

Welcome to Valhalla

Timeline

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Burble:

In my stories there's a strong link between earth and humans and the ancient tiger civilization which built the initial space station and uplifted the zebras and fennecs.

So, first, let's take a look at some links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lion_man_of_the_Hohlenstein_Stadel

Figurine of an uplift animal who served as a soldier in earth's military, and whose memory for saving humans was retained for millennia, long past the memory of the existence of uplifts or the war of the galactics and the terrans

<http://www.theguardian.com/science/2008/may/08/genetics.wildlife>

Platypus aren't just cute - They're a group of galactics that (re-)settled on earth because they liked the planet which millions of years ago gave birth to their species. And they enjoy the rustic primitive life here.

http://science.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/2012/13jan_rethink/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/55_Cancer_e

A planet 1/3 pure diamond?

Well, now think of this:

<http://www.geek.com/chips/81ghz-diamond-semiconductor-created-551147/>

Now you have a good guess where the tigers' habitats, which use massive diamonds for their main processor cores (fuck isolinear processors; The habitats use graphene layers which get compressed into diamonds to assemble their high density processors) can find raw materials needed for what they consider "a few exotic experiments in regards to processing capabilities" and where they might find some other fancy entities interested in extended processing capabilities.

#####

The Far Past of Humanity

Before the last iceage; 500.000 to 250.000 BC ;

#####

~ 300.000 BC

One aspect of my stories is that before the last ice age, humanity already had a stellar society, however, using slower-than-light ships, they sent out large robots, terraformers, to prepare habitable planets in nearby systems so that the "ice-arks" which followed at a much slower pace would find colonizeable planets.

Humanity had never thought about the possibility of the existance of other sapient species in space, or if, they hadn't given the terraformers any info on how to handle the situation. The machines thus terraformed planets, even when they were populated with native sapient species. Or, as happened in the Tau Ceti system, they mostly destroyed two "almost habitable" planets (which actually were inhabited) to uprate the planet Midgard to "perfect terra norm".

#####

~ 270.000 BC

The planets closer to earth had been settled by the ice arks, and from initially small colonies prospering worlds had sprung.

Remainders found were considered to be relics of the terraformers, only in some colony worlds doubt arose, and people questioned if those worlds may have been settled before the arrival of the humans.

"If so," the common answer went, "the terraformers would have asked for advice". Nope, they didn't. Their task was to terraform and use all possible means.

#####

~ 255.000 BC

The galactic society didn't see any hyperspace jumps, the telepaths couldn't track any sapient species to contact, and the origin of the terraformers remained a mystery until a large fleet of the galactics was able to take down a terraformer in a system.

A fleet?

Terraformers lacked intuition and empathy, but they had access to humanities vast experiences, and thus military conflict in itself posed no problem for them. Intended to call back to earth in case they faced a problem, they never communicated with earth about their finds as their military planning was ruthless and efficient enough to overcome planetary defenses and then terraform the planet to become an earth-type paradise virgin world.

Thus the initial tries of the galactics failed until they amassed a sufficient armada - with which they blew the terraformers that had travelled the deepest into the galactic out of space before those were able to analyze the situation and report back to earth.

#####

~ 252.000 BC

Within 3000 years the self-replicating terraformers got mostly destroyed with the exceptions of those that either hid away when observing the fate of other terraformers, or when they worked diligently in unsettled systems, accumulating gigatons of dust to create habitable worlds in otherwise barren systems, in the best way their creators could have thought of.

#####

~ 251.500 BC

No warning reached the terran colonies and the war fleets of the galactics finally found the originators of the terraformers. By that time, most of the galactics thought of humans as a virulent plague threatening the galaxy.

For not only was the development of AI systems strictly forbidden, and Terraformers were a prime example for reason for that law (although the galactics had a few AI wars when AI's had demanded legal status as equals amongst sapients, whilst the expert systems of the Terraformers were just following sloppily formulated instructions to the letter), but humans had also destroyed numerous habitable worlds, uncounted sapients on those worlds, whilst, and that was an affront to the galactics, the individual human neither was exceptionally strong, smart, fast or long lived, yet bred a lot faster than most other galactic sapients - and with their creations, without even intending, whipped the galactics and their councils military might, ridiculing the standing of the elder members of the galactic council in regards to their might and wisdom and knowledge.

In short, the galactics saw humans as a kind of golden horde bacteria, like ebola mixed with the flu.

Some galactics however, one of the oldest (Reptiles) species as well as one of the smallest (Platypus) species pointed out that the deeds of the humans hadn't been done out of malice, but just out of a lack of knowledge. They managed to avert the full destruction of the human species and converted the verdict of the galactics so that humanity would be confined until they'd proven that they're able to peacefully coexist with other species.

It was thought by the pro-human faction that this would be achieved by allowing limited settlement of galactics on all terran colonies.

As some of them had already established contact with a few isolated colonies, they had already found that humans were astonishingly friendly on an individual base.

However, the galactics as a whole aren't saints, just as humans.

Especially those who came from worlds destroyed by the terraformers managed to subtly influence the outcome to include the wording that the humans would be confined to earth. Pushing the population of over a dozen colony worlds onto earth would overtax earth's capability to supply the people, and "confined to earth" meant that humanity would be declined access to its orbital installations.

The pro-human faction too late realized the implications, but easily understood the intention behind:

- Punish humanity for their deeds, as close to total extinction as possible
- With the terran colonies empty, the colonies could be reclaimed by the survivors of the originally native species - spread throughout the galaxy, none of those species was at risk of extinction, but instead would have access to an empty, "fresh" world all for themselves.

#####

~ 251.000 BC

Tracking down the terran colonies in the vastness of space took the galactics quite some time. First they searched in the wrong direction, assuming a species in the galaxies coreworlds had used the terraformers

However, humanity proved to be very resilient in itself, too. Terran colonies reconfigured swiftly for defense. The Galactics who considered it normal to have a troop buildup of „a few year" to impress the enemy and make him surrender, had to learn that giving a terran colony a few years to prepare turned a garden planet into a stellar fortress. And whilst the Terrans weren't able to call for reinforcements, they were able to send vital data about the attackers to the nearest planets, cascading the informations even at sublight-speeds fast enough that the next world was even more fortified than the previous one.

The galaxy, which hadn't had any noticeable news for the last 30.000 years, was in turmoil, calling for the total annihilation of the threat - if only for the media and special effects and the thrills.

Thinking that one intentionally made wrong doesn't undo another, unintentionally made, wrong, the small but influential pro-human faction

managed to ensure that at least the officially adopted plan was retained.

For, together with a few humans they kept secretive contact with, they had come up with a brilliant plan.

The humans had used genetically uplifted animals as auxiliaries together with AI units in the ferocious wars fought on earth and the solar system before the terraformer-plan was hatched and all of humanity came together. Now the colonies were uplifting earth's fearsomest species (bears, sharks, wolves, tigers, badgers ...) to aid them in their defensive battles. Genetic modification aside of medical repairs, was frowned upon in the galaxy, as, like with AI's, the galaxy had memories of species breeding super soldiers for bloody wars that had raged through the galaxy.

With the war clearly being a losing proposition as the handful of terran colonies and earth had neither the technology nor the capacity to win against the galactics, the plan of the pro-human group in the galactic council crafted a few additions to the decree that sealed humanity's fate:

It would only be applied to humans - homo sapiens.

At the same time it recognized the uplifts as sapient species - officially as to warrant medals of honor and valor to the fighting troops of the galactics, as no such medals could be handed out for fighting against mere animals. It sounded good to all, as it promised a rain of easy won medals.

Only when earth itself was fought down, and the deportation of billions of individuals from the colonies to the war ravaged earth was underway, the enemies of the humans realized they didn't exactly get all they had wanted: Because the uplifts had to be left behind, and thus the planets were settled by sapients, none of the original native species was allowed to resettle to those worlds, nor was any other species allowed to settle in those systems.

The pro-human group had given the humans a glimmer of hope: The genetic experts of the platyps had helped designing the uplifts - for them a pet project between tea and supper - so that the uplifts would have a good chance to interbreed with humans, and, too, that the pheromones would be closely related enough that humans and uplifts would feel certain mutual attraction. That way, after humanity survived the impending disaster on earth - which was very likely, although at terrible cost - and humans would ever find to the stars again, or one of the uplifts would make their way to the stars and find humanity, relations between the species should work out amicably and with a lot of positive surprises.

The pro-human galactics thought that giving the humans as well as the uplifts a chance to learn to peacefully and amicably coexist especially on a personal level would help both to join the galactics one distant day.

And they enjoyed to have mocked and spoiled the plans of the anti-human galactics on several layers, like leaving a large population of genetically modified sapients alive which boast cross-species breeding capability, something which many of the isolationist or "pure blood" ideology following military hardliners amongst the galactics abhorred.

Earth was forced to send a shutdown and self-destruct signal to all terraformers that may or may not have remained, and the ice arks still in transit were captured by galactic bulk carriers and transferred back to earth at translight speeds.

Earth, overpopulated with 20 billion individuals and cut off from its hydroponic farms which had fed its previous population of some 6 billion individuals with ease before, ran in a short time into a full collapse. First a short but intense hot time came, then the abrupt fall into an iceage for 100000 long years (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_glacial_period).

The galactics started to transfer the different uplifts each to one of the colony worlds, a minimal concession to the "purity of blood" faction of the galactics, a task that took them only a few years and was soon done.

But humanity survived, reduced to a few survivors here and there. And nature recovered, too. But the knowledge of humanities former glory, of the terrible war, it all faded into myths and fairy tales when the last tools did wear out, the last machines broke down and the last bits of knowledge became forgotten.

And the terraformers?

Some galactics speak even today of lifeless hulks, adrift in the emptiness between the stars, others speak of moon-sized terrors that guard empty star systems and that gobble up every ship or recon drone that dares entering these systems.

But whenever the galactic military went after such news - in force - they found nothing. Except maybe then and when a beautiful virgin world.

By now, even amongst the longest living members of the galactics such stories are used to scare their hatchlings, like the stories of the fearsome mongrels called humans that breathe rocketfuel and eat other sapients, that are as tall as mountains, or as tiny as viruses, who possess no intelligence, but lots of brutish cunning, and who do fight only as mindless berserkers - even their limbs fighting on when cut off their bodies.

The pro human galactics know better, as they kept records.

But they carefully deleted the hard facts about humans, about their whereabouts in the vastness that is the milkyway, in all places they could reach. Only a few other groups retained their own informations about the humans and what the galactics nowadays dimly remember as "the great war".

####

~250200 BC

In the Tau Ceti system, one of the last colonies before the Earth system and one of the best prepared for the assault, the commander of the military had to witness how his human soldiers and their mostly feline (and some kodiak) uplifted auxiliaries were pushed back bit by bit by the galactics to the deep bunkers that served as the last refugium of the colony. He was one of the few humans that had been contacted by the pro-human galactics even before the actual conflict broke out. The first human genetic material the Platypus scientists had received to help with creating the first uplifts were that of him and his wife. His wife had died in one of the galactic's kinetic bombardments (note: Nukes are evil - kinetics give more bang for the buck and leave no fallout) of the fortified human cities that resisted the call to surrender immediately.

Like all high ranking personnel he had received uplift bodyguards to complement his human ones, in part to raise the acceptance of the auxiliaries amongst the regular troops - by now technically the entire planetary population - in part because several chemical / psychoacoustic weapons employed by the galactics were adapted to humans, but couldn't handle the uplifts, which the galactics hadn't expected.

When the galactics - as kinetic bombardments sufficient to destroy the deep bunkers would have made the planet inhabitable for decades at least - came in with ground troops and fought their way into the bunkers - with one galactic dying for each defender, a rate of loss the galactics found shocking considering their technological superiority - the commander sent one of his bodyguards, a white tigress, with his small son and daughter to a safe room deep in the mountains heart, whilst he ordered his second-in command (his younger brother) and his last remaining other uplift bodyguard, a kodiak, to surrender the moment the galactics managed to get near the vault, the group of large reinforced caverns in which the pitiful remainders of the planetary population that had managed to flee to the mountains, maybe half a million children and elderly, had sought safety.

Then he took his remaining soldiers and went out to make the experience as costly for the galactics as possible.

The tigress sneaked out after bringing the children to the safe room, and rescued the almost dead commander later on, bringing him to the safe room and, after administering first aid, placed the humans in hibernation chambers, hiding the access to the room, to return years later and join them.

##

Considering that the galactics had learned their lessons already well that humans were a tough nut to crack, the High Ruler of the fleet had been sure it'd be a work of equivalent 2 weeks to get the planet to surrender.

After 3 days he was dead, the concept of plastic-cased nuclear limpet mine a new entry in the galactics military handbook.

His replacement said that it'd might take about a month to get the system to surrender.

Mass drivers are an antiquated concept which, with the appearance of high current magnetic shields, had lost their appeal. That nonmagnetic asteroids of sufficient mass posed a threat to galactic ships was a common wisdom and the reason why no halfway sane captain would drop his ship out of either hyperspace or subspace inside a noncharted system.

The concept of using simple chemical explosives to drive polished ice-asteroids into a galactics ship proved another novel, as the clear-polished ice ate lasers for breakfast, reflecting enough of the laserlight to pose a threat to smaller vessels, whilst having enough mass to crush armor - and by that destroying the magnetic shielding, which allowed small nuclear rockets to penetrate into the ships and detonate on the inside.

The replacements replacement in his new flagship announced that after clearing of the system - which, after the new flagship would be made maneuverable again - would take about 3 months proceeding with the proper caution - capturing the planet should take about another month.

Sending out individual soldiers in spacesuits with maneuvering-packs allowed to keep that schedule.

The galactic council sent his recommendations.

However the replacements replacement had been shot down by a soldier during a parade who had gotten space-loony after being almost a full month out in zero gravity, for soldiers in high powered spacesuits swiftly learned that human snipers using heat-sensitive visors using weapons considered "quaint" and spacesuits so primitive that the soldiers in them had to know they were on one-way missions were sufficiently good shots to crack helmets open over distances of several kilometers. And for each terran you took out you still had to go in close to make sure that not only you got him, but that a potential explosion device suitable to turn the asteroid into a weapon against capital ships was disabled.

Often enough the device was disabled by blowing up early, taking the galactic soldier along, who's spacesuits weren't build to stand close to multi-megaton nuclear detonations.

The council of responsible individuals that followed was optimistic to crack down the planet in the projected 1 month.

With the usual stellar debris either already blown up or potentially converted into deathtraps, the galactics used badly damaged battleships as the ammunition for kinetic bombardments.

After one month no city remained and the council was summarily executed for destroying a whole galactic sectors yearly output in ship-hulls.

And the planet itself hadn't surrendered. Wherever there was a storm on the planetary surface - and there were many those days - interceptor rockets came up. Those rockets, made mostly from plastics or even natural fibers were mostly immune to magnetic and EMP defenses, and their autonomous robotic brains couldn't be jammed as there was no communication link - and terran computers with their near AI intelligence outperformed the either manually or programmed point-defenses, especially as each rocket had the uncanny tendency to either shoot a messagebox back to the planet with all the data it had collected, or, when the radiofrequencies were clear, send a burst with the tactical data, making the next rocket even smarter and able to select its target even more efficiently.

Large scale microwaving or lasering had limited effects as a planets stormclouds would eat a lot of the incoming energy.

And pinpointing reduced the chance of actually hitting anything.

The new High Ruler of the fleet ordered all troop carriers to the ground, dispersed in several locations where human resistance was to be expected.

Protected by the ships of the line above, most troop carriers made it safely to the ground.

The expected time to victory was set to another month, or maybe two.

After two months the planet was under control of the galactics - except for the polar mountainrange.

The remaining planetary population - it was a lot as people had fled out of the cities already when the first ships arrived after 3 months in orbit, and they had used those 3 months for good preparations which did cost the galactics a lot of soldiers and material - was already being rounded up and brought into transport ships.

Cracking the mountainfortress - as the galactic council considered it imperative that the military and civil command of the humans surrendered in official form - took another month.

There were exactly 2 soldiers left, and half a million civilians.

As the civilian command couldn't surrender alongside with the military command, the new high ruler of the fleet was sent home wearing the toga of shame. As the kinetic bombardment which killed the actual civilian command had been the preceeding councils idea, he was later on called back and commended - by which time he had a sufficient personal grudge against the Galactic Council that he later turned into a well feared political terrorist, causing several minor clashes and civil wars in at least 5 star systems.

To please the galactic council the humans were given their sweet time to elect a new civilian government, and then that one officially had to surrender.

By that time the kodiak, lupine and leonine auxiliaries had already been shipped out to former human colony worlds which were to become their new homeworlds, and tiger-type uplifts were being shipped in, and being trained in primitive survival techniques.

###

Interposed questions:

The original questions were:

Because I'm gonna need some hints on how / what might be left of cities after 20000 years being exposed to the elements (tigers cities), as well as what could be left of a city after a cataclysmic earthquake (richter scale 12+ ; cities on the two planets the terraformer partially crushed to gather material to enlarge a third planet in an orbit between them to terra norm).

And, too, given 100000 years are for the galactics like about 1000 years for us and somebody intentionally sabotaged the written / recorded informations... Is my description of what the galactics remember of their "great war" ("when the galaxy stood united agaisnt a common foe") acceptable?

The galaxy is a large place, and there's always some more or less heated conflict. The war with earth wasn't the galactics Vietnam, but it was something like their "Operation Iraqi Liberation" with all its ugly aftermath.

That, for us about 5000 years ago, probes of the habitats discovered an outpost of the galactics and that the probes AC outperformed the galactics analytics computers in so far as to make the analytic computers believe it - the proble - was a remote control drone controlled by a biological entity, is something different. It paves the way for the future.

#####

The Tigers Civilization

Next will be the timeline of the tigers, from their primitive beginnings to their height, and their deep fall.

#####

~ 240000 B.C.

With the ice-age on earth begins the slide into collapse. Under the burden of too many people to feed, and no technology to manage that, society evaporates. Humanity nearly goes extinct, except for a few hardy individuals that nearly go feral in their drive to survive. The three tribes of humanity are separated, until much later on the tribe from Africa starts expanding again, linking up with the other two tribes when the iceage is over.

A new society on Tau Ceti:

The former soldiers of the terran colonial military found themselves on a world bombed into primitivity, with no technology, no tools, nothing.

But they were natural top predators, and with the exception of a few of the largest wild beasts, little could stand up to them. So they enjoyed their newfound freedom, and when they realized that they had forgotten to teach their offspring their knowledge, they themselves had forgotten too much of it already themselves.

The tigers split into two groups, the orange tigers living on the mostly tropical continent near the equator, the white tigers living on the larger, but less hospitable northern hemisphere continent that reaches up to the northpole.

Likewise, the average galactics have forgotten about the war and the location of the battles. The pro human faction finished their project to eradicate knowledge of the human species to give them an opportunity for a fresh restart, whilst also managing over a long time to basically declare the sector an "uninteresting" one. A forbidden sector, they know, would tease the curiosity of especially younger species, but a boring sector just means that there is no trade, no wisdom, and no riches to be found. Such a description in the galactic archives has proven time after time to be the best way to ensure a place is forgotten by everybody.

#####

~200000 B.C.

The galactics separated the different races, when they shipped the humans out to earth, and the tigers from the various terran colonies to the Tau Ceti system. Overall the uplifts had fought just as viciously as the humans, so they, too, had suffered losses like the humans military. Due to different implementations of the uplift process, there were many variations of the uplifts, each colony having had their own variations.

The tigers (who developed the habitats in the end) had to start from scratch on a devastated, but healthy and alive world. Much later, by the time they had arrived at some technical society (~ medieval age) they had lost all knowledge of their origin, except for some fairy tales of ancient times. Having started with maybe a few thousand individuals spread out over several continents, they needed quite some time to link up again and learn to do with nothing but the tools they could craft with their hands.

#####

~150000 B.C.

Much later, a few spiritually inclined white tigresses who are the ancestors of the "Church of the mother" claimed some caverns deep under the north polar mountain ranges as their home. Caverns which, by that time about 50000 years ago, had been the deep bunkers of the terran colony of Tau Ceti.

Their religion centers around the all-mother which they find in one of the deepest caves - which happens to be the bodyguard of the last commander who, when the caverns partially collapsed during the galactics assault, took the commanders daughter and son and curled protectively around them before activating a stasis field the terrans had reconstructed from salvaged galactics technology.

But outside of a few high priestesses of the white tigers reclusive religion nobody ever learned about that find.

#####

~50000 B.C.

The white tigers had become locked in a feudal society since a long time, and their progress had stalled, whilst the orange tigers, who lived on a continent with large predatory reptiles, were slowed in their speed of progress due to repeated losses of entire settlements to the giant lizards. But the orange tigers proceeded steadily, adopting a strategic mindset, and long term planning attitude, whilst the white tigers feudal aristocracy just lived for the day, planning only in so far as to suppress any uprising of the commoners in their domain.

The commoners of the white tigers domain were kept in check in part by the church of the mother, who used their antiquity as their proof of their rightness, directing anger and hopes into less dangerous channels.

Only when some smaller white tiger aristocrats decided to go seafaring to discover new lands to enlarge their own domains, the two races met.

The orange tigers, whose focus was on cooperation and progress were initially in the defense. But working together, they swiftly learned the white tigers tactics, found them crude and ill suited for the purpose. The white tigers used swords and bows and armors, which each noble manufactured himself, not trusting in the skills of others and, as per their doctrine, having to be "self sufficient" - despite living off the spoils the commoners produced.

The orange tigers used farming techniques, supporting their culture with a vast array of plantfood, fish and using only minimal amounts of animal hunting, instead actually using the small foxes of the hot zones - fennecs - and the horses of the steppes - zebras - as domestic work-animals.

For the white tigers, self-sufficiency meant that you lived off what you could kill yourself. Plants was something for the commoners to gnaw upon, and even they, due to the teachings of the Church, preferred hunted meat.

#####

~35000 B.C.

At the coasts, the orange tigers had only few small settlements, mostly serving as ports for coastal fishing or coastal cargo transport between rivermouths. The orange tigers focused on cooperation, much like israelic kibbuzim cooperate.

The white tigers discovered only those small settlements at first and tried to conquer them, perplexed that the populations didn't offer battle, yet, when they "lorded it over them" simply fled and vanished.

The orange tigers basically assembled volunteers in nearby villages, with the goal to learn the white tigers language and then their goals and intentions, and once knowledge was gained, to first provide that information back to the larger towns upriver and, too, repel the attackers.

Heavy lancers, designed and trained to hunt down rampaging 5 ton lizards (Think of T-Rex) soon swiped away the white tigers, who's armor was just perfect against swords and arrows, but no match against heavy iron-shod lances used by cavalry.

In the coming years more and more white tigers nobles got the idea to travel over the oceans. Some found small islands to claim, others ran again into the orange tigers continent, which by now had been alarmed.

#####

~30000 B.C.

Finding that destroying the attackers wouldn't stop more attacks, and, too, finding that the white tigers had no interest in trade or peaceful coexistence, the orange tigers entered the industrial age.

Gunpowder was known as a concept, and as they had learned that the white tigers used fortifications, gunpowder, used only as a deterrent to drive giant lizards away from towns or outlying fields, was turned into weapons.

The orange tigers, living on a continent only 1/4th the size of the continent the white tigers lived on and whom the latter thought "overcrowded", had several times the population of the white tigers, so for them it was easy to set up an expeditionary force that, about two generations after the first contact, sailed forth and in record time achieved what all

white tigers had always dreamed about, but never achieved - they conquered all the white tigers realms

This was the start of their global society, in which the church of the mother, coddled and cozied by the white tigers aristocracy, and now just one amongst many religions or philosophies , boiled and raged in secret due to their loss of power and privileges.

The combined society tamed the jungles of the orange tigers, and made the continent of the white tigers a fertile land able to feed growing populations for the coming millenia. Because the orange tigers brought enhanced healthcare, but, too, the teachings of keeping the balance and not to breed more than ones society could handle.

So they had a long time to learn and improve before one day they started their next great project: Going to space.

About that phase, which led to the tigers fall and their self-inflicted nuclear holocaust, I'll write next time. It is those cities of the tigers which my questions were about.

#####

The tigers progressed at a much slower pace than we did here on earth, so from their industrial revolution to their spaceage it was like 1000 years, not a mere 100 as for us. But as they worked slower, they also put more thought into their actions - the orange tigers did at least ,whilst the white tigers - at least their nobility - tended to be rather rash and of short temper, throwing tantrums.

Roaring in anger was considered somethign to be proud of amongst the white tigers, whilst the orange tigers considered roaring loud an deed of folly.

The orange tigers had a long history with giant hunter-reptiles that saw tigers as a delicacy, whilst in the colder areas of the white tigers continent all creatures fled for cover hearing a tigers challenge.

####

Interlude: Questions

And, well, the "other cities" are on the two planets that eons ago the terran terraformer had crushed to terraform the planet the tigers now lived upon. Those cities had been of advanced societies, who were totally surprised when out of nowhere a moon sized robot came and without warning started to hurl asteroids at the planet to crack it open to gather crust material and atmosphere.

Those worlds, deformed, partially crushed, retained parts of their atmosphere, but they encountered vast earthquakes when between 1 and 5% of the planetary mass was ripped out into space by the monster machine for processing and terraforming.

Those cities were destroyed between 350 000 and 300 000 years ago. They were just "sources of performance-reducing effects" in the logfiles of the terraformer, which the terraformer either ignored or made short shrift of. Being of advanced materials, and under less corrosive atmospheres, I'll take your suggestions for the 20.000 years references.

Stirred and shaken beyond anything imaginable here on earth, yet having been of sci fi materials, the dead towns still had to cope with vegetation. For, although there is nearly no vegetation aside of a few hardy mosses left to cover them up - that moss had time on its side.

Even stainless steel will surrender to a dozen millennia, and synthetic diamond will be broken, dispersed and hidden by tumbling rocks and eons of flowing water.

The tigers cities, erected about 20000 to 30000 years ago, were of rather common materials, maybe more ingeniously assembled (like <http://www.popsoci.com/article/technology/worlds-most-advanced-building-material-wood-0>) but what they did build smarter and more resilient by design, their global nuclear holocaust will have taken care of.

####

22000 years before now

The orange tigers reached, about 22000 years ago, the height of their civilization. They realized that soon their world would become overpopulated, despite continuous advances in food production. Their biologists had found that there seemed to be two different lines of evolution on their world, One, the dominant to which they belonged, suddenly appearing about a quarter million years ago. The other lifeforms had a totally different bodychemistry, and there were fossils of them reaching back millions of years.

This puzzled them. Decades later their space program was in full roar, establishing first orbital stations, then the first station on the moon. Their researchers picked up the previous research. They analyzed their own genome to try to find the line of their own ancestry. Instead, they found that there seemed to be no predecessors to them, and, worse, they found that there were in themselves two different types of genetic structures.

One was complete, and isolating it resulted in a healthy creature, although it was a feral creature without the power of reason.

The other parts they could separate were little more like hints and designs, stuff that complemented and expanded the base structure.

These parts however, encoded in specially designed viruses, could be attached to all those beings of the dominant class of lifeforms. It was not compatible with the other lifeforms.

Probes sent to the two broken planets returned with samples from the other worlds. Samples that carried remains of life of the type of the lesser lifeforms. It got more and more puzzling. A Computersystem was designed that could crunch away on the problem, and that would be able to manage the station and also build more stations.

The government decided that, as to test if the society of the tigers was fit to meet other sapient lifeforms in deep space, a fully isolated space station was to be built. Isolated, but able to support habitation for indefinite time. Equipped with a self learning computersystem of the most modern type, able to learn and improve itself. It became the replacement of the older system that had been used to operate the first station and to build outposts.

This station was to be the place where the biologists should try and apply the uplift process to the orange tigers reliable pets - zebras and fennecs.

The Church of the Mother couldn't open the status chamber. They had no intention, anyway. They only saw that a tigress - their founding mother as they believed - had been reduced to a pet to care for some strange creatures. They didn't want to ever meet any other creatures. The vastness of space they could not comprehend, and they did not understand what the future would bring if they would live just on, day for day.

They stole old research material on the transfer virus, and abducted a number of orange tigers.

They designed a virus that would drive orange tigers crazy. Or so they thought.

But they wanted to be on the safe side.

So they stole auxiliary drives from the mass production lines of the space program, and the powercapsules of the heavy lifter drive systems - Orion drives, and thus nuclear bombs.

They understood that the powercapsules had a mighty explosive force. But they did not understand the risks of unchecked nuclear explosions.

They sabotaged the space program wherever they could. But the stations AC had already been activated, and it solved problems within minutes the engineers had dreamed over for years. The station was finished in record time, a comfortable home away from home. The moonbase was outside the reach of the church, now that it had become autonomous.

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~ 21000 B.C.

Happily the researchers announced their successes, showing the first uplifted fennecs and zebras on TV.

The church ran amok, and released first the virus. But the virus did not kill orange tigers, or drove them crazy. No, it infected females, sending them into a fast cycling heat. Before, mating season had been once a year. Now, the females were almost perpetually in heat. All the males usually on sedatives during mating season, started to fight against each other as soon as there was any female around.

Orange as well as white tigers.

The church didn't understand what was happening ,but the researchers on the moonbase and some isolated laboratories on the planet were able to analyze the problem.

Whilst shocked, they announced that they could stop the spread of the virus within a few short weeks.

#####

~20500 B.C.

The End of the Tigers civilization and the begin of the Habitats and the Allied Sultanates

The church panicked, and started the nuclear weapons. Every place where there were orange tigers, a bomb impacted. But orange tigers were everywhere. and even a small nuclear bomb will level a town.

The entire planet started to burn, the jungles burned off, the rivers vaporized. The church in their mountain fortress didn't understand what happened.

The global holocaust, so they reasoned, was the doing of the orange tigers who had forced their hand to do this.

The tigers on the moonbase were shocked. The guard commander, a white tiger asked permission to build nukes and to level the mountainrange, as their homeworld was dead anyway. He got it, and he sealed the church deep under ground, shattering whole mountainranges in a daylong nuclear bombardment. The world was a burning, ash covered wasteland. For decades the moonbase crew planned and thought, raising more and more of the uplifts. They decided that, as they themselves had been created, there had been a job for them to do. Whatever that job might have been, they had failed. They were too few to restart their own society. When their world showed signs of recuperating ,they sent down all the fennecs with a few scientists.

They landed near an old military depot, intent of giving the fennecs access to it to help them start their own society. But when they opened the depot, they got attacked by raging mutants and got killed.

The little fennecs, seeing their striped parents be slaughtered by deformed mutants, scattered into the winds , not to be seen again for a long time.

The zebras were also landed on the planet, but at a place far away from any potential survivors, deep in what had once been the vast untamed jungles, and what was now desert. In an area with three springs an oasis had formed. This oasis the tigers fortified to an impregnable fortress, cultivated the land, and in this city they built inside the walls, they settled the zebras. They taught them all that they thought useful, before they returned to their brethren on the moonbase.

Aside of a few children, the majority of the people on the base were old. They decided to send their children away, to another place, in the hope that in the stars they might find a future. With the help of the habitat they built a large spaceship, capable to transport all the survivors in a cold sleep to a remote planet. All religions, all stories and myths, spoke of a yellow sun, which third planet had a large moon, and as fifth position a large asteroid belt. So at least the orange tigers scientists interpreted the old fairytales. The habitats AC had already located such a system, only 12 light years away.

With the limited speed of the sleeper vessel, they would arrive in a thousand years.

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~19000 BC

The first zebra leaves the town of Persepolis. Still in viewrange of the city, she gets attacked and killed by a giant scorpion.

The Zebras start learning to fight, and to build infantry weapons.

Spacestation Odin - originally named "Great Ears and Watchful Eyes" goes online. It operates the two large array telescopes (one optical, one a radiotelescope) that follow the sleeper ships progress and which shall keep an eye on the remaining tigers, despite them not having ordered that.

#####

~18000 BC

On Midgard: The first fortified outpost is erected, but has to be left as the caravans supplying it get attacked.

On Earth: The sleeper ship arrives. most of the old scientists have died during transit. Their children however find a wonderful world awakening from a long iceage. They soon discover humans, observe them, fascinated how a species so weak could have managed to develop sapience.

They admire these beigns, who, despite being individually prey to most species, as a group fight off all dangers. The orange tigers see themselves in these creatures, whilst the white tigers amongst them see their core values of pride ,loyalty and tenaciousness in them, and thus , too, can see themselves in these creatures.

Carefully they settle in a few spots on earth. However, being now even less than before they started their travel, the tigers soon see that incest happens, and find that their offspring degenerates.

They carefully try to teach select humans about them and their history, but the primitives don't understand, thinking them gods.

Soon the traces of the tigers last survivors vanishes.

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~17000 B.C.

The first city gets established. A week walk away from their capital, the town is capable to fight off a perpetual assault from various creatures of the deserts. The caravans guards get established, the amazones organized military is born.

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~16000 B.C.

A blackfurred Fenwa with blue glowing markings appears at the fennekim sietch of Evening Sun, warning the sietch to evacuate to the other side of the mountain.

After she is questioned by the mistress council - the tradesmistresses council of the females sector of the sietch - which takes the form of a fight agaisnt the Angel of the danceress guild, which she wins in a very scary manner, almost the entire sietch relocates to the other side of the mountain.

In the night a glowing stone falls from the sky. And seconds later a lightbeam from the heavens hits the ground where the stone landed, glassing over an area of almost 10 square kilometers to a depth of 200 meters.

The entire sietch would have been evaporated.

The black furred fenwa vanishes without a trace.

The habitats decide to build the perimeter fortresses to prevent future incursion of aggressive von Neumann probes as well as to monitor strange activities in deep space they do not understand.

#####

~15000 B.C.

The amazones run into the Tribes for the first time. The barbarians consider the amazones a delicious addition to their diet.

A few surviving amazones manage to escape, telling of the barbarians, where the friendly ones offered those amazones still alive pieces of their barbecued sisters. After checking their archives, the amazones guess that the Tribes must be the abnormal childrens of the creators, agaisnt whom they are free to defend themselves, but which they promised their creators not to attack or hunt down.

Several deep space probes of the habitats that investigate the strange occurrences far outside the Tau Ceti system discover drifting wrecks from the Galactics battle in the Tau Ceti System. Better probes are sent on the long voyage to the nearest galactics outpost to make contact.

A station like Odin is built, Freya, original name "Safe Harbour", in case a point of first contact is needed.

#####

~12000 B.C.

The probe "Playful Kitten" discovers an outpost of the Galactics. After observing the station for several years and even hacking the systems of vessels leaving the station to gather data, the probe mimics arriving officially, introducing itself as a dumb relay-probe. The computers of the station which are to scan to verify its not an AI, the on-probe AC manages to persuade its nothing else than a FTL-communication system with a STL drive system. Fortunately the probe does really possess an FTL communications system, so it is able to communicate all its finding back to the habitats.

Presenting themselves as a peace-loving, but xenophobic society, the probe manages to trade immaterial cultural goods of the tigers society against tradable goods and a worn out FTL drive. As the drive can be tracked, the probe does not return, but instead travels deeper into the galaxy, starting to trade and gather informations.

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0 B.C.

One of the amazon towns nearest to the coastal greenlands gets run over by a barbarian horde. The barbarians use it as a platform to strike deep into the amazones empire, eradicating caravans in about 1/4th of the Allied Sultanates area.

Several fennekim towns are discovered by the tribes and used as additions to the shrinking population of the captured town as snacks and food supplies.

The danceress council decides that the fennekim alone cannot hope to defend themselves against these barbarians. When they realize that the tall people, the amazones, are also attacked, they follow the simple doctrine of "my enemies enemy is my friend" and during a tribespeople raid on a caravan, rescue a more remarkable amazon.

It's a sword princess, a princess of a district and a candidate for the next calipha.

The fenwas are tasked with taking care of the female - which is as the danceress council had planned. They offer a mutual alliance after they find that the amazones pose no specific threat to the fennekim. However a princess is not qualified to make a binding military agreement. That's something only a stratega is allowed to do.

So an envoy is elected from amongst the fennekim. As the sietch expects an attack of the tribespeople in the coming days, they send their best scout, but least effective warrior, to guide the princess safely through the desert to her hometown to communicate the offer to the stratega. The fennekim offer their skills and senses, which are better than the amazones in regards to travelling through the desert and spotting dangers early on, in return for the amazones to raze the barbarian infestation, for which the fennekim are willing to send the - for the amazones hilarious - number of almost 30000 trained fighters. The amazones would have to depopulate 30 towns to get the same force together. Even when a fennekim is only a fraction of the fighting power of an amazon, the sheer number is staggering for the amazones.

The Envoy, Harun ibn Ardach - the first of this name - is a young married man, but his wife is a danceress and thus accepts the logic that he is the best choice of an enjoy.

The princess, who doesn't take the silly, childish fennekim serious, however soon learns that he is able, that he keeps his word, and that he is something which amazons are seldomly, but which they treasure:

He is funny.

Long story short: a treaty is made, the amazons and fennekim win, though under heavy losses, and the princess and Harun die.

But their death turns the treaty into a bond forged and tempered in fire, steel, blood and love.

Soon Fennekim join the amazon towns, and the Allied Sultanates enter a new age of technical, social and cultural innovation.

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1740 AC

The Snowleopards appear on the map

The snowleopard exploratory vessel "Long Jump" discovers Earth and finds what to the parders is a primitive society - Humanity. on their jump back they discover that there is a system which can be accessed with minute variations in the normal jump homeward, Tau Ceti.

As the ships and drives design matches nothing of the galactics and their sensors didn't detect the habitats, Central Command issues silence and instead observes the new arrivals.

The ship is interested in the south polar coastal regions, where forests, rivers and seashore and permanent ice are all close by each other.

Soon it jumps out. The habitats are puzzled. The construction of the ship itself, its electronics, ineffective, primitive and fragile. But its FTL drive way more advanced than anything Playful Kitten so far traded or stole from the Galactics.

#####

1840 AC

Refitted and streamlined, Long Jump returns and lands almost a thousand colonists. in the snow of the southpole, remains of the virus the Church released still exist in an infectuous form. The colonists go nuts.

For 30 years the crew of the Long jump tries to solve the mystery, until they understand it and finally have a counteragent. But the colony is lost and the ships supplies are almost used up. They don't risk anything and return home, beaten and sad.

#####

1870 AC

At home, the political situation has boiled over. The snowleopards, a minority on their world, are used as scapegoats for everything. Their spaceprogram is demanded to be given into the hands of the newly elected dictator-for-life - the old Senatorium of States was abolished.

The snowleoaprrds eldest order all space assets to assist the Long Jump to flee. The dictators people are too triggerhappy and risk-loving as to be entrusted with the Long Jumps technology.

The Ship, the space dock and the orbital laboratory of the snowleopards just barely escape a missile attack. The ship tugs the stations out into the outer asteroid belt, where the Long Jump gets refitted to carry all the personnel of the stations in suspended animation. The homeworld goes silent, but then and when friendly voices from the planet send messages that the dictatorship ruthlessly reorganizes the entire society.

The captian, by now 150 years old and already the second captain of the Long Jump, resigns, transferrign power to the first officer, a shipborn, 40 years old. A radiosignal from the outer gas giant of the parders home system requires the Long Jump to use its maiden flight after refitting to investigate. Unable to use its FTL due to the visual effects which would give away the position of the ship and the stations, the ship limps to the location on system drive. The travel takes a good two years. Upon arrival all they find is a huge nuclear fragmentation bomb camouflaged as an old snowleopards in-system exploratory vessel.

The mine explodes and damages the Long Jump badly.

Limping back – a five years travel – the crew is able to repair the damages from the onboard ressources.

When they get into radorange of the stations, the latter are in the last hours of their existence.

Troopships – which the other parders didn't have before as they had no space program, and the snowleopards destroyed all informations on-planet, or hoped so at least – are entering the stations, their external defences destroyed and their hulls no longer able to keep an athmosphere. Two rescue bujoys from the stations use torchlights to contact the Long Jump. Maneuverign the large vessel through between asteroids , the few survivors are picked up as the stations are destroyed.

A small patrolship spots the Long Jump. It fires, but the Long Jumps longrange communications laser vaporizes the patrolship, the Long Jumps anti-micrometeorite armor stopping the bullets of the patrolboats machineguns.

But they are discovered. The Long Jump flees. It's drive is more powerful than the following boats drives.

They fire nuclear rockets at them, hoping to disable their electronics and their drive, or to kill the crew by radiation. Heavily damaged, the Long Jump manages to open a jump-window to Earth in late June 1899, a rocket slipping through the jump window, to impact 1908 in Tunguska on Earth. The longest mis-shot where Earth was involved in.

The next 30 years the Long Jump limps through the outer solar system, parts of the crew in hibernation whilst the other fixes the damages on the ship. Radiowaves from earth reach the ship, and the parder learn the human languages. In 1936 the ship anchors in the asteroid belt to set up a forge to manufacture needed spare parts and to expand the hydroponics section. But they have to realize that a lot of the stored seeds got irradiated durign the escape.

One of the shuttles is sent to reconnoiter and to try to collect plants and foodstock animals.

In this phase they encounter the humans, which leads to:

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1944 AD

The shuttle is being picked up by the Long Jump together with 6 earth-built shuttles, plus a rich variety of seeds and numerous foodstock animals. The Captain sets course to the Tau Ceti system, whichs existence , or rather, the knowledge how to reach the system using the Long Jumps drives, never left the ship. They promise to deliver the little human fleet to the planet...

From here on, the „Welcome to Valhalla“ stories start.