

Transmission to Earth: Message #9

Dear Humans,

“Phred...” the human broke the silence. Goosebumps gathered along my body as the vibrations of those words bounced against my skin. I guess it hit me this time—the realization that a human being was actually communicating with me. I dreamt about this moment as a young one. The human kept talking. I tried to focus on him. He seemed to be realizing something too.

“I apologize. I lost myself for a bit there. But hey, I guess if you’re really here to learn about us humans, you might as well see the good and the bad. Let’s turn these lights on so bright that you won’t miss a thing!” The human seemed almost happy again. I must admit I was confused. The emotions in this human are like seasons—the highs and lows come and go, despite the circumstances. I decided to speak.

“Human. I think that I may have caused you some grief, though I am honestly not so sure. I will tell you this: I would like your forgiveness for any offense I may have caused. I can assure you that I am only here in an attempt to understand.”

The human looked at me for a long time. “Holy cow, man, you do need some help, don’t you?” he said as he began to check his pockets. “First off, humans don’t talk like that. Let’s just keep things real right from the start. If you’re gonna do it right, you gotta learn how to communicate with humans. You can start by using my name. You see, we humans have names too, you know.” He pulled out some gloves from his pockets and started putting them on.

“Don’t worry, Phred,” the human continued, “we’ll take a train from here all the way to Shanghai. I’ll take you anywhere you want to go! You gotta learn from as many different people as possible. That’s the only way to really get to know us.”

I spoke again. “Human. What do I call you?”

“Huh? My name? You don’t remember? Should’ve seen that one coming. You can call me Sandle.”

I wasn’t so sure about him being the human I wanted to have helping me. Somehow, though, I felt like I was sitting around the corner from something special, like I was only a short walk away from changing the course of everything forever. Maybe he would lead me to the human that could really help. I spoke again.

“Sandle. Thank you for sharing yourself with me. I have a proposal. You know I’m on a mission, and I have already shared with you many of the details. However, you are right. I

do need your help. Sandle, dear human, instead of a train, let's take my ship. Can you leave tonight? I have no time to spare."

The human's eyes grew wide like a child's. He started to speak excitedly. "Oh, dear Phreddie, I was already getting ready to go. It's going to be a fine night tonight. But are you serious? We can ride in your, like, spaceship, or whatever you call it?"

I nodded. He kept talking. "Whoa! Let's go! I have so many things to show you. So many people. You know, sometimes I feel like me and my friends rule the world. And they come from all different places. Just like you!"

Sandle and I walked up some hills in the woods before we came to where I had left the Eyestar-170. "Like an eagle in the mountain!" the human exclaimed when he saw it. "I know you can't stay here forever, Phred. But I hope we have time to see everyone. Maybe you can even take me to the moon one day! That was everyone's dream when I was a kid. Astronauts and firefighters. But there's barely ever anyone on the moon, and there's never enough firefighters."

We climbed aboard. I let the human look around a bit. He seemed a little overwhelmed, and after a while, it was like he remembered something out of nowhere. "Music! Does this thing play music? Please, wherever we end up going, we can't let the music stop."

I answered him. "Of course, Sandle. It was the first modification I made to my ship post meeting you. I rigged the communications system." I pointed to it as I explained. The human walked over to it. He started pressing things. It took him exactly 139 seconds to get the music started.

This wasn't the human I had thought I wanted, but it was the human I needed. I could feel things unraveling and coming together all at once. A thread being unwound from one spool while the edges of myself were being wound up onto another, newer and neater one. I opened the front viewport above the console so that the human could see what was ahead of us. Stars from the night sky greeted our eyes like specks of a future still so far away. Sandle, my dear and puzzling human, finally stopped talking.

Thank you for listening.