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Xeno-archaeological Research Assistant

You are more than a bit nervous, because you've never been on a mission like this. Most xenological work involves examining some supposed alien artifact a random uneducated colonist found and concluding it is totally natural and in no way an alien artifact.

This research station was different. On this small planet orbiting Alpha Centauri A, someone found the most intact, most identifiably alien artifact ever found. No doubts that it was alien in origin, and a good chance that it still worked. No one knew just what its purpose was or how to operate it, but it still was the find of a lifetime.

Pity the guy they put in charge of the mission, **Professor Newton Koop**, was a power hungry bastard who refused to share any of his findings with the xenological community. You hope to learn more about what was going on here, and find out more about the artifact.

This mission is also different in that you might be in a good bit of danger. No one is sure just yet what caused the outpost to stop communicating, so you have to be prepared for something violent or deadly. Hence all the armed guards around. Not that heavily armed soldiers make you feel more secure; if anything the presence of people with guns makes you feel more scared. That's why you're a pacifist.

You are a graduate assistant to **Dr. Obedience Tenagon**, who is the chief xenologist on this expedition. She's in charge of going over all the research that was done on the station, recovering the alien artifact and figuring out what happened here. You are sort of her second in command: you have worked with her a lot back at the **United Xenologists Conference**, unlike **Dr. J. Kashtaritu-Kennedy**. You and Dr. Tenagon only know her by her academic, which is impeccable.

Your aunt **Sapor Wheeler-Nicholson**, of all people, is in charge of military affairs on this mission. This is terribly embarrassing and awkward: you know she's going to treat you like a little kid. Plus, she doesn't get along with your dad: your dad is a pacifist like you, so he doesn't like her being in the military. You also fear she'll find out you've been associating with **Lieutenant Irvine Washington**. Washington is apparently a member of small, young religion worshipping aliens. Since you met when the mission was departing, he has been telling you about his people's belief in alien cities, the crystals they use to communicate with us humans and their cosmic purpose and such.

Out of Character: It is up to you whether or not you believe Washington's stories about aliens. You might be a new convert to his religion, or you might only be stringing him along to learn more about their crazy beliefs. If you don't believe what he says, then you're

probably trying to learn more as a sort of anthropological case study: what causes people to worship aliens we know almost nothing about? Of course, believing him leaves the option for you to be excited about your new religion, and spout strange nonsense yourself, which can be a lot of fun.