

# The Homecoming



# The Homecoming

A Novella

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# **First Contact**



**Prologue**  
**August 24, 2087**  
**The South Pole**

Amanda Whitestone was flexing the fingers of her left hand, looking over the shoulders of one of the male technical operators seated in front of the central control console inside Sky Shield's underground bunker. The 36-year-old brunette with hazel-colored eyes and well-defined cheekbones was staring at a computer screen, tracking the progression of a large convoy of objects fast approaching Earth. They'd materialized out of nowhere, passed the moon, and were on the final leg of their journey.

The large, hollow installation known as Sky Shield was humming with activity. It was impressive looking with all its sophisticated computers filling up over 5,000 square feet of hidden working space. The bunker was located five hundred feet beneath the permafrost surface of the South Pole. At ground level, the agency's headquarters looked unassuming and similar to the likes of a large utility warehouse. It was located a mere stone's throw away from the spacious and prestigious looking Presidential Palace.

Due to the harsh weather conditions that existed at the New World Government's South Polar complex, many of the executive offices had been constructed underground. A bevy of tunnels connected the different government buildings. One needn't brave the horrid outside weather conditions to get from one complex to another.

Amanda was concerned. She and her staff of 100 technicians were keeping a close watch on the fast-moving fleet of alien ships. She'd had an uneasy feeling about the whole situation from the first time she was informed that contact had been established.

Amanda was a brilliant director and competent at her job. She'd been serving as Director of Sky Shield for the past five years and had a stellar record in keeping the planet unscathed from potentially dangerous near-Earth objects that routinely whizzed by. Mostly, the celestial debris that her staff monitored were harmless. But on several occasions, they'd been forced to vaporize large space rocks that would have been harmful to the world. Amanda believed that some of the more prominent objects they'd encountered were probably part of the same debris field that had produced the tremendous catastrophic incident of 2036.

Amanda continued to watch the flotilla's progress on the computer screen. Some ships were fanning out and moving away from the central cluster. Her eyebrows arched upward. "I want extra coverage on the ones coming from the sides," she ordered. The

director was wearing a headset and microphone so the technical staff could hear her commands.

The computer screen she'd been observing changed; it showed three views. The leading group of ships was still visible, but now two additional views were monitoring the progression of the crafts that had deviated from the others.

“Do you want the cannons locked and loaded on all targets, Director?” said a voice through Amanda's earpiece. The question had come from a technician working the floor. He was referring to the giant atomic lasers capable of vaporizing incoming meteors.

Amanda smiled while continuing to follow the blips on the screen in front. “Keep them locked on the targets but unloaded.” She took a deep breath and exhaled the air from her lungs. “I don't expect we'll be firing at any targets today.” She clicked off the microphone for a second with a hand controller fastened to her belt and said to herself, “Of course that's always subject to change.”



## **Chapter One**

### **January 2036**

In the year 2036, Earth suffered the worst cataclysmic event in modern, recorded history. A small meteor known as TS-723 struck the Pacific Ocean halfway between the Hawaiian Islands and the Western coastline of the United States. The energy generated from the celestial object sent a 400 foot wall of water in multiple directions, which affected every landmass on the planet.

The shockwave generated from the meteor's impact with the ocean's saltwater caused a massive electromagnetic pulse that spread across the globe at the incomprehensible speed of light. The electromagnetic radiation destroyed many electronic components that were an integral part of the planet's technological infrastructure and set off a myriad of inland explosions that matched the intensity of hundreds of nuclear warheads detonated simultaneously.

In several hours, the world's major cities were dealt a crippling blow, and the global population was reduced by over seventy-five percent. The Earth's technological capabilities became nonexistent in a short period.

The United States, China, Russia, and other traditional superpowers were reduced in strength and status to the likes of third-world countries.

For ten years, the most advanced forms of communication were limited to basic equipment. Shortwave radios, walkie talkies, and computer systems were reverse engineered and manufactured by survivors. The new technology was distributed to locations resettled and designated to be the modern cities of the post-cataclysmic world.

By the year 2056, the ingenuity of humanity had blossomed once more across the entire planet. The new Earth featured a civilization fast becoming as technologically advanced as the one vaporized only 20 years earlier.

Although the new Earth resembled the old one from a technological perspective, it was much different. New Earth's governmental design was based on a global construct instead of the previous traditional model where sovereign countries and territories littered the planet. The old antiquated model had been used on Earth for as long as modern history could recall. It had been predicated on independent countries attempting to get along with one another. The citizenry that made up the new world had outlawed the prior template, and a New World Government had been elected and was at the South Pole.

With a new global government, many of humanity's past mistakes had been averted in the post-cataclysmic world.

War, which had been such a significant part of old Earth, had also been outlawed by the New World Government along with military installations and armies. The world's entire nuclear arsenal had been collected and dismantled; the remnants buried in deep caverns in what used to be known as the Midwestern United States.

By 2066, most of Earth's younger people didn't remember the catastrophe of 2036. They learned about the tragedy through lessons taught in public schools and by watching television documentaries that discussed how, in the old world, people from different countries waged war on one another and robbed each other's natural resources.

In retrospect, the catastrophe of 2036 was thought of by many in the new world as a great blessing. It was referred to by scholars as the great cataclysm that saved planet Earth.



## **Chapter Two**

### **January 2086**

In the year 2086, post-cataclysmic Earth elected its fourth president, Roberto Hernando Chavez. President Chavez had been voted into office for a ten-year term via the same election system that had elected his predecessors, Presidents Hamilton, Cologne, and Schwartz.

Chavez had received the most popular votes of any elected president that had served in the New World Government. President Chavez was very popular with the world community. Like most political candidates that achieved elected status in the new world, his ideas about running the government resonated well with the citizenry.

Modern politics had changed on post-cataclysmic Earth. Eliminating political parties was one such change embraced by people globally. Citizens had determined that political parties precluded a society from electing free-thinking leaders that were unencumbered and free from the influences of cronyism and other types of political conflicts of interest.

In the new political system, politicians ran their campaigns on more genuine platforms, and their political strategies were based on their ideas. They weren't bound to thematic paradigms supported by entire parties.

The New World Government on post-cataclysmic Earth worked, and it did so because the framers of the new government set out to create a brand-new constitution that was both fair and balanced. Their goal from the document's inception was to ensure the world's citizens a safe governing system that wouldn't trample their rights. The result was a constitutional document built on ironclad principles fair to all law-abiding citizens.

After the great cataclysm of 2036, citizens got together and attempted to eliminate crime and corruption. The new society no longer tolerated criminal behavior and crimes against humanity. Individuals found to be acting outside the parameters of the law were sentenced to harsh conditions in giant prisons that had been built at the North Pole.

The North Polar prisons were magnificent structures and could house millions of inmates. In the New World Government, there were absolutely no second chances for people that disrespected the agreed-upon laws of the land. There was a zero-tolerance policy for murderers and rapists. Such persons were euthanized.

In 2086, violent crimes throughout the world involved less than five percent of the global population. This percentage had decreased

over the past 20 years according to information recorded and kept by the World Police Force.

Never, in the history of modern Earth, had the planet's citizens demonstrated more love and respect for one another. The principles and basic structure of the New World Government were working, and the planet, for the first time, was indeed a peaceful place.



### **Chapter Three**

#### **June 2087**

#### **The South Pole**

In June 2087, something remarkable happened to the people living on post-cataclysmic Earth. It was the 21<sup>st</sup> day of June when the event occurred, and like the catastrophe of 2036, what transpired on this day would forever change the lives of almost every person within the global community.

President Chavez was in the middle of a meeting with his administrative staff when he was interrupted by two male bodyguards dressed in dark blue suits. They had been sent by the Director of the World Space Agency, Robert Johnson, to summon the president. Chavez, a robust, healthy-looking man of Spanish descent, ended the meeting with his Cabinet members and exited the large conference room.

The white, male bodyguards were large in stature, about six feet tall with muscular builds. They walked on each side of Chavez, saying nothing, as the three made their way down a long hallway inside the presidential complex.

Chavez was a very handsome man in his late sixties. He featured a medium build with a receding grey hairline, high cheekbones, brown eyes, and dark-colored skin. He was wearing a light brown suit and a gold tie.

When the three reached the end of the hallway, they came to a large, closed, opaque glass door. The guard on Chavez's right side removed a keycard from his suit pocket and held it up to a small brown panel on the door. The door slid open, and the three men walked into a secure conference room. The guards then retreated into the hallway before the glass door slid closed.

Robert Johnson, a good-looking heavy-set man in his mid-forties, was standing in front of a large glass conference table facing the president. He had on a black suit and a blue tie. Johnson had dark skin and a full mustache. An opened black leather briefcase was positioned on the tabletop in front of him, along with multiple stacks of paper.

“Good afternoon, sir,” Johnson said. “I apologize for interrupting your meeting, but we have a developing situation that needs your immediate attention.”

Chavez swallowed hard. He was almost afraid to ask what was so pressing that the Director of The World Space Agency had to see him. He was praying it wasn't another meteor on a collision course with Earth. “What is the problem?” Chavez asked.

“Sir,” Johnson said, before clearing his throat. “I have some news to report that, quite frankly, defies logic. I never thought I would be saying these words to you.”

Chavez’s eyebrows arched upward. “Well, don’t keep me in suspense, out with it already.”

Johnson glanced down at the papers in front of him before raising his head. He walked away from the conference table and approached the president. “Sir, we have made contact with an alien civilization.”

Chavez stared at Johnson for a few seconds without uttering a word. He was not expecting that answer from his space agency director. After a few seconds of uncomfortable silence, he managed to speak. “Are you certain?”

“We’re a hundred percent certain.”

Chavez walked over to the other side of the conference table, where Johnson had the stacks of paper laid out. The president stared at them. There were several lengthy reports, diagrams, and charts. He noticed one paper appeared to be a drawing of a foreign-looking solar system. Chavez’s mind was racing in a thousand directions. “Robert, I don’t know what to say. This is pretty unbelievable.” Chavez continued to stare at the table, paging through the documents with his fingers. “You’re certain about this?”

Johnson nodded. “Yes, Mr. President.”

Chavez broke his concentration and looked up from the table at his director. “What do they want? Are they friendly?”

Johnson was very businesslike, a consummate professional. “It appears, Mr. President, that they are not hostile and pose no immediate threat to Earth. Regarding your question about what they want, they would very much like to set up a meeting and speak with you.”

Chavez smiled for a second. “Are you kidding me?”

“No, sir,” Johnson replied. There were no signs of emotion visible on his face.

“When and how do we set up such a meeting?” Chavez asked.

“They would like to have the meeting here. And they have requested the meeting take place within the next two months.”

“That’s soon,” Chavez remarked.

“I think they’re anxious, sir. And they’ve traveled a great distance to get here.”

Chavez pursed his lips, and his eyebrows arched upward again. “How far have they traveled?”

Johnson smiled for the first time. “15,800 light-years, Mr. President.”

**Chapter Four**  
**July 2087**  
**The South Pole**

The Presidential Palace was a madhouse over the next several weeks as members of the president's staff prepared for the Tresantarians' arrival. That's what the extraterrestrial civilization that had contacted Earth called themselves.

The Tresantarians lived on a small, blue planet called Tresantaras. Their world existed in a distant galaxy; 15,800 light-years removed from Earth.

On July 10, 2087, President Chavez announced to the global community that a benevolent race of alien beings had contacted the New World Government.

Citizens around the world had different reactions to Chavez's big announcement. Post-cataclysmic Earth featured a minority portion of the population with strong ties to Christian, Jewish, and Muslim belief constructs. Christianity, by far, was the most organized religion being practiced, and Vatican City still existed in the city of Rome in World Federal Zone # 26.

The Papacy did not recognize the New World Government's reclassification of countries into federal zones. Because of this ongoing, heated disagreement between the New World Government and Vatican City, the Papacy had been granted special permission by the New World Government to maintain its status as the only remaining sovereign country in the world.

The New World Government's decision to eliminate sovereign countries and create 33 federal zones on post-cataclysmic Earth had more to do with the federalists' belief it was necessary to develop and maintain a strong relationship between the government and its citizens than anything else. It was believed by New World Government leaders that such a bond between citizens and its governing body would create a synergistic effect, and this would ultimately yield a more peaceful world long into the future. It was also believed that eliminating independent countries would go a long way in keeping the peace between citizens and the government.

President Chavez, like his predecessors, was a big believer in the principle of synergy. He'd often stated that a world with independent countries was a world divided. Chavez believed that sovereign territories were inherently divisive and that the last thing the world needed was different segments of the population working against one another. That model, according to the president, had been a complete failure. It had created wars, bloodshed, and a dysfunctional planet.

Chavez's earlier career as a medical physician made him realize that an organism was only as healthy as its physiology allowed it to be. He understood that the wellbeing and strength of the human body were predicated on all bodily organs working together for the common good of the entire physiological system. He knew that when organ systems followed their independent agendas, cancers and other diseases developed.

President Chavez didn't want sovereign countries to exist in the post-cataclysmic world because he'd envisioned and wanted a global community working together for the common good of the entire planet. He was working to create a world that would become stronger through time and free of any political cancers.

The Papacy had written publicly about their disdain and total lack of respect for the New World Government. The pope, on more than a few occasions, had publicly called Chavez a direct threat to Christianity and the Roman Catholic Church.

As soon as President Chavez went public with his news about the Tresantarians, the Roman Catholic Church came out with a powerful statement of its own. The Papacy accused Chavez and the New World Government of fabricating the alien story to mislead and confuse followers of the church. According to the Vatican, the New World Government wanted to eliminate Christianity from the picture.

Vatican City's position was firm; it had drawn a line in the sand and had no intention of giving any public credibility to the New World Government's claim that the Tresantarians were a race of benevolent beings.

**Chapter Five**  
**August 10, 2087**  
**The South Pole**

There had been plenty of excitement at the Presidential Palace in the weeks leading up to the intergalactic meeting at the South Pole. President Chavez had received one communication from the visitors before their face to face meeting. The contact was made possible by a particular satellite feed the Tresantarians had provided for the New World Government.

The radio signals originated from an unknown location in space and were strategically bounced off the lunar surface and directed towards Earth.

The Tresantarians could broadcast messages to the people of Earth in any language deemed necessary to have an intelligent conversation.

The first official teleconference between the Tresantarian Leadership and President Chavez lasted for one hour. Chavez and his closest advisors attended. Also, Robert Johnson, the Director of

The World Space Agency, and Amanda Whitestone, the Director of Sky Shield, had been present.

Sky Shield was the government agency put in place by the New World Government to provide early detection against incoming celestial objects threatening the planet's population and infrastructure. Sky Shield's early detection technology was linked to an elaborate laser system developed ten years prior. It could vaporize small meteors bearing down on Earth. The government attempted to minimize the chance of another catastrophic event like the one in 2036.

The first meeting took place in one of the secure conference rooms housed inside the palace's main compound. A giant 200-inch television screen had been positioned at the front of the room. The president's Cabinet members, dressed in matching professional attire, were seated on black leather chairs that occupied the perimeter of a long, glass conference table. The tension in the room was palpable.

The teleconference had been scheduled for 10:00 a.m., and the Cabinet members along with Chavez assembled in the room beginning at 9:45 a.m. A little conversation, if any, took place between the attendees; most of the time had been spent by the different officials staring at the television screen in front. Before the commencement of the meeting, the television had featured a screensaver image of the New World Government's logo depicting a

drawing of the Earth with interlocking hands joining from across the globe. It symbolized the world's commitment to maintaining a peaceful planet.

At 10:00 a.m. precisely, the television screensaver in front was replaced by a picture of a blue planet suspended in space that looked eerily like Earth. The word TRESANTARAS overlaid the view of the celestial body. Moments later, a clear image of a humanoid-like creature had become visible on the television. It appeared male and very handsome looking. The being sported blonde hair, blue eyes, and a strong jawline.

The Tresantarian spoke to President Chavez and his Cabinet members in perfect English. The New World Government had long ago chosen English as the official World Language to minimize the confusion taking place between people worldwide. In Earth's recent past, language barriers had been a serious concern for humanity and were broadly thought to be one reason tensions regularly arose between different sovereign territories.

The extraterrestrial being explained to Chavez and his Cabinet members that the Tresantarians had contacted humanity in the hope the two civilizations could form a mutually beneficial relationship. He further explained his people could offer humans many technologies that could make life easier and more enjoyable. Some of the technological advancements included help with combatting deadly diseases that had plagued the people of Earth forever. Before

the meeting concluded, a firm date and time had been decided by the parties regarding a face to face summit that would be taking place at the Presidential Palace. It was scheduled for August 24, 2087.

**Chapter Six**  
**August 24, 2087**  
**The South Pole**

Amanda Whitestone, the Director of Sky Shield, continued to watch the flotilla's progress on the computer screen. Some ships were fanning out and moving away from the central cluster. Her eyebrows arched upward. "I want extra coverage on the ones coming from the sides," she ordered. The director was wearing a headset and microphone so the technical staff could hear her commands.

The computer screen she'd been observing changed; it showed three views. The leading group of ships was still visible, but now two additional views were monitoring the progression of the crafts that had deviated from the others.

"Do you want the cannons locked and loaded on all targets, Director?" said a voice through Amanda's earpiece. The question had come from a technician working the floor. He was referring to the giant atomic lasers capable of vaporizing incoming meteors.

Amanda smiled while continuing to follow the blips on the screen in front. “Keep them locked on the targets but unloaded.” She took a deep breath and exhaled the air from her lungs. “I don’t expect we’ll be firing at any targets today.” She clicked off the microphone for a second with a hand controller fastened to her belt and said, “Of course that’s always subject to change.”

President Chavez and his Cabinet members were waiting for their Tresantarian guests inside the Presidential Palace’s reception building. It was a beautiful and spacious hall where formal gatherings were held for federal dignitaries from different world zones when they visited the New World Government’s headquarters. The room had been constructed with a Victorian-style architecture as its theme. It was indeed a magnificent building that created a memorable first impression for guests.

When the New World Government was first planned many years earlier, the South Pole was chosen as the government’s home because the territory was not priorly occupied by any sovereign countries. The region had a strong representation of countries present for research only, so the logic employed by the government’s framers was that the South Pole would be a great neutral location to build the new governing body’s permanent home.

The Tresantarian spacecraft materialized from nowhere. It was a small vehicle that looked silver in color and appeared to be made

from some metal alloy. It featured no visible seams that had been held together by screws or rivets. Instead, the ship looked very smooth, almost as if it had been poured into a mold as a liquid that later solidified with no rough or projecting edges. Interestingly, there weren't any windows or portholes visible from where the president and his Cabinet members had been observing.

The weather had been cooperative on this day, and the visibility excellent. The favorable meteorological conditions were unusual; good weather days at the South Pole were few and far apart. You could generally count them during a given year on one hand.

The Tresantarian ship hovered a few feet above a designated aircraft parking area marked by a large, red-colored X. Once the vehicle landed, the parking area began to descend. The landing spot was the top of an elevator system that routinely brought aircraft to an underground hangar where crew members could exit indoors and away from the usually harsh weather conditions.

A reception team of eight assembled nearby the craft and waited for its occupants to exit. After a short period, a hatch materialized on the ship's side and slid open. A small ramp extended outward from the base of the vehicle until it touched the floor covered by a red carpet that continued from the spacecraft down a corridor that led to the main reception facility.

A few seconds later, three Tresantarian beings, two men and one woman, exited the spaceship. They were dressed in gray uniforms that appeared to be made of light, shiny material. The three beings were slender looking, about six feet tall. They were attractive looking creatures that resembled humans. If they'd not just exited a spacecraft and had been viewed on a city street dressed in conventional clothing, they'd have blended perfectly with the members of any Earthly community.

As the three Tresantarians walked down the red carpet towards the entranceway of the reception hall, they could be seen making small talk with some of the personnel that had greeted them. Everything had gone as planned, and a lot of the apprehension and tension experienced by staff members at the palace earlier had lessened.

Amanda Whitestone remained poised and ready to respond at a moment's notice if the situation suddenly turned sour. She carefully followed the critical events at the Presidential Palace 500 feet above her.

The remainder of the Tresantarian space fleet had remained off the planet and was maintaining a low-Earth orbit. The earpiece Amanda wore along with her strategic position inside the brain center of Sky Shield allowed the director to monitor the progress of

the intergalactic summit while keeping a close watch on the massive flotilla of extraterrestrial spaceships circling Earth.



**Chapter Seven**  
**August 24, 2087**  
**The South Pole**

After some formal introductions, handshakes, and photographs, the intergalactic summit between the New World Government and representatives from the planet Tresantaras finally got underway. President Chavez and his Cabinet members sat on one side of a Mahogany conference table, and the three Tresantarians sat opposite them.

Chavez began the meeting with a warm welcome. “On behalf of the world community and the citizens of Earth, I would like to welcome you here today. We are excited and honored to have you as our guests. We have been eagerly looking forward to this day with great anticipation.

“It’s my hope and desire that the conversations taking place today will be the beginning of a long friendship and alliance between our two civilizations.”

The female Tresantarian, seated between the two males, replied. She was a beautiful being with near-perfect looking features. Like her male counterparts, she had long flowing blonde hair and dark

blue eyes. Her face, like the males, displayed very prominent, Nordic features. Her body was lean and had the standard curves associated with an attractive human woman. “Mr. President, it is our honor to be here on your planet today. We appreciate the opportunity to form a friendship and alliance with the people of Earth.

“Our leadership back on Tresantaras was overwhelmed with joy that you accepted our offer to have this summit meeting.”

Chavez smiled. “Tell me,” he said before hesitating, “how do I address you?”

The woman smiled. “I am Shandra. This is Anron and Kaelin.” She pointed to the male beings on each side of her.

“Thank you,” Chavez said. “Shandra, how long was your journey to Earth?”

Shandra smiled. “We can travel great distances across the vastness of space in short periods. Although this will seem difficult for people of your world to comprehend, our journey to Earth from Tresantaras was accomplished in a few of your hours.”

Chavez raised his eyebrows and his forehead wrinkled. “Hours?”

“Yes, Mr. President. We can manipulate the physics of space and time in ways that your scientists have not yet discovered. But don’t worry, this technology will eventually be discovered and developed by your scientists in the future.”

“May I ask, Shandra, how is it possible that your civilization discovered Earth?”

“We have been observing Earth and the people of your world for a very long time. We will get into the specifics of this question in the future. But I can tell you that our leadership has been wanting to reach out to the citizens of your world for a while. Up until recently, there were obstacles firmly in place that precluded a summit such as this from taking place. Now that those barriers have been removed, we were finally able to extend the invitation we have longed to make.”

Chavez scratched the top of his head. He suddenly had a plethora of questions for the beautiful alien sitting opposite him. “Shandra, the people of Earth have long debated the existence of life in outer space. Are there other intelligent civilizations in the universe?”

Chandra smiled and turned towards Anron.

Anron replied to Chavez’s question. “Mr. President, life is very abundant throughout the universe. It is not the exception; it is the rule. There are many creator races of beings, and there are civilizations that have been in existence for varying amounts of time. Some are very young civilizations, and others have been around for extended periods.”

“Why is it, Anron, that we have not seen evidence of other civilizations on Earth before your arrival?”

“Mr. President, there are many extraterrestrial civilizations that have interacted with your planet. You would be surprised to know how many different species of alien life are involved with Earth.”

Chavez looked over his right shoulder at Robert Johnson. “If that’s true, Anron, why haven’t we observed them?”

Anron smiled before turning to Kaelin.

Kaelin hesitated and then replied. “Mr. Chavez, many of the civilizations interacting with Earth don’t want to be seen. They have stealth technology that allows them to operate in Earth’s environment without being detected.”

“I see,” Chavez said. His imagination was running wild. “Are these civilizations dangerous?”

Shandra interjected, “Have they caused you any problems to date?”

Chavez realized how stupid his question must have sounded. “I am sorry you’ll have to forgive my ignorance of this subject. Up until a couple of months ago, I had no idea about any of this information.”

Shandra straightened in her chair. “You don’t have to apologize, Mr. President. We are aware of your scientists’ understanding of space and the universe in general. A civilization’s journey through space and time should not be judged by others. We’re all here to garner experiential knowledge and to learn from our mistakes.

That's what life appears to be about. It's more about the journey than the destination.

“There are many puzzles that our civilization has not uncovered or figured out. These are things that would be incomprehensible to our scientists. The process of acquiring knowledge is a never-ending journey. We're all students in a universal classroom setting.”

“Why, Earth? Why human beings?” Chavez asked.

Chandra's blue eyes were fixed on Chavez. “Our two civilizations are forever linked, Mr. President. As you can observe, our physical characteristics are like those of the people residing on Earth. This is not a coincidence by any stretch of the imagination. We have a direct connection to the people of Earth. The choices humans make in life on Earth will not only impact their future here but will also impact the future of the Tresantarian people.”



**Chapter Eight**  
**August 24, 2087**  
**The South Pole**

President Chavez was very confused by Shandra's claim that the people living on Earth were forever linked to the Tresantarian people. He shifted his body on the chair and placed his hands together in a prayer position as he eyed the female alien across the table. "I don't understand what you meant when you said we're all connected?"

Shandra smiled at the commander-in-chief before offering a full explanation to everybody. The information she shared was mind-bending and initially confused Chavez and his Cabinet members. The lengthy dialogue was so littered with details, it took an entire hour for her to finish. "And that's why, Mr. President, the Tresantarian people have a desire to form a special relationship with the people of Earth."

Chavez and his Cabinet members now understood things more clearly. The explanation was unbelievable, almost too far-fetched to be true. But Shandra had somehow convinced them it was the truth.

Chavez turned towards Robert Johnson, his head nodding up and down. “I think we agree?”

Johnson nodded back. “Yes, Mr. President.”

Then the president turned in the opposite direction, facing the other Cabinet members. “Any objections?” he asked.

The Cabinet members were nodding and giving their approval as well.

Chavez stood up from his chair, extending his right arm and hand towards Shandra. She stood up, extending her hand to meet his. They executed a formal handshake that sealed the deal.

“Thank you, Mr. President,” she said, smiling. “I see a bright future for our two worlds.”

“You’re welcome, Shandra. I hope everything works out for both our civilizations,” he replied. Chavez turned towards Robert Johnson and nodded.

Johnson had been wearing an earpiece and microphone. He clicked on the mic and said, “Stand down, Amanda.”

Amanda Whitestone was still watching the computer screen when she got the official word in her ear. Moments later, the large flotilla of Tresantarian spaceships maintaining their positions in low orbit descended towards the Earth’s surface. Amanda saw the blips on the computer spread across the planet. They had the entire globe covered in a few minutes. “Stand down, everybody,” she said.

“They’ve been given clearance to enter our airspace. I repeat, stand down, and take no defensive actions.”



# **A Gift**



**Chapter Nine**  
**February 10, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

Everything had happened so damn fast he had little of a chance to think about the significance of his decision. When the opportunity initially presented itself, he reflexively agreed to be a participant. In retrospect, he wished he would have been afforded a little more time so he could have spoken with some of the project's representatives regarding their overall goals and expectations for participants.

But after each drawing, the invitations were thrown on the table. None of the candidates were permitted a lengthy period to consider the once-in-a-lifetime experience that awaited them. And he knew there were plenty of people that would be champing at the bit to take his place.

David Hutchins sat at the small, white table in his kitchen, staring at the copy of the ten-page agreement he'd signed less than 24 hours earlier. It was a done deal. He was in the program. There was no need for him to rehash in his mind what had been legally executed on paper and finalized in the eyes of the law.

TRESANTARAS! He was going there with one million other lucky people.

During his lifetime, David had entered the six-ball lottery often. But he'd never won much to write home about. He always considered himself one of the unluckiest players in existence. Many of his friends had won smaller prizes. In all the years he'd bought lotto tickets, David had only won a few hundred dollars.

But his luck had finally changed, and in a big way, too! He'd recently won the biggest lottery game ever conducted in the world. The prize wasn't a monetary award. Sure, there was money involved, but that was being paid out to his ex-wife, Kelly, and her daughter, Rachel. Rachel was Kelly's biological child from an earlier marriage.

The money earmarked for Kelly and Rachel would help support them for the five years that David would be gone. The money acted as a severance package designed to replace the loss of income they'd incur because of David's absence from his current job as a postal worker.

In his very amicable divorce settlement, David was not financially responsible for Kelly or Rachel. But David had always provided them with financial support, and Kelly and fifteen-year-old Rachel had grown accustomed to that regular inflow of cash that came their way each month. The lottery commission and the New World Government had made sure that the winners headed for

Tresantaras wouldn't have to worry about loved ones or family members staying on Earth. Everything would be taken care of in that respect. Any income that a winner would forfeit by going on the intergalactic journey would be paid out to their dependents by the government.

Going to Tresantaras was a big deal, and there were people in the world community offering large sums of money to lotto winners in exchange for giving up their seats.

There were many emotional and psychological factors involved with a decision to travel on a five-year journey. Five years was not a short period. Some winners were happy to exchange a ticket for a lucrative payout from others that didn't have a strong emotional reason to stay on Earth.

The winners that had voluntarily opted out of claiming their prizes, for various reasons, were replaced by new winners from subsequent lottery drawings. The ongoing process of winners opting out, followed by additional drawings, went on for several months until the one million seats had been filled with people like David that had signed an official agreement of commitment.

David's lotto number had also been selected in a subsequent drawing. He recalled, as he sat down in his kitchen staring at the signed agreement in front of him, how the lottery contest had become the talk of the entire world after it had been announced four months earlier.

David had only bought a dozen chances in the big game. Many of his friends and co-workers had purchased hundreds of tickets. Each ticket had cost five World Dollars. He never expected to win a seat to Tresantaros, but the possibility of winning, and escaping from his real-life troubles, kept him happy. He reasoned that the fantasy of winning the big contest was worth the sixty bucks. Entering the lottery gave him something to look forward to. That “*something*” had been missing from his life for a long time.

At the time he’d purchased the tickets, David’s life had been coming apart at the seams. He’d been trapped in a career at the postal service he hated, and his short marriage of two years had long since ended.

After he purchased the lotto tickets, David used to look forward to coming home from his job to watch the latest news updates about the contest. He tried to imagine what a trip to Tresantaros would be like.

It had been reported by the Global Census Services that three billion players entered the unique lottery for a chance to travel where no man or woman had ventured ever before. Not even the World Space Agency or its professional staff of astronauts had ever gone to another planet, let alone one that existed 15,800 light-years away from Earth. David was now a part of this magnificent mission. He was about to become a modern pioneer within the field of deep space travel.

**Chapter Ten**  
**February 23, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

David made himself penne pasta in a light marinara sauce with some parmesan cheese sprinkled in. The dinner wasn't very fancy, but he enjoyed it. His days of sitting down, family-style, with other people had ended years ago. Meals were now much less sophisticated and not at all formal occasions. David usually ate breakfast, lunch, and dinner on the run or sometimes out of a box. And the silverware in his apartment was used sparingly; it was always cleaned immediately after each meal and put back into the cupboard.

Today was an important one. David was scheduled to participate in an exclusive webinar that was being presented for the lottery winners. It was scheduled to begin at 1300 hours Eastern Time.

Each passenger had been emailed a unique web address along with a passport code to access the presentation. David had logged onto the webpage with his smartphone that was resting on the

kitchen table. He shoveled a forkful of penne noodles into his mouth while concentrating on the computer screen.

The webpage read:

***PLEASE TYPE IN YOUR PASSPORT CODE***

David was a tall, handsome man with sharp-looking facial features. He had light brown hair and an athletic build.

He pasted the code he copied from the email into a shaded box on the webpage. David pressed the *ENTER* key and waited as the computer processed the data he'd submitted. As the website went through the authentication process, he thought about the first time the Tresantarians had arrived on the planet. He remembered the day well.

David had been driving home from the post office with the radio playing in the car. There was an emergency broadcast alert. He figured it was some test. The radio stations were regularly conducting these exercises. He tried changing the tuner, but the different stations all featured the same emergency alert. That's when he realized there was something more than a test taking place. David pulled his car over to the roadside so he could safely listen to the message.

After a few moments, the president addressed the world community. President Chavez explained that he had met with the

Tresantarian Leadership in a special summit at the Presidential Palace. The president had called the summit an overwhelming success and stated that the New World Government had contracted with the Tresantarians to become intergalactic allies.

President Chavez stated that additional details would be forthcoming, and that the world community should not become alarmed by the Tresantarian ships permitted to land on the planet by the government.

It wasn't long after his message when the first ships touched down. They were visible throughout the world. The crafts were huge and resembled giant sports stadiums albeit much larger and more sophisticated looking. They were shiny, silver looking monstrosities.

The evening news telecasts had shown continuous pictures of them from different locations around the planet. They had descended from the heavens and landed worldwide. It was only a short time after that when the lottery contest had been announced by President Chavez. One million seats were up for grabs to travel to Tresantaras for five years to study and learn about the Tresantarian culture and their way of life.

The website finally finished authenticating David's passport. The screen switched to a new page that showed a clear image of the blue planet, Tresantaras. After a few more seconds, the words, *Welcome to your new home*, became visible.

David smiled and waited for the presentation to begin. A digital clock on the page was working its way down to the start of the webinar. There were only three minutes and forty-seven seconds remaining.

David's smartphone rang. It broke his concentration, and the image of the blue planet was replaced with a photo of his ex-wife. He frowned as he answered the incoming call. "Hello, Kelly."

David listened to his ex-wife complain about a plumbing problem affecting her house. "Can I call you back in an hour?" he asked. "I am involved with a very important conference call that's about to begin in a few minutes."

Kelly was speaking fast, and David was dividing his attention between her and looking at his watch.

"Kelly," he said, trying to interrupt. He knew that once she got on a roll, it was impossible to stop her from talking. David still cared about the woman and her daughter, but he couldn't live with either of them. "Kelly, I have to go because I am on the other line speaking with people about the trip to Tresantaros. I'll have to call you back."

She was still talking over him and showing no signs of slowing down. "I have a trickle of water coming out of my sink, and it's impossible to get a plumber over here..."

"Kelly, dammit, can you please stop talking for five seconds and listen to me?"

There was finally silence on the phone. David tried to compose himself before he spoke again. “I have to participate in a conference call in two minutes. I will call you back, find you a plumber, fix it myself when I am finished. Do not call me back right now because I will be unable to answer. Do you understand?”

“Fine, David. You don’t have to be so damn rude.” She hung up on him.

David stared at the phone that was still showing Kelly’s face on the screen. He felt guilty about raising his voice to her, but he would have been stuck in the same conversation for twenty minutes if he hadn’t said something.

A moment later, the screen changed back to the picture of the blue planet, and David watched the digital clock run off the remaining seconds. The webinar was beginning.

**“Greetings from Tresantaros,”** a pleasant female voice spoke. **“It’s an honor to welcome each passenger to your new home.**

**“Over the next several months, I have a lot of information to teach you. I must also prepare you for the arduous journey that awaits. I want to be able to answer all questions to the best of my abilities, and I plan to do so. However, please remain patient with the process designed to make the upcoming journey to our world comfortable.**

**“As you already know, Tresantaras is a world that is 15,800 light-years away from Earth. Using your present technology, it would be impossible for humans to make such a trip. There are obvious problems associated with traveling between the two destinations. Rocket technology is not an option because the journey would take too long.**

**“Fortunately, there are technologies available to us that make travel between our two worlds possible.**

**“Let me preface my remarks today by saying that our two species are genetically related. Tresantarians have had a direct connection to human beings since the inception of life on Earth. It is because of this special connection that we have always felt a sincere desire to interact with your world. This is not merely an act of charity on our part, although we consider ourselves a ‘service-to-others’ species. Tresantarians have a genuine, vested interest in your daily affairs. The success or failure of humans to evolve physically, spiritually, and emotionally directly affects our world and the Tresantarian race.**

**“Although it is difficult for me to explain everything about why this is so, I promise that before the conclusion of this training program, I will make every effort to reveal all facts that have to do with the connectedness of our two species.**

**“To make a successful and safe trip to Tresantaras, each of you will have to undergo a series of treatments that will prepare**

**your bodies for the transformative journey. The procedures will not harm you. They will, however, cause minor physiological changes to your body that will allow you to endure the travel technology necessary to make the trip.**

**“The treatments will consist of four individual sessions that will last for a total of thirty minutes. In simple terms, this process will prepare your physical body to be more comfortable during the trip and when you are living on Tresantaros. You will receive another set of treatments before your return to Earth.**

**“You will receive a separate email that will explain the full details of the treatment program. You will be instructed as to where you need to report and what to bring in the way of wardrobe.**

**“We will be having several additional webinar sessions before the commencement of your journey. The exact dates and times of these communications will be sent to you well in advance via email or text messaging, all depending on the option you selected through your preferred platform.**

**“I truly look forward to working with you in the weeks and months ahead as you prepare for the amazing journey to our world. If you require additional assistance or have specific questions that need to be addressed, please feel free to contact your personal ambassador at the contact address that will be**

**forthcoming in a future email or text message. I wish everybody an enjoyable day.”**

The webinar presentation ended, and the webpage changed back to the original screenshot that contained the shaded box where David had entered his passport number.

**Chapter Eleven**  
**February 26, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

It was several days before the email came through on David's account. He'd been eager to receive the document and had been checking his mail regularly in anticipation of its arrival. David clicked on the link and waited for the communication to open and display on his smartphone. It read:

*Dear Mr. Hutchins:*

*With great pleasure, we welcome you to the planet Tresantaras. To comply with our travel requirements, it will be necessary for you to attend four treatment sessions at the Hamilton Outpatient Facility at 1611 Morgan Street in the town of Danville.*

*Please bring a bathing suit or a comfortable pair of shorts you can change into. You will have to rest in a machine like a tanning bed. The approximate length of the treatment will be 30 minutes.*

*Your initial session is scheduled to commence on March 1, 2088, at 1100 hours Eastern Time. Bring an electronic copy of this email to the first session. There are no restrictions regarding food or drink before each session. It is strongly recommended that you do not engage in strenuous activities of any kind following treatment for at least one hour.*

*If you have questions about your treatment instructions or your upcoming journey to Tresantaras, please contact your ambassador at the following email: [2416@tresantaras.info](mailto:2416@tresantaras.info).*

*Sincerely,*

*The Transformation Team*

On Monday, March 1, 2088, David arrived at the Hamilton Outpatient Facility on Morgan Street at 1030 hours. It was a modern-looking brick building with ten floors and many offices inside.

David found a building directory on a wall in the ground level lobby. He read that the outpatient facility was on the sixth floor.

David took an elevator up six levels and was surprised to learn the entire floor was occupied by the facility. There was a reception desk situated straight ahead from where he exited the elevator. A blonde-haired woman, in her late twenties, was seated at the counter.

A large sign in the shape of an infinity symbol with the company's name was hanging on the wall behind the receptionist.

David walked over to the woman and smiled. "Good morning," he said.

The woman smiled, acknowledging his presence while holding up her hand to ask for his patience. "Yes, Mr. Danby, this Thursday at 1400 hours is your scheduled appointment." The receptionist was wearing a small headset and microphone so that she could speak with callers yet still had free use of her hands. "Very good, Mr. Danby, we'll see you at your appointment time. Goodbye."

The receptionist looked up at David again.

"Hello," he said. "I have an appointment this morning at 1100 hours."

The woman smiled. "Do you have a registration notice?"

"Oh, yes, of course." He reached for his phone and pulled up a copy of the email notice he'd received. He showed the receptionist the document.

"Thank you, Mr. Hutchins," she replied after looking at the phone. Her facial expression changed to one of intrigue. "You're one of the lottery winners. You must be so excited to be doing all of this."

David looked around the room to see if anyone else had been listening to the conversation before turning back to face the young

receptionist. “Yes, it is pretty exciting. My life hasn’t been the same since I found out that I had been chosen.”

“I’m sorry,” the receptionist said in a much softer tone. She was embarrassed she’d blurted out the comment. “That was completely unprofessional, I was just excited to meet someone who was involved in the Tresantaras program. You’re the first one to receive treatments here.”

David swallowed hard. “The first one?”

“Yes. You’re the very first patient we’ve had to visit our facility. We’re taking care of several others, but their appointments don’t begin until later in the week.

“It’s so exciting. The treatment beds were delivered here a few weeks ago. They’re huge machines.”

“I see,” David replied.

The receptionist pointed to a cluster of tan-colored chairs in the waiting area. “You can take a seat over there. It’ll be just a few minutes before you’re called back. I’ll let them know you have arrived.”

David smiled for a second before making his way over to the waiting area. He looked at a few electronic magazines spread out across a coffee table, then selected a publication about professional sports. David swiped through the pages with his finger. He came upon a story about baseball. The first expansion team in ten years would debut this spring. David wondered if they played baseball or

any sports on Tresantaros. He also thought about the prospect of not watching sports for the next five years.

“Mr. Hutchins, you can come back now,” a woman’s voice said, breaking his concentration. He got up from the chair he’d been seated on and placed the electronic magazine tablet back on the table the way he’d found it.

He walked towards the woman dressed in a blue lab gown. She was a tall person of about thirty with brunette hair and was holding a clipboard. “Hello,” David said.

“Hi, I’m Mallory. Nice to meet you.”

“Yes, nice to meet you, too,” David replied.

“Did you remember to bring a bathing suit or a pair of shorts?” Mallory asked.

“I’m wearing a bathing suit underneath my clothes.”

“Excellent,” she said.

They walked down a long hallway well lit by the glow of soft fluorescent bulbs. At the end of the hall, they entered a large room that contained three transformation beds.

Mallory turned towards David. “I’ll need you to take off everything except for the bathing trunks. You can place your clothes in one of the little cubicles on the wall. I’ll let you do that for a few moments, and then I’ll return to help you begin the treatment session.” Mallory walked outside the room and closed the wooden door behind her.

David took off his clothes and placed them in one of the metal containers attached to the wall. He walked over to one machine and checked out the contraption. David wondered who constructed it and how it had been delivered to the outpatient facility. The device looked like a tanning bed. It was gold-colored and had a black base. There was a nameplate on the front that read TRYTON ELECTRONICS. “Tryton Electronics,” he said softly to himself. He was familiar with that name. They were a World Company that manufactured thousands of products throughout its long history.

“Tryton Electronics won the government bid to manufacture the beds,” Mallory said, walking back into the treatment room.

David turned around to face her. “It must have been a tough job getting these things up here.”

“Yeah,” Mallory replied. “They came in pieces, and a team of installers spent the better part of three days assembling them.”

“How’d they know how to put them together?”

Mallory scratched her head with the fingers of her left hand as she set the clipboard down on a metal countertop. “I was told that the Tresantarians engineered everything and sent the schematics to the government. Once the contract was awarded to Tryton Electronics, everything was forwarded to their engineers, and the assembly process began.”

“You think it’s safe?” David asked, wearing a sardonic grin.

Mallory walked over to the bed and pushed a green button on the top of the machine. The bed's hood opened. "I'm sure everything will be fine." She gestured for him to enter the bed.

David hoisted himself inside the long, cylindrical tube and tried to make himself comfortable. "I guess this isn't too bad," he said.

"The training team explained that you shouldn't experience any discomfort during the treatment. If you feel like sleeping, it's perfectly fine to do so." Mallory handed David a pair of goggles. "Wear these at all times. Do not take them off until the treatment concludes. Your eyes could become damaged without the protective eyewear."

David put on the goggles and watched nervously as the hood closed.



**Chapter Twelve**  
**March 5, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

“So, let me understand this, David,” Kelly said. “You’re going to give up your life here, not to mention your career at the postal service to live on some alien world that you know nothing about?” The fair-skinned woman with red hair and light-complexioned skin was visibly upset.

“I think it’s pretty cool,” Rachel chimed in. The fifteen-year-old was seated on a green sofa inside Kelly’s home. She’d been paging through an electronic brochure that provided statistics and facts about the planet Tresantaros.

“Keep out of this, Rachel,” Kelly yelled at her daughter. She gave the teenager a nasty look before returning her attention to David.

“I hate the postal service, Kelly. I have been telling you that for years, but you never listen,” David explained.

“I bet a job like that would suck,” Rachel said as she continued to peruse through the brochure.

Kelly gave her daughter another quick look with dagger eyes. “David, how do you know it will be safe there? Suppose you get to this planet, and they make you a slave or something worse?”

David smiled at Kelly and laughed. “Do you honestly believe that an advanced civilization, like the Tresantarians, would waste time and energy to travel this far from home, design a program like they have, just so they could enslave one million humans?”

“How the hell should I know what they’re planning? That’s my point, David. I don’t know what their true intentions are, and either do you.”

“Kelly, the government is on board with the entire program. They’ve assured us that the Tresantarians only have the best of intentions for the participants and Earth.”

Kelly threw her arms up in the air and walked away from him. “And you believe everything that Chavez and his advisors tell you?”

“I believe that the Tresantarians are genuinely friendly. I believe they want to help our planet and the people here.”

“Why would they want to do that? What’s in it for them?” Kelly asked.

“Gee, I sure wish that I could go with David,” Rachel interrupted again. She was still looking at the brochure.

“Shut up, Rachel. I am not going to tell you again!” Kelly shouted.

“Why do you treat her like a baby?” David asked, defending the young girl.

“Don’t worry about how I treat my daughter. If you were so concerned about us, you wouldn’t be running off with a bunch of god damn aliens halfway across the universe.”

“Kelly, I am not leaving permanently. And I am not leaving you without any resources. All your financial needs are being taken care of. The government and lottery commission are going to make up for everything that I would have provided through the post office. And I already told you that I am transferring all my assets to your account before I leave.”

“David, why do you always think everything is about money? There are other factors in play here. Your safety is one of them.”

David smiled and said, “I am looking forward to this adventure.”

“You have my permission to go, David,” Rachel interjected again.

“Go to your room, Rachel.” Kelly had her arm stretched out and pointing down the hallway towards her daughter’s bedroom.

“But mom, I...”

“Rachel, so help me God, I am not going to ask you again.”

The young red-haired girl with freckles sprang up from the sofa and walked briskly down the hallway and slammed her bedroom door shut.

Kelly frowned as she stared at the hallway, then walked over towards the kitchen and grabbed a soft drink for her and David. She poured the refreshment into two tall goblets. Kelly handed one cup to David. “Tell me what the purpose of the program is. I don’t understand how one million people leaving for another world will help people here on Earth. What are we supposed to learn from all of this?”

David smiled and took a sip of the soft drink. “Kelly, they’re giving the government access to technology and scientific advancements in medicine that will benefit people for years to come. The cure to previously incurable diseases will be available to you, Rachel, and anyone else that needs them.

“This is an opportunity of a lifetime, and it can allow me to contribute to something significant.”

Kelly took another sip from her goblet. “I just think it’s damn ironic that the best way for you to contribute to this stinking world is by having to leave it.”

“Life is strange, Kelly. You never know what the hell’s going to happen and where you’re going to end up.”

“Yeah, that’s for sure,” she replied. The two touched goblets and finished their drinks.

**Chapter Thirteen**  
**April 1, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

It had been one month, exactly, since David began the four necessary treatments at the Hamilton Outpatient Facility. Today was his last scheduled session, and until now, the handsome, 38-year-old ex-postal worker with light brown hair and an athletic build hadn't noticed any physical changes regarding his body. His appetite was healthy and consistent with what it had always been, and his weight remained unchanged. Other than the fact he no longer had to report to work, David went on with his life as usual.

Over the years that David had been employed by the postal service, he'd accumulated a lot of sick time and never missed work. Because of being healthy, he built up a large inventory of paid sick leave. The postal service informed him he could either have the value of the days he'd accumulated added to his monthly pay, or he could retire early, stay at home and continue to receive weekly paychecks. David elected option two.

David was using his time away from the post office wisely. He made sure that all his business and personal affairs were in order. David was especially careful in making sure Kelly and Rachel had complete, legal access to his assets. Once everything had been straightened out with his attorney and accountant, and he knew the women he cared most about had financial security, David relaxed a little.

He used the time away from work as a paid vacation. He'd read four novels that had been on his bookshelf for years. David had planned to read them long ago but always found an excuse not to. He was always preoccupied with something else or too tired to keep his eyes open long enough to push through the books. The post office was a stressful working environment and getting away from that scene was worth more to him than anything else in his life.

At 2000 hours that evening, President Chavez was scheduled to address the world community to provide updates on the newly established relations with the Tresantarian leadership. David had invited two new friends he'd recently met to his apartment for pizza and to listen to the president's address.

Sarah Goddard and Peter Vance were also lottery winners like David. The three had met while undergoing required treatments at the outpatient facility and formed a bond.

Peter was a tall, gaunt-looking man with brown hair and big-bulging eyes. He was single, in his early forties, and had worked for

most of his life in the banking industry as a branch manager for the World Banking System. He, like David, walked away from his job as soon as he'd learned he won a seat to Tresantaras.

Sarah Goddard was an attractive 38-year-old divorcee anxious to move to a new world and get away from the bad memories that haunted her in this one. She'd had a difficult life and a disastrous marriage that ended two years earlier after her former alcoholic husband of four years got drunk one evening and threw her headfirst across the room into a wall. There was an ugly domestic violence case that ensued, and eventually, everything ended with her now ex-husband, Martin going to jail. Sarah was headed to Tresantaras and felt happy for the first time in two years. She believed the upcoming intergalactic travel opportunity was the equivalent of hitting a reset button that would allow her the fresh start in life she desperately needed.

Peter and Sarah arrived at David's apartment about an hour before the presidential telecast. David had called in a delivery order to a local Italian restaurant for two pizzas along with three Caesar salads. The friends enjoyed each other's company while having dinner. They theorized about what new information Chavez would broadcast during the evening address.

At 2100 hours, President Chavez appeared as advertised on the World Communications Network. The president was dressed in his trademarked brown suit and gold-colored tie. He appeared seated at

a large Mahogany desk in front of a blue backdrop and familiar logo of the New World Government.

The three friends listened as Chavez began his presentation.

**“Hello, my fellow citizens; I’d like to thank all of you for taking precious time out of your lives to listen to this important update. With great pleasure and excitement, I speak about our new intergalactic space brothers, the Tresantarians.**

**“As I have already explained in an earlier communication, the Tresantarians are a benevolent race of people that reside, coincidentally, on a small, blue planet like Earth. Their world is approximately 15,800 light-years away from ours. And from everything that I have seen to date, I have no reason to doubt the kind spoken words of these gentle beings. I believe they are our friends and can help the world community to become healthier and more sustainable in the immediate and long-term future.**

**“The Tresantarians seem to have a special bond with the people of Earth. Although it’s difficult to articulate all the reasons this is so, it has become very apparent to our science advisors, who have performed physical examinations on these beings, that they are related to the human genome.**

**“After engaging in formal discussions with the Tresantarian Leadership Council earlier this year, I became impressed with**

**the amount of help and genuine concern this race of people has offered human beings.**

**“The continuous pursuit of advancements in medicine, energy, and scientific knowledge has always been the centerpiece of my strategic plan to better our world. Also, I have always believed, from my earliest days as a world leader, that our collective goals and ambitions must include scientific breakthroughs that can help us better our lives and the lives of our children, and eventually our children’s children.**

**“I am truly happy for the world community because we now have an incredibly promising future. Just a short time ago, things looked a lot less promising than they do now. But the future of our world is brighter than ever before due to the Tresantarian race.**

**“The scientific capabilities we now possess, thanks to our new space brothers, have already saved millions of lives and have allowed for the implementation of even more advanced technologies that have made life on Earth easier and more enjoyable for everybody.**

**“While being very generous, the Tresantarians have asked little in return from us. They have gone to great lengths and endured severe conditions to initiate contact with our civilization. They continue to believe that our wellbeing, both presently and in the future, is directly connected to the viability**

**and health of their world and culture. They have told me on more than one occasion that their species is akin to a mirror reflection of us.**

**“Earlier this week, I had an opportunity to take part in a special conference call with the Tresantarian Academy of Science and Research. The results of our meeting have brought about an entirely new set of opportunities for our world and its citizens. The academy has put forth a brand-new offer that, in my considered opinion, is unprecedented.**

**“After consulting with some of the most brilliant scientific minds on Earth, I have been thoroughly convinced that it is in our best interest to fully cooperate with the Tresantarian people and to take full advantage of what these benevolent beings are offering humanity.”**

David, Peter, and Sarah nervously stared at one another. Their eyes displayed plenty of excitement and anticipation. David usually hated watching Chavez and his announcements on television, but today’s broadcast had his full, undivided attention, and probably the rest of the world’s attention as well. He wondered what new offer had the Tresantarians put on the table?

**Chapter Fourteen**  
**April 1, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

President Chavez was still giving his public address, laying out the Tresantarians' latest offer on the World Communications Network. It was an offer that would certainly stir up the imaginations of the most prominent conspiracy theorists.

**“Tresantarian Leadership has developed a vaccine that can immediately eradicate all diseases that currently exist within the human population. This offering alone is probably more valuable to the people of Earth than any other technological gift the visitors have bestowed to us.**

**“In conjunction with our medical scientists, the Tresantarians have applied already existing medical technology from their world to our human genome. They have figured out a way to correct imbalances that exist within our genetic blueprint**

that preclude the most optimal expression of health and human wellness.

“If administered worldwide, we are looking at the end of human suffering from the likes of bacterial and viral microbes that have had a long history of causing diseases. I am referencing maladies that have traditionally required a plethora of suppressive drug therapies and other modalities to manage.

“As a former medical physician with a deep understanding of human biology, I am excited to see a potential end to all diseases. The vaccine on the table will undoubtedly change the way medicine is practiced on Earth and the way people live their lives.

“I realize that for many citizens, the idea of receiving a vaccine that has been designed by an alien civilization might be a terrifying concept. I also understand that people have traditionally had a constitutional right to choose what they want to accept in the way of drugs and medical treatments. This is especially true regarding vaccines and medicines that can modify human genetics. However, there are exceptional and unusual circumstances taking place in the world.

“This is a health issue and subject that will require a great deal of personal reflection by everybody in the world community. To eradicate diseases, citizens must receive the medicine in question. The vaccine only needs to be administered

**once, and future generations need not take the product. The genetic repairs the vaccine creates are permanent and automatically passed on to our offspring.**

**“I want to reiterate and explain once again that we need to accept or reject the current offer from our intergalactic friends democratically through a binding world referendum that will be scheduled on May 1, one month from today.**

**“The Tresantarians have made it clear that our decision to accept or reject their offer will significantly affect the lives of people living on Tresantaras.**

**“As it stands right now, the vaccine will only be mandatory for the lottery winners traveling to Tresantaras at the beginning of next month.**

**“As for everybody else, our decision to accept or reject the medicine will, ultimately, be made through the upcoming referendum.**

**“Once more, thank you for listening to the broadcast. I wish everybody a good day.”**

David couldn't believe what he'd heard and was upset.

Sarah shot up from the chair she'd been sitting on and looked disturbed.

Peter remained calm. He was smiling and unfazed by what had been spoken by Chavez.

“Did you hear anybody mention anything about having to take a vaccine to go on this damn trip?” David asked.

Sarah was shaking her head in disgust. “Not a word. This is the first I have heard of this.”

“I knew there’d be a catch,” Peter interjected. “Things were moving along way too smooth. That’s how Chavez does things. He throws out the idea so people can play with it for a while and get emotionally attached. Then, when you’re fully invested in the damn thing, he pulls the rug out from underneath your feet. This is a classic New World Government deception.”

Sarah turned towards Peter and brushed away a few strands of hair from her face. “You think Chavez knew about this beforehand?”

Peter rolled his eyes upward as he faced her. “Of course, he knew about it. Do you honestly believe he just found out about this? It’s probably been in the works ever since the first summit.”

“I don’t believe that,” David said. He turned the volume lower on the television but left the station playing. A panel of news reporters was discussing the president’s address. “I think the situation is completely fluid. As things develop, changes are necessary and being made.”

“You’re a very trusting individual, David,” Sarah said.

Peter was shaking his head from side to side. “You mean, gullible.”

David wheeled around to face Peter. “What’s your take on the vaccine? Do you think there’s something sinister going on behind our backs?”

“I wouldn’t go that far,” Peter said, deflecting the question.

David walked closer to him. “Well, you must have some ideas about what just took place.”

Peter stood up from his chair and inched away from David. “I think the vaccine issue has been in the works from the beginning. That doesn’t necessarily mean something nefarious is going on. If you’re asking me if I think they’re trying to kill us all, I’d have to say no.”

Sarah walked over to the kitchen table and helped herself to one of the two remaining slices of pizza. She looked at Peter. “I seriously doubt the vaccine is something that will harm us. I just can’t figure out what the Tresantarians are getting out of the relationship with the New World Government.”

“There has to be something in it for them,” David added.

Sarah nodded. “I agree. You don’t travel over 15,000 light-years to come to this place to help another species without there being something in the way of a payout for your kind.”

Peter threw up his arms. “But they have been upfront about that right from the beginning. They told us that their coming here and interacting with humans was going to affect the Tresantarian people back home.”

David smiled as he watched the television out of the corner of his eyes. “If they’re truly related to humans like they claim, they must have visited this planet many years ago. They must have had sex with ancient humans.”

Peter shook his head while smiling. “You think? If they’re related to the human genome, somebody from Tresantaras got it on with somebody from Earth at some point in time.”

Sarah was laughing. “Talk about a long-distance relationship.”

# **The Resistance**



**Chapter Fifteen**  
**April 4, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

On Sunday, David met Peter and Sarah for drinks at a local pub on Thompson Street called O'Connor's. It was a hole in the wall establishment, but there seemed to be a good number of patrons present. The three friends were seated at a small table towards the back of the bar.

Sipping suds was not something David did with regularity, but Peter and Sarah had convinced him to tag along and listen to a few locals debate the pros and cons of accepting the *gift*. That's what the Tresantarians' offer to eradicate every disease known to modern man was being referred to in news telecasts.

Father McAndrews from St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church was seated on a chair to the right of the bar on a makeshift platform made of plywood. Alongside the priest were the town's sheriff, Billy Elliot, and Gary Saunders, a local city councilman.

After a few minutes of sitting around and waiting for something interesting to happen, Billy Elliot finally got the ball rolling. Billy

was a big-bellied out of shape lawman that had occupied the sheriff's office over the past fifteen years. He was a popular incumbent that had won the last two elections unopposed. Billy got up from his chair and addressed the people in the pub. "I'd like to begin everything by saying that this is a fantastic opportunity that cannot be passed up. The *gift* is something that can be a game-changer. It can bring health to so many people that are truly suffering from sickness in their lives."

Lots of people inside the pub were already making plenty of noise. Loud bursts of applause could be heard following the sheriff's comments.

Father McAndrews wasted little time interjecting the church's position regarding the Tresantarians. "It's fundamentally wrong and against biblical principles, for human beings to interfere with His laws. Our Lord would certainly not approve of a decision to alter our DNA. If the Creator wanted our genes to be modified, He'd have given us a sign."

"I'd call contact with extraterrestrials a pretty big sign, McAndrews," a man said from the back of the pub. The comment got a few laughs.

"The Papacy continues to protest what the government has created with the Tresantarians," McAndrews fired back. "The fact that Mr. Chavez has even considered accepting this unholy offering speaks volumes about his being influenced by demonic forces. The

Papacy has sent an official letter of communication to Mr. Chavez asking the New World Government to cancel next week's referendum and to reject the *gift*."

A loud chorus of obscenities could be heard throughout the pub as the crowd turned against McAndrews.

"No one gives a rip about what your pope says, McAndrews. You're living in the Dark Ages," a short white-haired man yelled out from the back of the room.

Another guy from the opposite side of the bar threw out his two cents. "The Catholic Church can kiss my you know what. You represent the most corrupt organization in the world. The pope is afraid of the Tresantarians because they represent the future and more people pulling away from the church. The *gift* is your worst nightmare."

Father McAndrews stood up and yelled back at the man. "Sir, you will pay dearly for the blasphemy you speak. You are not a God-fearing man, and the Almighty will not tolerate such behavior from anyone at any time. By stating such sacrilege, you risk being condemned to hell for all of eternity."

"What is wrong with you, McAndrews?" another middle-aged man interjected. "People have moved on from your religious dogma. They're sick of it, tired of genuflecting to a make-believe guy on a throne that sits around all the time casting judgment on everybody.

The story's so damn outdated and ridiculous, it's any wonder that it still manages to survive."

McAndrews was staring at the man, standing tall on the plywood platform. "You're dead wrong, sir. People will always need the Roman Catholic Church. The fake extraterrestrial offering is a test put forth by demons that are agents working for Satan. It's nothing more than a deceitful form of trickery and sleight of hand operation cleverly designed to trap the world community and condemn them to eternal life in hell under the hands of Lucifer."

Gary Saunders, the tall, slender city councilman, was waving his arms around, trying to quell the crowd noise. "Hey, hey, can we have some order in here before this thing turns into a full-blown brawl? We can agree to disagree with others without getting nasty and being disrespectful."

A pretty woman with auburn hair seated at the bar shouted out to the crowd. "It's going to pass, you know." She'd been reading an electronic news tablet. The woman held up the device and pointed to it. "The first polls have just been released, and it has the referendum passing in the 83 percent range. It's not even close."

The crowd went crazy, and people were yelling and celebrating.

Another man that had downed too many drinks voiced his opinion. "Well, McAndrews, sure looks like your old pope is going to be pretty pissed off after the vote is passed next month."

The priest walked off the platform, disgusted. The patrons inside the establishment were pro-Tresantarian, and McAndrews could not say anything that would change their minds. “You can laugh at me and say whatever you want. Remember, it is not me that you need to fear. The Wrath of God is nothing to joke about. Think carefully before you cast your vote for Satan’s *gift*. Because once you make your choice, He will know what you have done, and He never forgets those who cross Him.” McAndrews exited the pub as people continued to heckle the holy man the entire time.

“Hey, Saunders,” yelled another man in the crowd. “Aren’t you going to chase after his holiness? With you being such an upstanding member of the church and everything, I’d have thought you’d want to go comfort him.” The crowd let out another mighty roar in response to the man’s comments.

Saunders shrugged his shoulders as he looked towards Billy Elliot.

Elliot frowned and then stepped forward to address the unruly crowd. “Do you idiots want to have an intelligent discussion about this subject, or would you prefer to get so liquored up that I have to haul most of you out of here and transport you to the county jail?”

“Oh, don’t be such a stick in the mud sheriff,” the woman with auburn hair yelled out. “McAndrews is so damn full of himself. We’re all sick of his self-righteous, overbearing religious bullshit. He got what he deserved.”

The sheriff spoke again. “Look, let’s all calm down a bit and give some other people in here a chance to make some comments.”

“Who the hell needs to speak?” auburn hair woman asked the crowd. “Besides, it’s a done deal. The polls don’t lie, and 83 percent in my book is a victory for the people who want the *gift*.”

David stood up from his chair at the back of the pub. “I’d like to say a few words.”

Peter and Sarah quickly turned towards their friend, surprised that he’d decided to expose himself to the raucous crowd.

“Who the hell are you?” asked an overweight, drunk man leaning up against the side of the bar closest to the speaking platform.

David looked at the guy and said, “My name is David Hutchins, and I’m one of the lottery winners that will be traveling to Tresantaras.”

**Chapter Sixteen**  
**April 4, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

Everybody inside O'Connor's stopped speaking. There was complete silence, and all eyes were now fixed on David. He looked around the pub, taking in the blank stares coming his way. Some people were inebriated; others appeared to be mildly coherent. But all were waiting for him to say something profound.

Peter and Sarah were looking at him, too. They felt uncomfortable that David had drawn so much attention to himself.

David smiled at them before returning his attention to the strangers in the pub. "And these are my two friends; they're also lottery winners and traveling to Tresantaras." He pointed to Peter and Sarah. They were looking down at the table.

"I came here today because I was told there was going to be a serious debate about the *gift* being offered by the Tresantarians. So far, I've heard nothing more than a bunch of drunken people insulting one another and a lot of stupid remarks being tossed around.

“I don’t want to come across like the priest who was rudely attacked and had to retreat for cover, but I have to ask a simple question; aren’t any of you people the least bit concerned about receiving an unknown vaccine that’s being proposed by the government?”

“If the referendum turns out like the current polls are reporting, we’re all going to be forced to accept a drug that was designed by an alien civilization that we know very little about. Do they have our best interests at heart? I guess that question will eventually be answered in the future. Meanwhile, are we all prepared to roll up our sleeves and give Chavez and the Tresantarians our arms before we have that answer? Are we prepared to blindly accept and embrace a medicine reportedly designed to permanently alter our genetic blueprint?”

“We learned, like everybody else, that we must accept the vaccine regardless of the referendum results. The lottery winners traveling to Tresantaras don’t have a choice. We either receive the medicine, or we don’t go. And just like everybody else in here, we learned about this new requirement the night President Chavez gave his address on television.”

Billy Elliott and Gary Saunders brought up two additional chairs to the makeshift platform and motioned towards David, Peter, and Sarah to come to participate in the debate. David encouraged his friends to join him, and after some initial reluctance, they did.

“What will you do, David?” a barmaid asked. She’d just cleared the table and was carrying empty glasses back towards the kitchen.

David looked at his friends before speaking. “I’m going through with the trip to Tresantaras regardless of the vaccine situation. I, personally, don’t have any concerns about the medicine they’re offering. I believe the Tresantarians are good people. I don’t think they’re trying to harm us. But having said that, I can certainly understand the concerns others might have. Because I am comfortable taking the vaccine doesn’t mean that everybody else should feel the same way.

“The thing that is more concerning to me is the government’s strong arms approach, threatening to break constitutional protocol. How can Chavez feel good about forcing the world community to give up their constitutional rights? I don’t think that’s the way this issue should be handled; people being forced to take a vaccine against their will.”

Peter worked up the courage to contribute to the conversation. “My biggest issue has to do with how the government and the Tresantarians never mentioned anything about a vaccine before the president’s address. Why did they hide it from us until recently?”

The barmaid looked at Peter as she picked up a few empty glasses from the top of the bar. “So, what will you do? Are you prepared to give up your spot and stay here on Earth?”

Peter shrugged his shoulders. “I haven’t made a final decision yet. At this point, the vaccine is not a deal-breaker for me. I must think it through a bit more, and I need to have some questions answered by the government and the Tresantarians. And if the referendum is passed, it won’t matter anyhow.”

Sarah spoke, finally breaking her silence on the issue. “I have been looking forward to this trip for a long time. I’m not giving up an opportunity of a lifetime because a single vaccine is required. The way I see it is, as lottery winners, we have already decided to place our trust in these intergalactic beings. We’ve made a five-year commitment to them and are putting our lives in their hands. If they want to do bodily harm to us, there’s very little we’re going to be able to do to stop them. For me, the vaccine is a little disturbing because of the way we were notified, but not because I don’t trust the Tresantarians. It’s more of a courtesy thing. They could have said something earlier and been more upfront about everything going on behind the scenes. That’s all I’m saying.”

“I have stage four kidney cancer,” said a frail-looking woman seated at another table in the room. She looked pale and sickly. “For me, the vaccine means a new lease on life. If I’m lucky enough to be offered the damn shot, you can bet I’m going to take it. If the referendum results reject the gift, nobody gets the vaccine. That would be a death sentence for me. I have nothing to lose and everything to gain.”

“But how do you know it will cure you?” asked the barmaid who had picked up a fresh tray of drinks and was making her way through the pub again.

“I don’t,” the woman with cancer said. “But I do know that without the vaccine, death is coming for me in a few months.”

“I don’t believe you have anything to worry about. The referendum is going to pass,” Peter said to the woman. “People are pretty damn gullible when it comes to world politics. I think it’s safe to say that the polls and the referendum are rigged. There’s no way Chavez and his world government are going to pass on this opportunity to have a legacy that includes eradicating all diseases from the face of the planet.”

“But how are they going to make certain everybody is vaccinated? It will be physically impossible to jab a needle into the arm of every person on the planet,” said Billy Elliot. The sheriff was facing Peter. “Can you imagine trying to get the people in Vatican City to comply with Chavez’s request? They’ll fight him tooth and nail.”

Another man from the far side of the bar interjected, “They don’t have to use conventional needles to administer vaccines anymore. They can choose to use a homeopathic or vibrational vaccine that takes the drug’s resonance signature and transfers it into the population by a radio frequency or through laser technology.

Once they have a passing referendum, they'll get everything done pretty fast and efficiently.”

“How do you know all this?” the sheriff asked.

The man smiled. “I’m a retired physician. I know the technology exists, and the government has the means to do it. And you can be damn certain, so do the Tresantarians.”

**Chapter Seventeen**  
**April 15, 2088**  
**The South Pole**

President Roberto Hernando Chavez was seated at the main conference table inside the Presidential Palace's reception building. He was impeccably dressed from head to toe in a double-breasted, dark-brown suit. Sitting opposite the world leader, was Francis Michael Marconi, the special ambassador appointed by the Papacy to represent the interests of Vatican City.

Marconi was a short, robust man of Italian descent. At 76, he still featured a full head of white hair and most of the prominent facial features that had given him his good looks earlier in life. Marconi was wearing a dark blue Italian suit.

Francis Marconi had worked for the Papacy, wearing different hats, for over fifty years. He'd arrived on the scene right before the cataclysm in 2036. Having lived through that nightmare, Marconi had witnessed unimaginable horrors in living conditions, people suffering from diseases, and starvation. He'd seen firsthand the uncountable deaths of fellow countrymen and women. He'd

witnessed the gradual rebuild of the world's technological infrastructure and the formation of the New World Government. Marconi was working for the Vatican when the first elected president of the new government, Cameron Hamilton, had proposed, and the world community approved, the dissolution of all sovereign nations.

Marconi had been on a diatribe, expressing his government's displeasure about the recent alliance signed into law by Chavez and the Tresantarians. He wasn't happy about a lot of the things the New World Government had recently been involved in regarding the Tresantarians. High on his country's long list of complaints was Chavez's most recent decision to hold a binding referendum that would determine whether the world community would accept or reject an offer by the Tresantarians to eradicate all diseases from the face of the Earth through a controversial vaccine.

"Roberto, how could you have committed such an egregious act against the world?" Marconi asked. He was red in the face, his temper evident. "You have committed everybody to this ridiculous vote that will force people to be subjected to an untested, and for all intents and purposes, experimental medicine. Have you lost your mind? Do you not understand the consequences of your actions?"

Chavez had a temper, too. He fired back at the ambassador. "You come here with nothing but insults and demands, Francis. I

understand you are angry with me. It is also blatantly obvious you have no respect for me or my office.”

“How can I have respect for a man who is trampling the constitutional rights of his constituents?”

Chavez arched his eyebrows upward and slammed his right fist, forcefully on the Mahogany conference table. “I have told you repeatedly that this situation is different. It calls for emergency action by the government, which I am authorized to enforce. What I have done is not against the constitution.”

“Why is this an emergency? Because these people from another world suddenly come on the scene, we must have a knee-jerk reaction and accommodate all their wishes. How do you know they can be trusted or what their true intentions are?”

Chavez took a sip of water from a crystal glass on the table. “I have had extensive conversations with the Tresantarians, and I have been made privy to information that I am unable to share with you at this time. I am telling you, Francis, that what we are doing with this race of beings will in no way harm our planet or the world community.”

Marconi composed himself and lowered his voice. “We are concerned, Roberto, about the vaccine. We don’t know if it’s safe. Vatican City doesn’t want any part of this thing, and we’re advising members of the church to refuse it.”

“It’s safe, Francis. I have been given access to the product, and it’s been thoroughly tested by our scientists. You have nothing to fear from the vaccine.”

“We don’t want it!” Marconi said. “This is non-negotiable.”

“Francis, you of all people should understand the importance of what we’re doing. You remember the diseases that have affected the world. If we allow the Tresantarians to help us, the people of the world will never have to deal with this threat again. Nor will their children and future generations.”

“How can you be certain they are telling the truth?”

Chavez took a deep breath and exhaled forcefully. “Francis, I have seen things that I can’t share with you. You will have to take my word that the Tresantarians pose no threat to humans. Their wellbeing and longevity depend on humanity being healthy and prospering far into the future.”

“That doesn’t make sense, Roberto.”

“It doesn’t make sense to you, Francis, because you have not had access to the information that I have. You will have to trust me and understand that this office would never do anything to harm the people of this world.”

“Who are these Tresantarians, Roberto?” Marconi asked; his eyebrows arched upward, and his forehead wrinkled.

Chavez took another deep breath and then stared at the ambassador for a few seconds before responding. “You won’t

believe me if I tell you, Francis, but if you have some more time to spare, I will try to explain.”



**Chapter Eighteen**  
**April 22, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

David, Peter, and Sarah wanted answers to three questions they believed had been inadequately addressed by the government and the Tresantarians. They'd decided two days earlier to take matters into their own hands and write a detailed letter to their Tresantarian ambassador. David transmitted the document through an electronic portal system set up for all lottery winners with additional questions and concerns. They believed the questions covered the significant concerns that most people had about the *gift*.

The planet Tresantaras might have been 15,800 light-years away from Earth, but the distance didn't affect the Tresantarian ambassador's response time. On Thursday, April 22, David received an email containing his answers to their questions. The subject line read: ***Questions Regarding Safety and Purpose of Vaccine***

David immediately forwarded the email to Peter and Sarah. The response read:

*Dear Mr. Hutchins,*

*I have reviewed the questions you submitted. I have attempted to answer each question as best I can.*

*Please take the time to carefully review my responses. If, after reading them, you still have additional questions, please contact me so I may attempt to provide you with a more thorough resolution to your concerns.*

*It is not my intention, nor is it the intention of the Tresantarian Leadership to purposefully provide you or other lottery winners with misleading information regarding our world, culture, physiology, lifestyle, or any offerings being made to the people of Earth.*

*I hope the answers I have provided will put your mind at ease.*

*Sincerely,*

*Halevstren*

*Your Question: Why has the Tresantarian Leadership suddenly offered the gift of disease eradication to the people of Earth?*

*Our Answer: It has always been our goal to share science and technology with the people of Earth. Until recently, we were*

*unsure if the vaccine would be useful for your species and therefore did not formally discuss this subject with lottery winners or the New World Government. After being permitted to examine the physiological construct of humans in a more detailed manner, our scientists concluded that the vaccine preparation would be 100 percent effective and, most importantly, safe for the world community existing on Earth. It was because of our prior uncertainty regarding the vaccine and its effectiveness we did not disclose the information earlier. We informed all interested parties when we received the scientific results from our scientists.*

*We also wanted to make sure that all lottery winners were inoculated adequately before making a challenging trip to Tresantaras that will be taxing and stressful to human physiology. We wanted to provide travelers with the best chance to remain healthy and free from diseases.*

*Your Question: How can the Tresantarian Leadership be sure the vaccine will be effective and not harm humans if the product has not been tested over time on human subjects?*

*Our Answer: The product has been tested on human subjects over time and is both safe and effective for human physiology. We have mastered specific technologies not yet available on Earth that can manipulate linear time sequences. Our scientists can garner*

*laboratory results that would typically take several years on your world, in a shorter period. Although this may be difficult for you to comprehend, I can assure you the technology I am writing about exists on Tresantaras and is regularly employed by our scientists.*

*Your Question: Why is it necessary for all people in the world community to accept the vaccine?*

*Our Answer: The reason we are offering the vaccine to the people of Earth is to make the human genome more durable and resistant to bacterial and viral plagues. To fully complete this objective, it will be necessary to have 100 percent compliance within the world community.*

David felt relieved after reading Ambassador Halevstren's responses. The one answer that referred to manipulating time seemed odd to him. Still, he figured that he would have to trust the Tresantarian ambassador at his word that such technology existed and was regularly employed by their scientists.

When David had checked with Peter and Sarah, they too had felt better about the gift after reading the ambassador's responses. The three were on board with taking the vaccine. They were moving forward with their travel plans.

**Chapter Nineteen**  
**April 26, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

On Monday morning, David visited Kelly to help her try and resolve a plumbing problem causing low water pressure in the kitchen sink. He worked under the cabinet on the pipes for an hour before concluding she needed to call in a professional to correct the problem.

David crawled out from underneath the sink, clutching a wrench in one hand and a towel in the other. Beads of sweat glistened on his forehead as he stood up, wiping his hands, and face with the towel.

Kelly was seated on a chair at the kitchen table, staring at him, waiting for the final verdict. “Well, how much is it going to cost me? Can you fix it?”

David shook his head from side to side. “You’re going to need a plumber. Unfortunately, I think the pipes are corroded and need to be replaced. I don’t have the time or the skills to do it properly.”

“Great,” Kelly said sarcastically. “I can imagine how much money this will cost.”

“I’ll make a few calls for you, and we’ll get some estimates. There’s no sense getting upset, the pipes have to be fixed,” David explained.

Kelly frowned and quickly switched gears, changing the subject to the upcoming referendum. “How do you think the vote will turn out?”

David knew Kelly was in a confrontational mood, and he wasn’t looking for a fight. “I think it’ll probably pass in favor of receiving the *gift*,” he replied.

It took a few seconds only for her to get into a full-blown argument with him. She was a devout Catholic and, naturally, sided with the Papacy and the rigid position they’d taken.

No matter what type of logic he’d present, Kelly wouldn’t change her mind and go against Vatican City.

“It’s downright demonic!” she said. “Everybody has lost their minds trusting these Tresantarians that we know nothing about. It’s the work of the devil, I tell you.”

“Listen to yourself,” David said. “The devil? Really?”

“Yes, the devil!”

“Do you believe such nonsense? You act like you’re living in the Dark Ages. You think the devil sent the Tresantarians here?” David was chuckling.

As had been the case often throughout the years, David became irritated and overwhelmed with frustration when he argued with

Kelly. She would not be reasonable about the upcoming referendum or anything else that concerned the Tresantarians. He finally grew tired of fighting and left for Sarah Goddard's apartment on Kendall Street.

When David arrived at Sarah's place, she was finishing a workout routine. She was very health conscious and almost obsessive about keeping her body healthy. David had been physically attracted to her since the first time they'd met at the Hamilton Outpatient Facility.

Sarah had found David desirable too but had given him fair warning, shortly after meeting, that she wasn't interested in having a physical relationship with anyone. Sarah explained that with all the travel arrangements looming on the horizon, and her not knowing what the future entailed, things would be overly complicated already. She didn't need additional complications added to her life.

Then Sarah had a sudden change of heart. David had been taken by complete surprise when she showed up, unannounced, at his apartment late Friday evening in the mood for physical contact. They'd made love several times late into the night and then again early the next morning. The intense extracurricular sessions continued over the weekend. They were really into one another, like two high school sweethearts experiencing the feelings of emotional love for the first time.

“Tough workout?” David asked. His eyes were looking at the two-piece, turquoise bodysuit she was wearing.

“What are you doing here?” Sarah asked with a smile on her face. She walked to the other side of the living room and closed the window blinds, then removed her top, exposing her bare breasts.

David was still staring intently at her, fully aroused “I thought I’d treat you to lunch if you weren’t too busy.”

Sarah grinned as she seductively peeled off the rest of her workout clothes, exposing her naked body. She was wet from perspiration and for other reasons. “I’d prefer dessert before lunch,” she replied, grabbing David’s hand and leading him to the bedroom.

Sarah closed the door behind them and walked David towards the king-sized bed in the room. She unfastened his belt.

David removed his shirt and pants and was standing in front of Sarah naked.

She pulled David onto the bed; the two lay on the mattress in each other’s arms.

“And you’re sure this is still a good idea with everything that’s in front of us?” David asked.

“It’s a great idea,” Sarah replied and then reached down and gently guided him deep inside her.

**Chapter Twenty**  
**April 30, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

Things had progressed on schedule for David, Peter, and Sarah after having their questions answered by Halevstren. They had finished two more required webinars with the Tresantarians and were on the homestretch and making their final trip preparations.

The scheduled date for the grand departure to Tresantaras was Saturday, May 8. The Tresantarians had landed twenty huge ships in different locations on Earth back in August 2087. When the ships landed, they were empty and had remained that way ever since. The large space vehicles had been sent to Earth solely to transport humans back to Tresantaras. The plan to do so had been hatched by the Tresantarians long before the lottery had been conceived by President Chavez and the New World government.

The vote on the world referendum to accept or reject the Tresantarians' *gift* was only one day away.

David and Sarah were at David's apartment, having lunch when his cell phone rang. He retrieved the device from the kitchen counter; it was Peter calling. "What's up?"

"Are you watching the news?" Peter asked, with a lot of excitement evident in his voice.

David reached for the television remote and turned on the World News Channel. "Is there something important happening?"

"Just turn on the news," Peter said, growing impatient.

"Okay, give me one second."

David and Sarah watched as a woman news anchor was discussing the referendum. In bright red letters on the bottom of the screen were the words: BREAKING NEWS. David turned up the volume with the remote, and they listened.

*"In an unusual turn of events, Vatican City and the Papacy have agreed to participate in the Tresantarian gift referendum scheduled for May 1. According to the country's ambassador to the New World Government, Francis Michael Marconi, the Vatican government has also agreed to abide by the referendum's results.*

*"This marks the first time in history that the Papacy has agreed to acknowledge an official resolution created by The New World Government. This is an unprecedented announcement and a historic day.*

*“New World Government spokespersons have stated for the record that the Vatican ambassador flew to the South Pole to meet with President Chavez two weeks ago. The two men had a closed-door session that lasted well over three hours. They were reported to have been smiling and shaking hands after the meeting ended. Marconi flew back to Rome later that same day.*

*“Before today’s big announcement, there had been no official comments offered about the meeting at the South Pole by either the Vatican or the New World Government.”*

Peter was still on the phone. “Well, that’s certainly unexpected news,” David said.

“It’s hard to believe,” Peter replied. “I didn’t see this coming at all.”

David turned the television volume down so he could hear. “What do you think was behind their sudden change of heart?”

“I don’t know. Maybe Chavez gave the ambassador some classified information. It’s a big victory for him, nonetheless.”

“I’ll say,” David agreed. “Look, while I have you on the phone, I wanted to invite you over tomorrow evening for dinner with Sarah and me. I figured we’d all get together and watch the referendum results. What do you say?”

“Sure, I’ll be there,” Peter replied.

“Come over around 1900 hours.”

“Sounds good.”

David hung up the phone and turned towards Sarah. “I’d say the referendum is pretty much a slam dunk, wouldn’t you agree?”

She nodded. “No doubt about it.”

**Chapter Twenty-One**  
**May 1, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

On Saturday evening, David, Peter, and Sarah dined on Chinese takeout at David's apartment. At 2000 hours Eastern Time, the polls closed, and voting on the referendum concluded.

The three friends were seated on a large sofa in front of David's television, watching the results trickle in.

Like they usually did, the World News Channel had exclusive rights to broadcast the voting results. It didn't take long for the news agency to report on the early returns once the polls closed.

The handsome, award-winning primetime network anchor, Brent Dennis, commented on the early results. He was sporting an expensive pinstriped suit for the special newscast.

*“With one percent of all world precincts reporting, we can tell viewers that 71 percent of the votes are in favor of receiving the gift. Of course, it's much too early to say how the referendum will play out. The initial results tabulated so far have come from areas*

*that are pro-Tresantarian. It will be interesting to see how traditionally conservative zones in and around Rome and other European locations will vote. Those regions are densely populated by Catholics and usually side with the church's political position. The unprecedented announcement by the Papacy yesterday will undoubtedly play into how the results turn out.*

*“Some analysts are of the mindset that many predominately Catholic precincts will still vote against receiving the gift, even after the Papacy announced publicly, they were supporting President Chavez and the referendum process.”*

“You know that will be the case,” Peter said as he munched on the end of an eggroll. He had the metabolism of a small furnace and could put down serious food and still maintain the bodyweight of a prepubescent boy.

David believed the densely populated Catholic areas would vote for the *gift* now that the Vatican had given its blessing to Chavez. “I think you’ll be surprised at the end of the night by the results over there. Out of respect for the pope, they’ll likely vote in favor of the *gift* just so they don’t make the holy man look bad.”

“I’ll have to agree with Peter on this one,” Sarah chimed in. “I think they’re going to vote conservative, against it.”

As the night progressed, the results favored David's prediction; the heavily concentrated areas of Catholic citizens voted for the *gift*. Brent Dennis delivered the final verdict to the world community.

***“With 77 percent of world precincts reporting, we’re ready to call the referendum in favor of accepting the gift. The results have been overwhelmingly in favor of the gift since the polls closed. We can now report 83 percent of citizens are interested in receiving the Tresantarian gift of eradicating all diseases on Earth.”***

“And there you have it,” David said. He lowered the television volume as he turned towards Peter and Sarah.

“Was there ever any doubt?” Peter asked. “I told you that this issue had already been decided by Chavez and the government before the referendum was ever announced.”

“It doesn't matter,” Sarah added. “Now, we can focus our attention on the trip.”

The three debated the issue for a little while longer before surrendering to mental and physical exhaustion. Peter left for his residence before midnight, and Sarah stayed at David's apartment. They had to be up early the following morning to participate in a final webinar with the Tresantarians.



# **The Healing**



**Chapter Twenty-Two**  
**May 8, 2088**  
**Federal Zone 12**

On the day of departure, David met Peter and Sarah at the City Airport Conference Center, right off the Interstate at exit 11. That was where they'd board the Tresantarian spaceship. David had driven by the massive ship often since it had landed there last August. It looked huge from the interstate highway but appeared even larger the closer David got to the conference center. David had taken a taxi to the location.

The Tresantarian ship was a gigantic craft that resembled a sports stadium. Twenty ships had landed around the world. They were all saucer-shaped in appearance and had a shiny metallic look to them.

Judging from its size, David estimated the craft they were taking would probably hold many thousands of people. The travelers had been told that the intergalactic journey would take approximately three Earth hours to complete. Considering they

would be traveling 15,800 light-years, it meant they would be moving through space at a speed of 5,266 light-years per hour.

The friends had secured three seats together on the ship. They were appreciative that the Tresantarians had accommodated their seating assignment requests. They'd been told during a webinar, that every attempt would be made to keep them together, but final seating assignments could not be guaranteed.

When David, Peter, and Sarah arrived at the reception area at 900 hours Eastern Time, the parking lot was already filled with thousands of people. Everybody traveling to Tresantaras was doing so lightly. Personal belongings that couldn't fit comfortably inside a pant pocket were prohibited on the spacecraft. All material items and supplies required to live on Tresantaras were being provided by the Tresantarians. The lottery winners had nothing to worry about with regards to bringing along luggage and food.

At 1100 hours, the travelers assembled into long lines and began a lengthy process of boarding the ship. The check-in process moved along efficiently; it was being supervised by New World Government officials. After they cleared one line, the travelers entered another long line where they were vaccinated with the Tresantarian gift and injected with an identification chip in their right arms. It was a painless procedure that took less than three seconds. Receiving the vaccine was a bit of a letdown considering the entire world had debated the subject for weeks before a

referendum passed in favor of the world's population receiving the *gift*.

When they entered the spaceship, it reminded David of attending a music concert. There were thousands of blue upholstered seats. They'd been assigned to a specific section that contained different rows and individual chairs. Once they were seated, they fastened interlocking seatbelts that held them securely in place.

There was a large clock in the craft visible to all the travelers. It was counting down the time to depart. It read 35 minutes and 14 seconds.

David looked over at Peter and Sarah. Peter was smiling and looking around at the other passengers. He looked content. Sarah was staring back at David, smiling and excited to be going to a new world.

David was reminiscing about the different things that had happened to him during his life on Earth. He thought about childhood, his parents, and how they'd cared for him early in life. David remembered their deaths and the sadness he'd felt when they passed on. He remembered his school years and meeting his first girlfriend and falling in and out of love. David recalled the time he'd spent with Kelly and Rachel. They'd had good and bad times, but when he thought of their time together, it still brought a smile to his face.

“What are you thinking about?” Sarah asked. “You look like you’re in deep thought.”

David smiled at her. “I’m just thinking about some stuff.”

“What kind of stuff?”

“Like how I got on a ship heading to a foreign world.”

“Are you having second thoughts?”

“You mean like buyer’s remorse?”

“Yeah, like buyer’s remorse,” Sarah said.

David smiled and grabbed her hand tightly. “Not one bit!”

Sarah smiled back. “Me either!”

Amanda Whitestone was back inside Sky Shield’s underground bunker, 500 feet beneath the South Polar surface waiting patiently for the countdown clock to reach zero.

“We have sixty seconds, Director,” said one of the technical operators through Amanda’s earpiece.

“Copy that,” she replied, watching television monitors in front that showed twenty locations where the Tresantarian spaceships were positioned around the world. Each ship had 50,000 passengers on board, and they were about to take off on an intergalactic journey that would last for five Earth years.

She watched a huge countdown clock on the wall in the front of the spacious bunker. “Thirty seconds and counting,” Amanda

announced. Her palms were sweating. She didn't know what to expect. Nobody knew what to expect.

There were genuine feelings of tension and anticipation being experienced by everybody in the bunker.

“Ten seconds, nine seconds, eight seconds, seven seconds,” a technician called out the final moments as takeoff was about to commence.

Amanda watched the clock and counted off the remaining time to herself. “Three seconds, two seconds, one second, zero seconds.”

She kept her eyes glued to the television screens. And then, in an instant, they were all gone. In less than a single second, the huge ships with one million human passengers on board disappeared from the screens.

“Give me a radar status report,” Amanda called out.

“No visual observations detected, Director,” a voice replied through her earpiece.

Amanda typed some data on a keyboard in front of her and brought up a sizeable single view of all objects orbiting the Earth. There were no signs of the Tresantarian spaceships. They'd vanished into thin air.

Amanda reached for a red telephone receiver and waited for her supervisor, Robert Johnson, to pick up. “There's no sign of them, sir.” There was a slight pause before she spoke again. “I understand. Very good.”

Amanda placed the receiver back on the phone's cradle and removed her earpiece. "I'm stepping off the deck," she said. "Michael, you have the floor."

**Chapter Twenty-Three**  
**May 8, 2089**

During the first year that the lottery winners were living on Tresantaras, a lot of positive changes took place on Earth. As the Tresantarians had promised, eradication of all diseases began almost immediately following the world community's acceptance of the *gift*. The vaccine was quick to correct the genetic weaknesses that had become inherent within human immunity.

People recovered from many ailments that had chronically plagued them throughout their lives. In one year, virtually all illnesses caused by bacterial and viral microbes had disappeared. Human physiology had strengthened so much, the need for suppressive medications, used to manage countless diseases, was no longer necessary.

The medical profession was busy altering the way it practiced. A more significant emphasis was placed on emergency and trauma care. Emergency medical services became the primary area of focus for doctors. Many patients suffering from autoimmune diseases and

cancers also got healthy. After the human genome reorganized, it provided the entire species with an overall better expression of health.

President Chavez gave periodic updates to the world community about the lottery winners that had traveled to Tresantaras. The New World Government received monthly updates from the Tresantarian Leadership about how the travelers were adapting to life in the alien world.

As the year progressed, life on post-cataclysmic Earth continued to prosper. The Tresantarians had made two more trips to the Presidential Palace, where new summit meetings between the intergalactic allies had taken place.

A future summit meeting was planned between Chavez and the Tresantarians on the planet Tresantaras. It wasn't scheduled to take place until after the lottery winners returned to Earth. The meeting had been loosely planned for the year 2093.

Kelly and Rachel had received regular messages from David each month. They had seen plenty of pictures of his new life on Tresantaras.

Rachel had commented to Kelly that the planet looked a lot like Earth. The terrain and landscape of Tresantaras were stunning. David sent photos of Tresantarian lakes, oceans, and mountains. David was living in what appeared to be a clean and peaceful place.

Kelly had sensed from David's regular writings to her; he was happy, healthy, and living a very productive life there.



## **Chapter Twenty-Four**

### **April 24, 2093**

There was a rapidly growing interest by the world community about the soon to be returning lottery winners. The World News had been adding fuel to the fire. They produced a recurring nightly series solely dedicated to giving updates on the human travelers. The series ran in January of 2090. It was watched by a broad audience ever since it first aired, but in the last few months, the show's ratings had skyrocketed.

Over five years, people gradually became used to the idea of extraterrestrial life existing in the universe and that one million people from Earth were living their lives on a planet 15,800 light-years away from them.

When the Tresantarians first contacted the New World Government, there were constant headlines and breaking news stories being published and broadcast by the media. But as time moved forward, as was often the case, the staying power of some newsworthy topics lost strength. People could have short memories of many things, not directly affecting their everyday lives.

A few documentaries had been produced for television that discussed the Tresantarians and their beautiful blue planet. One episode discussed the logistics involved with living in a different world and what ill effects that might have on human physiology. It was interesting information.

Mostly, people put everything that concerned the Tresantarians on the back burner during the five years the lottery winners were gone. Out of sight, out of mind seemed to be the way people handled the topic.

But with only two weeks remaining before the travelers were scheduled to return to Earth, a renewed interest in the intergalactic story had been brewing. The Tresantarians and the lottery winners were becoming the talk of the world community once more.

People were generally curious about what the returnees would have to say about living for so long in a foreign world. People wondered if the travelers would have a difficult time resettling back on Earth. Would they even want to come back? Had they formed new friends and relationships on Tresantaras?

One television show featured a psychologist discussing the emotional challenges people returning to Earth might experience from the overall letdown of finishing such an enormous mission.

Perhaps, the most important question people on Earth had for the returnees concerned what they had learned from their experiences on Tresantaras. Were the aliens much more advanced

than humans? Did they possess unique intellectual capabilities not yet realized by the people of Earth? What kinds of technology did the Tresantarians have? Did they get along with others on their planet? Did they fight wars? Were crimes ever committed by people living there? And if so, did they have prisons where criminals were punished? Did the Tresantarian people have romantic relationships, fall in love, and have families?

These were the questions people living on Earth were champing at the bit to know the answers to more than anything else. And soon they would have those answers, and so much more.

The people of Earth were about to learn an unbelievable, mind-bending secret about the Tresantarians. A secret first revealed to President Chavez in 2087, the information immediately changed how the New World Government conducted its business. The same secret had been told by President Chavez to Francis Michael Marconi, the Vatican ambassador, during a special meeting at the South Pole. The secret information had caused an immediate change in the Vatican, New World Government relations. And the same classified information was about to forever change the way humans viewed life, Tresantarians, and, most importantly, themselves.



## **Chapter Twenty-Five**

### **May 8, 2093**

The lottery winners' return to Earth had been scheduled for 1200 hours Eastern Time on May 8, 2093. The travelers had been away for five years and were expected to return to the same locations they'd left.

Large crowds of people had gathered to welcome home the space pioneers. Concrete barriers had been placed strategically in and around the different locations by federal police to prevent onlookers from occupying the exact areas where the ships were expected to land. Specific coordinates had been delivered ahead of time to the government by the Tresantarians that explained correctly where the vehicles would return.

The World News Channel had plenty of television cameras and reporters present to film and broadcast the historic return of the one million passengers. The news teams were well represented at each of the 20 locations where the ships were scheduled to return.

At 1200 hours, brilliant flashes of light, much brighter than the brightest lightning strikes imaginable, were observed by millions of

spectators at the different landing locations around the world. The bright flashes of light were immediately followed by the materialization of the huge saucer-like Tresantarian spaceships.

Just as quick as they'd disappeared into thin air five years prior, the huge crafts reappeared in the same manner. Onlookers stared at the ominous-looking machines with absolute astonishment. Previously large open fields were now occupied by the spaceships that each contained fifty thousand passengers. It was difficult for many people to comprehend what had just transpired.

An extensive period passed before the returnees exited the ships. The scenes at each location resembled the end of a sporting event with a mass exodus of passengers leaving the saucers from the base of the structures where platforms had descended towards the ground. As people walked away from the different ships, large government transport vehicles were in place to meet the returnees and transport them to debriefing centers set up ahead of time.

By the end of the day, all space pioneers, except for 200 people, had been accounted for and returned safely to Earth. The only travelers not to return had been detained temporarily by the Tresantarians for special assignments. Those individuals had volunteered to participate in a teaching program and had been chosen to stay behind on Tresantaras for an extended period.

One week later, David, Peter, and Sarah, along with the other 197 space travelers that had stayed behind on Tresantaras, returned to Earth. They landed at the Presidential Palace at the South Pole. The travelers were greeted by a red-carpet ceremony and honored by President Chavez and his Cabinet members. Each traveler was given a full medical examination and debriefed by a team of doctors and psychologists. After being fed and offered a chance to freshen up, the returnees retired to private rooms and slept.

The following day, President Chavez held a special press conference on the World News Channel. Five of the returnees that had arrived at the Presidential Palace had been selected to speak about their experiences on live television and reveal to the world community what they experienced during their time on Tresantaras. David Hutchins had been chosen as one of the five travelers to discuss his time with the Tresantarian people.

The press conference began with President Chavez welcoming home all the lottery winners and commending them on a job well done. He applauded their commitment to helping the world community and thanked them for their service to the government and for agreeing to participate in the mission.

Chavez then introduced the five travelers selected to speak about their experiences on live television.

Each traveler had been asked to talk about a particular aspect of life on Tresantaras. The speakers discussed how life existed on the

distant planet in terms of social, political, historical, scientific, and philosophical standpoints.

But the most important subject about the Tresantarian civilization that hadn't yet been revealed would be discussed by David. He was about to tell the world the most critical information about the Tresantarians.

***“Greetings, everyone,” David Hutchins said as he stared into the television camera. “I am going to tell you something that is pretty damn amazing. It’s going to sound far-fetched and maybe even unbelievable. But everything I am about to say to you is the absolute truth.***

***“When we left for Tresantaras, I believed we were traveling to a distant world to live with an extraterrestrial race of beings that referred to themselves as Tresantarians. What I learned upon our arrival to this distant world was that Tresantaras was not an alien world, and the Tresantarians were not an alien species.***

***“The Tresantarians are time travelers. They have invented a technology that can bend the fabric of space and time. They are brilliant quantum scientists from the future that traveled back in time to visit Earth at a critical point in its history. That period is vital to the people of Earth in 2093 and is equally important to the people of Tresantaras in their timeline of existence.***

*“The people of Tresantaras are the future expression of the people of Earth. The reason the planet Tresantaras looks so much like Earth is that it is Earth.*

*“The Tresantarians were in trouble. Their genetic makeup had a severe defect that had begun to cause them physiological problems. They traced that problem back to our timeline when human beings had been experimenting with certain vaccines that damaged the human genome. The only way to save their species and ours was for them to travel back through time to correct the genetic flaws within the blueprint of human physiology. That’s why they contacted us and the reason they offered humanity the gift.*

*“The vaccine was what corrected the genetic defects in the human genome and what ultimately allowed those changes to be passed on to the Tresantarians in the future. By inviting one million humans to Tresantaras, our space brother relatives were able to monitor and make sure the genetic changes were repaired properly and that both species in both timelines were able to have the most optimal expressions of health and physiology possible. This has now been accomplished, and their mission has been completed.”*

David finished his speech and then took a seat next to the other travelers. They all listened as President Chavez verified the veracity

of David's explanation. It was an incredible story, and one the Tresantarian Leadership asked the president to keep secret.

The Tresantarians had explained to Chavez when they first met, that interfering with the timelines of other civilizations was a risky undertaking. Many of the Tresantarians' top scientists had warned their representatives against doing such a thing. But the Tresantarian civilization was desperate and in need of a miracle. If they hadn't intervened, they risked extinction. They made a calculated risk and did the unthinkable. They traveled hundreds of thousands of years into the past and solved the problem.

**Epilogue**  
**August 2093**

As the people of Earth continued to study the teachings of the Tresantarians, they realized the people of Tresantaras were a unique and kind race of beings.

It made everybody on Earth feel positive about the alliance that had been created between President Chavez and the Tresantarian Leadership.

The intergalactic friendship was ultimately an excellent investment for all citizens worldwide. The people of Earth knew this all too well because they finally understood that when they were looking at the Tresantarians, they were viewing themselves in the future.



## **Author's Note**

Thank you for reading my novella, *The Homecoming*. If you enjoyed the story, please consider reviewing the book on Amazon.com and Goodreads.

I wrote the basic template for this story back in 2011 and published it as a novelette titled, *Tresantaros*. In 2020, I decided to rewrite the manuscript and develop it into its current version.



## **About the Author**

Dr. John Reizer is a practicing chiropractor and author residing in the Upstate of South Carolina. For additional information, please visit the author's website at [www.johnreizer.com](http://www.johnreizer.com).

