

Title: The Last Transmission

Dr. Elias Carter stood alone in the dimly lit control room of the ARES-9 space station, orbiting the distant exoplanet Kepler-442b. The mission was simple—establish a research base and report back to Earth. But for the past three months, there had been only silence. The last message from Mission Control was a garbled transmission:

"Abort mission. Do not engage. Return immediately—"

Then, nothing.

Elias had tried everything—scanning deep space, recalibrating the long-range antenna, even launching distress beacons. But Earth was gone. Not destroyed, not damaged—just... missing. The blue dot that had always been there was now a void, an absence where home should be.

Tonight, he stared at the endless blackness beyond the station's viewport, clutching a data drive in his trembling hands. It held everything—the final recordings, atmospheric scans, anomalies detected days before Earth vanished. He had to send it somewhere.

Activating the emergency beacon, he uploaded the data and aimed it toward Gliese 581, a star system with a known exoplanet. Maybe someone—something—would find it.

As the transmission began, a low hum echoed through the station. The lights flickered. His breath caught.

Something was here.

Not outside. Inside.

A shadow moved behind him.

Before he could turn, the last thing he heard was a whisper—his own voice.

"You were never meant to leave." The transmission ended.