed. Until then, be at peace and one with the cosmos.

The MISSION DESIGNER hesitates before adding something more.

MISSION DESIGNER

This is the best we can do for you, and I have supreme confidence that all of you will dispatch yourselves with great measure. Just know that each of you is precious, and your first duty is to take care of one another.

The MISSION DESIGNER pauses and smiles.

MISSION DESIGNER

All my best.

The MISSION DESIGNER'S face registers a glimmer of emotion before the hologram flickers away.

TI-KAL stares into the now-empty space in contemplation.

INT. REFRESHMENT CENTER, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA and PET-RA fix themselves liquid nourishment at one of the ship's automated dispensers, where food and beverages are disbursed. DEL-PHI, still sleepy, approaches. PET-RA smiles at DEL-PHI and offers her a filled cup.

PET-RA

Here - refresh yourself.

DEL-PHI accepts the proffered cup with a somnolent smile.

DEL-PHI

Many thanks.

DEL-PHI sips from the cup while PET-RA fixes herself another cup.

PAL-MYRA

We would happily impart our names to you except - we can't remember them.

DEL-PHI

It is some small relief to know that mine is not the only brain that's frizzled.

FAI-YUM approaches one of the other dispensers and looks it over.

FAI-YUM
How does this work?

PAL-MYRA smirks, reaches over, and points at a light.

PAL-MYRA
Pass your hand before the light. But first, a vessel would be best placed beneath the nozzle, lest the floor get your breakfast.

FAI-YUM
I am most grateful. The brain-frizzles have me strong.

DEL-PHI, PET-RA and PAL-MYRA giggle as FAI-YUM grabs a clean bowl.

PET-RA
What a wooly crew we make!

INT. OBSERVATION DECK, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

TI-KAL approaches CAR-AL, who sits in a lotus position on a low cushioned seat on the large glass-enclosed observation deck, gazing out at the magnificence of the universe. Ambient music plays in the underscoring.

The view is painted with stars, nebulae, and galaxies.

TI-KAL stands slightly behind CAR-AL, holding a large bowl-shaped drinking vessel by the handle. Nothing is said for a moment, as both are transfixed by the transcendent scene before their eyes.

TI-KAL glances down and notices that CAR-AL holds a similar drinking vessel filled with what looks like the same liquid as his.

TI-KAL

I see you are partaking of the same galvanizing elixir.

CAR-AL glances down at her cup, and then up at TI-KAL with a dreamy smile before returning her gaze to the cosmic display before them.

CAR-AL

I have been living on it since awakening.

TI-KAL gives CAR-AL a curious look as he ensconces himself in the same pose on the seat next to hers.

TI-KAL

How long have you been awake?

CAR-AL

A whole rotation cycle now, I should think, or longer.

TI-KAL turns his gaze to the stars with a furrowed brow.

TI-KAL

How strange. I just received my recorded briefing from the Mission Designer, assuring me that I was the first to be summoned from slumber.

CAR-AL turns to TI-KAL.

CAR-AL

It occurred to me that my stasis had malfunctioned. I haven't been able to remember my name, my home, my family .
. .

TI-KAL

All of us have been deprived of such knowledge by the stasis.

CAR-AL

Such a potent paralysis.

TI-KAL

I am assured our memories will emerge upon our arrival.

CAR-AL

Meanwhile - we are kept in perfect obscurity.

TI-KAL

Indeed.

Voices of awakening CREW MEMBERS can be heard in the background.
CAR-AL glances over her shoulder.

CAR-AL

I shall have to reacquaint myself with the sounds of others. I have been floating in celestial silence for so long now as to be immersed.

TI-KAL

I am sorry you were pressed by circumstance into such solitude.

CAR-AL gazes at the stars and reflects.

CAR-AL

The solitude was not profound. Being alone and without memory, it was as if I were hollow, outside of time. I have had no sense of self, only a manifest feeling of singularity with the universe.

CAR-AL tilts her head.

CAR-AL

Almost as if I didn't exist.

TI-KAL alights from his seat with a smile.

TI-KAL

And now the rest of us emerge from slumber to pull you back into noisy existence. Here - I will leave you to your final moments of quiet solace.

CAR-AL laughs lightly.

CAR-AL

Please, remain. I welcome the company.

TI-KAL

There will be time enough for companionship. For now, I have to prepare to brief the crew. All will be assembled in the meditation chamber in two decans. I look forward to your presence.

CAR-AL

I will attend.

TI-KAL bows and leaves. CAR-AL turns back to the stars, with the same dreamy smile.

INT. MEDITATION CHAMBER, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The CREW of three hundred sit in the lotus position upon floor mats in the spacious and beautiful meditation chamber. They are an alien species, as diverse as Earth humans in terms of individual facial characteristics, but with different complexions. Instead of earth tones such as white, brown, black, etc., their colors are more like the colors of beautiful gemstones: sapphire, emerald, ruby, amethyst, amber. [Note: let the actors pick which color they want to be, provided the entire spectrum is covered.] All of the CREW MEMBERS are young - no greater in age than twenty-five.

TI-KAL addresses the CREW from a raised platform at the front of the room, flanked by HA-TRA and BAL-BEK. He holds a portable screen in his hand. The scene begins in mid-speech.

TI-KAL

At this time, that is all the intelligence I can give regarding our collective memory loss. Your mission names have been given to you via the database, corresponding to the numerical insignia on your shirts. My designated name is Ti-Kal.

TI-KAL tugs at the numerical character in the top left corner of his shirt. In all names the letter I is pronounced 'ee' unless preceded by an A.

TI-KAL

These names will have to suffice until such time as our memories may be once more engaged. If this temporary loss of identity causes disquiet, I implore you to address your concerns to our mind healer Ha-Tra.

TI-KAL gestures to HA-TRA at his side.

TI-KAL

She can act as pathfinder as we navigate these unmapped regions of our consciousness.

The CREW MEMBERS listen to TI-KAL'S speech thoughtfully.

TI-KAL (o-s)

We mustn't allow ourselves to succumb to the less exalted emotions. The success of our mission depends upon our embrace of rational thought, and our higher feelings.

TI-KAL gestures to BAL-BEK at his other side.

TI-KAL

Now then - our body healer Bal-Bek has assured us that the birth control implants in the males will be easily removed at the conclusion of our mission. This should allow us to be kind to one another, if we choose, without consequence to our resources. So that is good.

FAI-YUM, seated amongst the crew, affects an expression of excitement. PAL-MYRA, seated to his left, glances at FAI-YUM and smirks.

TI-KAL

Our loss of memory does not affect our faculties or talents. Each of you retain all knowledge of your particular field of fulfillment, designated by the colored dots on your sleeping garments. Each color corresponds to

a specific Guild, and as I announce each one, please raise your hand if you are . . . designated therein.

TI-KAL clears his throat and reads from the device in his hands.

TI-KAL
Physical Sciences - red.

TI-KAL raises his hand, along with numerous members of the CREW, including PAL-MYRA.

TI-KAL
Computer Sciences - violet.

Many CREW MEMBERS raise their hands, including FAI-YUM, CAR-AL and CY-REEN.

TI-KAL
Mathematics - gold.

CREW MEMBERS raise their hands, including PET-RA.

TI-KAL
Healing - indigo

HA-TRA and BAL-BEK raise their hands, along with other CREW MEMBERS.

TI-KAL
Agriculture - green.

A smaller number of CREW MEMBERS raise their hands, including BYB-LOS.

TI-KAL
Illustration - yellow.

A few CREW MEMBERS raise their hands, including ANG-KOR and ARG-OS.

TI-KAL

Music - pink.

DEL-PHI raises her hand, and, looking to the right and left, notices that she is the sole member of the Music Guild.

DEL-PHI lowers her hand with a look of annoyance and embarrassment.

TI-KAL (o-s)

Engineering . . .

EXT. THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The City-Ship passes through space, accompanied by ambient space music in the underscoring. In the background, a cloud of gas surrounds a distant quasar.

INT. BRIDGE, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CY-REEN arrives at the bridge. It is a semicircular proscenium room, similar to a lecture hall, with two levels. Each level has a long curved control panel dotted with various symbols and flat screens, faced with mobile chairs. In front of the room is a large curved blank wall.

TI-KAL sits in one of the chairs on the top level. He turns and stands with a smile as CY-REEN enters the room. From this point forward, the crew members wear a standard uniform with a colored stripe or sash denoting their Guild, as well as a small communicator sensor in the upper center of the top. A small label listing their assigned name is on the upper left-hand shoulder.

TI-KAL

Ah, felicities - Cy-Reen, is it not?

CY-REEN

That is my designated name, yes.

TI-KAL

Does it please you?

CY-REEN

As well as any other name.

TI-KAL

Indeed. Our value is greater than a name. For example, you are most excelled at the science of computer language, yes?

CY-REEN

Well - it maddens me that I cannot recall my education in this field. Nevertheless it appears to have served me well.

TI-KAL

Good, good.

TI-KAL turns and points at the control panels with a pensive frown.

The control panels sit silent and imposing.

TI-KAL

Um - how does this work?

CY-REEN stares at the control panels and then spares TI-KAL a look.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

DEL-PHI enters the observation deck and gazes around.

Various CREW MEMBERS are lounging and conversing with one another. The dim lighting allows the universe to be visible in all its glory.

DEL-PHI wanders listlessly among the various discussion groups until she smiles, spying someone.

PAL-MYRA sits with PET-RA and FAI-YUM at a congregation of seats, sipping nourishment and conversing.

DEL-PHI approaches the group, smiling, though still somewhat hesitantly.

PAL-MYRA glances up and smiles at DEL-PHI.

PAL-MYRA

Felicities! We may exchange names now.

DEL-PHI

Del-Phi.

PAL-MYRA

Pal-Myra.

DEL-PHI and PAL-MYRA bow their heads to one another.

PAL-MYRA

Please - join our hive.

DEL-PHI exchanges smiles and nods with the others as she sits on the edge of PAL-MYRA'S seat.

PAL-MYRA

We're attempting conjecture as to how the ship is powered.

PET-RA laughs with amusement.

PET-RA

Science and memory loss make for strange leisure.

PET-RA points at her shoulder.

PET-RA

Pet-Ra is my designation.

DEL-PHI bows her head.

DEL-PHI

Del-Phi.

PAL-MYRA

Well, we all accord that it is most definitively not fuel-based.

FAI-YUM

No, 'twould be impossible.

FAI-YUM smiles and nods at DEL-PHI, and points at his name on his shoulder.

FAI-YUM

The database thought Fai-Yum would make a lovely name for me.

The group share a laugh.

DEL-PHI smiles and points at herself.

DEL-PHI

Del-Phi.

PAL-MYRA

I suspect ionized solar radiation, stored and harvested in fuel cells.

FAI-YUM stares at the ceiling for a moment and thinks.

FAI-YUM

Or a particle accelerator; but that would require high-density radiation shielding.

DEL-PHI affects an expression somewhere between boredom and incomprehension.

PET-RA

And then, mayhaps, it uses an energy unknown to our . . . absent minds.

PET-RA gestures at her head with a smirk.

DEL-PHI

Um - where is the power station?

PAL-MYRA gestures at their surroundings.

PAL-MYRA

Far from these genteel adornments.

PET-RA fixes DEL-PHI with a conspiratorial smile.

PET-RA

I say, Del-Phi, do you fancy yourself an explorer?

PET-RA shares her conspiratorial smile with FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA.

DEL-PHI frowns and thinks for a moment.

DEL-PHI

Well . . . as I'm still stitching all my bits back together I doubt I can give proper answer at this time.

PAL-MYRA

Why not join with us then? We're plotting a discreet expedition to the power source.

PET-RA

But be cautioned - it is surely a maze.

FAI-YUM

A foreboding maze.

DEL-PHI shrugs.

DEL-PHI

Well - I shall have to confirm, but I think my schedule is free at the moment.

The other three share a laugh.

INT. CORRIDOR, AGRARIAN DOME, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

BYB-LOS and other CREW MEMBERS of the Agricultural Guild loiter outside the entrance portal to the agrarian dome, an enormous greenhouse comprising the entirety of one of the City-Ship's domes. They attempt to peer through the windows, which are opaque with moisture.

Vegetation, attended by robotic machinery, can be glimpsed through the condensation.

BYB- LOS

Well - at least we can spy the mechanisms at work within the dome.

CREW MEMBER

We hold them in esteem. They provide us with our nourishment.

BYB-LOS and the others continue to peer through the moisture-enshrouded windows as TI-KAL approaches. BYB-LOS turns to TI-KAL and greets him with a smile.

TI-KAL

Felicities - Byb-Los, yes?

BYB-LOS nods in affirmation.

BYB-LOS

And felicities to you, Ti-Kal.

TI-KAL

So - have you and the other members of your venerable guild deduced how the garden's produce is transformed into our food and drink?

BYB-LOS

Well, the food stuffs are grown by artificial sun lamps and harvested by robotic automation - which we can just barely discern through the window.

BYB-LOS and TI-KAL join the other CREW MEMBERS peering through the condensation. BYB-LOS and TI-KAL back away from the window.

BYB-LOS

Most assuredly the stuffs are then cleaned and fed through tubes where they are processed and ultimately dispensed at the ship's various refreshment centers.

TI-KAL

Excellent! Efficient, efficacious, and reliable. Well, then - shall we enter the dome and witness this robotic ballet at play?

BYB-LOS

Certainly - just as soon as we can deduce how to open the door.

BYB-LOS and TI-KAL turn and look at the smooth, closed, unyielding portal.

INT. SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The shuttle bay is a large brightly lit enclosure occupied on one side by a fleet of ten shuttle craft, each equipped to carry approximately a dozen people. The large launch portal is closed at the one end. The entrance ramp to the bay from the elevated control tower is at the other end; through it CAR-AL enters the launch bay.

CAR-AL strolls casually around the bright, quiet space, quiet save for ambient music in the underscoring.

CAR-AL strolls over to one of the shuttles and traces her hand along its smooth surface. She comes to the door and touches a circle next to it. The door slides open smoothly. CAR-AL climbs up inside the shuttle.

INT. SHUTTLE, SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CAR-AL makes her way around the passenger seats to the front of the shuttle and seats herself in front of the control panel. Closed storage compartments line the walls, and the control panel sits before a semi-circular window. CAR-AL sits back in her seat and contemplates.

Just then TI-KAL enters the shuttle behind her.

CAR-AL sits up and looks back.

TI-KAL

I disturb your meditations yet again, Car-Al. I seem to make a habit of it.

CAR-AL laughs lightly and offers him a seat.

CAR-AL

Welcome.

TI-KAL

I had just entered the control room when I saw you slip inside here. I thought I would join you in your investigations.

CAR-AL

Whoever we are, the curiosity of our species has a heady appetite.

TI-KAL gazes at CAR-AL for a moment.

TI-KAL

How do you like your name?

CAR-AL

It is not my birth name.

TI-KAL

No, that will return in time.

CAR-AL

So we are told.

TI-KAL pauses and frowns.

TI-KAL

Ha-Tra is available for counsel, if troubling thought be crowding you.

CAR-AL smiles at TI-KAL, looks down, and shakes her head.

CAR-AL

No, I hold trust in those who sent us forth.

CAR-AL looks up contemplatively out the window.

CAR-AL

I can recall certain features of our species; a primary one being an evident aversion to the poison of falsehood.

TI-KAL

We could not survive otherwise.

CAR-AL

Mm.

A reflective pause follows.

TI-KAL

So - are you content with your station?

CAR-AL moves her hands around the control panel.

CAR-AL

It appears to be the sole sector of the ship that allows for manual intervention.

TI-KAL

Yes, there appear to be very few functions on this vessel that are not automated - even the cleaning devices.

INT. CORRIDOR, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CREW MEMBERS are walking along a corridor when they encounter a low flat automated cleaner (resembling a large roomba) coming the other way. As the CREW MEMBERS attempt to avoid the aggressive machine they tumble into one another. The cleaner continues on its way.

INT. SHUTTLE, SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CAR-AL'S hands continue to dance around the control panel.

CAR-AL

The opening of the launch portal may be affected from either the control tower or from within the shuttle itself. The portal will not open if it senses an organism standing in the launch bay.

TI-KAL

Very good.

CAR-AL

And, most interesting - the door to the control tower has a lock, activated by fingerprint identification.

CAR-AL wiggles her fingers in the air.

TI-KAL

Verily.

CAR-AL

Mm-hm.

TI-KAL pauses and thinks for a moment.

INT. SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CAR-AL and TI-KAL emerge from the shuttle, sealing the shuttle door behind them. They stroll along to the entrance to the control tower.

TI-KAL

These shuttles are entrusted to our good offices. They are all that will allow us to leave this - placid island in space.

TI-KAL gestures at the ship which surrounds them.

TI-KAL

The Mission Designer has given us leave to make use of them for the purpose of furthering the knowledge of our species, should we encounter any phenomena along our course which warrants closer discovery.

CAR-AL and TI-KAL pause as they reach the door to the control tower.

TI-KAL

I entrust them to you, Car-Al. Your fingers will hold the fleet, and clearance for use will pass through you.

TI-KAL pauses and looks down.

TI-KAL

Our sisters and brothers on this city-ship were placed here with good cause. We give them all due trust and respect.

TI-KAL glances back at the shuttles before turning his gaze back to CAR-AL.

TI-KAL

Yet these vehicles are of precious design. They must be used judiciously.

CAR-AL

Of course.

CAR-AL turns and enters the ramp leading up to the control tower.

TI-KAL

You know -

CAR-AL pauses and turns.

TI-KAL offers a smile.

TI-KAL

Car-Al is a splendid name.

CAR-AL beams, turns, and makes her way up the ramp.

EXT. THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The City-Ship traverses the space lanes, an enormous, beautiful violet and aquamarine spiral galaxy in the background, ethereal space music in the underscoring.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

A large number of CREW MEMBERS gather at the windows to view the beautiful spectacle of the spiral galaxy as the ethereal music continues in the underscoring.

HA-TRA walks among the crew, marveling at the cosmic spectacle, but also discreetly observing the others.

ANG-KOR and ARG-OS paint the galaxy from sight on electronic pads.

The largely science-based community contemplates the galaxy in a dissociative state, as if meditating upon it with detached fascination.

INT. CORRIDOR, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA, PET-RA and FAI-YUM stroll along a corridor with a slight incline, DEL-PHI tagging along behind. PAL-MYRA carries a small bag slung over one shoulder. The scene begins in mid-conversation.

FAI-YUM

It will be a lengthy tread to the power station. I suppose we should be grateful we retain the knowledge of how to attend basic functions, like - walking.

PET-RA laughs.

PET-RA

We would be quite useless otherwise.

FAI-YUM

And yet I feel as though we are useless. We are but passengers on a pleasure ferry, absent of mind and memory.

PAL-MYRA

I feel as though I am floating through consciousness, a waking dream. I cannot connect with reality beyond the present moment. Do any of you harbor such thoughts?

PET-RA

I do. Yet I am most grateful that if all we have is this moment, we may see it through with fair companions.

PAL-MYRA, PET-RA and FAI-YUM exchange smiles. DEL-PHI continues to tag along behind.

The group turns a corner where the light is somewhat dimmer. The sounds of human activity here are also sparser.

DEL-PHI slows to a stop.

DEL-PHI

Um, should we come to peril, is there a means by which we can -

PAL-MYRA, PET-RA and FAI-YUM pause and turn to DEL-PHI.

DEL-PHI

Howl for aid?

PAL-MYRA comes up to DEL-PHI'S right side and points at DEL-PHI'S communication sensor.

PAL-MYRA

Pass your hand to the left over your sensor.

DEL-PHI follows PAL-MYRA'S direction.

PAL-MYRA

Say my name.

DEL-PHI

Pal-Myra.

A 2D hologram of PAL-MYRA'S face and shoulders appears a foot away from DEL-PHI'S face on her left. Both PAL-MYRA and her hologram blink and move simultaneously. DEL-PHI glances back and forth a few times between PAL-MYRA and PAL-MYRA'S hologram with an increasing look of discomfort. PAL-MYRA and her hologram grin and address DEL-PHI simultaneously.

PAL-MYRA

To end communication, pass your hand to the right.

DEL-PHI follows PAL-MYRA'S instructions and the hologram fades away. DEL-PHI furrows her brow in thought.

DEL-PHI

Suppose someone hails you while you're - indisposed?

PET-RA

It can be disengaged. Simply turn the outer ring.

PET-RA demonstrates before turning it back.

DEL-PHI mutters as they continue on their way.

DEL-PHI

If one can be reminded . . .

As they come to the end of the corridor a buzzing or humming noise grows louder and louder, emanating from around the corner.

PAL-MYRA, PET-RA, FAI-YUM and DEL-PHI slow to a creep as they reach the corner.

Suddenly a cleaner plows heedlessly around the bend. PAL-MYRA, PET-RA, FAI-YUM and DEL-PHI leap out of the way to let it pass. They watch it continue on its way with deadpan expressions before turning and continuing around the corner.

INT. BRIDGE, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CY-REEN sits at the lower control panel, chin in hand, staring at the control panel in contemplation. In the background, TI-KAL peeks in the door and knocks lightly on the wall, smirking. CY-REEN turns casually around.

TI-KAL

Has the machine yet to divulge its mysteries?

CY-REEN smiles and turns back around to face the control panel.

CY-REEN

It is a stubborn beast.

TI-KAL enters the room and leans over the back of a chair on the upper level.

TI-KAL

Wholly unyielding to our wits, hm?

CY-REEN

Well, it's a computer. And a computer's language is code. Therefore, it's a simple matter of -

CY-REEN turns back to TI-KAL.

CY-REEN

Divining the code.

TI-KAL

A puzzle for sleepy heads.

CY-REEN

Mm.

TI-KAL straightens.

TI-KAL

Well, an idea formed itself but it need not devolve into an obsession. We can revisit the puzzle at our leave in due course. I thank you, Cy-Reen, for your appraisal.

CY-REEN

Mm.

TI-KAL turns to leave.

CY-REEN

Oh, I did discover this.

TI-KAL turns back around as CY-REEN triggers a mechanism on the underside of the control panel.

The large curved wall in the front of the room suddenly opens to reveal the entirety of interstellar space as viewed from the front of the City-Ship. Superimposed here and there on the viewscreen are various active technical readouts.

TI-KAL gazes at the viewscreen in mild surprise.

TI-KAL

Oh.

CY-REEN

All signs indicate that in a distant time past, this vessel was operated by manual control.

TI-KAL

Hm.

CY-REEN

Mm-hm; and yet, for reasons obscure, an intervention was made, and the vessel was automated.

TI-KAL furrows his brow.

TI-KAL

We inhabit an enigma.

CY-REEN

Indeed.

TI-KAL

It is probable, then, that a manual environment could be .
. . reinstated?

CY-REEN

It is probable.

TI-KAL

Hm.

TI-KAL, still thinking, turns and exits the bridge. CY-REEN continues to regard the control panel.

INT. VARIOUS CORRIDORS, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA, PET-RA, FAI-YUM and DEL-PHI make their way through the more foreboding and empty angular sections of the large vessel to slightly eerie ambient music in the underscoring.

INT. DERELICT STORAGE AREA, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA, PET-RA, FAI-YUM and DEL-PHI leave the corridors and stroll along a walkway overlooking a large disused storage area, the music continuing in the underscoring.

PAL-MYRA

How aged our ship is!

FAI-YUM

Must be eons. It's quite the artifact.

PAL-MYRA gazes down over the walkway.

The dimly lit storage area is cluttered with large metallic fixtures of varying size and shape.

PAL-MYRA (o-s)

Alah-loo! Such waste and emptiness.

PAL-MYRA turns back to the others.

PAL-MYRA

Perhaps it could be requisitioned for practical use.

PET-RA

Or aesthetic purpose.

PET-RA thinks a moment.

PET-RA

We could make a garden of it.

DEL-PHI briefly glances over the walkway.

DEL-PHI

At present, it's a garden of metal.

PAL-MYRA, PET-RA, FAI-YUM and DEL-PHI turn and continue on their way.

INT. THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA now walks ahead of PET-RA, FAI-YUM and DEL-PHI. The bag on her shoulder is open and she carries a type of scanner which she holds out in front of her. FAI-YUM comes up to PAL-MYRA and peers over her shoulder.

FAI-YUM

Radiation detector?

PAL-MYRA

Of like design.

FAI-YUM

And from what secret burrow was it acquired?

PAL-MYRA turns to FAI-YUM with a smirk.

PAL-MYRA

Actually a quite handsomely accoutered equipment cache on the lower brig.

FAI-YUM

You spend your rotations in wise pursuit.

PAL-MYRA shrugs and turns her attention back to the scanner.

PAL-MYRA

No stasis wash can detach me from my curiosity, that much is certain.

PET-RA and DEL-PHI stroll along behind the others. PET-RA contemplates PAL-MYRA for a moment and then turns to DEL-PHI.

PET-RA

Tell me, Del-Phi - what is your device of musical invention?

DEL-PHI

Well - a pipe sits conspicuously in my bedchamber.

PET-RA sighs and smiles dreamily.

PET-RA

The beauty of your talent must be wonderful.

DEL-PHI

Your confidence in me is most gracious. I have yet to take it up for play.

PET-RA

Why?

DEL-PHI

I worry that the stasis wiped my knowledge of the instrument. I cannot know until I take the piece at hand and feed it with my breath.

DEL-PHI sighs.

DEL-PHI

But I fret.

PET-RA

Certainly with practice the knowledge would return.

DEL-PHI

It would be most welcome. As the moments pass, the reason for my purpose on this vessel escapes me.

PET-RA

Your art is your purpose, and that alone makes you cherishable.

DEL-PHI beams at PET-RA.

DEL-PHI

I deem you to be sweet as pudding.

PET-RA grins and laughs in reply.

INT. POWER STATION, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PET-RA, PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and DEL-PHI arrive at the base of a massive glass globe-shaped structure, filling the interior of the largest of the ship's domes. A long metallic staircase vertically traverses the exterior of the globe in two directions at a third-degree angle. From the base, only the bottom half of the structure is visible: solid, metallic and gray. Way up in the top half of the structure a bright pulsating glow emanates from whatever is within, alternating purple, blue, red, green and gold. All around is the sound of humming machinery.

PAL-MYRA'S scanner begins lighting up and making a sound as they reach the base of the globe.

FAI-YUM

Do the readings suggest retreat?

PAL-MYRA

The breath of our vessel emanates from whatever apparatus murmurs within. May . . .

PAL-MYRA studies her scanner.

PAL-MYRA

Be there danger within or naught, we are well-shielded by the enclosure.

DEL-PHI

The beastie shall not make lunches of us, then?

PAL-MYRA turns the scanner off and places it back inside the bag.

PAL-MYRA

We are safe.

PET-RA gazes up apprehensively at the long metal staircase.

PET-RA

Shall we - ascend?

The other three pause and consider.

FAI-YUM

Our fitness should help us make the summit.

DEL-PHI frowns.

DEL-PHI

A batch of rosier fitness options present themselves.

PET-RA

Would you prefer, Del-Phi, to take your rest here while we ascend and study?

DEL-PHI glances apprehensively up at the winding steps.

DEL-PHI

Its mechanism would surely escape my comprehension. I will
- play the sentinel.

The others laugh lightly.

PAL-MYRA

We promise a thorough report.

DEL-PHI

I shall be all attention.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA approach the staircase on the right. PAL-MYRA gestures to FAI-YUM and PET-RA as if to allow them to proceed ahead of her. The three begin their ascent.

INT. CORRIDOR, AGRARIAN DOME, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

BAL-BEK strolls along a corridor, studying a device in hand, when he happens to glance around the corner.

BYB-LOS, wearing a face shield, is attempting to slice open the door to the agrarian dome with a laser torch.

BAL-BEK affects a curious expression and approaches BYB-LOS.

BYB-LOS lifts up his face shield and smiles in greeting at BAL-BEK. He turns the torch down.

BAL-BEK

Er, Byb-Los, is it not?

BYB-LOS

Indeed! Felicities, Bal-Bek.

BAL-BEK

Felicities. I say, my good fellow - how came you by such an implement?

BAL-BEK gestures at the torch.

BYB-LOS

Pal-Myra and I made discovery of an equipment closet on the lower brig.

BAL-BEK

And entrance to the garden demands such a scalding?

BYB-LOS

The portal is fused shut.

BAL-BEK smiles at BYB-LOS.

BAL-BEK

Your labors are appreciated.

BYB-LOS replies with a point of his finger. He then lowers his face shield, reignites the torch, and returns to the task at hand.

BAL-BEK waits a moment, and then turns and walks away, still smiling.

INT. STAIRCASE AND PLATFORM, POWER STATION, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA climb the staircase to the top of the power station. They are dwarfed by its size. Industrial ambient music accompanies them in the underscoring.

The three climb steadily in silence.

Overhead, the bright pulsating light flashes purple, blue, green, red and gold in a steady pulse.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA continue their silent ascent.

INT. POWER STATION, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

DEL-PHI sits at the base of the power station; she is diminutive in size by comparison.

DEL-PHI, slightly pouting, stares into space. She then turns and cranes her neck, looking up over her left shoulder.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA slowly disappear around the corner of the staircase.

DEL-PHI sighs and returns back to her initial posture, talking quietly to herself.

DEL-PHI

I only exist in this moment. I exist only in this moment.
 In this moment only I exist. Only I exist in this moment.
 Only I exist . . .

INT. STAIRCASE AND PLATFORM, POWER STATION, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA continue to climb the staircase as they near the top half of the globe, the music continuing in the underscoring.

As seen from within the glass enclosure, PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA'S tiny faces emerge over the lip, the pulsating glow from within illuminating their features. They gaze upon the interior of the power station.

Within the globe sits an enormous mechanical plateau, topped with gray and black structures of varying size and shape. Dominating the center of the plateau is a long transparent rectangular structure with two large flat blue disks sitting vertically on either end. A large solid metal cylinder crowns the transparent rectangular structure in the exact center of the plateau. On either side of it two squat transparent domes emit the bright light that alternately flashes bright blue, purple, green, red and gold in a pulsating glow.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA stop on the platform and gaze upon the power station, the ambient music in the underscoring adding to the trance-like effect of the machinery. PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA are enthralled by the light, almost hypnotized.

The domes emit pulsating bright flashes of purple, blue, green, red and gold.

PAL-MYRA reaches out and places her hand against the glass.
PET-RA and FAI-YUM follow suit.

The light pulsates, the machinery hums.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA gaze upon the power station in a trance.

INT. POWER STATION, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE.

DEL-PHI paces with her head down at the base of the power station. She looks up at the sound of PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA descending down the staircase on the left.

DEL-PHI

You made the circuit.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA arrive at the bottom of the stairs, slightly out of breath.

PET-RA

So we did.

DEL-PHI

Good fitness?

PET-RA

Wondy!

DEL-PHI

Shall we return now to our candy-colored chambers?

FAI-YUM

I could do with nourishment after such a venture.

DEL-PHI, PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA proceed on their way back the way they came.

DEL-PHI

You may now proceed with your lesson on the matter of our power source. I promise to - attempt an understanding.

PAL-MYRA

It appears - uh - it -

PAL-MYRA glances at PET-RA and FAI-YUM.

FAI-YUM

It may be a - a variable - um -

FAI-YUM glances at PAL-MYRA and PET-RA.

FAI-YUM

We have no diagnosis to give. Its function escapes our wits.

DEL-PHI

Yet you were occupied for a whole half a decan. I grew weary contemplating my existence.

PAL-MYRA furrows her brow in contemplation.

PET-RA

We were . . . caught up in its dance.

DEL-PHI

I lament that I lingered behind.

PAL-MYRA glances at PET-RA and FAI-YUM.

PAL-MYRA

Mayhaps we accord that some mysteries are best left in shroud.

DEL-PHI

Well, what's important is that its multicolored brilliance keeps us safe and steady as we wander through this big bubble of stars.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA smile and laugh.

INT. TI-KAL'S CABIN, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

TI-KAL lies asleep in bed, the cosmos glistening through the cabin window in the background.

EXT. BAY SHALLOWS, RINGED PLANET - NIGHT

Light reflects upon ripples at night. The music in the underscoring is equally shimmering.

TI-KAL, naked, sits with his knees pulled up in the shallows of a bay. Other members of his species are also lounging in the waters. He turns to his left and gazes at someone, smiling.

A FEMALE lies naked on her stomach in the shallows, smiling back at TI-KAL. Others are lounging behind her as well. Voices are distant, echoey, and muffled in the background.

TI-KAL turns his head around.

Behind them, a beautiful, illuminated city brightens the darkness.

TI-KAL turns back to the FEMALE.

The FEMALE is murmuring to him but her words are muffled and unintelligible.

TI-KAL gazes upon her with a wistful, dreamy smile.

The FEMALE pauses and says one word which comes through clearly.

FEMALE

Troubadour.

TI-KAL continues to smile dreamily at the FEMALE, and then tilts his head to the side.

The reflection of what look like large rings in the sky shimmers in the ripples.

TI-KAL tilts his head upwards.

INT. TI-KAL'S CABIN, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The ceiling of TI-KAL'S cabin is bathed in starlight and shadow.

TI-KAL stares up at the ceiling. He is lying in bed and looks again as though he has just woken up. He rubs his eyes and sits up.

TI-KAL turns and gazes outside the window.

The beauty of the cosmos glistens.

TI-KAL alights from bed and walks over to the window. He stares out at the cosmos with a somnolent gaze tinged with melancholy.

TI-KAL leans on the window sill, gazing out into space.

INT. ARTS LAB, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The beauty of space can be seen through a window in the lab. ANG-KOR sits and draws on an easel. ARG-OS draws on another one in another part of the room.

DEL-PHI wanders in, looking bored. She plops onto a table next to ANG-KOR, who acknowledges her with a smile and a nod. She watches him in silence for a moment.

DEL-PHI

Is my presence agreeable to you?

ANG-KOR

Very agreeable.

DEL-PHI

My designated name is Del-Phi.

ANG-KOR

Ang-Kor. That's Arg-Os over there.

DEL-PHI looks over at ARG-OS with a smile.

DEL-PHI

Felicities.

ARG-OS glances up from his easel and replies in kind.

ARG-OS

Likewise.

DEL-PHI sighs and watches ANG-KOR for a moment.

DEL-PHI

What pictures are you rendering?

ANG-KOR

The architecture of our vessel.

ANG-KOR turns to DEL-PHI with a smile.

ANG-KOR

Ti-Kal made gracious request.

DEL-PHI smiles, a bit forced.

DEL-PHI

Mm.

DEL-PHI glances over at ARG-OS.

ARG-OS looks up and smiles again at DEL-PHI.

ARG-OS

Star charts.

DEL-PHI

Mm.

ANG-KOR glances at DEL-PHI'S uniform.

ANG-KOR

You are a member of the Music Guild, yes?

DEL-PHI frowns, discomfited.

DEL-PHI

I *am* the guild.

ANG-KOR

Wondy!

DEL-PHI

Many thanks.

DEL-PHI looks down, continuing to frown.

ANG-KOR

What ails you?

DEL-PHI sighs, continuing to look down.

DEL-PHI

A sense of void.

ARG-OS glances up at DEL-PHI with a look of concern.

ANG-KOR sets his stylus down and turns to DEL-PHI.

ANG-KOR

Does your loss of memory upset your thoughts?

DEL-PHI looks up, scrunches her mouth and thinks.

DEL-PHI

Well . . . that vacancy surely hasn't provided balm to any of us.

DEL-PHI alights from the table and wanders over to gaze at ARG-OS' drawing.

DEL-PHI

You two grennels, though, have a purpose, like the others.

ARG-OS glances over at ANG-KOR and smirks at DEL-PHI'S characterization of them as "grennels", for which there is no English word.

DEL-PHI

I am merely a pest.

ANG-KOR grins at DEL-PHI.

ANG-KOR

You shouldn't paint yourself in such absurdities, Del-Phi. We esteem you, as we esteem each other. We must. We are all we have.

ARG-OS looks up at DEL-PHI.

ARG-OS

To realize your true self brings great fulfillment, but sometimes finding it requires effort and exploration.

ARG-OS returns to his drawing.

ARG-OS

But discovery will be made anon. After all, we have only just awoken from our cradles.

ANG-KOR

Remember, Del-Phi - no puzzle can be complete without all of its pieces.

DEL-PHI pauses and thinks a moment. She then reaches over and taps ARG-OS on the head.

DEL-PHI walks out in pensive thought, tapping ANG-KOR on the head as she goes.

ANG-KOR and ARG-OS give each other a smile.

INT. CORRIDOR, AGRARIAN DOME, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA stroll down the corridor laughing and chattering. They slow as they approach the entrance to the dome.

The door to the agra-dome has been sheared off by the laser torch and a thick piece of translucent material covers the entire opening.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA look the material up and down with curiosity. They turn and peer through the condensation-covered windows.

Several CREW MEMBERS of the Agricultural Guild can be barely discerned, dressed from head to foot in what look like hazmat suits. They are inspecting the vegetation with devices of some sort.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA turn back to the entrance. FAI-YUM attempts to peel back one side of the translucent material.

BYB-LOS (o-s)

No, I beg you, please withdraw!

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA pause and turn.

BYB-LOS walks hurriedly down the corridor towards them with his hand held up, wearing the same hazmat suit as the others, minus the head covering, which he carries in his hand.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA step back from the aperture as BYB-LOS reaches them.

BYB-LOS

Forgiveness for my remonstrance.

PAL-MYRA

You are most harried!

FAI-YUM motions towards the entrance.

FAI-YUM

Do your labors require aid? We are at hand for such endeavor.

BYB-LOS

No, but many thanks.

PET-RA

Wherefore is the urgency?

BYB-LOS

Our forced entry to this facility was made in error. It is of the greatest importance that this portal be affixed again anon. The food supply of the vessel must be kept free of our interference.

FAI-YUM

Alah-loo!

BYB-LOS approaches the translucent material and places his hand upon it.

BYB-LOS

Therein comprises an ecosystem of the greatest delicacy and balance. The machinery is protected from the degradation of the moisture and operates in clockwork proficiency.

BYB-LOS turns to PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA with fear in his eyes.

BYB-LOS

Yet there is no process to determine if our organic presence will poison the ecology.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA stare pensively at BYB-LOS.

PAL-MYRA

We cannot compromise our sole source of nutrition in the cosmic void.

PET-RA addresses BYB-LOS in a fearful tone.

PET-RA

Has any such - compromise been detected?

BYB-LOS

Thus far no vegetation appears adversely touched by virus or blight, but we continue our scans.

PET-RA

We esteem your tending of our garden.

BYB-LOS replies with a nod and a point of his gloved finger.

FAI-YUM

Please continue with your care and labors. We will find those whose talents may be put to stopping up the aperture again.

BYB-LOS

Many thanks.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA turn to leave but PAL-MYRA turns back to BYB-LOS.

PAL-MYRA

We will, of course, ensure that none of you remain trapped within.

BYB-LOS

Many thanks.

PET-RA, FAI-YUM and PAL-MYRA depart as BYB-LOS applies his head covering.

INT. HEALING CENTER, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

BAL-BEK stands in the middle of the healing center, surrounded by various medical equipment and furniture, studying a two-

dimensional x-ray hologram. The hologram floats in the air a few inches from his face.

HA-TRA comes up behind him. BAL-BEK turns to HA-TRA and smiles in acknowledgement.

HA-TRA

Our sisters and brothers have physical advantage.

BAL-BEK

They are indeed most fit.

BAL-BEK wipes the air, and the hologram vanishes. He walks over to a bank of medical instruments, followed by HA-TRA.

BAL-BEK

We are quite varied in our own unique fashion.

HA-TRA

There is beauty in the diversity of our species.

BAL-BEK

Indeed.

HA-TRA

Any maladies detected?

BAL-BEK

None, which makes of us a perfect specimen dish.

BAL-BEK turns to HA-TRA with a serious look.

BAL-BEK

Quarantines shall have to be rigorous. A single pathogen finding passage on this vessel could make shadows of us all.

HA-TRA furrows her brow pensively.

HA-TRA

According to Car-Al, the shuttle crafts' decontamination mechanisms are thorough.

HA-TRA turns to BAL-BEK and pats him on the shoulder.

HA-TRA

Still, we shall take care.

HA-TRA heads for the door.

HA-TRA

I go to the immersion study.

BAL-BEK

Ha-Tra.

HA-TRA pauses and turns back to BAL-BEK.

BAL-BEK

The excellent bodily health of this crew may leave me with much leisure.

HA-TRA winks and smiles.

HA-TRA

I hope such a regimen can be maintained for you.

BAL-BEK laughs.

HA-TRA grins and departs.

INT. IMMERSION STUDY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The immersion study is a circular room, adjacent to the healing center, with gentle lighting, and containing a variety of therapies: sound, aroma, touch, light.

TI-KAL paces the room, perusing a portable electronic screen. Chimes and other light electronic sounds tinkle in the background. TI-KAL pauses and glances up.

HA-TRA enters the room and smiles at TI-KAL.

TI-KAL returns HA-TRA'S smile.

TI-KAL
Felicities, Ha-Tra.

HA-TRA
Likewise.

HA-TRA gestures at the screen in TI-KAL'S hand.

HA-TRA
Has the ship yielded its secrets yet?

TI-KAL
We are . . . perusing its mechanism.

TI-KAL sets the screen aside.

HA-TRA smiles and strolls around the room, inhaling aromas from the censers.

HA-TRA
Beneficial study to occupy the time.

TI-KAL thinks for a moment.

TI-KAL
We do hold trust in the Mission Designer. Yet -

TI-KAL turns back to HA-TRA.

TI-KAL
Possibilities may present themselves. We must be ready to
. . . borrow control.

HA-TRA seats herself in the lotus position upon a couch and extends a hand, gesturing at a low cushioned seat across from her.

HA-TRA

Please - take your rest.

TI-KAL grins sheepishly.

TI-KAL

I am restless.

TI-KAL alights onto the seat and assumes the lotus position.

HA-TRA

Have you slept?

TI-KAL

With some success.

HA-TRA

Much of the crew have found difficulty attaining their clock.

TI-KAL

I am little surprised. We slept for eons.

HA-TRA

Most assuredly.

TI-KAL scrutinizes HA-TRA a moment.

TI-KAL

Ha-Tra, do you study dreams?

HA-TRA

Alas, not my own. I am sorely pressed to recall any of them the moment I awake.

TI-KAL

Hm.

HA-TRA

Is there a particular dream you wish to share?

TI-KAL pauses and thinks, with a slight smile. Flashbacks to his dream accompany his description.

TI-KAL (v-o)

I dreamt of a ringed planet. The veil of night had fallen. I felt singularly at ease, as if in a place of great comfort - a place I feel I should know, but for which I have no conscious memory.

HA-TRA listens to TI-KAL intently.

TI-KAL (v-o)

I reclined in velvet waters with a female.

TI-KAL pauses, seeking words to describe his vision.

TI-KAL

I feel I should know her, as well. That it is important that I make a proper recollection of her. But I cannot.

HA-TRA thinks for a moment.

HA-TRA

How did you feel within the dream?

TI-KAL smiles in remembrance.

TI-KAL

Blissful.

HA-TRA smiles warmly.

HA-TRA

I suggest this vision, in all its tenderness, is a gift from your deeper consciousness. You are, of course, free to immerse yourself in its study as you will. After all, we have been sated with ample time for such diversion. Yet . . . perhaps wisdom might also suggest simply taking comfort in the contemplation of its sights.

TI-KAL absorbs HA-TRA'S words. His communication sensor lights up.

TI-KAL
Forgiveness, a moment.

TI-KAL alights from his seat and turns away from HA-TRA.

TI-KAL swipes his hand to the left and FAI-YUM'S face appears.
PET-RA peeks over FAI-YUM'S shoulder.

FAI-YUM
Forgiveness for our disturbance.

TI-KAL
May I be of aid?

FAI-YUM
We would like to requisition a shuttle.

PET-RA smiles over FAI-YUM'S shoulder.

TI-KAL
Might I inquire what objective you hope to pursue?

FAI-YUM
A desire to view the ship from without.

TI-KAL
I see.

FAI-YUM and PET-RA fall back slightly as PAL-MYRA'S face emerges beside FAI-YUM'S.

PAL-MYRA
We despair of useful business to attend to.

FAI-YUM and PET-RA look contrite.

TI-KAL turns and smirks at HA-TRA.

HA-TRA laughs and shakes her head.

TI-KAL turns back to the hologram.

TI-KAL

You will have to avail Car-Al. She manages the fleet.

FAI-YUM

Many thanks.

TI-KAL swipes his hand to the right and the hologram disappears.

TI-KAL turns back to HA-TRA with his arms out.

TI-KAL

They despair of useful business to attend to.

HA-TRA replies with a knowing smile.

HA-TRA

Then useful business will have to be found for them.

TI-KAL smirks and turns to leave. He pauses and turns back to HA-TRA with an odd frown.

TI-KAL

Does the word - troubadour hold any meaning for you?

HA-TRA thinks for a moment, sounding out the words with her lips.

HA-TRA

No.

TI-KAL shrugs.

TI-KAL

Nor I.

TI-KAL turns and leaves.

HA-TRA gazes after TI-KAL thoughtfully.

INT. CONTROL TOWER, SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The door to the control tower slides open and CAR-AL enters, holding a cup, with PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA following along.

CAR-AL

Have any of you logged hours piloting spacecraft before?

CAR-AL pauses and turns to them.

PAL-MYRA and FAI-YUM slowly raise their hands. FAI-YUM shrugs and smiles sheepishly.

FAI-YUM

Though we cannot recall the training, we are assured of the knowledge.

CAR-AL smiles and nods, pointing to the ramp that leads down to the shuttle bay.

CAR-AL

We will make examination. Onward, if you please.

CAR-AL allows FAI-YUM, PAL-MYRA and PET-RA to proceed down the ramp before following them.

INT. BRIDGE, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CY-REEN sits at the lower control panel, feet propped up on the edge of the panel, studying it with her fingers cupped under her chin. Behind her, TI-KAL appears in the doorway and knocks lightly on the wall as before.

CY-REEN turns in her chair. Behind her, the vastness of space presents itself on the viewscreen, complete with technical readouts.

TI-KAL
Still flummoxed?

CY-REEN smiles and turns back to the control panel.

CY-REEN
Merely . . . contemplating a means of ingress.

TI-KAL
I ask you to heed my previous counsel - make not an
obsession of your study. The wall can be breached another
time.

CY-REEN continues to gaze at the control panel.

CY-REEN
Mm-hm.

TI-KAL nods, pauses, and waits a moment, and then leaves.

INT. SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE.

The shuttle bay door opens vertically with a hiss. Outside the
vastness of space presents itself.

As seen from the shuttle bay, CAR-AL monitors the shuttle's
progress in the control tower.

The shuttle moves forward from the stationary fleet and glides
into position.

INT. SHUTTLE, SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA and FAI-YUM sit strapped in the front seats at the
control panel. PET-RA is strapped into one of the passenger
seats directly behind them. All three wear space suits, though
their helmets are off.

PAL-MYRA and FAI-YUM look at each other with excitement and
trepidation. They glance back at PET- RA.

PET-RA smiles in expectation and nods.

PAL-MYRA and FAI-YUM turn back to the control panel, breathe out, and begin moving the shuttle forward.

INT. SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The shuttle gently rises from the floor and glides towards the exit.

EXT. SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

Accompanied in the underscoring by the beautiful, ethereal shuttle theme, the shuttle emerges from the shuttle bay into space.

As the shuttle enters out into the vacuum away from the City-Ship, it turns to face the vessel.

INT. SHUTTLE - DEEP SPACE

PET-RA leans forward as she, PAL-MYRA and FAI-YUM gaze with wonder at the sight before them.

EXT. THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The City-Ship is enormous, framed by the cosmos.

The shuttle moves in closer to examine it from the rear. The shuttle is dwarfed by the size of the City-Ship.

As the shuttle moves in closer to the City-Ship, the shuttle's multicolored lights reflect off the hull.

The shuttle moves around the rear of the City-Ship, which contains the largest of the domes - the power station.

INT. SHUTTLE - DEEP SPACE

PET-RA has removed her straps and is leaning forward, her arms on the backs of PAL-MYRA'S and FAI-YUM'S seats. All three gaze at the City-Ship with awe, glancing at each other and laughing.

As seen from the shuttle, the City-Ship's domes are imposing but smooth, save for any apertures. The overall colors of the vessel are light purple and gold intermixed with gray. There are no discernible markings or writing, big or small, that could identify the vessel.

The shuttle glides along the side of the City-Ship.

The shuttle maneuvers around the front of the City-Ship, at the uppermost dome where the bridge is located.

INT. BRIDGE, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CY-REEN sits as before at the lower control panel, scrutinizing the various controls, her head in her hand, moving a forefinger around as if tabulating or calculating something. Her eyes glance up.

As seen through the viewscreen, the shuttle floats into view facing the bridge.

CY-REEN stares at the shuttle with a raised brow.

As seen from the viewscreen, PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA grin and wave.

CY-REEN stares at the shuttle and its occupants with a frozen and bewildered smile. She slowly raises her hand and waves at them, even though they cannot see her.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

CREW MEMBERS occupy themselves alone or in small groups on the observation deck, conversing, working with devices, or engaging in activities together.

DEL-PHI sits by herself, gazing out into space contemplatively. Suddenly something outside the ship draws her attention.

The shuttle containing PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA hovers in space facing the interior of the observation deck, its multicolored lights twinkling.

The CREW MEMBERS on the observation deck gaze up at the shuttle with looks of stunned wonderment.

As seen from the observation deck, PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA grin and wave.

INT. SHUTTLE - DEEP SPACE

As viewed from over their shoulders, PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA wave at the CREW MEMBERS on the observation deck.

PAL-MYRA

They are perfectly muddled!

PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA laugh and wave.

INT. OBSERVATION DECK, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

The CREW MEMBERS now stand, smile, laugh, and wave back at the shuttle. Some of them applaud and cheer.

DEL-PHI remains seated and gazes up at her friends in the shuttle with a sad smile.

INT. CONTROL TOWER, SHUTTLE BAY, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

TI-KAL enters through the open door to the control tower and strolls up to where CAR-AL is sitting, sipping from her cup and watching a monitor.

TI-KAL

So - how fare our intrepid voyagers?

CAR-AL gestures at the monitor.

CAR-AL

Observe.

TI-KAL leans forward and stares at the monitor.

Viewed from over their shoulders via the shuttle's onboard camera, PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA make dancing movements with their hands while the CREW MEMBERS on the observation deck can be seen in the distance, clapping and waving.

TI-KAL stares blankly at the monitor for a moment.

TI-KAL

Uh-huh.

TI-KAL turns and walks away. CAR-AL laughs behind her cup.

INT. CORRIDOR, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA round a corner, laughing.

PET-RA

Our adventures make us giddy!

PAL-MYRA

The meditation chamber will bring us calm.

PAL-MYRA, FAI-YUM and PET-RA come to the entrance to one of the refreshment centers. PAL-MYRA stops and addresses her friends.

PAL-MYRA

Refreshment first?

FAI-YUM and PET-RA refuse with laughs.

PET-RA

My stomach turns like a wheel.

FAI-YUM

Later, perhaps.

PAL-MYRA

I will join with you anon.

The three part and PAL-MYRA enters the refreshment center.

INT. REFRESHMENT CENTER, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

PAL-MYRA enters the room and glances around.

DEL-PHI sits alone in a corner, eating a small meal.

PAL-MYRA smiles and goes over to DEL-PHI.

PAL-MYRA

Felicities, Del-Phi!

DEL-PHI smiles at PAL-MYRA.

DEL-PHI

Likewise.

PAL-MYRA sits down across from DEL-PHI. An awkward pause follows.

PAL-MYRA

We made haste to find you earlier, but our searches were for naught.

DEL-PHI

I was tarrying on the observation deck.

PAL-MYRA

Oh. We attempted to make hail by communicator.

DEL-PHI

Must've been disengaged.

PAL-MYRA

Ah.

Another pause as DEL-PHI takes a bite.

DEL-PHI

Did your shuttle voyage bring you pleasure?

PAL-MYRA

We made a thorough study of the exterior. The vessel is massive of girth and well-modeled.

DEL-PHI

Mm. I saw you making good mirth with the observation deck.

PAL-MYRA

Oh! Yes, well . . . that, too.

PAL-MYRA smiles sheepishly. There follows another awkward pause.

PAL-MYRA

Forgiveness, Del-Phi. We - we left you behind.

DEL-PHI

Oh, no bother.

DEL-PHI smiles.

DEL-PHI

Next time.

PAL-MYRA

Most assuredly.

There follows another awkward pause.

PAL-MYRA

Well, then - I will find refreshment and trundle on.

DEL-PHI holds up a piece of food.

DEL-PHI

The ship bears rich morsels and fruit.

PAL-MYRA laughs lightly and takes her leave.

DEL-PHI continues with her meal, in solitude.

INT. ARTS LAB, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

ANG-KOR stands before his easel, regarding his work, adding touches with a small wand which he uses like a paint brush.

TI-KAL enters the room and sits down next to ANG-KOR, gazing wistfully at the image on the easel.

The image is a rendering of the female in TI-KAL'S dream.

ANG-KOR turns and smiles at TI-KAL.

ANG-KOR
A mirror likeness?

TI-KAL
Yes, quite beautiful.

ANG-KOR turns back to the easel for touch-ups.

ANG-KOR
You were minute in your description. I had ample material for the rendering.

TI-KAL
I extend my profoundest thanks to you for this work.

ANG-KOR
I hope it brings you much solace for the duration of our voyage.

ANG-KOR cocks his head at the portrait and adds a touch.

ANG-KOR
It is nearly finished. I shall then dispatch it along to your cabin.

TI-KAL stands, regards the portrait in silence for a moment, touches ANG-KOR'S arm, and turns to leave.

ANG-KOR turns and smiles at TI-KAL before returning to his work.

The female in the painting lies naked in the nocturnal shallows of the bay.

EXT. NATURAL POOL, RINGED PLANET - NIGHT

DEL-PHI lies naked in a shallow natural pool in the midst of a glade lit by glowing multicolored orbs. Most of her body is submerged. She lies with her head resting on her right arm, gazing upward at the colorful, glowing lights which illuminate her, accompanied by chiming, shimmering music in the underscoring.

The glowing orbs dance slowly and lightly in the breeze.

OTHERS of her species are also lounging in the pool.

DEL-PHI hears voices, which are muffled and distant. She lifts her head and looks behind her.

A little ways up the hill, a YOUNG MAN sits naked with his arms wrapped around his knees. Behind him, further up the hill where the flora ends, stands a curious structure of unusual shape and color. The YOUNG MAN smiles down at DEL-PHI, speaking to her, but only one word is audible.

YOUNG MAN

Troubadour!

DEL-PHI smiles back at him and once more reclines her head. She gazes skyward. Something catches her attention. She lifts herself from the water, droplets glistening on her skin in the dappled multicolored light.

Overhead, wide beautiful celestial rings traverse the sky, shining brightly in the night.

DEL-PHI lies back down, resting her head on her arm again, and contemplates the rings with a relaxed smile, as if reassured and comforted by them.

The rings traverse the sky, white streaks across the firmament.

INT. DEL-PHI'S CABIN, THE CITY-SHIP - DEEP SPACE

DEL-PHI lies in bed, rubbing her eyes. She gazes around the room as if slightly disoriented.

DEL-PHI sits up in bed, garbed in her sleeping garments, attempting to recollect something, or absorbed in its memory. She turns and gazes out the window.

Stars and stardust twinkle in the cosmic backdrop.

DEL-PHI turns and contemplates something opposite her.

On top of a dresser set against the opposite wall sits a wind instrument, a kind of flute or recorder, but of beautiful, esoteric design.

DEL-PHI alights from her bed and approaches the dresser. She looks at the instrument for a moment before gingerly picking it up.

DEL-PHI brings the instrument over to the bed and sits in the lotus position, facing the window. After a moment she slowly brings the instrument up to her mouth and breathes into it, fingering the holes. A beautiful, modal, haunting melody unfolds. DEL-PHI plays the instrument with assurance and sensitivity, as if she has been playing it her entire life.

As seen from behind, DEL-PHI sits on her bed facing the window, playing her pipe, serenading the stars.

Fade out.

DEL-PHI'S tune continues over the closing credits.

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