

SPACE TRADERS:
ELECTION YEAR

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November 1. As the sun rose on this particularly dark autumn morning, something bright and foreign lit up the sky. People leapt from their slumber to this blinding light that seemed to stretch from Boston to Los Angeles. With eyes finally adjusting, people across the nation soon caught sight of a massive ship spanning what seemed to be their entire city's radius. Aliens had finally landed on Planet Earth.

A ship was sent to every major city. New York, Raleigh, Dallas, and even Anchorage, Alaska was completely covered from satellite view by these elephantine spacecraft. Before terror could even begin to fester in the souls of the Americans, every television in every home across the entire nation began to static. Curiosity of the deafening noise drove everyone inside to see the Aliens transmitting their first message. A purely black screen with no voice, only words that read as follows:

Americans – we have come bearing gifts. Every ship that hovers over each of your cities carries wondrous amounts of remedies for your nation's numerous ailments. First, we bring you gold, diamonds, and precious jewels to cure your bankrupt government and tremendous debt. Second, we bring you fuel from our planet that we have crafted out of dark matter, ending any reliance you may need upon other nations for oil. Third, we have the ability to clean your air, water, and environment to erase all pollution you have blindly caused. It would be our greatest honor to bestow upon you these gifts, however, we ask you for a simple gift in return. Deliver the entirety of your African American population to us on November 9th, the day after your 58th quadrennial

presidential election. For the simple fee of your African American citizens, you can once again live in a world free of any stress, free of pollution, and free of debt. It is your choice, and we stress to you the importance that there will be no use of force. If you choose not to accept, we will simply move on to another nation who will agree to this transaction.

Silence and darkness fell across the nation after the transmission. While the spaceships still hovered above the cities, their lights no longer shined. All televisions had clicked themselves off, and all Americans sat in bewilderment. A simple fee. A trade of sorts. A perplexing situation. It wasn't long until the sun broke over the horizon and the American population began to surge upon their government institutions in protest.

In the early dawn it was mostly whites who had made their way their representatives offices first. Their extreme need to protect themselves over others had started a fire in their soul that needed to be released. Their concerns were voiced calmly when they noted no black faces around to judge their thoughts. Most campaigned the idea that "the spaceships didn't *look* menacing. The transmission wasn't *aggressive*. The fact that the aliens weren't *forcing* the Americans to trade meant they must only have good intentions." While the elected official's staff took note of the overwhelming white consensus that "the trade was for the good of the nation", one by one, black people began to show up to voice their concerns as well. The early fear of being abused or trampled over had long departed their minds and in replace of that sat anger and fear of the unknown. Larger cities like D.C., New York, Seattle, San Antonio, and Kansas City had quickly organized sit-ins at all local government offices. Hundreds of thousands of black men, women, and children covered the parking lots surrounding

the buildings. Every single one of them had their hinds bound behind their backs, tape covering their mouths, and a hashtag drawn on their cheek in red. The ghostly image was made even more solemn when the groups hand delivered a single lined message to their elected officials, printed on what looked to be blood splatted paper.

Even the reenactment of the slave trade would not extinguish our voice; #BlackLivesMatter

Other protests grew across the nation, some just as peaceful, some insanely violent. It was not long until an all-out race war was unofficially declared in some city streets.

Whites began to call blacks selfish for not thinking of others, blacks began to call whites cruel for so easily taking another's life. The mobs began to be so uncontrollable that all government institutions were placed on lockdown throughout the nation. Every police officer, military personnel, and public security officer in the nation was deployed to end the violence, but even they couldn't end the terror.

Up on Capitol Hill, all the nation's leaders had been summoned and locked in the house floor until a decision could be made. On one side, arguments were determined by what was deemed "fair" for the population as a whole. America was at its weakest point; drowning in debt and unable to adequately provide for all 330 million citizens. Not only was debt significant, but the country could no longer feed its masses without food created in a lab. After years of extreme droughts and massive flooding, so much land had been ruined that GMOs and similar food sources were necessary, creating an onslaught of cancer throughout the population. "If we could only trade 12 percent of the population," said one senator, "we could not only save the other 88 percent, but build everyone else better lives, the likes of which no one had dreamed of having in this lifetime."

Other debaters stood for what was humane. Sanford Bishop, Georgia's representative in the House stated, "We cannot send a portion of our citizens off for extermination for the 'betterment' of the rest of the population. If this is not considered a genocide, I don't know what is." Back and forth this debate went for hours. At first there was a clear division between the two sides. The group of people for the trade screamed and pleaded to the others, making a case for saving everyone else. One protestor shouted, "A doctor would amputate the arm in case of an infection, so that the rest of the body could survive!" More aggressive people for the trade decided that the only way to get something done would be through force, and began breaking the desks and chairs of their opponents in an attempt to intimidate them into concession.

The Congressmen and women who were against the trade started out strong, stood by their claims of genocide and would not budge. One woman, a white senator from North Carolina said that she could not and would not send another human off to an unknown planet because, "what if it was *her* daughter/husband/cousin that was being forced away? How could [she] stand by and watch them take them to their death?" She was the first to give in to the opposition. Immediately they attacked her, saying that this trade would be the only way to save her children in the long run, as predictions of America's future without this trade were grim. Eventually, only 8 were left on the "Against" side. The house floor would remind bystanders of a warzone; the "For The Trade" side a nice, clean sea of white, flecked with a very few Hispanic or tan skinned minority, while the Against The Trade side was pure disaster, broken infrastructure and eerily unkempt, only guarded by the 8 members of Congress who were black.

These last eight members were eventually pushed out into the hallway as the rest of the self-claimed “rational” congressmen and women decided what was to be done. It was determined that the black delegates would be too biased to make any decisions. What did it mean to send away a portion of the population that was almost equivalent to the entire population of California?

First the delegation considered the economic effects – would business owners lose in this transaction? It was very quickly accepted that if the trade did take place, the businesses who lost consumers would each be paid a large sum from the earnings. One house member raised the question of what to do with “African – American neighborhoods?” A very simple solution was proposed that America just replace the black populations with the poor and the homeless that ‘littler’ the streets of nicer cities. With all of these homes cleared out, this would end the problem of homelessness with little to no fees to the government.

Second, they considered their global reputation – of course there might be a few minor countries who looked down upon them, but surely no fully developed nation would. Who would pass on a chance to completely renew their nation and start over in terms of wealth? Surely not Russia, most definitely not England (especially if they were able to trade all of the Irish), and not the European Union. Significant fear was noted that if they passed on this offer, another country would take it and surpass the United States as the global hegemony. This simply would not do. Without their hegemonic power, the country stood absolutely no chance with their current crises. China and others would come demanding what they were owed, and America just could not afford to pay them back, especially not while fighting their current war – the one on drugs.

A creak of a door halted the deliberations. As the first African-American President of the United States walked down the lengthy aisle, congress men and women began to take their seats in silence. Barack Obama reached the podium and looked blankly across the room. The blood drained from the faces of the congregation, as if they were mortified at the fact that they had forgotten their own president was black. The tension was so strong that it felt like it was hours before he began to speak. The typical Obama charisma was missing, in its place was sadness and exhaustion:

“My fellow government officials, I am addressing you today in a somber state. I have heard of your debates, and I am saddened to hear that a majority of you are not only considering this trade, but arguing *for* it. I have spent the last twelve hours since the transmission speaking to our... visitors, urging them to reconsider and allow us to trade something other than our American people. It was my first intention to tell them to leave and to never come back to our planet. Watching the transmission filled me with extreme disgust, as I questioned how anyone could muster up the courage to come to our planet and offer, essentially, a repeat of the slave trade. However, my role of the President means that I must handle myself in a dignified manner.

We debated for hours. They showed me their gold, explained their antipollution capabilities, and demonstrated their dark matter energy source. What I can say is that the world these foreign people come from is highly technologically advanced. Their technology does work, their gold is real, and sadly, they will not budge in negotiations. The offer stands at all of their self-claimed treasures for the total population of African-Americans from coast to coast.

I have spent hours with my family, attempting to dry tears and comfort fearful daughters who are afraid of being shipped off to another planet. What they cannot fathom is how a country that we have served for close to eight years can turn around and trade our entire race to a species of 'people' whom we do not know. We do not know the world this species comes from. We do not know what they will do with 38 million people. We do not know if their intentions are good or evil. I have come today to inform you that after careful thought, I have decided to use my power of Executive Action to send these uninvited guests on their way, their vessels empty of our American citizens."

Silence fell, and the only noise to be heard for what seemed like minutes was that of the President's footsteps back down the aisle, and out the door. Little did he know this would be the last time he would be in that room. After hearing the click of the door knob shutting in place, all hell broke loose. The delegates started to scream and shout at each other, wondering the constitutionality of such an action. "How could he just make this decision for all of us? Without even *consulting* us," questioned the delegates.

Well of course this could not be left alone. This *is* the senate that had been working feverishly to make sure Obama could not seat a Supreme Court Justice in his final year. Even if this had not been a national crisis, this group of men and women would still work day and night to block him from passing any laws or regulations, no matter how minute. After the initial anger was brushed aside, the elected officials came

together to brainstorm exactly how they could stop President Obama from separating them from the deal of a lifetime.

Many hours passed, and finally, a solution to their problem was found. The Biden Rule. The same rule they had been using to justify not approving Obama's nominations was going to save them once again. The people of America had been participating in primary elections all year long, and had been gearing up to vote for their new President in only seven days. It only seemed fitting to the delegates that the future of an entire portion of the population be decided by whom they elect to represent them in the future, not someone who is on their way out the door.

So the senators and representatives set a course for their success. First, they set aside twenty delegates to write legislation that would prevent Obama from using Executive Action in the final three months of his term. The rest of the delegates set to work searching out the Supreme Court Justices, the Attorney General, and other officials from the judicial branch who could be easily convinced or even bribed to ratify the legislation. By sunset that night the United States Congress had officially created and passed a law stating that, "the decision of this particular national crisis was to be determined solely by the candidate that won the 58th Presidential Election." In order for this to be constitutional, the congress had decided that instead of the traditional inauguration in January, the winning candidate would be immediately sworn in at 11:59 pm on November 8th.

November 2nd was a strange morning. All of America had woken to turn on their televisions and radios to realize that overnight, Congress had launched a media campaign announcing the new law. The next seven days were to be set aside

specifically for the candidates to make their pitch to America on how they would deal with this situation, and this situation only. For the next week all campaign funding restrictions were null and void. It was to be assumed that anything deemed necessary by the candidate would be acceptable as the time of crises seemed to create a lack of governmental ability to oversee restrictions anyways. Beginning at noon on November 2nd, through the evening of November 8th, the final two candidates were to have access to all television and radio networks 24/7 in order to properly campaign to every eligible voter. All work throughout the nation was to be halted by 2 p.m. on November 7th, to allow for every American to view the final debate where each candidate would get the chance to fully explain their platform. The suspension of work was to continue into the day of November 8th where every single citizen of America was required to vote, or else face maximum punishment of the law.

For most, whites especially, the arrival of this message seemed to say to them that the next five days were meant for sitting and waiting. In fact, a majority of whites immediately went to grocery stores to stock their homes with enough provisions to last them until the vote was over. They were overwhelmingly pleased with the idea of getting to vote for the person who was to make the final decision, especially since the night before the vote they would literally vow to them what decision they would make. Others were weary of this decision, wondering where their currently elected president was, and why he wasn't the one making these announcements.

For the African – Americans however, the message meant something else entirely. The fact that their departure was even up for debate at all was horrendous. They didn't think anyone in this day and age was capable of so easily agreeing to a

mass genocide. When the first alien transmission came through, they had had little worry, as all of their faith was in their president to do all that he could to protect them; his own race. Now, faith was dwindling and fear was replacing it. The most recent of America's years troubled them, creating a fear that society would once again deem them the lesser race and send them packing.

Beginning in 2012, America had been the battleground for a new social movement, after the murder of 17 year old Trayvon Martin. #BlackLivesMatter had taken the world by storm, sounding the alarm on police brutality that had disproportionately affected black men, women, and children above all other races. The movement soon became an organization which now had chapters throughout almost every major city.

The anti-Black racism that had been permeating the American society in the background of every day livelihood, was now at the forefront of the news. Black protestors began demanding the media start reporting on the continuous murders of African American citizens by police. Trayvon Martin was not an isolated event. In fact, the killing of unarmed black men and women by police was a common practice of the institution that produced officers who were trained to specifically be wary of a black person on the streets.

Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Tanisha Anderson, Tamir Rice, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, and Sandra Bland were only a few of the men and women murdered in cold blood from 2014 to present day. They were unarmed and unable to protect themselves from their own supposed "guardians". Every time a new murder would become public knowledge, the #BlackLivesMatter group would be at the head of the

protests, calling for compassion and equality for their race. In some cases, African-Americans were so sick of being afraid of their own death that riots broke out. Ferguson, Missouri was the first city to become a full demonstration that including protests and evolved into full on riots that ended with looting and setting fire to buildings, as well as tear gas and rubber bullets. These protests lasted for many days and grew numerous critics from the white community.

Again in 2015, with the murder of Freddie Gray, substantial riots broke out, this time in Baltimore. Looting and destruction became so ferocious that almost immediately, media coverage on the city was available around the world. These protests were most widely criticized as they had not only caused a significant amount of destruction, but one protest leader was quoted saying that if people wanted to destroy space, we created it for them.

#AllLivesMatter had been circulating since the beginning of the #BlackLivesMatter in an attempt to silence the black population. #AllLivesMatter and #PoliceLivesMatter started to overpower social media throughout the Baltimore riots, creating a very negative connotation on the #BlackLivesMatter movement in the minds of most whites across the United States.

It was because of this recent history that African-American's were terrified of the outcome of this vote. While the black population had always been aware of the social stigmatization that was placed upon their race, it was the whites who were only now becoming truly aware of the institutionalized racism they had not only allowed, but maintained through their own acceptance of the ideas. Through millennials and most of the previous generation attempted to say they were "colorblind", they maintained the

structure of racism that their government created in society. Colorblindness then turned to support of #AllLivesMatter and #PoliceLivesMatter because of an overwhelming critique of the riots that had taken place. Ironically enough, most whites were in support of the two movements over the one of Black Lives Matter because they didn't "support unnecessary violence." It seemed to completely go over white people's head that the Black Lives Matter movement was specifically that – a movement against unnecessary violence.

The difference between the whites and the blacks on November 2nd were very noticeable. While whites prepared to watch t.v. all week in preparation of the big vote, blacks began to congregate and strategize their approach to the situation. African-American people needed a plan, and it needed to be big enough to get the attention of the candidates and the whites and sway their votes. After long deliberation, it was decided that the Black Lives Matter movement was to organize a tour of the most well know African Americans to gain support for the vote against the trade. Celebrities like Morgan Freeman, Beyoncé, Halle Berry, Drake, Oprah, Will Smith, Alicia Keys, John Legend, Erykah Badu, and many more were to hold huge rallies in every major city they could reach before the vote. In a sort of "see-what-you'll-be-missing" type tour, the celebrities were going to bring major attention to the main things whites seemed to like about the black community; their entertainment value.

As it was now past noon on November 2nd, propaganda from the two remaining candidates began to fill homes across the nation. It was odd to many how closely the two parties' advertisements sounded. "How lucky the American people were that they were able to vote upon such a historic event", campaigned the two groups.

Donald Trump began pushing the idea that when voting, Americans needed to think about the common good. What was to be done was to save the rest of America by “cutting off the broken limb.” He began to assert that the nation would never be able to save itself from the destruction it had caused through debt, pollution, and mismanagement of its food sources. He seemed to paint the African American population as heroes, “saving the rest of us so selflessly”, and began to thank them for the contribution to society’s future.

Hillary Clinton took her allotted time to remind the American people that no matter race or creed, everyone living in this nation was to be protected equally. She carefully built her platform to address problems, some would say without actually addressing them. “We will come to a conclusion on this trade. We will choose what we think is best for the American people. With your vote, we will make this trade and the next four years the best America has ever experienced.” Minorities across the nation clung to her with hope as they thought she might be able to deliver them from a purely white America.

While the whites sat and watched the propaganda on repeat for the next seven days, America’s black population got to work. The celebrity tour had begun, but no one was allowed to broadcast over any radio or television network before the trade was over. This meant that no matter the esteemed cast, the tour could not get enough advertisement to get a large enough audience to really make a difference in the polls. In fact, since the aliens had landed, most of the white population had been carefully avoiding any black person in order to not have to face their guilt. The whites would not only avoid the blacks, but chose to altogether barricade themselves in their homes. In

only two days the tour had already reached 8 major cities, but had not reached anyone other than black people. Something had to change.

The tour started targeting all minorities with the question – if us first, why not you next? An overwhelming fear of becoming the next scapegoat for the American hegemony grew among Middle Eastern people, Hispanics, Jewish people, and even Asians. The tour started visiting strictly minority neighborhoods in an attempt to gain their entire population against the majority whites. Soon the amount of people publically against the trade reached above 40 percent of the total population. African-Americans felt that they finally had a fighting chance.

By the end of the week, propaganda had been played across all news outlets nonstop. Repeat after repeat of Trump's voice for hours, then the next four hours a constant stream of Hillary's voice. The white Americans that hadn't ventured out of their homes for the entirety of the campaign were slowly going insane. If 120 hours of the exact same message on repeat wasn't enough to melt someone's brain, they didn't know what was. Eventually the ones who had completely sheltered themselves had lost touch of the direness of the situation entirely, to them the only thing that mattered was what was to be gained.

November 7. The night of the final debate had America on the edge of their seats. Every citizen found a television or radio to listen to and patiently waited to see what the last two standing candidates had to say about their nation's future. The audiences settled down with snacks and drinks in heavy anticipation, fully expecting a long program ahead of them:

Moderator: "Welcome to the final debate before the 58th Presidential Election! Tonight we have many questions but the only subject is the trade with our new foreign allies. We're going to start the night off chivalrously, ladies first. So, Mrs. Clinton, please, enlighten us with what you believe is the right way to handle this situation."

Clinton: "Well, the right way to handle any of America's affairs is by constitutionality. We have to look at the situation and see if it fits in with what the founding fathers believed were to be the principles of how to govern this nation. Once this is done, we can make our decision."

Moderator: "Okay, we will definitely be coming back to that, but Mr. Trump I want to allow you to make your opening remarks."

Trump: "Simply put, America is in deep trouble. There is only one way out and these foreign allies are offering it to us. If we don't take this trade now, not only will we continue to crumble as one of the most powerful nations in the world, but someone else *will* take the deal, and we will have to answer to them, rely on them, and basically work for them for the rest of our existence. That is not the powerful America I grew up in, not the powerful America I loved. Together, with this trade, we will make America great again."

Moderator: "Mrs. Clinton, your opening remarks made it seem like you haven't made a decision yet... have you?"

Clinton: "Well of course we have, we have made the decision to protect the Constitution over any foreign affairs. That is our decision. We have to decide, does this trade protect our people, all of our people? Once I am elected I will sit down with all of

Congress and the Supreme Court and insure that this is a fair and equal trade, and then, we will make our decision.”

Moderator: “Mr. Trump, do you have anything to rebuke?”

Trump: “I would just like to say this – a vote for me is a vote for victory. America would officially be at the top of the pack, and we would never worry again about what our enemies are planning behind our back. Yeah, my administration would trade all of the black people. So what? They’ve been doing nothing but creating trouble for us these last years. I have one thing to say to them, All Lives Matter. That’s it. And if the trade of them helps ALL lives, that’s what is going to happen.”

Moderator: “Well Hillary, any comments?”

Clinton: “I think it’s clear to see where my opponent stands. I think the voters know what they’re voting for tomorrow. We will just have to see how America speaks.”

Trump: “I don’t think I’ve ever agreed with her more.”

And with that, all of the televisions across the nation were once again dark. The shortest “debate” in history left the citizens of the most powerful nation in the hemisphere to think about the repercussions of whatever decision they should make the coming day. The white population was left thinking about what could be gained, while the black community was wondering about the things that could be lost. To say that very few people slept that night would be an understatement.

Election Day was surprisingly, full of no surprises. There were no protests, no demonstrations, no one attempting to sway a vote for either side. Literally everyone had

given up trying to make their case for whatever they saw as the acceptable solution. Polling places were so quiet that you could hear the click of the buttons as the votes piled in. Exhaustion encompassed the entire nation. After hours of waiting in line to vote, the American people went home to simply wait some more. The fear of what was to come was so overwhelming for the African American population that they mostly sat in silence, surrounding themselves with their loved ones for what could be the last time while watching the votes be counted.

For hours the candidates were neck and neck. Every time Clinton would gain a vote, so would Trump. It wasn't until 11:43, 16 minutes before the inauguration of the newest president, where the votes began to surge in favor of one person. Seeing this extreme growth for Donald Trump crushed the African-Americans. They were sure that their pleas to the liberal whites, paired with the entire minority vote would have given them an advantage, even if it was slight. Daughters and wives began to cry, sons and fathers began to break things in anger. But then, something miraculous happened. The final vote was counted. Hillary Clinton had officially won by 1 percent. Tears began to flow as African Americans across the nation began to cry out in joy as they were sure they were to be protected by Hillary. Hillary had, after all, always campaigned well with the black vote and claimed to enforce as many laws in their favor as she possibly could. Celebrations began to break out in the streets of black neighborhoods, whereas small riots began in white neighborhoods. The nation was once again divided.

November 9. African Americans were cautious to wake up on this day. Afraid that if they opened their eyes, they would realize Hillary Clinton winning the vote was a dream. One by one they began to venture outside. With the warmth of the sunshine on

their skin, the feel of the soft grass against their feet, joy began to erupt amongst them once more. After realizing they were still on Earth, they soon looked to the sky to see that the ships were retreating! No longer did they hover so closely to the ground that a bird would fly into them.

Thirty minutes into this jubilant occasion burst forth a loud, thunderous sound. The earth began to shake, and looking to the sky, everyone could see that the ships were beginning to open. At an altitude equivalent to an airplanes, bright beams began to come down out of the spacecraft. Three, four, even five people at a time, the ships began to suck up all of the African Americans in its radius. Even the people inside their homes, hiding in basements, were ripped up through their roof in terror. Screams and cries could be heard through the atmosphere. "How could this have happened?!" the black community cried, "we voted for Hillary!!" Within minutes the transaction had been completed. A broadcast from the United States Government took over every screen in America one last time. A single line, on a black background, announced the news to America:

The transaction has been completed. Welcome to your improved America.