



Image by freepik

Fates Intertwined

G Srivani

I am Zaraq, a wanderer from the distant planet of Xylothia, a place where the sky is perpetually painted in shades of indigo, and the trees communicate through luminescent tendrils. My kind, the Xyloths, have always been explorers, seeking the unknown among the stars. I now find myself on a tiny blue orb called Earth, observing its inhabitants with fascination and concern.

Earth is a world of contrasts. Its beauty is marred by the scars of war and pollution. Its inhabitants, the humans, are a

complex species. Some radiate kindness and creativity, while others seem driven by greed and destruction.

One day, while I hovered in the clouds, cloaked in invisibility, I witnessed a scene that perplexed and saddened me. A group of humans had gathered around a small sapling, planting it in the soil with great care. They spoke of hope and renewal, their faces filled with joy. Yet, not far away, others were tearing down ancient forests, heedless of the consequences.

I decided to take a closer look at these peculiar creatures. I assumed the form of a common Earth animal, a squirrel, and ventured closer to their encampment. The humans were diverse, each with unique stories etched on their faces. Some wore garments that sparkled with colours like the flowers of my home world, while others were covered in tattered rags.

As I watched, a young girl by the name of Mia approached the group with an air of determination. She held a small bag of seeds in her hands, her eyes bright with anticipation. "Let's plant these by the riverbank," She exclaimed, her voice filled with youthful optimism.

An older man with a weathered face, who seemed to be the leader of the group, nodded in agreement. "That's a splendid idea, Mia. It will help restore this area's natural beauty."

Just as I was marvelling at their efforts, I heard a burst of laughter. I turned to see Sarah, a woman with a twinkle in her eye, pointing in my direction. "Look at that little squirrel!" she exclaimed. "It's as if it's cheering us on!"

Caught off guard, I froze momentarily before realising that my disguise was not as perfect as I'd thought. I scampered away, my alien heart pounding with both embarrassment and amusement.

Over the following days, I observed the humans with a newfound appreciation for their quirks and humour. Sarah, always quick with a joke, had a way of brightening even the gloomiest moments.

"Did you hear about the time I tried to teach my cat to dance?" she asked me one evening, a mischievous grin on her face. "Let's just say, I ended up with a lot of scratched furniture and a very unimpressed feline."

As I spent more time near the environmental activists, I understood the complexity of human emotions. I witnessed their capacity for both selflessness and cruelty. I watched them wage wars over resources, and I saw them come together to aid one another during times of crisis.

Sarah often talked about the future of Earth. She believed in the power of change, in the ability of her species to heal the wounds they had inflicted on their home. She dreamed of a world where humans lived in harmony with nature and cherished their planet as I cherished Xylothia.

"I've seen the good that humans are capable of, little squirrel," Sarah told me one evening under the star-strewn sky. "We have the potential to transform Earth into a paradise if we only choose to prioritise its well-being." Then she sighed. "But why am I talking about that with you? I'm pretty sure you can't even understand me. Maybe you're only hanging out with me because you see me as just another dumb human you can use to obtain food."

Feeling incredibly sorry for her in that one gloomy moment, I ended up speaking without thinking. "That's not true," I say. "I genuinely see you as a friend!" Realising that I had just blown my cover, I slapped my furry little hands onto my mouth, furious with myself.

Sarah looked at me in shock, wondering if she had heard me, a completely normal squirrel, in her opinion, speak.

"Hey, little squirrel, did you just... speak...?" I groaned in frustration before ridding myself of my disguise and revealing to her my true form.

She fell back with a scream, and I panicked to quieten her.

"Hey, hey, calm down I'm not here to hurt you!" I exclaimed, taking a step back. "I'm not dangerous. I just wanted to observe human society. I'm not going to hurt you or anyone else."

"What is going on... is this a dream?" Sarah asked, in a daze.

"No, no, it is not," I answered. "This is one hundred per cent real; I promise. I am Zaraq, a Xyloth from the planet of Xylothia."

"This is so weird..." Sarah muttered. "Uhm, welcome to Earth, I guess? I am Sarah... of Earth?"

"I know," I speak. "I've been with you since you started planting saplings here."

"I have so many questions," Sarah exclaimed. "Like are there any other sentient alien species? What's your planet like? Are you planning universe domination? How do you understand English if you're an alien? But most importantly, why is your species literally just named after your planet?"

My cheeks turn a bluish hue as I blush with embarrassment at the last question. "... Some questions are better left unanswered," I replied solemnly.

"Uh, okay, pal," She said doubtfully. "I am going to have to inform the boss about you. You'll probably be taken to... NASA, I guess? To hold negotiations between your species and mine?"

"There will be no need for that, please," I speak. "I will take my leave immediately."

"Wait, what," Sarah started asking before I vanished in a pulse of purple light and re-emerged in Xylothia.

I left Earth, the planet I had been tasked with observing, the planet on which I had shared many memories with the local species, with a heavy heart, my brief encounter with humanity etching deep impressions on my soul. I returned to Xylothia, where I shared my experiences with fellow Xyloths. We debated the fate of Earth, whether the humans would save their planet or continue down a path of self-destruction.

I remain hopeful, as Sarah's words and actions demonstrated that the potential for positive change exists within humanity. I keep a watchful eye on Earth, observing the ebb and flow of its inhabitants' actions.

From my perspective as an alien, Earth is a world of contradictions, a place where beauty and destruction coexist. I can only hope that humans will recognise the preciousness of their planet and work together to protect it. The fate of Earth hangs in the balance, and the choices made by its inhabitants will determine the course of its future.

G Srivani (14 yrs), Class-IX, Reliance Foundation School, Lodhivali (EM), Khalapur, Raigad-410 206. Email: srivanigiri@gmail.com