

# **The Colonist**

By

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## PAGE 1

### PANEL 1

Iris, 21-year-old black woman, gestures flippantly. We're in Iris' room on a science-fiction colony base.

IRIS  
Mom, they're all white again.

### PANEL 2

Appearing on a screen, Roland, her 42 year-old mother, disapproves. Below her face, text reads:

Botanist-in-Chief Roland

ROLAND  
So what? Black guys didn't really use our sperm bank.

### PANEL 3

Iris looks exasperated.

IRIS  
I'm just so sick of the little kids staring at me, and now here's another brood. White again.

### PANEL 4

Roland isn't sympathetic.

ROLAND  
Iris, come on girl. I never get stared at.

### PANEL 5

Iris is deadpan.

IRIS  
That's because you're needed at the outposts year-round. You have no idea what it's like growing up here--or what it was like for me.

### PANEL 6

Roland's facade breaks.

ROLAND  
I didn't mean for that to...

PANEL 7

Neither makes eye contact.

ROLAND  
Why don't you come visit the outpost?

IRIS  
No, mom.

ROLAND  
Why?

IRIS  
No.

PANEL 8

Roland looks hurt.

ROLAND  
But it's been what, a year? Iris, it's  
only a few day's walk. Join a caravan.  
You'll get away from Big Base. Away from  
the kids.

PANEL 9

As Iris stares into her lap, a 'mail' message appears over  
Roland's face with the words 'NEW COMMUNICATION'.

## PAGE 2

### PANEL 1

Iris look quizzical, and leaning forward she waves her hand at the screen. Roland's image is half-vanished.

IRIS

Oh, I just got a thing, Mom. Looks important, better go.

ROLAND

Ok, Iris. I lo--

### PANEL 2

Horror on Iris' face.

### PANEL 3

She covers her mouth, reeling.

### PANEL 4

This large panel features the beginning of the letter she's been sent. It's a formal letter requesting her attendance at the Insemination Clinic.

Text:

Dear Miss Iris Roland,

I am writing to inform you that your time has come to be part of the insemination program. As you know, human survival depends on a steady, monitored population growth, and now it will be your privilege to contribute. Though you may elect a 'Father' for your child, we are still enforcing that all pregnancies must originate from the Sperm Bank to promote genetic diversity and safeguard the stability of our species. An appointment has been made for you to attend on...

### PANEL 5

In this long panel, we see her starting to cry at her chair (speech goes here), then by the door putting her spacesuit on, then hitting the door control.

IRIS

(small)

No...

PANEL 6

From behind, we see her NASA-emblazoned spacesuit and helmet.  
Through the open door, we see a red wasteland at dawn.

## PAGE 3

### PANEL 1

Sun dawning above, we see Iris up close gritting her teeth determinedly through her visor. Behind her we see a community of dome- and cube-domiciles like you'd see in concept pics of Martian colonies, complete with Rovers.

IRIS

Fine, mom.

### PANEL 2

Iris' wrist-display shows a 3D blueprint of her route ahead. There's a chasm between her and a place marked 'Outpost 6', with a huge detour highlighted to get to a safe crossing. Directly between her and the outpost, there's what looks like a bridge, but marked 'The Tombs - DANGER'.

CAPTION

Later...

IRIS (OFF)

Hmmmm.

### PANEL 3

Standing on a hill and looking up from her wrist, Iris sees the 'Tombs': a shopping centre, dilapidated and half-sunken in the crack.

IRIS

Screw it.

### PANEL 4

Iris climbs through a smashed window, onto an upper walkway above the atrium which is lit naturally through a giant glass roof. We can partially see a statue in the centre of the cavern.

SFX

Hnngg!

### PANEL 5

As she reaches a 'MotherStore', she stops.

IRIS

Not now.

PANEL 6

Her gloved hand lifts a rock from the cracked, uneven tiles.

## PAGE 4

### PANEL 1

Iris' arm hurls the rock.

SFX

Fwwpp

### PANEL 2

At the moment of impact, two red eyes can be seen through the glass.

SFX

CRACK

### PANEL 3

Microseconds later, the glass falls away shattered and the eyes aren't there any more. The store is pitch dark.

SFX

SMASH

### PANEL 4

Iris' face, one eye squinting, eyebrow raised. Raising a hand to her helmet, she clicks on her headlamp.

SFX

click

### PANEL 5

Through the window we can see cribs with sale stickers.

IRIS

Hmmm...

### PANEL 6

She reaches a door to an emergency exit stairwell. Framed by the broken window, we see a strange, huge-eyed, fanged face in the background.

IRIS

Oh well.

### PANEL 7

As Iris climbs the stairs, we see the face appear around the



door to the stairwell behind her.

PANEL 8

As Iris emerges through the door to the roof, the creature slashes at her back. It's large as a Great Dane, with a face like an Aye-Aye. Its claws are like a raptor but with one incredibly long finger. Its ears are big like a bat's and it's covered in black fur that stands on-end.

SFX (CREATURE)

RACKACKACK

SFX (IRIS)

AHHHHHH!

## PAGE 5

### PANEL 1

Iris' head swivels, terrified as she runs.

### PANEL 2

The creature chases her far out onto the glass roof, pouncing onto her again as she dashes away, bringing them both to the ground.

SFX (OVER RIGHT GUTTER)

CRACK!!

### PANEL 3

From below the glass, we see an impact point spidering outwards. Staring at it both Iris and the creature panic, pupils dilated and eyes wide.

SFX (REPEATED, SPREAD AROUND)

Krik krak

### PANEL 4

Side-by-side, they both run back towards the stairwell, but...

### PANEL 5

Before they make it, the glass shatters. We see the whole atrium in a vertical slice, including the statue at ground level, which is of a warrior woman with babe at her breast. Iris and the creature can be seen falling, to the side of the image, near the upper walkway with the MotherStore on it.

### PANEL 6

Iris' gloved hand catches the guardrail of the upper walkway.

### PANEL 7

Iris staggers onto the walkway, bloodied slash-marks showing on her back, as the creature climbs through the broken window into the MotherStore.

IRIS

Oh for...

### PANEL 8

Her visor slightly cracked, Iris jumps inside...

PANEL 9

And comes down on top of it, fist raised, other hand on its neck, kneeling on it's belly. Another pair of red eyes can be seen in the dark background.

PANEL 10

The creature cowers, raising its paws. Iris' head turns to the side to look at something, fist still raised.

SFX (ABOVE IRIS' HEAD)

?

## **PAGE 6**

### **PANEL 1**

We see what Iris is looking at: a largish green sapling, arching towards the window she broke, grows in a crib. The stone she threw earlier can be seen near it.

### **PANEL 2**

Iris' fist lowers and her shoulders slump. Beyond her, we see the other eyes, closer.

### **PANEL 3**

The creature's cub wanders out of the dark, and the mother licks it. Iris steps away from the creatures, looking apologetic.

IRIS  
Sorry about the rock, little guy.

### **PANEL 4**

The creatures slink away.

IRIS  
Damn...

### **PANEL 5**

Iris cups a bundle of the sapling's leaves in her hand. She is awed, teary.

### **PANEL 6**

Her hand grasps a shard of glass.

### **PANEL 7**

Outside the store, she examines a small cutting she has taken from the sapling in the light.

### **PANEL 8**

In a wide vista from the roof of the building, Iris looks out towards Outpost 6, cutting in hand. She is stooped, clearly injured, holding one arm to her chest.

## PAGE 7

### PANEL 1

In this series of slices, we see Iris doggedly making her way across the roof, falling down the very small drop onto solid ground at the other side of the chasm, down on one knee in open desert, and then arriving at the outpost airlock. She's clearly struggling, hard.

### PANEL 2

Iris' face, bloodied but relieved.

### PANEL 3

Slashes on her back again visible, she supports herself on the doorframe as she enters the outpost. This panel should be followed by a small-panel-size gutter/blank space.

### PANEL 4

Iris is sat up in a bed, arm in a sling. She looks concerned

CAPTION

Later...

IRIS

How's my little guy doing?

### PANEL 5

Her mother walks across the room holding a pot in both hands in which the cutting is planted. She's grinning.

ROLAND

Just fine! It seems to be growing nicely. I still can't believe it's alive.

### PANEL 6

Iris grins too.

IRIS

From what you've always said, I never thought we'd see a species like it again!

### PANEL 7

Her mother sits on the end of the bed, admiring the plant.

ROLAND

I've no idea how it survived. I've decided to lead an expedition out to where you found it tomorrow, maybe pop some trackers on those creatures too.

PANEL 8

Iris looks down, ashamed.

IRIS

So, there's something else Mom...

## PAGE 8

### PANEL 1

Roland reaches out and holds Iris' hand.

ROLAND

The insemination? That's why you came, right?

### PANEL 2

Iris looks surprised.

ROLAND (CONT)

C'mon Iris, I'm in with the science lot. I hear these things.

### PANEL 3

Roland looks sombre.

ROLAND (CONT)

It gets a load more complex with kids. You won't make the right decisions all the time.

### PANEL 4

Iris, upset.

IRIS

It's the responsibility. It's too heavy, us being on the edge. Us humans.

### PANEL 5

Roland.

ROLAND

It's the scariest thing that'll ever happen to you, the first one. Nobody says it, but **you**, as you know yourself, are gone.

### PANEL 6

Iris, for the first time, empathises with her mom.

ROLAND (CONT)

But they say their first words, they

learn to run, and you **want** to be there.  
You follow them. And they turn out to  
be...

PANEL 7

Roland has moved around and hugs Iris' good side, plant pot  
still in hand. Iris is crying, burying her face.

ROLAND (CONT)

The most wonderful people you'll ever  
know.