

WELCOME TO ANDROMEDA!  
A CHOOSE YOUR OWN PATH SCREENPLAY

by

Merrick Ann McCurdy

HONORS THESIS

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Thesis Supervisor:

Jordan Morille

Second Reader:

Anne Winchell

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## **DEDICATION**

To Jordan. Simply put, this just wouldn't exist without you.

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Welcome To Andromeda!* is a science-fiction choose-your-own-path screenplay. Inspired by both HON 3396C: Screenwriting: A Structured Approach to Writing for the Screen and HON 3396X: Storytelling in Video Games, this project weaves the creative freedom of a screenplay with the interactivity of video games all into one science-fiction adventure. However, the adventure isn't your typical run of the mill science-fiction as the film sets out on an intergalactic mission to explore a universe beyond humankind.

This leads to the distant planet of Andromeda where viewers will meet the Dronemedians, who are curious lemur dragon hybrids. Viewers will follow Key, a young Dronemedian, who happens to sit on Andromeda's governing body, the High Council. But business is far from normal when a satellite explodes, and an unknown spacecraft takes its place in the Andromeda sky. This soon leads the Dronemedians to meet the Claquians, a nomadic robot-like species, for the very first time. And it's up to the viewers to help Key make some of the biggest decisions of this intergalactic public relations affair and Key's young life.

## I. "THE ORIGIN STORY"

*Welcome To Andromeda! A Choose Your Own Path Screenplay* is a thesis project that weaves the creative freedom of a screenplay with the interactivity of video games all into one science-fiction adventure. However, this adventure isn't your typical run of the mill science-fiction, as the film sets out on an intergalactic mission to explore a universe beyond humankind. This leads to the distant planet of Andromeda where viewers will meet the Dronemedians, who are curious lemur dragon hybrids. Viewers will follow Key, a young Dronemedian, who happens to sit on Andromeda's governing body, the High Council. But business is far from normal when a weather satellite explodes, and an unknown spacecraft takes its place in the Andromeda sky. This soon leads the Dronemedians to meet the Claquians, a nomadic robot-like species, for the very first time. And it becomes up to the viewers to help Key make some of the biggest decisions of this intergalactic public relations affair and Key's young life.

In the simplest terms, *Welcome To Andromeda!* is a science-fiction choose-your-own-path screenplay. However, that sentence is still a mouthful and has quite a few moving parts, so I am going to break them down and provide some explanation on this quite complex project of mine.

Starting with the format of the whole piece, which is a screenplay, a script written for the screen, whether that be a movie or a television show. In the spring of 2019, I took HON 3396C, Screenwriting: A Structured Approach to Writing for the Screen with the professor Jordan Morille (who would later become my thesis supervisor). Even though I've been a writer ever since I could remember, I had only ever really written prose and never tried to write a script of any kind. But throughout the class, I started to really enjoy

screenwriting - way more than I originally thought I would. After finishing the course, I went on to start writing multiple other screenplays and I haven't really looked back. So, naturally, when it came to settling on a thesis project, I knew it had to be a screenplay of some sort.

So, when I started writing *Welcome To Andromeda!*, I had decent experience with writing screenplays, however, I didn't have a lot of experience with writing branching storylines associated with the film being a choose your own path format. Growing up, I read quite a bit, but I only ever remember reading one of those "Choose Your Own Adventure" (CYOA) books. I can't even tell you what the title was or what actually happened - I just remember that I did have one at some point in time.

I didn't really think about this one little book from my childhood until the spring of 2020 when I enrolled in HON 3396X, *Storytelling in Video Games*, taught by Anne Winchell (who would later become my secondary reader). This course somewhat reintroduced interactive storytelling to me as I didn't remember much of that one CYOA book I had. Throughout the semester, I began to really enjoy the concept of branching storylines and telling an interactive story. So, naturally, I wanted to try my hand at writing something like that and my thesis seemed like the perfect opportunity to do so.

However, in order to get more familiar with the structure I was attempting for the first time, I needed to do a little more research. This research almost immediately led me to finding Netflix Interactive. I had heard about probably the most popular film of the category, *Black Mirror Bandersnatch*, but I also watched some of the others including *Carmen Sandiego: To Steal or Not to Steal*, *Minecraft Story Mode*, and *Puss in Book: Trapped In An Epic Tale*. While watching, I tried to focus on how the writers handled the



interactivity of the structure, but I did end up noticing that the science-fiction genre wasn't really represented in the category. A side note about my research: CYOA or the "Choose Your Own Adventure" phrase is trademarked by the books of the same name, hence why Netflix used "interactive", and I used "choose your own path."

Next, we come to the genre of the film - science-fiction. Now, I've always loved science-fiction. I grew up watching Star Wars with my dad and continued throughout the years to see the newer movies in theaters every chance I got. I also really enjoy the Star Trek franchise, my favorite series being Star Trek: The Next Generation. This, of course, led me to have a strong pull to write my own sci-fi and I've done just that throughout the years. I believe I like it so much because it's a genre that begins to satisfy my overactive imagination, but it also keeps pace with humanity's ever-advancing technology. To me, it's a genre that humankind can never quite catch up with and pass entirely.

However, humankind isn't present in *Welcome to Andromeda!* There are no human characters and really, the only human involvement is the viewer / reader when they select their choices. To explain the thought process behind this seemingly odd choice, we have to go back to the summer of 2020.

Specifically, a particularly low point in quarantining during the COVID-19 pandemic over the summer. After seeing a television broadcast detailing rising case numbers and quarantine being extended once again, I had a conversation with my roommate at the time about wanting to just get away from everything and everyone. This led to a "would you rather" type situation between the two of us - would you rather go into space, never to return to Earth, or go into the ocean, never to return to land?

I picked outer space as I thought it would be a lot more interesting and because of

what we know about the universe continually expanding, going out into space would provide almost endless possibilities of exploring (that is if you don't run out food, water, or fuel) compared to the ocean where you would be limited to, well, Earth. This idea didn't quite spark the whole idea of Andromeda, the Dronemedians, etc., but it did spark an idea for a screenplay titled *How I Escaped Earth* that I started the same day my roommate and I had the conversation.

This screenplay followed the main character, Ziva, and her trusty Pitbull sidekick, Zeus, as they convince Ziva's father and CEO of Space Z to let them launch into orbit for a quick trip around Earth. However, this quick trip quickly turns into a lifetime when Ziva and Zeus decide to leave Earth's orbit to pursue Ziva's late mother's favorite comet, which ultimately leads them out of this solar system and into the next. While I didn't finish this screenplay before starting my thesis, the overall story did set my brain on a track of somewhat pushing the so-called limits of the universe within the sci-fi genre.

Starting with humans and Earth as your base point is almost a standard in sci-fi. Therefore, having humans or at least somewhat humanoid characters at the center of sci-fi narratives is also standard. It's easy for viewers and readers to connect with a mainly human protagonist and that's why writers do it. I did it with *How I Escaped Earth*, Ziva was a typical human teenager and she started out on Earth (even if she did "escape" it at the end).

But through developing and writing *How I Escaped Earth*, I started to wonder what a sci-fi film would look like if Earth and humans weren't the starting point. And that's when Andromeda, Dronemedians, Claquians, and Quian were created. Because I decided that I wasn't going to start with Earth or humans, *Welcome To Andromeda!*

became a very interesting and somewhat difficult worldbuilding exercise. It is probably the most intensive worldbuilding I have ever done for any one story. I wasn't exactly starting from scratch as there are still human-like things present, as well as the Claquian species being somewhat humanoid, but it was still a lot more to create than I normally would.

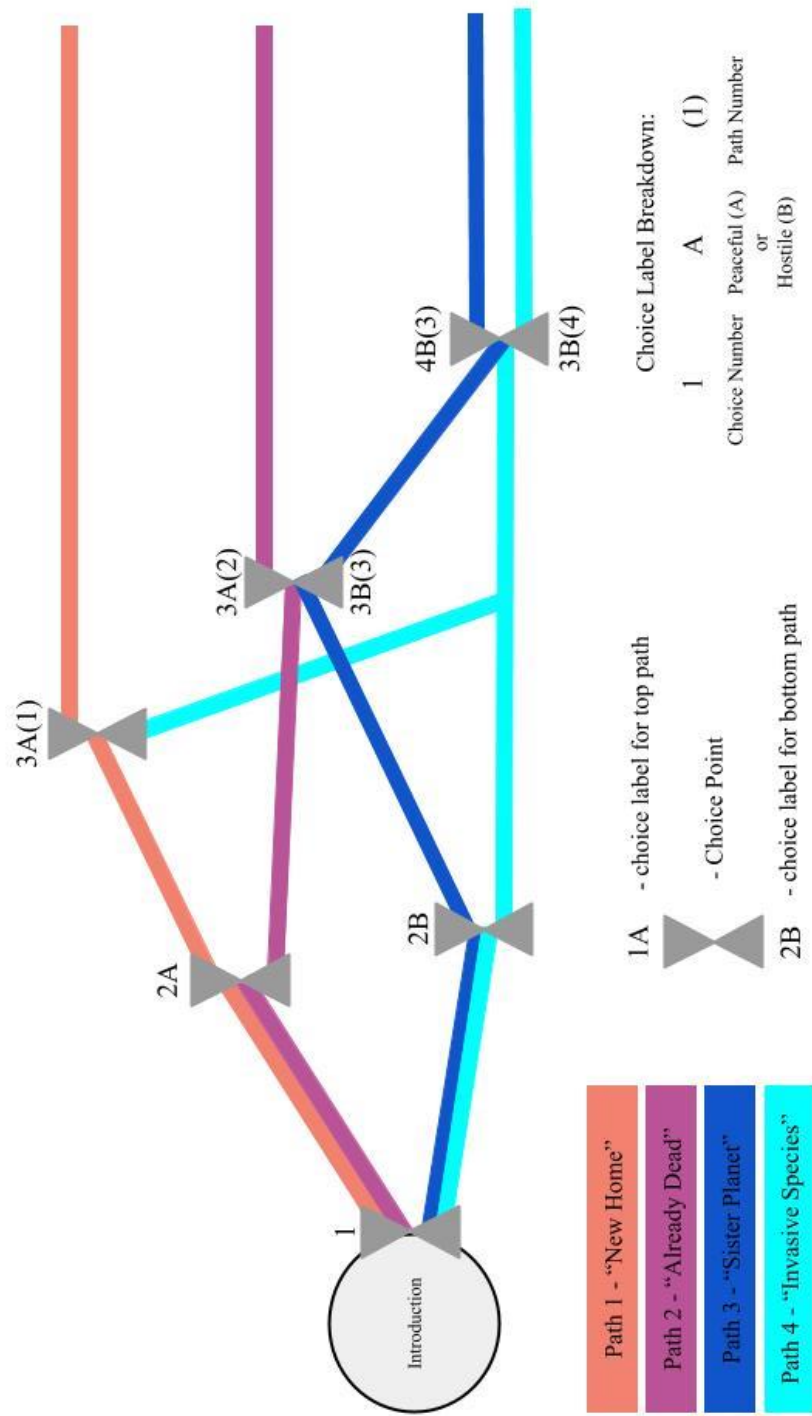
Even though I wasn't including Earth, humans, or even the Milky Way, I still wanted to incorporate some typical sci-fi elements in *Welcome to Andromeda!* - the biggest element being the first contact trope. This trope follows the storyline of humans going out into space and meeting an alien species for the first time or aliens coming to Earth for the first time. *Welcome To Andromeda!* somewhat flips this trope on its head as instead it's two alien species meeting each other for the first time.

The reason I choose this specific trope is because when I think of the story being told, the situation can either go really well or really badly. And this seemed like a good choice for a storyline that was in a choose your own path structure. This duality of the trope's outcomes led to the development of four different paths, "New Home," "Already Dead," "Sister Planet," and "Invasive Species." "New Home" and "Already Dead" (despite the title) are labeled as peaceful paths as there are no hostilities and almost no danger comes out of the encounter between the two species. On the other hand, "Sister Planet" and "Invasive Species" are what I call hostile paths as there are hostilities and some danger during the encounters. At the beginning, I did call them violent paths, but I'm not the writer to write full-out war, intergalactic or any kind, so the paths quickly became more hostile than full-out violent.

I would be lying if I said *Welcome to Andromeda!* came together as easily as I

thought it would in the beginning - because it really didn't. Don't even get me started on how I even managed to keep this whole thing straight in my own head, because I honestly don't know how I did. It was a lot of research, worldbuilding, planning, writing, rewriting, editing, discussing, and even more writing. This project was a unique blend of things I was comfortable with like the sci-fi genre and screenwriting and things that were completely new to me like creating not one, but two different alien worlds and the choose your own path structure. But, in the end, it was a labor of creativity and I wouldn't have it any other way.

## II. CHOICE MAP



Welcome to Andromeda!  
A Choose Your Own Path Screenplay

by

Merrick A. McCurdy

Merrick A. McCurdy  
merrickmccurdy00@gmail.com

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - MORNING

The room is circular with a large grey moss-speckled TREE trunk standing in the middle. Vine-like BRANCHES spread out across the ceiling. The occasional purple LEAF clings to the branches. A few litter the floor.

An open-top ICEBOX sits off to one side of the room. Next to it is a tall black TABLE that serves as a kitchen counter with various cooking CONTRAPTIONS scattered on it.

On the other side of the room, three CUSHIONS are on the ground, surrounded by various stacks of brightly colored BOOKS.

On one cushion sits KEY, a young Dronemedian with honey-colored eyes and whose fur had more of a teal tint than silver, holding a CUP of tea. Their semi-translucent wings are folded neatly behind their back and their tail swishes in the air occasionally.

They sigh before taking a sip.

After a couple of moments of silence, ZERO, also a young Dronemedian with navy-colored fur, bright purple eyes, and lots of metal piercings and jewelry adorning his body, walks into the room.

ZERO

Not going into the Council today?

Key shakes their head.

KEY

We're on hiatus for the next couple of days.

Zero nods, heading towards the other side of the room.

KEY (CONT'D)

Have you seen Fleur?

Zero pulls out a BOWL of fruit from the icebox.

ZERO

She's already out, a group of really young ones.

Key nods.

Zero begins to pick out fruits from the bowl.

Key sips their tea, finishing it.

Zero holds up a fruit.

ZERO

Do you want any fruit melee?

Key nods enthusiastically before jumping up.

Key and Zero start to prepare the fruit and throw it into another bowl along with some other ingredients.

They each claim a cushion - Key using the same one as before, holding their own serving of food.

After a moment of eating and silence, Zero looks up at Key.

KEY

(mouth full)

Don't look at me like that.

ZERO

I was just wondering / if you...

KEY

/ If I want to go to the market with you?

Zero nods with a smile.

KEY (CONT'D)

You just want someone to help carry all your stuff.

Zero shrugs.

Key raises their eyebrows.

Zero nods.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (ZERO'S BEDROOM) - MORNING

KEY stands in the middle of the round room. A DOOR to the main room is behind them. A HAMMOCK is attached to the ceiling and is stretched across the room.

The floor is littered with various BOXES, metal PIERCINGS, JEWELRY pieces, and other mess.



ZERO stands at the DESK, equally as messy as the floor, at the back of the room, throwing pieces of jewelry into a box.

KEY

Which box?

Key looks around at the mess.

Zero turns around.

Zero points at a BOX.

ZERO

I think that one.

Key bends down to look in the box that Zero pointed at.

KEY

Wrong. That's just paper.

Zero turns back to face the desk.

ZERO

Those are probably orders, can you bring that here?

Key sighs and shakes their head.

KEY

You're the worst businessman I've ever met...

Zero shrugs.

Key picks up the box.

KEY (CONT'D)

And I work on the Council.

ZERO

I make my money and pay my share, that's all that matters.

Key shakes their head again before walking towards Zero.

EXT. MARKETPLACE - LATE MORNING

The tree-lined clearing sits under a crisscross of wooden BRIDGES, connecting two large TREEHOUSES. DRONEMEDIANS fly overhead, sit on, or hang from the bridge by their tails, or walk about the clearing.

Wooden STALLS with brightly colored leaf roofs displaying various items line the perimeter of the clearing.

KEY and ZERO land on the ground, holding BOXES that are overfilled with various JEWELRY pieces.

ZERO

Stall's over here.

Zero throws his head to one side.

Key follows Zero as he navigates through throngs of Dronemedians to an empty stall.

Once they get to the stall, they set their boxes down on the ground. The jewelry inside jingles.

ZERO

I don't really need help setting up, you can go walk around.

Zero starts pulling jewelry out of the box and setting it on the stall's countertop.

Key looks down at the full boxes and then back up at Zero.

KEY

You sure?

Zero nods without looking away from the box and stall.

EXT. MARKETPLACE - LATE MORNING

KEY wanders around the clearing, occasionally stopping at stalls to look at the items being sold.

They eventually fly up to the bridge, hooking their tail around a plank before hanging down to watch the market from above.

EXT. MARKETPLACE - AFTERNOON

ZERO stands behind his stall, talking to another DRONEMEDIAN.

KEY walks up to the stall and busies themself by looking at some of the jewelry displayed.

After some discussion between the Dronemedian and Zero and an exchange of a necklace and some coins, the Dronemedian walks away.

ZERO

Find anything interesting?

Key shrugs, toying with a BRACELET.

KEY

We don't need to bring home any more crap.

Zero looks around.

ZERO

That's a matter of opinion.

(Beat.)

Do you want to watch the stall for me?

Key puts down the bracelet.

KEY

Actually, I was thinking about going to visit my parents.

Zero's eyes widen.

ZERO

Can you bring back some of your mom's cocoa salad? Or some of her mango puree?

Key laughs.

KEY

I can try, but she's getting / older...

A Dronemedian runs past Zero and Key.

RANDOM DRONEMEDIAN

/ There was an explosion!

There is an outburst of talking and yelling from others.

Zero and Key look at each other before taking off after the yelling Dronemedian.

When they catch up, Key stops the Dronemedian.

KEY

What happened? What exploded?

The Dronemedian takes a moment to catch their breath.

RANDOM DRONEMEDIAN

A satellite exploded close to Rayi and they saw something orbiting.

Zero looks at Key.

ZERO

It's probably the same thing that blew up our satellite.

The Dronemedian sees something off in the distance and runs off.

Zero watches them while Key looks up.

KEY

/ I need to go to the Council.

ZERO

/ I need to tell Fleur.

Zero and Key look at each other.

A loud shrill BELL sounds.

KEY

I really need to get to the Council.

Zero nods before Key spreads their wings and takes off.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - AFTERNOON

A long rectangular POND sits in the middle of the hall. Various types of alien PLANTS sprout from the shallow water.

VINES drape from the ceiling, some have grown partway down the wall.

Gold CUSHIONS surround the pond on the long sides in two neat rows.

Some DRONEMEDIANS rush around. Other Dronemedians sit on their assigned cushions, talking with others around them.

A few sit or hang by their tails on the vines, talking amongst themselves.

KEY walks into the hall.

They take a deep breath before making their way towards the opposite side of the pond.

They find their cushion before sitting down.

DANE, an older silver Dronemedian, walks up to Key.

DANE

Any idea why we got called in today?

Dane sits down on the cushion next to Key.

KEY

I heard a satellite exploded.

Dane's eyes widen.

DANE

Oh, lovely.

Key is about to respond when a bell chime.

The Dronemedians who were rushing around hastily find their way to their cushions and sit down.

Once the corridor is clear, MADGE, an elderly blue Dronemedian, steps out from one end, her wings fully outstretched.

She flies to the middle of the pond. She hovers just above the water's surface.

MADGE

The other Elders and I have called you all here to discuss a threat to the safety of Andromeda and our people.

There is an outburst of whispering and mumbling throughout the seated Dronemedians.

Key stays quiet while Dane whispers to the Dronemedian seated on his other side.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Hush.

The hall falls quiet.

MADGE (CONT'D)

This morning, one of our weather surveillance satellites was shot with a laser torpedo by an unknown spacecraft.

This caused the satellite to explode on impact. It is also believed that the unknown spacecraft is now orbiting the planet, but its intentions are unclear at this time.

More whispering and mumbling erupt throughout the hall.

Key glares at Dane, who is now whispering to someone behind him.

Madge rolls her eyes.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Seriously hush.

The hall falls silent.

MADGE (CONT'D)

We have called this emergency meeting today to discuss how we want to go forward from this morning's events.

A beat of silence.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The floor is open for discussion.

Several Dronemedians, including Dane, SAUL, PAX, and BAY, stand up and start talking increasingly louder - trying to talk over each other.

DANE

I think we should fire back a warning shot.

SAUL

Why would we do that?

DANE

Because they blew up one of our satellites!

PAX

That's not how Dronemedians do things.

BAY

That's how we do things when we're being attacked.

PAX

We're not being attacked though.

DANE

They already shot at a satellite; they might be planning  
an attack!

PAX

We can't know that for sure.

SAUL

Why don't we try to communicate before firing at them?

BAY

There's no point in talking with them if they're already  
proving to be violent.

PAX

It was just a weather satellite.

DANE

They still shot at it!

SAUL

We have no idea who 'they' are or what their motivations  
are.

BAY

I think their motivations are pretty clear.

PAX

Once again, we can't know that for sure.

Madge slaps her tail against the water, stretching her wings out while doing so.

The hall falls quiet. The standing Dronemedians slowly sit back down.

MADGE

Alright, alright. I think we're in need of a vote.

Madge motions to a lone Dronemedian standing near the back wall of the hall.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

The meeting hall is silent.

MADGE still hovers over the middle of the pond, collecting SLIPS of paper from passing DRONEMEDIANS as they head towards one of the various doors.

A handful of Dronemedians, including KEY, remain seated, a slip of PAPER in their laps and a PEN in hand.

Key looks around at the empty seats around them before looking back at the slip of paper.

**INSERT CHOICE 1.**

**OPTION 1: Vote to communicate with the unknown spacecraft. (Go to page 19)**

**OPTION 2: Vote to fire at the unknown spacecraft. (Go to page 149)**



**RESULT OF CHOICE 1, OPTION 1.**

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - EARLY MORNING

Every seat in the hall is full, many DRONEMEDIANS are having whispered conversations.

KEY sits quietly, while next to them DANE is talking to someone else.

MADGE walks out from one end of the hall. She stands at the edge of the pond.

Some Dronemedians fall quiet, others continue to talk.

Madge outstretches her wings before dipping them in the water. She flies to hover over the pond - flinging water all over the seated Dronemedians.

MADGE

Hush.

The hall goes silent.

MADGE

The Elders have gone through the votes and a decision has been made.

A pause.

A loud scoff is heard.

RANDOM DRONEMEDIAN

Oh, get on with it.

A good majority of the seated Dronemedians whip around to glare at where the voice came from.

Key just rolls their eyes.

MADGE

The Council has decided to communicate with the unknown spacecraft.

There is an outburst of talking. Key stays silent.

The talking continues for a beat or so. Key just looks around the hall.

Madge slapped her tail against the pond's surface, splashing the Dronemedians sitting the closest.

MADGE

Hush, you think you would've learned by now.

(Beat.)

Now, the next step is to settle on what our message shall say.

A beat. Madge looks around.

The hall is silent.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Good, you learned. Because this situation is the first of its kind here on Andromeda, the engineers in the industrial sector have asked if a couple representatives of the Council to go and learn about the process of sending these types of messages. This is just in case this process needs to become a regular occurrence.

Dane looks around.

Key gives him a side-eye glance, but Dane stretches out his wings.

DANE

Why would this messaging become a regular occurrence?

(under his breath)

We shouldn't even be sending this message.

Madge looks over at Dane.

MADGE

We are still not sure who or what we are dealing with. This message might be the only one we send, or it might be the first of many to whoever is up there.

Dane nods, still not looking overly pleased.

There is the onset of whispered conversation among the Council members, but the hall quickly goes silent when Madge fully outstretches her wings.

MADGE (CONT'D)

So, who would like to visit the industrial sector?

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - MORNING

FLEUR, a pale blue Dronemedian with green eyes, sits on a cushion - a CUP of tea in one hand and a BOOK in her lap. She occasionally turns a page with her tail.

Fleur's other hand is held by ZERO who is fashioning a metal RING around one of her fingers. Zero is surrounded by various metalworking CONTRAPTIONS and metal WIRE.

KEY walks in.

Fleur looks up from her book but Zero keeps working on the ring.

FLEUR

Did everyone really agree that quick?

Key shakes their head before heading to the door leading to their room.

Key disappears into the room before quickly reappearing with a small leather BAG slung over their shoulder.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Where are you off to now?

Key walks over to the ICEBOX before reaching into it.

KEY

Madge is having us visit the industrial sector to learn about this whole message sending process.

Key pulls a POUCH of blue liquid out of the icebox. They raise their eyebrows at Fleur.

Fleur shrugs her shoulders.

FLEUR

One of the kids gave it to me. I wouldn't open it if I were you.

Key throws the pouch at Fleur, who manages to catch it with her tail.

KEY

Well give it back. I don't want it in with all the other food.

Key turns back to the icebox and pulls out a MANGO.

Key heads to the front door. They are just about to open the door when Fleur clears her throat.

Key turns to face their roommates. Zero looks up from the ring.

FLEUR

You'll tell us about the industrial sector, right?

Key sighs.

Fleur and Zero frown.

KEY

Of course, I will.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - AFTERNOON

In the middle of a large clearing of trees, there is the CORE OUTPUT - a large HOLE in the ground with a purple-bluish LIGHT shining from within. Various WIRES of all different colors and sizes flow out of the hole - either going underground, connecting to large blue BOXES scattered across the clearing, or connect to one another.

A cluster of white BUILDINGS sit on the tree line of the clearing, half hidden by the trees.

A handful of DRONEMEDIANS mill about the clearing, holding TABLETS and occasionally stopping to inspect a wire.

MADGE leads a group of High Council members, including KEY, PAX, and DANE, into the clearing.

The group stops and looks around - most eyes landing on the core output.

A couple beats of silence.

KNOX, a completely silver Dronemedian, steps behind the group, unnoticed. He looks through the group at the core output.

KNOX

Quite a feat of engineering, isn't it?

The group collectively startles and turns around to see Knox.

KNOX (CONT'D)

Took a group of fifty engineers to install the first wire.

The group is quiet.

KNOX (CONT'D)

I'm Knox by the way. I'm the head engineer of power consolation. I wasn't part of the team that installed the first wire since I wasn't even born yet, but I helped install the hundred-eighty-fifth one. And every wire after that expect number two hundred and eight, I was home sick / that day because of...

MADGE

/ Yes, yes. Nice to meet you Knox. We are here to see Lynx.

Madge steps out in front of the group.

KNOX

Ah, yes. Head of our communications team. Let me show you to their section.

Knox starts off towards the cluster of white buildings.

As the groups follows behind Knox, Dane catches up to Key.

DANE

Are all these engineers this talkative?

Key shrugs their shoulders.

Dane quickens his pace to talk to another Dronemedian.

Once he leaves their side, Key rolls their eyes.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - AFTERNOON

COMPUTER SCREENS cover the back wall. The other walls are covered in various GRAPHS, DIAGRAMS, and the like.

In the middle of the room stands a fairly large TABLE with a SCREEN for a top.

Three DRONEMEDIANS stand around the table, talking amongst themselves.

KNOX walks in, followed by the High Council GROUP.

KNOX

Lynx, they're here to talk to you.

Knox motions towards the group.

Two of three Dronemedians at the table step away, leaving only LYNX, a graying blue Dronemedian.

Lynx fully outstretches his arms and wings.

LYNX

Madge, High Council members, welcome to our side of Andromeda.

Knox steps to side as the group files into the room and spread out in front of the table.

MADGE

Thank you for having us. We were hoping you can explain a little more about how we plan to exactly send a message to the unknown spacecraft.

Lynx nods.

LYNX

Yes, of course. Gather around.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - LATE AFTERNOON

The High Council GROUP is now huddled around the TABLE. LYNX stands off to the side with a TABLET in his hands.

LYNX

Given the constraints of our technology on Andromeda, the message can't be quite long. Here are a few examples our staff has come up with.

Lynx presses something on his tablet.

A LIST of different message options pops up on the table's screen.

**INSERT CHOICE 2A.**

**OPTION 1: "This is the High Council of Andromeda; we request that you state who you are and where you hail from. Regardless, we welcome you to our lovely Andromeda." (Go to page 26)**

**OPTION 2: "This is the High Council of Andromeda; we request that you state who you are, where you hail from, and what brings you to our Andromeda." (Go to page 98)**

**RESULT OF CHOICE 2A, OPTION 1.**

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (KEY'S ROOM) - LATE AFTERNOON

The room is circular with purple and blue VINES covering the walls with no clear point of origin.

Various PLANTS in brightly colored pots are scattered throughout the room and are equally accompanied with stacks of BOOKS.

A bay WINDOW juts out from the wall across from the DOOR leading to the main room.

KEY lounges in a HAMMOCK that hangs diagonally in the alcove. They are more focused in looking out the window than they are in the gold-plated JOURNAL and QUILL that lay in their lap.

There is a knock on the door before it swings open. FLEUR pops her head into the room.

FLEUR

Doing anything important?

Key holds up the journal, without taking their eyes away from the window.

KEY

Just writing up a report for the Council.

Fleur nods.

FLEUR

Want a distraction?

Key looks over at Fleur.

KEY

What would that be?

FLEUR

Zero and I were thinking about going to the café plaza,  
wanna come?

Key is almost immediately out of the hammock and placing the journal on a stack of books.



Key walks out of the room.

MAIN ROOM

KEY walks into the room and towards the front door.

FLEUR still stands at Key's door.

ZERO sits on the TABLE, snacking on a POMEGRANATE.

KEY

Well, let's go.

Fleur laughs before following Key to the front door.

FLEUR

You really don't want to do that report, huh?

Zero messily finishes his snack before joining them at the door.

Key opens the door.

KEY

Of course not. Those things are so boring.

EXT. CAFÉ PLAZA - EVENING

Little STOREFRONTS with leaf roofs sit on the tree line of a BEACH with pink sand that overlooks bright blue water.

Some DRONEMEDIANS walk on the beach, some sit on the storefront's roofs, and some hang or sit in the trees - all eating some kind of FOOD.

KEY, FLEUR, and ZERO land on the sand.

Zero immediately starts walking towards the storefronts.

EXT. CAFÉ PLAZA - EVENING

KEY, FLEUR, and ZERO sit on the roof of a storefront, all snacking on some sort of FRUIT.

Key finishes their snack before starting to pluck leaves from the roof with their tail.

A bright blue lightning FLASH touches down farther down the beach.

ZERO

What the-?

Two CLAQUIANS, completely gold humanoids with four arms and three white glowing eyes, appear where the lightning strike struck.

Two CLANISES, small orbs of white light encapsulated by two interlocking gold rings, floats above each of the Claquians' heads.

All the Dronemedians who had been on the beach flee to the trees, but still keep an eye on the newcomers.

A variety of clicks come from the Claquians causing the Dronemedians to either climb to the next highest branch or scoot farther up on the roofs.

Key's head snaps up to look at the sky.

A misty outline of the GAUNTLET 17-A-2 is overhead.

KEY

The...the...

Fleur and Zero both look at Key.

KEY (CONT'D)

T-the thing...the ship that blew up the satellite.

Fleur's eyes widen while Zero's eyes snap back to the Claquians.

KEY (CONT'D)

Go home, I need to bring them to the Council.

Key goes to stand up but is yanked back down by Fleur.

FLEUR

Are you crazy? How do you know they from the thing?

Fleur motions towards the sky.

Key shrugs.

KEY

Where else would they be coming from?

Fleur is quiet.

Key reaches over to pull on one of Zero's wings.

He immediately looks over at Key.

KEY (CONT'D)

Go home, I don't want you two to get caught up in this.

Key stands up, attracting the attention of the Claquians and Dronemedians.

FLEUR

But, but...

KEY

You sound like one of your kids, now go.

Fleur opens her mouth to argue but decides against it.

Fleur and Zero stand up and hover just above the storefront's roof.

All eyes are drawn to the three.

Fleur looks nervously at the Claquians and then back at Key.

FLEUR

(trailing off)

Just don't...

Key stands up.

KEY

I'll be home when I can.

Fleur nods before she turns around.

Fleur and Zero take off to fly up above the tree canopy.

LATER

The plaza is mainly empty, the storefronts are closed and dark.

Key gently lands on the sand in front of the two Claquians, AMBASSADOR ZPL and COMMANDER KNA.

Ambassador ZPL's Clanis, ZIP, bobs in the air next to his ear.

Commander KNA's Clanis, SIR, is still just above his shoulder.

Key waves awkwardly as their tail swishes behind them.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Novus. We are Claquians from the Gauntlet 17-A-2. My data designation is ZPL. You may use Ambassador as that is my occupation designation.

Ambassador ZPL raises a hand for a moment before returning it to his side.

COMMANDER KNA

My full designation is Commander KNA.

Ambassador ZPL looks sideways at Commander KNA.

ZIP clicks furiously.

ZIP

Have you already forgot your academy training?

All three of Commander KNA's eyes narrow.

He turns to face Ambassador ZPL and raises a single hand to Zip as if to slap it.

Key clears their throat.

KEY

Uh...well I'm Key.

Both Claquians turn to face Key.

KEY (CONT'D)

I sit on the High Council of Andromeda. And I am to take both of you there now.

Ambassador ZPL nods.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Affirmative. We would appreciate meeting with your leader.

Key nods, before slightly hovering above the sand.

Sir and Zip let out a click.

KEY

You can just follow me.

Ambassador ZPL and Commander KNA look up at Key.

Key drops to the ground.

KEY (CONT'D)

This way.

Key turns before starting to walk down the beach.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - EVENING

The hall is completely empty. The vines hanging from the ceiling gently sway.

KEY walks into the hall, followed by AMBASSADOR ZPL and COMMANDER KNA.

The group stops just before the pond.

KEY

Just wait here.

Ambassador ZPL and Commander KNA give curt nods.

Key starts walking towards a DOOR on the far wall.

After a couple steps, Key stops and turns around.

KEY

And just don't touch anything.

HIGH COUNCIL'S BACKROOM

A large TREE with blue and teal leaves grows in the middle of the room. Various HAMMOCKS hang from the branches.

SHELVES filled to the brim with gold-plated JOURNALS take up all the available wall space.

MADGE stands in front of the back wall, occasionally taking a journal off the shelf, flipping through it, and placing it back in its spot.

KEY enters the room, quietly shutting the door behind them.

Madge places a book back on the shelf and turns around to face Key.

KEY

Uh. T-the Claquians? They're kinda here.

Madge cocks her head to one side.

MADGE

Excuse me?

KEY

The things from the spacecraft. They're here.

Madge points to the ground.

MADGE

Like here on Andromeda?

Key points to the door.

KEY

Like in the hall.

Madge rushes past Key and through the door.

HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL

AMBASSADOR ZPL and COMMANDER KNA stand at the edge of the pond, looking down at the water.

Their Clanises, ZIP and SIR, occasionally bump into one another, resulting in an angry click every time.

MADGE walks into the room, with KEY following closely behind.

Ambassador ZPL and Commander KNA straighten and turn towards the two Dronemedians.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Are you this planet's leader?

MADGE

No, I'm Madge. I lead the High Council of Andromeda.

Ambassador ZPL nods and Zip emits a click.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The High Council actually consists of a hundred members and I think it would be appropriate to call a meeting so we can discuss this situation fully. Would that be alright?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

We would appreciate this meeting.

Madge nods before turning to Key.

MADGE

Could you ring the bell?

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - EVENING

MADGE stands at the edge of the pond, her wings fully outstretched.

AMBASSADOR ZPL and COMMANDER KNA stand against the wall behind Madge.

SIR and ZIP are now perfectly still next to their respective Claquian's head.

KEY sits crossed-legged on their cushion.

DRONEMEDIANS come in the door, throwing various glances at the Claquians, and having whispered conversations with each other as they make their way to their cushion.

After a beat or so, every Dronemedian is sitting in their respective cushions, but whispered conversations continue.

Madge flicks her wings into the pond, spraying water in every direction.

MADGE

We will not start this meeting until the talking stops.  
The hall falls silent.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(Beat.)

As you can see, we have two visitors from the spacecraft. First, I would like them to introduce themselves and then the floor will be open for questions.

Madge steps aside while motioning towards the Claquians, who step forward to the edge of the pond.

Ambassador ZPL raises a hand.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Novus. We are Claquians from the Gauntlet 17-A-2. My data designation is ZPL. My occupation designation is Ambassador of Other Worldly Species.

Ambassador ZPL lowers his hand.

Zip emits a series of clicks.

Ambassador ZPL looks up at it with narrowed eyes.

COMMANDER KNA

Novus. My data designation is KNA. My occupation designation is Head Commander of Security.

Most of the High Council members' eyes bounce from the Claquians and Madge.

MADGE

Quickly before we open the floor, I would like to ask two questions I'm sure all of us have on our minds.

Ambassador ZPL nods. Zip bounces and clicks aggressively.

Without looking at it, Ambassador ZPL reaches up and smacks Zip.



A beat of silence - most eyes trained on Zip.

MADGE

My two questions are what brings you to Andromeda, and if you had anything to do with the explosion of one of our satellites and if so, why?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

The Gauntlet is on an exploratory mission of this cosmic division. Andromeda is the first planet that we have surveyed that maintains intelligent life.

(Click.)

The Gauntlet did fire at your satellite because Admiral ZDI deemed it unsafe for our technologies to come into contact without further research.

There's an outburst of whispering from the seated Dronemedians.

MADGE

I will not warn you again, hush.

The hall falls silence.

Madge looks around, as if to challenge someone to talk.

After no one speaks up, Madge turns to the Claquians.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Thank you for your explanation.

Madge turns to the High Council members.

A couple beats of silence.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The floor is now open for questions.

Immediately various hands and tails shoot into the air.

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - DAWN

KEY lands on the balcony.

Their hand reaches for the doorknob, but they briefly pause.

Key sighs. Their wings slowly fold against their back.

Key sucks in a breath before opening the door.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - DAWN

The room is empty but looks recently cleaned.

Piles of BOOKS are pushed up against the walls. There is a pile of LEAVES at the base of the tree trunk.

The three CUSHIONS are arranged in a neat triangle with a CANDLE in the center.

KEY walks in.

After a quick glance around the room, they let out a breath.

Key heads towards their bedroom door but stops in front of the table.

A small BOWL sits alone on the tabletop, filled to the brim with various FRUITS.

KEY'S BEDROOM

Key lays in the HAMMOCK. Their tail holds a gold JOURNAL while they use their hands to eat from the BOWL, which is now almost empty.

LATER

Key lays in the hammock, fast asleep.

The empty bowl and journal now are on the floor underneath the hammock.

Loud movement and rustling are heard offscreen.

Key's eyes open.

**INSERT CHOICE 3A(1).**

**OPTION 1: Go out to the main room. (Go to page 37)**

**OPTION 2: Go back to sleep. (Go to page 199)**

**RESULT OF CHOICE 3A(1), OPTION 1.**

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - AFTERNOON

FLEUR stands at the TABLE, cutting up FRUIT and placing it into two BOWLS.

A pale blue young Dronemedian, HALE, swings from tree branch to branch.

KEY walks into the room and is immediately met with Hale's face right in front of theirs.

HALE

Hiya! What's your name?!

Key looks around Hale at Fleur.

Fleur doesn't look up from her fruit.

FLEUR

Hale, what did I say about yelling at new friends?

Hale drops to the floor with a thud.

HALE

I shouldn't yell because they might not like it.

Fleur nods.

FLEUR

So?

Hale looks up at Key.

HALE

I'm sorry for yelling.

KEY

It's okay, buddy.

Key awkwardly pats Hale on the head before walking over to the cushions.

There is a beat of silence as Key sits down and Hale attempts to climb up the tree.

Fleur finishes cutting up the fruit and turns around to face Key.

FLEUR

Do you have another meeting today?

Key picks up a BOOK from a pile.

KEY

No, there's one tomorrow though.

Fleur nods.

Hale gives up on trying to climb and sits at the Fleur's feet.

HALE

Is it snack time?

Fleur smiles before placing one of the bowls of fruit in Hale's outstretched hands.

LATER

Fleur and Key sit on cushions across from each other.

Key reads the book in their lap, while Fleur nurses a CUP of tea.

Hale half flies and half runs figure-eights around Fleur and Key.

There's a KNOCK on the front door.

Hale stops dead and looks at Fleur.

HALE

Mommy?!

Fleur places her cup down before standing up.

FLEUR

I don't know, let's go check.

Fleur and Hale head towards the door.

Fleur opens the door to reveal a graying teal DRONEMEDIAN, whose arms Hale immediately runs into.

Fleur and the Dronemedian chat for a beat or so before the Dronemedian flies off with Hale.

Fleur closes the door.

The room is silent as Fleur sits back down on her cushion and takes a sip of her tea.

Fleur looks at Key. Key continues to read.

FLEUR

So...

Key doesn't look up.

KEY

So what?

FLEUR

So, tell me everything.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS) - DAWN

The room is slightly curved. The back wall is mostly floor-to-ceiling WINDOWS showing both ANDROMEDA and the empty expanse of SPACE.

In front of the windows is a matching set of black plush LOVESEATS flanking a perfectly clear glass coffee TABLE.

The front wall is full of SCREENS - small white TEXT scrolls across a black background.

There is a clear glass DESK with a black CHAIR facing the screens.

Off to the side of the desk is a glass cylindrical POD that runs the entire height of the room. Inside the pod are various WIRES that hang in every direction.

ADMIRAL ZDI, a rather tall Claquian, stands in front of the wall of screens. All four of his hands are clasped behind his back, but his chest is pushed out.

His Clanis, MAL, is perfectly still next to his left ear - occasionally letting out a soft click.

The text on the screens starts to scroll faster.

The text soon blurs into continuous white lines.

Admiral ZDI slowly closes his eyes as Mal starts to click faster.

A loud DING sounds from the door.

Admiral ZDI's eyes open before almost immediately narrowing as he looks at the door.

ADMIRAL ZDI

State your official data designation.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (O.S.)

ZPL. Ambassador.

ADMIRAL ZDI

You may enter.

The door slides open and AMBASSADOR ZPL walks in, ZIP bobbing in air next to him.

Admiral ZDI turns to face him while Mal makes an angry click before going silent.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Commander KNA and I met with the surface's inhabitants.

A beat of silence.

ADMIRAL ZDI

And?

ZIP

They're blue.

Admiral ZDI looks up at Zip and then back down at Ambassador ZPL.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

They call themselves the Dronemedians and this planet is named Andromeda.

(Beat.)

And affirmative, the inhabitants are various shades of blue.

Admiral ZDI nods. Mal lets out a click.

ADMIRAL ZDI

What kind of technological infrastructure did you observe?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Minimal. However, I would not label these inhabitants as primitive.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Would you label the inhabitants as intelligent?

Ambassador ZPL nods.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

Intelligent but not primitive?

Zip lets a series of clicks.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

The inhabitants are intelligent but do not seem concerned with technological pursuits.

Admiral ZDI looks back at the screens. The text has slowed to a more normal pace.

A long beat of silence.

Ambassador ZPL looks around the room, his eyes landing on the surface of Andromeda through the windows.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Have a group of the inhabitants tour the Gauntlet.

Ambassador ZPL looks back at Admiral ZDI and opens his mouth to respond.

ZIP

Why?

Ambassador ZPL immediately looks up at Zip and raises a hand towards the Clanis.

Admiral ZDI narrows his eyes and Ambassador ZPL lowers his hand.

ADMIRAL ZDI

I want to further my knowledge of this species.

Ambassador ZPL nods.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

Transfer all the necessary data when you complete it.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MORNING

KEY, DANE, PAX, SAUL, BAY, and AYA, a bright teal Dronemedian, stand around the edge of the POND, in silence.

Key looks around the hall before their eyes land on the water that reflects the image of the VINES on the ceiling.

The DOOR leading to the backroom opens and MADGE walks out.

She quickly walks over to the group.

Key looks up at Madge.

MADGE

Thank you for coming on such short notice. We got another message from the Claquians.

(Beat.)

They asked if a small group of High Council members would like to tour their spacecraft, the Gauntlet.

Madge looks around the group. When she is met with silence she continues.

MADGE (CONT'D)

I've selected this group because of seniority...

Madge looks at Key, Aya, and Pax.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Or you've been very outspoken on the matter.

Madge looks over at Dane, Saul, and Bay.



MADGE (CONT'D)

The tour is scheduled for later this afternoon and they have sent down schematics of their teleportation method which I would be happy to go over with all of you.

DANE

You mean their little lightning stunt at the café?

MADGE

I believe they call it 'lux materiae,' but essentially yes.

DANE

No way am I letting anything like that near me.

Madge takes a deep breath.

MADGE

Well, do you want to learn more about these Claquians?

Dean looks around at the other High Council members, who don't offer any support.

A beat of silence.

DANE

(begrudgingly)

Yes, only because they may still pose a threat to our Andromeda.

Madge lets out a sigh.

MADGE

We'll meet back here after lunch.

EXT. CAFÉ PLAZA - MORNING

The plaza is bustling with DRONEMEDIANS, going to various STOREFRONTS, and buying various types of FOOD.

KEY and FLEUR stand near the water, small waves rolling against their ankles.

Fleur looks around them while Key watches the water.

FLEUR

(whispering)

Is the whole Council going?

Key shakes their head.

KEY

Just a couple of us.

FLEUR

(still whispering)

Is that Dane guy going?

Key looks up at Fleur before cocking their head to the side.

KEY

Yeah. Why are you whispering?

FLEUR

'Cause I don't want anyone to hear about secret Council things.

Key lets out a laugh.

Fleur smacks their shoulder.

KEY

We're not spies, and plus Council records are public knowledge.

FLEUR

Still, it feels like a private matter.

(Beat.)

They're really letting Dane go?

Key shrugs their shoulders.

KEY

He said something about wanting to know more since they're 'still a threat.'

FLEUR

Well, you better tell me if he mouths off to one of  
the...the...what are they called again?

KEY

Claquians.

Fleur opens her mouth but stops when ZERO walks up behind  
the pair, holding a large BOWL filled to the brim with  
various FRUITS.

FLEUR

I don't think we need that much.

Zero grabs a mango from the bowl before handing it to Key.

ZERO

Speak for yourself.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - AFTERNOON

MADGE stands in a clearing outside the hall. A small circle  
of LEAVES is laid out on the ground in front of her.

PAX, SAUL, BAY, and AYA all stand off to the side, talking  
amongst themselves and taking turns looking up at the sky.

An outline GAUNTLET is seen in the sky, right overhead of  
the clearing.

KEY gently lands in the clearing, a MANGO still in hand.

MADGE

Now, we're just missing Dane.

AYA

Can't we just start without him?

SAUL

I think that would just upset him even more.

MADGE

I will only be explaining this process once, so I would  
prefer if everyone was here.

The Council members all nod.

LATER

Key swallows the last piece of their mango as they stand with the other Council members.

Madge is perched on a tree branch above the clearing.

DANE lands in the clearing and walks up to the group of Council members.

AYA

Took you long enough.

Dane waves a hand in the air, dismissing Aya's statement.

Madge lands gently on the ground.

MADGE

Dane, this tardiness will not be tolerated going forward.

Dane just nods.

Madge sighs.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The Claquians use a technology called lux materiae. This process uses controlled lightning to trace particle entanglement, which will allow the transfer to happen from here on the surface to their spacecraft.

Dane scoffs.

DANE

I'll believe it when I see it.

Madge motions towards the circle of leaves.

MADGE

Then, would you like to go first?

Dane violently shakes his head.

DANE

Absolutely not.

Madge sighs once more.

A beat of silence.

MADGE

*Who would like to go first?*

Aya steps forward as her tail swishes in the air behind her.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Thank you, Aya.

Aya steps closer to the circle of leaves.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Before you step into that, I have two things to tell you. One, there will be a five second countdown once you step into the circle fully. And two, the Claquians recommend that you don't open your eyes until you feel your feet planted firmly on solid ground.

DANE

(muttering)

Because they don't want you to see what they're doing to you.

Everyone looks at Dane.

MADGE

No, because while the Claquians' eyes can handle the light conditions while transporting, they do not yet have extensive research on us Dronemedians and how our eyes would react.

A beat of silence.

Dane bows his head.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Are you ready, Aya?

Aya nods before stepping into the circle.

AYA

One...two...three...four...

As Aya opens her mouth to say 'five,' a blue lightning FLASH hits the ground at Aya's feet.

After a split second, the lightning flash and Aya are gone.

A beat of silence.

MADGE

Who would like to go next?

Key's tail swishes behind them as their wings flatten against their back.

Madge looks at Key.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Key?

Without a word, Key's tail becomes still, and they step towards the circle of leaves.

Key steps into the circle. They bob their head four times.

A blue lightning FLASH.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (WAITING ROOM) - AFTERNOON

The completely white room is circular. There's a black DOOR framed with a glowing doorframe.

Half of the room's walls are covered in SCREENS, very small white TEXT scrolling on a black background.

In the middle of the floor is a black CIRCLE with a ring of light surrounding it.

AYA stands in front of the screens, her head cocked to one side.

A bright FLASH of blue light fills the room.

KEY appears on the black circle.

Aya turns around as Key opens their eyes.

AYA

It wasn't as bad as I thought.

Key steps off the circle.

KEY

I half-expected a shock.

Aya shrugs.

AYA

Yeah, but I didn't feel anything super weird.

(Beat.)

I was trying to figure what these screens were saying.

Key steps closer to the screens as Aya turns back around to see them.

Another bright FLASH. SAUL appears on the circle.

As they step off the circle, they shake their wings and tail vigorously.

SAUL

Please tell that's not going to become a regular thing.

Key shrugs without turning their attention away from the screens.

Aya looks over her shoulder at Saul.

AYA

Well, we're going to have to do it again to go back home.

Saul shudders as they step towards Aya and Key to inspect the screens.

LATER

Key, Aya, Saul, BAY, and PAX all stand looking at the screens, occasionally pointing to a word scrolling by.

PAX

(mumbling)

How do they even comprehend any information this fast?

A long beat of silence.

Saul looks over their shoulder at the circle.

SAUL

We're always waiting on Dane.

AYA

Madge is probably going to have push him in.

BAY

Or he's just not coming.

One after another, all the Council members turn to watch the circle.

A couple beats of silence pass.

A bright FLASH.

DANE appears on the circle, his wings fully outstretched.

Dane almost immediately hunches over.

AYA

Dramatic much? It wasn't that bad.

DANE

(out of breath)

It was *that* bad.

Aya sighs.

A loud DING sounds from the door. All the Council members turn towards the sound.

The door slides open and AMBASSADOR ZPL steps in, followed by ZIP.

Ambassador ZPL surveys the room. Zip lets out a series of six clicks.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

All of you are present. This means we can commence the tour.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMINISTRATION COMMAND) - AFTERNOON

The room is an oval. The walls and floors are pristinely white and glistens in the light.



In the center of the room is a large circular TABLE with a SCREEN for a top. Above the table floats a large holographic GLOBE. A miniature GAUNTLET and ANDROMEDA sit in the middle of globe.

Various POP-UPS appear on the outer rim of the globe, identifying different stars and listing Andromeda's planetary statistics.

Other TABLES with screen tops are disbursed throughout the room, with a couple plush black STOOLS scattered amongst them.

A few CLAQUIANS sit or stand at the tables, or mill about the room.

AMBASSADOR ZPL with ZIP bouncing near his head leads KEY, PAX, SAUL, AYA, and DANE into the room.

#### AMBASSADOR ZPL

This the Gauntlet's Administration Command. The center unit has the ability to maneuver the Gauntlet, as well as control every technological system the Gauntlet has. In case of catastrophe, this command center also has the ability to detach entirely from the Gauntlet and support approximately ten Claquians through a standard ten light-year warp.

#### INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (EXECUTIVE MECHANICS) - AFTERNOON

The room is an oval. The room's walls are completely covered in SCREENS, all with tiny white TEXT scrolling across them.

In the center and taking up most of the space is a large glass CYLINDER that runs the entire height of the room.

Inside the cylinder are bright red CRYSTALS. Some are fixed onto the bottom, top, or sides of the glass, while other float in mid-air.

Various POP-UPS appear on the glass, listing out multiple equations and statistics.

A handful of CLAQUIANS tap away on the screens on the walls.

AMBASSADOR ZPL stands with his back to the cylinder.

ZIP bobs in the air near his head.

The group of DRONEMEDIANS stand farther away from the cylinder, all looking at Ambassador ZPL.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

All Claquian vessels are powered by a crystalline formation called caeris floris, which is formed by letting liquid aeris cool in a vacuum chamber for multiple centurias.

ZIP

And if that glass breaks--

Zip stops talking as Ambassador ZPL reaches up and smacks the Clanis away from his head.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (AMBROSIA CIRCLE) - AFTERNOON

The entirely white room is a circle, with five descending levels. On the lowest level and at the center of the room is a large multi-tier FOUNTAIN, spewing black LIQUID and surrounded by a light fog. In the liquid, golden flecks shine as they catch the light.

The other levels have small black TABLES and STOOLS disbursed among them - all situated to face the fountain.

AMBASSADOR ZPL with ZIP near his head, and the group of DRONEMEDIANS all stand around the fountain.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

This fountain dispenses angiovitae, a fermented drink made from the vitae fruit. It has become colloquially known as 'ambrosia' because of its airy taste and calming effects.

Aya slowly stretches her hand out to the fountain.

As soon as the liquid hits her hand, she pulls it back with a YELP and tries to shake it from her fur.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

I would not recommend coming in contact with or consuming this liquid as we do not yet know your species' body composition.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE ROOM) - EVENING

The completely white room is an oval. Half of the room's walls are completely covered with SCREENS.

In the center of the room is a black oval TABLE with ten plush black CHAIRS situated around it.

ADMIRAL ZDI stands at the far end of the room, facing the screens on the wall. His hands are all clasped behind his back. MAL is perfectly still next to his ear.

COMMANDER KNA and COMMANDER IQE stand on either side of him. SIR bobs in the air next to Commander KNA's head, while Commander IQE's Clanis, EON, floats an inch above his head.

A loud DING sounds from the door.

ADMIRAL ZDI

You may enter.

Admiral ZDI turns around.

The door slides open. AMBASSADOR ZPL walks into the room with ZIP bobbing along, followed by KEY, DANE, PAX, SAUL, BAY, and AYA.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

These are members of the planet's governing body, the High Council.

Admiral ZDI nods curtly as Mal lets out a click.

A beat of silence.

Ambassador ZPL motions towards the table.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

You may sit now.

After sharing a quick exchange of nervous looks, the High Council members each takes a seat.

Ambassador ZPL, Commander KNA, and Commander IQE each take a seat at the far end of the table, leaving the chair at the head of the table open.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Novus, High Council members. My full designation is Admiral ZDI, and I am the head executive officer of the Gauntlet 17-A-2. This assembly is meant to bring forth any questions you may have about the Claquian species or the Gauntlet 17-A-2.

A beat of silence.

DANE

What are you made of?

All eyes look at Dane.

Aya holds up a hand and turns to face Admiral ZDI.

AYA

Ignore him.

DANE

Excuse me?

Aya glares at Dane.

AYA

You haven't spoke this whole time and that's the first thing you say?

DANE

He said it was time for questions and I asked a question.

Aya sighs and shakes her head.

AYA

Does anyone else have an actual question?

Dane glares at Aya, but stays silent.

A beat of silence.

SAUL

Are there other spacecrafts like the Gauntlet?

Admiral ZDI motions towards Ambassador ZPL.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Yes, the Claquians have approximately fourteen thousand spacecrafts in operation currently.

Saul looks around at the other Dronemedians.

AYA

Why so many?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

The entirety of the Claquian species lives on these spacecrafts.

SAUL

Do you have a home planet?

Ambassador ZPL opens his mouth to respond, but Admiral ZDI holds up a hand.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Affirmative. Our home planet goes by the name of Quian. However, a Claquian has not lived on Quian for over a centuria.

AYA

What happened to it?

Admiral ZDI shakes his head.

ADMIRAL ZDI

As a species, we outgrew it. Our advances in technology went beyond what the planet could offer us.

A long beat of silence.

Key swishes their tail. Aya and Saul look over at Key.

KEY

Do you interact with every planet you come across?

DANE

(mumbling)

Or was Andromeda so special that you had to blow up our satellite?

ADMIRAL ZDI

We attempt to interact with every habitable planet and to learn more about the inhabitants.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

This allows us to expand our knowledge of our surroundings. This can also serve as refuge or a new

opportunity for an inhabitant seeking to leave their own planet and travel on the Gauntlet.

Dane's eyes widen.

DANE

So, you're trying to steal them away from their home planet?

Ambassador ZPL shakes his head.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

It is a completely voluntary process by the individual.

DANE

After you brainwash them.

AYA

/ Dane!

SAUL

/ Dane!

All eyes turn towards Dane.

DANE

I'm just trying to get the full picture here.

Admiral ZDI holds up two hands as Mal lets out a click.

ADMIRAL ZDI

I can assure you that we do not conduct this 'brainwash' you speak of.

Dane stands from his chair.

DANE

(voice rising)

Then, explain why a Dronemedian would want to come live with walking pieces of metal that will blow up anything on sight?

Admiral ZDI's eyes narrow.

Commander KNA slowly rises from his chair.

Admiral ZDI holds up a hand and Commander KNA sits back down.

ADMIRAL ZDI

We Claquians are a peaceful species. However, this is Commander KNA, and he oversees security measures here on the Gauntlet. If you prove to be disruptive once more, I will have to ask him to remove you from the premise.

DANE

That's not very peaceful if you ask me.

Admiral ZDI stands up and clasps all four hands in front of himself.

ADMIRAL ZDI

This assembly is now concluded. I have other duties to attend to. Ambassador ZPL, escort the group to the waiting room for lux materiae.

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - DUSK

KEY lands gently on the leaf-covered ROOF, sending a few stray LEAVES off the edge.

They sit down in the middle of the roof, folding their wings against their back. Their tail lays flat behind them.

Key picks a leaf from the roof and flicks it into the air.

As the leaf flutters back down, Key looks up.

The outline of GAUNTLET is barely visible in the fading light.

MAIN ROOM

Key stands at the TABLE, chopping up a MANGO and tossing it into a BOWL.

They finish cutting up the mango and steps towards the ICEBOX.

Key opens the icebox and finds another MANGO.

As they step back to the table, the icebox's lid slams shut.

Key winces.

There is rustling heard offscreen.

The DOOR leading to Fleur's bedroom opens and FLEUR, looking half-asleep, steps into the room.

FLEUR

I swear, Zero, if you're eating the pouches, I made for tomorrow...

Key turns around to look at Fleur.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Oh, it's you.

Key just nods, having just placed a piece of mango in their mouth.

Fleur walks over to the icebox.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

I'll make some tea. You're going to tell me all about this tour.

Key nods again before placing another piece of fruit in their mouth.

LATER

Key and Fleur sit on their respective CUSHIONS, each holding a CUP of tea. The bowl of chopped mango sits in between them.

FLEUR

All of them just live in space? In those ships?

Key shrugs.

KEY

That's what he said.

Fleur takes a tip of her tea.

FLEUR

I can't even imagine us just abandoning Andromeda like that.

Key shrugs once more. Fleur looks at them with wide eyes.



FLEUR (CONT'D)

Can you?

A beat of silence. Key takes a sip of tea.

KEY

I mean, if we got to a point with technology like they did, why would we stay?

FLEUR

We would stay...because...

(Beat.)

Because we've always been here.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - THE NEXT MORNING

FLEUR stands at the TABLE, arranging ten little blue POUCHES neatly on the tabletop.

KEY walks out from their room.

They grab a BAG that is precariously balanced on a stack of BOOKS.

FLEUR

And where are you heading off to?

Key picks up the BOOK that was under the bag.

KEY

I was going to go see my parents.

Key flips through the book quickly before slipping it into the bag.

Key makes their way to the front door and opens it.

FLEUR

Tell them I said hi.

INT. EDDA AND CHET'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - MORNING

The room is circular with a large grey TREE trunk standing in the middle. Vine-like BRANCHES spread out across the ceiling of the room.

Off to one side, there is a tall white TABLE, its' surface perfectly clean. The table is flanked by two open-top ICEBOXES.

The other side is decorated with large leafy PLANTS in pristinely white pots. In between the plants, two CUSHIONS sit on the floor - one white, the other grey.

The walls are covered with PICTURE FRAMES - depicting Key at various ages, sometimes showing Edda, a bright blue Dronemedian, or Chet, a light grey Dronemedian.

CHET, now a darker grey, walks into the room from a DOOR on the far wall.

He heads towards one of the iceboxes.

As he opens the lid, a knock is heard from the front door.

Chet's eyes narrow as he looks up at the door.

CHET

(shouting)

Edda! One of / your friends...

KEY (O.S.)

(shouting)

/ It's me, Dad!

Chet lets the icebox lid slam shut as he makes his way to the door.

He opens it and KEY walks into the room.

CHET

What a pleasant surprise, kid.

Key smiles as they make their way to the cushions and sits down on the floor between them.

KEY

Thought I would come visit, it's been a crazy few days.

Chet makes his way back to the icebox.

CHET

I'm assuming you can tell me more about that thing in orbit?

He pulls out a BOWL of cut-up WATERMELON from the icebox.

Key opens their mouth to respond but is cut off by EDDA walking into the room.

EDDA

Is that Key I hear?

Key peeks around a particularly large plant and waves at their mom.

EDDA (CONT'D)

Ah, I just have to show you something!

Before Key can respond, Edda disappears back into the room she came from.

Chet walks over and sits down on the grey cushion.

He holds out the bowl to Key, who takes a piece of watermelon.

CHET

Your mother has picked up a new hobby.

Key swallows the piece of watermelon in one gulp.

KEY

Which is?

Edda walks back into the room, with a large leather-bound BOOK in her arms.

EDDA

We've been running out of wall space, so...

Edda gently sits down on the white cushion and places the book in Key's lap.

Key opens the book and flips through a couple pages full of pictures similar to the ones on the walls.

KEY

You know you don't have to keep every picture of me?

Edda takes the book from Key, flipping to a page in the middle.

The page has pictures of a very small Key bundled in blankets.

EDDA

I thought it would be a nice thing to have around for,  
you know...the grandbabies.

Key lets out an exasperated sigh.

KEY

Mom.

(Beat.)

I told you I wanted to focus on my work with the Council.

Edda closes the book and pats the cover.

EDDA

I just think it would be nice to have a grandchild or  
two, running around.

Key throws a sideways glare at Edda.

EDDA (CONT'D)

And plenty of Council members have partners and children.

A beat of silence.

CHET

So, tell us about these...these...

KEY

Claquians?

Chet nods as Edda turns her attention back to the book in her lap.

KEY

They're...uh...an interesting species. Completely gold,  
four arms, three eyes.

(Beat.)

Their technology is so beyond what we have on Andromeda.  
Edda flips through the pages.  
Chet shakes his head.

CHET

All that metal and tech mess is no good for a place like  
Andromeda.

KEY

But the thing is that they don't even live on their home  
planet anymore. They just explore space all the time.

Chet scoffs.

A long beat of silence.

Edda lands on a page.

In the middle is a PICTURE of young Key sitting on a tree  
branch, a stack of five books in their lap, and looking up  
at the sky.

EDDA

You were always into that kind of stuff.

Key looks over at their mother.

Edda traces the border of the picture.

EDDA (CONT'D)

You swore you were going to fly to Rayi one day.

Key looks down at the picture and a smile tugs on their  
lips.

EXT. EDDA AND CHET'S TREEHOUSE - LATE MORNING

KEY, CHET, and EDDA stand on the small balcony. Key stands  
closer to the edge, their wings fully outstretched behind

them. Chet and Edda stand closer to the door, Edda still holding the BOOK from earlier.

EDDA

Where are you heading off to now?

Key sighs.

KEY

I have a report to finish for the Council. And then I'll probably go to the plaza for some food.

Edda nods and hugs the book closer to her chest.

CHET

Well, keep us updated on this whole Claquian business.

KEY

Of course. I'll come back to visit soon.

Key takes a step backwards off the balcony, hovering in the air.

EDDA

/ See you soon!

CHET

/ Bye kid.

Key flies away from the treehouse.

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

KEY sits crisscross on the leafy roof, bent over a gold JOURNAL in their lap.

Key writes for a couple beats before closing the journal and looking up at the sky.

The outline of the GAUNTLET is overhead.

Key's eyes trail down to where the sky meets the tree canopy where half of RAYI, a perfectly white moon, is seen.

Key looks back up at the Gauntlet as they run their hand over the cover of their journal.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

MADGE sits at the edge of pond - her wings tucked behind her back and her tail wrapped her and dipping into the pond.

A stack of gold JOURNALS sit on either side of her. One journal is open on her lap.

KEY walks in, their gold JOURNAL in their hands.

Key slowly walks over to Madge. They gently place their journal on top of one of the stacks.

Madge, without looking up, grabs Key's journal and places it on the other stack.

A beat of silence.

KEY

You said you wanted to see me.

Madge looks up and smiles.

MADGE

Ah yes, Key. I have a favor to ask.

Madge closes the journal in her lap, sets it asides and stands up.

MADGE (CONT'D)

A group of the Claquians will be coming to the surface tomorrow for a tour.

(Beat.)

I want you to be their guide. Show them what Andromeda has to offer.

Key nods.

KEY

Will the Admiral be coming?

MADGE

No, the Ambassador will be though.

Key opens their mouth to speak, but Madge holds up a hand.

MADGE (CONT'D)

I heard about what happened during the meeting with the Claquians. Dane will be nowhere near this tour.

(Beat.)

I'm trusting you to make a better impression for Andromeda.

Key nods.

KEY

You have my word that I will.

Madge smiles.

MADGE

They'll be teleporting down right outside the hall tomorrow morning.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (AMBASSADOR'S QUARTERS) - THE NEXT MORNING

The room is slightly curved. The back wall is mostly floor-to-ceiling WINDOWS showing both ANDROMEDA and the empty expanse of SPACE.

In front of the windows is a matching set of black plush LOVESEATS flanking a perfectly clear glass coffee TABLE.

The front wall is full of blank SCREENS.

There is a clear glass DESK with a black CHAIR facing the screens.

Off to the side of the desk is a glass cylindrical POD that runs the entire height of the room. Inside the pod are various WIRES that hang in every direction.

AMBASSADOR ZPL sits on a loveseat, all four hands folded in his lap, looking at the window at Andromeda's surface.

ZIP bobs up and down near Ambassador ZPL's head.

A long beat of silence.

A loud BEEP sounds from the screens.



ZIP

You're late.

Ambassador ZPL slaps the Clanis away from him as he stands up.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - DAWN

KEY gently lands on the ground, scattering the circle of LEAVES.

They look around at the empty clearing before starting to pace.

They walk the length of the clearing three times before a FLASH of blue light appears for a split second.

AMBASSADOR ZPL appears in the middle of the clearing with ZIP floating right next to his head.

Key walks up to him as he takes in his surroundings.

Ambassador ZPL notices Key and raises a hand.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Novus.

Key awkwardly waves.

KEY

Hi.

(Beat.)

How many will be going on this tour today?

Before Ambassador ZPL respond, there another FLASH of blue light.

COMMANDER KNA appears in the middle of the clearing with SIR bobbing in the air right above his shoulder.

He steps towards Ambassador ZPL and Key.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

There will be five.

Key nods.

Another FLASH of blue light.

COMMANDER IQE appears in the middle of the clearing, EON right above his head.

LATER

Key stands in front the meeting hall's doors.

The group of Claquians, now including COMMANDER WNG, his Clanis, NAV, and LIEUTENANT CXL, and her Clanis, CC, stand a couple paces away from Key.

KEY

This the High Council's meeting hall. It's where we conduct all our meetings about the governing of Andromeda, as well as any special ceremonies of our people.

EXT. CAFÉ PLAZA - MORNING

The plaza is empty of Dronemedians. The STOREFRONTS openings are boarded up.

The waves roll up and down most of the open sand.

KEY and the CLAQUIANS with their various CLANISES stand on dry sand closer to the storefronts.

KEY

This is the cafe plaza, it's where a lot of Dronemedians come to get fresh fruit and other home-cooked meals. However, it's not very useful when the tide is high like this...

A wave rolls up on the beach and touches one of Commander IQE's feet.

Eon lets out a click as Commander IQE steps closer to the storefronts.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - AFTERNOON

KEY stands a couple feet away from the CORE OUTPUT.

The group of CLAQUIANS stands inches away, peering down into it. Their CLANISES let out a variety of clicks.

KEY

And this is what we call the core output. It generates all the power needed for life on Andromeda but has to be carefully maintained.

(Beat.)

I wouldn't get any closer if I were you.

Ambassador ZPL steps back, Zip letting out a few clicks.

The other Claquians look down into the core output for a couple long beats before stepping back as well.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

KEY and the CLAUQUIANS with their CLANISES stand in the center of the clearing.

The Claquians take turns stepping away from the group. Bright FLASHES of blue light leave an empty space where they stood.

After a couple beats, only Key and Ambassador ZPL stand in the clearing.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I have received permission from Admiral ZDI to stay on Andromeda's surface for an extended time.

Key looks at Ambassador ZPL with wide eyes.

KEY

Why?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I would like to document more information about this planet and the species of the Dronemedians.

Key looks around the clearing.

KEY

Uh, well I...that was all that was planned for the tour.

Zip lets out a click.

A couple long beats of silence.

Key looks around the clearing again.

KEY

Actually, I have somewhere where we can go.  
Zip lets out another click as Ambassador ZPL nods.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - LATE AFTERNOON

The room is empty.

The DOOR, leading to Zero's room, is slightly ajar.

KEY and AMBASSADOR ZPL, who has to duck at the doorway, walks in. ZIP bobs gently in the air next to Ambassador ZPL's head.

KEY

Fleur, Zero! I'm home!

There is some rustling heard offscreen.

ZERO walks out of his room, rubbing his eyes and slightly fluttering his wings.

ZERO

Fleur will be back in just a few...

Zero's voice trails off as he meets eyes with Ambassador ZPL.

ZIP

Why would you put metal in your body--?

Zip stops talking as Ambassador ZPL smacks it and sends the Clanis into the wall behind him.

Key and Zero look wide-eyed at the orb as it gently floats back to Ambassador ZPL.

A beat of silence.

ZERO

Well, aren't you going to introduce me to your friend?  
Key swishes their tail.

KEY

Right, right.

(Beat.)

Zero, this is Ambassador ZPL from the Gauntlet.  
Ambassador ZPL, this is my roommate, Zero.

Ambassador ZPL holds up a hand. Zero waves back awkwardly.

A long beat of silence.

ZERO

And to answer the...thing's question, this is my art and  
I'll display it as such.

LATER

Key, Zero, and Ambassador ZPL sit on the cushions, a BOWL of  
cut up fruit sitting in between them.

ZERO

So, you really don't have any kinds of piercings or  
jewelry?

Ambassador ZPL shakes his head.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Claquians' skin is genetically modified to be 10.9  
millimeters thick and thus, difficult to pierce.

Zero stares wide-eyed at Ambassador ZPL.

ZERO

Well, what about like jewelry?

Zero waves his hand, causing the BRACELETS on his arm to  
jingle against each other.

Ambassador ZPL once again shakes his head.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Claquians do not take a liking to the decorative.

Zero looks over at Key, who just placed a piece of fruit in  
their mouth.

KEY

(mouth full)

You should see their ship, there's like no decoration. No art or anything.

Zero looks back at Ambassador ZPL, who nods his head.

Zero scoffs before toying with his bracelets.

FLEUR walks in from the front door, carrying a couple BAGS.

She drops the bags as she glares at Zero.

FLEUR

Zero! I just washed that-

Zero looks down at the cushion he's sitting on as Fleur's eyes fall on Ambassador ZPL.

Ambassador ZPL holds up a hand.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Novus.

FLEUR

Key?!

Fleur's glare turns to Key.

KEY

(mouth still full)

He wanted to learn more about us.

Key swallows.

KEY (CONT'D)

Ambassador, meet Fleur, my other roommate.

Ambassador ZPL nods at Fleur.

Zip lets out a click.

Fleur takes a deep breath before letting out a sigh.

FLEUR

I'll grab another cushion.

(Beat.)

And I'll make some tea. You should never invite someone  
in without offering some...

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - DUSK

KEY and AMBASSADOR ZPL, with ZIP next to his head, sit  
crossed legged on the leafy roof.

Key looks up at the sky while Ambassador ZPL surveys the  
tree canopy.

A faint outline of the GAUNTLET is seen near a crescent of  
RAYI.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Your house companions provided more than significant data  
for my research.

Key lets out a laugh.

KEY

They're quite interesting.

(Beat.)

Is Andromeda the first planet you've been to?

Ambassador ZPL shakes his head.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Andromeda is the one hundred forty-second planet I have  
visited during my career aboard the Gauntlet.

KEY

Have you ever lived on a planet?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I have resided on five planets.

Key nods. Their eyes land on the Gauntlet.

KEY

Do you like it out there?

Ambassador ZPL closes his eyes for a beat.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I do not understand your question.

KEY

Do you like living on the Gauntlet more than the planets  
you've lived on?

A beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I have lived on the spacecraft for seven out of twelve  
years I have been designated as Ambassador.

Key looks over at Ambassador ZPL.

KEY

So, you do like it more?

Ambassador ZPL gives a curt nod.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Analytically, residing on the Gauntlet is significantly  
more satisfactory.

Key looks back up at the Gauntlet.

A beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Would you prefer to live elsewhere? Does Andromeda bore  
you?

Key opens their mouth before shutting it again.

A beat.

KEY

Yes and no...to both questions.

Ambassador ZPL looks at Key and cocks his head to one side.



ZIP

That didn't answer the question.

Without looking up, Ambassador ZPL smacks Zip away.

Key closes their eyes. Their wings flattened against their back even more.

A beat of silence.

KEY

I love Andromeda. I really do. It's my home...it's my only home.

(Beat.)

But you're here...so I know there's more. More out there that I could see.

Key opens their eyes and looks up at the Gauntlet.

ZIP

There's a lot more than one measly planet.

Ambassador ZPL smacks the orb away once again.

Key watches Zip gently bounce back next to Ambassador ZPL's head.

KEY

It's right, but that would be leaving everything here forever.

Zip lets out a click.

Ambassador ZPL starts opening and closing his mouth, but no words come out.

Key picks at the leaves next to them.

KEY (CONT'D)

I don't know if I can do that.

A long beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Hypothetically, if you were to become a designated traveler on the Gauntlet, you could request visitation to your home planet. Admiral ZDI has accepted eighty percent of this kind of request.

Zip lets out a click.

A beat.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

The thirteen percent of requests were declined on the basis that the visitation would be highly strenuous to the flight path.

Key looks at Ambassador ZPL with wide eyes.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

Therefore, your past statement would no longer be correct.

Key looks back at the roof before looking back at the sky.

Their tail twitches and knocks leaves off the roof behind them.

ZIP

Make a decision already.

Ambassador ZPL smacks the Clanis past the roof's edge.

Key glares at the orb as it slowly makes its way back to its original position.

Once Zip is back, Key's eyes meet Ambassador ZPL's.

KEY

How do you become a traveler on the Gauntlet?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

A prospective traveler must appeal to the Admiral. The Admiral and three of their peers would have to record a unanimous vote in favor for the traveler to be allowed aboard.

Key nods, picking at the leaves again.

KEY

Are you one of the Admiral's peers?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Affirmative.

Key looks around at the tree canopy. Their wings flutter quickly before flattening against their back once again.

A long beat of silence.

KEY

I would have to get permission from the Council.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - DUSK

FLEUR stands next to the tree with a BOWL of fruit in her hands.

KEY walks in the front door.

Key's eyes grow wide at the sight of Fleur.

FLEUR

I-I didn't mean t-to eavesdrop but you two were talking and...and...

(Beat.)

You would come back to visit, right?

The bowl shakes in Fleur's hand.

KEY

Of course, I would.

Fleur lets out a sigh.

Key walks over and takes a piece of fruit from the bowl.

KEY

And who knows if the Council will actually let me go.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MORNING

The hall is empty, but the DOOR to the backroom is slightly ajar.

KEY walks in the hall.

KEY

Madge?

MADGE (O.S.)

In the back!

HIGH COUNCIL'S BACKROOM

MADGE stands at a SHELF, placing gold JOURNALS onto it.

A stack of journals is next to the TREE.

She looks over her shoulder as KEY enters.

MADGE

Can you bring me the stack by the tree?

Key picks up the pile and walks over to where Madge is standing.

MADGE

Thank you.

Madge starts taking the journals from Key and placing them on the shelf.

MADGE (CONT'D)

How did the tour go?

Key's eyes widen.

KEY

Good, good.

(Beat.)

I got so sidetracked...I promise I'll bring in my report as soon as possible.

Madge nods.

MADGE

You better. But is there a specific reason why you came  
in today?

Key fumbles with the journals in their hands, but quickly  
recovers.

KEY

I want to live on the Gauntlet.

Madge drops the journal she's holding.

A long beat of silence.

Madge slowly picks up the journal she dropped and resumes  
placing the journals on the shelf.

MADGE

What put that idea in your head?

KEY

I was talking to the Ambassador and he said that I could  
appeal to the Admiral to become a traveler on the  
Gauntlet.

(Beat.)

I would come back to visit, of course.

Madge stops and turns to fully face Key.

MADGE

You really want to leave Andromeda?

Key nods.

KEY

I want to see what else is out there.

After a long beat, Madge slowly nods.

MADGE

If this is what you want.

(Beat.)

We'll have to hold a vote.

Madge places a journal on the shelf.

She looks over her shoulder at Key.

Key nods.

Another beat of silence.

MADGE

Go ring the bell.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MORNING

The flat ROOF is littered with LEAVES of various colors.

In the middle sits a large brass BELL with a single ROPE hanging down on the side.

KEY gently lands next to the bell.

They reach up and pull the rope. They struggle for a beat, using both their wings and tail to help.

The rope gives and the bell swings.

The bell emits a loud shrill.

Key immediately steps away, wincing.

KEY

(muttering)

It's even worse up close.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - LATE MORNING

MADGE and KEY stand at the edge of the pond.

A majority of the DRONEMEDIANS are seated, but some mill about, having whispered conversations.

MADGE stretches her wings out fully and slaps her tail against the water.

The talking Dronemedians stop and hurry to their seats.

MADGE

Thank you.

(Beat.)

We've called this meeting because Key would like to become what the Claquians call a traveler and live on the Gauntlet.

DANE jumps to his feet. All the Dronemedians in the room look at him.

DANE

You want to live with those hunks of metal?

AYA, a couple seats over from Dane, rolls her eyes.

AYA

Dane, sit down!

Dane begrudgingly sits down.

MADGE

This, of course, requires a vote of the Council. Key will provide their statement and then the floor will be open for discussion.

Madge glares at Dane for a beat before motioning towards Key.

KEY

I've always really liked the idea of space. Just the other day, my parents said even when I was young, I swore up and down that I was going to fly to Rayi.

(Beat.)

Andromeda will always be my home, but I also want to explore what else is out there and the Gauntlet gives me that opportunity. I would come back as much as I'm allowed to, but this would be overall a rather permanent living situation.

A long beat of silence.

MADGE

The floor is now open for comments, questions, and discussion.

Dane flutters his wings behind him but doesn't stand up.

DANE

(loudly)

I think this is a bad idea.

AYA

You got any reasoning behind that statement?

DANE

They blew up a satellite.

SAUL

We're already way past that.

Dane stands up.

DANE

Their "security" threatened to escort us off their ship!

Aya stands up.

AYA

Because you wouldn't shut your mouth!

Madge slaps her tail on the water.

MADGE

Dane, Aya...

Both Dronemedians in question slowly sit back down.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Thank you. Does anyone else have something to say?

PAX stands tentatively.

PAX

I think it would be a good thing. If Key goes out and learns about space, they can bring that back to Andromeda. It could help improve our Core power, the satellites...



AYA

And the Claquians have already proved they're quite  
technologically advanced as a species.

Madge, Aya, and Key all look at Dane.

Dane stays quiet.

A beat.

BAY

Would you revoke your position on the Council?

Key nods.

KEY

I would have to.

(Beat.)

I already have someone I would like to nominate to take  
my position.

BAY

Who would that be?

KEY

Fleur, my housemate. She's the most genuine friend I've  
had, and I think she would do a lot for Andromeda,  
especially the youth.

After a beat of silence, Madge looks around.

MADGE

I think it's time for the vote.

LATER

Key stands against the back wall.

Madge hovers above the pond, collecting slips of PAPER from  
passing Dronemedians.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - AFTERNOON

The hall is now empty, except for KEY, who sits at the edge of the pond, swishing their tail just above the water causing ripples.

A long beat.

MADGE walks out of the backroom, holding a pile of slips of PAPER.

Key stands up. They swish their tail causing water droplets to spray out.

MADGE

Eighty-four votes for yes.

A beat of silence.

Key looks around the empty hall before meeting eyes with Madge.

KEY

I should go talk to the Ambassador.

Madge nods.

Key slowly starts to walk towards the door.

MADGE

Key.

Key stops and turns around to face Madge.

MADGE (CONT'D)

This might be the last time I see you for a while, but I just wanted to say you've been an outstanding member of the Council and have done great things for your people.

Key blinks the wetness away from their eyes.

KEY

Thank you.

(Beat.)

Goodbye, Madge.

MADGE

Farewell, Key.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - AFTERNOON

LYNX paces around the core opening. Other DRONEMEDIANS mill about.

KEY lands on the ground and starts looking around.

Lynx walks up to them.

LYNX

Madge told me you were coming. We already established a link with the Gauntlet if you want to follow me.

Lynx starts to walk towards one of the white buildings.

After a deep breath, Key follows.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - AFTERNOON

The room is empty of Dronedmedians, but the SCREENS light up occasionally.

LYNX and KEY walk in and stand at the center table.

LYNX

This will start the call, and this will end it.

Lynx points to two SQUARES on the screen, one blue and one grey.

Key nods.

LYNX

I'll be down the hall if you need anything.

KEY

Thank you.

Lynx gives a curt nod before walking out.

Key looks down at the tabletop.

They let out a deep sigh before clicking the blue square.

A loud DING sounds.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (AMBASSADOR'S QUARTERS) - AFTERNOON

AMBASSADOR ZPL stands in front of the wall of screens. His arms are clasped together in front of him, and ZIP is bouncing in the air near to his head.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Novus, Key.

INTERCUT INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) / GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (AMBASSADOR'S QUARTERS)

KEY

Hi.

(Beat.)

So, I just came from the Council.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

What was the concluding result of the vote?

KEY

Eighty-four members voted yes.

Zip lets out a click. Ambassador ZPL nods.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

You shall proceed with appealing to the Admiral.

KEY

When can I do that?

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I will inquire.

Various clicks are heard as Ambassador ZPL taps some of the screens in front of him.

A beat.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

The earliest the Admiral is available is tomorrow during  
the midday assembly slot.

KEY

I can do that.

(Beat.)

Will you be there?

Ambassador ZPL nods.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Affirmative, my presence is required at these kinds of  
assemblies.

A long beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

Was our connection severed?

Key slightly jumps.

KEY

No, no, I'm here.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Shall I schedule the assembly?

Key takes a deep breath.

KEY

Yes, thank you.

Ambassador ZPL taps a screen in front of him and a loud DING  
sounds.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

The assembly has been scheduled. Lux materiae will be  
conducted at the same coordinates as the previous  
occurrence.

KEY

Okay, got it.

A beat.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

This has satisfied all the requirements listed for this contact.

KEY

I guess it does.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

We shall convene tomorrow.

Key nods. Their wings flutter behind them.

KEY

Alright.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Finis, Key.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL MEETING HALL - THE NEXT DAY

KEY kneels on the ground, arranging scattered LEAVES into a circle.

A folded piece of PAPER lays on the ground behind Key.

Once the leaves are in a somewhat lopsided circle, Key stands up and looks up at the sky.

The GAUNTLET is almost directly above the clearing.

AYA, with a golden JOURNAL tucked under her arm, lands on the ground on the other side of the clearing but Key doesn't notice.

Aya walks over and picks up the piece of paper.

AYA

Is this yours?

Key jumps, scattering some of the leaves away from the circle.

Aya lets out a laugh as Key turns around.

KEY

Oh, it's you.

(Beat.)

Yeah, it's my appeal to the Admiral. They talk so formally, and I really don't want to mess this up...

Aya nods before unfolding the paper.

Key kneels to fix the leaves again.

A long beat of silence.

Key stands up.

KEY

How does it sound?

Aya hands the paper to Key.

AYA

Good, I don't see why they would say no.

A beat of silence.

Aya looks up at the Gauntlet, Key follows suit.

KEY

It's almost time.

AYA

Well, I wish you the best of luck.

(Beat.)

I gotta turn in some late reports.

Aya holds up the journal as Key laughs.

Aya walks towards the meeting hall's doors and disappears into the building.

Key reads over the paper once before looking down at the circle of leaves.

They take a deep breath before stepping into the circle.

KEY

One, two, three, four, five...

A bright blue FLASH of light.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (WAITING ROOM) - AFTERNOON

A bright blue FLASH lights up the room and KEY appears on the black CIRCLE in the middle of the room.

Almost immediately, the door slides open and AMBASSADOR ZPL, with ZIP following, steps into the room.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Novus. The Admiral's previous assembly was rescheduled. Therefore, the Admiral is ready to hear your appeal.

Key nods.

ZIP

Hope you're ready.

Ambassador ZPL smacks the orb against the wall.

Key watches the Clanis hit the wall and float back next to Ambassador ZPL's head.

Ambassador ZPL motions towards the door.

Key walks out.

Ambassador ZPL smacks Zip against the wall once more before stepping out after Key.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE ROOM) - AFTERNOON

ADMIRAL ZDI stands facing the wall of SCREENS. MAL is perfectly still near his head.

COMMANDER WDG, with his Clanis, NAV, bouncing right above his shoulder, and COMMANDER KNA, with SIR perfectly still next to his head, sit at the TABLE.

The door slides opens and AMBASSADOR ZPL, with ZIP bouncing along beside his head, and KEY step into the room.

A beat of silence.



ADMIRAL ZDI

You may sit.

Ambassador ZPL points Key to the chair directly across from where Admiral ZDI is standing.

Key sits down.

Ambassador ZPL makes his way over to sit next to Commander WDG.

Admiral ZDI turns around to look at Key.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Key of Andromeda, do you wish to submit an appeal to gain the official designation of a Gauntlet traveler?

KEY

Yes.

Admiral ZDI sits down in the chair in front of him, clasping all his hands together in his lap.

ADMIRAL ZDI

We will hear your appeal.

Key nods quickly before standing up.

Their wings flutter behind them.

They take a deep breath.

KEY

I would like the designation of traveler aboard your vessel as it would provide me with immeasurable knowledge that is not currently attainable on the surface of Andromeda.

(Beat.)

I revoke my position on the High Council of Andromeda for the Claquian designation of traveler to fully commit to learning the customs and ordinances of the Claquian species and the Gauntlet 17-A-2.

Key nods quickly at Admiral ZDI before sitting back down.

All the Clanises in the room let out a simultaneous click.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Commander KNA, your remark on the appeal.

Commander KNA raises a hand.

COMMANDER KNA

The Dronemedians have been proven to be a peaceful species. I cannot speculate a security threat in allowing a Dronemedian the designation of a traveler.

Another simultaneous click from the Clanises.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Commander-

A loud DING sounds from the door.

Commander KNA, Commander WDG, and Ambassador ZPL all look at each other before looking at Admiral ZDI.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

You may enter.

The door slides open and LIEUTENANT CXL steps in with CC bobbing along next to her head.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

State your reasoning for interrupting an assembly.

LIEUTENANT CXL

The Chalice is broadcasting a distress signal. The Gauntlet is the closest Claquian spacecraft in the approximate vicinity.

A simultaneous click sounds from the seated Claquians' Clanises.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Commander WDG and Lieutenant CXL, report to Administration Command.

Commander WDG stands up and follows Lieutenant CXL out of the room.

Admiral ZDI stands up and meets eyes with Key.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

Your appeal was significantly adequate.

(Beat.)

I will grant you the designation of a traveler.

Key's eyes widen and a smile tugs at their lips.

Key looks over at Ambassador ZPL, but quickly looks back at Admiral ZDI.

KEY

Thank you.

ADMIRAL ZDI

You have little time to gather your personal belongings as other Claquian spacecrafts take precedence.

Key nods enthusiastically before standing up.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL MEETING HALL - EVENING

The clearing is empty.

A bright blue FLASH of light.

KEY appears in the circle of LEAVES.

They immediately spread their wings and fly up above the tree line.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - EVENING

The room is empty.

KEY walks out of their bedroom, a full BAG hanging off their shoulder and another empty BAG in their hands.

They start packing various BOOKS scattered around the room into the empty bag.

FLEUR walks out of her room and almost immediately stops in her tracks. Her eyes start to water.

Key looks up and the two meet eyes. Key nods.

Fleur takes a few steps forward before dramatically throwing her arms around Key.

After a long beat, Fleur pulls away.

Key pulls out a golden JOURNAL from the bag on their shoulder and hands it to Fleur.

Fleur traces the spine of the journal with a finger before nodding.

A disgruntled, half-asleep ZERO steps out of his room. Fleur and Key turn to face him.

Zero takes in the scene in front of him before disappearing back into his room.

Fleur and Key look at each other before shrugging.

Key goes back to packing books. Fleur stands next to the tree trunk, toying with the journal.

Zero walks back into the room.

He holds out one hand to Key while holding the other hand behind his back.

Key cocks their head to one side but still tentatively holds out their hand.

Zero takes their hand and slips a silver BRACELET onto their wrist.

Key looks at the bracelet before back up at Zero. Zero smiles and pats Key's wrist.

LATER

Zero sits on the tabletop, eating a MANGO.

Fleur sits on her cushion, trying to quell her shaking enough to take sip from her CUP of tea.

CHET and EDDA stand in the middle of the room with Key.

Key hugs Chet.

They let go and Key looks at Edda, who has now started to cry.

Edda hands Key a folded-up PICTURE. Key smiles at it before tucking it into their bag.

Key and Edda hug.

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - EVENING

KEY, now with two full BAGS hanging off their shoulders, CHET, EDDA, FLEUR, and ZERO all stand on the small balcony.

Key hugs everyone individually, the last hug being Edda.

Key, with watery eyes, takes a backward step off the balcony.

They twist in midair before flying out above the tree canopy.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL MEETING HALL - DUSK

KEY stands alone in the middle of the clearing.

They take a couple beats to look around and then finally at the hall.

They take a deep breath, tears down flowing down their cheeks.

They step into the circle of leaves.

A bright blue FLASH.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (WAITING ROOM) - DUSK

A bright blue FLASH lights up the room.

KEY appears on the black circle.

They readjust the BAGS on their shoulders before wiping away their tears.

A beat of silence.

The door slides open.

AMBASSADOR ZPL steps into the room, ZIP bobbing in the air next to his head.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Welcome aboard to the Gauntlet 17-A-2, Traveler Key. I am here to escort you to your assigned living quarters.

Key smiles before following Ambassador ZPL out the door.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (TRAVELER'S QUARTERS) - DUSK

The room is slightly curved. The back wall is mostly floor-to-ceiling WINDOWS showing both ANDROMEDA and the empty expanse of SPACE.

In front of the windows is a matching set of black plush LOVESEATS flanking a perfectly clear glass coffee TABLE.

The front wall is full of blank SCREENS.

There is a clear glass DESK with a black CHAIR facing the screens.

Across the back corner of the room hangs a black HAMMOCK that is tied to the ceiling with clear glass hooks.

The door slides open.

AMBASSADOR ZPL, with ZIP next to his head, and KEY walk in.

Key looks around with wide eyes.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

These will be your living quarters for the entirety of your time aboard the Gauntlet. Do you find these conditions adequate?

Key's eyes fall on Andromeda through the window.

A beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

Key, do you find these conditions adequate?

Key jumps before nodding their head.

KEY

Yes, very much.

Zip lets out a click. Ambassador ZPL nods.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I have other matters to attend to. I will leave you to become acquainted with your quarters.

Key nods.

After a beat of silence, Ambassador ZPL walks out of the room.

Key walks up to the hammock, before hovering to be eye level with it.

They inspect the hammock - touching the fabric, pulling on it, etc.

They smile before gently getting into it.

Once they are comfortably inside, they look over their shoulder at the window.

FADE OUT.

END OF PATH 1.

**RESULT OF CHOICE 2A, OPTION 2.**

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (KEY'S ROOM) - EVENING

The room is circular with purple and blue VINES covering the walls with no clear point of origin.

Various PLANTS in brightly colored pots are scattered throughout the room and are equally accompanied with stacks of BOOKS.

A bay WINDOW juts out from the wall across from the DOOR leading to the main room.

KEY lounges in a HAMMOCK that hangs diagonally in the alcove. They are more focused in looking out the window than they are in the gold-plated JOURNAL and QUILL that lay in their lap.

There is a knock on the door before it swings open. FLEUR pops her head into the room.

FLEUR

Dinner's ready.

Key is almost immediately out of the hammock and placing the journal on a stack of books.

Key walks out of the room.

MAIN ROOM

ZERO sits on his CUSHION, holding a BOWL full of mango and watermelon.

Two more CUPS of tea and multiple BOWLS with various fruit concoctions sit in between the CUSHIONS.

FLEUR and KEY walk into the room and take a seat on their respective cushions.

FLEUR

I tried to make your mom's mixed puree.

(Beat.)

I really wished she had exact amounts...

Fleur looks down at a bowl of a pink smoothie-like substance.



Key laughs as they pick up a bowl of cut-up mango.

KEY

I'm not surprised, she's been making that since I was little.

Fleur sighs before taking a sip of tea.

LATER

All the bowls are now empty and stacked in the middle of the cushions.

Zero's and Key's cups are empty, while Fleur still holds hers and sips occasionally.

Fleur looks over Key.

FLEUR

Well, are you going to tell us about the ship?

Key shrugs.

KEY

There's not much to tell. We're just waiting on a reply.

A long beat of silence.

FLEUR

I also made dessert.

Key's and Zero's eyes perk up.

Fleur lets out a laugh before standing up from her cushion.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - THE NEXT DAY

KEY and FLEUR stand at the TABLE. There is a stack of drawstring leather POUCHES next to Key, who is taking one at time and packing them with various clear POUCHES filled with brightly colored liquids.

Fleur takes the full pouches and ties the strings into a bow before placing them in a larger BAG on the floor.

KEY

I can't believe we used to eat this.

Key squeezes a pouch with a disgusted face before placing it in a pouch.

FLEUR

It's better than trying to get the little monsters to eat a balanced meal.

Key shrugs before going back to packing the pouches.

A long beat of silence.

A loud shrill BELL sounds, causing Fleur to jump.

Key looks down at the pouches before looking at the front door.

FLEUR

The Council comes first, go.

Key puts down the pouch they're holding before heading towards the door.

KEY

I'll be back as soon as I can.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - AFTERNOON

MADGE stands at the edge of the POND, she's mostly relaxed but her wings are fully outstretched behind her.

Most of the CUSHIONS are occupied, the seated Council MEMBERS have whispered conversations with those around them.

KEY walks in and immediately heads to their cushion.

After several beats, all the Council members are present and seated.

MADGE

Thank you all for coming.

(Beat.)

We have received a reply from the spacecraft.

The hall erupts in conversations.

Madge bats her wings into the water, spraying droplets across the hall.

The conversations stop.

MADGE

However, we are fairly certain the message is encrypted  
and is currently unintelligible.

DANE, sitting next to Key, shakes his head.

DANE

(muttering)

Probably some cybernetic virus.

Madge looks over at Dane.

MADGE

We know nothing for sure about this spacecraft or who  
might have sent this message.

Dane shakes his head but remains quiet.

A long beat of silence.

SAUL outstretches their wings.

MADGE

Yes, Saul?

SAUL

How do they expect us to decode it then?

Madge flutters her wings.

MADGE

Once again, we are not sure.

(Beat.)

However, our Communications team may be able to provide  
possible solutions.

The seated Council members look around at each other before  
looking back at Madge.

LATER

The Council members either sit quietly or have whispered conversations with those around them.

Madge stands in the same place as before but is now reading a golden JOURNAL.

LYNX walks into the hall, followed by ASH, a teal Dronemedian, and FINN, a light blue Dronemedian.

Madge places the journal on the ground before slapping her tail against the water.

The hall falls quiet.

MADGE

This is our communication expert, Lynx, and his associates, Ash and Finn.

All three Dronemedians mentioned wave to the seated Dronemedians.

LYNX

Hello all. I'm here to inform you that my team and I have a couple leads on how exactly to decipher the message we received from its original format.

(Beat.)

However, we do not possess the technology to run the message through all the possible codes simultaneously. We have come to the High Council to ask for volunteers to help run the various codes.

A long beat of silence.

Madge looks around.

MADGE

Do we have any volunteers to help further the state of affairs?

AYA, a bright teal Dronemedian, stands up from her cushion.

Saul follows suit.

A beat.

Key looks around. Dane shakes his head in disgust.

Key slowly stands.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - AFTERNOON

FLEUR sits on her cushion. Ten small DRONEMEDIANS sits in front of her in a semi-circle.

The small Dronemedians are throwing a small blue BALL between one another.

Fleur smiles, occasionally intercepting the ball mid-air.

KEY walks in the front door. They almost immediately grab a BAG that hangs from a tree branch and starts reading the titles of the BOOKS scattered around the room.

The kids stop throwing the ball and all their eyes' follow Key around the room.

FLEUR

What are you up to now?

Key looks up from a book and surveys the group of kids.

KEY

I'll tell you later.

(Beat.)

Council stuff.

The kids look at each other with wide eyes.

Fleur just nods.

A beat. Key places a book or two in their bag.

FLEUR

If you need dinner, there's some in the icebox.

Key nods, placing another book in the bag.

Key walks over to the ICEBOX.

They open it, look inside, and pull out a leather drawstring POUCH, overfilling with clear POUCHES of bright liquids.

The kids let out quiet laughs.

Key looks over their shoulder at Fleur.

Fleur shrugs with a smile tugging on her lips.

FLEUR

I need to go to the market.

Key sighs before tossing the pouch into the bag.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - AFTERNOON

The dark room is bordered with nine COMPUTER STATIONS, complete with multiple SCREENS, a KEYBOARD, and a blue STOOL.

LYNX unlocks the door before walking into the room, followed by ASH, FINN, AYA, SAUL, and KEY.

All the screens light up as the Dronemedians gather in the middle of the room.

LYNX

Each of you will have a workstation. You're free to come and go as you please, but we do want to run these codes as fast as possible to hopefully get closer to a solution.

Ash, Finn, Aya, Saul, and Key all nod before dispersing around the room to find a station to sit at.

LATER

Key, Ash, Aya, and Lync all sit at their own stations - Finn and Saul are no longer there.

Key looks up at a screen before looking down at a BOOK that lays across their keyboard.

They do this several times before moving the book to type on the keyboard.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - DUSK

KEY steps out of a white BUILDING before taking off and flying up above the surrounding trees.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - DAWN

KEY lands gently on the ground in front of the white BUILDING before walking in the door.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - MID-MORNING

KEY sits at their STATION, multiple BOOKS now laying across the keyboard and a few are propped up against the SCREENS.

LYNX sits at their station, reading words on a SCREEN as they scroll past.

The rest of the other stations are empty.

KEY

(whispering)

Quadrant...seized...spacecraft...combat...percent...

A beat of silence.

KEY (CONT'D)

Uh, Lynx?

Lynx looks over his shoulder at Key.

KEY (CONT'D)

I think I got something.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - AFTERNOON

Every seat in the hall is filled - KEY sits still except for their tail that swishes behind them.

MADGE stands at the edge of the pond with her wings fully outstretched, holding a golden JOURNAL.

LYNX stands off to Madge's left side, his wings folded tightly behind his back.

The hall is silent.

MADGE

Thanks to Council member Key, we believe we've deciphered the spacecraft's message.

(Beat.)

It reads 'Quadrant fifty-seven has been seized. The probability of any operational Claquian spacecraft exiting the current combat is less than two percent. Employ blueprint Crygena Effugium.'

A beat of silence.

DANE flutters his wings.

DANE

Seized? Current combat?

(Beat.)

They're just getting even more suspicious.

SAUL lets out a loud sigh.

SAUL

We don't even know the full context.

DANE

The context is that they're declaring war.

AYA outstretches her wings.

AYA

By what logic?

Dane opens his mouth but closes it before any words come out.

AYA

Exactly.

A beat of silence.

Saul turns to look at Madge.

SAUL

Can you repeat the last part?

Madge nods.

MADGE

'Employ blueprint Crygena Effugium.'

SAUL

What's crygena and effugium?

Saul looks over at Key.



Key shrugs.

KEY

That's just what came through when I ran the code.

A beat.

AYA

What kind of spacecraft does it say?

KEY

Claquian.

SAUL

Crygena, effugium, Claquian.

(Beat.)

Could those also be codes?

DANE

Or viruses.

AYA

Shut up.

Dane outstretches his wings.

Aya stands up, her tail swishing behind her.

MADGE

Aya...

Aya slowly sits back down.

A long beat of silence.

MADGE

We will resume discussion tomorrow.

(Beat.)

Once everyone has a clear head.

Madge looks at Aya and then at Dane.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - EVENING

FLEUR sweeps loose LEAVES into a pile near the tree trunk.

KEY walks in the front door, a BAG hanging off their shoulder.

Key walks over and plops down onto their cushion, placing their bag on a nearby pile of BOOKS.

KEY

Where's Zero?

FLEUR

The market.

Key's eyes widened.

KEY

You let him go to the market alone?

Fleur laughs.

FLEUR

I gave him the option of either cleaning or going to the market.

Key nods.

KEY

That makes a lot more sense.

A beat of silence.

Once Fleur sweeps all the loose leaves on the floor into the pile, she sits down on her cushion.

FLEUR

So?

KEY

So.

FLEUR

Are you not going to relay the message you miraculously decoded?

Key cocks their head to one side.

KEY

How do you know about that?

Fleur shrugs.

FLEUR

I have my sources.

(Beat.)

Now, tell me.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - THE NEXT MORNING

The hall is empty, expect for MADGE and HUD, a navy blue but graying Dronemedian, who hang from their tails on a vine in the middle of the room.

They converse quietly until KEY walks in, a gold JOURNAL tucked under their arm.

KEY

Uh, I have my report?

Key holds up the journal.

MADGE

Ah, yes.

Madge gently flutters down from the vine to land in front of Key.

Key hands her the report.

MADGE

Thank you, I'll get this filed.

Key nods before turning towards the door.

Hud clears his throat.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Actually, Key?

Key stops and turns around to face Madge.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Would you be interested in carrying out a mission for the Council?

KEY

What kind of mission?

MADGE

It would be a...let's say, a covert mission.

(Beat.)

It involves sneaking onto the spacecraft.

Key's eyes widen.

A beat.

KEY

If I may ask...why?

MADGE

We believe the Council needs more substantial information about this affair.

Another beat.

Hud flutters down to land next to Madge.

HUD

And if it would make you more comfortable, we could recruit a team to assist you in this mission.

MADGE

However, Key, you've proven your intelligence through your years on the Council and I also believe you could do this mission alone.

(Beat.)

But it's up to you.

**INSERT CHOICE 3A(2).**

**OPTION 1: Ask for a team. (Go to page 111)**

**OPTION 2: Go alone. (Go to page 164)**

**RESULT OF CHOICE 3A(2) & 3B(3), OPTION 1.**

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - EVENING

KEY sits on the leafy roof, an open golden JOURNAL laying in front of them.

FLEUR flies out from the front door, holding a CUP of tea.

She gently lands next to Key, before sitting down and holding the cup out to Key.

Key takes the cup but is too focused on the journal to take a sip.

FLEUR

You've been out here all day; I think you know the plan by now.

Key finally looks up from the journal.

KEY

I just don't want mess anything up.

Key takes a sip as they look up at the sky.

A dark outline of the GAUNTLET is just above the horizon.

Key looks back down at the journal.

FLEUR

You won't.

(Beat.)

I mean, Madge picked you for a reason.

Key shrugs without looking up.

A couple beats of silence.

Fleur stands up, fluttering her wings behind her.

FLEUR

Well, promise me you'll actually get some sleep tonight?

Key shrugs again.

Fleur glares at Key's hunched back.

A couple beats.

Key looks up to meet Fleur's eyes.

KEY

Fine.

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - DAWN

KEY and FLEUR stand on the balcony, each have a leather BAG on their shoulder.

Fleur looks back at the door and lets out a sigh.

KEY

Tell me again why you want us to leave at the same time?

FLEUR

It's something my family used to do.

Key looks over their shoulder at the door and then at Fleur.

A beat.

FLEUR

And you're going on this crazy mission.

Key keeps looking at Fleur, eyes slightly narrowing.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

I want to see Zero awake before lunch.

Key nods.

KEY

That makes more sense.

The door opens.

ZERO steps out onto the balcony, with a BOX, overflowing with JEWELRY under his arm.

FLEUR

Well, I'll be home to make dinner.

ZERO

Wouldn't miss it.

A beat of silence.

Zero and Fleur look over at Key.

Key shrugs in response. Fleur cocks her head to one side.

KEY

I'll try to be home for dinner.

Fleur smiles.

A beat.

Key steps off the balcony before flying out above the trees. Fleur and Zero follow suit.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - MORNING

MADGE, AYA, and CHELL, a bright teal Dronemedian, stand a couple feet away from the core, talking quietly amongst themselves.

DANE stands a couple feet away from the group, looking around.

KEY gently lands on the ground near the trees, followed shortly by JOR, a navy blue Dronemedian with a greying face.

Key rolls their eyes at Dane as they and Jor walk past him to the others.

MADGE

Excellent, everyone is here.

A beat of silence.

The group looks over at Dane, who doesn't acknowledge them.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Dane?

Dane looks over at Madge before walking quickly over to the group.

Another beat of silence.

MADGE (CONT'D)

I want you to meet our satellite operator, Chell.  
Chell waves as her tail swishes behind her.

CHELL

I'll be launching and operating the satellite that will  
be getting all of you to the spacecraft.

(Beat.)

If you follow me, I'll show you to the heliport.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (HELIPORT) - MORNING

CHELL walks into a clearing of trees, followed by MADGE,  
KEY, AYA, DANE, and JOR.

In the middle of the clearing sits a large, elevated  
PLATFORM with an equally large, white-paneled SATELLITE  
perched on it.

On either side of the platform, nestled along the tree line,  
are two large HANGARS.

Chell walks closer to the platform, while the rest stay  
where they are.

CHELL

This is Satellite 4-11. After carrying out this Council  
mission, it will be replacing Satellite 4-9 that was  
destroyed.

(Beat.)

I'll explain more once we get everyone settled into the  
apparatus.

INT. SATELLITE 4-11 - MORNING

KEY, AYA, DANE, and JOR sit in a circle, facing outward,  
surrounded by SCREEN-paneled walls with KEYBOARDS and  
various BUTTONS sticking out.

Dane reaches out a hand to the keyboard in front of him.

Aya slaps it away.



Jor and Key let out a laugh, while Dane just narrows his eyes at Aya.

CHELL (O.S.)

Does everyone understand the launching sequence?

Aya looks around. Key, Dane, and Jor all nod.

AYA

Yes, we do.

CHELL (O.S.)

Does anyone have any sort of problem or concern before we start the launching sequence?

A beat of silence.

AYA

That would be a no.

A long beat.

There's a series of clicks and a faint mechanical whirring starts.

CHELL

We are set to launch.

(Beat.)

We have liftoff  
in...ten...nine...eight...seven...six...five...

INT. SATELLITE 4-11 - MORNING

KEY, AYA, DANE, and JOR are in the same spots as before, intently focused on the SCREENS in front of them.

A series of CLICKS and BEEPS sound.

AYA

996...997...998...999...1000 decemmmeters.

Key sucks in a breath.

CHELL (O.S.)

And we have a successful launch and entrance into orbit.

Key lets out the breath before looking around.

Key makes eye contact with Aya.

AYA

I didn't think we had the technology to do that.

Key nods.

Dane lets out a sigh.

A beat of silence.

CHELL (O.S.)

Approaching the spacecraft.

Aya and Key look back at the screens in front of them.

CHELL (CONT'D)

We will start the airlock sequence in two minutes.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (HALLWAY) - MORNING

The walls and floor are completely white, except for a thin black SCREEN that runs along the wall at eye level.

A DOOR slides open. AYA tentatively steps out into the hallway, followed by KEY, JOR, and DANE.

The group looks around.

AYA

I half-expected guards or something.

JOR

There still could be some around.

Aya shrugs, but still continues to look around nervously.

A long beat of silence.

AYA

Looks like we're clear for now.

DANE

What's the plan now?

Aya looks sideways at Dane with narrow eyes.

AYA

Look for any information we can get?

A beat of silence.

Dane takes a step down the hallway.

DANE

Well, let's go then.

Aya huffs but follows Dane along with Key and Jor.

LATER

Key, Aya, Jor, and Dane walk down what seems to be an endless hallway.

After some time, they come to a double-wide DOOR.

There is a SIGN above the door, reading out 'ADMINISTRATION COMMAND' in green blinking letters.

Dane steps closer to the door but doesn't trigger it to open.

AYA

Wait. There's gotta be someone in there.

JOR

But it also might be our best chance to get some information.

Dane looks over his shoulder at Aya.

DANE

You know, like the whole reason we're doing this dumb mission?

Aya's eyes narrow and she opens her mouth.

Before she can say anything, Dane steps towards the door.

It slides open and he steps into the room.

Jor follows closely behind.

Key tentatively steps towards the door.

Aya lets out a sigh causing Key to look over at her.

AYA

(muttering)

Out of all the members, it had to be Dane.

Key lets out a laugh before stepping through the door.

Aya takes a deep breath before tentatively following.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMINISTRATION COMMAND) - MID-MORNING

The room is an oval. The walls and floors are pristinely white and glistens in the light.

In the center of the room is a large circular TABLE with a SCREEN for a top. Above the table floats a large holographic GLOBE. A miniature GAUNTLET and ANDROMEDA sit in the middle of globe.

Various POP-UPS appear on the outer rim of the globe, identifying different stars and listing Andromeda's planetary statistics.

Surrounding the table on the ground are the comatose bodies of ADMIRAL ZDI, COMMANDER WDG, and COMMANDER IQE, completely gold humanoids with four arms and three eyes.

Other TABLES with screen tops are disbursed throughout the room, with a couple plush black STOOLS scattered amongst them.

DANE walks confidently towards the center table, eyes focused on the globe.

JOR, KEY, and AYA stop in their tracks, their eyes are fixed on the bodies.

JOR

Uh, Dane?

Dane looks over his shoulder at him but keeps walking.

JOR (CONT'D)

You might want to -

Jor is cut off as Dane walks into the body of Admiral ZDI, letting out a loud CLANK.

Dane looks down.

DANE

What the...

A beat of silence.

Dane kicks the body again, causing another loud CLANK.

AYA

/ Dane!

JOR

/ Dane!

Dane holds his hands up.

DANE

I was just making sure it was actually dead.

Aya quickly walks over to the body and kneels next to it.

She places her hand on the cheek.

AYA

Cold, no pulse.

(Beat.)

It almost feels like metal...

Dane kneels next to Aya.

Jor and Key follow suit to inspect Commander WDG's body.

DANE

They're ugly up close.

Aya slaps Dane's wings with her tail.

Dane shrugs before standing back up and stepping over the body to inspect the globe.

Aya continues to inspect Admiral ZDI while Key moves to Commander IQE.

JOR

This one is cold too. No pulse either.

KEY

Same here.

Dane taps a few things on the table's screens.

DANE

(whispering)

How did these dead things fire at us?

Aya stands up before kneeling next to Key.

KEY

Did they just die? Or was it murder?

AYA

No external wounds.

JOR

But it looks like they were trying to protect this table.

A beat of silence.

DANE

(whispering)

Then what does this do?

Dane presses something on a screen.

Aya stands up and slaps Dane's hands away from the table.

AYA

There are literal corpses on the ground, quit messing with stuff.

Dane reaches for the screen again and is once again slapped away by Aya.

DANE

I'm doing what we came here to do.

Aya lets out a sigh.

A long beat of silence.

Jor stands up.

JOR

Let's go talk to Madge, see what she wants us to do.

Aya nods as Key stands up.

AYA

Great idea.

Jor and Key head towards the door.

Aya goes to follow them but realizes Dane hasn't moved.

AYA (CONT'D)

Yeah, I'm not leaving you alone here.

Aya grabs the tips of Dane's wings in one hand and starts walking towards the door.

Dane is pulled along until he lets out a grunt and jerks away from Aya, but still follows the others out the door.

INT. SATELLITE 4-11 - MID-MORNING

JOR, KEY, AYA, and DANE squeeze into the satellite from the airlock contraption that connects it to the Gauntlet.

Jor sits down in one of the SEATS and starts typing on a KEYBOARD, while the others stand in the middle.

A loud BEEP is heard.

CHELL (O.S.)

Is everything alright?

Jor looks back at Aya, then at Key.

A beat of silence.

CHELL (CONT'D)

Hello?

Aya lets out a sigh.

AYA

We found...bodies.

CHELL (O.S.)

Excuse me?

AYA

We're not sure if they're actually dead or not.

DANE

They're dead. Like real dead.

Aya smacks Dane with her tail.

CHELL (O.S.)

You found corpses?

A beat.

AYA

Yes, I think.

A longer beat.

CHELL (O.S.)

Did you see anything else? Like alive?

AYA

Nope, we just found the bodies in / ...uh

KEY

Administration Command. That's what the door said.

AYA

But yeah, we didn't see anything or anyone else.



CHELL (O.S.)

Oh okay, well--

The voice turns to static.

The group looks around at each other for a beat before Jor tries typing on the keyboard.

When nothing happens, Key steps closer and leans over to inspect the screen in front of Jor.

A long beat of silence.

A loud BEEP sounds.

MADGE (O.S.)

Transport the bodies back to the surface with you. / It will be our best...

DANE

/ Absolutely not.

Aya goes to slap Dane with her tail but he catches it and throws it away from himself.

Aya narrows her eyes at Dane but stays quiet.

MADGE (O.S.)

And why not, Dane?

DANE

Who knows what those things actually are? They could be / riddled with disease or...

MADGE (O.S.)

/ That's why I would like you to transport the bodies back to the surface. It will be our best option to learn about what they are and what this spacecraft is.

A beat of silence.

MADGE (O.S.)

Have I made myself clear?

Dane grunts.

A beat.

AYA

Yes, you have.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMINISTRATION COMMAND) - AFTERNOON

AMBASSADOR ZPL, a relatively tall Claquian, stands at the center TABLE, furiously typing on the SCREENS.

His Clanis, ZIP, an orb of white light encapsulated by two interlocking gold rings, floats right above his right shoulder.

The GLOBE spins increasingly faster and occasionally zooms into the tiny GAUNTLET.

ZIP

Maledi, maledi, maledi...

Ambassador ZPL takes one hand away from the screen, while the other three keep typing, and smacks Zip away from himself.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (ORGANIC LABORATORY) - AFTERNOON

The room is starkly white. The back wall is covered with SHELVES filled with various lab-like CONTRAPTIONS.

There is also a black-top TABLE that runs the length of the back wall that is even more cluttered with contraptions.

Three similar black-top TABLES are arranged in the middle of the room. On them lays the still comatose bodies of ADMIRAL ZDI, COMMANDER WDG, and COMMANDER IQE.

MADGE, KEY, AYA, JOR, and DANE stand around the tables, looking at each other and then at the bodies.

DANE

Who exactly are we waiting for again?

Madge looks over her shoulder at the door, before looking back at Dane.

MADGE

Van, they're the head researcher in our labs.

Dane sighs.

JOR

Are they going to do an autopsy and like cut them open?

Jor lifts one of Admiral ZDI's hands and lets it fall back onto his chest, causing a CLANK.

AYA

Who knows if we have the tools to even pierce that?

Jor shrugs.

A long beat of silence.

The door opens.

VAN, a completely gray Dronemedian, steps into the room.

VAN

So sorry about my timing.

(Beat.)

Got caught up with an experiment out on the shore.

Van walks to the tables, Jor and Aya having to move out of their way.

MADGE

Well, we're glad you're here now.

Van starts to prod and poke at Admiral ZDI's face.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Can you tell us anything about these creatures?

Van stays silent as they continue their inspection.

After a while, they stop and step back to look at all the bodies.

A long beat of silence.

The door opens, all the Dronemedians in the room turning to look at it.

LYNX rushes in.

LYNX

We got a message from the spacecraft.

(Beat.)

And this one makes sense.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - AFTERNOON

LYNX, MADGE, KEY, AYA, JOR, and DANE stand around the center TABLE.

Lynx clicks on something on the screen.

A beat of silence.

A loud click.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (O.S.)

Novus. My full designation is Ambassador ZPL. I am aboard the Gauntlet 17-A-2. I request to travel to the surface of this planet to elucidate the current circumstances. Additionally, I request the prompt return of the bodies of Admiral ZDI, Commander WDG, and Commander IQE. Finis.

Another loud click.

Lynx looks up from the screen to meet eyes with Madge.

DANE

Why do they want the dead bodies back?

Aya's tail twitches behind her.

Madge looks over at Aya, causing her tail to stop moving almost immediately.

MADGE

The High Council will receive this Ambassador and hear their explanation at a meeting.

(Beat.)

Lynx, you are welcome to attend.

Lynx nods before looking around the room.

After a beat, Lynx's head snaps back to look at Madge.

LYNX

Oh, you meant right now?

Madge nods before stepping towards the door.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MID-AFTERNOON

KEY, AYA, JOR, and DANE sit on their respective CUSHIONS while other Council members file into the hall and sit down.

After all the members are seated, MADGE and LYNX walk into the hall, followed by AMBASSADOR ZPL with ZIP bobbing along in the air next to his head.

There is an outburst of whispered conversations at the sight of Ambassador ZPL as he stands next to Lynx and Madge at the edge of the pond.

Madge fully outstretches her wings before whipping them into the water in front of her, causing a sizable splash.

The hall falls silent.

MADGE

Thank you.

(Beat.)

I will let our visitor provide an explanation on what's happening. But please keep your questions and side conversations to yourselves till they are finished.

A series of nods ripple through the seated Dronemedians.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Go ahead.

Madge motions for Ambassador ZPL to step closer to the pond.

As he steps forward, he holds up one hand and Zip lets out a click.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Novus. I am of the Claquian species. My full designation is Ambassador ZPL. I am affiliated with the Gauntlet 17-

A-2, which is presently orbiting this planet of Andromeda. The message you received from our spacecraft was a relay of the last broadcasted message we received.

As might be expected, this created considerable confusion. I will commence to elucidate the current circumstances.

Zip lets out a click that seems to echo in the quiet hall.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

Approximately half of all Claquian spacecrafts were engaged in combat with the Zebanein species. When the probability of an operational Claquian spacecraft exiting the combat dropped below two percent, it warranted the deployment of a blueprint of the name Crygena Effugium. This put the spacecraft on an undetermined course away from the combat and all those aboard were put into a slumber-like stupor.

Zip lets out another click.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

Additionally, I was informed by the Gauntlet's internal log that an unknown object of yours was destroyed by the spacecraft's energy phasers. On behalf of the Admiral, I do apologize. That action was part of the automated self-defense sequence that is installed in all Claquian spacecraft.

A tense beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

Furthermore, I formally request assistance in awakening the remainder of the Gauntlet's crew from the slumber-like stupor. Would any participants attending this meeting consider fulfilling this request?

Another tense beat of silence.

Dane swishes his tail. Aya, sitting a few cushions away, glares at him.

Madge looks around before outstretching her wings.

MADGE

I believe our visitor is asking for volunteers to help him and his fellow beings.

(Beat.)

Is there anyone here that would like to do that?

A decent portion of the seated Dronemedians stand, among them are Key and Aya.

EXT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MID-AFTERNOON

AMBASSADOR ZPL awkwardly kneels on the ground, creating a lopsided circle with loose LEAVES in the dirt. ZIP bounces in the air above the Claquian's head.

A group of High Council members, including KEY and AYA, stand off to the side, talking amongst themselves.

After a couple beats, Ambassador ZPL stands. Zip now bouncing along above his shoulder.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

We Claquians use the teleportation technology of lux materiae. This process uses controlled lightning to trace particle entanglement, which allows the transfer to happen from the surface of a planet to a Claquian spacecraft.

The Dronemedians look between Ambassador ZPL and the circle of leaves.

Zip lets out a click.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Would any participants be willing to go in advance of the others?

A long beat of silence.

Key steps forward.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

When you step into the designated area, there will be a five second delay before the lux materiae process will begin. Is that understood?

Key nods before tentatively stepping closer to the circle of leaves.

Key takes a deep breath before stepping in the circle.

They bob their head four times.

As Key goes to bob their head a fifth time, a blue lightning FLASH hits the ground at their feet.

After a split second, the lightning flash and Key are gone.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (WAITING ROOM) - AFTERNOON

The completely white room is circular. There's a black DOOR framed with a glowing doorframe.

Half of the room's walls are covered in SCREENS, very small white TEXT scrolling on a black background.

In the middle of the floor is a black CIRCLE with a ring of light surrounding it.

A bright FLASH of blue light fills the room.

KEY appears on the black circle.

Key flutters their wings and swishes their tail back and forth for a beat before stepping out of the circle.

Key steps towards the screens, trying to read what is scrolling past.

Another blue FLASH fills the room. AYA appears.

AYA

That was a weird sensation.

Key just shrugs, not looking away from the screens.

LATER

The room is getting crowded with DRONEMEDIANS, but no one stands on the black circle.

There is whispered conversations amongst the Dronemedians, either discussing the teleportation or what they can read on the screens.

A blue FLASH fills the room. AMBASSADOR ZPL appears.



AMBASSADOR ZPL

If you will follow me, I will show you to the Intermediary Locus where the remainder of the crew is located.

Ambassador ZPL, with Zip bobbing alongside him, steps up to the black door and it slides open.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (INTERMEDIARY LOCUS) - LATE AFTERNOON

The completely white room is a large oval. There are hundreds of low black glass TABLES arranged in neat rows. On top of each table is a CLAQUIAN body, their arms folded across their chest.

AMBASSADOR ZPL, with ZIP above his shoulder, enter the room through a hidden white DOOR.

He is followed by the group of DRONEMEDIANS, including KEY and AYA.

Ambassador ZPL makes his way to the nearest table, on top of it lays COMMANDER KNA.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

To awaken a Claquian from this stupor, you must reconnect the median eye to the optical nervi.

Ambassador ZPL pushes Commander KNA's middle eye into the socket, a loud click emitting from the body.

The Dronemedians collectively take a step backwards.

SIR, Commander KNA's Clanis, appears from the nape of his neck.

A beat.

All three of Commander KNA's eyes open.

He sits up on the table, Sir letting out a click.

He stands up and heads straight for the door, completely ignoring the Dronemedians.

Ambassador ZPL turns to face the group of Dronemedians.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

They will immediately report to their designated station to begin downloading the most updated internal log. I would not recommend obstructing their path.

A beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (CONT'D)

Is this process understood?

There is a series of hesitant nods from the Dronemedians.

Another beat of silence.

Key tentatively steps forward, closer to the next table where the body of LIEUTENANT CXL lays.

Ambassador ZPL nods.

Key reaches out with a shaking head and hovers over Lieutenant CXL's top eye.

Key looks over their shoulder at their fellow Dronemedians.

Aya is completely still, her eyes fixed on Key's hand.

A beat.

Key pushes the eye into the socket.

A loud click. CC, Lieutenant CXL's Clanis, appears.

All three of Lieutenant CXL's eyes open.

She sits up before getting up from the table and heading towards the door just as Commander KNA did.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I would recommend a brisker pace to return the spacecraft to an operational state in a more timely manner.

Key looks sideways at Ambassador ZPL, who has walked to another table.

LATER

The group of Dronemedians are now dispersed through the room, waking up Claquians at a decent pace.

Ambassador ZPL works his way through rows at a faster pace.

Key wakes up a Claquian and after they get up and head towards the door, Key steps to the next table where Aya is standing.

Her hand is outstretched, but she is completely still.

KEY

Need help?

Aya gives a small nod.

Key reaches over to push the Claquian's eye.

Aya retches.

AYA

I hate this.

The Claquian's body emits a loud click. A Clanis appears.

The Claquian sits up, gets off the table, and heads towards the door.

KEY

Those light things are cool though.

Aya just shrugs, still frozen in place but her eyes follow the Claquian to the door.

A beat.

Key moves to the next table.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (WAITING ROOM) - EVENING

AYA, KEY, and another DRONEMEDIAN stand in the room.

Key nods at the other Dronemedian, who steps onto the black circle.

After five swishes of their tail, a blue FLASH fills the room and the Dronemedian is gone.

A beat of silence.

Key looks over at Aya.

KEY

Go, I'll be right after you.

Aya looks between Key and the black circle.

KEY (CONT'D)

Go. You're freaked out and don't need to be here any longer.

A beat of silence.

Aya lets out a sigh before stepping onto the black circle.

AYA

(whispering)

One...two...three...four...

A blue FLASH and Key is left alone in the room.

They swish their tail behind them for a beat before stepping onto the black circle.

A blue FLASH fills the room.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - EVENING

The room is as clean as it can be.

FLEUR sits on her cushion, nursing a CUP of tea.

An open BOOK lays on the floor in front her, but she isn't looking at it.

KEY walks in from the front door, their tail swishing behind them.

Key jumps slightly when their eyes land on Fleur.

KEY

Why are you still up?

Fleur takes a sip of her tea but continues to look at Key.

A beat.

Key looks over at the bare tabletop and closed icebox.

KEY (CONT'D)

I missed dinner.

Fleur nods.

KEY (CONT'D)

Sorry.

(Beat.)

I have so much to tell you though.

A smile tugs at Fleur's lips.

She carefully puts down her cup and closes the book before standing up.

FLEUR

Go wake up Zero.

Key cocks their head to one side, watching Fleur as she makes her way to the icebox.

Fleur opens the icebox before looking over her shoulder at Key.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

I'm sure he won't be opposed to a second dinner.

Key laughs before walking over to Zero's door.

LATER

Key, Fleur, and a half-awake ZERO sit on their cushions.

A BOWL of various cut-up fruits sit on the floor between them.

Zero continuously shovels fruit into his mouth, while Key and Fleur eat piece by piece at a more leisurely pace.

KEY

...So, we had to like push one of their eyes in to wake them up.

Key pops a piece of fruit in their mouth.

Fleur stops, a piece of fruit halfway to her mouth. A shiver runs through her body, ending with her tail swishing.

FLEUR

Gross.

(Beat.)

Let's not talk about that while we eat.

Key laughs, grabbing another piece of fruit.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE ROOM) - THE NEXT MORNING

The completely white room is an oval. Half of the room's walls are completely covered with SCREENS.

In the center of the room is a black oval TABLE with ten plush black CHAIRS situated around it.

ADMIRAL ZDI sits at the head of the table. His hands are clasped on the table in front of him and MAL, his Clanis, is perfectly still next to his ear.

COMMANDER KNA and COMMANDER IQE sit on either side of him. SIR bobs in the air next to Commander KNA's head, while Commander IQE's Clanis, EON, floats an inch above his head.

AMBASSADOR ZPL with ZIP bobbing above his shoulder sits on the other side of Commander KNA.

COMMANDER WDG, with his Clanis, NAV floating next to his left ear, sits on the other side of Commander IQE.

COMMANDER IQE

The path code is generated randomly. There is no possible test to predict the trajectory at any given time.

COMMANDER WDG

We are approximately ten thousand light years away from our last known location.

A simultaneous click emits from all the Clanises in the room.

A beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Has any other Claquian spacecraft explored this cosmic division?

COMMANDER WDG

It is unlikely. There are no records or logs of this division. I am led to believe that we are past the explored boundary of the Claquian species.

All heads turn towards Admiral ZDI.

Mal lets out a soft click as Admiral ZDI closes his eyes.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (KEY'S ROOM) - AFTERNOON

KEY lounges in their HAMMOCK.

They are more focused in looking out the window than they are in the gold JOURNAL and QUILL that lay in their lap.

A loud shrill BELL sounds.

Key startles, almost knocking the journal and quill onto the floor.

After a beat, they close the journal with a sigh and get out of the hammock.

KEY

(muttering)

This better be good.

Key grabs a leather BAG that lays on a stack of books as they make their way to the door.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - AFTERNOON

MADGE stands at the edge of the pond, her tail swishing just above the water.

DRONEMEDIANS mill about the hall, having quiet conversations with one another.

KEY walks in and heads directly to their cushion, only waving to AYA and JOR as they pass.

After Key sits down, Madge slaps her tail on the water.

The hall falls silent as the Council members turn to look at Madge.

MADGE

This will be a fairly quick meeting if you all would take your seats.

After a quick beat of shuffling, all the Council members are seated in their respective cushions.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(Beat.)

We have received another message from the Gauntlet spacecraft and Ambassador ZPL.

Whispered conversations break out throughout the hall.

Madge slaps her tail against the water again.

MADGE

What did I just say about this being a quick meeting?

The conversations stop.

MADGE (CONT'D)

This message reads that the Gauntlet crew need a little more time to get situated and recuperate after this whole ordeal.

A long beat of silence.

Madge looks around the hall and makes eye contact with DANE, who had started to lean over to talk to the Dronemedian in front of him.

Dane freezes and sits back up.

MADGE (CONT'D)

We will update you all if we receive any more messages from the Claquians.

(Beat.)

This meeting is dismissed.

The hall erupts in movement and talking.



Key stays seated but lets out a sigh.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (KEY'S ROOM) - MID-AFTERNOON

KEY lounges in the hammock, half asleep. A gold JOURNAL and QUILL lay in their lap.

There is a knock on the door before it swings open. FLEUR pops her head into the room.

FLEUR

Doing anything important?

Key holds up the journal.

KEY

Just writing up a report for the Council.

Fleur nods.

FLEUR

Want a distraction?

Key looks over at Fleur.

KEY

What would that be?

FLEUR

Zero and I were thinking about going to the café plaza,  
wanna come?

Key is almost immediately out of the hammock and placing the journal on a stack of books.

Key walks out of the room.

EXT. CAFÉ PLAZA - EVENING

Little STOREFRONTS with leaf roofs sit on the tree line of a BEACH with pink sand that overlooks bright blue water.

Some DRONEMEDIANS walk on the beach, some sit on the storefront's roofs, and some hang or sit in the trees - all eating some kind of FOOD.

KEY, FLEUR, and ZERO land onto the sand and Zero immediately starts walking towards the storefronts.

LATER

Key, Fleur, and Zero sit on the roof of a storefront, all snacking on some sort of FRUIT.

Key finishes their snack before taking plucking leaves from the roof with their tail.

A long beat of silence.

Zero polishes off his fruit.

Fleur looks down at hers, which is only half-eaten at this point.

Fleur holds it out to Zero, who happily takes it and swallows it whole.

FLEUR

Had your fill?

Zero nods enthusiastically.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS) - DAWN

The room is slightly curved. The back wall is mostly floor-to-ceiling WINDOWS showing both ANDROMEDA and the empty expanse of SPACE.

In front of the windows is a matching set of black plush LOVESEATS flanking a perfectly clear glass coffee TABLE.

The front wall is full of SCREENS - small white TEXT scrolls across a black background.

There is a clear glass DESK with a black CHAIR facing the screens.

Off to the side of the desk is a glass cylindrical POD that runs the entire height of the room. Inside the pod are various WIRES that hang in every direction.

ADMIRAL ZDI stands in front of the wall of screens. All four of his hands are clasped behind his back, but his chest is pushed out.

MAL is perfectly still next to his left ear - occasionally letting out a soft click.

The text on the screens starts to scroll faster.

The text soon blurs into continuous white lines.

Admiral ZDI slowly closes his eyes as Mal starts to click faster.

A loud DING sounds from the door.

ADMIRAL ZDI

You may enter.

The door slides open and AMBASSADOR ZPL walks in, Zip bobbing along next to him.

ADMIRAL ZDI

I acknowledge your ability to be able to converse on short notice.

Ambassador ZPL nods.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

May I inquiry what this private assembly is regarding?

Admiral ZDI turns to face Ambassador ZPL.

ADMIRAL ZDI

I would like to present my plan of action for the current situation.

Zip and Mal let out a click.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

The Gauntlet 17-A-2 is currently the farthest Claquian spacecraft from an established boundary. I would like to survey this division to conduct numerous scans before attempting to return within the explored boundaries to report our findings.

Ambassador ZPL nods once more with Zip letting out a series of clicks.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

That is the most logical plan of action.

Admiral ZDI holds up a hand.

ADMIRAL ZDI

However, I want to further my knowledge of this planet of Andromeda and the Dronemedians that inhabit the surface.

ZIP

What do you plan to do about that?

Admiral ZDI's eyes narrow.

Ambassador ZPL reaches up to smack the Clanis away from his head.

ADMIRAL ZDI

If the Dronemedians' High Council permits it, I would like you to lead an outpost on Andromeda. When I deem the scans to be complete of this division, you will be able to rejoin the Gauntlet to return to established boundaries.

Zip lets out a click as it slowly bobs back to the side of Ambassador ZPL's head.

A beat of silence.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I agree to this duty.

Admiral ZDI nods.

Mal and Zip let out a series of clicks.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - MORNING

KEY and FLEUR sit on their cushions.

A variety of BOWLS with various fruits sit on the floor between them. Two CUPS of tea sit among the bowls.

FLEUR

So, they really haven't given any more information? Like why they were in a war anyway?

Key pops a piece of fruit into their mouth.

KEY

(mouth full)

Nope.

A beat. Fleur nibbles on a piece of fruit as Key eats several more.

Fleur finishes the piece of fruit before taking a sip of tea.

She sets down the cup.

FLEUR

What are they doing up there?

Key shrugs as they keep eating.

A loud shrill BELL sounds.

Key swallows.

KEY

(muttering)

Speaking of...

Key looks down at the bowls before looking back up at Fleur.

FLEUR

I'll clean up, go.

Key jumps up and heads towards to the door.

They stop when their hand is on the knob and looks at Fleur over their shoulder.

KEY

Thank you.

Fleur swishes her tail.

FLEUR

No problem, now go.

Key smiles before opening the door.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MORNING

The hall is deathly quiet.

MADGE stands at the edge of the pond with ADMIRAL ZDI and AMBASSADOR ZPL next to her.

MAL is perfectly still just above Admiral ZDI's right shoulder while ZIP bobs in the air right next to Ambassador ZPL's left ear.

Most DRONEMEDIANS are already seated and the ones that are not are making their way to their cushions.

KEY walks into the hall, looking around quickly.

They make their way to their cushion, never taking their eyes off the Claquians.

After a beat or so, every cushion is filled.

Madge flutters her wings, causing Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL to step back. Mal and Zip let out a soft click.

MADGE

As you can see, we have two visitors from the Gauntlet spacecraft, Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL.

(Beat.)

They're here to present a proposal to the Council.

A beat of silence.

Madge motions for Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL to step forward.

Admiral ZDI steps forward and raises one hand.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Novus. My full designation is Admiral ZDI. I command the Gauntlet 17-A-2. As you already know, we were sent here on a random path code after escaping combat. It has been determined that we are past explored boundaries of the Claquian species. This provides us an ample opportunity to complete scans and research on this cosmic division.

Ambassador ZPL steps forward next to Admiral ZDI.

Admiral ZDI's eyes narrow, but he stays quiet and Mal bobs for a beat before going still.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

However, we also find that Andromeda and the Dronemedian species provides an equal opportunity for research. We would like to implement a small outpost of exactly thirty Claquians on Andromeda. I, myself, will be the acting leader of this outpost.

ADMIRAL ZDI

This outpost will rejoin the Gauntlet after we have completed the necessary scans and research.

A long beat of silence.

Madge steps forward as Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL step backwards.

MADGE

I believe that is the end of the proposal.

Madge looks over her shoulder at the two Claquians.

Admiral ZDI nods.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The floor is open for discussion.

Key looks over at DANE, who is glaring at Ambassador ZPL.

After a beat, Dane stands up, swishing his tail.

DANE

I'm sure you could be lovely beings under all that metal, but the Council knows next to nothing about you and for that reason I don't think this outpost is a good idea.

AYA swishes her tail causing most of the hall occupants to look at her.

AYA

And Dane, I'm sure you're absolutely lovely under all that grey fur.

Dane turns to glare at Aya.

DANE

And I'm sure you're lovely under all that--

MADGE

Dane! Aya!

Dane and Aya slowly sit back down.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Thank you. This is a discussion about a proposal, not personal disputes.

(Beat.)

Does anyone else want to share their thoughts?

SAUL stands tentatively.

SAUL

I think this would a really good opportunity for both sides to learn more about each other.

BAY stands, fluttering his wings.

BAY

Where would this outpost even be?

LATER

The hall is loud with various conversation between Council members.

Madge, Admiral ZDI, and Ambassador ZPL are absent from their previous spots at the edge of the pond.

Instead, they enter the hall from the backroom, but conversations still continue.

As Madge approaches the pond, she smacks her tail against the water.

The hall falls silent.

Madge positions herself at the edge of the pond with Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL next to her as before.

MADGE

The votes have been counted.

A tense beat of silent.



MADGE

The proposal for the Claquian outpost has passed by  
ninety-one votes for yes.

The hall erupts in noise.

Madge turns to converse with Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL.

Key stays silent and looks around.

Dane pouts next to them. Key just rolls their eyes.

EXT. OUTPOST TREEHOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The treehouse is similar to Key's, except a long wooden  
LADDER leans up against the tree's trunk.

The DOOR swings gently in the wind.

KEY lands on the balcony, a BOX of various technology  
GADGETS under their arm.

Key sets the box down on the balcony before glancing in the  
doorway.

KEY

Ambassador?

AMBASSADOR ZPL, with ZIP bobbing along near his shoulder,  
walks out onto the balcony.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

Affirmative.

Key motions towards the box.

KEY

Uh...I brought a...gift from Knox.

Ambassador ZPL bends down to pick up the box.

ZIP

What kind of name is Knox?

Ambassador ZPL lets go of the box with one hand to smack the  
orb into the wall behind him.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I do not recall a Knox.

Key laughs.

KEY

I'm sure you'll meet him sometime while you're here.

Ambassador ZPL looks down at the box before back up at Key.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I anticipate this meeting.

Key lets out another laugh.

KEY

Sure, you do.

A beat.

KEY (CONT'D)

Do you think you'll like it here?

Ambassador ZPL looks around.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

I find the dwelling satisfactory.

Key lets out a breath.

KEY

I guess that's a good start.

FADE OUT.

END OF PATH 2.

**RESULT OF CHOICE 1, OPTION 2.**

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - EARLY MORNING

Every seat in the hall is full. Many DRONEMEDIANS are having whispered conversations amongst themselves.

KEY sits quietly, while next to them, DANE is talking to someone else.

MADGE walks out from one end of the hall. She stands at the edge of the pond.

Some Dronemedians fall quiet, others continue to talk.

Madge fully outstretches her wings before flying above the pond.

She smacks her tail on the water - splashing the nearest Dronemedians.

MADGE

Hush.

The hall falls quiet.

Madge returns to stand at the edge of the pond.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The Elders have gone through the votes and a decision has been made.

A beat.

Key looks around - all eyes are trained on Madge.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The Council has decided to fire at the unknown spacecraft.

The hall erupts in talking. Key stays silent.

Dane excitedly chats with the Dronemedian behind him.

DANE

The only way to deal with this situation, really.

Madge smacks her tail on the water once more.

The talking stops.

MADGE

Engineers have already started to work to meet this decision and have asked a small group of Council members to convene for a meeting to discuss how to go about it.

Key looks around - a lot of the other Council members are doing the same thing.

MADGE (CONT'D)

So, who would like to attend this meeting?

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - MORNING

FLEUR, a pale blue Dronemedian with green eyes, stands at the TABLE, cutting some FRUIT up and tossing the pieces into a BOWL.

A bright blue young DRONEMEDIAN sits at her feet, looking up at her.

Four other young DRONEMEDIANS sit near the tree trunk.

They take turns trying to fly up halfway up the trunk, reaching for a stray LEAF sticking out of the bark.

KEY walks in the door and is immediately met with five little gazes.

KEY

Well, hello.

Key waves awkwardly at the small Dronemedians.

After a beat, the kids return to their activities.

Key walks over to Fleur at the table, before grabbing a handful of fruit and placing it in their mouth.

FLEUR

Hey, that's for the kids!

Key loudly gulps and reaches out for the bowl again, but Fleur slaps their hand away with her tail.

KEY

I didn't know we ran a daycare.

Fleur bends down to give a piece of fruit to the small Dronemedian at her feet.

FLEUR

The book club meeting ran late, and they were hungry.

Key walks over to the other side of the room and grabs a BAG that sits on a stack of books.

While walking towards the front door, Key grabs the stray leaf with their tail and flicks it into the air.

The small Dronemedians scramble to catch it but are quickly distracted when Fleur sets down the bowl of fruit on the floor.

FLEUR

And where are you heading off to so quickly?

KEY

A Council meeting at an outlook.

FLEUR

Well, have fun.

Fleur sits down on the floor and the Dronemedian that was watching her crawls into her lap.

KEY

I'll try.

EXT. NORTHERN OUTLOOK - LATE MORNING

KEY flies over treetops before landing on a white OUTLOOK TOWER that sticks up over the tree line.

A group of High Council members, including DANE, SAUL, and BAY, are already there, talking amongst themselves.

Key steps over to the railing and looks out at the tree canopy.

Conversations die down as MADGE flies up and lands on the tower with two others - KNOX, a completely silver Dronemedian, and LYNX, a graying blue Dronemedian.

MADGE

Everybody, this is Lynx, head of communications and Knox,  
head of power consolation.

Lynx nods while Knox waves excitedly.

MADGE (CONT'D)

They're going to be explaining how we will go about this  
situation.

Lynx steps forward.

LYNX

Yes, hello everybody. Our team of engineers have run some  
initial scans and we believe that we have identified non-  
essential hardware to fire at. While the missile will  
explode on impact, it's not intended to damage the entire  
spacecraft.

Dane steps forward.

DANE

And why not damage the whole thing?

KNOX

Well, we don't have the capacity to damage the whole  
spacecraft. This is because when power comes out of the  
Core, it's in a very scattered state. Over hundreds of  
years, engineers like me have developed the process of  
consolidating and centralizing this power so civilians  
can have and use it in their day-to-day lives. However,  
this process wasn't developed to fire a missile into the  
stratosphere and seriously damage an object as large of  
the spacecraft we are dealing with. A process able to do  
that would take a couple more hundred years and / quite  
possibly redoing the entire way of how we think and  
control power here on Andromeda.

DANE

/ Alright, alright. I get it. I get it!

Lynx holds up a hand. Knox nods before stepping backwards.

LYNX

Anyway, if you look up.

Lynx gestures to the sky.

A misty outline of THE GAUNTLET is just above the horizon.

LYNX (CONT'D)

We are aiming for the long cylindrical segment that is attached to the spacecraft's left side.

There is a series of nods from the Council members.

SAUL

Are we firing right now?

KNOX

Once again because of the state of the raw power coming out of the Core, it takes quite a bit of time and work to centralize and consolidate enough power to fire and since we only got the directive less than twenty-four hours ago...

Lynx glares at Knox.

LYNX

We will be firing later this afternoon.

Key nods before looking back up at the sky.

There is some whispering among the High Council members. Key stays quiet.

EXT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE - MID-AFTERNOON

KEY sits on the treehouse's leafy ROOF, looking up at the sky.

The GAUNTLET is now directly overhead.

There is a loud CRACK and HISS heard.

A beat or so later, a bright FLASH of purple-bluish light emits from the Gauntlet.

The front door of the treehouse opens and FLEUR and ZERO fly out.

They land on the roof and stand on either side of Key.

FLEUR

Was that the missile?

Key nods.

ZERO

What do you think is going to happen now?

Key shrugs.

FLEUR

What do you think is up there?

Key looks up at Fleur and then at Zero.

A couple beats of silence.

Zero kicks a loose leaf which flutters over the edge of the roof.

**INSERT CHOICE 2B.**

**OPTION 1: Stay distrustful of the spacecraft. (Go to page 155)**

**OPTION 2: Have hope that the spacecraft and its inhabitants are actually friendly. (Go to page 198)**



**RESULT OF CHOICE 2B, OPTION 1.**

EXT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2

The GAUNTLET orbits ANDROMEDA.

The cylindrical segment is a mess of glowing WIRES and twisted METAL.

Bright blue ICICLES hang from the jagged edges.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (O.S.)

Novus. We are the Claquians aboard the Gauntlet 17-A-2.  
We entered this galaxy through the occidental quadrant.

A click is heard.

AMBASSADOR ZPL (O.S.)

We have traveled a thousand parsecs in search of help for  
a planet similar to this one. Finis.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - THE NEXT MORNING

KEY sits on their cushion, carefully sorting BOOKS into three different piles.

ZERO sits on the table, pulling different FOODS out of the ICEBOX. A pile of food sits next to him on the table while another pile accumulates on the floor.

FLEUR sweeps the floor, collecting stray leaves into a pile by the door.

Fleur occasionally shoots a glare at Zero when he throws a piece of food on the floor but stays quiet.

A loud shrill BELL sounds.

All three Dronemedians stop what they're doing. Fleur and Zero look over at Key.

Key stands up and heads towards the door.

FLEUR

You better come straight back and tell us what happened.

KEY

Of course, I'll be back.

Key carefully steps over Fleur's pile before walking out the door.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MORNING

The hall is quiet as KEY walks in.

Most of the cushions are filled with Council MEMBERS, but there are no side conversations.

MADGE is already standing at the edge of the pond, her wings fully outstretched.

Key silently makes their way to their cushion and sits down.

A couple moments pass and soon all the cushions are filled.

Madge takes a deep breath.

MADGE

I want to start off by saying, we are not under attack.  
We called this meeting because we have received  
communication from the spacecraft.

There is an outburst of talking amongst the seated Dronemedians.

MADGE (CONT'D)

If you would be quiet for a moment, I will tell you what  
the message actually said.

The hall falls quiet.

Madge swishes her tail.

A light blue DRONEMEDIAN stands up from where they were sitting along the back wall.

The Dronemedian walks up to Madge and hands her a piece of PAPER before going back to their spot at the back wall.

Madge clears her throat.

MADGE

The message reads 'Novus. We are the Claquians aboard the Gauntlet 17-A-2. We entered this galaxy through the occidental quadrant. We have traveled a thousand parsecs in search of help for a planet similar to this one. Finis.'

Madge folds the piece of paper and looks around the hall.

The High Council members stay quiet and share mildly confused looks.

MADGE

I'm impressed that you've learned your lesson about freely talking.

(Beat.)

As most of you have learned in your primary history lessons, Dronemedians have dabbled in space travel. Research and scans have not shown the presence of another planet in our star system.

(Beat.)

With that, the floor is open for discussion.

DANE, PAX, LULA, a mostly white Dronemedian with purple eyes, and ALIX, a navy Dronemedian with light blue eyes, stand up, either swishing their tails or fluttering their wings to bring attention to themselves.

LULA

I think we just have to help.

DANE

And what makes you think that?

LULA

That planet could be dying out as we speak. What if that planet has a species like us?

ALIX

But, how come we've never found out about this planet before?

LULA

A valid point, but that doesn't mean we can just sit and let this planet die?

ALIX

I'm not suggesting that we just let a planet die.

DANE

Then, what are you suggesting?

ALIX

I'm just saying that we found multiple uninhabitable planets during the space era, so wouldn't a habitable one make bigger news?

PAX

To be fair, our space period wasn't very long.

LULA

It only lasted two High Council cycles before the Aura Declaration was passed.

PAX

Exactly. We didn't have fancy spacecrafts like these things do. All we did was take pretty little pictures of the sky. And maybe a little bit of actual science.

DANE

We also have no reason to trust this message at all. Especially since we're not entirely sure who or what exactly sent it.

LULA

Dane, why are you always so mistrusting of *everything*?

Dane opens his mouth to respond but Madge slaps her tail on the water before he can.

MADGE

Alright, alright. I think that is enough discussion. The Council will reconvene at a later date when everyone has had time to put their thoughts on the matter together.

(Beat.)

Dismissed.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - AFTERNOON

KEY and FLEUR sit on their respective CUSHIONS.

Fleur holds a GLASS of purple liquid and occasionally takes a small sip.

Key has an open BOOK in their lap and their tail is wrapped tightly around a pile of precariously stacked BOOKS.

FLEUR

The whats?

KEY

Claquians, I think?

Key sets aside their book before taking the top book from the pile.

Key flips through the pages while Fleur takes a sip.

ZERO walks in from his room, holding a metal CONTRAPTION and a gold BRACELET.

He awkwardly stands in the middle of the room till Key and Fleur both look up at him.

ZERO

/ Am I interrupting?

FLEUR

/ Need something?

Key goes back to their book.

Zero holds up the bracelet.

ZERO

I need a model; I'm trying to redo this design.

FLEUR

You know that stuff turns my fur pink.

Fleur stands up and walks over to the icebox.

Fleur refills her cup from a pouch.

Zero looks at Key, who's still entranced by their book.

ZERO

Key?

Key sighs.

KEY

Fine, but be quick.

Key sticks out one of their arms, while using their other hand to turn the page.

LATER

Key sits in the same position as before, now plucking stray fur from their wings. There are now three different piles of BOOKS in front of them.

Zero sits next to Key, fiddling with the bracelet and the metal CONTRAPTION in his lap.

Fleur isn't present.

ZERO

Hand.

Key sticks out a hand, which Zero takes and fits the bracelet around their wrist.

Zero continues to fiddle with the bracelet and contraption on Key's wrist while Key looks around the treehouse.

KEY

Are you almost done? I need to work on a report.

Zero doesn't respond for a couple beats.

ZERO

There, I think that's the best it's going to be.

Zero stands up with the contraption in hand.

Key goes to take off the bracelet but Zero swishes his tail.

ZERO

Keep it.

Key looks up at Zero.

KEY

You sure?

ZERO

Yeah, it's wonky on the one side, I wouldn't sell it  
anyway.

Zero walks into his room, leaving Key to look down at their  
new piece of jewelry.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - AROUND MIDNIGHT

KEY lays on their stomach on the floor, writing in a gold-  
plated JOURNAL with a QUILL.

Key lets out an exasperated sigh before setting the quill  
down.

Key reads what is written in the journal as they fiddle with  
the BRACELET still on their wrist.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - THE NEXT MORNING

The hall is empty, expect for MADGE and HUD, a navy blue but  
graying Dronemedian, who hang from their tails on a vine in  
the middle of the room.

They converse quietly until KEY walks in, a gold JOURNAL  
tucked under their arm.

KEY

Uh, I have my report?

Key holds up the journal.

MADGE

Ah, yes.

Madge gently flutters down from the vine to land in front of  
Key.

Key hands her the report.

MADGE

Thank you, I'll get this filed.

Key nods before turning towards the door.

Hud clears his throat.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Actually, Key?

Key stops and turns around to face Madge.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Would you be interested in carrying out a mission for the Council?

KEY

What kind of mission?

MADGE

It would be a...let's say, a covert mission.

(Beat.)

It involves sneaking onto the spacecraft.

Key's eyes widen.

A beat.

KEY

If I may ask...why?

MADGE

We believe the Council needs more substantial information about this affair.

Another beat.

Hud flutters down to land next to Madge.

HUD

And if it would make you more comfortable, we could recruit a team to assist you in this mission.

MADGE

However, Key, you've proven your intelligence through your years on the Council and I also believe you could do this mission alone.

(Beat.)

But it's up to you.



**INSERT CHOICE 3B(3).**

**OPTION 1: Ask for a team. (Go to page 111)**

**OPTION 2: Go alone. (Go to page 164)**

**RESULT OF CHOICE 3A(2) & 3B(3), OPTION 2.**

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - MORNING

In the middle of a large clearing of trees, there is the CORE OUTPUT - a large HOLE in the ground with a purple-bluish LIGHT shining from within. Various WIRES of all different colors and sizes flow out of the hole - either going underground, connecting to large blue BOXES scattered across the clearing, or connect to one another.

A cluster of white BUILDINGS sit on the tree line of the clearing, half hidden by the trees.

A handful of DRONEMEDIANS mill about the clearing, holding TABLETS and occasionally stopping to inspect a wire.

MADGE and CHELL, a bright teal Dronemedian, stand a couple feet away from the core, talking quietly.

KEY gently lands on the ground near the trees and makes their way to where Madge and Chell are standing.

MADGE

Ah, Key.

(Beat.)

I want you to meet our satellite operator, Chell.

Chell nods as her tail swishes behind her.

CHELL

I'll be launching and operating the satellite that will be getting you to the spacecraft.

(Beat.)

If you follow me, I'll show you to the heliport.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (HELIPORT) - MORNING

CHELL walks into a clearing of trees, followed by MADGE and KEY.

In the middle of the clearing sits a large, elevated PLATFORM with an equally large, white-paneled SATELLITE perched on it.

On either side of the platform, nestled along the tree line, are two large HANGARS.

Chell walks closer to the platform, while Madge and Key stay where they are.

CHELL

This is Satellite 4-11. After carrying out this Council mission, it will be replacing Satellite 4-9 that was destroyed.

(Beat.)

I'll explain more once we get you settled into the apparatus.

INT. SATELLITE 4-11 - MORNING

KEY sits in the middle of satellite, facing outward, surrounded by SCREEN-paneled walls with KEYBOARDS and various BUTTONS sticking out.

CHELL (O.S.)

Do you understand the launching sequence?

Key looks at the screens in front of them.

KEY

Yes, I do.

CHELL (O.S.)

Do you have any sort of problem or concern before we start the launching sequence?

A beat of silence.

KEY

Nope.

A long beat.

There's a series of clicks and a faint mechanical whirring starts.

CHELL

We are set to launch.

(Beat.)

We have liftoff  
in...ten...nine...eight...seven...six...five...

INT. SATELLITE 4-11 - MORNING

KEY is in the same spot as before, intently focused on the  
SCREENS in front of them.

A series of clicks and beeps sound.

KEY

997...998...999 decemmmeters.

Key sucks in a breath.

CHELL (O.S.)

And we have a successful launch and entrance into orbit.

Key lets out the breath before looking around at the  
satellite.

A couple screens show the outside of the satellite,  
including a small glimpse of Andromeda's surface.

A beat of silence.

CHELL (O.S.)

Approaching the spacecraft.

Key looks back at the screens in front of them.

CHELL (CONT'D)

We will start the airlock sequence in two minutes.

Key nods.

A beat.

MADGE (O.S.)

Key?

KEY

Yes?

Static is heard.

A beat.

MADGE (O.S.)

We don't know how long you'll have before any kind of security or alarm detect your presence. We also have no idea what these things are capable of. You are to download as much information as you can into the macrochip and get out.

Key sucks in a breath before letting it out.

KEY

Understood.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (DOCKING BAY) - MORNING

At one end of the hangar is a large black mechanical DOOR, seal shut with large STRIPS of metal across it.

The other end of the hangar is open to the outside. ANDROMEDA can be seen through the opening.

The curved walls are completely white with a thin black SCREEN running the length of the room at eye level.

Various PORTS and BUTTONPADS are scattered on the walls under the screen.

SATELLITE 4-11 slowly makes its way into the open hangar.

Once it is fully inside the hangar, the satellite rotates till one end is touching the wall.

Loud mechanical WHIRRING is heard as the satellite suction itself to the wall.

INT. SATELLITE 4-11 (AIRLOCK) - MORNING

KEY sits on the floor of the cylindrical room, their tail, and wings flat against their back.

In front of them is a section of black SCREEN with white TEXT scrolling across it.

Beneath the screen is a white BUTTONPAD that is nearly unseen against the white wall.

Next to the button pad is an ELECTRICAL SLOT, where Key places a gray and black MACROCHIP.

Key hits a button on the pad.

A beat of silence.

Key hits another button. The macrochip lights up at one end.

Key lets out a breath.

A beat of silence.

A blaring ALARM sounds.

Key jumps, their wings spreading out to fill the available space.

CHELL (O.S.)

Get out of the airlock, we gotta deploy immediately.

Key's wings once again flatten against their back as they crawl backwards.

MAIN SECTION

Key barely makes it to their seat before the satellite jolts to one side.

CHELL (O.S.)

Undocking was successful.

Key looks around at the screens before letting out a breath.

A beat of silence.

The satellite jolts.

Key's head whips around.

KEY

What was that?

Key turns to the screen in front of them before they start typing.

MADGE (O.S.)

Nothing important.

Key cocks their head to one side as they look up at the screen in front of them.

Key sighs.

CHELL (O.S.)

Trajectory set for the surface.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (HELIPORT) - MORNING

LYNX, MADGE, and CHELL stand watching in a HANGAR as SATELLITE 4-11 lands on the PLATFORM.

After a couple beat of silence, KEY appears from the satellite.

As Key makes their way to where the others are standing, they hold up the MACROCHIP.

MADGE

Excellent job, Key.

Key nods, handing the macrochip to Lynx.

Chell takes a step out of the hangar towards the satellite.

CHELL

I need to run a few tests before the satellite's launch into orbit.

(Beat.)

I assume you three can find your way back to Comms.

Lynx nods before Chell makes their way to the satellite.

Lynx and Madge step out of the hangar towards the treeline.

Key stays still.

MADGE

Key, you're going to help us figure this out.

(Beat.)

Whether you like it or not.

Key smiles before following Madge and Lynx towards the tree line.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - AFTERNOON

COMPUTER SCREENS cover the back wall. The other walls are covered in various GRAPHS, DIAGRAMS, and the like.

In the middle of the room stands a fairly large TABLE with a SCREEN for a top.

LYNX, MADGE, and KEY stand around the center table.

MADGE

Why would they have a completely desolated planet in their logs?

Madge points to a DATA ENTRY on the screen.

Lynx clicks on the screen a couple times.

LYNX

It must be important to them; it's mentioned multiple times.

A beat of silence.

Key looks around the room while Madge and Lynx keep looking at the screen.

Key's tail swishes. They look back at the screen.

KEY

The other planet.

Madge and Key look up from the screen at same time and lock eyes.



INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - AFTERNOON

MADGE stands at the edge of pond. Her wings are folded flat against her back.

DANE, LULA, BAY, and AYA, a bright teal Dronemedian, all stand in front of their cushions.

LULA

There's no guarantee that's the planet they're talking about.

BAY

It appears the most often, so it's probably the most recent.

DANE

There's probably more like it that we can't see.

Aya shoots Dane a side look.

AYA

There's absolutely no guarantee about that.

DANE

Who knows?

(Beat.)

They're probably going to try to kill off Andromeda like they did to that planet.

The hall falls quiet.

Lula sinks into her cushion.

Aya glares at Dane.

A couple beats of silence.

Madge outstretches her wings.

MADGE

Dane, Bay, Aya...

The three in question slowly sit down.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(Beat.)

I think it's in the High Council's best interests to bring forth the proper authorities of this spacecraft and see what they have to say for themselves.

Dane scoffs.

Almost every head in the hall turns to look at him.

DANE

You want to talk to those planet killers?

Madge glares at Dane for a beat.

MADGE

I think a conversation would in the High Council's best interests.

Dane looks like he might say something but stays quiet.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (KEY'S ROOM) - EVENING

The room is circular with purple and blue VINES covering the walls with no clear point of origin.

Various PLANTS in brightly colored pots are scattered throughout the room and are equally accompanied with stacks of BOOKS.

A bay WINDOW juts out from the wall across from the DOOR leading to the main room.

KEY lounges in a HAMMOCK that hangs diagonally in the alcove. They are more focused in looking out the window than they are in the gold-plated JOURNAL and QUILL that lay in their lap.

There is a knock on the door before it swings open. FLEUR pops her head into the room.

FLEUR

Dinner's ready.

Key is almost immediately out of the hammock and placing the journal on a stack of books.

Key walks out of the room.

MAIN ROOM

ZERO sits on his CUSHION, holding a BOWL full of mango and watermelon.

Two more CUPS of tea and multiple BOWLS with various fruit concoctions sit in between the CUSHIONS.

FLEUR and KEY walk into the room and take a seat on their respective cushions.

FLEUR

I tried to make your mom's mixed puree.

(Beat.)

I really wished she had exact amounts...

Fleur looks down at a bowl of a pink smoothie-like substance.

Key laughs as they pick up a bowl of cut-up mango.

KEY

I'm not surprised, she's been making that since I was little.

Fleur sighs before taking a sip of tea.

LATER

All the bowls are now empty and stacked in the middle of the cushions.

Zero's and Key's cups are empty, while Fleur still holds hers and sips occasionally.

Fleur looks over Key.

FLEUR

Well, any updates on the...

KEY

Claquians?

FLEUR

Yeah, an update on them.

Key lets out a sigh.

KEY

We're bringing them to trial.

Fleur's and Zero's eyes widened.

KEY (CONT'D)

We found some stuff and Dane said some stuff.

(Beat.)

It's a long story.

Fleur looks at the empty bowls before looking at Zero and then at Key.

FLEUR

We got time.

Key sighs.

KEY

So, basically...

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - THE NEXT MORNING

The hall is silent.

Every seat is filled with DRONEMEDIANS.

MADGE, HUD, and LYNX stand at the edge of the pond at one end.

At the other end of the pond stands two CLAQUIANS, completely gold humanoids with four arms and three white glowing eyes.

ADMIRAL ZDI, the taller of the two, stands with his hands clasped behind his back.

His Clanis, MAL, an orb of white light encapsulated by two interlocking gold rings, is still in the air next to Admiral ZDI's right ear.

AMBASSADOR ZPL, shorter than Admiral ZDI but still quite tall, stands with his hands at his sides.

His Clanis, ZIP, bounces in the air right above his left shoulder.

KEY looks at the Claquians while a disgusted DANE looks at Madge.

MADGE

The High Council has brought you, Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL, here to hold trial under the assumption that your presence on Andromeda has ill-intent.

Zip and Mal let out a simultaneous click.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Our presence on this planet of Andromeda is in search of help for a similar planet in the peripheral quadrant.

A beat of silence.

AYA tentatively flutters her wings.

MADGE

Yes, Aya?

Aya stands.

Her tail swishes behind her a couple times before she turns to face the Claquians.

AYA

If you're searching for help, then why you did destroy one of our satellites?

Admiral ZDI holds out a hand in front of Ambassador ZPL.

AMBASSADOR ZPL

The Gauntlet fired at your satellite because it was deemed unsafe for our technologies to come into contact without further research.

Aya nods before slowly sitting back down.

A beat of silence.

Dane swishes his tail.

MADGE

Dane, please / don't.

DANE

/ What's your explanation for killing a planet then?

Zip and Mal let out a click.

ADMIRAL ZDI

I do not compute your question.

Dane stands.

DANE

Is the dead planet in your logs the one you're trying to  
"help"?

Admiral ZDI's eyes narrow.

ADMIRAL ZDI

How did you acquire access to our internal logs?

Madge quickly glances at Key before looking back at the  
Claquians.

Key's eyes widen but stays still and silent.

Mal and Zip let out another click.

LATER

Most of the High Council members are now standing and  
shouting over each other.

Key is still sitting and doesn't move a muscle - their wings  
and tail flat against their back.

Admiral ZDI, with narrowed eyes, raises his voice  
occasionally. Mal now bobbing and weaving around his head.

Ambassador ZPL has taken a couple of steps backwards away  
from Admiral ZDI. Zip now sits perfectly still in the air  
above Ambassador ZPL's left shoulder.

Madge flies to hover above the center of the pond.

After a beat, she smacks her tail against the water a couple  
times.

The hall falls silent. All eyes fall on Madge.

MADGE

This trial is dismissed until both parties can compose themselves.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (KEY'S ROOM) - EVENING

KEY sits on the floor surrounded by piles of BOOKS.

They pick up a book and flip through the pages before placing it in a different pile.

Three books sit in their lap.

They pick up an old and tattered leather-bound book and flip through the pages.

KEY

(whispering)

I forgot I even had this...

Key flips through the pages again before shrugging and placing the book in the pile off to their side.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - MIDNIGHT

The clearing is empty and is only lit by the core's glow.

A bright blue lightning FLASH touches down a couple feet away from the core.

COMMANDER KNA and COMMANDER WDG appear where the flash struck.

SIR bobs in the air right next Commander KNA's head.

NAV frantically swirls around Commander WDG's head.

After a beat of surveying their surroundings, Nav and Sir let out a click.

Commander KNA and Commander WDG take a few steps towards the core opening.

COMMANDER KNA

Could this contraption possibly be the planet's power supply?

COMMANDER WDG

Energy is being extracted from an unknown source.

SIR

Is that a yes or...?

COMMANDER WDG

Affirmative, it is highly likely that this is the planet's power supply.

Commander KNA looks around.

COMMANDER KNA

This is located exactly two hundred meters from the nearest residence.

(Beat.)

There are no safeguards or patrol in place to protect passerby from expiration.

Sir and Nav let out a click.

A beat of silence.

Commander KNA looks around again.

COMMANDER KNA (CONT'D)

I speculate the citizens are not aware of the correct nature of their power extraction.

COMMANDER WDG

I concur.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (KEY'S ROOM) - MIDNIGHT

KEY sits on the floor, surrounded by piles of BOOKS.

They are now slumped over the five books in their lap, fast asleep.

A couple beats of silence.

Key startles awake.

They look around for a beat before picking up the books in their lap and placing them on the floor.



Key makes their way to their hammock before slowly getting in.

After a beat or so, Key is fast asleep again.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS) - DAWN

The room is slightly curved. The back wall is mostly floor-to-ceiling WINDOWS showing both ANDROMEDA and the empty expanse of SPACE.

In front of the windows is a matching set of black plush LOVESEATS flanking a perfectly clear glass coffee TABLE.

The front wall is full of SCREENS - small white TEXT scrolls across a black background.

There is a clear glass DESK with a black CHAIR facing the screens.

Off to the side of the desk is a glass cylindrical POD that runs the entire height of the room. Inside the pod are various WIRES that hang in every direction.

ADMIRAL ZDI stands in front of the wall of screens. All four of his hands are clasped behind his back, but his chest is pushed out.

MAL is perfectly still next to his left ear - occasionally letting out a soft click.

The text on the screens starts to scroll faster.

The text soon blurs into continuous white lines.

Admiral ZDI slowly closes his eyes as Mal starts to click faster.

A loud DING sounds from the door.

Admiral ZDI's eyes open before almost immediately narrowing as he looks at the door.

ADMIRAL ZDI

State your official data designation.

COMMANDER KNA (O.S.)

KNA. Commander.

COMMANDER WDG (O.S.)

WDG. Commander.

ADMIRAL ZDI

You may enter.

The door slides open. COMMANDER KNA and COMMANDER WDG walks in, SIR and NAV bobbing along next to their heads.

Admiral ZDI turns to face them while Mal makes an angry click before going silent.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

State your observations.

LATER

Admiral ZDI now sits at his desk, Mal still next to his left ear.

Commander KNA and Commander WDG stand off to the side of the desk. Sir and Nav are also still next to their respective Claquian's heads.

Admiral ZDI clasps two hands together in front of him on the desk.

He closes his eyes for a beat before opening them and looking at Commander KNA.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Commander KNA, request aid from the nearest Claquian spacecraft.

(Beat.)

We could be dealing with a malicious governing body.

All three Clanises let out a click before Commander KNA walks out of the room.

Admiral ZDI's eyes narrow when Commander WDG doesn't follow.

ADMIRAL ZDI (CONT'D)

Is there anything you would like to state, Commander?

Commander WDG looks around while Nav whips around his head once before returning to its place next to his ear.

COMMANDER WDG

If we are in fact dealing with a malicious governing body, should we not confess to our own deception?

A beat of silence.

ADMIRAL ZDI

The falsehood we presented about the planet in need of help was to protect ourselves and this spacecraft. It was necessary therefore I see no logical reason to confess of the deception.

(Beat.)

You are dismissed, Commander.

Commander WDG doesn't move.

Nav lets out a barely audible click.

Admiral ZDI stands, placing all four hands on the desk.

ADMIRAL ZDI

You are dismissed, Commander WDG.

Commander WDG quickly walks out, Nav bobbing along near his shoulder.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - THE NEXT DAY

MADGE stands at the edge of the pond, her wings fully outstretched.

DRONEMEDIANS either make their way to their seats or sit quietly.

KEY sits still on their cushion, occasionally glancing at DANE or Madge.

After a couple beats, every cushion is filled, and Madge lowers her wings.

MADGE

Thank you all for coming.

(Beat.)

Because of what happened at our last meeting...

Madge looks over at Dane. Dane lets out a huff.

MADGE (CONT'D)

The other Elders and I have decided we don't have enough information to make any rash decisions about our visitors. Therefore, our objective with this next vote is to hopefully gain more knowledge about our visitors before resorting to more hostilities.

The hall erupts in whispered conversations.

Madge smacks her wings into the water, splashing the nearest Dronemedians.

The hall falls quiet.

MADGE (CONT'D)

May I remind you that we Dronemedians have long been proud of our peaceful nature.

**INSERT CHOICE 4B(3).**

**OPTION 1: Vote for a diplomatic gathering with the Claquians. (Go to page 183)**

**OPTION 2: Vote for a knowledge exchange with the Claquians. (Go to page 200)**

**RESULT OF CHOICE 4B(3) & 3B(4), OPTION 1.**

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - THE NEXT MORNING

FLEUR and ZERO sit on their cushions with various BOWLS of fruit on the floor in between them.

Fleur sips from a CUP of tea while Zero continuously throws pieces of fruit into his mouth.

FLEUR

You know if you didn't eat so fast, you wouldn't get sick  
as much?

Zero ignores her and keeps eating.

Fleur rolls her eyes.

KEY walks out of their room.

They grab a leather BAG that hangs off the center trunk as they make their way to the front door.

FLEUR

And where are you going?

Key stops at the door and turns around to look at Fleur.

Key lets out a sigh.

KEY

The Council is having a diplomatic gathering with the  
Claquians.

Fleur's eyes widen. Zero stops eating and looks up at Key.

ZERO

Uh, what?

FLEUR

You're being diplomats to the things that might be trying  
to kill our planet?

Key sucks in a breath.

KEY

Madge says we need more information about them before making any "rash" decisions.

A beat of silence.

Zero goes back to eating.

FLEUR

That doesn't sound like a good idea.

(Beat.)

Who knows what those things could do?

Key shrugs.

KEY

I have to go regardless. Council's honor.

Fleur reluctantly nods before taking a small sip of her tea.

Key steps out the door.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - MORNING

The cushions have been cleared from the floor. Even more PLANTS decorate the hall.

Long TABLES border the hall, each filled with various BOWLS of brightly colored FRUIT.

DRONEMEDIANS mill about the tables, occasionally eating, or talk in small groups scattered throughout the hall.

KEY walks into the hall before immediately getting swept into a conversation with SAUL and AYA.

A couple beats later, MADGE walks in followed by ADMIRAL ZDI with MAL, AMBASSADOR ZPL with ZIP, COMMANDER KNA with SIR, COMMANDER WDG with NAV, and COMMANDER IQE with EON.

The hall falls silent as the Dronemedians turn to look at the Claquians.

Madge and the Claquians stop to stand at the edge of the pond.

All the Claquians clasp their hands behind their backs and all their Clanises are perfectly still in the air.

MADGE

Hello everyone. Today we are joined by Admiral ZDI of the Gauntlet 17-A-2. He is accompanied by his crew of Ambassador ZPL, Commander KNA, Commander WDG, and Commander IQE.

(Beat.)

This starts our gathering and I ask that we keep all conversations civil.

Madge glances around the hall but quickly turns to face the Claquians.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Welcome to Andromeda, I hope we can gain some more insight about one another through this gathering.

Admiral ZDI nods curtly. All the Clanises let out a click.

The hall erupts in talking.

LATER

The air is tense.

All the Claquians stand off to one side of the pond, talking amongst themselves. Their Clanises are perfectly still as before.

Dronemedians whisper to one another and pretend not to look at the newcomers.

Madge, Key, and Aya stand at the other end of the hall.

Key is eating small pieces of fruit out of their hand.

Aya's tail swishes behind her as she glances at the Claquians every so often.

MADGE

Under no circumstances do you tell them that it was you in that satellite.

Key pops a piece of fruit in their mouth and shrugs.

KEY

(mouth full)

Why would I?

AYA

(under her breath)

Let Dane take the blame.

Madge sighs.

MADGE

Aya...

Aya looks over at the Claquians before surveying the hall.

She spots DANE near a food table talking to BAY.

AYA

What? He was the one who blurted it out during the meeting.

(Beat.)

And plus, you almost gave Key away anyway.

Madge scoffs before turning and walking away from the two.

Key slaps Aya's wings with their tail.

AYA

Ow. What?

KEY

You don't talk to Elders like that.

Aya shrugs.

Madge is halfway across the hall when Admiral ZDI and Commander KNA walk up to her.

The hall's noise fades to silence, all eyes trained to Madge and the two Claquians.



ADMIRAL ZDI

In accordance with Claquian law regarding the welfare of other species, I am placing the entirety of this High Council under arrest for unlawful power extraction and the suspected intention of extinguishing the planet of Andromeda without citizens' consent.

The hall erupts in noise.

Key drops the fruit they were holding.

Key goes to step forward towards Madge, but Aya holds them back with her tail.

The other Claquians almost immediately flank Admiral ZDI while he looks at Madge with narrowed eyes.

The Clanises let out a click.

Madge slowly folds her wings against her back.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (CONFERENCE CIRCLE) - AFTERNOON

The entirely white room is a circle, with five descending levels.

The levels are lined with black CHAIRS - all situated to face the center.

On one side of the room sits KEY, MADGE, DANE, and AYA.

On the other side sits ADMIRAL ZDI with MAL, AMBASSADOR ZPL with ZIP, COMMANDER KNA with SIR, COMMANDER WDG with NAV, and COMMANDER IQE with EON.

All the Clanises are still in the air above their respective Claquians' shoulders.

COMMANDER KNA

The charges against this High Council of Andromeda are unlawful power extraction and suspected intention of planet extinguishment without citizens' consent. /  
What...

ADMIRAL ZDI

/ What is your defense?

Aya and Key look over at Madge.

After a beat of silence, Dane goes to stand up.

He is slapped back into his seat by Aya's tail.

Madge glares at him.

The Clanises in the room let out a click.

MAL

Let him speak.

Madge's head whips to look at Admiral ZDI.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Let him proceed with his statement.

Key's and Aya's eyes go wide as Dane stands with a smug grin.

Dane takes a deep breath before making eye contact with Admiral ZDI.

Aya sinks farther into her chair.

DANE

You have absolutely no right to put us under arrest for providing our citizens with power.

(Beat.)

You're the ones running around killing planets.

Aya's tail wraps around herself.

Key just stares wide-eyed at Dane.

Madge is completely still.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Do Andromeda's citizens know the exact process in which you extract power?

Dane looks down at the floor under Admiral ZDI's narrowed eyes.

Dane shrugs.

DANE

Well...no. It's not something we really ever learn about.

A simultaneous click from the Clanises.

Dane looks up.

A beat.

DANE (CONT'D)

Listen, you bunch of metalheads.

Aya's wings wrap around her body.

Key sinks into the back of their chair.

Madge is unmoving.

DANE (CONT'D)

We have proof that it's you that have blood on your hands, not us. So, you can take this silly little arrest and / sh...

MADGE

/ Dane!

Madge stands and steps in front of Dane.

Admiral ZDI stands, clasping his hands together in front of himself.

Mal zips around his head once before becoming still once again next to Admiral ZDI's left ear.

ADMIRAL ZDI

And how did you obtain this alleged proof?

Admiral ZDI's eyes fall onto to Key.

LATER

Everyone in the room is now standing, glaring at one another.

DANE

Well, you...

Dane trails off as Admiral ZDI raises his hands.

ADMIRAL ZDI

This assembly has become ineffectual and is now concluded.

(Beat.)

Ambassador ZPL, escort the group off my spacecraft.

INT. KEY'S TREEHOUSE (MAIN ROOM) - DUSK

The room is empty when KEY walks in.

They slowly make their way to the ICEBOX.

Key opens the lid before starting to rummage around inside.

Without looking, they place a BOWL full of fruit onto the TABLE, knocking over a pile of empty BOWLS.

The empty bowls clatter to the floor.

Key freezes.

There's some shuffling heard off screen.

A beat of silence.

The door to Fleur's room opens without a sound.

FLEUR

Zero, I swear...

Key jumps before turning around.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

Oh, Key.

Fleur lets out a sigh.

FLEUR (CONT'D)

I'll make some tea.

Key smiles.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - MIDNIGHT

The clearing is empty and is only lit by the core's glow.

A bright blue lightning FLASH touches down a couple feet away from the core.

COMMANDER KNA and COMMANDER IQE appear where the flash struck.

SIR bobs in the air right next Commander KNA's head.

EON is still in the air next to Commander IQE's head.

After a beat of surveying its surroundings, Eon lets out a click.

A beat of silence.

SIR

Well, get on with it.

Commander IQE glares at Sir, while Commander KNA glares at Commander IQE.

COMMANDER KNA

I cannot estimate how much time you have to complete the task before our presence is discovered.

Commander IQE gives one last side glance at Sir before walking towards the core.

He kneels next to a particularly large black WIRE coming out of the core.

He places a hand right where the wire connects to a large blue BOX.

After a beat, Commander IQE lifts his hand to reveal a tiny black BOX with thin black WIRES wrapping around the larger wire.

From a distance, the box blends into the wire and cannot be seen.

Eon lets out a click.

He repeats the process on the same wire right at the edge of where the wire disappears into the core.

Commander IQE stands as Eon lets out another click.

Commander KNA still stands where he appeared with his arms crossed over his chest.

Sir bobs in the air.

COMMANDER IQE

I request to run a simple diagnostic scan.

Commander KNA's eyes narrow.

COMMANDER KNA

I deny the request.

The two Claquians glare at one another for a beat.

Two blue lightning FLASHES strike where Commander KNA and Commander IQE are standing.

INT. HIGH COUNCIL'S MEETING HALL - THE NEXT DAY

Every seat in the hall is filled, but the hall is quiet.

DANE smacks his tail against the floor in a random beat.

KEY glares at him but stays silent.

A long beat.

MADGE walks out of the backroom, holding a pile of slips of PAPER.

All eyes turn to her.

MADGE

Ninety-three votes for yes.

(Beat.)

We will be proceeding to fire at the Gauntlet this afternoon.

A beat of silence.

Key looks around the hall.

MADGE

Anyone who would like to see the process can watch from the Core Output, trusting that you will stay out of the engineers' way.

Madge glances over at Dane, who just shrugs his shoulders.

MADGE (CONT'D)

Meeting dismissed.

INT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (COMMUNICATIONS) - AFTERNOON

LYNX, KNOX, and CHELL stand around the center table, while other DRONEMEDIANS rush around the room.

LYNX

It's still not responding to commands.

Lynx points to something on the screen.

KNOX

That's impossible. The communication panel is directly connected to the power construction grid. That connection has been steady and functioning for / over a century...

CHELL

/ What if we redirect its power?

Knox looks up from the screen to glare at Chell.

Chell doesn't seem fazed and after a beat, Knox looks back at the screen.

KNOX

That doesn't make sense because if there is a problem with the...

Knox trails off when MADGE walks into the room.

She stands at one end of the table and looks between Lynx, Knox, and Chell.

MADGE

What's the delay?

Lynx takes a deep breath.

Knox opens his mouth to speak but is stopped by Lynx holding up a hand.

LYNX

The core isn't responding.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - AFTERNOON

The clearing is busy with DRONEMEDIANS rushing around with TABLETS.

The WIRE with the black BOXES remains unnoticed and untouched.

KEY, AYA, and BAY land off to the side of the core.

They are followed shortly by DANE.

AYA

It's not always like this, is it?

Key just shrugs.

Bay and Dane step closer to the core, disrupting multiple Dronemedians' paths.

The High Council members observe the clearing in silence for a beat.

MADGE, LYNX, CHELL, and KNOX appear from a white BUILDING.

Madge immediately makes her way to where Aya and Key are standing.

MADGE

Dane, Bay, get away from there.

Bay steps away almost immediately.

Dane reluctantly steps away after a beat.

Knox kneels to inspect a blue BOX that has multiple WIRES connected to it.

Lynx and Chell with TABLETS in their hands watch Knox.

AYA

What's going on?

Madge looks at Knox before looking back at Aya.

MADGE

Something is wrong with the core.

The High Council group turns to watch Knox.



After a beat, Knox stands and he, Lynx, and Chell disappear into another white building.

LATER

Dane and Bay now sit on a tree branch overlooking the clearing.

Key, Aya, and Madge stand at the edge of the clearing.

Dronemedians still rush around the core.

After a beat, a disheveled Lynx appears from a building and makes his way over to where Madge stands.

LYNX

We believe the core is operational now.

(Beat.)

Do you still want to proceed with firing?

Madge looks at Aya and Key before looking up at Dane and Bay.

A beat of silence.

Madge takes a deep breath.

MADGE

Yes, go ahead and proceed.

EXT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 - AFTERNOON

A grey MISSILE lets out a loud CRACK just before it hits the side of the Gauntlet.

A loud HISS is heard as parts of the Gauntlet's METAL exterior melt and almost immediately harden into lumpy drips down the side of the ship.

LIGHTS on the outside and inside of the spacecraft start to flash red.

INT. GAUNTLET 17-A-2 (ADMINISTRATION COMMAND) - AFTERNOON

The room is an oval. The walls and floors are pristinely white and reflect flashing red light.

In the center of the room is a large circular TABLE with a SCREEN for a top. Above the table floats a large holographic GLOBE. A miniature GAUNTLET and ANDROMEDA sit in the middle of globe.

Various POP-UPS appear on the outer rim of the globe, identifying different stars and listing Andromeda's planetary statistics.

Other TABLES with screen tops are disbursed throughout the room, with a couple plush black STOOLS scattered amongst them.

CLAQUIANS move about the room in a panic.

ADMIRAL ZDI, AMBASSADOR ZPL, COMMANDER KNA, COMMANDER WDG, and COMMANDER IQE all stand around the center table.

MAL, ZIP, SIR, NAV, and EON all whiz around their respective Claquian's heads, letting out insistent clicks.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Aim for the power supply.

Commander IQE presses something on the screen in front of them.

A RED CIRCLE appears on the holographic Andromeda.

All the Claquians and Clanises in the room fall still and quiet as their eyes are trained on Admiral ZDI, who is focusing on the red circle.

A beat of silence.

ADMIRAL ZDI

Fire.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (CORE OUTPUT) - AFTERNOON

KEY, AYA, MADGE, BAY and DANE all stand in the clearing, talking amongst themselves.

LYNX, CHELL, and KNOX stand a couple feet away, also talking amongst themselves.

Other DRONEMEDIANS mill about the clearing with TABLETS.

A small blue STREAK whizzes through the air.

By the time, the Dronemedians in the clearing notice the streak, it hits a particularly large purple WIRE right where it starts to disappear into the CORE.

The wire explodes into fiery PIECES and the force of the explosion sends everyone in the clearing reeling backwards.

Key's back slams into a tree TRUNK.

Their eyes slowly close as their head tilts upward.

After a couple beats of labored breathing, Key's eyes open.

They stand up straight as their wings outstretch behind them.

Key looks over in time to see a charred lump of FUR fall off their wing and onto the ground.

They take a deep breath.

Key flies straight up until they're above the tree line.

Key surveys the sky.

The Gauntlet can no longer be seen.

Key sucks in a breath before looking down at the clearing below.

FADE OUT.

END OF PATH 3.

## **RESULT OF CHOICE 2B, OPTION 2.**

- Ambassador ZPL and Commander KNA teleport down to the surface in a public area. Key sees them and brings them to the High Council. But unknown to the Dronemedians, while this High Council meeting is going on, Commander WDG and Commander IQE are surveying Andromeda and stumble upon the Core Output.
- Commander WDG and Commander IQE get quite nosey and start messing with the technology at the Core Output and ultimately causes a small explosion. No Dronemedians are there to see the actual explosion or the Claquians.
- After the explosion and meeting with the High Council, all the Claquians return to the Gauntlet.
- Dronemedians fix the damage caused from the explosion, but they can't find any solid evidence about what or who caused it.

**(RESULT OF CHOICE 3A(1), OPTION 2.)**

- The High Council is called to meet the next day for a briefing about the explosion at the Core Output and to decide what they want to do about the Claquians. Madge and the other Elders decide that they need more information about the Claquians before they make any more decisions about the matter.

**INSERT CHOICE 3B(4).**

**OPTION 1: Vote for a diplomatic gathering with the Claquians. (Go to page 183)**

**OPTION 2: Vote for a knowledge exchange with the Claquians. (Go to page 200)**

**RESULT OF CHOICE 4B(3) & 3B(4), OPTION 2.**

- The High Council votes for a two-part knowledge exchange and the Claquians agree.
- For the first part of the knowledge exchange, Commander IQE, Commander KNA, Commander WDG, and Ambassador ZPL teleport down to the surface to gather research. This quickly turns into them mutating various plant life while they are trying to figure out to clone it. The Claquians hide it from the Dronemedians and go back to the Gauntlet before the mutated plants are discovered.
- For the second part of the knowledge exchange, a group of High Council members, including Key, Aya, Dane, Saul, and Bay, teleport onto the Gauntlet for a tour. The Claquians use this tour as time to study and learn more about the Dronemedian species. They also try to sedate Aya in an attempt to clone her, but the Dronemedians don't let this happen and leave quickly.
- The next day, the High Council meets to attempt to decide how to proceed with the Claquians, but a final decision is never reached.

- At another High Council meeting, held a day or two later, further investigation is presented, and it is revealed that Claquians were present at the Core Output when the explosion happened.
- The High Council decides to bring Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL to trial. During this trial, the Dronemedians speak of their philosophy on a nature-focused society as a way to attempt to preserve the core's energy. This leads the Claquians to bring up their home planet, the dead and abandoned Quian, and they also admit that they don't know how to fix what they have done on Andromeda (mutating plant life and the Core explosion).
- After hearing the Claquian's pleas, the High Council decides to give the Claquians two days to try and fix the mutation in the plants, in order for the mutation not to spread.
- During the two-day period, Claquians teleport back and forth from the Gauntlet to Andromeda. However, they don't fix the mutation and instead they are successful in cloning the certain kind of plant.

- After the two-day period and learning about what the Claquians did, the High Council decides to destroy the cloned plant and basically exiles the Claquians from ever coming back to Andromeda.
- The Claquians teleport back to the Gauntlet, acting like they've been defeated in their mission, but they still have quite a bit of data on Andromeda's life.
- When the Gauntlet doesn't leave orbit after a day, the High Council votes to fire at it again. This time, the missile barely missing the Gauntlet's engine containment unit.

FADE OUT.  
END OF PATH 4.



## IV. WORLDBUILDING

### Andromeda (an-draa-muh-duh)

- Nature / Environment Basics:
  - Incredibly lush and full of plant life, basically a tropical rainforest on steroids (oversized, huge trees, flowers, etc.)
  - One star, Astra, and 3 moons, Cybelle, Rayi, and Panos
    - Moons are heavily and widely worshipped, because of this, they have been left untouched and unexplored

### Dronemedians (drone-medians)

- Physical Description:
  - Slightly humanoid, but also dragon-ish and lemur-ish
  - Silvery-bluish skin & fur, bat-like wings, tails with black rings, large eyes, elf-like ears
- Society:
  - Names are typically short, one or two syllables
  - Live in treehouse villages with bigger communal buildings being on the ground
  - Especially prefer to be in the trees than on the ground
  - Not a lot of ladders or bridges
    - Not very accessible to visitors
  - Does have an industrial sector, but it's hushed and hidden away to present a more nature-focused civilization

- Uses energy from within the planet's core
- They believe if they preserve the landscape as much as possible and not focus on industrialization, the energy / power will never run out
- Has satellites orbiting the planet (not the moons, as mentioned before), somewhat dabbled in space flight and exploration but not a big focus
- Government:
  - Has a Parliament-like body called the "High Council"
    - 100 members, elected by the community
  - The "figureheads" of the community are the group of elders
    - Elders have very little to no power, somewhat act like advisors for the High Council
    - Highly regarded by the community
- Inspirations:
  - *Avatar* (2009): Pandora, Na'vi

Quian (ka-wean)

- Nature / Environment Basics:
  - Abandoned, once a high-tech industrial planet
  - Little to no life left behind
    - If there was life left at time of abandonment, it has died out at this point

Claquians (ca-lack-ians)

- Physical Description:
  - Humanoid (more so than the Dronemedians)
    - Completely gold in color, plastic-like skin, four arms (all originating from the shoulder area), 3 completely white and glowing eyes
  - Clanis:
    - Two interlocking rings with an orb of light in the middle
    - Voice is quite robotic
    - Each Claquian has their own Clanis
      - Wirelessly connected to the Claquian via an implant in their brain
      - Main focus is to help with health
      - Have access to the Claquian's innermost thoughts
        - Can and will be sarcastic or mean

- Society:
  - Names are a combination of 3 letters
    - Clanises can be named by their Claquian, but aren't restricted to the naming system
  - Quite mobile in interstellar travel in an expansive spacecraft fleet
    - Spacecrafts are quite large, typically have 2,000 to 4,000 aboard and can sustain a population for multiple generations
    - Maker ships are even larger but have less aboard as their main function is to make more spacecrafts
      - Highly automated process
      - Aboard are mainly engineers
  - Disperses various outposts on different planets in different star systems
    - But have a tendency not to come back or keep contact once they leave
    - As time goes on, those who volunteer to be part of the outposts know this
      - Lucky outposts eventually merge and become part of the planet's native population
      - Not-so lucky outposts die out
- Government:
  - The fleet is loosely connected but in general, each ship operates independently
    - Varying rules about inviting people onto their spacecrafts, but generally are quite welcoming to other species

- Order of Command:
  - Admiral
  - Commanders (Admiral's crew - flying the spacecraft, heads of departments)
  - Lieutenants (work for the ship - includes teachers, engineers to help with mechanics of the ship, security teams)
  - The rest of the general population of the ship (family members of the crew, other species from different planets, travelers)
  
- Inspirations:
  - *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987): Starfleet, USS Enterprise
  - *Big Hero 6* (2014): Baymax
  - *The Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* (2017): The Sovereign species

## V. CHARACTER LIST

- Dronemedians:
  - Key (Main Character / Viewer / Reader)
    - Androgynous, they / them
    - Quite young, lives with friends
    - Sits on the High Council of Andromeda
    - No significant other or offspring
  - Fleur and Zero, Key's two housemates / friends
    - Fleur works with children, teaching them about climbing and flying, works with a lot of other High Council members' kids
    - Zero makes fashion accessories like necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and things to wear on their wings and tails
  - Other High Council members
    - Dane, Aya, Saul, Pax, Bay, Lula, Jor, Alix
  - Elders
    - Madge
      - Conducts High Council meetings
  - Hud
    - Madge's confidant
  - Industrial Complex workers:
    - Lynx
      - Head of communications
    - Knox

- Head of power consolation
  - Chell
    - Satellite operator
- Claquians:
  - Admiral ZDI of Gauntlet 17-A-2
    - Comes from a family of Admirals and Commanders
    - Clanis: Mal
  - Commanders
    - KNA - Head of Security
      - Clanis: Sir
    - WDG - Head of Navigation
      - Clanis: Nav
    - IQE - Head of Engineering
      - Clanis: Eon
  - Ambassador ZPL
    - Rejoined the fleet after being part of a successful outpost
    - Main job is to advise the Admiral on decisions relating to outposts and other visitors outside the Claquian species
    - Clanis: Zip
  - Lieutenants
    - CXL
      - Clanis: CC

## VI. CHOICE OUTLINES

### Path #1 - "New Home"

- Scenes 1-6: Introduction.
  - INSERT CHOICE 1.
    - OPTION 1: Vote to communicate with the unknown spacecraft.  
(Keep reading)
    - OPTION 2: Vote to fire at the unknown spacecraft. (Go to Path 3 or 4, Scene 7)
- Scenes 7-11: The High Council votes to attempt to communicate. A group of High Council members go to the Core Output to learn more about the process of sending a message and are presented with two different messages.
  - INSERT CHOICE 2A.
    - OPTION 1: "This is the High Council of Andromeda; we request that you state who you are and where you hail from. Regardless, we welcome you to our lovely Andromeda." (Keep reading)
    - OPTION 2: "This is the High Council of Andromeda; we request that you state who you are, where you hail from, and what brings you to our Andromeda." (Go to Path 2, Scene 12)
- Scenes 12-14: Instead of a return message, a couple of Claquians come down to the surface, this freaks out a lot of Dronemedians. Key, Fleur, and Zero see the whole situation, so Key runs off to speak to them and bring them to the High Council.



- Scenes 14-15: There's a peaceful meeting of the High Council members and the Claquians, who explain they're just exploring the star system. The Claquians go back to their ship afterwards.
- Scene 16: Key heads home.
  - INSERT CHOICE 3A(1).
    - OPTION 1: Go out to the main room. (Keep reading)
    - OPTION 2: Go back to sleep. (Go to Path 4, Scene 13)
- Scenes 17-23: High Council members are invited to tour the Gauntlet and Key accepts. After the tour of the ship, there's a meeting with Admiral ZDI and other staff where the Dronemedians can ask questions. Key asks about space flight.
- Scenes 24-27: After returning to the surface, Key goes to visit their parents. Key's mom brings out some scrapbooks which hints at Key's love for space.
- Scenes: 28-32: The next day, Claquians (including Ambassador ZPL but not Admiral ZDI) come down for a proper tour of the surface. Key is volunteered to be their tour guide and takes them to the Core Output.
- Scenes 33-36: After the tour, Ambassador ZPL gets permission to stay on the surface a little longer. Key, not wanting to leave Ambassador ZPL stranded, takes them back to the treehouse to meet Fleur and Zero. Key takes Ambassador ZPL out to see the tree canopy. Ambassador ZPL asks if Key ever gets bored of the surface which Key sheepishly admits that they do. Ambassador ZPL mentions the Claquians' process of accepting travelers (basically a trial of pleading to Admiral ZDI). Key counters with that they would have to get permission from the High

Council. The discussion pretty much ends there. Key is left once again to look up at the Gauntlet.

- Scenes 37-38: The next day, Key goes to talk to Madge about living on the Gauntlet.
- Scenes 39-40: Madge presents Key's case to the High Council. There's some debate, but eventually a decision is made to let Key leave on the Gauntlet if Admiral ZDI will allow it.
- Scene 41: Key talks to Ambassador ZPL and they are able to get a meeting with Admiral ZDI.
- Scenes 42-44: During the last part of the meeting where Admiral ZDI is giving his permission, the Gauntlet is called to another Claquian ship that needs help. Key is left to make their decision right there.
- Scenes 44-45: They agree to live on the Gauntlet and are sent back to the surface to pack up their belongings.
- Scenes 46-47: Key says a tearful goodbye to their parents, Fleur, and Zero.
- Scenes 48-50: When Key gets back to the ship, Ambassador ZPL leads them to their new room.

## Path #2 - “Already Dead”

- Scenes 1-6: Introduction.
  - INSERT CHOICE 1.
    - OPTION 1: Vote to communicate with the unknown spacecraft.  
(Keep reading)
    - OPTION 2: Vote to fire at the unknown spacecraft. (Go to Path 3 or 4, Scene 7)
- Scenes 7-11: The High Council votes to attempt to communicate. A group of High Council members go to the Core Output to learn more about the process of sending a message and are presented with two different messages.
  - INSERT CHOICE 2A.
    - OPTION 1: “This is the High Council of Andromeda; we request that you state who you are and where you hail from. Regardless, we welcome you to our lovely Andromeda.” (Go to Path 1, Scene 12)
    - OPTION 2: “This is the High Council of Andromeda; we request that you state who you are, where you hail from, and what brings you to our Andromeda.” (Keep reading)
- Scenes 12-20: They open communications and get a coded message from the Gauntlet. A group of High Council members, including Key, decode it only to find it doesn’t make sense.
- Scene 21: Madge decides to investigate the Gauntlet.

- INSERT CHOICE 3A(2).
  - OPTION 1: Ask for a team. (Keep reading)
  - OPTION 2: Go alone. (Go to Path 3, Scene 16)
- Scene 22-29: Key and a group of others are sent up to the Gauntlet.
- Scene 30: After finding the main control area of the ship, Key finds the bodies of Admiral ZDI, Commander WDG, and Commander IQE and assumes they're dead.
- Scene 31: After some debate both among the Dronemedians aboard the Gauntlet and also the ones back on the surface, they decide to transport the three bodies back to the surface to try to figure out more information about them.
- Scene 32: While the Dronemedians are doing that, Ambassador ZPL wakes up on the Gauntlet and almost immediately sends a message down to the surface.
- Scene 33-35: The message is received and Ambassador ZPL comes down to the surface to explain the situation - The Claquians were engaged in a war with another species, but the war wasn't going to be resolved anytime soon so a handful of Claquian ships put their crews into a frozen sleeping / comatose state and set course for the farthest reaches of their galaxy.
- Scene 36-40: After explaining this, Ambassador ZPL shows the Dronemedians how to wake up the other Claquians and enlists them to wake up the entire ship, which Key helps with.
- Scene 41-45: The Claquians head back to the Gauntlet to figure out how far they traveled. They quickly figure out they are way further away than they originally planned and in unexplored territory for the Claquians.

- Scene 46-47: Admiral ZDI comes up with a plan to plant an outpost on Andromeda and then go out exploring the galaxy.
- Scene 48-49: The High Council is hesitant about this plan but after some deliberation, they decide to agree to the outpost with Ambassador ZPL as the leader.

### Path #3 - "Sister Planet"

- Scenes 1-6: Introduction.
  - INSERT CHOICE 1.
    - OPTION 1: Vote to communicate with the unknown spacecraft.  
(Go to Path 1 or 2, Scene 7)
    - OPTION 2: Vote to fire at the unknown spacecraft. (Keep reading)
- Scene 7-9: The High Council votes to fire at the Gauntlet and a group of High Council heads to the Core Output to learn about the missile that they will fire at the spacecraft.
- Scene 10: Key goes back home to talk to Fleur about what has happened.
  - INSERT CHOICE 2B.
    - OPTION 1: Stay distrustful of the spacecraft. (Keep reading)
    - OPTION 2: Have hope that the spacecraft and its inhabitants are actually friendly. (Go to Path 4, Scene 11)
- Scene 11: The Gauntlet sends down a message that they have come to tell them that Andromeda has a dying sister planet across the star system. The Claquians came across the sister planet first and were instructed to come to Andromeda to hopefully help the other planet.
- Scene 12-14: The High Council is suspicious of this explanation because their prior dabble in space exploration didn't reveal a sister planet.
- Scene 15: Key is approached about doing a stealth mission to find out more information, which they agree to.

- INSERT CHOICE 3B(3).
  - OPTION 1: Ask for a team. (Go to Path 2, Scene 22)
  - OPTION 2: Go alone. (Keep reading)
- Scene 16-18: Key is the only one actually going on the Gauntlet and has a crew on the surface.
- Scene 18-22: Key finds information about the abandoned Quian and thinks it's the sister planet and comes to believe that Claquians stole all the energy from the planet and then abandoned it.
- Scene 23-24: There's a lot of debate about what to do, and it is decided that they'll request to bring Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL in front of the Council for a trial of killing a planet and suspicion of attempting to do the same thing to Andromeda.
- Scene 25: They hold the trial which ends in basically a shouting match because the Claquians find out and get mad because Key snuck onto the Gauntlet and then the High Council find out and get mad because the Claquians lied about the sister planet (they came up with the sister planet as an excuse to stop the High Council from firing at them).
- Scene 26-28: Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL go back to the Gauntlet, but in the middle of the night, they send two Claquians back to the surface. The two Claquians find out about Andromeda's industrial sector.
- Scene 29: After reporting back to Admiral ZDI, he calls for backup from a nearby Claquian ship.

- Scene 30: The High Council is called to meet the next day. Madge and the other Elders decide that they need more information about the Claquians before they make any more decisions about the matter.
  - INSERT CHOICE 4B(3).
    - OPTION 1: Vote for a diplomatic gathering with the Claquians.  
(Keep reading)
    - OPTION 2: Vote for a knowledge exchange with the Claquians.  
(Go to Path 4, Scene 16)
- Scene 31-32: The gathering is turned into a set-up by the Claquians to put the High Council under arrest for attempting to kill their own planet without their citizens' consent.
- Scene 33: The Claquians hold their trial, but once again, the trial ends in basically a screaming match, so the High Council returns home.
- Scene 34-35: Two Claquians are once again sent down to the surface, but this time to the Core Output to place power tracking devices on certain cords and such.
- Scene 36-37: The next day, when the Gauntlet still hasn't left orbit, the High Council wants to fire at the Gauntlet, but the devices make the Core stop responding to the computer so a group of engineers and High Council members, including Key, go out to the Core.
- Scene 38-39: After they think they "fixed" the Core, the group stays at the Output and the High Council decides to directly fire at the Gauntlet.



- Scene 40-41: The shot hits the Gauntlet causing some noticeable damage. In response, the Gauntlet fires at the Core Output, which causes a huge explosion, before they leave orbit quickly and basically disappear into space.

## Path #4 - "Invasive Species"

(Scene numbers marked with an \* are tentative)

- Scenes 1-6: Introduction.
  - INSERT CHOICE 1.
    - OPTION 1: Vote to communicate with the unknown spacecraft.  
(Go to Path 1 or 2, Scene 7)
    - OPTION 2: Vote to fire at the unknown spacecraft. (Keep reading)
- Scene 7-9: The High Council votes to fire at the Gauntlet and a group of High Council heads to the Core Output to learn about the missile that they will fire at the spacecraft.
- Scene 10: Key goes back home to talk to Fleur about what has happened.
  - INSERT CHOICE 2B.
    - OPTION 1: Stay distrustful of the spacecraft. (Go to Path 3, Scene 11)
    - OPTION 2: Have hope that the spacecraft and its inhabitants are actually friendly. (Keep reading)
- Scene 11\*: Ambassador ZPL and Commander KNA teleport down to the surface in a public area. Key sees them and brings them to the High Council. But unknown to the Dronemedians, while this High Council meeting is going on, Commander WDG and Commander IQE are surveying Andromeda and stumble upon the Core Output.
- Scene 12\*: Commander WDG and Commander IQE get quite nosey and start messing with the technology at the Core Output and ultimately causes a small

explosion. No Dronemedians are there to see the actual explosion or the Claquians.

- Scene 13\*: After the explosion and meeting with the High Council, all the Claquians return to the Gauntlet.
- Scene 14\*: Dronemedians fix the damage caused from the explosion, but they can't find any solid evidence about what or who caused it.
- Scene 15\*: The High Council is called to meet the next day for a briefing about the explosion at the Core Output and to decide what they want to do about the Claquians. Madge and the other Elders decide that they need more information about the Claquians before they make any more decisions about the matter.
  - INSERT CHOICE 3B(4).
    - OPTION 1: Vote for a diplomatic gathering with the Claquians.  
(Go to Path 3, Scene 24)
    - OPTION 2: Vote for a knowledge exchange with the Claquians.  
(Keep reading)
- Scene 16\*: The High Council votes for a two-part knowledge exchange and the Claquians agree.
- Scene 17\*: For the first part of the knowledge exchange, Commander IQE, Commander KNA, Commander WDG, and Ambassador ZPL teleport down to the surface to gather research. This quickly turns into them mutating various plant life while they are trying to figure out to clone it. The Claquians hide it from the Dronemedians and go back to the Gauntlet before the mutated plants are discovered.

- Scene 18\*: For the second part of the knowledge exchange, a group of High Council members, including Key, Aya, Dane, Saul, and Bay, teleport onto the Gauntlet for a tour. The Claquians use this tour as time to study and learn more about the Dronemedian species. They also try to sedate Aya in an attempt to clone her, but the Dronemedians don't let this happen and leave quickly.
- Scene 19\*: The next day, the High Council meets to attempt to decide how to proceed with the Claquians, but a final decision is never reached.
- Scene 20\*: At another High Council meeting, held a day or two later, further investigation is presented, and it is revealed that Claquians were present at the Core Output when the explosion happened.
- Scene 21\*: The High Council decides to bring Admiral ZDI and Ambassador ZPL to trial. During this trial, the Dronemedians speak of their philosophy on a nature-focused society as a way to attempt to preserve the core's energy. This leads the Claquians to bring up their home planet, the dead and abandoned Quian, and they also admit that they don't know how to fix what they have done on Andromeda (mutating plant life and the Core explosion).
- Scene 22\*: After hearing the Claquian's pleas, the High Council decides to give the Claquians two days to try and fix the mutation in the plants, in order for the mutation not to spread.
- Scene 23\*: During the two-day period, Claquians teleport back and forth from the Gauntlet to Andromeda. However, they don't fix the mutation and instead they are successful in cloning the certain kind of plant.

- Scene 24\*: After the two-day period and learning about what the Claquians did, the High Council decides to destroy the cloned plant and basically exiles the Claquians from ever coming back to Andromeda.
- Scene 25\*: The Claquians teleport back to the Gauntlet, acting like they've been defeated in their mission, but they still have quite a bit of data on Andromeda's life.
- Scene 26\*: When the Gauntlet doesn't leave orbit after a day, the High Council votes to fire at it again. This time, the missile barely missing the Gauntlet's engine containment unit.