

THE ARC.

Our last hope is beyond us.

Written by

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EXT. OUTER SPACE NEAR THE SPACECRAFT - NIGHT

JAMES (32) opens his eyes disoriented, his breathing agitated, his body spinning slowly. The alarms on his helmet red. Ahead, the strap holding him stuck in the solar panel.

A.I.

James, you suffered a concussion.

James reaches out to grab the strap, but fails to grasp it.

JAMES

Damn it!

The electrical panel explodes. James is propelled backwards, stops when the strap is fully tensioned, but a second explosion makes the cover of the panel to be ejected straight at James, hitting him in the abdomen, cutting the strap and pushing him into the void.

JAMES

Oh shit, oh no, no, no. Please, no!

James spins uncontrollably on his axis, moving farther and farther away from the spacecraft.

A.I.

James, you are consuming too much oxygen, I recommend pausing your breathing.

Moving out of control, James closes his eyes for a moment.

JAMES

(nervous whispering)

1... 2... 3... 4... 5!

James opens his eyes and presses the thrusters button, hard. The thrusters activate and gradually stop James' uncontrolled spinning, he comes to a complete stop.

A.I.

Oxygen levels at 30%.

James blinks multiple times to get the dizziness out of his eyes. He looks through his helmet in search of the spacecraft, but all he can see is deep space.

JAMES

I can't see the ship.

A.I.
I estimate that the ship is at a
distance of 100 meters and
increasing.

JAMES
(breathing heavily)
Increasing!? Can we go back?

A.I.
It is not possible at this time to
return to the ship with the
remaining thrusters.

A beep is heard inside the helmet, small portions of a gas
are released.

JAMES
What are you doing!?

A.I.
I administered a mild sedative to
manage oxygen consumption..

James begins to calm down.

JAMES
I understand, thank you.

A.I.
I remind you that the ship has been
left in manual mode, not returning
means the failure of the mission.

JAMES
We'll get back.

A.I.
Are you sure? Your vital signs...

JAMES
(in pain)
Don't worry about it.

A.I.
Okay, in approximately 2 hours the
spacecraft's orbit will be close
enough to our position to attempt a
return.

James raises his arm and looks at the panel monitoring his
vital signs, indicators are yellow. The light from the panel
causes James' face to be reflected in the helmet glass.

(Flashback)

INT. YOUNG JAMES' ROOM - DAY

James (12) wakes up shaken, sweaty, his body trembles. Hurriedly, he gets out of bed and sits at the desk, grabs a paper and starts writing.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JAMES' PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY.

James runs out the door, still wearing his pajamas. PAULA (37), James' mother, comes out after him.

PAULA

James, wait, where are you going?

James continues to run down the middle of the street, getting farther and farther away from the house.

PSYCHOLOGIST

(V.O.)

Why do you think you did it?

JAMES

(V.O.)

That dream, I've never had a dream like that before.

Each step he takes carries more force forward...

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. ATHLETIC TRACK AT NASA - DAY

James (18) runs concentrated, the rest of the contenders are all further down the track.

PSYCHOLOGIST

(V.O.)

Why do you think this memory is so important to you?

James closes in on the rest of the competitors...

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. ATHLETIC TRACK AT NASA - DAY

It's raining, James (25) continues to close in on the competitors, he manages to pass three of them.

JAMES

(V.O.)

It was the first time I realized...

PSYCHOLOGIST
(V.O.)
What?

James approaches the next competitor.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. ATHLETIC TRACK AT NASA - DAY

James (32) manages to pass the next competitor, pushing himself even harder.

JAMES
(V.O.)
That I was going to die.

James passes two contenders before crossing the finish line.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The psychologist writes something down on his notebook.

PSYCHOLOGIST
That night, it was the night your
father...

JAMES
Why are we doing this?

PSYCHOLOGIST
The agency needs to know if you are
ready for the mission.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIEFING ROOM AT NASA - DAY

James (33) seated next to SARA (35) and PATRICK (36). Ahead, General Mackenson makes a presentation.

GENERAL MACKENSON
The mission is simple, get close
enough to plant a bomb on this
structurally weak point and escape
as quickly as possible.

James looks at the chart on the screen next to the General.

GENERAL MACKENSON

James. I understand your piloting effectiveness is even higher than that of the A.I. we tested. I don't need to remind you how important your performance will be.

James stares at the General, does not reply.

GENERAL MACKENSON

So, do you accept the mission?

CUT TO:

EXT. BARBECUE IN THE BACKYARD OF JAMES'S HOUSE - DAY

SOPHIA (29), James' wife, pregnant and angry, looks at James in the middle of the barbecue and all the guests.

SOPHIA

You can't do this! I need you here!

JAMES

Honey, please...

Sophia leaves James and walks angrily inside the house. James sits down, sighs deeply and takes a swig of his beer. Paula (58) sits next to James.

PAULA

Try to understand her.

JAMES

I do, Mom.

PAULA

Maybe you can write her one of those beautiful poems you used to write.

JAMES

I don't write them anymore.

James takes another sip of the beer.

PAULA

I know, since that day... was it because of your father?

James takes the last sip of beer and leaves it on the table.

JAMES

I just felt I had to do something.

PAULA
Is that what that poem is about?

James gets up, looks to the house, Sophia is at the window.

PAULA
Go to her, you don't want to leave
like that.

JAMES
Thanks, Mom.

James gives Paula a kiss on the cheek, then walks to the house, where he...

INT. JAMES' HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

... finds Sophia eating a piece of cake.

JAMES
That looks good.

PAULA
I think the baby likes it.

Sophia grabs her belly and caresses herself. James comes over and hugs Sophia, kisses her on the forehead.

PAULA
(sobbing)
Why...

JAMES
I' m coming back, Sophia.

James hugs Sophia again, as he does so, he looks out the window to the sky, the asteroid engulfed in flames can be seen approaching the Earth from afar.

(BACK TO PRESENT)

EXT. DEEP SPACE - NIGHT

The graphs on James' helmet light up, two parallel lines pointing towards infinity and straightening out each time.

A.I.
James, please wake up, the ship is
approaching the optimal point.

James opens his eyes, noticing that he is still floating in space, he moves as if he is falling, but quickly stops.

A.I.
You have to control your breathing,
James. The oxygen level has dropped
considerably.

JAMES
I understand.

A.I.
Are you ready? your vital signs...

JAMES
(interrupting)
Let's review the plan once more.

A.I.
Okay, we'll use the thrusters to
approach. Once used, we will have
nothing but your strength to get
aboard the ship.

James moves his limbs in preparation, but, as he does so, he
feels a deep pain in his abdomen.

A.I.
James?

JAMES
(hurt)
I' m fine...

A.I.
Are you ready?

James looks at the parallel lines on the helmet glass, the
lines are getting straighter and straighter.

(FLASHBACK)

INT. CABIN OF THE SPACECRAFT - NIGHT

James presses buttons on the ship's dashboard.

SARA
Are you ready?

James nods and grabs the main joystick.

OLDER A.I.
Manual mode enabled.

James moves the joystick, propelling the ship in the
direction of the giant asteroid, seen through the window.

SARA
It's so big, will this really work?

PATRICK
(from a back seat)
Leave it to me.

JAMES
Okay, let's get into the trail.

The spacecraft accelerates and moves even closer to the asteroid, approaching the trail of debris it leaves behind.

JAMES
Here we go.

The ship enters the trail of the asteroid, chunks of frozen rock move at high speed towards the ship, James makes precise movements to evade the debris.

PATRICK
(nervous)
Remember, I need at least 3 seconds
to aim for the rift.

JAMES
I don't know if we can hold out
that long.

PATRICK
We have to!

JAMES
God dammit!

James struggles to evade the debris, the ship moves from side to side. The objective on Patrick's screen fails to catch the target.

SARA
Come on Patrick! Do it!

PATRICK
I can't! It moves too much!

Sara turns her gaze to James, who tries a new move. The ship evades a large chunk of rock, ahead the path looks clear.

JAMES
Now!

Patrick takes aim at the rift, manages to lock the target.

PATRICK
1, 2, 3... go!

The nuclear scavenging missile shoots out straight into the asteroid, however, a chunk of rock hits the side of the ship, knocking the three astronauts to the ground.

OLDER A.I.
Critical damage to aircraft
fuselage, integrity compromised.

James gets up with alarms and red lights on the panel.

JAMES
Are you all right!?

SARA
(getting up)
Yes!

Patrick nods from the floor, James helps him up.

JAMES
Get to the escape pod, now!

A new blow shakes the ship, James holds onto the command chair. Sara and Patrick move to the exit, James follows to the next compartment. He looks back and notices small pieces of rock hit the glass of the main cabin, the glass cracks and shatters. James jumps towards the separation hatch and closes it just before being sucked into the vacuum of space. Sara and Patrick look frightened at James.

JAMES
Keep moving forward!

Sara and Patrick move to the next compartment, James follows. Fire moves through the walls. James reaches the...

INT. SHIP'S ESCAPE POD COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

... next compartment, closes the hatch, but fire breaks through the edges. James rushes forward, where Sara is activating the escape pod, Patrick is the first one to go in. James reaches Sara.

JAMES
Go!

Sara and James climb into the pod, the fire collapses the hatch and ferociously enters the escape compartment. James presses the eject button and the escape pod is ejected into space, quickly leaving the spacecraft behind.

SARA
How long before the explosion!?

An intense flash of light illuminates the space around the escape pod, a strong vibration follows. James and the others look out of the pod window, the asteroid has not suffered much damage. Patrick slumps back in his seat, defeated.

PATRICK
Failed...

SARA
What do we do now?

Patrick does not reply.

SARA
James?

James sighs and moves away from the window.

JAMES
We go home.

James returns his gaze to the window and outer space.

(BACK TO PRESENT)

EXT. DEEP SPACE - NIGHT

The parallel lines on James' helmet finally line up.

A.I.
Now, James.

James presses the trigger, the thrusters propel him forward at high speed. They shut down in mid-flight.

A.I.
Thrusters depleted.

JAMES
Now it's up to us!

A.I.
The oxygen level has dropped to 5%,
James, are you sure you...

JAMES
Trust me!

James is hurtling through space at high speed, finally able to see the spacecraft, getting closer and closer.

JAMES
We're going home!

James gets closer and closer to the spacecraft, reaching it and hitting the side of it with his body. Because of the force of the impact, James spurts blood from his mouth and rolls along the fuselage.

JAMES
C'mon!

James reaches out and manages to grab hold of a pipe, stopping his movement. He is breathing heavily.

A.I.
Oxygen level at 2%, James.

JAMES
We are not done yet.

James can see the entrance to the ship near his position.

(FLASHBACK)

INT. ESCAPE POD - NIGHT

James looks at the Earth from the window of the escape pod.

SARA
A dream?

JAMES
(nodding)
When I was a kid.

Patrick stands from his seat.

PATRICK
And you want us to risk our lives
for a dream?

JAMES
No, that's not what I'm saying.

SARA
(at Patrick)
We can't stay here.

PATRICK
The fuselage of the pod is damaged,
we don't even know if it will
hold...

JAMES
Listen, Patrick. My newborn son is
waiting for me. I have to get back.

Patrick sits back down, annoyed.

SARA
So, we're really doing this.

JAMES
We have to.

James presses keys on the pod panel.

SARA
What did you see... in your dream?

JAMES
The end.

(BACK TO PRESENT)

EXT. SPACE OUTSIDE THE SPACECRAFT - NIGHT

James holds on to the fuselage tube. He reaches out and
grabs an edge, propels himself forward, grabs a new tube and
finds himself in front of the entrance of the ship.

A.I.
Oxygen levels at 0%, James.

James breaths all the air he has left inside his helmet,
holds his breath and lunges for the hatch.

(FLASHBACK)

INT. ESCAPE POD - DAY

The pod pierces the atmosphere engulfed in flames as seen
from the window, the interior vibrates with force.

JAMES
Hold on!

Pieces of the fuselage break loose, steam escapes from the
tubes, the pod falls free in the air. Ahead, out the window,
the pod is heading straight for a wooded area.

JAMES
Prepare for impact!

The pod hovers, but continues to move towards the line of
trees, hitting them directly.

The trees are torn apart as the pod passes by, however, ahead, a rocky mound approaches.

JAMES

Damn it!

The pod hits the rocks and breaks in two, Patrick is ejected out along with the destroyed pieces.

SARA

Patrick!!

The pod hits another line of trees before coming to a screeching halt.

(BACK TO PRESENT)

EXT. SPACE NEAR THE SPACECRAFT - NIGHT

James' momentum carries him to the entrance, reaching it but failing to hold on. Making a last effort, he grabs the handle with his foot, leaning back against the entrance, hitting his head.

(FLASHBACK)

EXT. MILITARY AIRPORT - DAY

The door of the jet opens and James, with his right arm broken and in a cast, climbs down the stairs. A group of reporters take pictures of him. James ignores them and gets to the ground. Sophia is waiting for him, carrying her young son James Jr. in her arms. James reaches Sophia.

JAMES

I told you I'd be back.

Sophia, with tears in her eyes, smiles at James. They hug.

(BACK TO PRESENT)

EXT. ENTRANCE TO THE SPACECRAFT - NIGHT

James hangs with his foot on the handle.

A.I.

James, James!

James comes to his senses, begins to choke from lack of air and struggles to grasp the handle with his hands. Succeeding, he releases his foot and turns the handle, the entrance opens...

INT. SPACECRAFT INTERIOR COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

...And James darts inside. The hatch closes and the lights in the compartment turn on.

A.I.

Oxygen and gravity activated.

James removes his helmet and takes in the air coming out of the ship's vents, breathing in relief.

A.I.

Welcome to the Arc, James.

(FLASHBACK)

INT. SUBTERRANEAN MILITARY FACILITY - DAY

James, General Mackenson and a Scientist get off the elevator...

JAMES

The Arc?

GENERAL MACKENSON

We can't save the planet, nor ourselves. But we can still preserve life.

James sees a pile of crates with supplies and machinery being loaded on rails into a giant spaceship.

SCIENTIST

Inside the spacecraft is the genetic material of all living species known to us, as well as the DNA of most of the human beings alive.

James, General Mackenson and the scientist walk closer to the ship.

SCIENTIST

Our estimations indicate that it will take at least 100 cycles to reach the nearest habitable planet.

JAMES

Cycles?

GENERAL MACKENSON

Human lives, James.

James stops.

JAMES
I don't understand, who is going to
pilot the ship?

General Mackenson stares at James.

(BACK TO PRESENT)

INT. THE ARC - NIGHT

James struggles to a side panel that has the lid open.

A.I.
James, your vitals...

JAMES
Give me a second.

James reaches inside the panel and pulls a lever, the lights
on the main panel of the ship activate.

A.I.
Automatic mode reactivated. Mission
accomplished.

JAMES
Good. Test the solar panels,
please.

James sits on the floor and struggles out of his spacesuit.

A.I.
Solar panels running smoothly.

James removes his spacesuit, a long bleeding wound is
visible on his exposed abdomen.

JAMES
(standing)
I'm glad to hear it.

James walks over to a scanner-like machine.

A.I.
James, do you think it's time to...

JAMES
Yes... activate resuscitation
protocol, please.

A.I.
All right. Resuscitation protocol
activated for James number 37.

Lights turn on in the rear space, illuminating a long row filled with cryostasis stations on both sides. Inside each of the stations is a hibernating James.

James get inside the scanner-like machine. His skin pale.

A.I.

Is there anything else I can do for you, James?

JAMES

Yes, activate the farewell sequence.

A.I.

Agreed. Goodbye, James.

James nods and closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE JAMES' PARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

The car stops. James gets out and goes to the passenger side, opens the door and receives James Jr. from Sophia's arms. The three of them pause outside the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF JAMES' PARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

James, holding James Jr. in his arms, and Sophia arrive, Paula stands by the fireplace, holding a piece of paper in her hands. James hugs and kisses Paula on the cheek.

JAMES

Hi, mom.

PAULA

James, Sophia... and this little sweetheart.

Paula kisses James Jr. Sophia notices the paper Paula holds.

SOPHIA

Is that what I think it is?

Paula nods.

SOPHIA

(at James)

Can you read it for us?

James stares at Sophia, doesn't answer. Paula comes to James and takes James Jr. from his arms, gives him the paper.

PAULA

I think is time, James. It's okay.

Paula caresses James's arm. Then, she and Sophia sit down in the sofa near the fireplace. James stands in front of them, holding the paper. Suddenly, the sound of a heavy impact is heard in the distance. The shock wave shakes the walls.

PAULA

Go on, James.

James looks at Sophia, who nods. He starts reading.

JAMES

I was a child when God spoke to me,
He told me that I was going to die,
I remember it was in the morning, I
hoped it was a lie. But he said,
don't you worry, because the end is
a miracle, like the taste of honey,
if you share it, it tastes nice.

A new tremor interrupts James, but he keeps going.

JAMES

I was young when God spoke to me,
it was the middle of the day. He
told me He was a lie, then fire
came from the sky. Should I even
try? Fear took my life, I
remembered, I'm going to die. Not
before giving my heart to survive.
And a hundred angels walked with
me, and the clamour of the
trumpets gave us strength, To push
forward against the end, once
again.

James stops. He comes near Paula and Sophia, hugs them both and starts crying.

JAMES

I was a man when God spoke to me,
it was the middle of the night. And
the taste of honey, was the
sweetest goodbye.

James, Paula and Sophia hold each other and the baby as the tremors get stronger and stronger.

FADE TO BLACK.