

Emily stepped through into a meeting room. A large, oval table stood in the centre with chairs around it. Three other teenagers were already inside. A girl with braids and folded arms watched her suspiciously. A boy in an American football jersey had his head down on the table, possibly asleep. Another girl, this one wearing a long dress and a green headscarf, paced along the back of the room. There was another tank here, too, but the glass sides didn't reach the ceiling, and it seemed to be empty.

“Welcome, Emily,” said a woman’s voice very close to her ear.

Emily turned and found herself nose-to-nose with a woman — sort of. At first glance the smiling woman seemed human, but there was something unreal about her smile. It wasn't a person. A robot, maybe. An android? Emily took a step back.

“You have been chosen as an Earth Ambassador,” said the not-woman.

