The Book of  
Tales & Memories

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Human Space

# Sisters

Centuries ago, three sisters set out on a journey from Centauri to Incandescent. Because of the danger of pirates, they traveled on three different ships. Eugenia was eager for adventure and she boarded the lead ship, *Endeavor.* Victoria was the smartest of the three and she traveled on the science ship, *Fermi.* Katharine, who would have preferred to stay at home, morosely boarded the last ship, the *Rising Star*.

In deep space, far from any aid, the three ships were attacked by pirates. All three ships defended themselves as best they could. Laser turrets fired ceaselessly at wave after wave of pirate ships, but still the pirates kept coming.

Without warning, several missiles struck the *Endeavor.* Many compartments were breached and passengers screamed as they fell into the cold vacuum of space. Inside a leaky deck, Eugenia gasped for air as the pressure dropped. With the noise of explosions fading in the thin air, Eugenia fell unconscious and began to dream.

In her dream, Eugenia heard the soft voice of Domina and she saw before her a brilliant green star surrounded by welcoming worlds.

“This system is yours,” said Domina in her head, “Let it be a sanctuary for you and for all your people.”

As she heard those words, Eugenia saw before her a beautiful temple, orbiting one of the moons in the system.

Moved by the vision, Eugenia reached out her hand to touch the temple, but as she leaned forward, she lost her balance and fell into the blackness of space. Wind roared in her ears as she fell and stars danced around her. Then a blinding light opened beneath her feet and swallowed her whole. For more than an eternity, Eugenia saw, heard, and felt only a brilliant white light.

When she woke from her vision, Eugenia found herself onboard the *Endeavor* once again. The air pumps were restoring normal pressure and the explosions had stopped.

Eugenia rushed to the bridge to contact her sisters. Though many people had died in the attack, Victoria and Katharine were alright.

“How did we escape the pirates?” asked Eugenia.

Victoria said, “Just as it looked like we were about to be killed, our three ships passed through a stargate, though no stargate was visible. I don’t have any science to explain it. It’s miraculous!”

But Katharine said, “It’d be a better miracle if we were on Incandescent right now. But instead our so-called savior dumped us in this miserable system with a hideous green sun.”

Eugenia then told them the story of her dream and how she saw a great temple in this system that would welcome and sustain all travelers.

“This *must* be the system that Domina showed me,” said Eugenia, “As Domina has returned my life to me, so I give my life to carrying out her will. The *Endeavor* and I will stay here and build Domina’s temple.”

Victoria agreed, “You are chosen by Domina, and it is our duty to help however we can. Kathy and I will make our way to Incandescent and from there obtain supplies and materials to help you.”

Katharine and Victoria said goodbye to Eugenia and commanded their ships to head towards Incandescent. But because they were in uncharted space, they did not know which stargate to take. Victoria, on the science ship *Fermi*, used its instruments to unravel the mysteries of the ancient stargate network.

The ships remained immobile for many days while Victoria worked, but still they had no idea of how to get to Incandescent. With supplies running low, everyone on board began to get desperate.

One night, after twenty hours in front of the *Fermi* astrocomputers, Victoria fell into an exhausted sleep and dreamed.

Victoria floated above the Galaxy and, with unnatural vision and mind, pierced the blur of countless stars. Every one of a hundred billion stars was known to her and each she saw in its proper place. And there was no corner of the Galaxy that was a mystery to her—every world was as familiar to her as the flowers of her own garden.

As she floated there in joy, Victoria heard the voice of Domina—a voice that is more beautiful than any music and clearer than the warnings of your own conscience.

“You will find your path among the stars,” Domina said, “But first you must help your friends.”

When she woke up, Victoria cried in pain. The infinite knowledge of the Galaxy was gone from her mind and only a vast ignorance remained. But her feeble mind yet retained two important pieces of knowledge. The first was a path to the home of the Gods at the Galactic Core; the second was the way to Incandescent.

One day, Victoria would follow her path to the Galactic Core and disappear from Human Space, but at this moment she used her knowledge to guide the *Fermi* and the *Rising Star* to the Commonwealth colony at Incandescent.

Several weeks later, Victoria and Katharine reached the stargate that would finally take them to Incandescent. But Katharine was worried and called her sister.

“Victoria, I have a weird feeling that we’re not safe. The pirates that attacked us are still out there. They’ll probably hit us the minute we come out of that stargate.”

“How could you know that?” asked Victoria, “There is no logical reason why the pirates would hang around to wait for us.”

“I know it’s illogical, but I had a crazy dream last night,” said Katharine. “I dreamed that I was floating over Earth and all its continents were covered in ash and all its seas had boiled away. I cried, in my dream, thinking about all the people, and as I floated there I tried to see and hear if anyone was still alive. But I sensed only a black emptiness—nothing was left alive.

“I floated higher and higher and I could see the stations of Centauri and the metropolis at Sirius, and all of them, no matter where I looked, were as dark and dead as the depth of space.

“Gods! How I wanted to look away! But I saw it all, from the Ringerhomes at Saturn to the cities of Incandescent, to the ends of Jiang’s Star and beyond, and nowhere did I see a human left alive. Every trace of our lives and our works was smothered in blackness, ash, and death.

“And floating above it all, I could see the face of Domina. She too saw the lifeless void that once held our human homes. And I saw that she wept. She wept for our death and the death of all our worlds, but I looked at her face closely and I saw no sign of regret.”

Victoria tried to reassure her sister. “It was just a dream,” she said, “Domina would never allow anything bad to happen to us—I’m sure of it. When we pass through that gate tomorrow, you’ll see that everything is alright.”

The next day, the *Fermi* and the *Rising Star* passed through the final stargate, and just as Katharine had predicted, they were instantly attacked by pirates.

The two ships fought back valiantly, but Katharine’s ship, the *Rising Star*, was quickly crippled.

On the comlink, Victoria pleaded with her sister, “Hurry! Match our course and we’ll rescue you and your crew!”

But Katharine refused, “No! Run now while I engage the pirates. Go now! Domina will help me!”

With tears in her eyes, Victoria turned her ship away and thrusted at full power towards Incandescent and Commonwealth space.

Behind her, Victoria saw the *Rising Star* in a fierce battle with the pirates. Katharine was firing wildly with the laser turret and every shot was true. But the pirates kept coming, and some had started to disengage the *Rising Star* and head towards the *Fermi*.

Suddenly, the *Rising Star* began to glow from within. A beautiful, violet glow enveloped the ship and grew brighter and brighter. Soon the ship was lost in the glare and the pirate ships around it were frantically turning to get away.

The globe of violet light burst forth in all directions and slammed into the pirate ships. When the glow faded, all that was left was the dark, drifting hulls of the pirate ships. Katharine and the *Rising Star* were gone.

Enveloped in grief, Victoria reached the planet Incandescent. Though Katharine was gone, she and Eugenia would have to continue to do Domina’s work.

The story of the journey inspired millions and when supply ships were sent to help Eugenia, thousands of volunteers were aboard to dedicate their lives to Domina.

Eugenia built the first temple to Domina in what is now the Sanctuary system.

Victoria visited the new temple once, but she did not stay for long. She could not forget Katharine’s sacrifice or Katharine’s terrible dream. Was Katharine’s dream a glimpse of the future? Was it all some trick of Oracus? There was only one place to seek such answers.

Centuries ago, Victoria set out on a journey to the Galactic Core. She was the first pilgrim to seek Domina, and though many others have journeyed since, none have yet returned. May they all find their path and return safely home.

Oracus & Domina

# Oracus & Domina

When the warriors of Al’trec [the precursor of the Core Races] reached the vault of the Halo they brought with them void weapons and Core energies against which the people had no defense. But when threatened with infodeath and oblivion the guardians of the Halo refused to surrender.

True to their inquisitive nature, the Al’trec asked the guardians how they could hope to endure in the face of such power as the warriors had brought. The guardians replied that they could alter their essence and their distinctiveness to adapt to the Al’trec morphology and that even if the Halo Races were wiped out, their information would live on inside the bodies of the Al’trec. Eventually, the Halo Races would reappear, embodied in the Al’trec.

The Al’trec warriors realized that they had no defense against such powers and so they agreed to a billion-year peace between the Halo and the Core.

Satisfied that they had preserved their race, the guardians of the Halo rested, but a young guardian named Oracus still had doubts. He asked the other guardians, “What guarantees have we received? How can we be sure that the Al’trec will keep the peace?”

The other guardians had no answers. The energies of the Core were beyond the reach of the Halo.

But Oracus said, “Just as our information can inhabit the body of an Al’trec it can also be made to inhabit the Core. Our essence will watch the Al’trec and keep the peace.”

The guardians agreed but asked, who would be willing to sacrifice themselves to such a fate?

And Oracus said, “I will go—even though it means abandoning my body and my home.”

The guardians of the Halo, though designed for war and sacrifice, knew pity too and they said to Oracus, “You will not go alone. So that you may remember your home and your race we will construct a companion for you out of the best and noblest aspect of us.”

They named her “Domina.”