

# End of Summer Mix

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And then something  
happened



The console was beeping a rapid alarm again. It had been doing that for a week now and none of us knew how to turn it off. We knew it was perhaps finally sign that our time on the ship was running out. Like most from our generation we move from salvaged ship to salvaged ship to travel. After the Earth was healed and declared a sanctuary zone it was decided that humans were too dangerous a species to inhabit the planet and all humans were sent to the stars to travel in search of a new home. We could visit Earth any time that we wanted of course- but no one could live there permanently.

We had been in this current ship for over a year, one of our longest runs yet.

"Damn it". I hit the console a couple of times. The beeping didn't stop. I was the only one up. Working my shift searching for livable planets as we hurtled through space in a broken down ship was just about the most boring part of my day. We had not found a livable planet in all of my years in this work. The beeping seemed louder, though I knew it was just that it was really grating on my nerves. I got up and went to the sleeping cubbies. I grabbed my pillow and brought it to the console. "Better than nothing". I muffled the beeping as best I could.

I sat back down and prepared myself for a long and boring three hours. I picked up the log book- the one that we carried with us from ship to ship and now from generation to generation- recording our experiences. I had been writing in the book for 25 years. My great grandfather had written in it too. He was alive in the times of the revolution on Earth- long before we solved the climate crisis.

I flipped to his section of the book. He wrote about the fall of capitalism, about the end of white supremacy. He talked about the time up to the big Changes, just before we were sent from Earth. He died in the Changes, fighting for our freedom. I wondered what it was like to live through that kind of upheaval. Imagine- to have a sense that what you were doing, that what you were part of was going to change the world, was going to alter history? It must have been so intoxicating, so appealing. How did the classical poets of the late 1980s describe it? As irresistible revolutions. Yes, that's it. I can't understand why everybody did not immediately get involved in the project of transforming the world. It would have been so irresistible.

Reading the logs though, it's clear that our ancestors were facing something I can't even fathom- a way of thinking about other human beings that was rooted in white supremacy. I can say those words now but I can't really appreciate what they mean. I've never lived under that system of violence and control. It's unimaginable.

He talks about something called a "prison" where they isolated and punished people's bodies and minds through horrific tactics. Can you imagine a world where that was allowed? I flipped through the log book looking for one of the most mystifying passages for me.

"We opened the doors to the prisons and began a process of Indigenous governance. Black people finally got to rest, free from slavery after 650 years. We worked to stop climate change.

We invested our collective brilliance into cooling our planet and saving the living things. It took us 10 years to radically reverse the temperature rise. We were all able to work on the project of solving climate change because we could- we had time and brain space to do this work well, we listened to Elders and to children and we made change together. By 2030 in my pod, we were hopeful again.”

He writes about the end of these prisons- but not about the exact process of how they ended that system. He writes about it years after the violence had ended, when he had time to write. Perhaps he didn't want to scare us. From what I understand the battle to end something called “policing” and prisons was a long and aggressive one.

When I read passages like this I can't comprehend living in that time. It's unimaginable that people were rising up all over the place to say stop this violence and no “police” won't be allowed to terrorize people day in and day out. But for some reason it seemed to take people a long time to awaken to the reality of alternatives.

The beeping intensified. This was new. I lifted the pillow. Strange- it was not coming from the same spot anymore. I looked at the console. I realized in a second that lights were flashing. This was not an error. We had picked up a planet on the scans. It was always such a rush of emotions when this happened. Would it be livable? Would we finally get to rest and put down roots? Or would this be like all the other times? And the crushing disappointment.

Still, rereading these words- “By 2030 in my pod, we were hopeful again.”- reminds me that it's important to stay hopeful even in the most incredible of circumstances. I close the log book and go to wake the others. We have work to do.