

A Hundred Lifetimes
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based on the novel, *A Hundred Lifetimes*
by David C.A. Zink

Logline

A Venusian botanist finds himself in the middle of a political battle between a radical environmental group and the corrupt government officials who run their planet - Venus.

Main Characters

Zyzz: A botanist that teaches at a major university on the planet Venus, he is an environmentalist who likes to spend his time doing field research and keeping a low profile.

Zilla: Zyzz's former student, he eventually becomes his lover and then-wife. Head-strong and opinionated, she is dedicated to saving Venus from business interests that are bent on doing anything to advance their financial gain.

Three-Act Summary

Act 1

A chill morning in the Nokomis Mountains. Zoom in on a lush tropical scene. A young boy (Zyzz), his mom (Marg), and dad enjoying a beautiful morning, then his dad gets grabbed & carried off by a Megaraptor (giant dragonfly), leaving them crying & hysterical.

Now college-aged, Zyzz has an interview with the head of the Forestry Department. He's asked to describe himself politically. Soon after that, he gets the job.

Zyzz spends time out botanizing with a magnifier that hangs around his neck. He then writes his thesis paper on Carnivorous Plants of Western Ishtar. The book soon becomes the standard reference in the field.

While at lunch, Zyzz sees two of his students working at an information table. One of the students is a beautiful female named Zilla. They talk as he looks through their literature, discussing the system that is ruining the planet.

Later, Zilla is out with her boyfriend. The guy is a bit of a jerk. He makes rude remarks to an older gentleman, and Zilla decides she can do better. She breaks up with her boyfriend and leaves with the older man. She learns that his name is Amp.

Zyzz and Zilla begin to date. They talk a lot about science and politics. They have many long discussions that help Zilla's scores in the class. In return, she brings him to insights. They start to influence his lectures, and he starts to use botany as a jumping-off point for discussing conservation issues. His classes start to become lively seminars on environmental activism.

One evening they return home, and for the first time, they sleep together. Their love grows. Zyzz has to be careful not to play favorites because Zilla is still one of his students.

Zyzz takes Zilla to meet his mom. They go out and get sodas. His mother (Marg) is nervous at first, but she gets along well with Zilla. When they leave, Zilla tells Zyzz that his mother is a bit old-fashioned and likes her.

A few weeks after the final exams, Zilla and Zyzz go through the mandatory series of pre-marital counseling sessions and receive the standard cautions, warnings, advice, and Holy Assent.

The marriage ceremony is beautiful. Zilla and Zyzz exchange vows, then go on their honeymoon, stroll along the beach, collect seashells and kiss.

Zyzz and Zilla have lunch with Zilla's parents. It's going great until they start discussing politics. Her father, Mott, has extreme political views in stark contrast with Zilla's views. After lunch, Zilla assures Zyzz her father likes him, just so long as they don't talk about politics.

The Back-to-the-Landers send three representatives into Mumphara, a large Thlargi reservation. Moorv is one of the three. They discuss poverty on the reservation and how to save the communal system, which is the basis of the Thlargi tradition.

Zilla and Zyzz continue their lives and build a home. A year after their marriage, they learn that Zilla is pregnant. She gives birth to three eggs. Although only two hatch, the new parents now have two little girls.

Zilla and Zyzz go to see Moorv's presentation about lands wrongly officially classified as "non-significant." The turnout is small, but Moorv hides his disappointment. After the presentation, Moorv meets Majanga.

Moorv calls Majanga on the phone. They meet down at the main gate of Riverside Park and attend the Spring Fest music festival. They have a wonderful time and share their first kiss.

Zilla and Zyzz attend a Town Hall meeting about healthcare issues.

Zilla and Zyzz go on a double-date to a Muncho stand with Moorv and Majanga. They discuss how and why the syndicate system is messing things up. Their conversation draws the attention of people around them; some agree, others disagree.

Zilla and Zyzz attend a political meeting. There is much debate between radicals and moderates. Some advocate armed revolution if the elections do not go their way; others insist on using only non-violent tactics.

The elections are held. The results are excellent for the syndicate-financed parties but not so good for the Left. A rowdy Unity convention is held by the Left parties, who decide to form a united electoral front: The Eco-Socialist Party ("ESP").

Things get very lively at a spirited debate between Liberal Party and ESP candidates.

Act 2

Things are festive during the election-watch party. The results come in, and once it's clear that Thromm (an ESP candidate) has won her seat in the Senate, the crowd goes wild. Her victory sends shock waves through the Establishment. Those who oppose change begin to get very nervous.

Ishtar Forest Resources ("IFR") is a cluster of companies formed by the acquisitions of smaller companies. As a powerful syndicate, they hold a monopoly on lumber and paper production on Venus. They are the largest land-owner on the planet. They also have harvesting rights to much more land. Porm and Kobe are upset about IFR destroying nature with clear-cutting. They decide that maybe they should take matters into their own hands.

Kobe and Porm kidnap Bufo (the Chief Executive of IFR) at zipper-gun point. The kidnapping makes headlines. It doesn't take long for the police to catch up with them. Porm gets shot by a rookie cop. An ambulance takes him to the emergency room while Kobe is taken to the Department of Public Safety.

Bufo does everything in his power to imprison all radicals. Zilla and Zyzz help organize rallies and speakers for the kidnappers. The goal: to free Kobe and stop the greedy Syndicate.

Zyzz gets tased, and some protesters are herded into a paddy-wagon. At the station, the police have Zyzz fill out some paperwork and then release him.

Things escalate. Senator Thromm asks Moorv to give expert testimony at the Senate on how climate change is damaging food resources. The Senate session is tense and unfriendly to Moorv. It soon becomes obvious that the Grand Army of the Empire works hand-in-glove with syndicate-sponsored security forces. The military is now a tool used to crush any public unrest that the Syndicate feels might disrupt its business interests.

There is a protest, but violence quickly breaks out. Military police incite a riot by attempting to arrest those who are peacefully protesting. Makeshift explosives are thrown at buildings, causing numerous deaths and injuries. All the streets are blocked off by police and protestors, some armed.

A curfew is put into effect, but things escalate further. Word gets out about the rough conditions to which Kobe and other detainees are subjected. Syndicate-sponsored "news" enrages more people. Bombs are thrown, and talk of revolution intensifies.

Zyzz realizes that it's just a matter of time until they come for him and Zilla. He debates on whether he should go underground to keep his

family safe. Can he spend the rest of his life without seeing Zilla? He decides to stay with Zilla and the family.

Politicians like Senator Thromm recognize the importance of the root issues causing the protests; they speak openly about them. A special government committee is created for Crisis Management.

Bufo urges the police to round up all the so-called radicals. He tells the Space Development Consortium they can use the prisoners as free labor, and if an "accident" happens to them, he would be okay with that.

Zyzz and Zilla are served with subpoenas for their involvement in the riot.

Zyzz and Zilla meet with their lawyer, Mr. Schlive. They tell him that they've been unjustly arrested. Zyzz tells him it's their right to protest, but Schlive isn't confident that saying it's their right will help them.

When they arrive home after the meeting, Zilla tells him she'll never speak to him again if he names names. He doesn't see what the big deal is. He says that if the people they report get deported, they'd be lucky. Zilla is very strong-willed on the subject. She says that she would be ashamed of him if he betrayed anybody. She reiterates that anybody they name could end up in a "Family Protection Center" (death camp).

Venus undergoes a vicious fascist crackdown. Zilla and Zyzz watch as their neighbors are rounded up and hauled off to "family protection centers." One neighbor is beaten viciously in the street for trying to protect his child.

Zyzz and Zilla arrive at the District Hall of Justice a half-hour early. The judge finds Zyzz to be a hostile and uncooperative witness

and pronounces him guilty of consorting with and being a member of an outlawed and criminal organization. The court places him under the authority of the Space Development Consortium for twelve years of indentured servitude. After much conferring, the judge grants Zyzz, Zilla, and their daughters Joint Domicile.

Zilla and Zyzz are driven home by the cops. They share stories of their court hearings and try to laugh through the madness.

Majanga and Moorv get married in a small ceremony. Zilla and Zyzz are their witnesses. Soon, a police bus comes to bring Moorv to an Intake Station.

Zyzz spends his last day on campus saying goodbye to his students and colleagues.

Zilla and Zyzz pack up only the bare essentials as advised because there won't be much room on the ship. They watch the final Venus sunset that they'll ever see. They look for Earth up amongst the stars.

Zilla's mom and dad stop by to visit with them one last time before they leave for the Intake Station. Both her parents look like they haven't had much sleep. Her dad is disappointed that they couldn't just let this go.

Act 3

Zyzz and Zilla's group are led through an Intake Station. Their belongings are inspected. Their kids begin to get antsy. The military police herds them in. They get instructions on what to do with their children. They board a shuttle which takes them up to a spaceship bound for Earth.

Zyzz is elected his group's representative, and he has an appointment to meet the ship's chief officer, Captain Bantia. Bantia asks if everything on the ship is to his liking. Zyzz struggles to determine if he's being sarcastic or not. Their conversation goes back and forth. At times strained, other times Bantia gives him advice on how to deal with onboard life.

Zilla is asked by her daughters what Zyzz does. She tells them and explains Zyzz's job to them.

Zyzz and Moorv pass each other as Zyzz is headed back to his room. They exchange pleasantries and information about following orders. Moorv is very upset about being separated from Majanga. There's a hint of jealousy that gets confirmed when Moorv tells Zyzz he's lucky to have Zilla and the children here with him.

The next morning, Zyzz goes to meet with the Earth Affairs liaison. He knows he needs to be firm but respectful, and trying to find the balance makes him nervous. Once he meets with her, he tells her of his group's concerns. He asks what will be in store for them once they reach Earth. He also tells her of Moorv and Majanga's situation. She gives him a form to give to Moorv. On his way back to his room, Zyzz provides the form to Moorv.

A few days later, a message comes over the ship's intercom system ordering all passengers to assemble in the cafeteria for a mandatory incoming message from home. Zyzz, Zilla, and their kids take a seat just as it's starting. Bufo's message tells them of severe disturbances in the past several days at "Family Protection Centers" throughout the empire that are being "taken care of." Martial law will soon be lifted, and orderly normal life will soon return.

The ship arrives at Earth's orbit. All the passengers ushered through the communal shower. Next, they are routed through a chamber where

they are treated with disinfectant mist to kill any remaining microbes and parasites.

Three shuttles are in the shuttle bay, parked and loaded with provisions and gear for the colonies. Zilla, Zyzz, and their daughters are among those who board the shuttle for Beta Colony, located somewhere in South America. Moorv is assigned to a different Earth base in Africa to reduce collusion between the leaders.

The shuttles are deployed, and eventually, Zyzz and Zilla arrive at their colony. When they arrive, they are given instructions and learn that Earth is the Consortium's best project. Zyzz is told he has an early morning appointment the next day with Colonel Ameles, the warden's Chief Adjutant for Personnel.

Zilla, Zyzz, and their children are assigned a suite of adjoining rooms in the junior officer's quarters. They settle in and have a meal at the base mess hall.

Zyzz arrives at his meeting with Colonel Ameles. They talk about what Zilla and Zyzz can do to be of use in the colony. She tells him he will join the Research and Development Team. She gives Zyzz a commission as Lieutenant and makes him squad leader for any botany-related fieldwork.

Zyzz learns that humans think they run the planet and are better off avoiding them. She also tells him that there have been some unsolved disappearances.

Zyzz and his squad are briefed about projects underway and the dangers of life on Earth. They're shown how to use the radios and weapons.

While doing field research, Zyzz, Klum, and Schnorr observe wildlife and natives. Klum is killed by a giant mantis. Zyzz and Schnorr kill it with their zappers.

Zyzz and Zilla receive a letter from Zilla's mom. She tells them about all of the hardships people are enduring back home. She tells them about the heat, the raging fires, and how people are getting sick from drinking contaminated water. Things are getting bad on Venus because of the way they've treated the environment.

The planet Venus suffers a catastrophic planetary Eco- Apocalypse.

Soon the supplies from Venus stop arriving. All communications with Venus soon stop as well. The colonists soon realize that life on Venus has ended. Shock and grief spread throughout the colonies as everyone understands that outcasts and prisoners are now the last of their species.

Zyzz is the first to come down with a mysterious illness.

Vespa, Klum's widow, moves in with the family, and they form a triad. The daughters now have two moms.

Zilla begins teaching in the elementary school. She loves her job, and the students love her.

Zyzz continues his fieldwork. Zilla, Vespa, and Zyzz accustom themselves to their new home and enjoy their lives as they raise their daughters, one of whom comes out as a lesbian.