*The harsh deceleration that had shoved the three of us deeply into our couches let up, replaced with near free-fall as our lander fell through the middle reaches of the atmosphere.   
“Now it’s up to the chutes,” Maqtlaz said. She monitored the lander’s status panel. “I hope double the rated interval of cold and vacuum soaking hasn’t degraded them too much.”  
“Tazo,” Yalad said, ‘are we still on track?”   
The reticle above the tiny Zhdant-globe in the so-called navigation panel lay pegged over the floodplains north of the mouth of the Friebrkad River. I read the coordinates off of the verniers, pulled the atlas out of its cubby and opened it to the page we’d marked before we left Comm Station Number Seventeen three hours ago.  
“Near as I can tell from the iron idiot here,” I shouted over the slipstream noise, “we’re coming down about fifteen klicks north of some settlement called Dzaltlievan.”   
We all grunted as the initial drogue fired. The atlas flew out of my hands, falling at Maqtlaz’ feet. “Leave it,” I told her. We all silently counted off the seconds until the main chutes deployed. Then the capsule jerked hard and our jaws slammed shut.  
“Lost one, curse it!” Maqtlaz shouted. The lander began to spin lazily with only two of the three main chutes slowing it. “We’re going to hit a little harder than usual, folks.” She spat out a sliver of tooth.  
Seconds after the landing bag inflated, the lander slammed into the gravel. It felt like a groundcar crash. “Tazo here,” I said blearily.  
“Yalad here,” he mumbled. “Maq? Maq? Dammit, she’s passed out.”   
We fumbled with our restraints. Maqtlaz began to come to. I looked out the egress hatch window.  
“Looks like the locals saw us come down. They’re on scene.” I tried to keep the fear from my voice.  
“Good! They can help us, maybe give first aid to Maq.”  
“We’ve got other problems.” The hammering began on the egress hatch.* ***Please don’t pull the emergency handle****, I willed them silently. We could hear them shouting now through the vents.  
“Kill them! Kill the spacers! They killed the world! BURN THEM ALIVE!”*