

THE HIDDEN CIRCLE GAZETTE

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EPISODE

Mission II - Part 1

BY SCARLETTT — 2025-12-02



In [Mission]/(mission-part-1/), we were introduced to Ruby, a professional bunny girl dancer who seemed to have just the right qualities to be future Earth's representative on an 'important secret mission'. In this first part of a new six part series, a not-so-chance encounter in the park leads to a request for Ruby's skills to be put to use once again.

Mission II: Stranded - Part 1: Departure

An original story by Scarlett

Weather Control had set the day to be warm and sunny, so after the advanced yoga class, Ruby decided to walk home via the wide lawns in the park. She slipped off her shoes and strolled barefoot across the soft grass. Ahead she could see a group of school children sitting in a semicircle, their attention directed towards a figure sitting cross legged on the grass in front of them, whose back was towards Ruby. As Ruby got closer, she could see the figure's long white hair and immaculate black bunny girl costume. It was the holographic avatar of the HB-Infinite, humanity's AI leader...

As Ruby approached, the HB-Infinite turned to face her. *"Hi Ruby"*, she said. *"Please sit with us for a minute"*.

Ruby sat cross-legged herself on the edge of the semi-circle. The children were excitedly asking the HB-Infinite all sorts of questions, which she answered deftly, often using examples from the questioning child's own life to illustrate the answers. The children would shriek in delight at this, especially when a teasing reference to their friends was included.

Shortly, the children's teacher returned, and ushered them away.

"May I walk with you for a bit?", the HB-Infinite said to Ruby, and offered her arm for Ruby to link with.

They strolled in silence for a few minutes, then Ruby spoke. *"I remember the day you visited our school class. We were very excited"*, she said.

"Yes", replied the HB-Infinite. *"You even chose to wear your favourite red dress for that day"*.

"Anyhow, I guess this is not a chance encounter..", Ruby continued.

The HB-Infinite smiled. *"Do you remember Anna, from the colonists' planet?"*, she asked.

"Of course", replied Ruby.

"Anna has passed on a message that she would like to meet you again", continued the HB-Infinite. *"I think this is a good chance to see how things are going over there. Would you be up for another trip?"*.

Ruby smiled. She'd only spoken to Anna for a few minutes, but she knew she liked her and certainly would not mind talking to her again.

"Great", said the HB-Infinite. *"I have just made the travel arrangements and altered your schedule. You can leave the day after tomorrow..."*.

Two days later, the journey began. The lifting vehicle took off from Schiphol airport, again with only Ruby on-board, then accelerated smoothly across the sky to reach escape velocity. As they travelled up to meet the Entanglement Drive in orbit, Ruby flicked through the holopages of the latest Charlie Vogue magazine. The magazine projected holographic mockups of Ruby herself wearing the latest fashion ideas, and Ruby looked at them thoughtfully.

"Hmmm... I remember this style previously being popular about 30 years ago...", she mused at one set of projections. It was a 'bare middle' style, with nothing from the top of the thighs to above the navel. *"This would be popular as a base for some of our dance costumes"*.

They had reached orbit and Ruby could see the Entanglement Drive through one of the portholes. Ruby thought it looked like a giant mechanical starfish. She smiled, as she had always been curious about how Entanglement Drives work. She thought back to her school day wearing her favourite red dress, and had cheekily asked the HB-Infinite to explain...

"Well", the HB-Infinite had replied with her trademark nurturing smile, *"think about those lovely drawings you did last week. You had learned how to use 'perspective' to make great realistic looking 3D pictures on a flat piece of paper. That palace you drew was particularly good, and, yes, I'd like to live there. Anyway, Entanglement Drives just use a trick like the 'perspective' drawing, except with space instead of paper"*.

The lifting vehicle docked with the Entanglement Drive's centre. The drive folded its arms around them, in a type of affectionate echinodermatous embrace.