

**Title:**

*Author:*

# Occupy Climate Change (OCC!)

*Creative story  
entry*



FORMAS



## **The Expedition**

*Joe Albrecht*

Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3 [Subject: UNDISCOVERED SYSTEM: Galactic Location 4, Wing 9, System 4]

10 Planetary Cycles ago, galactic exploration vessel *Intrepid Dance* detected a gravitational well in a previously uncharted and undiscovered sector of the GL 4, along Wing 9, commonly referred to by local systems as the “Orion Arm.” After exiting slipspace and performing a number of deep space scans and reconnaissance missions, they discovered a solitary GV2 Yellow Dwarf Star, with 8 accompanying major planetary bodies and a number of smaller satellite bodies. Four of the discovered bodies are gaseous in nature, and are much too far from the system’s star to be of any real use. It should be noted that they are rich in mineral resources, though collection processes may be difficult. We are commencing exploration of the other 4 shortly.

Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3B4 [Subject: Body 4]

We have completed extensive ranged testing on the remaining 4 bodies. Only 2 remain within the radius of the Star’s Habitable Zone, with the other 2 having drifted out of it millions of cycles ago. Body 4 initially appeared to be a good candidate for project New Horizon, and while it is still a viable option, further exploration and expeditions revealed that it has very little natural atmosphere, and is too distant from its host star to have favorable climate conditions. There are signs of previously existing hydrogen-based liquids, and some signatures pointing towards basic monocellular life forms, but both instances of sustainability have long since vanished before our arrival. While Body 4 is still a viable option, it would be very difficult to build any form of colony, and it would serve as an ill-suited lifeboat.

We sent several manned expeditions to Body 4, and conducted planetary-wide scans from the *Intrepid Dance* in orbit. It is worth noting that there was a large quantity of artificially produced materials discovered on the planet. Many were reminiscent of different forms of technology, and 5 of them appeared to be automated, autonomous roving exploration devices. 4 were defunct; however, 1 still had some semblance of life to it, though it appeared to have been immobilized by

the planet's harsh weather patterns. The evidence of this led us to the conclusion that we are not the first sentient species to explore this system or this planet. As for who our predecessors were, and where they are now, there was not enough data available through our discoveries to draw any conclusions .

#### Supplemental Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3B4 [Subject: Semi-Functioning Rover Discovered on Body 4]

The Planetary Roving Machine discovered on Body 4 is quite sophisticated in its design, yet simple in its apparent function. Our scientists were able to determine that it was intended for the purpose of material gathering and analysis of the planet's surface and limited atmosphere. Much like the other rovers discovered on Body 4, this one has several glyphs painted along its flank, likely an assigned designation or name. A Blackbox system located in the core of the machine held a log of transmissions sent from the machine to an orbital relay. Further examination of the relay provided us with more transmission details between relay stations around Body 4 and Body 3. Scribes are currently trying to decipher the glyphs on the machines we found, but in the meantime we've been approved to examine Body 3, as it seems to be the receiving location for the Rover's signals, and likely holds some indication of the species that was investigating this planet.

#### Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3B3 [Subject: Body 3]

Upon approach of Body 3, initial scans revealed that there is a mass of hydrogen-based liquid material on the planet's surface, much like our home world. The planet's axis sits about 23 degrees off of its orbital plane, leading to a mass of observed strange weather patterns. And the planet's singular satellite body seems to only contribute to the severity of these weather patterns. Scans have also revealed a host of artificially produced material scattered throughout the planet's atmosphere, and covering the majority of the planet's surface. Initial examinations suggest that this was either a large outpost planet or a fully colonized system. Command is apprehensive to send landing expeditions due to a number of intense energy readings that seem to be slowly navigating the planet's surface. However, we do plan to start automated landing expeditions soon.

Supplemental Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3B3 [Subject: Signs of Life]

After nearly 20 cycles observing Body 3, and 15 exploring the surface, we have decided to pull all resources from Body 4 to join expedition efforts here. Initial landings were incredibly difficult, as this Planet's thick atmosphere and strange axial tilt have caused intense electrical windstorms that damaged our landing craft's equipment. After automated landings revealed no imminent danger, manned crafts soon followed. Of all of the phenomena that we've witnessed here, the weather is the strangest. Precipitation can sometimes be acidic, burning the skin and leaving scarring marks on our equipment and crafts. The planet is rich in vegetation, but there are no traces of existing sentient life. And strangest of all is the massive structures we've found. Towers of metal and glass, scattered periodically across the planet's surface, enveloping the horizon, and though most evidence of civilization we've seen has fallen to disrepair, these towers stand undamaged by the intense weather. The technology located here is too advanced for our own scans to determine its functions. We've also discovered other instances of the same Glyph language as was discovered on the Rovers found on Body 4. The increase in sample size is helping to expedite the scribe's translation processes, and they expect to have a full translation program ready soon. More detailed orbital scans have discovered expansive scarring across the planet's surface, many appearing to be naturally occurring, and likely results of the violent storms that plagued our entry, as well as the other weathered phenomena discovered by the *Intrepid Dance's* scans. However, a number of the scarred landscapes appear to have been formed by some kind of conflict between sentient species.

Supplemental Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3B3 [Subject: Everlasting Machines]

We've been here for over 150 of this planet's revolutionary cycles. There is no life on this planet other than the vegetation, and even that is sparse for a planet of this material and atmospheric composition. We've discovered a wealth of incredibly advanced technologies. Winged machines that drift through the skies, and similarly designed creatures that navigate the vast bodies of water on this world, ever maintained by seemingly endless power sources of an unknown design. We've hypothesized that these machines, which share some similarities in their design structure, are all constructed in the image of various bestial creatures that likely populated the planet. And though they lack the same design principles, the machine creatures bear an extreme resemblance to the

glass towers we discovered upon initial landing. Despite the incredible caches of technology we've discovered, we're no closer to determining what purpose they served. The linguistic translation is proving more difficult than imagined, and though we've found many samples, they aren't diverse enough to formulate a full concept of the glyph language.

#### Supplemental Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3B3 [Subject: The Repository]

We've made a breakthrough, a discovery that might finally piece together the puzzle of what happened to this planet's sentient species. After nearly 300 of this planet's Rotation Cycles, in the center of what we assumed to be a large Metropolitan area, we discovered an entrance to a subterranean cavern. Constructed from the same materials as the machines outside, it was fully functioning and sealed from the outside elements. Upon entering, we were met by a lift that descended hundreds of feet into the planet's surface before opening up into an expansive hall filled with rows and rows of digital storage devices, ancient tomes and books sealed in airtight containers for as far as the eye can see and beyond, all of the information encoded in the same glyph language. The Scribes are finishing their translation program, and we should be able to decipher this knowledge within the coming cycles.

#### Supplemental Report: Planetary Expeditions L4W9S3B3 [Subject: The Message]

At the entrance of the Repository there was an encoded message that had to be played before the rest of the Repository's knowledge was unlocked for us. Using the Scribes' program, I myself translated and recorded the message, and following its contents hereby strongly insist we do *not* consider this planet for project New Horizon. I'm including a transcript of message's recording here, and recommending it be disseminated to all other research teams, as well as command. The message read as follows:

*Hello. My name is Asad Nadullah Valkerian. Welcome to The Library. This collection represents all of the knowledge, history, and culture of our people. And we leave it behind with the hopes that if others may come, they'll find this place, and that they can learn from us, this planet, and the mistakes we've made.*

*Through reasons I've never understood, I've lived longer than should have ever been possible, and in that time I've seen the rise and downfall of our civilization by our own hands. Years of greed, waste, and mindless consumption that slowly began to strangle the life out of our planet.*

*And when it began to die, rather than band together, we turned on each other, clawing desperately to stay in the sun. And those of us who were able to work together found our efforts repeatedly falling short.*

*And as our atmosphere burned and our oceans turned to poison, we realized this would be the end of us. Some tried to leave, making their way towards Alpha Centauri in hopes of finding a new home. The rest of us retreated underground.*

*If history has proven anything, the national parks, Chernobyl, and the other disasters that forced us to vacate areas, it's that without us, the land and planet will recover in time. So in one final effort to preserve our home, even without us on it, myself and several others formulated a plan. First we created the machines you saw outside. They're cleaning the planet of our messes, and if I'm correct, they'll continue to do so for several thousand years before their machinery falls to pieces. Secondly, we created a governor. An artificial intelligence to monitor the planet's biosphere as it recovers. We named her Persephone, after the Greek Goddess of the Harvest and Spring. As the planet is capable of sustaining lifeforms, she will slowly release seeds, repopulating the planet's plant life. And thirdly, we created this library, so that our mistakes, triumphs, knowledge, and history aren't forgotten. To you we give this freely, so that you may learn from us, and not become us.*

*Finally, I leave you with a request. In the back of this Library is a database. A collection of genetic material and data for all of the Fauna that used to populate this once beautiful planet, as well as the facilities needed to replicate and grow that DNA. When Persephone deems the planet ready for them, that cache and those facilities will unlock. I ask that you use it, to restore this planet to what it was before we killed it.*

*Now, almost 300 years after this all began in 2049, I'm tired. Whatever sustains my life is slowly waning, and I know I won't be here much longer. But I now believe I can go with the knowledge and hope that you will come here, to our beautiful Earth, and find this facility. That there is now a chance, that though we are gone, that our home may yet live again.*

*Tomorrow I'm leaving the Library. My home is one of the few places where traces of what this planet once was still exist. I think I'll climb to the top of Tallac, and see the sun set over the basin one final time.*

*And to you, we leave our planet, our Earth. Take care of her. She deserves so much more than what we gave her.*