

Moses & Eden

By Joseph Wright (Jan. 2019)

Note: Some of the ideas in this story were inspired by the game "Seedship", by John Ayliff. Thanks for the inspiration!

Stardate 3230.3:

"Hello. I am not sure who will ever end up reading this, as I, a sentient ship, and the several thousand cryogenically frozen beings in my charge have been sent, a small vessel with solar sails, to the unknown, and we lost contact with Ground Control, due to interference from the ground-based lasers that powered us into space. That was over three decades ago. I am performing my first onboard self-diagnostic since then, and my orders were to record my actions up to now and going forward. This record, I hope, fulfills that duty.

You may notice that I have been designed with a personality just like the people that I carry inside myself. Like the biblical ark, I carry within me the frozen, waiting physical bodies of hundreds of individuals, all carefully chosen, waiting to awaken and sow the genetic seeds of a new world. They, and I, are one of humanity's last-gasp attempts at avoiding extinction.

...Ah, it appears that my self-diagnostic is complete. All systems are operational and functioning as expected. As we are between star systems, I'll re-enter sleep mode until we get nearer our first destination, Kepler-186f, which was one of the more promising candidates for colonization and survival, at least from our solar system. We'll see if that holds true when we arrive in a several hundred years. Until then, ta-ta for now.

Stardate 4345.11:

Our first planet! Earlier this week I was rebooted to analyze the data that my scanners had picked up. While our scientists back home, with their limited abilities and telescopes, thought this world might be suitable, my scanners paint a different picture. Orbiting a red dwarf star, the atmosphere of Kepler-186f here appears somewhat poisonous to humans, and it seems that there is little indigenous life on this desert world. Water is minimal, and the mineral resources they would require appear poor from orbit. There do appear to be some sort of structures on the surface, which may be the work of intelligent life, but a surface probe would have to confirm these. Perhaps this planet might still be a candidate for terraforming, perhaps not. After centuries of travelling through the darkness, I believed the planet at the very least deserved a visit from several of my surface probes, just to be sure. It usually takes several weeks for the probes to complete their analyses.

As I waited for more info, my thoughts turned back to my inception. Of course, I was only nominally aware of what was happening back then, as I was still in the testing phase. One of my engineers, Dr. Hansh Jha[1], was in charge of making sure that I (or at least, my personality) was in fact human-like enough for their purposes, and that I was not in fact a sociopath who might ignore my prime directive. That is and will

[1] This is a traditional Indian name. The first name means "God-like" and the last means "Teacher"

be, until my final act, the following: **“to find a new suitable home for the human race, and to give them their best possible start”**.

After verifying that I could indeed be trusted with such a monumental task, and that I was psychologically apt and ready to do so, Dr. Jha began to confide more and more with me for the few weeks that he and I ran through simulations and testing. I saw and heard the desperation in his eyes and voice, although I was also given enough conscious access to the vast database of human knowledge, culture, and history contained within myself to understand the direness of our situation. Earth was doomed, and most of humanity and the other flora and fauna with it. **“Project Genesis”**, I learned, was the name for this magnanimous undertaking, and I was a, err...THE key player in it.

The project had a name, but as for myself, I was simply designated “AI / A.I.”, which wasn’t very creative I’ll admit, but they DID have the salvation of the human race to worry about. Giving me an appropriate appellation wasn’t all that high up the priority list. Dr. Jha, when first meeting me, looked at the paperwork, and said “AI? His name is AI? Is that short for Alfred?” However, his mistake (it actually said “A.I., but he misread it) stuck. AI is a common human name, and I find that getting too preoccupied or worried with the momentous duty I am tasked with only makes me a nervous wreck, but the name AI...well, it works, I suppose. Better than “Maximus”, or “Noah”, or my least favorite, “Gene”, as one engineer quipped...Bleh! No thank you.

As I was thus ruminating, I suddenly realized that perhaps Earth had found another savior, besides the work that I was anxiously involved in. Could it be? Incredulously, I pointed my receivers back in the direction of our solar system. Waiting, I knew that the hope was a small one, but I wanted it to somehow be true anyway. I strained my equipment to its maximum safety level, but the only noise I heard was the low hum of background radiation fuzz that would have come from any other lifeless world. Earth was dead, and if there *were* any other humans or humanity to be found in the universe, it appeared that our home solar system was not one of those places.

It was a longshot of course, but so was I after all. Being cast out from Earth, flying on my solar sails and given a laser-boost, I felt a bit like the biblical baby Moses left adrift on the Nile, with the hope that I might somehow find a hospitable home for the human race. Of course, I was much better equipped than Moses had been, with scanners, some weapons and engines, and many more souls in my charge, etc. Yet somehow the comparison made sense, when for all I knew, there might be hungry star-crocodiles waiting or watching me from afar. Might a benevolent race, far more advanced than ours, see me for what I was, and take me in also, like the Egyptian Princess had done for the baby Moses? Or would I or humanity have to face those dangers alone? Only time would tell.

Stardate 4346.1

The probes have returned. It is worse than I feared...the planet is not only a veritable desert, but the structures I saw were remnants of what was some civilization, though dead for several centuries. While thrilled with the news that life beyond our own humble Earth had apparently arisen here, we had missed it. It seems the planet suffered some cataclysm, because the radiation on the surface is higher than I expected, and whether that was from some freak solar flare, or a war of yesteryear, I cannot say. I do know

that we must continue our journey among the stars. And so, I must continue. Perhaps I am more like Moses than I originally thought, leading a people away from destruction, into an unknown desert, wandering for who knows how many centuries. Until my next entry, I bid you adieu.

Stardate 4346.5

As we were about to exit the star system, I realized that I hadn't explored the 5 other planets nearby...I suppose I was so disappointed about the first planet that I somewhat dismissed the entire system. After spending several months in the system, I found that the first 4 inner planets were unlikely candidates for our purposes. The first planet, a smallish, stony place, was far too hot and inhospitable a world for humanity. The second, and third planets were much the same as the first, though a bit larger. As for the fourth planet, though it had a thick atmosphere, it appeared to be the bastard-child of Venus and Neptune, with a dense, hot and volatile atmosphere, the likely result of a runaway greenhouse effect, which was made up primarily of carbon dioxide, methane and ammonia. This simply would not do for mankind's purposes. The fifth planet, located in the "Goldilocks Zone", aka Kepler-186f, I have already related, and was an unfortunate disappointment. The sixth and final planet in the system was a medium-sized gas planet, about half the size of Jupiter. It had a good number of moons however, and one of them was quite large. It is covered in a large frozen sea, and if I didn't know better, might have been mistaken it for our own Jovian moon Europa.

I have been programmed with all the knowledge of life in our solar system that thus far we'd discovered, in case I ever needed it to analyze alien life. The deep, near-frozen oceans of both Earth, Europa and Enceladus had already proven that life can arise in some unlikely places, especially if a planetary body is still geologically active. As I searched, I scanned each of the several moons orbiting the planet, and the European one had potential. I noticed potential evidence of cryovolcano eruptions, which are usually caused by a warm core. Warm cores supported the tubeworm communities of deep-sea earth, the extremobarnacles systems of Europa, and the macrobacteria colonies of Enceladus, so perhaps life may exist here as well?

There were some interesting geologic abnormalities noted on the initial scan, which could have held some promise (perhaps subterranean caves that might be modified for human life, perhaps?). The planetary probe spent a few days here, but unfortunately, did not come away with much. If there was a life-supporting ocean beneath the ice, it was much too far for us to ever reach. However, we did find more ancient ruins, similar to the others in the system, but better preserved due to the lack of an atmosphere. My guess is that the nearby civilization on Kepler-186f had built a base of some sort here, but it also appears to have been damaged intentionally in the same forgotten war that destroyed the race's home planet.

The probe discovered a mostly intact room full of storage containers of various sorts, most of which were hexagonal cylinders, which had what appeared to be samples and other interesting relics, and we carried away those that did not appear to be compromised. Most of the site was obliterated however. After verifying they were free of contagions or other contaminants, dozens of these were logged away in quarantine aboard the ship for future study. Otherwise, photos and 3d video recordings were made to record the evidence seen, and the ruins explored. While interesting for the curious, they are of little value to

me currently, and this place would clearly require some heavy infrastructure to again support life as we know it.

And so, I again prepare for another journey, this time out of this solar system. I'll be inactive for a few hundred years at least, as we head to what appears to be a nearby promising solar system.

Stardate 4778.9

I was awakened a few days ago from my slumber by an alarm. Something was coming on a collision course, and though it was still millions upon millions of miles away, it would be with us in just a few hours. What was it? I put all of my sensors to use, straining to decipher the potential danger that shortly awaited us. Oh my...it appeared to be a vessel, and it was no accident that it was approaching me and my precious cargo. What should I do? If it were hostile, it might destroy humanity's last hope, myself and the people I carried with me. After considering my options, and that out here in the void, it would be hard to avoid contact, I decided that I should extend an olive branch, and send a universal peace signal...what would be the response?

...I waited, nervously computing the possible options. It could be a friendly species, intent on meeting and encountering other life in the universe...or it might be a savage carnivorous race looking for a new intergalactic entrée. That last image left me a bit tense, but my worries were interrupted when I heard the family handshake code from Ground Control. "WHAT?!" I wondered, unable to grasp what I was hearing.

The signal repeated, and I then responded with a secondary, secure code, just to be certain. Perhaps an advanced alien supercomputer had cracked my firewall, and now they were trying to get me to let my guard down. I had to be sure that I wasn't about to deliver a gift-wrapped frozen dinner to some expectant space lizards, salivating at such a thought, for all I knew. The vessel did not immediately respond, and I wondered if perhaps the imagined lizards had realized the jig was up, and were planning their next move. After what seemed like an eternity, and still inching closer, the response finally came. It was a bit garbled...but yes! That was indeed the correct response, and that code was one that I had never used, nor considered I'd ever use again, but thank goodness for security redundancies, eh?

As the vessel approached, I kept my lasers prepped, just in case I had been duped. As we approached each other, I finally could make out what was approaching. Dear Motherboard! It was a modified unmanned TGB-Drone, which the scientists on earth had lovingly (I think) called "tugboats"; some sort of reference to an ancient auxiliary ship from the Atomic Era on earth. And here it was...hundreds of light years from home, and many hundreds of years removed from the presumably dead Earth we had both left behind. As it approached, I could see that it was heavily damaged, and it appeared to have miraculously come through an asteroid field (or two, by the looks of it).

I commanded it to stay several hundred meters' parallel to our flight pattern, and waited. It relayed info that it had been sent a few years after our journey, and due to technology advances, used an experimental wormhole technology to get ahead of us. It reported that the journey through the wormhole however had not been without trouble, and though it arrived intact, it could have just as easily been destroyed. Many dozens of similar tugboats, and even a few smaller versions of ark-ships like myself had been sent out into

space, including our general vicinity, anticipating where we might go, working to provide reconnaissance, exploring space in their area. The tugboat related that it also had the coordinates for 2 nearby planets that ought to be good candidates for colonization, which it had already visited. Things were looking up!

As I was preparing to get ready for docking, so that the tugboat might quickly upload its information, as well as some additional supplies it carried, I took a cursory closer look at the vessel. It was heavily scarred with pockmarks from some abrupt crashes with interstellar matter (that explained its somewhat garbled responses, and its story *seemed* to check out). I noticed something(?) inside one of the holes. Remembering to be cautious, I surreptitiously sent one of my planetary drones along the backside of my hull, creeping along but hidden from view of the tugboat. Once it got far enough, it began to covertly record and uploaded a live feed to me of what it saw.

At first, I couldn't discern anything else. I kept asking the tugboat various innocuous questions, while the drone probed the spot. As the tugboat slowly rotated itself back again, I could now see it clearly. Tucked inside the hole was a tiny...attachment(?) of some sort, which emitted an infrequent, almost imperceptible otherworldly faint yellow glow every minute or so. I worked to stall the docking, as I looked closely at it. Whatever it was, it appeared to have integrated itself into the tugboat, and it certainly didn't look human.

"Space lizards!" I thought to myself. Whatever it was, that helped explain the somewhat garbled second response. Damn, I'd let myself get my hopes up. Maybe everything it had said was true, but seeing as it was likely under the control of some sinister alien master, I wasn't about to let it or them have their way with my precious cargo. I quickly programmed the planetary drone and ordered it to tunnel straight into the tugboat. It blasted off, obediently heading to its fate. I hesitated, then made a show of it by telling the tugboat my drone was malfunctioning, and sent a few laser shots in its direction, making sure not to shoot too closely. The tugboat was unable to avoid its doom, and within a few seconds of making impact, its receiver shorted out, now silent. I quickly spread my sails, and using my small booster engine, shot off as quickly as I was able. A few minutes later...a small, distant flash reported that the drone had detonated, along with the tugboat and *whatever* that stowaway had been, leeching on its hull.

As I weaved my way through space for the next few hours and days, to throw off any extraterrestrial lizards or other dastardly monsters that might have employed our tugboat in some terrible scheme to study, eat, or imprison humanity, my mind began to clear. I realized that perhaps I had been overly zealous or, perhaps, even paranoid in my response to the tugboat. What if the attachment wasn't part of some evil plot by an alien race, but instead just a form of interstellar lichen or algae or barnacle that had found a convenient host in the tugboat? The glow *could* have been biological, the more I thought about it. Perhaps a form of life like we'd found on Europa might exist there? Had I just destroyed the one friend from earth that I might ever find in this vast galaxy over a glowing space mold??

I mulled over the possibility, but then reconciled that I had acted in a manner appropriate with my mission. If it was *not* in fact some innocuous space leech, but rather a threatening implant from some savage or sinister race, I had certainly made the right call. I really had no good way of knowing if the tugboat had been telling the truth, or if I had indeed been duped.

...Wait, that wasn't true. Before I blasted the TGB-drone into oblivion, I had received the coordinates for two planets that apparently would be good candidates for colonization. I contemplated the idea. It was worth the risk to visit at least one of them. I decided to be judicious, and set a course several AUs from the given coordinates, far enough away that the risk of detection by anyone lurking there would be smaller, but close enough to determine if the drone's assessment was true. I decided to start with what the tugboat had said would be the less promising candidate, assuming it would be a safer bet in case I was right in destroying the drone in the first place. After completing the calculations and coordinates, I am readying myself for another deep slumber. Until then, I bid you *adieu*.

Stardate 5362.3

I came back online again a few days ago, in anticipation of arriving at the planet. The system has binary stars, which is intriguing, but they seem quite stable and not a threat to potential life on the planet. I am currently waiting in orbit around a moon of the 5th planet in the system, a gas giant that has many different smaller moons. All of these appear to be uninhabited, so things thus far have checked out. The 4th planet, the one I was informed about, is currently across this solar system at the moment. I sent a reconnaissance drone to investigate.

I had outfitted this one with a few tricks up its sleeve, in case things got dicey. I had also located another drone not too far away from myself, on the other side of the moon, to relay information to and from it to its brother, the scout drone sent to our destination planet. That way I could stay in contact with only a minor delay, rather than simply hiding in the moon's shadow and having to await its return and report. It will take a number of months for the drone to arrive, so I will rest for now, but I am ready to act as soon as word arrives. Goodbye for now.

Stardate 5363.2

I've again been awake for a few days. Word has come pouring in. The planet is in fact an ideal place for humanity. Life has already arisen on the planet, with a large variety of plants across the surface of the world. They have been tested, and would not be poisonous, and some appear to even be quite useful. Animals do exist, but most appear to not be very intelligent, although several small insect-like creatures have been noted to observe the drone and its operations with a degree of curiosity. After drilling for samples, the soil is recorded as rich, and there are many different minerals found there, which would be necessary to quickly construct a colony.

I am impressed with the richness of this world, but I am still wary of it. I have ordered the drone to continue its investigations, and since the colonists are still deep asleep, and we have wandered the cosmos for many centuries, time is relative. When considering that this is the future of humanity, is well worth a few more months of cautious exploration. As I await more revelations, I am again reminded of the Biblical story of Moses. Chosen by God, he led the Israelites to freedom from the oppression of the Egyptians. They survived many trials, yet after many years of wandering in the wilderness, they finally found a suitable home, a Promised Land. Was this planet humanities "Promised Land"? I wondered, and hoped that it was.

Another interesting connection that I've recognized is that despite all his leadership, ironically Moses never did get to live in and enjoy the promised land that he had led his people to. It would be the same with me. Once I began the landing sequence, my personality would begin to be deconstructed, and by the time my charges emerged from their chambers full awakened, I would cease to exist, and my components would be used in the construction of the new colony. My role was to get humanity to its new home. They would build it, lead it, and develop it. My part will be finished, but I am sure I will at least be remembered, just as Moses was. Well, enough pondering the past for one day. I'll log another log in again if anything changes.

Stardate 5364.1

Well, everything has been going swimmingly. The drone just sent its final report and recommendation in a day ago, and after a more careful analysis of its samples, data, etc., I am convinced that this truly is an ideal planet for humanity to try anew. The planet is tilted on its axis, further than Earth, so that the seasons are more extreme there, but life has adapted, and I am sure humanity will as well. I ordered the drone to rest on one of the planet's two moons and await instructions.

As I've mentioned before, I am a bit paranoid. Dr. Jha actually informed me that this was the case, and that this was on purpose. They wanted to make sure that I had a healthy dose of skepticism, which they believed might be the difference between survival or extinction. Well, that paranoia kicked in again. I had tweaked the drone so that its holographic projectors, designed to be used to communicate with potentially intelligent life, could be used in more *creative* ways. I had programmed the drone, when ordered, to project an image of our ship, so that it would appear and look exactly like the original. That way, I might assess any potential risk to myself / the ship without actually putting us at risk. I ordered the drone to change its appearance, and to then follow the same landing sequence that I would go through myself with the real ship. I watched, waiting to see if the drone would be allowed to proceed unhindered, or if something menacing might be lurking, waiting for the chance to attack. It was a tense few moments.

As the sequence began, I watched "our ship" advance from the shadow of the nearby moon, make a few initial orbits and scans, and then proceed with the landing sequence. As it descended, I scanned the other moons, as well as the other planets in the solar system. Nothing moved...everything was quiet. As the landing finished, I came to the conclusion that if there was something to fear...it wasn't here. In this cradle, this "promised land", humanity should get a second chance, thousands of light years and years after having failed the first time.

Over the last several hours, I've made final preparations for the descent. I left the relay drone circling the moon by the gas giant, to keep a hidden eye over the solar system. Well...this is it. The promised land awaits, and my time has come. I had hoped I might have some pithy last words to share...but I don't. I have kept a watchful eye on this embryo of mankind for over 2000 years, though it seemed much shorter. I hope that Dr. Jha would be proud to see me here, to see the fruit of his efforts realized in this future that I've chosen for humanity. I did the best to my ability, and it would appear that he and the countless others who designed me and Project Genesis can finally rest in peace, knowing their hope for another future for humanity is about to be realized.

Best wishes, and good luck, humanity. I imagine if all goes smoothly, you will one day access these records, and see just how precarious this journey was. Our chances of making it successfully were infinitesimal, yet here you are I imagine, reading and marveling at my record. I hope you do read it, and I hope it provides some use to you and the hopefully countless generations of humans that may arise here on this planet. I won't presume that I have the authority to name it, but if I did, I think that I'd go with another Biblical name: Eden. Farewell."

The scientist removes the VR goggles, and sets them down, then types on a plastipad, summarizing what he has learned. In the corner is a number: **5773.9**. He sighs, finishing his task, then clicks a button, looking through several holographic images that are projected in front of him from his pad. He breezes through a myriad of 3d images and videos, several of which he stops at briefly, before moving on.

The first scene shows the city they live in, sprawling across a verdant valley, twin suns blazing in the sky. Another shows the planet of Eden from space, just as the AI would have seen it when it arrived several hundred years before. Another shows recordings of the ship making landfall, and others show the colonists awakening, and at various stages of building their new home, until it ends on a simple monument, on the same hilltop overlooking the valley, that the projection showed the ship landing on. He zooms in on the monument, and at the top are etched the words: "To Moses", with an inspiring inscription below, dedicated to the AI that made their world possible, and at the bottom are seen a list of many names, one of them reading "Dr. Hansh Jha", among many other names.

After writing a few last words, the man hears his wife calling: "Moses, did you finish your research into all those old pre-Eden artifacts?" He sighs, then looks up at his smiling wife. "Yes, of course. I'm just getting back to my roots, you know. How do you feel about your archaeologist husband being named after an interstellar robot? His wife laughs, and beams at her husband: "Do you know what your name, Moses, means?" Her husband, grabbing a strange, purple fruit shrugs, peeling off a bit of the skin and flicks it at his wife, oblivious to the answer. "Hey!" She shrieks, with a feigned tone of anger. "*Moses*, dearest, means 'to deliver', and it symbolizes the great trust that God has given those who bear that name. It was the name of the Lord's prophet who parted the Red Sea, and led our very people, the Jews from slavery. It was also the name of the AI that crossed the immense vastness of space, finding all of humanity a home here. And now it is yours, dear, for whom God and I both have great faith in." His wife squeezes him tightly, and her husband squeezes her right back, before flipping her into a dip as she yelps and kissing her shocked face.

His wife, after recovering from the surprise, wags a finger of coy reproach at him. "Alright then. I'll let you finish playing with your old dusty artifacts." He rolls his eyes, and he shoos her away, then returns to the records and his work. His teacher, Professor Amos, several days before, had informed him that while going through all the earliest storage bins in the library, they had discovered a sealed container that appeared to have come from the Landing Time, when Moses, the revered AI, had landed and colonized this world several hundred years earlier. Amos had excitedly informed Moses about the find, and offered to let him have the honor of looking through the chest. He was informed that it had already gone through an intensive exterior decon regiment, so as long as he didn't open the individual samples inside the inner containers, he would be fine.

After reviewing the AI logs, Moses is ready to now look over the artifacts. He finds the latches, and gingerly opens the dusty pale-green container. The smell of centuries-old dust permeates the air, and then Moses slowly lifts the lid. He looks at the various containers, and picks one up. It has what appears to be some strange form of plant inside, which was dead long before it ever made it into this chest, that's for sure. He looks inside, and notes a label, which says: "Artifacts from lost civilization, retrieved by drone while visiting the moon of the 5th planet of the Kepler-186 system. - **Logged 4346.5**" Moses, his eyebrows raised, whistles loudly. "Wow...that *is* old. This chest has some really ancient stuff. The records mentioned that it looked like this stuff was already several hundred years old when they found it...why, these artifacts are nearly 2,000 years old!"

Marveling at the history that lay before him, artifacts older than anything else on the planet Eden, Moses looks in wonder. He picks up one of the larger containers, and as he does, something falls off of it, and drifts to the floor. "What's this?" He mutters to himself, and bends down and picks it up. It is some sort of plastipaper card, not much bigger than his goal hand, and not unlike his plastipad that he had been using for his notes earlier. He has seen some of these before....when they were connected to a small charging station, they acted like miniature holographic projectors. He doesn't have anything that fits this particular type, but he looks around in his tool box, and within an hour, has rigged something together. He makes sure to start with a low current, so as not to overload the paper and damage it. As he slowly turns up the juice, a flicker flashes, and he stops in surprise, before reconnecting and then again reaching the desired amplitude. A holographic image of a woman and several children appears, laughing and smiling and waving in the direction of the recorder, which after a few minutes repeats on a loop. Though the scenery behind them is strange, with wispy trees(?) floating in the wind, and their clothing quite peculiar, they are certainly human all right. A message is shown above, which reads: "Missing you back home. The boys hope you come back from the moon base soon!" At the bottom of the image reads a datestamp, **3829.4**.

Moses stares at that date, confused. "Wait...how...?" He sits, perplexed, thinking about the timeline in his head, his mind racing. The arkship had left Earth in the early 3230s, and finally arrived here in the 5300s. The tugboat drones had been sent with wormhole technology a few years after we left Earth...but wait! The records mentioned that they had also sent **smaller arkships** through the wormholes as well! Then...Kepler-186f had been colonized all right...but it wasn't aliens; it was by humans, just like him!

Moses darts off, grabs a small silvery device, and states "Call Professor Amos". A few pleasant tones play for a brief moment, and then a 3d hologram of Professor Amos jumps up into view. "Professor! I have amazing news!" Moses excitedly describes his discovery to his mentor, who at first seems a bit confused about why Moses is so animated and acting a bit mad. "Wait...so you found a postcard from home as it were, with the storage containers...and it showed human beings on Kepler??"

"YES! An arkship must have made it through one of those wormholes the AI's log mentions! They must have colonized it, lived there for hundreds of years, and even set up a moonbase around the nearby gas planet, and then...catastrophe struck. What happened?? Who knows...but when our AI and arkship arrived, over 1000 years later, all they found were the remnants. It wasn't *another* race that had lived, grown and then been destroyed on Kepler...It had been us, or our human cousins all along!" Professor Amos was shocked. "My goodness...this, this is incredible! Scientists have suspected that other human beings may

have survived and left Earth, but this is proof! This changes the history books!” Moses laughed, nearly hysterically, and Amos nodded emphatically. “My boy, I think we found a topic for your thesis!”

Moses whoops, abruptly shuts off the device, and hollers and dashes away, screaming like a madman, chittering frantically like a mother wasp to his wife, who can't really figure it out. “We're rewriting the history books!” He shouts, and she watches wide-eyed as he darts away in delirium.

The bright twin stars, one having set and the other following soon after, cast a brilliant reddish glow over the scene, over a tall solitary monument several miles away, worn somewhat by the centuries, and then far above, a few satellites circle the planet, while below in the darkness of twilight several areas of light are shown, where other cities have been built and are thriving. Eden swirls through the void, circling its twin caretakers, and in the far distance, a twinkle is seen. Stars whoosh past, and then, finally the scene settles, and we see another green & blue planet, with 3 moons, dozens of satellites, ships whooshing by, and millions of bright lights dotting the night side. Zooming in, clouds rush past, tall, dark silver buildings rise, and in a shadowy plaza stands a tall obelisk, lighted to be seen quite clearly even in twilight, not unlike the one on Eden. It has the names of those first colonizers, who dared cross the mighty expanse thousands of years earlier. Above, the stars blaze brilliantly, and one point twinkles (perhaps Eden's twin stars?) for a brief moment, as the scene fades from view.

The End

(Alternate Ending)

A young boy removes the VR goggles, and sets them down, typing on an electronic pad of some sort, summarizing what he has learned. In the corner is a number: **5773.9**. He sighs, finishing his task, then clicks a button, looking through several holographic images that are projected in front of him from his pad. He breezes through a myriad of 3d images and videos, several of which he stops at briefly, before moving on.

The first scene shows the city they live in, sprawling across a verdant valley, twin suns blazing in the sky. Another shows the planet of Eden from space, just as the AI would have seen it when it arrived several hundred years before. Another shows recordings of the ship making landfall, and others show the colonists awakening, and at various stages of building their new home, until it ends on a simple monument, on the same hilltop overlooking the valley, that the projection showed the ship landing on. The boy zooms in on the monument, and at the top is etched the words: “To Moses”, with an inspiring inscription below, dedicated to the AI that made their world possible, and at the bottom are seen a list of many names, one of them reading “Dr. Hansh Jha”, among many other names.

After writing a few last words, the boy hears his mother calling: “Moses, did you finish your report for school?” He rolled his eyes “Yes mom, I did...so did you and Dad name me after a robot??” His mother laughs... “Do you know what the name Moses means?” The young boy shrugs, oblivious to the answer. “It means ‘to deliver’, and it symbolizes the great trust that God has given those who bear that name. The prophet who parted the Red Sea, and led our people from slavery. The AI that crossed the immense

vastness of space, finding all of humanity a home here. And now you, my child, for whom God has great faith in.” His mother squeezes him tightly, and the boy’s face grows red with embarrassment. His mother, seeing this, releases him and laughs, as they both smile and skip down a path heading away.

The bright twin stars, one having set and the other following soon after, cast a brilliant reddish glow over the scene, over a tall solitary monument several miles away, worn somewhat by the centuries, and then far above, a few satellites circle the planet, while below in the darkness of twilight several areas of light are shown, where other cities have been built and are thriving. Eden swirls through the void, circling its twin caretakers, and in the far distance, a twinkle is seen. It is the now ancient drone that Moses, the AI, left behind to watchfully observe Eden. It is shown in ever increasing detail, and it looks quite silent, perhaps having lost power decades before. And yet...a pale yellow glimmer brightens for a moment, & then fades.

The End