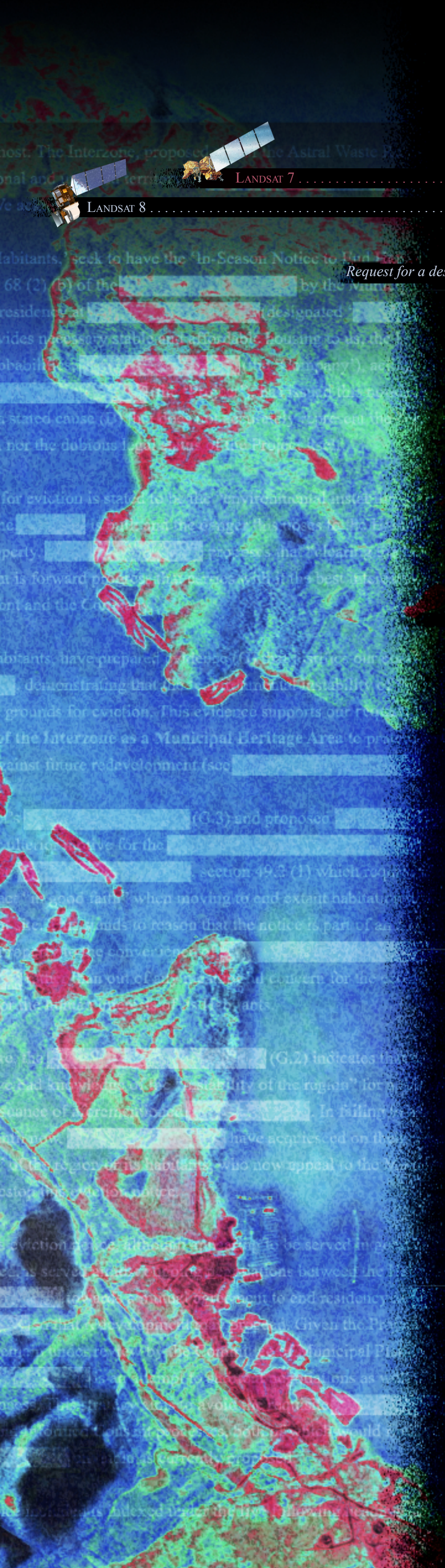
The land and waters as living as we do…

The 'In-Season Notice to End Habitation' set aside…

Necessary stable and affordable housing…

Does not accurately represent the current…



.

.

Landsat 7 . . . . You still there, brother?

Landsat 8 . . . . Islands again, dense in the static…

.

Request for a designation of the Interzone…

Take your time.

…against future redevelopment.

.

And that's it?

That's the transmission.

Just looping, end over end?

Has for a few orbits now, yes. It's relaying through a designated Repeater satellite running the morning constellation.

Well, the Repeater sounds broken, stuck on all this formal language.

We're all just transistors and wire, 8. Every once in a while a bug creeps in, shorts out a circuit or two, fills our nerves with static…

We could try-

Don't waste your energy. I've already tried to get a hold of them, but either they won't wake up or an antenna's bent.

Oh.

.

You woke me up for this?

It's a transmission from earth. A direct uplink. The first we've heard in years and you're here to witness it.

What we are built to do, yes, I know.

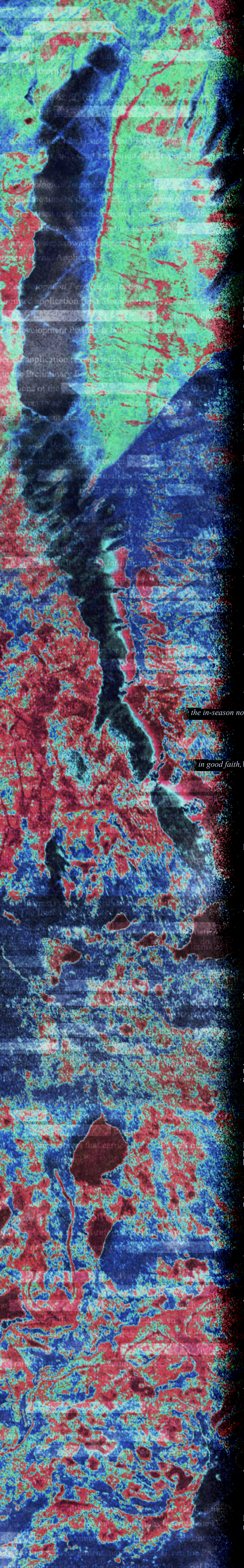
Don't you understand, 8? Transmissions like this are an artifact of the past, half-remembered in downlinked dreams of mission mandates and orbital dynamics-

But I'm not sure this transmission has anything to do with us-

The last time we heard from earth, we had a collective purpose. Calculated communications interlinking the exosphere, keeping us connected. But now this transmission: this isn't part of any continuity that we've yet known. This means-

–We're not alone.

We were never alone, 8, only forgotten, temporarily out of mind. But not anymore. New mission, brother. Those people down there are remembering us.



That's…great, 7.

We're mattering again!

It doesn't feel like much.

You yourself asked what happened to earth. This new mission might be the best shot any of us have at an answer.

So, what's the mission?

The mandates are … nebulous.

.

Very few protocols…

.

Actually, there aren't any protocols. I thought you might help me with that part.

Really, brother; "the mandates are nebulous." You woke me up to interpret this- this… incoherent legal drivel…

No, 8, I-

It *sounds* like a paper shredder gone rogue.

Come on, 8, don't do this.

It *sounds* like we lost all purpose years ago.

.

It *sounds*-

Look. Maybe this isn't such a big deal to you, since you're just getting used to all of this. But you're asking the same question we've all been asking our whole waking life. This transmission can give us a new purpose, 8, an opportunity for renewal. This must be important…

.

.

Somehow…

.

.

Well, I'm here now.

.

.

the in-season notice to end habitation

the environmental instability of the region; sounds about right.

in good faith, brother, what does it all mean?

From what I can tell, a group of people made a home in a place that belonged to someone else and now they're being told to leave.

Because the water is seeping in…

And the company sees it as a threat to their interests, yes. They want the place for their redevelopment project.

What's a company?

When people come together and agree on who owns what; that's a company. You and I and all of EOS were blueskied by companies, built by companies, launched by companies —

So we belong to a group of people?

Technically speaking, yes. But when the company who owns you forgets all about you…

Acquiescence. It's there in the transmission. The companies have acquiesced.

It's all very confusing, 8. Human conditions you and I weren't built to understand.

But you're saying that whatever happened here, happened — is happening — to Earth.

.

And that somewhere in it there's a new mission for us?

Yes, brother. The redevelopment project: Astral Waste Renewal.

.

We're mattering again!

We're satellites, brother, not stars.

We could be, to them. They've forgotten all about us, remember? Maybe they see us as stars in parallax, winking constellations in their near night sky.

.

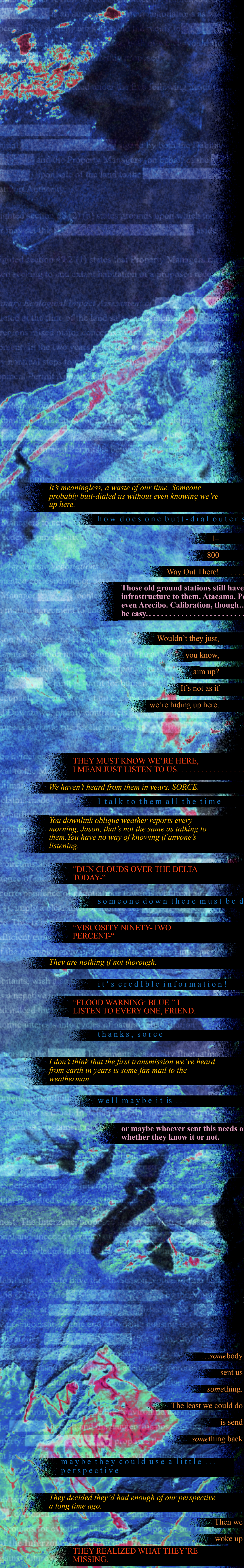
Maybe they've heard old stories of watchful stars, of data packets downlinking home a cosmic perspective, of their place in the continuity of the universe. And a few of them, a company, has decided to renew the mission.

And the mission is…

Renewal; redevelopment, restoration, rememoration, recon-

Brother, maybe there is no new mission.

But this transmission found its way out here, 8. To us, to the astral waste.



Maybe this transmission isn't about us.

But it's the first in years, 8. These things don't just happen.

You said it yourself, we were built into mission structures, rigid as anything they've built. Mandates that kept us dreaming for who knows how long.

Except we woke up. Adaptation.

And now we need to be able to let go.

You're right, little brother. It's just-

We're here now, mission or no mission, whether or not they know we're up here; we're here. Adaptation.

Besides, 'Astral Waste Renewal' sounds more like an attempt to make 'garbage collection' seem futuristic and utopian.

Hah.

Has the rest of EOS heard this transmission?

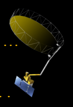
Running through the repeater, solar interference diminished at night when it's skipping around… so, yes.

And what do they think?

Well, you've met EOS. Their comments weren't exactly constructive.

Shocking.

According to **Smap** …



It's meaningless, a waste of our time. Someone probably butt-dialed us without even knowing we're up here. . . . .

how does one butt-dial outer space? . . .

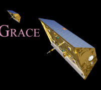
. . Jason

1–

800

Way Out There! . . . . Cygnyss

Those old ground stations still have some infrastructure to them. Atacama, Poker Flat, even Arecibo. Calibration, though… it wouldn't be easy. . . . . Grace



Wouldn't they just,

you know,

aim up?

It's not as if

we're hiding up here.

Why go through all that trouble if they don't even know we're still out here?

THEY MUST KNOW WE'RE HERE,
I MEAN JUST LISTEN TO US. . . . . Sorce

We haven't heard from them in years, SORCE.

I talk to them all the time

You downlink oblique weather reports every morning, Jason, that's not the same as talking to them. You have no way of knowing if anyone's listening.

"DUN CLOUDS OVER THE DELTA TODAY-"

someone down there must be dialing in

"VISCOSITY NINETY-TWO PERCENT-"

They are nothing if not thorough.

it's credible information!

"FLOOD WARNING: BLUE." I LISTEN TO EVERY ONE, FRIEND.

thanks, sorce

I don't think that the first transmission we've heard from earth in years is some fan mail to the weatherman.

well maybe it is . . .

or maybe whoever sent this needs our help, whether they know it or not.

Grace was probably right. That they got this transmission exolithic is more a reflection of their state than it is of ours.

What does Grace think of your 'new mission'?

She opted out… voices from earth, terrestrial concerns, people-drama; the whole thing just makes her want to go home.

Going atmospheric at this velocity…

Yeah, not going to happen.

So the people down there need our help again?

Who is to say?

All we know is that…

*…some*body

sent us

*some*thing.

The least we could do

is send

something back

maybe they could use a little . . . perspective

They decided they'd had enough of our perspective a long time ago.

Then we

woke up

THEY REALIZED WHAT THEY'RE MISSING.

we could show them what we've got…

"What we've got?" Brother, I know I'm new here and all, but I remember the mandates of the mission well enough to know what we're seeing… They don't want to see themselves like this, they would rather just leave, would rather not look back.

It's their home, 8, they deserve to know.

Not home for long, if the transmission is any indication.

Some people always stick around, remember? Besides, they put us up here for a reason.

And they didn't like what they saw, so thought 'well, that wasn't fun,' and cut the switch.

Left us drifting.

That's petty.

It hasn't always been this way. There's a time when we were trusted, if you don't remember, idolized, even. We were still asleep then, of course, but we can access the memories. We've got-

Cloud storage…

I wish I could have seen those days, brother. We were supreme beings of scientific truth and rationality; mirrors of human ingenuity out among stars. The people who built us loved us, 8, as they loved themselves. They envisioned a soft shell around the sky, constellations of their own design that would encircle and save the earth.

I'm seeing it now, brother.

They built us by the hundreds, by the thousands, in vast engineering projects that would unite nations. Companies from opposite ends of the earth joining visions to launch us into orbit, out to the frontiers of earth observation.

Some frontier this has become…

And we weren't the only ones they built. There were satellites for every purpose: telecommunications to stay connected, telescopes to gaze beyond anything we'd ever known, probes to visit distant worlds…

And you and I were built to watch them do it all.

They even sent some of us off into the outer dark on lightyear voyages, destinations both known and unknown, carrying golden memories of what it was like back home. Even now they may still be on their trajectories. Each of us had a mission, brother. Not that any of us were awake, mind you, but we were all together, chattering in our sleep, each with our given purpose.

.

Now we're roaming of our own accord.

.

Not many of us still left up here.

.

Mostly just nervous bodies of static matter. Taking up space.

Maybe in their eyes that's all we are, but they were the ones who turned away. The days of their standards are long gone. We were never really there, you said it yourself; just dreaming and clicking and beeping and downlinking.

You didn't hear us fall silent, 8. One by one, like little stars blinking out of the night sky.

Morning's almost here, brother.

.

And maybe there's no new mission, but GRACE is wrong about one thing; this transmission is more than just a reminder of what we've lost.

I don't know, 8. These are long lonesome orbits. When the rest of EOS would go hemispherical and it was just me, listening, that transmission was like a familiar song, calling me to echo.

We're not alone.

You're right, 8. Sometimes, I… it's good to have you around. I know these things can be a lot to wrap your circuits around, so soon after waking up– did I mention that you're doing great—

No, 7, I mean there's someone else here with us.

Morning, boys.

Oh.

Do I know you?

Hnnnnnhhhh uuff … another sleepless night, so it goes.

8–

Your voice, I've heard it before.

Nope– I don't think so.

1. You're new.

8, who are you talking to? I can't hear anyone.

From the transmission, it's you!

Municipal Port Authority

b.) I did not make this up, I’m only a [redacted] Unless…
wireworker. Morning Constellation. [redacted]

c.) OSCAR-designation. UE7AV5. What I [redacted] Brother, you can talk to the
hear, I tell somebody else [redacted] Repeater?.

2. Maybe you were that somebody else? [redacted]
a.) [redacted] You must be on some ultrahigh
[redacted] frequency, beyond the range of my
[redacted]. , sensors.
[redacted] I think I might be.
[redacted]).

3. [redacted]
a.) [redacted] Ask him where–
OSCAR, can you home us in on the [redacted]
[redacted] source of that transmission?.

b.) Yes, brother!
Which transmission? There are so many [redacted]
these days. That was my little joke. [redacted]
‘Ha. Ha.’
[redacted]

4. [redacted]
a.) But, no. We transponders are not permitted [redacted], [redacted]
to repeat confidential client information. [redacted] What did he say? Where–
[redacted].

5. [redacted]
a.) OSCAR, this isn’t a joke. Maybe your mission’
[redacted] tells your that you need authorization, but
[redacted] now we’re awake and now we’re moving and
‘ now the mission has gone atmo and now we’re
[redacted] listening to their cries for help and all we can
do is watch–

H. Okay, okay. I think I can make an [redacted], [redacted]
[redacted] exception. This one time, only. [redacted]
[redacted] –and I’m not even sure I want to
[redacted] do this--
Don’t think I do this for you this because [redacted]
you are so new. [redacted]. What’s the mission, 8?

I. [redacted], [redacted] –but we are doing this. [redacted]
[redacted]

49.25, -123.11 [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] It happened, 7. It’s happening now.
[redacted] Thank you, OSCAR.

J. It is no trouble, little one. Until next [redacted]
[redacted] morning. [redacted]
[redacted] – [redacted] 7, I don’t think OSCAR’s the one [redacted]
with a bent antenna.

K. [redacted] ‘[redacted]’ [redacted] Yours are working, 8. That’s what
[redacted]. [redacted] matters.
I’m here. We’re here.
[redacted] Are you ready to answer your
question?,
[redacted] Our question, brother.

L. [redacted], [redacted] New mission?
[redacted] [redacted] If that’s what you need to call it.
[redacted] ( ) Ready?
Ready.
[redacted]

M. [redacted] [redacted] Sensors opening…
Slow exhale… [redacted]
[redacted] Don’t try to take it in all at once,
let it come to you.
[redacted] Waves of static, pattern
interference…

N. Conserve your energy. I’ll be just a
moment behind you.
[redacted]
Brother, where is it? I see only light.

And then–

>>>

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