



The Ships of Earth

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Forty million years ago colonists landed on a planet they called Harmony. Determined that this new home would never be ravaged by war as Earth had been, they installed a massive computer whose task was to influence subtly the minds of her people. Any technology that might have led to large scale destruction was blocked. Yet lately the Oversoul has begun to falter in her task, and General Moozh has captured the capitol city of Basilica.

Nafai and his family managed to escape to the desert, taking with them a seed bank which contains genetic models of many old species from Earth. In addition, a few extra members have been included— enough to make eight couples, though some have not yet even met the person they are expected to marry.

Many changes take place as the group travels slowly through the desert. Marriages are celebrated; children are born and become adolescents. Laws and customs must be changed to insure survival in the harsh environment. As always, human nature asserts itself. Power struggles emerge between members of the group; factions develop as the Oversoul leads the small tribe to the promised land— Vusadka, the place of disembarkation, where humans first set foot on Harmony. Vusadka is where the worker robots wait to be awakened from their sleep, and where the starships wait to be refitted for the journey back to ancient Earth.

In this continuing story, Card not only creates an imaginative world, but he peoples it with truly human characters whose lives reflect human struggles, human questions, human values and ethics.

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