

Then with a snap, the shutter fell open. The impact of the opening forced me to my hands onto the clear glass of the ship. I was stunned with dis-belief. After...who even knows how long, a shimmering sphere of heaven and hope was presented in front of my open eyes; it was like a glistening diamond on a perfectly matched crown.

I had flown past many planets on my expedition: none as hopeful as this one. The land below us was mounted with thick chrome clouds and vague, but surrounding them was a rusted silver horizon, and a crystal clear ocean encroached around the side, with a beacon of moonlight shining down into the eternal darkness of the sea.

The night took over its fraction of the globe, and dark looming shapes of what looked like continents stood out with jagged mountain caps reaching out among the clouds. And that's when I realized...

If there was clouds, there was rain, and if there was rain, there was water, and if there was water, there was life! My heart was racing faster than ever, pounding, almost painfully, at my chest. Had I just discovered the solution to the extinction of the human population? But as I was processing my thoughts, the shutter suddenly closed again, and I was left in extraordinary distrust, doubt, and slight confusion, as I slid steadily across the smooth surface of the ships floor.

How can I describe the thing I saw? What looked like vibrant and colorful stems twisted and churned around each other, the leaves and exotic flowers spiraling in and out, Left and Right. Tangling roots branched out into the unknown of the soil-a meter or so: they must have been sturdy, robust; parts were emerged from the ground and had broken sections of the solid soil, even though the petite plant itself was no more than a foot tall.

"It's a seed" said Cavor, and then I heard him whisper, very softly: "Life!"

-Mia Humber-aged 11