

EARTHLIFE: MOST BASIC TRAINING

116 page Feature - Drama, Thought-provoking

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TREATMENT

OVERVIEW

When a down-and-out man accepts a mysterious stranger's invitation to role play in a virtual universe, we might anticipate desert planets, aliens and spaceships, but this virtual universe seems oddly familiar: it's ordinary people navigating ordinary situations, and it has a familiar-sounding name: EarthLife. This is the fundamental twist of the story: unbeknownst to our protagonist (and to the viewer until the very end) the "virtual universe" where he has his role-play adventures is none other than planet Earth. So why bring him to "EarthLife"? So he can uncover fascinating new information about Earth's true operating system which will help him evolve into a peaceful, conscious, loving person.

What information does he uncover? The most dramatic might be expressed in a 3-word mantra: mirror, magnet, mesh. This refers to the seriatim revelations that "EarthLife" is a mirror universe (everyone and everything mirror something about yourself), a magnet universe (ruled by attractive forces, most powerful of which is love); and a mesh universe (people are not separate entities but part of one all-encompassing mesh). When these principles are discovered and applied to day-to-day situations, life is dramatically upgraded and will never be the same again.

On its surface, EarthLife is an emotionally intense role play adventure with unique characters and their compelling struggles and transformations. Below the surface: wisdom bombs about reincarnation, transmigration of the soul, metaphysical laws, and evolution of consciousness from fear and separation to love and oneness. Ultimately, EarthLife reveals our life on Earth as a dazzling simulation, a hall of mirrors, a laboratory of love.

THE STORY

Opening montage of negative news clips places us in our ordinary, hardscrabble world. Images of wildfires fade into the first scene: a neighborhood devastated by wildfire.

TV news crews are interviewing our protagonist, 48 y.o. Fred Fernow, whose home and business have just burnt to the ground (and who's recently

had cancer and a divorce) . He wears baseball cap and shirt with "Fred's Parts" insignia and walks with a slight limp. Distressed, he cries out for help, stumbles to the ground, then takes on a faint golden glow from head to toe.

Fred is helped back up by our other main character: Wise Guide (WG) , a mysterious stranger with a dry wit, whose face is never on screen and whose name is never known. WG leads Fred to a vacant TV production studio and invites him to role play in a virtual universe, claiming it may help. Skeptical but out of options, Fred agrees, and the adventure begins.

WG tells Fred he must first go to the Wardrobe Room to select the character he will play. Fred enters and sees hundreds, if not thousands, of holographic human beings of every shape, size, gender, age posed in different scenes. Overwhelmed, he bolts. WG helps him narrow down which kind of character to play. Fred feels a soldier might be good.

Back in the Wardrobe Room all the holographic characters now have something military in their appearance. WG tells Fred there's a kind of magnet inside him which will lead him to the right character if he tunes into it. Fred does and chooses: Latiqua Shantay, a 28 y.o. woman sitting on a couch, arms uplifted, wearing a camo tank top, dog tags and jeans.

WG gives preliminary instructions about the virtual reality game:

- * It's a mirror universe: everyone and everything around you reflect back something about you.
- * Ask for help if you need it; someone will assist you.
- * When the game is about to end, everything slows down, turns yellow, then lights flash.
- * If you want to stop the game yourself at any point, say "end this" three times.

When asked what the virtual universe is called, WG hesitates, then seems to manufacture the name: EarthLife.

Fred then repeats a kind of incantation uttered by WG, declaring his intention to take on Latiqua's identity in the EarthLife universe. WG activates the game, and poof! in a flash of golden light, Fred turns into Latiqua, his golden glow transferring to her for a few moments before she becomes a normal person with no glow.

ROUND ONE: LIFE AS LATIQUA

Latiqua sits in her apartment next to her 8 y.o. daughter Lana whose hair she's braiding. After some initial awkwardness with the unfamiliar body/identity, Latiqua shakes it off and dives into the role. She's

a former soldier who walks with the same limp Fred had. She and Lana have a sweet, loving relationship.

After Lana goes to bed, Latiqua starts to feel sad and upset and wonders why. Doorbell rings: enter Eno, the sex- and self-interested married man she's been seeing. She keeps her distance, then ducks into the bathroom to figure out what to do. When she asks for help, a spider walks over to an open book displaying a message about letting her emotions and sensations guide her. She gets it, gives thanks. When she returns to Eno and tells him she'd like to be a committed couple, he deflects and shows his stripes. Upset, she returns to the bathroom to process on her own. She remembers the mirror rule and wonders how Eno could be a mirror of her when he clearly doesn't think she's relationship material? Baffled, she asks for help again. Suddenly the shower starts dripping. When she goes over to it, she notices her face in the shower caddy mirror and aha! realizes that Eno is just mirroring her own belief about herself! Shower stops dripping on its own. Now upbeat and confident, Latiqua returns and tells Eno she deserves a committed relationship. He makes lame excuses and exits. She's pleased at her new insight and gives thanks for the mirror of Eno.

But the insecurities resurface. Asleep in bed, Latiqua mumbles about how there are no good guys, nobody cares about her, etc. A text from Eno (he's "feeling her vibe") pings her awake. She turns to the bedroom mirror and sees Lana rush in, scared by a nightmare about how nobody likes her. Latiqua hugs her and tells her how loved she is. She plays a little game to help her put the bad thoughts out of her mind, which works like a charm (for both of them). The morning alarm comes on: Marvin Gaye's "How Sweet It Is To Be Loved By You." Lana and Latiqua hug and smile, feeling how sweet it is.

Now Latiqua is at the law firm where she works as a paralegal. Co-worker/good guy Larry clearly likes her, but she struggles to believe it. When he brings her roses, she's pleased but then slips into self-doubt. Right on cue, cocky Eno appears, asking Latiqua to lunch. Larry disappears, and Latiqua goes to lunch with Eno, ignoring a side eye from her caring coworker Nelly.

Eno puts out more b.s., and Latiqua has a sneezing fit. She then remembers about the mirrors, emotions and sensations and realizes the sneezing is guidance. She gets back in touch with her own worth and expresses it to Eno. A stranger appears out of nowhere, gives her a thumbs-up and lucky penny. Eno drifts away. Larry appears, walking towards her. She gives thanks for all the mirrors and guidance and happily spends the rest of lunch with Larry.

At home that evening, Latiqua happily makes dinner while Lana happily

plays with a dollhouse. But in comes a phone call from Latiqua's friend, Marla. When Marla hears about Larry, she worries he is a child molester only interested in Latiqua because she has a young daughter. The more Latiqua buys into the fear, the more things go wrong around her: she cuts herself, knocks veggies on the floor, pots on the stove boil over. Lana now angrily play-acts mean scenarios with the dollhouse figurines. And of course a slick text from Eno pings Latiqua's phone. Overwhelmed and confused, Latiqua asks what she should do. Lana walks in, holding a mirror, and asks the same question. Bird sounds are heard. Latiqua brings Lana outside to hear what the birds have to say. One seems to tell them to lose the idea that they're not good enough to be loved. When they realize this, the entire flock "applauds." They hug, feeling happy again.

Next day at work, Latiqua gets more roses and a lunch invitation from Larry. She's unsure what to do. Marla calls with more withering worries, and Latiqua succumbs to them, developing a headache and failing to reply to Larry about lunch. As she tries to focus on work, an email about child sex trafficking comes in. She slams the laptop shut and goes to the bathroom. Headache worsening, she steels herself, doesn't ask for help, doesn't notice the mirror in front of her or a spider trying to get her attention. She gets a call from Lana's school: Lana has gone unconscious. After a classmate called her a loser, she ran off and then fell from the monkey bars. An ambulance is taking her to the hospital. Extremely alarmed, Latiqua accepts Larry's offer of a ride there.

At the hospital, Lana is still unconscious. Latiqua is sent to the waiting room while they run tests. As time passes, Latiqua becomes more and more distraught and develops an even worse headache. When a doctor finally tells her Lana needs emergency brain surgery, Latiqua can't bear the news. Head hanging between her legs, she whispers, "End this, end this. Please, God, end this!" The color yellow starts to spread. Things slow down, including the doctor's voice, which is now muffled and distant. All turns yellow. Lights flash.

BACK WITH WISE GUIDE

Stunned and glowing gold again, Latiqua is back in the Wardrobe Room with WG. Behind her are many holographic characters including half-hidden reclining Fred Fernow whom she does not see. She says she feels worse than when she started even though EarthLife was supposed to help her find peace. WG tells her it takes time to learn the lessons of EarthLife and that there are multiple rounds to be played. WG notes that Latiqua started out remembering about the mirrors, asking for help and being guided by her emotions and sensations, but, once she plunged into fear, she forgot all the rules, went unconscious and the

rest was history.

Latiqua jumps up, worried, eager to go be with Lana after her surgery. WG gently breaks it to her that once a round of EarthLife ends, there's no going back to being that character in that life. Anguished, Latiqua begs to go back and breaks down at the thought that Lana no longer has a mother. WG empathizes, saying EarthLife is only a game, but it's easy to get attached. WG admires her great love for Lana and says that continues whether Latiqua is a character in the game or not. Latiqua asks if she'll ever see Lana again. Answer: no, not as Latiqua, but it's possible they'll play future rounds together. The key is to keep the love for her alive. When Latiqua asks how to help Lana if she can't go back, WG tells her to simply ask for help for Lana, the same way she asked for help for herself during the game.

Latiqua does this and gets a vision of Lana awake in a hospital bed, head bandaged, with Nelly holding her hand and Larry placing flowers by her bed. She sees pink-green energy moving from their hearts towards Lana. Latiqua is comforted but feels bad for thinking Larry might be a danger to Lana. WG shows her a way to seek forgiveness and release her guilt. She feels much better.

WG elicits info from Latiqua about what kind of character she'd like to play next: one without kids because she can't handle that heartache again; one who spends time on the ocean because she's always been drawn to it; and one who's good at noticing the mirrors and such during the game. Latiqua chooses Bernardo Reed, a 25 y.o. man in a swimsuit standing on a boulder. WG informs Latiqua that, because of her great capacity for love, she's stumbled upon another aspect of EarthLife. It's not only a mirror universe, it's also a magnet universe.

ROUND TWO: LIFE AS BERNARDO

Latiqua repeats WG's incantation to activate the next round. In a flash of golden light, she turns into Bernardo, her golden glow transferring to him for a few moments before he becomes a normal person with no glow. He stands on a rock in the ocean at sunset, shark fins circling. An overzealous grad student keen on saving coral reefs, Bernardo has once again gotten himself in a pickle by wandering off alone exploring the coral and not telling anybody his whereabouts. After waving and screaming to no avail, Bernardo prays for help. A small motorboat appears: the "Donato's Love", property of his recently deceased Grandpa, Donato. Bernardo's Mom, friend Simón and girlfriend Ludmila rescue him. Ludmila lovingly gives him a tongue lashing for worrying them.

Later at Mom's house, Bernardo wears a camo tank top and jeans and walks with the same limp as Fred and Latiqua. Mom gives the back story

of the boat rescue: she said a prayer when she heard Bernardo was missing. Cody the family dog started barking at a photo of Grandpa Donato that had fallen off the wall. This gave her the idea to go see if his old boat would still run. Thank God it did so they could rescue Bernardo. Bernardo asks Cody if it was Donato who knocked the photo down. Cody howls yes then runs and howls at another picture of Donato. An ocean lover, Donato arranged for his ashes to be placed inside an artificial coral reef recently installed in the Mano Mano Coral Nursery on the far side of the island. Bernardo's been meaning to get over there to take pictures for his Mom. He abruptly gets up to leave, rushing Ludmila along with him, because he has a lot of prep to do for a dive at the Ohana Coral Nursery the next day.

In the wee hours at the couple's place, Bernardo plows through coral-related prep, popping pills for a headache. Ludmila worries, urges him to go to bed. Irritated by her constant worrying and overreaching, he asks for help dealing with her. She walks over to a full-length mirror, and a fly appears which draws him over there as well. Observing himself and Ludmila in the mirror, he suddenly realizes that she's mirroring his worries about the coral and his over-the-top efforts to save them. He gives thanks, lets go of the coral mania (for the moment), and they kiss and embrace. Pink-green energy glows around their hearts. A gust of wind knocks coral-related charts and graphs to the floor, along with the magnets that were holding them up.

Next morning, the couple sleep cuddled with Bernardo's stuffed toy lion, Lana. Alarm comes on: "How Sweet It is". They smile, a fly lands on Bernardo's heart. He limps to the mirror and gives thanks.

Later that day, a marine biology professor, Bernardo, Simón and other students install coral fragments underwater at the Ohana Coral Nursery. The others make quick work of it. Blissed out, Bernardo takes his sweet time, greeting and playing with other sea life along the way and painstakingly and lovingly handling the coral. When he finally returns to the boat where the others have been waiting, he wants to go find more fragments they can install. Simón reminds him that Ludmila's planning to pick them up soon, so he agrees to call it a day and go back to the harbor.

Bernardo, Ludmila, Simón and his partner have dinner at a cheap takeout place. Ludmila excitedly shares about her social media successes, and the others cheer and toast her. A bellowing horn interrupts the party. A fishing boat that's done a lot of damage to the coral reefs is barreling into the nearby harbor. Bernardo freaks and wants to go give them a piece of his mind. Ludmila starts excessively worrying about him again, tells him not to go. When he asks for help, a seagull brings a piece

of broken mirror to him and then deposits it on Ludmila's lap. Bernardo gets the message, lets go of his coral angst, and the party celebrating Ludmila starts up again. She's doing a livestream tomorrow with an important guest, and Bernardo says he can't wait to tune in.

That night, Bernardo shares research with Ludmila that the electromagnetism of the heart is the strongest of all, sixty times greater than the brain's. He refers to the mirrors and magnets in the game they're playing, but she has no idea what he's talking about. She just gushes love for him, and their hearts' magnetic energy for one another glows brightly.

Next morning, as they sleep cuddled with Lana the lion, a text pings Bernardo's watch. It's an alert about an oil spill near Mano Mano Coral Nursery with a request for staff to report immediately but for students to stand by. Bernardo freaks, starts getting ready to go and cuts his foot on a broken magnet on the floor. He is hellbent on going even though it's far away and he's been told to stand by. When Ludmila questions whether he should dive with a fresh cut because of the danger of sharks, Bernardo snaps at her. When the "How Sweet It Is" alarm comes on, he angrily flings the watch, accuses her of not caring about the coral and storms out.

That evening, sad, contrite Bernardo returns, effusively apologizing to Ludmila for missing her livestream and for being such a fool. He tells her she was right about sharks: when he dove in at the Mano Mano Nursery, his cut attracted sharks, which meant all the divers had to get out of the water, and very little coral was saved. And the new manmade reef with Grandpa Donato's ashes was probably ruined too. When the professor found out Bernardo was diving with an open wound, he kicked him off Dive Crew for violating protocols. Ludmila compassionately holds and forgives Bernardo, says she knows what it's like to make a mistake, and they fall asleep in one another's arms.

The "How Sweet It Is" alarm comes on in the morning, and the couple feel the sweetness again. Bernardo waxes on about how he loves the coral and gets an idea to take her to the Ohana Nursery early before the Dive Crew gets there, to show her how wonderful it is. Doubtful at first, Ludmila agrees to go after Bernardo explains that he's not trying to rebel or be a rescue hero and that sharks aren't usually in the Ohana Nursery area. There are no full scuba tanks for them to use, but two have enough oxygen for a quick dive. So off they go, feeling happy.

They take the Donato's Love out, gear up and fall into the water. Swimming down towards the coral nursery, Bernardo dances and plays with the sea life, and Ludmila follows suit. Suddenly she's caught on a piece

of net attached to a rock. After unsuccessfully trying to pull it off, Bernardo pulls a knife off his belt and cuts it, freeing Ludmila. As they continue down to the nursery area, the knife slips off his belt and floats away, unbeknownst to them. They discover a huge heavy fishing net covering the table where the coral fragments are. They try to remove it but can't, instead becoming hopelessly entangled in it. Bernardo reaches for his knife which they soon realize is gone. The scuba tank gauges read "empty", and things start to turn yellow. They relax and hug. Bernardo makes prayer hands. A glowing image of Grandpa Donato appears, smiling down on them from above, pink-green energy surging forth from him out to the entire sea. All is now yellow. Lights flash.

BACK WITH WISE GUIDE

Bernardo lands back in the Wardrobe Room, stunned and glowing gold. The customary crew of holographic figures pose behind him, including half-hidden reclining Fred Fernow whom he does not see. Bernardo wonders what happened to Ludmila. When he tunes into his heart, he gets a vision of her emerging all aglow from a serene lake and being greeted by other glowing people in an ancient, ethereal realm. WG explains that she's entered a different game universe, "AstralLife", but will be back to play another round of EarthLife at some point. Bernardo's heart stirs at the prospect of seeing her again. He feels good about his last round even though he was still young when it ended. He was in the place he loved best with his beloved Ludmila, Grandpa Donato and the coral. He felt fine because he knew there would be other rounds. WG applauds his progress and invites him to play one more round. It would be with the knowledge that EarthLife is not only a mirror and magnet universe, but also a mesh universe, meaning that characters are not separate beings but part of a unified whole, a single mesh, which allows them to perceive and act much more expansively. Straining to even remember the name of his original self (Fred), Bernardo agrees to play a new round and identifies three wishes: 1) to feel deep love again, as he did for daughter Lana, for Ludmila and for the coral; 2) to do peacemaking work and have a positive impact while in EarthLife; and 3) to get advice from WG while he's active in the game. WG approves, except that WG will only communicate during the game if it doesn't undermine the learning purposes of EarthLife. Bernardo prays for Lana, Ludmila and the coral before starting the next round because he knows he'll forget about them once he's in the next identity. He chooses his next character: Lee-Doa X, a 30 y.o. androgynous person in an overcoat, seated and learning forward.

ROUND THREE: LIFE AS LEE-DOA X

The magic happens again: incantation, flash of light, Bernardo transfers the golden glow to Lee-Doa who then turns into a normal person

with no glow. Lee-Doa sits in a compartment of a moving train across from Palameh, a 40 y.o. woman who urgently explains the dire situation of her people, the Kandas. The High Command is hunting them down, kidnapping, torturing and killing them. She is part of an underground movement to get Kandas to safety and end the violence. They want Lee-Doa, who is half Kanda, to infiltrate the High Command and either change their hearts and minds or eliminate them if necessary. Lee-Doa agrees to the mission and accepts two ID's from Palameh: a true one showing Lee-Doa's Kanda ancestry, which may result in death if the High Command sees it, and a fake ID for Banki Goji, the High Command officer Lee-Doa will impersonate. Palameh gives Lee-Doa a duffel with officer's uniform and profile and other basics. The train stops, they hug, Palameh rushes out.

Lee-Doa prays for help, then exits. Walking with the familiar limp, Lee-Doa heads toward a parking lot next to the station, but a scary dog appears out of nowhere and chases Lee-Doa from the parking lot into a wooded area. Once Lee-Doa is hidden in the woods, the dog casually trots off. High Command officers then burst out of a van parked in the lot and go terrorize an old man rickshaw driver. When they see his Kanda ID, they drag him to the van and roar off. Meanwhile, another man in the parking lot, 45 y.o. pedicab driver Damle sneaks into the woods not far from where Lee-Doa is.

Shocked, Lee-Doa prays for the rickshaw man and gives thanks for the dog that chased him to safety. Now angry, Lee-Doa struggles to understand what these various people are mirroring back. A small mesh bag falls from the duffel. It contains a tiny mirror, heart-shaped magnet and piece of coral. Connecting the mesh bag with the mesh of oneness, the realization hits Lee-Doa that maybe this whole situation reflects the conflicting parts within Lee-Doa, some angry and violent, others peace-loving and compassionate. Lee-Doa asks Wise Guide for a consult. A faint violet light flashes, and WG's voice confirms that EarthLife is a theater of the self, it shows the self in all its aspects. Awestruck, Lee-Doa puts on the officer's uniform (over a camo tank top), including holster and gun and starts memorizing the profile. Suddenly Damle appears, frightened at the sight of the High Command officer. Lee-Doa tells Damle not to be afraid and asks for his ID. Damle claims it's in the pedicab, so they walk to the parking lot where Damle then bolts. Lee-Doa chases him down and says it's obvious he's a Kanda, and that's ok. Lee-Doa gets in the pedicab and tells Damle to pedal to his home, pointing the gun at him when he hesitates.

They ride in the pedicab past scenes of High Command violence against Kanda people. When they get to Damle's shack, four Kanda rebels rush out and drag Lee-Doa inside. Damle's mother, 75 y.o. Aleha, is in charge and inspects the two ID's found on Lee-Doa, skeptical that Lee-Doa

is actually half Kanda and impersonating an officer to help the Kandas. She checks the backs of Lee-Doa's shoulders for a rebel tattoo that true Kanda freedom fighters always have and which means certain death if seen by the High Command. Finding none, she remains skeptical and says that if Lee-Doa is speaking the truth, the rebels can put the tattoo on right now. Lee-Doa has no fear of death and agrees to be tattooed. The rebels do the tattoo, then Damle discovers the Banki Goji profile and confirms that Lee-Doa is telling the truth. They honor and embrace Lee-Doa and vow to help with the important mission.

The Kandas help Lee-Doa devise and execute a plan. Damle drops off Lee-Doa at the site of the annual National Pageant which happens in two days. High Command battalions from all over are gathering for speeches and fanfare so a good place for Lee-Doa to blend in as Officer Banki Goji. Lee-Doa nervously approaches the checkpoint, dressed as Banki Goji but is denied admission because Banki's name is not on the list. They won't accept just the ID. So Lee-Doa sends out a prayer to the one all-powerful mesh for the highest good of all. Wind gusts blow away the registration lists at the checkpoint, and a loudspeaker voice announces that ID's will now be accepted for admission. Amazed, Lee-Doa is admitted as Banki, a member of the Rifle Squad.

Lee-Doa goes to the assigned barracks and meets Ara-Lee Meej, a friendly, attractive 25 y.o. woman assigned to the same bunk. They hit it off instantly and decide to go eat at a restaurant in town. Lee-Doa changes into civilian clothes (including a shirt with ocean pattern), careful to hide the Kanda tattoo from Ara-Lee. Alone for a few minutes, Lee-Doa checks in with Wise Guide. Is it true that Ara-Lee, the Kandas, the High Command, Lee-Doa, Banki Goji are all just conflicting parts of the one self and that it's possible to make peace with them all and love them all? Flash of violet light and an affirmative from WG who reiterates that EarthLife is the self in all its aspects and adds that it's also love in all its forms.

Lee-Doa and Ara-Lee share open-heartedly at dinner. Both feel like they already know each other even though they just met. Ara-Lee confesses she would like to leave the High Command and put on kids' parties instead. She figures Lee-Doa is probably down for life in the High Command since most sharpshooters are. Lee-Doa would prefer to do some kind of work with the ocean. On their way back to the barracks, they witness High Command officers violently rounding up a Kanda woman and her small kids. Both are stunned, and they return in silence.

As they go to bed, Lee-Doa in the upper bunk, Ara-Lee in the lower, Ara-Lee says she wishes Lee-Doa had had a gun. Lee-Doa agrees, thinking of protecting the woman and kids, but Ara-Lee adds "filthy Kandas!" Tense and angry, Lee-Doa remains silent and tries to tune into the

mirror/magnet/mesh level. When Ara-Lee cheerfully asks to hang out together the next day, Lee-Doa agrees.

Next day a nervous Lee-Doa reports for target practice with the Rifle Squad. They first shoot at stationary targets like tin cans, then at animals released from cages. Colleague Lonnie goes first and grazes a rabbit which then has a limp. Upset, with pink-green heart energy surging, Lee-Doa silently prays for the welfare of the animals as a bird is released next. The action on Lonnie's rifle jams and won't fire. Grateful, Lee-Doa suppresses a smile but then is called up next. Pink-green heart energy abounds as Lee-Doa steps up and the next rabbit is released. Storm clouds roll in, thunder claps, and a dog in High Command harness charges over and starts chasing the rabbit. Lee-Doa holds fire. The frustrated Sergeant yells to canine officers to come get the dog. Lightning strikes, a torrential downpour begins, Sergeant calls off target practice, everyone runs off, and the canine officers keep chasing the dog around in circles.

That night Lee-Doa and Ara-Lee are happily back at the restaurant. Ara-Lee, who witnessed some of target practice, confesses she was glad the animals were spared. Lee-Doa agrees and admits to praying they wouldn't get hurt. Lee-Doa asks why she hates the Kandas. She replies that they steal, hurt and kill people. Lee-Doa reveals feeling hatred for the High Command and the desire to shoot them last night, not the Kanda mom and kids. Confused, Ara-Lee reaches out to touch Lee-Doa. When Lee-Doa tells her they are mirrors of each other, she doesn't get it, so instead Lee-Doa explains that this is all a process of discovering the places in Lee-Doa's heart where hatred still exists. They touch and look at one another lovingly. Rifle Squad member Lonnie appears at the table and excitedly anticipates the National Pageant the next day saying, "the Kandas won't know what hit 'em!" Lee-Doa worries.

Back at the barracks, Lee-Doa gets in bed with Ara-Lee (at her request) and asks her what Lonnie meant. She says three Kanda prisoners will be killed by the Rifle Squad. Lee-Doa's heart sinks. After Ara-Lee falls asleep Lee-Doa seeks Wise Guide's input. Violet light flashes. Lee-Doa wants to end the round now. Does WG agree? No response after repeated attempts. Lee-Doa remembers that WG will not respond if it undermines the learning purposes of EarthLife. Resigned to continue, Lee-Doa asks for help to make it through the day tomorrow.

Ara-Lee awakens first. Still sleeping, Lee-Doa mumble-sings "How Sweet It Is" then awakens and shares a dream in which a beautiful spirit was swimming and saying I love you, Bernard. They hug and whisper intimately. When Lee-Doa moves to get out of bed, Ara-Lee suddenly sees the Kanda tattoo. Lee-Doa reveals their true identity. When Ara-Lee

asks if Lee-Doa has come to assassinate the president, Lee-Doa says no, "I'm here to have compassion, to change myself, to make peace." Total respect from Ara-Lee; their heart energy for one another surges. Closer than ever, they rise to put on their dress uniforms and face the day.

On the way to the large exhibition field where the pageant is held, Lee-Doa and Ara-Lee notice a High Command officer delivering three Kanda prisoners at the gateway. With prayers for the highest good, Lee-Doa senses an opportunity and intervenes, telling the officer that Lee-Doa is on Rifle Squad and will take over custody of the prisoners. When the officer hesitates, Ara-Lee steps in with distracting comments, and the officer gives up and drives off. Ara-Lee sees her battalion's van parked near the field, and they decide to use it to help the prisoners escape. Ara-Lee drives the van to an out-of-the-way spot where Lee-Doa has brought the prisoners. The prisoners hide in back while Ara-Lee drives them past the checkpoint and on to Aleha's house.

Relieved, Lee-Doa reports to the firing squad area, and the National Pageant begins. After a procession and speeches, it's time for the Kanda prisoners to be brought out to face the firing squad. When the staff sergeant in charge of them reveals that the holding cells are empty, Sergeant says staff sergeant must pay with his life instead. Summoning courage and uttering prayers, Lee-Doa steps forward and reveals that Lee-Doa allowed the prisoners to escape, not the staff sergeant. Sergeant orders Banki Goji (Lee-Doa) to step before the firing squad instead. On the way there, Lee-Doa shouts out their true identity, then tears off the uniform shirt, exposing the Kanda tattoo for all to see. Gasps all around. Sergeant asks if Lee-Doa has any final words as storm clouds roll in and thunder booms in the distance. With prayers to the one mesh for help, images of Donato and Ludmila appear in the sky. Lee-Doa expresses deep love and understanding for everyone and oneness with all. Pink-green energy bursts forth from Lee-Doa's heart out into the field. As the storm nears and just as Sergeant gives the order to fire, a huge lightning bolt strikes Lee-Doa in the heart amplifying the magnetic love energy in a dazzling way and lighting up the entire sky. Then things slow down, become muffled, turn yellow until only yellow is visible. Then lights flash.

BACK WITH WISE GUIDE

Glowing gold, magnetic energy still pulsating from the heart, a blissful Lee-Doa is back in the Wardrobe Room with WG. Usual cast of holographic characters behind including half-hidden reclining Fred Fernow whom Lee-Doa doesn't see. Overcome with emotion and awe, Lee-Doa reverently bows, touching forehead to floor and gushes thanks to WG, praising amazing EarthLife. WG compliments Lee-Doa on such excellent play and

on the wisdom of seeking help and accepting it. Lee-Doa now realizes that it was Grandpa Donato and Ludmila who appeared during those last moments. While in the identity of Lee-Doa they were unrecognized, but Lee-Doa knew they were helpful, loving beings. WG says they are always there to help no matter which round or which identity Lee-Doa may be in. The discarnate are just as much a part of the mesh as everyone else; it just takes many rounds of EarthLife to realize it. WG then says the next round will be easy because they already know which character Lee-Doa will be playing. Confused, Lee-Doa thinks the game is ending and it's back to the "real self", Fred. WG deflects with an elliptical comment. When Lee-Doa gushes more about how amazing EarthLife is, WG remarks that actually Lee-Doa has merely scratched the surface of EarthLife (setting the stage for more adventures in the EarthLife universe). WG encourages Lee-Doa to direct heart energy towards Fred in preparation for the transition. Lee-Doa first prays (for the Kandas, High Command, Ara-Lee, Lana, Ludmila and the coral) then tunes into Fred. All the other holographic characters behind Lee-Doa vanish a few at a time, leaving only reclining Fred Fernow. Lee-Doa then repeats the usual incantation, which includes language about assuming Fred's identity in the EarthLife universe. Shocked at those words, Lee-Doa cries out, but WG has already activated the next round....

BACK TO LIFE AS FRED

Lee-Doa turns into Fred who glows gold momentarily. Eyes closed, Fred lies with a balled up blanket under his head, on a dusty street corner back in the wildfire-damaged neighborhood. Media crews, first responders and residents still mill around. Fred wears khakis and the same baseball cap and shirt with "Fred's Parts" insignia. EMT L. Donato, a 45 y.o. woman, crouches near him and in a caring voice whispers to another EMT, 27 y.o. man Ludwig Sweet, that Fred lost everything in the fires and also had cancer and a divorce recently, that he was being interviewed by the news and then suffered a loss of consciousness. Ludwig jots notes. L. Donato then warms the end of a stethoscope on her heart and places it on Fred's, after unbuttoning his outer shirt, revealing a camo tank top underneath. His eyelids flutter, and he forces a small smile. L. Donato smiles sweetly and asks if he knows where he is. Dazed and confused, Fred shrugs. Then she asks if he knows his name. He notices the name tag on her scrubs, L. Donato, EMT, looks at it as though trying to place a familiar name and says, "Donato?" She sweetly laughs and tells him that's her name; she's asking him his. His eyes fall on the shiny end piece of the stethoscope where he sees his face reflected. He lights up and announces, "I'm Fred, Fred Fernow!"

L. Donato smiles and helps him into a seated position. He smiles when someone hands him a plate of apple slices and water. And again when

a dog licks his face and when a bird drops a shiny penny beside him. Then, as the two EMT's help him to his feet, an object falls from his pants pocket: the familiar small mesh bag. L. Donato smiles and hands it to him. Curious but not recognizing it, he loosens the gathered top, glances down into the open mesh bag, looks up, smiles brightly and says, "I wonder what's inside!?"

Pink-green energy encircles him and then spreads across the entire screen touching, penetrating and connecting everyone and everything. Then all the images dissolve into it, leaving only the beautiful, glowing, pulsating heart energy.

End credits roll, and the song "How Sweet It Is To Be Loved By You" plays (signaling perhaps our collective wake-up call).