A tired, well-armed, weary woman tasked with trudging through the ruins of the old world to deliver a message in the search of beginning again.

A world in calamity, with civilization holed up in four massive megacities that serve as the only spot of respite and safety in a world full of monsters made from pure evil that seem to feast off of the suffering of humanity.

“A homesick secretary in charge of the clerical work on a spaceship” and “a faraway world with many alien creatures”.

Even paradise grew boring.

Still in her uniform as she returned to the small room that her title allowed her to claim as her own aboard the *CSV Fatum Iustum Stultorum* – a room that was only slightly bigger than some of the ship’s storage closets in that it had a desk alongside the seemingly small dresser and the bed that felt even smaller – Elly fell down onto the bed, not sinking at all into its uncomfortable firmness as she stared up at the ceiling. The *Fatum Iustum Stultorum* was her first choice of posting when she re-enlisted after her initial conscription with the Core System’s Exploration Outfit, but it was nothing like her conscription. As a conscript, she did a grand sum of nothing; she was barely worth the well-made food that they were giving her. To the politicians’ that had enacted the conscription policies years ago, that’d been the effort: it was never going to be economically worthwhile, they knew, but it would benefit society greatly by forcing different people who’d never come together to have to do so, in doing so forming new bonds between society and strengthening it as a whole.

As a conscript, Elly had actually enjoyed her time, because every day was a new opportunity. When she re-enlisted, she’d hoped that it’d be similar among the *Fatum Iustum Stultorum*, given that it was a top of the line vessel designed to go further out in the galaxy than any one before it, with a specialized warp drive that made bridging light years of distances cost far less fuel while going far quicker in doing so.

Had she known that the position she’d wind up would see her in charge of a few dozen conscripts writing reports that she was then to combine, edit, clean up, and refile about every planet that the vessel visited, she might have reconsidered it. Especially given the latest planet – it was a bonified garden world, with a civilization prospering that was, if the eggheads had an accurate guess, about to transmit their first message into space. As they catalogued every species on the planet remotely, using advanced cameras, it was her job to send those reports back to Earth and to wait for word on what to do.

With a sigh, Elly closed her eyes. It’d be another week before the initial reports got back, so another week until they even could think about leaving.