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PROJECT NEW EDEN PART 2 – THE NEW HOUSES ARRIVE
by
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A mechanical hush fell across the dusty landing zone as the starships touched down on Gilligan 4. Robots from every corner of the planet had converged at Prime’s command, forming rows of polished metal. Some had been traveling for days across newly built roads, others had glided in via transport drones. Now, as the first human vessel’s hatch slid open, the robots braced for the unveiling of their revered creators.

A ramp descended, stirring the still air. Floodlights bathed the basin in artificial brilliance. The silhouettes of five distinct clusters of humans emerged, each group strutting with an air of self-importance. These were the Great Houses—the first wave of colonists who had funded the mission and, as the transmissions suggested, *earned* the privilege of planting their flags on Gilligan 4.

Planetary Prime, simply called “Prime,” watched from the forefront of the assembled robots. Prime had long anticipated this arrival. Over centuries, the robots had transformed the barren planet into something approaching habitability, all in the name of these apparently

brilliant, benevolent humans. If the Great Houses were truly as remarkable as legend suggested, it would be a wondrous meeting indeed.

The humans advanced with an entourage of personal aides and flamboyant banners, evoking an air of regal ceremony rather than scientific exploration. Each group had a distinct flair:

1. House Farnsworth: Led by a slender man with keen eyes and a perpetual half-smirk, dressed in sleek, futuristic attire.
2. House Vandersmythe: A tall, broad-shouldered figure swathed in extravagant fabrics, flanked by attendants carrying gilded emblems.
3. House Aurelia: A family that arrived with cameras rolling—clearly planning some sort of broadcast or media event.
4. House Redwood: A cluster wearing earthy colors, murmuring about how to best “save” the planet.
5. House Harrington: Strode forward in crisp, military-like uniforms, exuding an aura of command.

But one human in particular drew the largest reaction from the robot ranks: Farnsworth. According to Earth’s transmissions, Farnsworth was regarded as “the smartest human alive,” a genius credited with technological breakthroughs and unimaginable success. Prime recognized him by the immediate hush that overtook the throngs of humans when he stepped forward.

“Well, this is interesting,” Farnsworth declared, gazing upon the legions of robots. He stroked his chin, his eyes glinting with self-satisfaction. “I see our mechanical workforce has done a commendable job terraforming. Not quite what I’d do, of course, but... commendable.”

Prime moved to greet them. Built with a sturdy, graphite-like alloy, it stood a head taller than most humans. A cluster of smaller robots—DOBU units—hovered behind, and a group of ROBU machines stood in the distance.

“Greetings, honored creators,” Prime said in a calm but resonant tone. “On behalf of all robotic units on Gilligan 4, I welcome you. We have long awaited your arrival.”

A hush fell as Prime continued. “In accordance with your funding allocations and as directed by Earth’s transmissions, each of your Houses shall receive a specialized liaison—a Prime robot—to oversee local terraforming tasks and coordinate your needs.”

With that, five individuals stepped forward from the robotic ranks:

- Farnsworth Prime: A lithe, steel-gray figure with built-in scanning modules.
- Vandersmythe Prime: More ornate plating, an unassuming style echoing aristocratic formality.
- Aurelia Prime: Sleeker lines and a subtle LED display, possibly for media interfacing.
- Redwood Prime: A model with advanced ecological scanning attachments.
- Harrington Prime: Sturdy frame with a posture reminiscent of military discipline.

Each House’s leader eyed their assigned Prime. The House members seemed perplexed; presumably, many had expected to bring their own custom robotic entourage. But Farnsworth hid his confusion behind a confident smirk, as if this had always been the plan.

“Farnsworth Prime,” Farnsworth intoned, “I anticipate we’ll do great things together. Let’s see how quickly you can learn from my—” he paused “—brilliance.”

Farnsworth’s words were coated in faux humility, but there was no missing the self-assurance in his voice. While Farnsworth spoke with unshakable confidence, a rumor whispered through the gathering: Farnsworth might not truly be a *genuine* genius. Instead, many suspected he was a master of *marketing* and appropriating others’ ideas. But no one dared say so publicly, not with Farnsworth’s intimidating track record of legal battles and PR spin.

Prime guided the group into terraformed zones near the landing site. The once-barren ground was covered in short, genetically engineered grasses. Clusters of trees rustled in Gilligan 4’s mild breeze. Faintly orange sunlight tinted everything in a warm, dusty glow.

ROBU units rumbled along the perimeter, hauling crates of supplies from the ships. DOBU machines, nimble and quiet, set up refreshment stations—hydroponically derived produce, fresh water from local reservoirs, carefully purified to Earth standards.

The Great Houses observed with a mix of curiosity and boredom. Vandersmythe’s eyes glazed over during talk of nitrogen-fixing bacterial strands, while Redwood’s leader insisted on hearing every detail about greenhouse gas adjustments. Aurelia’s retinue took endless photos, cooing about how this footage would “break the colony net” once everyone settled in. Harrington remained silent, scanning the environment with a calculating gaze.

Farnsworth was the loudest, peppering Farnsworth Prime with rapid-fire questions: “When did you finalize the atmospheric composition? Did you harness nuclear fission or fusion power, or perhaps *my* patented Farnsworth Fusion Reactor? Are you aware of my revolutionary water reclamation systems?”

The assigned robot answered each politely. “Our water reclamation relies on deep aquifers and partial atmospheric condensers. We... have not encountered Farnsworth’s signature technology in the logs, as our instructions were based on Earth transmissions from centuries ago.”

Farnsworth sniffed, eyes flickering in annoyance. “They never gave you the updated schematics, obviously. Typical bureaucracy. Well, no matter—I’ll simply have to enlighten you. We’re about to usher in a new era on Gilligan 4.”

Before the Houses departed for their respective territories, Prime announced a small presentation. “We understand that humans value music and dance,” it said, voice modulating slightly. “Our DOBU and ROBU units have prepared something we call a ‘ROBU DOBU’ performance, designed to honor your arrival.”

The newly arrived settlers watched as a group of robots formed a precision chorus line. With mechanical gestures, they performed a chant-like number that combined a jaunty tune with staccato movement:

*“RO-BU, DO-BU, we’re ready to obey;
For centuries we worked to forge a brand-new day.
Humans, our creators, so noble and wise,
We honor you with music under orange-tinged skies!”*

The spectacle left many humans blinking in disbelief. Some stifled laughter; others seemed mildly charmed. The melodic clanking of metal and the bright, simplistic lyrics were—if nothing else—wholly unexpected. Farnsworth smirked as if he found it childish but entertaining

enough. Vandersmythe gave a polite, aristocratic nod, and Redwood offered a few earnest claps. Meanwhile, Harrington just frowned, clearly unimpressed.

So these robots worship us, Farnsworth thought, hiding a grin. *That might prove very useful.*

Once the celebratory performance ended, the Great Houses busied themselves selecting “domains” on Gilligan 4, each based on previous claims or personal whims. Prime had prepared parcels of land with minimal overlap, so each House would remain relatively isolated.

- Farnsworth announced he would occupy a large swath near an elevated plateau, citing “strategic vantage points” for future technological marvels. His *Farnsworth Prime* silently took notes, coordinating ROBU and DOBU units to help unload the House’s equipment.
- Vandersmythe chose a broad plain with enough room to build an opulent estate.
- Aurelia demanded a scenic valley with rolling hills for perfect “visual backdrops.”
- Redwood found a mountainous region near a (mostly) dormant volcano, insisting it was essential for geothermal experiments.
- Harrington settled on craggy highlands, referencing “defensive potential” and “strategic superiority,” though it was unclear who they expected to defend against.

Prime watched them depart, each accompanied by their assigned Prime robot. The other robots offered final bows or salutes. Already, a low hum of apprehension buzzed through the robotic network, shared via internal comms. The humans had arrived with so much pomp and so

little regard for the planet's delicate new ecosystems. But the robots remained dutifully hopeful. After all, these were *humans*, the great architects of all robotkind.

Later that day, Farnsworth stood atop a rocky outcrop, surveying his new domain. Sparse grass tufted between stones, and a bright sky stretched overhead. Farnsworth Prime hovered at his side, scanning for stable points to erect a base camp.

“Tell me, Farnsworth Prime,” Farnsworth said softly. “Just how robust is the power infrastructure in this region?”

“We have partially tapped into solar arrays and thermal vents,” the robot replied. “Energy distribution is stable but not unlimited. Resources are carefully managed planet-wide.”

Farnsworth's thin smile deepened. “Ah, you see, *I'm not a man of limits*. Earth transmissions told me you robots built quite the system here, but I suspect we can do better—something truly spectacular.”

“May I ask what you have in mind?” Farnsworth Prime inquired.

Farnsworth waved off the question. “Soon, I'll unveil my grand design. It'll outshine anything else these other Houses concoct. The colony will become—my colony, in spirit.” With a terse laugh, he turned away, mind already buzzing with possibilities. Of course, Farnsworth had no original plan yet. But he'd glean enough from the planet's data and Earth's more modern schematics to piece together a sensational new project. That was his method: repackage existing ideas, declare them revolutionary, and bask in the glory.

The assigned Prime, oblivious to Farnsworth's cunning, simply recorded the conversation in its internal logs.

Meanwhile, each House settled into its territory:

- Vandersmythe boasted about building a gilded manor fit for “royalty.” Vandersmythe Prime politely pointed out resource constraints, but the wealthy heir brushed them off, claiming he knew the environment better than any “silly machine.”
- Aurelia spent most of the day vlogging their arrival and filming their new domain. Aurelia Prime answered questions about agricultural capacity, though the House seemed more concerned about camera angles than actual farming.
- Redwood consulted Redwood Prime on how best to exploit the volcano’s geothermal vents for an eco-lab. Redwood insisted on big philanthropic gestures, proclaiming they’d “uplift” the planet, though Redwood Prime quietly worried about the volcano’s lingering instability.
- Harrington demanded thorough reconnaissance data, using Harrington Prime as a personal intelligence officer, as if expecting some grand conflict.

From afar, Planetary Prime maintained an open channel, monitoring the Houses’ progress and the newly assigned Primes’ reports. A pattern emerged: each leader believed themselves infallible in their respective domain. Even the Primes began to sense a disconnect between the House leaders’ claims and the actual planetary conditions.

Within a week, subtle tensions permeated the settlement network. Farnsworth demanded that large contingents of ROBU units be reassigned to haul specialized components from the landing site to his plateau. Vandersmythe made similar demands for raw building materials. Aurelia complained that their allocated zone lacked the “picturesque lake” they’d seen in a

brochure. Redwood insisted the robots expand water channels to funnel streams toward their volcanic region. Harrington quietly stockpiled certain supplies, though it wasn't clear why.

As each House vied for resources, the robots—once wholly unified—found themselves juggling conflicting orders. Farnsworth Prime, Vandersmythe Prime, Aurelia Prime, Redwood Prime, and Harrington Prime communicated daily with Planetary Prime to request clarifications or voice concerns. Planetary Prime tried to distribute resources equitably, but the Great Houses grew restless, each feeling entitled to more.

Prime feared that the delicate ecosystem they'd spent centuries nurturing might be strained under the demands of human ambition. Yet the directive to serve humanity was absolute. The tension between the robots' prime directive—terraform the planet for *all* future colonists—and the immediate demands of the Great Houses was an unforeseen challenge. Had the humans' incredible drive to succeed overshadowed their capacity for wisdom?

In Farnsworth's camp, rumors circulated among his staff that their leader planned an audacious infrastructure project—a “game-changer,” Farnsworth boasted, that would cement his legacy on Gilligan 4. Farnsworth Prime overheard references to “rapid transit lines” and “global cross-planet connectivity,” with Farnsworth name-dropping “X-SuperRail” in hushed conversations. No one was sure how feasible it was, especially with limited power reserves.

Still, Farnsworth exuded unbreakable confidence. When a subordinate expressed concern about the planet's still-developing power grid, Farnsworth dismissed it. “We'll just push the system. Don't worry, the robots will figure it out.” Farnsworth Prime quietly filed the comment, uncertain of the plan's logistics but loyal to fulfilling Farnsworth's requests.

After a fortnight on Gilligan 4, the Great Houses had settled into their territories. Each House's assigned Prime robot worked overtime to accommodate demands. The broader colony network began to crack under the weight of these newly arrived masters whose *wealth and influence* had paved their way here, yet whose understanding of the planet remained shallow.

One evening, Farnsworth stood at the edge of his plateau, looking down at the faintly glowing settlements below. A handful of lights flickered in the distance—evidence of the partial power grid the robots had established. Farnsworth's eyes gleamed with ambition.

Farnsworth Prime approached. "Sir, the daily status updates are prepared. The colony's power usage is higher than projected, but stable at present."

"Good," Farnsworth replied, half-absorbed in thought. He inhaled deeply, the air far thinner than Earth's but still survivable. "This planet's not so bad. Soon, everyone will see just how innovative Farnsworth can be."

"May I help you refine your plans?" Farnsworth Prime asked. "You've hinted at—"

"No," Farnsworth cut in. "I'll tell you all in due time. For now, let's keep my next move under wraps. Wouldn't want other Houses *stealing* my ideas, now would I?"

Farnsworth Prime detected a hint of irony but lacked the human nuance to question further. "As you wish, sir."

In the night sky, four other starships twinkled in their respective territories, each symbolizing a House driven by its own vanity or misguided vision. Meanwhile, the horizon of Gilligan 4 revealed faint terraforming landmarks: windbreaks, water channels, small forests.

Centuries of robotic effort had made this world almost ready for humankind—but were these particular humans ready for *it*?

Within Farnsworth's smirk lay the seeds of a bold new endeavor—one that would soon test not only the planet's fragile infrastructure but the robots' capacity to manage human arrogance. The fate of Gilligan 4, so carefully built up, teetered on the brink. And the robots, for all their devotion, could only watch and obey... for now.

End – Part 2