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A red light starts to blink on the control panel. A computerized voice says, "Cryogenic hibernation protocol. Programming active. Please enter valid command key. The AI programming automatically inputs the series of letters, and the voice continues "Command code valid. Stand by for cycle interruption." The hibernation pod lowers from its berth at the back of the bridge and opens with a hiss.

I open my eyes groggily. Where am I, what happened? Then, it all comes back to me. The Sun going supernova, the solar system shattered, then hibernation. I was one of the 456 survivors of the Apocalypse. I was aboard the Ark class starship, the *Savior*. I pull myself up and promptly fall back into my pod. One's joints can get quite stiff after a while in cryogenic hibernation. After another try and a long joint-popping stretch, I walk over the control panel. Now, what had interrupted the hibernation cycle? It was programmed to end when a hospitable planet was found. Long range scanners show no planets in range. I look at the time/date indicator. It reads January 16, 6011. I inhale sharply. Then, after regaining my composure, I see the blinking hostile alert light. Curious, I sit down at the control panel and say,

"Computer, submit emergency report."

"Stand by while emergency report is generated. Sectors PQ34, ST23 occupied by single contact. By large energy signature emanating from the object, it appears to be a warship preparing to fire. Report complete."

Suddenly, the *Savior* rocks with a massive impact. I fall forward over the control panel and onto the front walkway. When I look out of the main viewscreen, I am greeted by an unwelcome sight. A large battleship lies approximately 2 kilometers from the *Savior*. On the side is the name *Humboldt*. Suddenly, the radio crackles. "Unidentified warship, this is the Liberty Rogue dreadnaught *LRS Humboldt*. Submit your designation and ID unit or we will fire again." The turrets straighten out to correct any faults from the previous barrage and aim at the *Savior* again.

I grab the output receiver on the radio and say "This is the starship *Savior*. Order your turret teams to stop firing. We are on a peaceful mission. We do not have a designation, I repeat; we do not have a designation."

There is a pause, then "All ships must submit a designation. If they do not, they must be forcefully and totally eliminated."

The turrets start to fire again. I turn in my seat and activate the weapons systems. The turrets of the *Savior* swivel and lock onto the *Humboldt's* turret hardpoints. Suddenly, the computer says "Warning, incoming torpedoes." I look out the viewport in time to see four antimatter torpedoes heading straight for the *Savior*. I hit the fire command on the weapons computer just in time for the turrets to destroy the incoming projectiles. I set the systems on automatic and run to the main hall, where everyone has by now awakened from cryogenic sleep. I start pointing at people and assigning them to battle stations. I put three people in each of the four torpedo launch bays, two people in each of the ten turret control stations, and five people on the weapons systems of the bridge. Whoever I haven't already assigned to a station I take with me to the hanger bay. Each person chooses a highly maneuverable Liberator-class fighter and we launch to space to take on the *Humboldt*. The *Savior* fires torpedoes and long range missiles at the rogue ship, while the wave of fighters goes in for the kill. As the *Humboldt* comes into range, it sends out its wave of rogue fighters. Luckily, the clunky ships they're flying are no match for our Liberators. The *Savior's* three bombers fly ahead and send their entire payload of torpedo salvos into the side of the battleship, severely crippling it. However, even with the ship crippled by the loss of its fighter wing and engines, it still has a secret weapon. From beneath the ship emerges a huge mortar turret. A lancing beam of energy barrels forwards and into the *Savior*, bringing the shields down to 40%. Just as the mortar is about to fire again, another smaller beam of antimatter mortar energy hits the *Humboldt* from behind, destroying it. A Liberty Navy dreadnaught emerges from the debris. Over the radio comes a familiar voice.

"Need a hand?" came the voice of Junko Zane, the main character from one of my favorite computer games, the very same one containing the liberty rogues as well. What was going on here?

"Yes, thanks" I say, as we head back over to the *Savior* for repairs. The dreadnaught leaves. I get out of the *Liberty*, my personal fighter, and head up to the bridge. The pressing matter of finding a habitable planet is my greatest worry at this time. I have a dangerous plan involving a ship at the back of the hanger, the *Time Flyer*. The *Time Flyer* is a time machine prototype, and still imperfect. I need to take it on a test run, and this is a perfect opportunity.

I take Hannah with me to carry out my plan, to take the *Flyer* to find a habitable planet in the future. I would return to the *Savior* and input a heavily encrypted coordinate set into the nav-com (Navigation Computer). The new coordinates would take the *Savior* to the time and place of the planet. The riskiest part of the plan is getting the *Savior* to the time. It could rip apart in the process.

The time flyer takes off on its maiden voyage, the time travel device (TTD) humming seemingly in anticipation. The TTD produces and projects a decagon of overlapping lasers, which form into a light gate, whose presence disrupts space and time, creating a portal to roughly the year 10,000. The *Flyer* slides forward into the wormhole. The ride lasts only a few seconds, and is remarkably smooth and quiet. The *Flyer* emerges from the event horizon just outside the atmosphere of a planet apparently covered in foliage. What isn't foliage is water, so the place looks promising.

On the surface, I find that the foliage is remarkably familiar, and that it covers the ruins of buildings whose architecture is very similar to that of earth. I enter the nearest ruin to find an ancient library. The first book I see is one entitled *The History of Earth After the Apocalypse*. Curious I open it. The first paragraph is as follows:

*Earth was prosperous, with many natural recourses, a huge population, and beautiful cities and places. But then, the apocalypse came. The Sun went supernova, killing billions and reducing our beautiful civilization to the one that existed in Bible times. But like before, we rebuilt. After a few thousand years, we were farther ahead than when earth died. Hundreds of planets beyond our own solar system were terraformed and inhabited. Then dark times came. On earth, bioengineers created a supervirus, which ravaged our planet. After it died down, a fraction of the original population of earth remained. But as in before, we brought it back from the brink.*

I flip through the concise history to the last page of the book, upon which is written in pencil:

*I am one of the survivors of the third and hopefully final apocalypse. An unknown power surged through the universe, causing people to simply vanish. I am one of the 144,000 who didn't disappear. We migrated back to earth, only to find that the supervirus had been reawakened by the energy. Now, only 77 remain, and I feel the effects of the virus upon me right now. If another survivor reads this, leave, and do not return.*

I slam the book shut and run out to the *Flyer*.

"Get in!" I yell to Hannah, who is standing outside the ship. I enter the wormhole even before we leave the planet's atmosphere. Only when we are safely back in the Savior do I let out a sigh of relief. We were safe. *Or were we...*

On the hull of the *Time Flyer*, the single cell of the virus quivers. It had been dormant, but now, awakened by the heat of the *Time Flyer's* hull, it started to split and multiply. The Supervirus had been awakened.