Earl Ives was a 17 year old high school senior.

He was born in 19, excuse me, he was born.

Earl Ives was a 17 year old high school senior.

He was born in 2035.

The world he lived in was troubled with the impacts of climate change, overpopulation, and diminishing resources.

He was orphaned at the age of 10 when his parents died in a tunnel collapse.

In his time, due to the population and over pollution in the heated atmosphere due to climate change and the harsh weather conditions, people lived underground in tunnels so that the air could be purified and they could be sheltered from the harsh climate.

The population of the tunnels were divided into clans.

Earl's clan was West Virginia 79521.

But that designation was only used in official communications.

The 104,032 people that made up Earl's main clan referred to themselves as Mountaineers to reflect their West Virginia mountain heritage.

The population of the clan was divided into sub-clan and family clans.

The sub-clans were groups of people who had lived in the same neighborhoods before life went underground.

The family clans were made up of people related to each other.

Earl escaped dying in the collapse of the mine because he was at the federal government's testing center because he had been identified as a mathematician prodigy.

He scored so high on the test at the government testing center that the government made arrangements for Earl to be assigned to a military orphanage for space force.

Earl was a stoic, honest, hardworking person who understood his place in life and tried to make the most of the opportunities before him.

Space force was made up of military personnel and was considered the elite force for the United States of America.

Earl applied to the space force academy for further education after he graduated high school.

These positions are highly valued and difficult for an orphan to get no matter how high their test score is due to people with influence or relatives in the space force getting favored for admission to the space force academy.

Earl realized this and stoically selected the methane mining branch of the space force.

This is considered the lowest military career in the space force because of the extended time spent away from earth mining the methane gases of Titan to keep Earth's industry and electricity flowing.

He realized that the reason that methane mining on Titan is considered such an undesirable position is because it requires a 20 year stay away from earth.

Earl and the female student have a mutual crush on each other but Earl realizes that her family has a much more prestigious and wealthy position and he would never be an accepted match and he accepts this when he applies to the space force academy for the methane division.