



Solus, Teotl Studios
Human backstory
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SOLUS HUMAN STORIES AND LOCATIONS

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For Teotl Studios. Solus.*

Earth 2168

Scientists conclude that Earth is falling apart and faces destruction in the next 20-50 years. The largest governments of the world hold an emergency meeting in New York in order to formulate a plan to save the citizens of Earth. What they delivered became known as The Solus Project.

The Solus Project - Informally known as the "Planet B"-project.

The Solus project is an internationally funded project, with the main purpose to seek out potentially habitable planets, and send a small crew of humans to each of these planets to try and establish a research base on them. It is planned that, after a certain amount of time, the research crews on these planets will give either a green light, meaning that these planets are truly habitable, or a red light, meaning that any plans of colonizing this world should be abandoned. It is then planned that the rest of the population of Earth will be sent to the green lighted planets, initially in small groups selected on the basis of what they can contribute to the new colonies.

In order to fulfill the large anticipated demand for qualified scientists, a scholar program was started to encourage large numbers of young students to become researchers in fields thought to contribute to the project, even though not all of them will be the ones sent to the planets.

Earth 2170

The Solus project has received enough funding to start building and sending out robotic probes to potentially habitable planets identified during the past century by space telescopes in near-Earth orbit. The probes are being sent out in order to tell whether the atmosphere is breathable, the climate and geography are suitable to humans, and these planetary systems are stable and reasonably safe from space hazards. The search of qualified scientists and personnel is intensified as the list of possible planets is being made.

The first ship sent to each of these planets is unmanned and robotic. These ships are carrying orbiting and landing probes. The ship enters orbit around the planet and then releases the probes. Afterwards, the ship only serves as a comlink to Earth. The orbiting robotic ship is also meant to serve as an emergency communication relay for the manned expedition that may follow it, sending information to and from Earth at a faster rate than possible from the manned ship.

Each of the manned missions is planned to consist of a ship and a crew of about 20 people. The ship is also designed to serve as a lifeboat, in case the mission turns horribly wrong and the team must leave the planet. Though not nearly sufficient to return to Earth before its destruction, it guarantees survival of the crew for many years. The ship is also equipped with a

number of emergency escape pods, enough to carry all the crew members to the planet surface but incapable of sustaining their lives for a long time.

After information of the Solus project was leaked to the population, protesters around the globe are accusing the Solus project of planning to save only a small number of humans. Most people protest against being left behind, while politicians and the rich are obviously trying to pay their way into the Solus program. Also the news of the first expeditions being largely suicide missions angers many, and protesters claim the project is forcing researchers to join the teams by making them feel guilty about the elite training and career opportunities they received from the project.

The Terra Nova group is founded, a branch of the Solus project whose main task is to relay carefully controlled information about the project to the public. Its main task is to uphold a strong image of hope to the public, in the belief that the public will act more calmly if there is hope for the future generations.

Earth 2173

All probes and orbiters have been sent away. The lists of suitable planets are shrinking rapidly. The Terra Nova group is successful in calming down parts of the public. Protests are still being organized, but not on the same scale as previously. Political murders and assassinations are common, as the ones paying for the murders hope that they will be selected as replacements in the project.

The initial teams are now starting to form and are prepare for their respective mission to the selected planets.

Earth 2180

All of the manned ships are now complete, and most probes are sending back data. The list of potential planets is now shorter than what was initially hoped. One planet, initially named Król-871C, was later renamed Elpis, the Greek Goddess of hope, after it had been prospected as a potentially habitable. The orbiters circling Elpis are sending very promising data, but no data is being sent from the landing probes.

As a measure of their desperation at the lack of other clearly suitable planets, they decide to send a team to Elpis despite the mysteriously silent landing probes.

The crew aboard these ships consists of mostly scientists, but also of a small team of psychologists and doctors to ensure the well-being of the crewmembers onboard.

All of the ships departing had a live feed that was broadcasted across the entire world, where the crew on Earth is shown doing their best to ensure that the crew onboard departs safely, and the nervous, yet excited crew onboard are holding up their breath during the launch. An almost real-time communication with Earth can be held for about 2 years, after which the crew communicates with the people on Earth only by sending and receiving recorded time-compressed messages.

The ship the player is on takes 15 Earth years to reach its destination. In the meantime, the crew keeps themselves occupied with analysis of data still being received from the Elpis orbiters and relayed to them from the Earth, since direct communication with Elpis is not possible from the ship except during the last few years of the trip, and prepares for the eventual landing. As the ship accelerates to a fraction of the light speed during the first half of the trip, time flows more slowly onboard the ship. By the time the ship starts to decelerate at the middle of its trip, 7 years have passed on Earth, but only 4 years onboard the ship. After 8 years (onboard time) or 15 years (Earth time), the ship nears its destination. At this point, even with trans-light communication available via the robotic orbiter working as a communications relay, it takes four months to send a message to Earth and receive a reply. Therefore, although the robotic orbiter and its probes observe the manned ship during its landing in real-time and from several angles of view, no one on Earth will know whether landing on Elpis has succeeded until two months after the actual landing attempt.

The contact with Earth grows more and more limited as the crew further advances their journey towards the planet. They hold a Q&A program for the people back on Earth. The questions are asked by the public, but the questions they choose to send to the crew are carefully selected by the Terra Nova-group. The crew has also been told to refrain from bad language, and from mentioning or displaying negative feelings during the recording of their answering session.

Earth 2195

The ship reaches orbit around Elpis and prepares for the landing. During the descent, an explosion severely damages the ship, which crash-lands on Elpis' surface. All of the crew die, except for the player.