

S.P.E.C.T.O.R 478

Chapter 478: Ailiv's massacre

"So the Solarians won't cut down a tree without the consent of the Environmental Sustainability Bureau? How does that work exactly?" Adam asked as the pair continued to walk through the main concourse area while people gave them strange looks.

"It depends on where the tree grows and the circumstances of it, since nature's growth on Solarian Prime is unpredictable," Rowena began to explain. "Sometimes you will have a tree that can take years to grow, while other times one can pop up in a single night.

If the tree or other form of plant life grows slowly at a more natural rate, then there is no need to consult the Environmental Sustainability Bureau about it, and the Solarian can just remove it themselves if they so wish. However, if it grows rapidly and suddenly appears, then they need to make a request to the Bureau about removing it since rapid growth generally indicates that nature has something in mind for growing it in that location."

"You make it sound like nature itself is a living entity," Adam remarked.

"I'm not an expert on this, and so I can't really explain it to you, but from what Eytelis told me when I met her in the past. All plantae hold a symbiotic relationship with one another and can therefore communicate with each other. Certain races, such as the Dryads, are capable of communicating with these plantae, which is why they hold so much influence over the nature of the planets they reside upon."

"So Eytelis speaks with the planets plantae about why a tree or other plant life suddenly grew in a specific location and then decides if the Solarian who made the request can remove it or not?"

"It doesn't have to be Eytelis herself since she is not the only Environmental Sustainability Bureau representative on the planet who can commune with plantae; she is just the leader. However, yes, you are broadly speaking correct, though I believe it is slightly more complicated than that."

"I imagine it is. I have nothing against nature or plantae, but I find it hard to believe that humanoids would listen to a plant's demands," Adam replied.

[Justiceistruth (Earth): Damn straight. I don't wanna listen and obey to some damn shrub.]

"That's probably because the plantae on Earth have never risen against your race and killed them," Rowena replied as she gave him a sideways smirk.

[All the Earth viewers: ...]

"Excuse me?" Adam asked just as they passed through the exit of the Orbital Elevator Planetary Station and saw what could only be described as a giant forest before him.

Liluth sat in the giant lecture hall of Capital University listening to the Dwarfinian science directorate's explanation on the theoretical repercussions on the body, both mental and physical, for long-term stasis travel in subspace.

She was not alone in the lecture hall as every seat was taken, though admittedly she was by far the youngest person present.

"And so, as you can all see from our data, current stasis pods are suitable for long-distance subspace travel as long as they're used when combined with jump gates. Without jump gates, however, the individuals will need to leave the stasis pods to take part in physical exercise and interaction with other people.

As we are aware from the probes each of the races has sent out over the years, the known universe only accounts for approximately twenty percent of the entire universe, and that number is constantly shrinking all the time.

Now, what about if someone were to use a stasis pod while travelling in subspace to somewhere far outside the known universe?

As you are all no doubt aware, our current estimate is that the universe has more than fifty billion galaxies within it, but for this discussion, we will select one galaxy that has recently been discovered by a probe sent out by this very university, S C U One Nine Five dash Seven Nine Three.

S C U One Nine Five dash Seven Nine Three is a barred spiral galaxy, a little under two hundred and nineteen million light-years away. This means that without a jump gate, it would take any subspace-capable ship roughly six years to reach it.

According to the probe's scans, this particular galaxy appears to have multiple planets bearing intelligent life with varying levels of technology.

One particular star system has eight planets rotating around a single sun, which are separated by an asteroid belt that divides them, with the first four planets being terrestrial and the remaining four being gas or ice giants.

Only the third planet in this system contains advanced life, which appears to have only just begun exploring space.

We know from past experience that sending members of our races on long-distance subspace travel in stasis..."

In a dark corner of the lecture hall, an individual tried hard to stifle their yawn before looking in Liluth's direction while scratching their large, drooping ears as they mumbled, "How long's this damn thing going to last?"

Trees towered far above Adam while canopies hung overhead, allowing moderate amounts of sunlight to pass through them and bathe the ground below. Built into many of the trees at ground level were open-fronted shops, while higher up the trees, you could see the doors and windows that showed homes had been built within them.

Walkways crisscrossed between the trees, allowing individuals to pass between them without having to travel to ground level.

The ground that people walked or vehicles travelled on wasn't pavements made of stone or concrete, but the earthen soil, while shrubs, grass and other plantlife seemed to grow as it wished away from the roads or footpaths.

[StealthAssassin9 (Earth): Wow, it's a forest city.]

[Celebrityhunter69 (Earth): So beautiful.]

“Impressed?” Rowena asked as she watched and smiled at his reaction to the scene.

Adam could only nod in response as he continued to admire the scene until he noticed a hovervan passing on what was the earthen road nearby, causing him to say, “I’m honestly surprised they allow vehicles.”

“Before the invention of hover vehicles, they didn’t, or at least they were severely restricted. The wheels of the vehicles would dig into the earth and damage it at times, so they placed restrictions on how many vehicles could travel and where. Apparently, back when combustion engines were still a thing and more economically friendly power sources had been discovered, vehicles as a whole were completely banned, unless they were pushed or pulled, usually by livestock.

Since hover vehicles never need to touch the ground, restrictions on vehicles have been largely lifted, though there are still a few to limit the number that travel at any one time. We are in the middle of a forest after all, and there is not as much room as in a normal city.”

“So, which way to find a city access terminal?” Adam asked.

“There were a few in the Orbital Elevator Planetary Station, but with so many people gathered around and watching us, I figured it would be best not to use one of those,” Rowena replied before pointing to a strange gnarled stump that grew out of the earth in the middle of the earthen path and was a dozen or so meters away before adding, “That stump just there should be a city information point that visitors can access if they wish to get directions or learn more about the city.”

“The gnarled stump?” Adam asked sceptically.

“Haha, trust me,” Rowena said as she pulled him along in the direction of the stump.

“So does this city have a name?” Adam enquired.

“We are in the Solarian Prime capital city of Elllelean.”

“They built the Orbital Elevator Planetary Station in the middle of the capital city?” Adam asked in surprise.

“I know what you’re thinking, but yes, because they had good reason to. As I explained before, the Orbital Elevator allows the trees and, in fact, some other fauna to climb it so that they can get closer to the sun, which they need to survive.

Also, unlike Orbital Elevators on other planets, which are often built away from cities or in the middle of oceans, because they are not always the nicest things to look at. The ones built here on Solarian Prime and several other planets, however, are hidden because the plantae that grow more freely help to hide the Orbital Elevator and its associated station.

“I see,” Adam replied before asking, “So you were talking about a tree uprising or something?”

[StealthAssassin9 (Earth): Are they seriously discussing a tree uprising? What did the trees revolt and kill the humanoids because of how they were treated or something?]

[OracleRomy (Elysium): Yeah, that’s pretty much how it went.]

[StealthAssassin9 (Earth): ...]

“Before I was born, there was an incident that took place on the planet Ailiv, which, like Solarian Prime, is a planet with unnatural plantae growth. However, unlike the Solarians, the native race of Ailiv did not build a symbiotic relationship with the plantae as they believed that they were the dominant species of the planet and that they could control it.”

[CEOHopkins (Earth): Sounds familiar.]

“The native race of Ailiv were doing whatever they wished to nature, such as felling trees on mass or using powerful machinery to flatten an area before building on it. Eventually, it reached the point where the plantae had had enough and so they fought back.

The trees, as one example, had their vines come up to the surface and attack the race that had been felling them while also destroying the machinery they had been using. What followed was the eradication of that entire race.”