Title:

Ovo

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Synopsis:

This short story is a science fiction that shines the light on the idea of immigration. The story is told through the eyes of an astronomer who desires more organic life. Her kindness is the key to a better understanding of racism and life. With an abortive crew on her shoulders, her strength and patience gets abated. But nothing can stop her from her dream.
Today is the last day I feel Earth’s man-made itchy grass this year. It is just as itchy as the personality of all the Houstonians in the Johnson Space Center. As I meditate in the
backyard, I see the hypercritical eyes that were upon my honey skin irk me. You would think racialism would be a thing of the past by now, but no. Most of the individuals with money have judgmental thoughts, and it is unfortunate to see them with all authority. Then suddenly “the man” with the immense voice from yesterday’s meeting falls like a brick through my mind:

“Our launch to Ovo, the newly discovered planet with confirmed life is on January 1st, 2100, which is two days away. The launch is set to transpire in this center as you all may know. For the people who are not traveling with us, it will take fifteen years to get information since that is the approximate time for space travel. To the astronomers, who is animated to see our new land? Cheers to our Ovo,” Tom Lure, the newest crew director of NASA’s current mission, pitched those words. I keep repeating the way he said “our” and he said it three times. My heart deflated like a dwindling pale-blue balloon when he mouthed that word like an impish snake.

“Our”

“Our”

Ours...

Sometimes people like Tom Lure can see way beyond their noses, and it can be beneficial. But sometimes it is superlative to observe where you are too. This process can be done simultaneously, though. Many humans see the destruction and dying life on Earth, and still choose to escape Earth rather than healing it.

I gradually open my almost-awakened eyes, and spot an old banner attached to the pearly white picket fence that says “Welcome home, Carla! Kind regards from the Arias family” in emerald bold letters. I remember the celebration they held for me one week ago. Sixty people
filled my Uncle’s boxy but aesthetic Zen glass mansion. With all those people inside and outside the home that day, I could imagine the mansion shattering into pieces.

Frankie Arias, my uncle, has a knack for gathering people. Since my family is Colombian, I can see why he has that knack. He is defiantly one of the most decent people I know. He bought this home near the Johnson Space center for the times I would have to come. Not only is he rich in his pockets, he is rich in his heart. If it were not for him, I would have not have been an astronaut going on an important journey in history. As a small girl, he would fill my imagination with the stories of him collecting information from asteroids in space. As of today, he gives me insight and continues to inspire me. However, he warns me of the mindset of the people in the workforce. He is concerned about the lack of attention to Earth and to the all people. He told me about how he was mistreated because of his caramel skin, so when I mention the harassment upon me he understands. He always likes to give me boosts when I arrive in Houston for my space journey because he knows this location is cruel-hearted. I can see why his true home is in Dubai; the people are not artificial there.

There is jubilance here or in most places that I have been to. I just assumed I should feel and decipher this exaggeratedly refined life just one last time before I go.

2100 is tomorrow, and I will spend the New Year’s up in the Space Craft. This New Year’s will be different because I’m going be asleep for fifteen years in a nourishment pod while artificial intelligence (AI) manages the warp-flight to Ovo. I will not lie. I am anxious about this, but I am relieved that the warp-travel has been successfully tested by AI three times before real humans take flight.

It is time to appreciate the comfort of my bed before I am in a pod for fifteen years.
Breathe.

Exhale.

Get up.

I stand upright and move my mind into the present. I discern the blissful puff of snowy clouds forming above my head. The aesthetic view gave me hope. With hope in mind, I gracefully glide into my uncle’s home. I study the photos of him on the wall to the staircase. He’s building the warp-travel spaceship that I will be in. His smile shined under a sign that said “2074’s space faction”. I stride on the vintage flamed-red rug on the staircase as I esteem his dedication. I make it to my room and prime myself to sleep.

Thoughts of Ovo filled my dreams.

Day 1:

Today is the Day

The car is in Space Johnson’s garage: check.

All necessities in bag: check.

Comfy PJs: check.
I have opened the door of awareness: check.

“All weapons placed in storage room, chief,” confirms Tom Lure’s assistant. The assistant’s eyes are two pools of alertness and secrecy.

“Step inside, Carla. Be safe,” the assistant said as he directly points to the vessel. The space craft entrance is akin to an airplane entrance except it is more spacious for space launches. I like it.

“Thank you, sir. Keep yourself and the center safe while we’re in space,” I said with a tight voice. My vocal cords feel like a constrained guitar. Maybe it is because of my subconscious nerves.

I step into the vessel, and discern fourteen pods positioned on neon blue lights. Seven pods on each side make it look organized but aesthetic in a strange way.


What is that? Oh, it must be the artificially intelligent (AI) robot that is basically babysitting the astronauts. This shall be interesting for me, but all the other crew members are used to AI. They have them as their cooks and maids in their homes.

The pilot’s door sways open. The AI appears to be a godly human, but too godly to be a human. The skin of the AI looks tough but soft. The hair is golden and short (looks tangible). The posture is too upright for a human too. It appears safe. The feeling of caution that was engulfing me quickly diminishes.

“Hello, Carla. My name is Argo. Welcome to the mission to Ovo. I appreciate your efforts. Please, be in your pod within 10 minutes. Your pod is pod #1,” the AI spoke in a human-
like voice with a heroic kick to it. I smirk as I go to my pod and place my bag under the pod. I
examine the instructions.

Argo swiftly comes up behind me without a word. He presses a bright blue round-button, and the pod automatically opens. I just embark myself in. Suddenly he grabs a mask on my right side.

“This is your nourishment; your deep sleep begins when we’re near Mars. Everyone is coming inside, so we’re departing soon,” Argo said.

I nod.

He places the mask over my face and plush blanket over me, and I feel a sense of ease.

_In Space_

It’s 69 degrees Fahrenheit as I pass by Mars. I’m the only one who is of Hispanic descent and who is shivering in my pitch-black plush blanket. The edges of the blanket are a perfect distraction, though. The softness is priming me to drift off into space.

_Ovo_

“Welcome to Ovo, Carla,” Argo said as my pod opens. _I am here_ is all I can think. He takes off my mask, and I can hear every astronomer cheering. It is time to reencounter Ovo.
Wild grass and raw air lifts my spirit the space craft’s door opens. I am the first to run into the wild. I pull out my environment calculator, and check if it is purely safe. The screen says: THE STATE OF THIS PLANET IS SAFE. I take off my shoes and run.

Abruptly, I hear a gun strike. “This stuff works well,” said some astronaut. Then the other twelve astronauts aim their guns in the wild air and shoot at the innocent clouds. Am I the only one without a weapon?

I stride alone. None of the astronauts seem to care anyways. It is more peaceful like this. I think the last time I saw organic soft vegetation was when I was 4, and that was thirty years ago. My eyes are caught in the beauty. Tall trees that like an oak tree and pam tree combined. Things that look like Lobster claw pop out of the dense jade bushes and it brings a tropical-feel.

As I perpetually inhale, I smell something burning. Are there animals? The possibilities are endless with all this vegetation. I run, again. The rare air rejuvenates my life as I run, and I notice I am running on a clean trail. *Something* must have *made* this path. The closer I get, I hear laughter from women. I run quicker.

I see something that looks like confetti being thrown. There must be a celebration. What do they celebrate? I can imagine it being something different from our revelries. Again, the gunshots fire behind me. The shots are 10 feet away. The vexing crew caught up to me. They’re like summer flies that won’t get away. Those shot must have frightened them because the confetti-throwing stopped.

“Haha, gli ju,” a child said some foreign language. Everything got extra silent after the child spoke. I know the first thing that came out of the voice was a laugh. At least it’s good to know that laughter is universal.
“Hello, we dearth food,” said a man in the crew that knows my name.

“No, that’s not my concern now,” I sternly said. I think they are tracking the signs of life, but I don’t know what their purpose is. All the crew members are quiet mouths on strict faces. I walk faster with a hefty head, and see nudity as I make it to an open bush. As I catch my breath, I study my surroundings. My eyes widen. The indigenous people of Ovo are taller than the average Homo sapiens. They embrace their nature. I can see their freedom and their underlying knowledge. The animal inside me wants to join this life-style.

“Mine,” said a discourteous man from the crew. As I rolled my eyes, the corner of my left eye catches a pistol aimed at them. I scurry in front of the target.

“No! I never knew you’d go this low!” I cried at the man for the first time. I knew they were ruthless, but not this cruel! The wary eyes from the indigenous people melt my heart.

“Woman, get out the way. We need their things as kind of proof,” the ignorant astronaut said. It makes me wonder how he got in the program.

“Shoot her,” a man from the back said with driest voice.

Without a word, he pulled the trigger. I stayed put. I did not want him to shoot them. I closed my eyes with a waterfall of tears.

_Bang_

_I am alive, how?_

I swiftly open my eyes, and see a clear resistant force around me and the natives. The bullet just missed me. I am in wonderment. I look to all my sides, to see how it happened. Straight ahead, I see a built naked man with a clear pad that must have controlled the force. All
the lean women were behind the men. They all are different in appearance. Some tan and some are pastel. All beautiful, though.

The crew members flee away. I hope they never return.

“Ali,” the whole group of natives said with harmony as they waved their hand. It must mean *hi*.

I wave and beam as the resistance-force deactivates. The atmosphere stimulates me once again. I am finally in-between the intact life.

**Ovo’s Dictionary:**
Ali: means Hello

Gli: means see

Ju: means it