

"MISSION TO MARS"

Screenplay by

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Story by

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SHOOTING DRAFT

FADE IN:

EXT. LATE AFTERNOON SKY

rays of
Blue sky, a few puffs of cloud, pierced by slanting
sunlight. Late afternoon on a perfect day.

SUPER TITLE: "HOUSTON, TEXAS. JULY 4, 2020."

VOICE.
As we hear, after a few more beats, an ASTRONAUT'S

PHIL

T minus ten, nine, eight, start
ignition sequence, five, four, three,
two, one, ignition... Liftoff!

faint,
LAUGHTER,
A tiny red streak zips into the sky, then bursts with a
ludicrous POP. A bottle rocket. We hear CHILDREN'S
excited SHOUTS.

EXT. LAWN PARTY. LUKE GRAHAM'S HOUSE. LATE AFTERNOON

with a
astronaut, has
using
DESCENDING, we see PHIL OHLMYER, late 20's, kneeling,
gaggle of eager CHILDREN around him. Phil, an
got an impressive array of fireworks lined up, and is
an empty longneck as his launching tube.

CHILDREN

(all at once)
My turn! My turn! No, I was next!
No, me! Uncle Phil, Uncle Phil, can
I do one? I want to do one!

PHIL

Guys, guys, please! This is risky
stuff here. And I'm a highly trained
professional.

recruiting
for
Derisive GROANS from the kids, more SHOUTS. Phil grins.
There's little danger NASA will ever use him on a
poster: he's messy, very hyper. Phil waves his hands
silence.

PHIL

Okay, okay! Uncle Phil will launch
another booster...

woman,
and
Another astronaut, RENEE COTE, a tall, very fit French
is walking by with a fresh six-pack. She tosses a beer
Phil catches it.

PHIL

...just as soon as he completes his
fuel intake.

ANGLE FOLLOWS COTE

begin
are in
suburb.
their
spread-out
flavored,
tossed
VOYAGE,
Who grins, walking away from Phil and the kids, as we
to get a better sense of the scope of this party. We
the big back yard of a middle-class home in a Houston
DOZENS OF PEOPLE - astronauts, NASA personnel, and
families -- are gathered around picnic tables or
blankets. Lots of red, white and blue bunting, lots of
balloons. We hear snatches of MUSIC, mostly country-
from dueling boomboxes. Futuristic Frisbees are being
about. A banner, strung between trees, reads "BON
MARS ONE!!!"

WILLIS

It'll take us six months just to get to Mars. Another year on the surface, then six months back. That's two years...

astronaut,
other arm
FRAME,
astronaut,
all

Passing the banner, Cote lobs a beer to another
NICHOLAS WILLIS, who snags it neatly. He's got his
around the waist of a PRETTY GIRL. As Cote moves OUT OF
ANGLE LINGERS on these two. Willis, a very young
early 20s, is recruiting poster material, and knows it
too well.

WILLIS

I guess what I'm trying to say is, since this is my last night on Earth, it's gonna be a very precious memory to me. Y'know?

PRETTY GIRL

Nice try, Nick.

and
his

As the Pretty Girl slips out of his grasp, laughing,
walks away, Willis shrugs philosophically. He pops open
beer, swigs it.

open-
has
SERGEI
nearby as
beerily

ANGLE FOLLOWS THE PRETTY GIRL As she swerves around an
pit barbecue, where other ASTRONAUTS are gathered. Cote
paused here, too, distributing the last of her beers.
KIROV, a Russian cosmonaut, is watching some kids
they play a game of wiffle ball. He turns, grinning
at the chef.

KIROV

Hey, Woody, our Mars One crew won't be heading back to Earth till ten days after you guys land at our base camp with Mars Two. That's a pretty good long rendezvous.

hat
entire
basting

WOODY BLAKE, late 30s, is a big, rangy guy in a cowboy
over a Hawaiian shirt and a "KISS THE CHEF" apron. An
pig is turning on a spit over the flames, and Woody is
this as he smiles at Malik.

WOODY

What are you suggesting, Sergei?

KIROV

Maybe you should bring a baseball
bat. Yes? American baseball? Our two
crews could have ourselves a little
Solar System Series.

WOODY

Please. Half you guys are foreigners.
We'd crush you.

KIROV

No, no, we have equal crews. Three
men, one woman. Same handicap.

He grins teasingly at Cote, who makes a face at him.

WOODY

Easy now, you're talking about my
wife.

(seeing her approach)

And Terri just happens to be one
helluva shortstop.

of
attractive
them.

DR. TERRI FISHER, early 30s, passes by with a platter
corn-on-the-cob. Short, sturdy body, a face made
by its alert, questing intelligence. She pauses to kiss
Woody's cheek; there's a wonderful, sexy spark between
Then she glances at Kirov, all business now.

TERRI

Fast pitch, no steals, batter calls
his own strikes. Thousand bucks make
it interesting?

who

He's a bit rattled by her cockiness, and looks at Cote,
smiles, nods her cool agreement.

COTE

Eh bien. Winner take all.

TERRI

Good.

(smiles sweetly at
Kirov)

Bring some balls.

as
watt
The other men oooh at this, busting on Kirov and Cote,
Terri moves on. Woody, watching her go, has a thousand-
grin.

WOODY

You wanna know the sad part?
Technically I outrank her. But if we
want any peace at all on Mars Two,
I'm gonna be saying a lot of "Yes,
dears."

The others laugh.

they run
a
containers
ANGLE FOLLOWS TERRI as she dodges a PACK OF KIDS --
by her, shrieking happily - before she finally reaches
picnic table, where ASTRONAUTS' WIVES are opening
of baked beans, coleslaw, and potato salad.

1ST WIFE

...just not sure how I feel about
NASA allowing couples to go on this
type of mission together.

the 1st
One of the other women raises a warning eyebrow, and
Wife turns, sees Terri setting down her platter.

1ST WIFE

(embarrassed)
Nothing personal, Terri. It's just
that, well, it's kind of a funny
feeling for those of us staying
behind.

TERRI

(carefully neutral)
All the research shows that marriage
will provide stability on these long

duration trips.

2ND WIFE

Then they haven't studied some of the couples I've known.

really
on.
slight

Laughter at this. Terri smiles politely -- she doesn't have much in common with these women -- before moving ANGLE LINGERS on the wives, who watch her go with a tinge of jealousy. One of them is looking around.

3RD WIFE

Anybody seen Jim McConnell?

4TH WIFE

I don't think he's coming.

1ST WIFE

God, that poor man. How's he doing?

2ND WIFE

Totally losing it, from what I hear. Can't sleep, can't eat. Visits her grave almost every day.

(lowers her voice)

They say he could lose mission status.

3RD WIFE

Oh, that's so sad. That is just so tragic. You go to a routine physical one day, and wham.

4TH WIFE

After all those years of training, too. It was their whole dream.

1ST WIFE

Must be a pretty funny feeling for Luke Graham. Y'know? Now he's gonna be in the history books. First man on Mars...

nod in
garage,

She shakes her head, awed by the thought. The others agreement, following her glance...

In the distance, a lone MALE FIGURE stands by the

SUVs
Another
early
LUKE
astronaut, the
her

his back to them, facing the parked cars, vans, and
which stretch down the driveway and along the street.
figure, a WOMAN, can be seen approaching him.
CLOSER ANGLE FOLLOWS the moving woman -- DEBRA GRAHAM,
30s, very attractive -- until she reaches her husband.
GRAHAM, mid 30s, has the lean, fit body of an
restless intellect of a scientist. He's unaware of her
approach until she touches his shoulder. He looks at
with an apologetic smile.

DEBRA

He's not coming, Luke.

LUKE

Jim deserves this, too. All his
friends are here. And it's my last
night.

DEBRA

(gently)

Your last night with us, too.

his

He looks at her, moved. She summons a smile. He slides
arms around her waist, kisses her forehead.

LUKE

I love you, Deb.

DEBRA

I love you too, baby. But maybe you
should spend some time with Bobby.

LUKE

Yeah. I will. Where is he?

DEBRA

Up in his fort.

him,

He kisses her again, then goes. Debra's eyes follow
with a mixture of pride and sadness.

ANGLE FOLLOWS Luke away from the garage, into

EXT. THE BACK YARD. LATE AFTERNOON

still

Luke moves through the crowd. Phil and the kids are shooting off rockets. Red streaks arc high overhead.

passes
to

In the back corner of the yard, where it's quieter, he Willis, who's sitting on a blanket, murmuring soulfully

PRETTY GIRL #2.

WILLIS

Deep space is so lonesome. So cold.
But I guess I'll have my memories to
keep me warm...

he

Luke shakes his head. Willis is incorrigible. Finally reaches a tall redwood playset. He looks up the ladder.

around
nearby

A SMALL BOY sits on the platform of the tower, arms his knees, staring up at the stars. A telescope rests on a tripod. He looks lonely.

him.
at

Luke climbs up, sits down on the wooden deck next to BOBBY, 7, glances over at his dad, his idol, then back at the sky.

BOBBY

Who's gonna read to me now, at
bedtime?

Luke is surprised by the question. A pause.

LUKE

Mommy will.

BOBBY

I like when you do it. Now we're
never gonna finish our book.

tears.

His voice is unexpectedly fierce. He's fighting back
Luke is moved. Another brief silence.

LUKE

Well, I'll tell you what. I've been

thinking about that. And what I thought was -- how 'bout if I bring along my own copy?

(Bobby looks at him)

Then every night, wherever I am, I'll read a little bit more of it. And I'll know that you and Mommy, wherever you are, you're reading it too. That way, it'll feel like we're still reading it together. 'Cause I don't know about you, but I'm pretty anxious to find out how 'ol Ben Gunn got marooned on that island. What d'you say?

Bobby manages a smile. He nods, feeling a little better.

Luke is proud of his son's courage.

LUKE

Good deal. Can I have a hug?

Bobby's arms go around his father's neck. He hugs Luke fiercely, and Luke hugs him back. His eyes, over the thin absence.

Then, from the distance, the sound of an APPROACHING CAR.

They both turn.

An open Jeep is coming down the street. Its DRIVER is alone.

Luke's expression changes. Recognition, then happiness.

EXT. LUKE'S STREET. LATE AFTERNOON

The Jeep stops, its electric engine WHIRRING down. The Driver comes out with a champagne bottle, hastily decorated with ribbon.

The PARTY SOUNDS are drifting this way, and he hesitates a moment, seeming to gather himself. He starts gamely towards the party, then pauses again.

Debra Graham stands nearby on the front lawn, waiting. She

smiles tentatively.

has
in.
JIM MCCONNELL, early 40s, manages a smile in return. He
dark circles under his eyes, and his clothes look slept

natural
Yet we sense, even through his sadness, a kind of quiet
competence in this man, an unforced authority; he's a
leader.

They
Debra hurries forward, into his arms, and he hugs her.
separate, looking at each other. Her eyes are shining.

DEBRA

We were afraid you wouldn't come.

MCCONNELL

I caught a whiff of your barbecue.
After that I was helpless.

DEBRA

All the way out in Galveston?

MCCONNELL

Something like that.
(she smiles)
It's his night, Deb. I didn't want
to spoil it.

DEBRA

Spoil it? He's been going crazy
looking for you.

around
them
Over her shoulder he sees Luke approaching, his arm
Bobby. The two men look at each other, the bond between
so strong it needs no words. Finally Luke smiles.

LUKE

C'mon. A whole lot of folks here are
gonna be mighty glad to see you.

towards
McConnell comes towards him, accompanied by Debra, and
together the four of them move OUT OF FRAME, heading
the party. ANGLE HOLDS on the parking area, as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAME VIEW. NIGHT (HOURS LATER)

two:
one of
Perched
They

All the parked cars and vans are gone now, except for McConnell's Jeep and Woody's classic 'Vette. Willis, the last to go, is just departing on his motorcycle. Perched behind him, arms around his waist, is PRETTY GIRL #3. They zoom away, through the darkened neighborhood.

EXT. BACK YARD. NIGHT

has
there a

The yard is nearly deserted. The "Bon Voyage" banner torn loose at one end and flutters limply. Here and there a napkin blows across the ground.

the

In the distance, THREE FIGURES sit on the ground, by the waning fire of the barbecue pit, sipping beers.

CLOSER ON THIS TRIO

For a
the
dots

As Woody shoves another piece of wood into the flames. For a moment he, McConnell, and Luke are silent, staring at the sparks as they rise towards the stars -- red and gold mingling with the silver ones.

WOODY

(abruptly)

I wish we were all going. Together.

even
beat.

The intensity in his voice surprises the others, and even Woody himself. Luke glances at McConnell. An awkward beat.

LUKE

Then you've got a short memory. Think back to how we were by the second week of lunar training.

WOODY

Oh, you're not gonna bring that up again --

LUKE

(laughing)
I'm trying to remember, let's see, which one of us scored the lowest ranking up there?

WOODY

You just can't let that go --

LUKE

Oh, man, three commanders, on the same ship? If they sent us off to Mars together, there wouldn't be enough fuel to lift all those egos.

WOODY

(laughs)
Bullshit, we would've made a great crew.

MCCONNELL

That was never gonna happen. I was always teamed with Maggie, and we were mostly chalkboard jockies. You know? Systems. Payloads...

LUKE

Listen to him. Mr. Cover-of-Time Magazine!

WOODY

Yeah, who landed the crippled Block II Shuttle?

LUKE

Yeah, and who scored highest on the lunar rankings?

WOODY

Let it go, Luke.

MCCONNELL

(smiles)
Sure, I made a little noise. But putting the first footprints on Mars? Nah. That's for guys who...
(looks at Luke)
...wrote their Ph.D. thesis on how to colonize the place. And guys who...

(looks at Woody)
...read too much science fiction as
a kid and still wear little Flash
Gordon rocketships around their necks.

hand He grabs playfully at Woody's neck. Woody smacks his
away, laughing.

WOODY

You read the same damn science fiction
books that I did! You're just not
man enough to wear jewelry!

rocketship He pulls from his shirt a little Flash Gordon
at emblem hanging on a chain, and waggles this tauntingly
McConnell, as Luke and McConnell laugh.

WOODY

You want Flash. You know you want
him. Well you'll have to come through
me!

at Luke grabs Woody's arm to give McConnell a better shot
the emblem, but Woody cuffs his hands away, laughing.
McConnell, watching their horseplay, shakes his head.

MCCONNELL

God, she would've loved to see you
two clowns. Just one more time.

once He tries to smile, but his face reddens. Then all at
emotions. his chest is heaving as he struggles to control his
McConnell Woody sees this, reaches out a reassuring hand, but
them, shakes him off, rises abruptly. He turns his back on
walking away a few steps.

Woody and Luke exchange a worried glance.

EXT. LUKE'S STREET. LATER THAT NIGHT

Corvette. McConnell and Luke watch as Woody starts up his
McConnell has regained his composure.

LUKE

Hey, Woodrow, isn't it about time
you donated this thing to a museum?

Woody revs the engine, which ROARS lustily. He grins.

WOODY

Internal combustion, boys. Accept no
substitutes.

Luke laughs. Woody looks at McConnell.

WOODY

Jim, if there's ever... if there's
anything Terri and I can do --

MCCONNELL

I'm okay. Really. Thanks.

Woody reaches out to shake Luke's hand.

WOODY

See you when I get to Mars, Luke.
Don't solve all the mysteries of the
universe, okay? Leave a little
something for the next guys.

LUKE

I'll see what I can do. Just make
sure you bring some fresh beer.

WOODY

You got it.

With a final glance at McConnell, Woody slips the car
into
silence.
We
this.

Luke glances at his old friend, growing more serious.
sense he's been waiting all night for a chance to say

LUKE

Should've been your mission, Jim.
Yours and Maggie's.

McConnell, looking after Woody's car, becomes very
still.

LUKE

None of us ever wanted Mars the way

you two did. Not even Woody. Twelve years of hoping for this assignment, training for it --

MCCONNELL

That's all over now.

LUKE

If Maggie hadn't gotten sick -- if you hadn't pulled yourself out of the rotation to take care of her --

will

McConnell turns to him, his eyes flashing danger. He not tolerate pity. Luke sees this but presses on.

LUKE

No, I'm gonna say this. I have to say it...

(pause)

I wanted Mars One. Hell, I battled you for it every step of the way. Never wanted to beat anybody so bad in my life. But not like this... Jim, I'd give this all up in a second, if it would bring Maggie back to us.

trust

McConnell is deeply moved, and for a moment doesn't his own voice.

MCCONNELL

I know that, Luke. You don't have to say it... Mars is yours now. Go get it.

LUKE

(pause)

Take care of yourself.

MCCONNELL

Yeah. You too.

Luke

a

his

Luke nods. They grab hands for a second, then let go. walks back towards his house. McConnell watches him for moment, then turns, walks over to his Jeep. He opens door, then pauses. He turns. Looks up at --

EXT. NIGHT SKY

distant
A tiny reddish dot hovers there, glowing steadily. Mars
itself, a tantalizing prize. But for him now, more
than ever. For him, perhaps, never to be attained.

CLOSE ON MCCONNELL'S FACE

moment
As we see these thoughts going through him. After a
he looks down at

HIS SHOES

And the sandy verge of the front yard.

MCCONNELL'S EYES

infinite
SHOE
Are a map of complex emotions: regret, injured pride,
yearning. Gently, a bit self-consciously, HE LIFTS ONE

footprint
And sets it down again, making a careful, deliberate
in the sandy soil...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. MARS. CHRYSE PLANITIA. DAY

LANDSCAPE,
sunlight. A
Boulders
Twin
towering,
- a
Instantly we're hurled into an immense, stunning
mysterious and vivid as a fever dream. Dazzling
vast plain of rust-orange soil. Countless craters.
the size of houses, tossed about by the hands of gods.
moons hanging in a salmon-pink sky. On the horizon,
craggy peaks. And, at center -- the only sign of life -
small, mysterious, moving puff of dust.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. MARS. DAY

robotic
Martian
occasionally

CLOSER ANGLE as a small, Sojourner-like, multi-wheeled vehicle ambles INTO FRAME, jouncing along the orange soil, pausing to snuffle its sensors towards the interesting rock. Lettering on its side reads "ARES-8."

LATER."

SUPER TITLE: "MARS. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. EIGHT MONTHS

fine-tuning
- a
quivers

Suddenly Ares-8 pauses. Its video lens WHIRRS out, focus, as it becomes intrigued by something OFFSCREEN - higher, more distant target. The little fellow almost quivers with excitement.

EXT. MARS. TIU VALLIS. DAY

clawed
face.
bulk,
Earth's).
closely,

A one-man ATV ROVER waits in the background, in a dry streambed, as Luke, in an EVA spacesuit, swings a rock hammer against a multi-layered, sedimentary rock face. Reddish dust coats his bulky white suit. Despite that he moves easily in the light Martian gravity (1/3 Earth's). A hunk of rock breaks off, and Luke examines it more closely, holding it up to his clear faceplate. He's very happy, absorbed in this work, when his RADIO CRACKLES.

COTE

Luke, you read me?

LUKE

Yeah, Renee.

COTE

Luke, I just got ARES-8 on line and...
Well, we think you're gonna wanna see this for yourself.

Luke, though reluctant to break off work, is intrigued.

LUKE

Copy that.

As Luke turns away, headed for the rover

WE PULL WIDE

time:
so
New

To REVEAL a STAGGERING PROSPECT, seen for the first
Valles Marineris, that planet-creasing slash. So wide,
deep, it boggles the mind: on earth it would reach from
York to L.A.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. MARS ONE HAB. DAY

joined
NASA
ON A

The crew of Mars One - Kirov, Willis, and Cote -- have
Luke, gathered around some display monitors. They're in
jumpsuits; the Hab has artificial atmosphere, enhanced
gravity, and heat. All are captivated by what they see.

VIDEO SCREEN

dirt-
huge.
along
contrast
what's
smooth,

We see a low-angle image of an elongated, rubble and
covered MOUNTAIN. Hard to tell scale, but it looks
What's most striking, however, is a WHITE PEAK barely
protruding through the rubble two-thirds of the way
the mountain's ridgeline. Its whiteness is in clear
to the typical rust-orange of the surrounding rubble;
more, this strange little peak also displays an oddly-
multi-planed symmetry.

LUKE

What the hell is that?

COTE

No idea, boss.

LUKE

Where is it?

they

Cote glances at the others. They're all smirking, as if share some secret joke Luke's not yet in on.

WILLIS

You don't wanna know.

LUKE

C'mon, what's so funny? Gimme the coordinates.

it

He leans over to read a digital gauge, but Cote covers with her hand, enjoying the tease.

COTE

Latitude 41 degrees north, longitude 9 degrees west.

LUKE

The Plains of Cydonia. So?
(pause)

Oh no. You're not telling me --

expression is

They all laugh as the other shoe drops. Luke's incredulous, exasperated.

COTE

Oui. Exactement! It's Kirov's fault, he picked today's sector.

KIROV

Hey, c'mon! We've got a scientific duty to check that thing out.

Cote.

without

Luke sits, taking over the Ares remote control from They all watch as he fine tunes the image, trying success to coax more resolution.

LUKE

Great. That's great. The first anomaly we hit, and it's gotta be in the one place guaranteed to make NASA look ridiculous... You know how many books have been written about that damned mountain?

COTE

The Egyptians put it there.

KIROV

No, the Amazons.

WILLIS

No, it was little green men!

LUKE

And all because a couple of lousy impact craters happen to look like eye sockets. If this gets out, we'll have every UFO kook on Earth spouting off on the six o'clock news... C'mon, people, gimme a read here. Is that a cinder cone?

KIROV

Nah, too smooth. Too angular. Volcanic upwelling?

COTE

No fissures. No caldera.

LUKE

It's an upwelling, for sure. But maybe not volcanic...

with The others look at him, puzzled. Luke leans in closer, growing excitement. He points to the screen.

LUKE

Look at the color. And see how shiny it is? I could swear that's ice...

COTE

This far south?

WILLIS

Impossible. You can't have ice at this latitude. Not unless...

from They look at each other, Luke's excitement now leaping one to another of them. They're almost trembling.

WILLIS

Oh my God.

LUKE

How far away is it?

KIROV

Sixteen kilometers northeast. Take us twenty minutes to get there.

LUKE

(considers a moment)

Let's send a packet to Micker. Then we'll go check it out.

EXT. MARS ONE BASE CAMP. DAY

AIRLOCK DOORS

gear. Slide back, REVEALING the crew in EVA suits, carrying
They walk over to...

THE FOUR-MAN ROVER

in The astronauts climb in through the hatch. The last one
Cote pulls it shut behind him and locks the latches. We see
and Luke check their screens and press some buttons.
Luke puts the rover in drive.

WIDER ANGLE, PULLING UP AND AWAY

kicking As the rover moves off across the rocky surface, dust
of the up from the wheels, we get our first exterior glimpse
tuna Mars One Base Camp. The main HAB UNIT looks like a huge
separate, can with a conical top section; it connects to a
STILL, inflated-bubble GREENHOUSE. There's also an OXYGEN
hundred PROPELLANT PLANT, and, on the other side, a couple
which meters distant, the massive ERV (Earth Return Vehicle),
arrived as a separate, unmanned flight.

AMERICAN Rows of SOLAR PANELS, arrayed on the ground, and an
scene. FLAG on a thin pole, about man-height, complete the

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION (ISP). EARTH ORBIT.

DAY

drifting
NASA
A vast, impressive, MULTI-SECTIONED SPACECRAFT is majestically above Earth. The main hull displays both and U.N. flag decals.

SUPER TITLE: "INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION. MARS MISSION CONTROL ROOM (MMCR). 20 MINUTE TIME LAG."

which
and
where
We
We MOVE IN towards another of the station's segments, is dedicated entirely (as we see from more labels and insignias) to the Mars Program: Control Room, Training Living Quarters, and a Vehicle Docking and Launch Area, Mars Two is already positioned for its eventual flight. We hear LUKE'S EXCITED VOICE, over speakers.

LUKE

This is a truly anomalous formation. Looks like nothing we've seen so far. The structure appears to be crystalline, at least from the angle displayed by ARES-8 ...

INT. MMCR. DAY

Mars
Hab,
On a large CENTER DISPLAY SCREEN, we see Luke and the One crew, sitting around their kitchen table in the finishing lunch while taping this VIDEO MESSAGE.

LUKE

(grins)
We're all trying not to go too nuts up here, but -- we think there's a good chance this could be an extrusion from some subsurface, geothermal column of water. And if we're right...

canaries.
He looks at his crew. They beam like cats who ate

LUKE

...then we've found the key to

permanent human colonization.

IN THE MMCR

TECHNICIANS,
fantastic,
There's an EXCITED BUZZ among the assembled
FLIGHT ENGINEERS, and SCIENTISTS. This would be a
epochal discovery.

MCCONNELL

the
is
for
Sits at the center console, wearing a headset. He's now
Mars One CAPCOM (Capsule Communicator), and his manner
brisk, efficient, all-business. A TECHNICIAN leans in
instructions.

MCCONNELL

Tell geology and hydrology we need
to scramble on this. Full-court press.

the
intense excitement of those around him, stares up at

THE SCREEN

the
Where Luke and his crew are still smiling, well knowing
excitement their bombshell will create.

LUKE

Anyway, we're going out to take a
closer look at it, try to get an
idea of its composition.

(checks his watch)

By the time you receive this, we
should be just about on-site.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

TOWARDS
The rover is a hundred meters away and moving fast

snout
CAMERA. We BOOM DOWN to REVEAL Ares-8, still faithfully
holding its point, like an Irish Setter, with its video

WHIRRING OUT.

hatch
opens all
in

The rover drives up and slows to a stop nearby. The door cracks open and some dust vents out. The door the way and the astronauts climb out. They all look up awe. We hear their voices ON RADIOS.

KIROV

Jesus Christ...

THE MYSTERIOUS PEAK

and
through
-- an
left

Gleams in the sun, dazzling white, its facets as planed smooth as if an architect had drawn them. It pierces the topmost rubble at the near end of the big mountain isolated, butte-like giant, stretching two miles from to right in front of them.

THE ASTRONAUTS

low,

Walk towards the mountain. There's a very deep, very staccato tone intruding over their headsets.

LUKE

Anyone else hear that?

COTE

Yeah. What is it?

WILLIS

Sounds like our antenna's out of phase.

LUKE

Can you fix it?

WILLIS

Hey, skip, I can fix anything.

LUKE

Big talker. Renee, Sergei, let's break out the radar, see what this thing's made of.

rumbling

As they go to their jobs, the deep, barely audible

tone continues.

INT. SPACE STATION. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE MMCR. DAY

gravity
from
savvy
and
tour.
races,

MULTINATIONAL CREWMEMBERS walk by, in the artificial of the busy station, as RAY BECK, mid-50s, approaches the opposite direction. Beck is the tough, crewcut, PR-head of the NASA Mars Program (ID'd by his name tag), just now he's leading a covey of U.N. AMBASSADORS on a tour. The ambassadors, of both sexes, many nations, and all races, look as excited as schoolkids.

BECK

...and this is the Mars Mission Control Room, nicknamed "Micker." I understand a comm packet is incoming from Mars One Base Camp, so you may find this interesting.

He opens the doors, ushering his flock inside.

INT. MMCR. DAY

impressive
the big
The
curiously.

The ambassadors enter, oohing and ahing over the array of gadgetry and personnel, and especially over the screen. Some of them start taking souvenir snapshots. NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR turns to Beck, whispering

AMBASSADOR

That man over there. He's in charge?

BECK FOLLOWS HIS GLANCE TO

MCCONNELL

is
depart,

Who is surrounded by a KNOT OF TECHNICIANS, to whom he is giving quiet, precise instructions. They hover, then depart, like so many eager bees.

BECK

Smiles indulgently at the ambassador's misunderstanding.

BECK

No, actually, that's Jim McConnell, the CAPCOM. Our voice link to the astronauts? Jim's been with the manned Mars program since its inception. One of our real pioneers.

AMBASSADOR

Will he be going to Mars, too?

BECK

Ah, no. This is as close as he gets.

ON THE SCREEN

clearing Luke and his crew have finished eating, and are away their dishes and leftovers.

LUKE

...anyway, that's about it. We'll send another packet when we get back.

can Cote clears her throat, gives Luke a look. The others barely conceal their grins.

LUKE

Oh, right. One more thing. Today is a very special day for a good friend of ours, and I know he's there right now.

to? McConnell looks at the screen, worried. What's Luke up

LUKE

Now, he hates it when any fuss is made, so I won't mention his name...

A look of relief comes over McConnell.

LUKE

...because the last thing in the world I'd ever want to do is embarrass someone like Jim McConnell.

Kirov
burning
SINGING

McConnell winces -- Dear God, no -- as, on the screen,
appears from OFF CAMERA holding a cupcake with a
candle stuck in it, and the Mars One crew starts
"Happy Birthday" to him. Loudly. And very off-key.

LUKE

C'mon, you Micker weasels, sing!

some of
of

Soon most everyone in MMCR is singing along -- even
the jolly ambassadors -- with the noticeable exception
Beck, who stiffens unhappily. McConnell is mortified.

LUKE

(sings a line, then,
to CAMERA:)

Hey, Ray! Take a look at him! Is he
all red with one of those fake "I'm-
a-good-sport" grins?

face

Beck looks over at McConnell, who indeed is red in the
with a fake "I'm-a-good-sport" grin.

LUKE

And hey, you guys, check out Ray!
Does he have on one of his "This-
wasn't-in-my-mission-plan" faces?

Indeed, Beck's smile is thin, sour, disapproving.

LUKE

Nothing you can do about it, Ray!
We're a hundred million miles away!

the

Luke and the crew finish singing the song. Luke raises
cupcake in a toast.

LUKE

Happy Birthday, Jimbo! Make a wish!

laugh and

He and his crew lean in, blow out the candle. They
applaud, then wave goodbye.

LUKE

Catch you again soon. Take care,

buddy. End of transmission.

screen
Luke reaches out, turns OFF the CAMERA, and the display
GOES BLACK.

annoyed,
McConnell's
Beck turns, his gaze locking with McConnell's. He's
as if this violation of protocol were somehow
fault. McConnell returns his stare coolly.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

Kirov
mountain.
Cote stands by a display screen mounted on the rover.
has a big radar gun on a tripod, pointing at the
Luke turns to Cote.

LUKE

Well? What's under there?

COTE

(puzzled)

Je ne sais pas. I... I think there's
something wrong with the equipment.

LUKE

What?

COTE

I mean, it can't be right. It says...
it says there's metal under there.

display
Luke doesn't understand. He walks up to look at the
screen.

COTE

(points)

There's ten, twelve meters of rubble
and sand, and then... solid metal.

LUKE

That doesn't make any sense. You're
reading a vein of ore.

COTE

(shakes her head)

No. It's under the whole mountain.

The deep pulsing tone continues. Luke frowns.

LUKE

Nick, could the problem with the antenna be interfering?

WILLIS

Could be.

LUKE

(to Cote and Kirov)

Try it closer and up the power. I'll watch the screen.

INT. MMCR. DAY

as
N.
McConnell is taping an audio message to be sent to Mars
the rest of MMCR looks on. Beck is gone. So are the U.
ambassadors.

MCCONNELL

Ah, we're all pretty stoked about that formation you spotted, Mars One. The folks in the geology and hydrology back rooms are going over your images and comparing them to every photomap they've got.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

vibrating
Cote and Kirov are close to the foot of the mountain, resetting the radar gun on its tripod. The deep
tone continues.

Willis,
Luke is some distance away, by the rover. He looks at
who's still working on the rover's antenna.

LUKE

Nick, how we coming on that antenna?

WILLIS

Goin' as fast as I can, boss.

switches on
Cote and Kirov are having some trouble with the
the radar gun. They turn towards Luke and Willis.

KIROV

Hey, Nick. Come show me how stupid I am. I can't get this to work.

Willis looks at Luke. Luke nods -- Go help them. Willis starts towards the radar gun.

INT. MMCR. DAY

McConnell is handed a slip of paper, glances at it.

MCCONNELL

Medical wants me to remind you that you're three days late on your blood tests. I know they're a bore, but you've got to get them done, or else... or else I don't know what. Just do them, okay?

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

Willis, Cote, and Kirov get the radar gun up and running.

KIROV

All set here, chief.

Luke sidles over to the display screen on the rover.

LUKE

Okay. Crank up the juice and let's see what's in this sucker.

INT. MMCR. DAY

McConnell checks over his clipboard list of updates.

MCCONNELL

I think that's about it for business. But on a personal note, be advised that, ah, none of you can sing worth a damn.

LAUGHTER in the MMCR.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

Luke watches the screen on the rover, as, by the mound...

KIROV

muzzle
and

Flips a switch on the radar gun, then swivels its
slowly across the near slope of the mountain. We hear
feel the radar signal. The immediate result is that the
pulsing tone we've been hearing suddenly stops.

LUKE

Looks up from the display screen. A puzzled expression.

LUKE

Why did that stop?

WHOOSH,

A split-second later, he gets his answer. We hear a
a mighty rushing of wind, as

A GIGANTIC, TRANSLUCENT CYLINDER

the
picks up
surface

Starts to swirl and rise, straight up from the top or
mountain, at its center. As it swirls, the cylinder
debris -- pebbles, sand -- from the sediment-encrusted
of the slopes.

THE FOUR ASTRONAUTS

of
too

Stare up at this spectacle, awed. A cyclone? Some kind
energy wave? They have no idea. At the moment they're
fascinated to even be scared.

TILTING UP - FROM THEIR POV

as a
narrowing
much
the
translucent

We see the whirling cylinder rise, higher and higher,
perfectly straight, until in just moments it's as tall
skyscraper. As it rises, it gains speed and power,
at its top into a conical vortex. It's sucking up so
dirt, so many rocks -- even small boulders now -- that
accumulating debris begins to darken its swirling,
outer "skin".

THE ASTRONAUTS

Exchange amazed glances. Can't believe their eyes...

INT. MMCR. DAY

McConnell still hovers by the microphone.

MCCONNELL

Honestly, Luke, if you guys don't have anything better to do with your time, I can make some suggestions to mission medical. There are worse things than blood tests.

LAUGHTER and GROANS from the staff in MMCR.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

sand
turns.
Luke, still staring in fascination, becomes aware of
and pebbles flashing past his helmet. From behind. He

SAND PATTERS AGAINST HIS FACEPLATE

As the nearby landscape BLURS. The vacuuming effect is becoming more general across the area. More violent.

LUKE IS ALARMED

lips
WIND. He
towards
him,
And the spell is broken. He keys his throat mike, his
moving, but no sound can be heard over the ROARING
waves his arms, motioning for the others to back away,
the rover. Wind whips at their EVA suits as they obey
retreating.

off
Luke, backing away himself, is afraid to take his eyes
the cylinder.

fact
hurries
Then he sees that one man -- Willis -- hasn't moved. In
he's busily snapping photographs of the cylinder. Luke
over to him, tugs his sleeve.

WILLIS LOWERS HIS CAMERA

face
frightened

But still stares up, transfixed, like a man face to
with a cobra. Luke follows the young astronaut's
gaze, and his own eyes widen as he sees

THE TOP OF THE VORTEX

they're
rocks

Beginning to tilt down, then coil sideways. Suddenly
looking into the huge open "mouth" of it, as sand and
fly into the swirling darkness...

the
And
little

The monstrous, gaping maw slithers down over the rim of
mountain, turning this way, then that. Seeking them.
then, with horrifying precision, it locks in on the
group of astronauts. And lunges towards them...

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

towards
they're

Luke and Willis turn, running as hard as they can
the rover. But the suction is so great, it's as if
held back by wires.

begin
vortex,
freight

The ground itself is SHAKING, RUMBLING, as earthquakes
to open fissures across the plain. The ROAR of the
the GROANING of the earth, are like an onrushing
train...

AHEAD OF THEM

out
their
smashes
her

In the maelstrom of flying debris, they can barely make
Cote and Kirov, still retreating, leaning back with all
strength against the suction, while staring up, aghast.
Suddenly a hurtling rock, the size of a basketball,
into Cote's helmet from behind, crushing it and killing
instantly. Blood sprays into the wind, immediately

pellets... crystallizing, in the sub-zero atmosphere, into red

LUKE, HORRIFIED, FLINGS HIS ARM UP

forearm. An As bloody hail patters against his faceplate and
instant later he sees

KIROV

terrifying Snatched up by the wind, then swept past him, in a
scream blur, arms and legs flailing, mouth open in a silent
as he vanishes...

THE GROUND AT LUKE'S FEET

Scrabbling Abruptly opens, and he slides into a fissure.
momentarily frantically with his gloved hands, he manages to
with arrest his fall, gripping the edge of the fault line,
is his helmet and one elbow thrust over its lip. The air
bound almost solidly choked with debris, deadly boulders
him over him, and torrents of cascading sand are burying
alive...

CLOSE ON LUKE

Barely conscious, as he watches, for a horrifying final
instant, as...

HIS LAST CREWMAN, WILLIS

spinning Is sucked bodily into the black maw of the vortex,
and tumbling like a rag doll...

CLOSE ON WILLIS'S FACE

tearing at His features grotesquely distorted by the forces
blood, him, before suddenly his faceplate is sprayed with
and...

DISTANT ANGLE - LUKE'S POV

Willis's spacesuit explodes, his entire body
disintegrating
as
into a million bits, which instantly disappear into the
hellish maelstrom. And then that maelstrom itself, just
abruptly...

STOPS. Vanishes.

There is an instant, ringing SILENCE, as awesome in its
own
way as the roaring storm itself had been...

WIDE ANGLE

On the plain, as the last pebbles, released from
suction,
away,
again
pitter down, bouncing. Swirls of dust and sand drift
settling gently. The harsh orange landscape is once
calm, peaceful.

And then, from the direction of the nearby mountain, we
hear
another sound: the deep bass pulsing rumble returns.

INT. MMCR. DAY

As McConnell finishes his message to Luke.

MCCONNELL

Oh, and I talked to Debra. She and
Bobby are doing fine. Said to tell
you, they're, ah, they're on their
"third time through the book, page --
(glances at a note)
-- page 125." They send their love
and say take care of yourself. Same
from us here, buddy. Till next time,
then. End of transmission.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

MOVING ANGLE, the CAMERA EXPLORING ground zero, as the
bass,
pulsing rumble continues...

WE PASS the Rover, canted sideways into a little
crater,

miraculously

with its canopy missing, one axle fractured, but still with all four wheels...

partially

WE PASS faithful little ARES-8, lying on its side, crushed under a boulder. It gives a final, pitiful

WHINE,

its video snout slowly extending, then dies. And

finally we

come to the area where the fissure had been, and see

THE FISSURE HAS BEEN FILLED IN

Luke.

Leaving only a slender crease of umber sand. No sign of

The pulsing rumble continues, over, as we see

EXT. AERIAL VIEW. DAY

looking

An extraordinary sight, seen from high in the air,

shallow

back down. Staring up at us from the bottom of a

and

crater, scoured clean of its aeons of accumulated silt

rubble, is a structure resembling a vast humanoid Face.

planes,

The surface is gleaming white, apparently metallic. The features are suggested by intricately interlocking

are

slopes, ramps. The "eyes" -- hatches of some kind? --

closed, and the overall expression is eerily calm, but terrible in its power, like some ancient tribal mask.

thick,

We see the Face clearly for only a few beats before

rumble

scudding clouds OBSCURE it, but the deep, pulsing

continues, low and insistent...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MARS TWO (DOCKED). COCKPIT. DAY

its

We're inside the Mars Two spacecraft, which is still in

docked position alongside the Space Station.

the

Woody Blake, wearing a NASA jumpsuit, floats up into cockpit in Zero-G, studying a thick manual.

WOODY

(reads)

"Problem: Hatch door malfunction, backup power fail, manual override fail. Solution: Replace circuit breaker 907B."

electrical

He straps into the pilot's seat, staring at an junction box at one end of the console.

WOODY

Okay... Piece of cake.

tangle

up

pilot's

He swings open the housing, revealing a bewildering of fuses and wires. He sighs heavily, as Terri drifts beside him, also in a jumpsuit, and straps into the co-seat.

WOODY

God, who dreams up these nightmares?

TERRI

Don't try to change the subject.

WOODY

I'm not! We're talking about your sister's wedding, right?

TERRI

Very funny. We're talking about dancing lessons. Before my sister's wedding.

WOODY

Honey, do you mind? I've got a catastrophic power failure here.

He peers into the housing with exaggerated concern. But Terri's not so easily sidetracked.

TERRI

Woody, we're a married couple. Would it kill you to invite me out on the floor once in awhile?

WOODY

I danced with you at our wedding.

TERRI

I'm not talking about shuffling your feet around while you grab my butt. I mean real dancing. Cha-cha, rhumba, jitterbug --

WOODY

Face it, honey, some couples dance, some go to Mars. That's life.

TERRI

I'm serious. We've got two more months in this training rotation, but just as soon as we get home, we're starting lessons. If we never dance, people will think there's something wrong.

WOODY

If they see me dance, they'll know there's something wrong.

As he reaches past him, she pulls out the required breaker. reacts, surprised, she smiles, despite her exasperation.

TERRI

You are such a lug.

Overhead, an intercom CRACKLES. We hear PHIL.

PHIL'S VOICE

Cockpit, this is Control.

TERRI

Control, this is Cockpit.

PHIL'S VOICE

Uh, Terri, they want us all back in the Station. Report to Micker.

TERRI

Who says report to Micker?

PHIL'S VOICE

The little men who live in my head.

WOODY

Phil, c'mon! We just started this drill.

PHIL

Woody, it was Ray Beck. He told me to round up the team. Now.

Woody and Terri exchange a worried look. What's wrong?

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. SPACE STATION. MMCR. DAY

crowded
hurrying

A crisis atmosphere prevails. The big room is more than we've ever seen it, with ENGINEERS and MANAGERS by, huddling in tense, conferring knots, or muttering feverishly into microphones.

flow
site

On the center screen, a giant image of Mars. A frantic flow of green numbers crawls above and below this, and the site of the Mars One Base Camp is marked in blinking red.

WOODY AND HIS CREW

Beck

Are staring up at this screen, appalled. McConnell and Beck stand nearby, briefing them.

BECK

Then, at 1417, the X-band continuous data stream from Mars went silent. All data -- med, environmental, everything -- suddenly stopped. While we were trying to figure out what the hell went wrong, we got a signal from the folks at the Large Array at Socorro.

MCCONNELL

At the same moment we lost the data stream, they picked up an intense burst of energy from Mars.

WOODY

What do you mean, "intense"?

MCCONNELL

(hesitates)
Catastrophic.

Looks are exchanged among the Mars Two crew.

TERRI

What about the crew?

BECK

The level of energy in the pulse...
didn't seem survivable.

WOODY

What about the REMO? It went into
Mars orbit last week. Maybe that
could give us some clue.

MCCONNELL

Good thinking, Woody. That's just
what we tried next.

He leans over, punches buttons on a keyboard.

ON THE CENTER SCREEN

Mars,
isolated
computer-
unmanned

An orange dot can be seen in its orbital ellipse around
leaving a glowing electronic trail. This dot gets
in a viewing box, then enlarged and rotated into the
animated image of a small, ugly, industrial-looking
cargo craft, labelled "REMO."

MCCONNELL

The Resupply Module checked out fine.
No instrument failures, no change in
status. Orbit holding steady. But
there was something else. The REMO'S
computer contained an uplink message --
a very faint, highly distorted
transmission from Mars One Base Camp.

TERRI

Someone's alive.

MCCONNELL

Yes.

PHIL

How?

BECK

The message is almost indecipherable.
Two teams are still working on it.
You better see for yourselves.

INT. MMCR. DAY

Terri,
weary

FINGERS press buttons on a console. McConnell, Woody,
and Phil are crowded around a monitor with Beck and two

TECHNICIANS.

TECHNICIAN

Still concentrating on the audio. We
managed to bring out a couple more
words, but we've got a long way to
go.

WOODY

Show us whatever you've got.

hits

The technician nods, then gestures to his assistant who
a play button.

CLOSE ON A MONITOR

comes a
table.
eyes.
he

Black for a moment, then static. Out of this static
faint image of Luke, sitting alone at the Hab kitchen
He looks awful -- dried blood on his face, bloodshot
The image is blurry, heavily streaked, and most of what
says is lost in waves of static.

LUKE

...make this quick... may be only ch--
(long section of static)
...to the site, when we... hit us
just as we... --thers are all dead...

Woody, Terri and Phil look at each other -- Oh, God.

LUKE

(following more static)
...low sound that we couldn't
understand. Then all of a sudden

there was this terrib...
(another long burst
of static)
...--stems are holding up for now,
but I don't know how long I can...

The monitor screen GOES BLACK.

INT. MMCR. DAY

TECHNICIAN

That's it.

is a Woody and his crew stare at the screen, stunned. This catastrophe almost too huge to grasp.

INT. SPACE STATION. DAY

down As Beck leads McConnell and the other shaken astronauts a corridor, Phil pauses, seeing...

A SOBBING TECHNICIAN

One At her desk. TWO CO-WORKERS are trying to comfort her. of these women looks up, and her reddened eyes meet...

PHIL'S EYES

He looks back at her, haunted.

TERRI

What did Luke mean by a "low sound?"

INT. SPACE STATION. DAY

Styrofoam In an otherwise empty lounge, the astronauts clutch coffee cups. Beck stands nearby. Through a large viewport behind them, stars glitter against the inky blackness.

BECK

If this was a earthquake, as we're now assuming, there's usually an auditory component.

WOODY

But that energy pulse they picked up in New Mexico...

PHIL

Electromagnetic emission. Not uncommon with large-scale geophysical phenomena.

WOODY

(incredulous)

Causing this kind of damage? I don't buy it. We're missing something here.

McConnell and Woody exchange a glance... Woody's right.

TERRI

Luke must be in pretty bad shape if he hasn't blasted out of there in the Earth Return Vehicle. That thing's designed so even one crew member could fly it back to Earth.

MCCONNELL

Even if Luke was in great shape, he couldn't get home. That energy pulse would've fried the ERV'S computers.

WOODY

Other than the computers, how do we think the ERV fared?

BECK

Well, so far our modelling says it should be in pretty good shape.

WOODY

Which means it's gonna be up to us to get new motherboards, drives, and software to Mars. As fast as we can.

McConnell looks at him, nods. They're on the same wavelength.

But Beck is more cautious.

BECK

Whoa, slow down. It's gonna take us weeks just to analyze this data.

MCCONNELL

Right, but meanwhile, we've gotta be working up a mission plan.

WOODY

Luke needs us now.

BECK

Luke may already be dead. And even if he's not, it's doubtful he's going to be able to transmit again. So we wouldn't know whether it's safe to land until you were almost there.

PHIL

What about SIMA?

Terri looks at Phil -- SIMA?

PHIL

The Saturn Imaging Probe. It's going to slingshot around Mars on its way through the solar system. It could be retasked to take pictures, read radiation levels at Mars One Base Camp.

WOODY

Good idea Phil. If SIMA tells us Luke hasn't survived and it's not safe to land, we swing around Mars and come right back home.

MCCONNELL

Yes. We can design the mission to have a free return capability. It's a long trip, but if you don't land it's the best option.

BECK

We're getting ahead of ourselves. You're forgetting the bigger problem.
(they look at him)

The orbits are all wrong. Our first decent launch window is almost eight months from now.

MCCONNELL

But we can go earlier and get there faster if we reconfigure the payload for extra fuel. We've modelled that, Ray. I've modelled it.

BECK

On paper, yeah. But those stresses have never been tested in space.

MCCONNELL

The ship can take it.

BECK

I wasn't thinking of just the ship.

these

A tense beat. Again we sense the test of wills between two tough-minded men, once good friends.

MCCONNELL

I know the protocols for a Mars Recovery Mission better than anybody, because I helped design them. And I'm saying these guys can do it.

WOODY

He's right, Ray. We've got a real shot.

A pause with Beck weighing the odds. He looks at Woody.

BECK

Give me an updated mission plan by 0800 tomorrow. Then I'll put it in the works.

MCCONNELL

You'll have it by 0600.

eager.

He looks at Woody, Phil and Terri, who are just as

MCCONNELL

Let's get to work.

starts

McConnell exits followed by Terri and Phil, but as Beck out, too, Woody stops him.

WOODY

Chief, could I have a word?

Beck looks at him a moment, nods.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. SPACE STATION. MMCR. DAY

In a quiet corner, Woody and Beck are alone.

WOODY

I've no longer got the right crew.

BECK

(surprised)

What do you mean? Bjornstrom can be up here on the next shuttle.

WOODY

Bjornstrom is a geologist. He's good, but not for this. My people just lost eight months of training. This is a different mission, with a different objective.

BECK

I haven't been given authorization for a mission yet.

WOODY

But when you are, it ought to be given the best chance for success. I want McConnell to fly right seat.

Beck's expression hardens.

BECK

He's no longer on mission status.

WOODY

Yeah. Because you washed him out.

BECK

He washed himself out. He only had to pass a few more psych evaluations, but he refused to take them.

WOODY

Ray, he's the best pilot I ever saw, and you've got him benched at a desk.

BECK

Everybody has to pass the psych prelims. No exceptions. Jim knew that.

WOODY

Maggie was his wife. He didn't want to lie on a couch and share her with strangers.

BECK

That was his call. But I had to make one too. It was tough as hell, but I'd do it again.

WOODY

His wife wasted away in front of his eyes. What was he supposed to do? Suck it up? Get with the program? What was his crime? That he was upset? That he cried...?

BECK

I couldn't trust him!

Beck and Woody stare at each other. A long tense beat.

BECK

(his voice softer)

Not in a crisis... I'm sorry Woody, but Jim lost his edge. Are you gonna stand there and tell me Jim McConnell is the same man he was two years ago? You want me to bet four more lives on that?

on This stops Woody, just for a beat. Then makes him press harder, with even greater intensity.

WOODY

When Maggie died, yeah, it knocked the shit out of him. It knocked the hell out of all of us. But you know and I know that he's still the best we've got. He and Maggie wrote the book on Mars. He's got more hours in the sims than the rest of us put together. Ray, we can do this. Give me McConnell as co-pilot, and we will bring Luke home. And that's a promise.

Beck looks back at him, his features taunt.

INT. SPACE STATION. MMCR. DAY

control Woody, Terri, and Phil stand at the edge of the big room, waiting and watching, in a tense silence, as

IN THE DISTANCE, FROM THEIR POV

Beck and McConnell are huddled together at the CAPCOM's console. Other personnel have moved away, giving them room. Both men are seated, leaning forward, with McConnell listening intently, while Beck does most of the talking, very quietly. After a moment McConnell looks up in surprise. His eyes search the room till they find

WOODY'S FACE

Woody looks back at him, nods: C'mon, man. Take it.

MCCONNELL'S OWN FACE

Is a study in conflicting emotions. But after a moment he masters his feelings, turns back toward Beck. A few more quiet words are exchanged, then Beck offers his hand. McConnell hesitates, then shakes it. Both men rise, and McConnell turns again to look towards

WOODY, TERRI, AND PHIL

Who react with relief, glad that he's now a part of their crew. Woody grins, giving him a thumb's up.

CLOSE ON MCCONNELL'S FACE

As he smiles. Then he starts towards them, with a new energy in his step, a new sense of confidence and purpose. And as he WALKS TOWARDS US, PASSING OUT OF FRAME...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DEEP SPACE. MARS RECOVERY. DAY

An infinite canopy of stars. After a moment, some of them begin to be BLOTTED OUT as

A SPACESHIP

looks
mounted
Glides INTO VIEW. "MARS RECOVERY" (formerly Mars Two)
much like its sister craft on Mars: a conical cockpit
above a "tuna can" crew Hab module.

SUPER TITLE: "MARS RECOVERY. MISSION DAY 172."

hull
we
emblem.
The entire lower deck forms a segmented section of the
that rotates on bearings to provide artificial gravity;
see window ports spinning past, then an American flag

struts,
round
rectangular
ship;
BELLS,
through
Behind this lower deck, in an extending network of
like the abdomen of a dragonfly, are the three huge
PROPELLANT TANKS. Then vast, delicate-looking
SOLAR PANELS, which sweep out to either side of the
these also bear the dish of the earth-pointing HI-GAIN
ANTENNA. And finally comes the great mass of the ENGINE
housed within a curving AEROSHELL; three hatches in the
aeroshell can open to allow the main thrusters to fire
for a mid-course burn.

CAMERA DRIFTS CLOSER

viewport
leaning
To the forward section of the ship, APPROACHING a
in the EVA airlock chamber. Inside, we can see Phil
forward, concentrating on some task...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. EVA AIRLOCK. DAY. A BUNCH OF M&MS

pattern. In
the EVA airlock, it's zero G.
Are floating in mid-air, forming an intricate 3D

just
blue
hunched

Phil, strapped into a chair by a galley counter, is completing this weightless puzzle by placing a final M&M. He looks bored, sluggish. In the b.g., Terri is over a microscope.

coming
obsessive

McConnell emerges from the core tunnel, behind them, up from the lower Hab, then pushes off from the ladder, floating towards Phil. He grins, admiring Phil's handiwork.

MCCONNELL

What's that?

PHIL

That... is the exact chemical composition of my ideal woman.

MCCONNELL

Used to be.

He plucks out a couple of the M&Ms as he drifts by.

PHIL

Hey!

McConnell grins, snacking on the M&Ms.

MCCONNELL

Now what is it?

Phil looks sadly at his floating model.

PHIL

A frog.

the

McConnell and Terri laugh as Phil starts scarfing down rest of the M&Ms. Swooping at them with both hands.

TERRI

I guess now we have our answer to the effects of long-term interplanetary travel on the human mind. The answer is Phil.

MCCONNELL

(smiles)

I'm gonna get an update on SIMA. It should be just about close enough to start capturing some surface images.

starts He's drifted to another short ladder, and now grabs it, up to the cockpit, atop the Hab.

INT. COCKPIT. DAY

the As McConnell appears in the cockpit, he sees Woody by forward instrumentation panel, looking at a monitor.
The cockpit is also zero G.

MCCONNELL

Hey, Skip.

WOODY

Take a look.

McConnell pulls himself forward.

ANGLE ON MONITOR

clearly MARS completely fills the screen. Surface details are brown visible. Something is moving down there, an amorphous swirl.

INT. COCKPIT. DAY

WOODY

What do you make of that?

MCCONNELL

Dust storm. Southern hemisphere, coming from the east... Big fella, too.

WOODY

Headed for Chryse Planitia.

MCCONNELL

Yup. Could get a little hairy just about landing time...

McConnell pulls back from the screen, looks at Woody.

WOODY

We'll have to be ready to move fast.
Maybe even advance our ETA. Those
things can cover the whole planet,
and last up to a year.

A beat. They both hope he's wrong.

MCCONNELL

When does SIMA do her fly-by?

WOODY

Tomorrow morning, about 0600. That's
when we find out whether we came all
this way for nothing.

is They exchange a glance. Woody's right, but the thought
too terrible to dwell on. McConnell looks back at Mars.

MCCONNELL

(softly)

My money's on Luke.

INT. MARS RECOVERY. EVA AIRLOCK. NEXT MORNING

CLOSE ON A DIGITAL CLOCK

Just turning over to read "0545."

TERRI

her Pulls her gaze away from these numbers. Judging from
Restlessly, redrimmed eyes, it's been a long, anxious night.
tube of looking to distract herself, she reaches for a test
Nearby blood, straps it into a centrifuge, sets it spinning.
is her electron microscope.

MCCONNELL (LOWER HAB)

closed. Lies on his cot in his own cubicle, with the door
can The lower hab has artificial gravity (AG) and McConnell
bureau. move normally. Hands behind his head, he stares at his

PHOTO OF A WOMAN

smiling, Rests there, in its leather travel frame. Beautiful,
dark-haired: MAGGIE MCCONNELL. Her face glows with
intelligence and energy.

MCCONNELL

"0546." Shifts his eyes. The clock on his bulkhead reads

PHIL (LOWER HAB)

a Stands in the communal bathroom, still in his pajamas,
glances towel around his shoulders, brushing his teeth. He
his at another digital clock, which reads "0547." Shakes
is head impatiently. He looks back into the mirror, then
surprised to hear MUSIC lilting incongruously over the
loudspeakers: Elvis Presley's "Blue Moon."

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. EVA AIRLOCK. DAY

stops Phil floats in through the connecting tunnel, then
of himself at a handhold. He grins, charmed by the sight

WOODY AND TERRI DANCING

surprisingly Like a weightless Fred and Ginger. Woody is
good at this. Enthusiastic, unselfconscious.
pushing He sweeps Terri gallantly about the little cabin,
some off from every handy surface, even guiding her into
passable twirls and dips. She laughs, shaking her head.

PHIL

What brought this on?

WOODY

Zero-G. My last chance to be graceful.
Once we're in Mars gravity, it's

back to shuffling my feet and grabbing her butt.

TERRI

I'll take what I can get.

She grins, kisses his ear, as Phil turns, sees

MCCONNELL

couple. A
eyes
smile:
Who has now arrived, is also watching the dancing
twinge of sadness crosses his features. But when his
meet Phil's, he shakes off the feeling and manages a
Aren't they something?

COMPUTER,
Over the music, they hear a CHIRP from the SHIP'S
then an announcement.

COMPUTER

Attention. Incoming packet.

over to
They all look at each other. This is it! Woody spins
a console, shuts off the music.

MCCONNELL

It's SIMA.

INT. COCKPIT. DAY. MINUTES LATER

lights are
expressions, we
The crew is gathered around a display screen. The
dim, reflecting up off their faces. By their
can tell the news is not good.

CLOSE ON THE SCREEN

Mars
It's a color, high-resolution satellite image of the
One Base Camp. Ghostly, dust-covered. No signs of life.

WOODY

Looks deserted.

PHIL

It's still standing, though. So is
the ERV. And look, there's the

greenhouse.

MCCONNELL

We know Luke survived for at least a few hours. Question is, are there any signs of recent activity?

They all scan the screen. Phil spots something.

PHIL

There.

He grabs a stylus and touches the screen. They all look.

CLOSE ON THE SCREEN

Using where the stylus touches the screen as the focal point, some the image enlarges. THREE LONGISH DIRT PILES appear, fifty meters from the hab.

PHIL

What the hell are those?

McConnell gets it first.

MCCONNELL

Graves.

They all realize he's right. They sit back, stunned. But then Phil has another thought.

PHIL

Hold on. There's only three. That means --

TERRI

Phil --

PHIL

It means Luke must still be --

TERRI

No. It just means there was nobody left to bury him.

This quiets everyone for a long moment.

WOODY

Check the radiation levels.

Phil keys in some commands and data pops up onscreen.

PHIL

Normal.

WOODY

Go to the disaster site.

The
Face,
debris
was,

Phil uses the stylus to bring MORE IMAGES into view.
The frame moves over the terrain in the direction of the
first in SWIFT BLURS, then slowing. Scattered rock
come into view. The IMAGE ARRIVES where the mountain
and they see...

dropped
sculpture. As
towards
They

Debris in every direction, NEAT SPIRALS of it now,
uncannily into place, like some massive earth
if - but this makes no sense -- it had been swirled
a LARGE CRATER. The crater itself is a perfect circle.
FOCUS on the CENTER OF THE CRATER, but the image gets
distorted by STATIC.

MCCONNELL

What's wrong?

PHIL

I don't know. Magnetic interference?

Phil tweaks the stylus, but the image won't clear up.

WOODY

Go to infrared.

Phil works the keyboard.

THE SCREEN

IMAGE,

Goes to INFRARED, reading heat, The middle of the
where the Face is, is still distorted, refusing focus.

THE ASTRONAUTS

Sit back, exasperated.

PHIL

Must be a problem with SIMA. I don't see how an earthquake, six months ago, could give us this kind of distortion.

MCCONNELL

That was no quake.

He leans closer, staring intently.

WOODY

Then what the hell was it?

engaged;
first
unlock
McConnell shakes his head. But his every sense is he's like a predator just sighting his prey for the time. We see in his eyes an utter determination to this secret.

EXT. SPACE. DAY

now
Mars Recovery is speeding ever closer to Mars, which looms large, a dusty red mysterious sphere.

INT. MARS RECOVERY. LOWER HAB. DAY

taped
McConnell and crew are eating dinner while they watch a message from MMCR.

CLOSE ON MONITOR SCREEN

or
great
is
As Ray Beck addresses them. Other NASA STAFFERS, twenty more, have crowded in behind him, and we sense their hopefulness and high spirits; the whole team's triumph tantalizingly close now.

BECK

We're going to continue analyzing this data and try to determine what the problem is with those images. Frankly, we're just as stumped as you guys, but we'll keep on it.
(glancing around)

We agree that the evidence of the graves is inconclusive and that a ground search is advisable. Be aware there are little sand storms kicking up near Mars One Base, but the big one you spotted is turning south. It shouldn't be a factor.

Beck takes a breath, smiles.

BECK

We're all pretty excited here and we're sure you must be feeling the same. Enjoy your meal and get a good night's sleep. We anticipate that tomorrow morning you will be Go for Mars Orbital Insertion.

INT. MARS RECOVERY. LOWER HAB. DAY

high
WHOOPS OF JOY from McConnell's crew. Woody and Terri
five each other.

BECK

God bless you and goodnight. End of transmission.

The monitor screen GOES BLACK.

INT. MARS RECOVERY. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

everyone's
The lighting is subdued for a sleep period, but
too restless. There's a low HUM of equipment.

INT. EVA AIRLOCK. NIGHT

single
her
out,
Terri and Phil are playing computer Monopoly under a
light. Terri is using touch-screen technology to move
piece. She glances at Phil. He has spread some M&Ms
letting them drift in mid-air as he performs his ritual
weeding out of the red ones. She shakes her head.

TERRI

What if you opened up your meal packs and found that, instead of putting in everything but red ones, they'd made a mistake and put in only red

ones?

PHIL

Hey, that's a funny notion. And what if in your meal packs, instead of brown rice, there were spring-loaded spikes that shot into your eyes?

TERRI

(pause)

How did you ever pass the psych evaluation?

PHIL

When you're schizophrenic, they take the higher score.

He touches the screen to roll the dice.

INT. MARS RECOVERY. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

McConnell, in his cubicle, looks away from the photo of Maggie. Haunted by memories. He rises, flips through

the CDs

in a storage case, pulls one out. He holds this

carefully,

hesitating, then feeds it into his computer.

Immediately his

screen saver vanishes and we see

HOME VIDEO OF A PARTY

An impromptu celebration, a bunch of friends gathered

in a

semi-darkened living room. The footage is HANDHELD, a

bit

jerky. People have paper plates of food, beers in hand, everyone is a little tipsy. Debra is there, Terri,

Phil,

Cote, Kirov, others. They're watching a STILL PHOTO

SEQUENCE,

shown on a large screen TV, with commentary by Luke and

Woody.

THE FIRST PHOTO

Is of a small boy (YOUNG MCCONNELL) in his pajamas,

kneeling

in front of a Christmas tree. He's grinning

ecstatically as

he holds up a brand new model rocket.

LUKE

Jim's first ship was seriously underpowered...

painfully bad LAUGHTER at this. Some AD LIB CRACKS about the haircut and the pajamas.

THE SECOND PHOTO

standing Is of a gawky-looking teenage girl (YOUNG MAGGIE), on a porch at night, posing a bit self-consciously by a telescope on its tripod.

WOODY

Maggie was always starstruck...

eyeglasses and More LAUGHTER, plus some digs about the nerdy braces. VIDEOCAMERA swings around the room, REVEALING the adult JIM and MAGGIE. They sit side by side on the hearth, leaning into each other, looking very happy.

MAGGIE

I'll get you guys for this.

VIDEOCAMERA More LAUGHTER. Everyone's having a great time. The swings back towards the TV screen as

THIRD PHOTO APPEARS

hand. Jim and Maggie, young adults, standing on the wing of a fighter jet. Both in Air Force flight suits, helmets in hand. Suntanned, cocky, flashing radiant smiles.

LUKE

When they met at the Air Force Academy, it was "love at first flight."

GROANS and LAUGHTER from the offscreen watchers.

WOODY

After that, NASA training was tough. All Jim could think about was exploring a heavenly body. More ribald LAUGHTER, as

FOURTH PHOTO APPEARS

Maggie and Jim, tethered together, floating weightlessly in space suits.

LUKE

But Maggie, as you can see, kept him on a short leash. Until...

A FIFTH PHOTO

Shows McConnell, in a dress uniform, leaning in to kiss Maggie, who wears a white bridal gown.

WOODY

Mission accomplished!

ANGLE ON MCCONNELL, IN THE PRESENT

CHEERS,
he's not
As he smiles at this, hearing the renewed LAUGHTER and the AD-LIBBED DIGS from the video. He becomes aware alone. He looks up.

WOODY

They
Stands in the doorway of his cubicle. Their eyes meet. both smile, turning back to the video. Remembering.

IN THE VIDEO

standing at
waves
Luke and Woody have stepped forward, INTO SHOT, the sides of the TV, where the last photo lingers. Luke his hands, hushing everybody.

LUKE

Today we celebrate a new chapter in their story. And guys, it's a pretty historic one.

Both men raise champagne flutes.

WOODY

Let's hear it for the newly-announced Captain and Co-Captain of Mars One. To Jim and Maggie!

grins,
CHEERS at this, repeats of "Jim and Maggie!" Luke
giving a little signal, and we see

A FINAL PHOTO

surf
a
Of Maggie in Jim's arms, both of them in goofy tropical
vacation wear, smiling. Evidently a photo taken in the
somewhere, but here it's been crudely superimposed onto
Martian landscape. Laughter greets this unlikely image.

LUKE

When you guys land, it'll prove once
and for all there's no intelligent
life on Mars.

to
Terri
More hoots of LAUGHTER, CATCALLS, but Maggie jumps in
protest, as the VIDEOCAMERA SWINGS TO HER AND JIM.
sits nearby.

MAGGIE

Hey, c'mon, what if I'm right?

ASSORTED VOICES

Oh no, here we go! Don't get her
started! Somebody put on some music!

MAGGIE

It's our sister planet!

PHIL

Oh brother!

sport.
LAUGHTER at this, and Maggie joins in. She's a good

TERRI

Maggie, why does this have to be
about us? Mars is a great opportunity
for pure science.

MAGGIE

We'll do the science. And we'll do
it very well. That's what we've
trained for. But what if there's
more...? In all our myths, in every
human culture, Mars has always held

a special attraction. What if that means something? Only we don't understand it yet...

caught up
VIDEO
The mood of the party is changing, as everyone is in Maggie's spell. She has a radiant simplicity. The CAMERA DRIFTS IN ON HER; we are caught up, too.

MAGGIE

The universe is not chaos. It's connection. Life reaches out for life...

She looks at McConnell, smiles. He takes her hand.

MAGGIE

This is what we were born for, isn't it? To stand on a new world, and look beyond it to the next one. It's who we are.

her
hadn't
A silence; the guests are enchanted by the purity of passion. She smiles, suddenly self-conscious. She meant to get so carried away.

IN THE PRESENT - MCCONNELL

screen.
beat.
Reaches out, gently taps the keyboard, FREEZING the He and Woody, their eyes shining, stare at her image. A

WOODY

You okay?

MCCONNELL

Yeah. I'm good to go.

saddened,
renewed
Woody glances at him. It's true. Rather than being McConnell seems to have taken on new strength. A sense of wonder.

MCCONNELL

After all these years... Can you believe it? Tomorrow we'll be standing on Mars.

Woody nods, smiles.

WOODY

You know what? She may have been right.

McConnell looks at him.

WOODY

If that wasn't a quake down there, then something else caused it. Or planned it... You're thinking the same thing.

MCCONNELL

It's never been out of my mind.

WOODY

Jesus. You realize what this means?

McConnell nods. Looks again at Maggie's face on the screen.

MCCONNELL

She knew, Woody. She was the only one of us that ever thought there might be something down there.

WOODY

Yeah, and we're not leaving until we find out... Deal?

Woody turns. Before leaving, he hesitates just a moment, turning back. One last thought, and he doesn't know he's going to say it until it comes out.

WOODY

Maggie was the best of us.

McConnell looks at him, silent but grateful. Woody goes.

McConnell turns back, looking at her smiling face, frozen on the screen.

INT. COCKPIT. NIGHT

MARS LOOMS AHEAD OF US.

MUCH
next
As seen through the cockpit windows. Huge, beautiful,
CLOSER now. We can make out swirling pink clouds, large
surface features. It's just before Martian dawn, the
morning.

MCCONNELL

Range 6783 and closing. 35 minutes
till Mars Orbital Capture.

WOODY

Okay, people let's look sharp. If we
overshoot, there's no coming back.

PHIL (O.S.)

Yeah, and drifting through eternity
will ruin your whole day.

and co-
CAMERA
adjustments
In the cockpit, Woody and McConnell are in the pilot
pilot's wearing space suits but not yet helmets. AS
PULLS BACK AND AWAY, we see them making instrument
in preparation for MOI.

TERRI (O.S.)

Delta V systems initialized.

WOODY

Charge primary APU.

TERRI (O.S.)

Engaged. Charged.

WOODY

Select HPU fuel cells for run.

TERRI (O.S.)

Engaged.

MCCONNELL

Tie main bus to systems.

PHIL (O.S.)

Power ready.

MCCONNELL

Select H2/O2 HPU and fuel cells for

open.

PHIL (O.S.)

H2/O2 control valves open.

CAMERA TURNS, PUSHING DOWN INTO...

INT. EVA AIRLOCK. NIGHT

...Where Phil and Terri sit side by side at a pair of computers, relaying cockpit commands to the systems.

WOODY (O.S.)

Charge flow.

TERRI

Charged and on-line

WOODY (O.S.)

Reset PW.

TERRI

Set

MCCONNELL

Transfer protocol data from EVA station.

PHIL

Transferred. Awaiting track confirmation.

overhead,
screen, is
holed

There's a sudden LOUD, BRITTLE POP from somewhere and Phil's gloved hand, hovering over a computer punctured through and through. The screen itself is and spiderwebbed with a loud CRACK!

PHIL

Uhhh!

PHIL HOLDS UP HIS HAND

droplets of
towards
astronauts'

As he and Terri stare at it, dumbfounded. Thick blood leak out and begin to swirl away, sucked up the venting puncture in the hull over head. The helmets dangle up there, awaiting use.

TERRI

What in God's --

Suddenly we hear HIGH PITCHED ALARMS SOUNDING, then the
PINGING OF MORE TINY MISSILES, slashing across the
ship's
outer skin.

WOODY AND MCCONNELL

Are staring back from the cockpit, reacting in
astonishment
to Phil's drifting blood and to the alarms. Then Woody
suddenly understands.

WOODY

Micrometeoroids

MCCONNELL

(scanning sensors)
Breach hits in the hull!

ANGLES ON TERRI AND PHIL

As she seizes his wounded hand, tries to stop the
bleeding.
He's staring at a gauge.

PHIL

Outgassing! Losing pressure!

TERRI

Woody, seal the breach!

ANGLE ON WOODY

As he unbuckles, dives from the cockpit back down into
the
yanks
EVA, and floats quickly over to a storage hatch. He
this open pulling out a

PATCH GUN

Then spins around in zero-G, as his eyes track

THE RISING DROPLETS OF BLOOD

Which give a telltale hint of the puncture's location,
somewhere up among the dangling helmets on the
"ceiling."

WOODY PUSHES OFF

Rising to this area, and shoves aside a helmet with a shattered faceplate -- its label reads "MCCONNELL" --

to
dangling
here,

REVEAL A BREACH IN THE HULL. Jagged metal edges, insulation. The blood droplets are whirling out through going into the vacuum of space.

Quickly Woody stuffs the muzzle of the patch gun into the
the
PINGS,
then

puncture, firing a thick grey sealant. We hear MORE ECHOING LOUDLY, but after a few seconds they DIMINISH, abruptly STOP. The KLAXONS continue to wail.

WOODY

Kill those alarms!

McConnell punches buttons, MUTING THE ALARMS, and they
all
beat. But
appeared.
phenomenon.

strain to listen, faces tense and sweating. A long the meteor shower has passed by, as abruptly as it The astronauts turn, becoming aware of a strange

PHIL'S BLOOD DROPLETS

spheres in
faster
core

Have stopped in place, wobbling eerily as perfect the zero-G. Then suddenly they start moving again, and faster, in a new direction. Down through the open tunnel that leads to the lower Hab.

MCCONNELL

Stares at a gauge that confirms what's happening.

MCCONNELL

Still outgassing in the lower Hab!
There must be another hole down there,
even bigger.

PHIL

Losing pressure fast! We're gonna decompress!

WOODY

Computer, how long until zero atmosphere?

COMPUTER

(after a beat)

Four minutes, nine seconds.

PHIL

If we get below 20% atmosphere, the power will shut down!

TERRI

Are you sure?

PHIL

Positive! A vacuum inside the ship would cause a total electrical failure. The nav computers will fry!

MCCONNELL

(to Woody)

We'll lose all control. We won't be able to fire the engines to capture Mars orbit.

punches Just then a computer screen flickers, freezes. Phil keys with his good hand. What he sees shocks him.

PHIL

It's already starting. The primary L-1 hub has been smashed. The systems are crashing.

more Woody looks back at his crew, struggling to project calm than he really feels.

WOODY

Everybody switch to suit oxygen. We beat this in the simulator, we can do it here. Jim, you've got the ship. I'm going EVA.

They stare at him, stunned by their immense task.

WOODY

C'mon, people, let's go! Let's work

the problem!

INT. EVA AIRLOCK. MOMENTS LATER

but
into
Terri, now helmeted, is putting Woody's helmet on him,
something's in the way, chafing his neck. He reaches
his suit, pulls out...

THE CHAIN

rocketship
From around his neck, with his little Flash Gordon
dangling.

WOODY HANDS THIS TO TERRI

time
his
towards
airlock
As they share a brief, loving glance, but there's no
for words. She tightens his helmet ring, and he brushes
gloved fingertips on her faceplate. Then he hurries
the inner hatch door, where McConnell is throwing
switches. Woody and McConnell exchange a look.

essential
back on
painful.
At the EVA computer panel, Phil is shutting down non-
power drains, trying to get the main computer system
line. His wounded hand makes this difficult and

PHIL

Jesus, it's still bleeding.

TERRI

Keep the pressure on!

COMPUTER

Eighty percent atmosphere...

INT./EXT. AIRLOCK. NIGHT

Woody
an
The outer airlock door is now open, revealing stars, as
drifts through it into space. He's now wearing the MMU,
oversized jet pack like the ones used by the shuttle
astronauts.

INT. EVA ROOM. NIGHT

MCCONNELL'S HELMET.

past
Phil's
With its shattered faceplate -- now useless -- drifts
Terri as she is wrapping med tape around gauze pads on
glove.

MCCONNELL

computer.
Floats up to them, checking on Phil's work at the

TERRI

Jim, you've gotta get your spare
helmet from storage.

MCCONNELL

No time. Phil, can you keep the nav
computers on-line?

PHIL

I can't get this damn machine to re-
initialize! And the automated systems
just went down. We can't shut down
the hab rotation from here.

MCCONNELL

I'll do it from below.

TERRI

We're losing pressure. You could
embolize.

COMPUTER

Seventy percent atmosphere...

starts off
McConnell looks at her, knows she's right. But he
anyway. Phil reaches out his good hand.

PHIL

Jim, I've got an idea. If you guys
can save enough atmosphere, I'll
disconnect the power in the main
computer bay, then jump start the
systems. I'll do a hard boot.

stares This is a radical, incredibly risky notion. McConnell
hard at Phil. So does Terri.

MCCONNELL

Has that ever been tested?

PHIL

Are you kidding? These machines are
much too valuable.

death. McConnell looks from Terri to Phil. It's life and

MCCONNELL

Do it.

pushes Then he turns, and the CAMERA FOLLOWS MCCONNELL as he
tunnel, away from the console and dives down into the core
heading towards the

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. LOWER HAB

deck, ...where he emerges from the core into the rotating Hab
and pushes himself down a ladder toward the floor. He
accelerates as he gets closer to the floor, then rights
gravity. himself with a twist and lands on his feet -- now in

EXT. MARS RECOVERY. NIGHT

of the Woody, in the MMU, is hovering over the lower segment
reach Hab hull, and right away we see his problem. He can't
spewing the damaged spot because it's spinning past him,
vapor.

WOODY

(over radio)

Jim, how we doin' on the AG?

INT. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

clicking
McConnell runs to a computer terminal and starts
with the mouse.

MCCONNELL

Just one goddamn second. Come on,
c'mon...

COMPUTER

Voice print identification.

MCCONNELL

McConnell!

COMPUTER

(a beat)
Accepted. Shutting down artificial
gravitational rotation.

turns,
with a
McConnell hears a sound up at the core tunnel. He
it's Terri. She holds an small 0-2 cannister, marked
red cross.

MCCONNELL

Hang on!

McConnell grabs onto a counter edge as...

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

pulses.
to
Attitude control thrusters on the hull begin firing in
The rotation of the lower Hab deck immediately starts
slow down. The great red ball of Mars drifts by.

INT. CORE TUNNEL. NIGHT

the
Terri, lurching, grabs a ladder strut, and watches from
tunnel as...

MCCONNELL

rotation
He
whistling out
Is also jarred by the firing of the thrusters. The
slows until the Hab is still. Zero-G. McConnell floats.
and Terri can hear the terrifying sound of air

into space through the breach hole.

COMPUTER

Sixty per cent atmosphere...

WOODY (V.O.)

Get some light on the hole so I can locate it.

MCCONNELL

I've got a better idea.
(shouts to Terri)
Stay there!

of He starts rooting through Phil's storage area -- bags
M&Ms, comic books -- looking for what he needs.

INT. COCKPIT. NIGHT

scared, Phil is now strapped into the pilot's seat. He's
good sweating hard, but concentrating fiercely as his one
hand works a battery-powered screwdriver.

the He's removing the panel of the main computer bay. Over
intercom, he can hear the merciless struggle going on
elsewhere.

WOODY (V.O.)

I'm topside, Jim, do you know which sector?

MCCONNELL (V.O.)

I'm workin' on it!

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

his The lower Hab deck is no longer revolving. Woody pops
there's thrusters and drifts over the metallic skin. But
such a vast area to search!

WOODY

Jesus, uh, OK, this is gonna be like searching for a needle in a haystack.

INT. LOWER HAB NIGHT

violently,
mouth.
speaks

McConnell locates a can of Dr. Pepper, shakes this
then tosses it up to Terri, who's still in the tunnel
She catches the drifting can, confused. When McConnell
again, he's gasping for air.

MCCONNELL

Shake out the liquid.

TERRI

Jim, I don't --

MCCONNELL

Shake it out near the hull!

McConnell
caught
the

Terri shakes out soda from the open can. She and
watch the brown stream of fluid swirl up into the air,
by escaping oxygen. It rises towards the "ceiling" of
outer hull, like a miniature tornado.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

his

Woody still drifts over the hull, searching intently as
frustration builds.

WOODY

C'mon, c'mon, where are you...?

COMPUTER (V.O.)

Fifty per cent atmosphere...

INT. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

remarkable.

Terri, staring at the ceiling, sees something

THE SODA STREAM

now
She

Swirling ever tighter, has formed a whirlpool that's
being sucked out through the breach hole in the hull.

can now see the ugly puncture for the first time.

MCCONNELL

(gasping)

Woody, the breach is in sector four!
Sector four, copy that?

WOODY (V.O.)

Copy, I' heading there now.

in
starts
Terri turns, excited by McConnell's triumph; she's just
time to see him collapse to the floor below her, as he
to lose consciousness. He's deathly pale.

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

spouting
away
Woody spots a tiny geyser of brownish ice crystals
out of the hull of the lower Hab. It's some distance
from him, but clearly visible.

WOODY

(to himself, marveling)

Sonofabitch. You never did that in
the simulator.

INT. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

down
cannister,
sucks in
Terri pushes off from the ladder, drifting weightlessly
to McConnell. She opens the valve of the oxygen
pushing the plastic mask over McConnell's face. He
air, color returning to his skin as he revives.

INT. COCKPIT. NIGHT

CLOSE ON THE COMPUTER'S GUTS.

gloved
them.
An incredible tangle of tubes, wires, chips, as Phil's
fingers -- both hands now -- probe desperately through

PHIL

Where are you, you little bastard,
where are you...?

PHIL WINCES WITH PAIN.

computer
gauges
apart,
glance at

As he moves his hands and forearms deep inside the bay. Around him, several of the smaller screens and are starting to malfunction, the data streams breaking streaking into electronic snow. He shoots a tense

THE NAVIGATIONAL MONITOR

much
flashing

Which is flickering crazily. It shows the ship moving closer to its critical MOI point, indicated by a red triangle aimed down at the Martian surface.

COMPUTER

Forty percent atmosphere...

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

towards
yet.

Woody, popping his thrusters, moves as fast as he can the protruding finger of crystal, but he's not there

moving
controls.

All of a sudden Woody's thrusters cut out. The ship is by, a meter beneath him. Woody punches his arm Nothing.

him,
starts to

Then just as the outer edge of the hab starts to pass the thrusters kick back in. Woody grabs the edge, move to the hole. Woody lets out a breath.

WOODY

(to himself)

Whoa.

INT. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

nods
leaping

McConnell, holding his breath, grabs a patch gun from a storage locker. Terri's still got the 0-2 cannister. He to her, and together they push off from the floor,

"ceiling."

been

weightlessly up to the other side of the Hab, the
They reach the gaping puncture, which they now see has
only partially dammed by the soda ice.

INT. COCKPIT. NIGHT

VERY CLOSE ON THE COMPUTER'S INTERIOR

been

As Phil's gloved fingers finally locate the plug he's
searching for. He hopes. And grip it firmly.

PHIL

Gotcha!

PHIL TAKES A DEEP BREATH.

WHINES,

are

be

to

Says a silent prayer. Then he yanks the plug. SHRILL
ELECTRONIC CRACKLES from all around him, as the systems
abruptly shut down, in a way they were never meant to
mishandled. Terrifyingly, a couple of the monitors arc
each other as they die. Dodging sparks, Phil stares at

THE NAVIGATIONAL MONITOR

As it also flickers and dies. Now they're flying blind.

COMPUTER

Thirty percent atmosphere...

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

crystal,

Woody arrives at the ice finger, knocks away the big
then pulls his patch equipment from a pouch.

INT. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

smash

getting

works,

In the Hab, Terri uses the base of the 0-2 cannister to
away the interior ice chunk, then McConnell, who's
wobbly again, blasts the hole with the epoxy gun. As he
Terri gives him another hit of air.

COMPUTER

Twenty percent atmosphere...

The lights flicker out in the Hab.

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

rips

Outside, Woody slaps a big square patch over the hole,
off the backing.

CLOSE ON THE PATCH

into

As it changes color and shrinks, drawing itself down
the metal of the hull.

INT. COCKPIT. NIGHT

VERY CLOSE ON THE COMPUTER'S INTERIOR.

As Phil's fingers re-connect the same plug.

PHIL PULLS HIS HAND OUT

streaked
gauze
switch.

From inside the computer bay. He's trembling, sweat-
inside his faceplate. Blood has soaked through his
pads. His good hand hovers over the red main power
The moment of truth.

PHIL

OK... OK now...

booting

With a dramatic click, he throws the switch, hard-
the computer system back on. He stares at the screens.
Nothing happens!

PHIL

Come on. Come on...!

something.

Frightened, furious, Phil bangs on the switch with his
cordless screwdriver. When all else fails, hit

INT. LOWER HAB. NIGHT

Terri,
to
eternity.

Feeble starlight from the viewports. McConnell and
drifting side by side, stare at one another, expecting
die within seconds. It feels like an agonizing

COMPUTER

Twenty percent atmosphere...

as
McConnell's eyes widen, as he realizes this is the same
the last reading.

COMPUTER

Pressure stabilizing... Atmosphere
level increasing.

in
grin.
it,
Terri and McConnell look at each other. Tears of relief
her eyes. He is exhausted, nearly spent, but manages a
She holds the 0-2 mask up to his face, and as he grips
breathing deeply, they hug one another.

INT. COCKPIT. NIGHT

All
Phil
The lights and computer screens are flickering back on.
of them! The cockpit lights up like a Christmas tree.
bounces up and down like a madman, babbling in triumph.

PHIL

Yes! Awriiiiight! Had it all the way.
Yes!

Forgetting his injury, he pounds his gloved fist on the
console in triumph.

PHIL

Shit!

He wrings his injured hand, then his gaze is caught by

THE NAVIGATIONAL MONITOR

coming
Which pops back on, showing the ship and the MOI point
perilously close together.

PHIL'S EYES WIDEN IN FEAR

As he keys his mike urgently.

PHIL

Get back in here, guys!

EXT. SPACE. NIGHT

Woody floats above the repaired hole, scanning the
nearby surface of the hull.

WOODY

Jim, there's a lot of scarring...
I'd better check for other punctures
while I'm out here.

MCCONNELL (V.O.)

Negative, negative. Woody, get back
inside. We've gotta start the
checklist for orbital insertion.

WOODY

(a beat; reluctantly)
Copy, I'm heading there now.

Woody jets back towards the open EVA hatch. But as he
reaches this, about to re-enter the ship, he's captured
momentarily by a breathtakingly beautiful sight below him.

SUNRISE OVER MARS

As the huge planet is REVEALED in all its red,
unearthly glory. It's so close now that individual features can
be seen with the naked eye -- the vast chasm of Valles
Marineris,
the and then Olympus Mons, poking all the way up through
Martian atmosphere. A stunning, alluring spectacle.

WOODY

Stares down at Mars, enthralled, as sunlight floods the
side of the spaceship, sparkles off his visor. Dawn, after a
very

breath. long night indeed. He whispers lovingly, under his

WOODY

Hey, Beautiful...

through Then he stirs himself out of his reverie and hurries
the EVA hatch.

stark CAMERA DRIFTS QUICKLY BACK and down along the hull as
a sunlight flares off the big propellant tanks, three in
a row, and the thick silver tubes that join them. There's
a good deal of scarring and denting from the meteor
shower. Then, as the ship begins to MOVE OUT OF FRAME...

WE MOVE IN CLOSER

bells, we On one of these tubes, a feeder line to the engine
of see a scatter of tiny, undetected holes, about the size
apparently the eraser at the end of a pencil. So small, so
harmless...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. EVA AIRLOCK. DAY

sweat, As Woody enters, stripped from the MMU, dripping with
just McConnell is waiting for him. For a moment the two men
fierce look at each other, then they surge forward into a
hug.

WOODY

(whispers)

Know what? You've got enough left.

McConnell looks at him, understands.

stitching up Terri sits nearby, where she has just finished

seat

Phil's hand. As Woody goes to her, she rises from her
and looks at him tears of relief and pride in her eyes.

TERRI

Piece of cake?

WOODY

Well. Easier than the cha-cha.

He scoops her into his arms; they kiss passionately.

his own

Phil is blinking; something seems to be getting into
eyes. His voice catches for a moment.

PHIL

I don't know what you're getting so
cocky about. We scored better times
in the sim at least twice.

MCCONNELL

(grins)

How's his hand?

Terri separates from Woody, looks down at Phil.

TERRI

Seems OK. Couple of the tendons are
going to be a little tight for awhile.
Try to close your fingers, Phil,
nice and slowly.

remains

Phil starts curling up his fingers. The middle digit
extended in the universal gesture. They all consider
this
for a moment. Then Phil looks up cheerfully.

PHIL

Well, at least I'll still be able to
drive.

roars

giddy

After a split-second they get it, and the whole crew
with LAUGHTER, which builds and builds; they're almost
with the relief of the tension...

EXT. DEEP SPACE. DAY

MARS RECOVERY

as the
capture
spectacle

Sails INTO VIEW, with small attitude thrusters firing
great ship maneuvers into position for its orbital-
burn. Mars looks very large, blood-red. The entire
is majestic, awe-inspiring.

WOODY

OK, we're ready to light this candle.
Go/No Go for braking burn and MOI.
Engines?

INT. COCKPIT. DAY

All four astronauts are strapped in, fully suited and
helmeted. Mars looms through the cockpit windows. The
atmosphere is electric with excitement.

MCCONNELL

Go.

WOODY

Systems.

TERRI

Go.

WOODY

Nav.

PHIL

Go.

WOODY

We are Go for the burn. I'm fueling
the engines.

He flips three switches, in rapid sequence, and...

EXT. MARS RECOVERY. DAY

but
the
chunks,
As we MOVE IN on the damaged fuel line, we see a tiny
steady spray of fuel venting from the hole caused by
meteorite. This freezes into eerie streamers and
which slowly drift away from the ship. They're quite
beautiful.

PHIL (V.O.)

Optimum angle of entry minus seven
degrees. Six... Five...

INT. COCKPIT. DAY

set,
Woody looks at the others for moment -- everyone is
looking good -- then reaches for a last switch.

PHIL

Four... Three...

Woody hesitates, then glances at McConnell.

WOODY

Jim?

throw
McConnell, moved by this honor, nods. He reaches out to
the switch himself.

MCCONNELL

Let's go to Mars.

final
As the countdown indicator reaches "0000.00.00", a
signal PINGS, and he flips the switch.

EXT. MARS RECOVERY. DAY

do,
In total silence, the engines ignite. The second they
the streamers of frozen fuel explode in a white flash.

INT. COCKPIT. DAY

With alarms sounding, the four astronauts are slammed
violently forward, against their restraints.

WOODY

What the --

MCCONNELL

Shut down engines!

incredible
yanking
He and Woody both reach out, straining against the
G-forces, and manage to grab a red emergency lever,
it down hard.

EXT. MARS RECOVERY. DAY

chain
solar
are
trailing
like
ship,
shredded,
causes
cockpit --

Too late! IN SLOW MOTION, we see a terrifyingly violent reaction. The fuel tanks themselves explode, one after another. The supporting metal struts are vaporized. The panels are snapped off. Two of the huge engine bells smashed sideways, out of alignment, while the third, pieces of the cowling, goes hurtling off, PAST CAMERA, a flaming cannon ball. The entire aft section of the ship, including much of the lower Hab, instantly becomes a charred tangle of metal, and even worse, the explosion what's left of the ship -- mainly the EVA chamber and to tumble end over end, cartwheeling down towards Mars.

INT. COCKPIT. DAY

The

In the windows, Mars goes crazily in and out of view. astronauts, flung this way, then that, are all fighting against unconsciousness.

WOODY

Engines negative! No response! I've got no attitude control!

MCCONNELL

Manual separation! Blow the bolts!

WOODY

Negative! The CM doesn't have enough thrust to correct this rotation!

PHIL

We're too steep! Falling into the atmosphere...!

EXT. MARS RECOVERY. DAY

can be
screen,

From further away, the charred remainder of the ship seen spinning down towards Mars, which now fills the

shuttle.
outer
angle

looming as large as Earth, when seen from the space
The ship's motion is mercifully slowing as it hits the
atmosphere, but just as clearly this steep, unplanned
of entry dooms it.

PHIL

Christ, at this angle we'll burn up!

INT. COCKPIT. DAY

ON A COMPUTER.

with an
flash:

Their ANGLE OF ENTRY is shown -- much too direct --
indicated swerve into blinking red disaster. Warnings

CRITICAL ENTRY! PULL OUT!

WOODY

How much time've we got?

PHIL

I don't know! Three minutes? I don't
know!

McConnell's mind is racing furiously, desperately.

MCCONNELL

Where's the REMO?

PHIL

The Resupply Module? Why? That's not --

MCCONNELL

Where is it?!

appears:
soon

Phil punches buttons. ON THE SCREEN a second ellipse
a blinking orange dot labelled "REMO." It appears to be
intersecting with their own trajectory.

PHIL

Uh, it's close...

MCCONNELL

Damn it, how close?!

PHIL

(shaken)
I-I don't know. It'll take time...

MCCONNELL

We don't have time! Figure it out!
Now!

Phil frantically types in commands on the computer.

WOODY

Jim, we're dead stick, there's no
way to maneuver this ship into a
link-up!

MCCONNELL

Not the ship. Just us. We have to go
EVA.

They look at him, stunned. Leave the ship?

PHIL

You want us to transfer in suits?

TERRI

Jesus, Jim -- if we don't make it --
if we miss the REMO...

MCCONNELL

There's no other choice! Phil, how
close?!

PHIL

One kilometer, that's the best I can
do!

of They stare at Woody. We feel the full, terrible weight
his responsibility. Four lives hang on his call.

WOODY

Prepare to abandon ship.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. SPACE. DAY

other The astronauts are outside the ship, tethered to each
suits, with long shock cords. Other cords, clipped to their

- his
They're

trail gear bags. Phil clutches a silver metallic case -
precious computer repair kit. Woody is in the MMU.
all rotating at the same speed as the ship behind them.

WOODY

On my mark, seven percent left
thruster. Three, two, one, fire.

from
This
control.

All four astronauts fire a brief, simultaneous burst
the tiny attitude control thrusters in their suits.
stops their rotation, bringing their travel under
The ship continues spinning in the background.

Recovery.
exchanges a
dead in

Woody takes a final look at the charred, doomed Mars
The only home they've known for six months. He
silent glance with the others. They all expect to be
the next few minutes. Woody takes a breath, nods.

WOODY

Okay. Let's go.

away
pulls

He pops the big thrusters on the MMU and starts heading
from the ship. The cord between Woody and the others
taut and they start to follow.

WIDE SHOT

planet

Of Woody leading them away from the crippled spaceship,
against the magnificent backdrop of the blood-red
below. Four tiny figures, all alone in space.

ANGLE ON MCCONNELL AND THE OTHERS

As Phil looks back, his eyes searching the stars.

TERRI

What're you looking for?

PHIL

(softly, sadly)
Earth.

TERRI

(beat)

Hey. When we get back? We really
will have to try this in the sim.

He tries to smile. So does she.

MCCONNELL

How we doin' on fuel, Woody?

Woody eyes a small display screen on his forearm.

WOODY

I'm at fifty percent.

(looking down)

But I don't see the REMO.

THEIR POV

black

Everyone is looking back at the curve of Mars against
space, expecting to see the REMO coming up behind them.

TERRI

Happens to glance directly below.

TERRI

There she is!

THEIR POV

against

The black outline of the little cargo craft drifts
the red of Mars.

WOODY

Jesus. She's not where I thought
she'd be.

PHIL

We're going to miss her.

WOODY

Looks again at his display screen, frustrated.

MCCONNELL

What do you think?

WOODY

We can't catch it. Not like this.

MCCONNELL

(thinking quickly)

Use the tether.

From a compartment on the side of the MMU, Woody pulls out...

THE TETHER GUN

About the size of a large flare gun. There's a carabiner-like hook five inches in diameter on the front of the gun.

MCCONNELL

We'll only have one, maybe two shots before she's out of reach.

WOODY

It'll be better if I leave you the gun while I run out to the REMO. I've got enough fuel left for that.

MCCONNELL

You'll be going too fast.

WOODY

I'll aim to overshoot, then brake like hell; arc it in.

McConnell looks at him. They both know how risky this is, and they also know it's their only chance. Woody flips a switch on the gun and pulls on the hook. Off it comes, trailing wire. Woody clips the hook to the MMU, then hands McConnell the gun.

WOODY

Seeya in a few.

McConnell nods. Woody and Terri exchange a look -- tender, loving -- then Woody turns around and fires the MMU jets at full throttle. As Woody pulls away, line unspools from the tether gun.

WOODY AND THE REMO

were in
freeway.
He

Woody is chasing the REMO from above. It's as if he
an airplane, trying to land on a car racing along a
Woody is picking up speed quickly. Maybe too quickly.
checks his armpad display screen.

WOODY

Okay. I'm on path to overshoot. I'm
gonna take the edge off.

he
Woody starts braking with the MMU thrusters as hard as
can.

CLOSE ON THE THRUSTERS

Glowing with orange flame. They suddenly cut off.

WOODY'S EYES

Show alarm. He checks his display.

WOODY

I'm out. Coming in hot. Still long.
(beat)
Abandoning the unit. I'll brake with
suit jets.

open. He
pushes
jets.
Woody hits some buttons and the MMU's latches snap
grabs the hook connected to the tether line, then
himself free of the MMU, starts firing his small suit

WOODY'S POV

He's still going very quickly.

WITH MCCONNELL, TERRI AND PHIL

unspooling
them, as
throat.
Floating close together. The tether line is still
from the gun. They watch Woody, below and ahead of
he races towards the REMO. Terri's heart is in her

TERRI

Oh Jesus. Jesus...

McConnell reaches a glove out, touching her arm.

BACK ON WOODY

Still speeding towards the REMO. His suit jets cut out.

WOODY

Suit jets gone. But I'm gonna make contact...

MCCONNELL, TERRI AND PHIL

Stare at Woody's distant figure.

INTERCUT --

MCCONNELL

At what velocity?

WOODY

Impact's gonna be a little rough.

MCCONNELL

At what velocity?

WOODY

(beat)
Thirty-two.

A look between McConnell and Terri; her face is stricken.

MCCONNELL

I'm gonna use the gun to slow you.

WOODY

No! You slow me and I'll fall short.

MCCONNELL

It's too fast, Woody.

WOODY

No choice. I'll be okay. Here we go...

WOODY AND THE REMO

Woody's coming down on the module at over thirty kilometers

hand
WHAM! --

an hour. He holds the hook out in front of him with one
while grabbing the tether line with the other, and
he crashes into the REMO.

WOODY'S HAND

REMO.

Slams the hook against a receiver on the hull of the

IT CONNECTS --

WOODY

too

Tries to hold onto the tether line but his momentum is
much.

HIS GLOVED HANDS

Are ripped from the line.

WOODY

Slides over the hull of the REMO.

HIS HANDS

bump

Grasp in vain for something to grab onto. They drag and
and then finally his fingers close on... empty space.

WOODY

Is past the REMO, freefalling toward Mars.

BACK ON MCCONNELL, TERRI AND PHIL

As Terri screams.

TERRI

Woody!!

reel

McConnell hits a button on the tether gun and starts to
them quickly in towards the REMO.

WOODY

Tries his suit jets again -- they're empty.

HIS POV

Falling away from the REMO.

MCCONNELL AND THE OTHERS

Another

Are being reeled towards the REMO by the tether line.
couple hundred meters to go.

MCCONNELL

Woody, what's your status?

INTERCUTTING --

WOODY

(after a beat)

Uh, well, no suit jets and I'm still
carrying a good deal of velocity.

MCCONNELL

As soon as we get hooked up, I'll
come get you.

WOODY

(after a beat)

Uh, I'd have to say negative on that,
Jim.

MCCONNELL

Negative on the transmission?

WOODY

No, I heard you. Negative on the
maneuver. I am not retrievable.

McConnell and Terri share a quick, anguished look.

TERRI

Woody, that's not possible. You're
not going that fast.

WOODY

It comes down to the amount of fuel,
honey. The suit jets were designed
for attitude control, not travel.
Retrieval just won't work.

PHIL

It has to work!

WOODY

Hey, believe me, I don't like it any more than you do.

TERRI

Woody --

WOODY

Run the numbers, Jim.

MCCONNELL

I am.

display
meet

McConnell finishes looking over the numbers on his pad. Terri is staring at him. When McConnell's eyes meet hers, they are red-rimmed. Haunted.

MCCONNELL

Woody, you hang tight. We'll get into the REMO, fire her up, drop her into a lower orbit and come scoop you up.

WOODY

Sounds good, Jim.

TERRI

It's gonna take half an hour to get the REMO reoriented! Woody'll be... He'll be in the atmosphere by then!

MCCONNELL

Then we'll have to get her moving faster.

TERRI

We don't have time!

WOODY

You listen to Jim, honey. It's a good plan.

TERRI

No! We are going to --

PHIL

Oh Jesus, look! The ship!

Phil points. McConnell and Terri look.

THE MARS RECOVERY COCKPIT

glowing
giant
Is now several kilometers below and behind them. It's red... then orange... then white. Then it erupts into a fireball, devoured by friction with Mars' atmosphere.

MCCONNELL, TERRI AND PHIL IN DEEP SPACE

to
Are all staring at this, awed, when McConnell happens to look up again. He sees something alarming.

MCCONNELL

Look out!

THEIR POV

They are drifting quickly into the REMO.

MCCONNELL

Brakes!

ALL THREE

bang
They
the
Fire their suit jets, slowing themselves down. They into the REMO at about one-tenth the speed Woody did. find handholds and grab on. McConnell hits a button on the tether gun.

THE HOOK

button
already
Releases from the REMO's hull. McConnell hits another and it is reeled all the way into the gun. Phil is scrabbling at a latch on the REMO's outer airlock door.

MCCONNELL

Okay, let's get inside! Phil, start dumping the cargo, or there won't be room for us.

PHIL

But we need those supplies for --

MCCONNELL

Dump the cargo. Hang on, Woody!

WOODY

that
Is looking back at the REMO. Smiles with relief to see
Terri has reached it safely.

WOODY

Will do, Jim.

He turns to look at...

MARS

beat.
Right below him, filling his field of view. A long

WOODY

(softly)

Hey, Beautiful...

BACK AT THE REMO

from
REMO.
Terri makes a snap decision. She grabs the tether gun
McConnell's surprised hands, then pushes off from the
McConnell lunges after her, his gloved hand straining.

MCCONNELL

Terri, no!

fires
But it's too late. She's already out of reach, and now
her suit jets, pulling quickly away from the REMO.

MCCONNELL

Is reaching to activate his own jets, when

PHIL'S HAND

They
half-
Grabs at his wrist, restraining this suicidal courage.
stare at each other. McConnell wrenches his hand free,
maddened, agonized, staring after Terri.

MCCONNELL

Goddammit, Terri, it won't work!

But Terri keeps on going.

WOODY

Mars.
Looks back at the REMO, as he continues to fall towards
Sees the small figure of his wife heading towards him.

WOODY

Terri, what are you doing?

INTERCUT --

TERRI

I'll tell you what I'm not doing,
Woody. I'm not going to watch you
die.

WOODY

Terri --

TERRI

You'd do the same for me.

AT THE REMO

twinkle
Phil
Phil is watching as Terri drops towards the distant
of Woody's suit lights. The airlock door hangs open.
looks at McConnell, anguished.

MCCONNELL

Get inside. Dump the cargo, then
start the systems.
(Phil hesitates)
Now.

INTERCUTTING BETWEEN WOODY AND TERRI

As Woody keys his mike. Tries to steady his voice.

WOODY

No. I wouldn't come for you. Not if
it just wasn't possible.

TERRI

I can do it!

WOODY

No, Terri, you can't! You don't have
enough fuel to get me, stop us both,
and get us back. Hell, you come any
farther and you won't have enough to

get back yourself.

No response from Terri.

WOODY

Listen to me, goddammit! You have to stop! You have to stop now!

MCCONNELL

He's right, Terri... It's no use.

Terri looks at her armpad display.

CLOSE ON DISPLAY SCREEN

As her fuel indicator drops from 50 percent to 49 to...

TERRI

Releases her thumb from the toggle control.

HER SUIT JETS

Stop firing.

TERRI

Drifts, staring towards Woody.

TERRI AND WOODY

only

Are on the same trajectory, going the same speed, and about a hundred meters apart. But it might as well be infinity.

WOODY

Okay, honey...? You gotta go back now.

TERRI

The hell I do.

Terri raises up the tether gun and pulls the trigger.

THE HOOK

it.

Comes shooting out of the gun, wire spooling out behind

WOODY

Watches as it comes shooting down toward him.

PLATE POV -- MOVING -- AS

closer,
GUN

Woody gets larger and larger, the hook gets closer and
and then SNAP! -- the hook stops. ANGLE ON THE TETHER

The wire has run all the way out.

WOODY

from

Looks at the drifting hook, ten agonizing meters away
him. His only life preserver.

TERRI

into

Hits the button and the wire starts winching fast back
the gun.

WOODY

What are you doing?

TERRI

I'm gonna jet a little closer and
try again.

WOODY

Terri, you spend any fuel getting
closer, you won't get back, and if
anyone tries to get you, they'll die
too.

No response from Terri.

THE HOOK

voice

Is whipping back toward Terri and the gun. Woody's
cracks; he's very close to tears. Pleading now.

WOODY

Honey, please go back. Go back and
help everyone get down to the surface.

Terri

The hook slams back against the muzzle of the gun.
resets the gun quickly, in an anguished fury.

TERRI

I am not losing you.

WOODY

I can't let you do it. I can't. I'm sorry.

TERRI

something
Looks at Woody, two hundred meters away, sensing different in his voice now, a terrible resolve...

TERRI

Woody...?

WOODY

Raises his hands to his helmet ring. His eyes shining.

WOODY

I love you, Terri. God how I love you.

pushes
opens
He unscrews the ring, pops the seal. The outrush of air his helmet all the way off. Woody shuts his eyes and his mouth.

TERRI

Woody, nooooooooo...!!!

nothing
Ice crystals bloom with Woody's last breath. There's to suck in. He doesn't fight it. He lets death come.

ANGLE ON TERRI

Tears streaming, chest heaving, frantic.

TERRI

Woody, oh Woody, please God, no!

HER THUMB

voice,
fifty
Hovers over her suit jet toggle control. McConnell's from the distance, sounds very tired. Like he's aged years in the blink of an eye.

MCCONNELL

Come back, Terri.

Terri's thumb is still poised. Death would be better.

ANGLE ON MCCONNELL

inside, Outside the REMO. The hatch is still open. We see Phil
staring out anxiously towards Terri.

MCCONNELL

(quietly, simply)
He's gone.

Terri. He sees no movement from the distant, small figure of

MCCONNELL

Please, Terri...
(long beat)
We need you.

TERRI'S THUMB

Pushes the toggle control... to one side, not forward.

TERRI'S FACE

herself Inside her helmet, is streaming with tears. She turns
REMO. around, reluctantly. Heads slowly back towards the

INT. INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION. MMCR. DAY

labelled On the big screen at MMCR, a glowing green icon
computer "MARS RECOVERY" is shown in orbit, as a stream of
figures crawls beside it.

SUPER TITLE: "SPACE STATION. MMCR. 20 MINUTE TIME LAG"

headset Beck stands by the NEW CAPCOM, as the latter repeats
data.

NEW CAPCOM

Okay, they're Go for the burn and
MOI. Should be initiating the burn
just about... now.

streaks,
representing

Suddenly the data stream goes crazy. It shivers,
breaks up... then stops. The blinking green icon
Mars Recovery glows brighter... then vanishes.

rising

A moment of stunned silence in the big room. Then a
babble of scared, confused voices.

RAY BECK

His
place,
a

Takes a step forward, staring helplessly at the screen.
face goes pale, stricken. His worst nightmare is taking
right before his eyes -- and for the second mission in
row...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REMO. MARS ORBIT. NIGHT

outside.

The REMO is now on the night side of Mars. Cargo boxes,
packing cases and assorted equipment containers float
The hatch is sealed.

INT. REMO. MARS ORBIT. NIGHT

by
overcome
concentrate
has

McConnell hovers by a bulkhead. He's anguished, haunted
the image of Woody's death. We see him struggling to
his grief and shock, trying to force himself to
on the critical tasks at hand. In front of him, a panel
been opened; he's facing

SMALL UTILITY MONITOR

indicator

Already glowing, surrounded by coded switches,
lights, com ports.

MCCONNELL

holding a
begins
He

Stares at these, thinking hard, remembering. He's
palm-sized computer, already wired into this panel. He
tapping the keys, but then stops himself. Reconsiders.
turns, looking back at

TERRI AND PHIL

land.
this

Hunched on what would be the floor if the REMO were on
They grip stowage straps to keep from drifting. Clearly
tiny, rude cargo craft was never designed for manned
operation. It's claustrophobic, bitterly cold.

PHIL'S FACE

and
computer

Is a map of torment. He is shivering, both from cold
fear, barely holding himself together. He hugs his
supply case like a scared child would hug a teddy bear.

TERRI

Is worse. A thousand-yard stare. She's in shock.

MCCONNELL

Knows he has to occupy them. Speaks softly.

MCCONNELL

Phil?
(no response)
Hey, Phil...?

Phil looks up at him dully.

MCCONNELL

We're going in blind. We'll deploy
the chutes by laptop. I need to get
on the data bus, put in a software
patch, and try to soften this tin
can's landing. I could use your help
with the patch.

beats,

After a moment Phil releases his strap, pushes towards
McConnell. He stares numbly at the monitor for a few

begins to
confidence.

then takes the little computer from McConnell. He
tap the keys, slowly at first, but then with more

MCCONNELL

That's great. Good job.

(turning to Terri)

Hey, Terri, I was wondering. Think
maybe we could rig some kind of
seatbelts out of those cargo straps?

her
reaches

Terri hesitates a moment, then looks at the strap in
hand, as if she's never seen it before. Dully she
for another one, begins looping them together.

MCCONNELL

can't
robots,

Studies both of their faces intently. Knows that he
push them too hard, too fast. They're moving like
but at least they're moving.

EXT. REMO. MARS ORBIT. NIGHT. (MINUTES LATER)

position

Small thrusters are firing, getting the REMO into
for entry into the atmosphere.

it

Then all the jets fire in unison, braking the REMO, as
falls away from us, towards Mars at night.

INT. REMO. HIGH ATMOSPHERE. NIGHT

jury-rigged
through

The astronauts, restrained on the floor by Terri's
strap system, hold on for dear life. The buffeting
the atmosphere is shaking them violently.

BEHIND THEIR FACEPLATES

distorted,
again:

We see the effect of the incredible g-forces: faces
unable to focus their eyes. Each of them thinking, once
Now I'm going to die...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. MARS ONE BASE CAMP. NIGHT

some
night sky
bright
behind

The Mars One Base Camp looms in the foreground, like desolate, otherworldly ghost town. And then, in the beyond it, we see an eerie and beautiful sight: a streak of red as the REMO slashes down into the Martian atmosphere, like a shooting star, finally disappearing distant mountains. Then all is stillness again, deathly stillness and silence...

INT. INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION. VIEWPORT. DAY

just
this
even

Beck stands by a viewport, staring out into space. He's lost four good friends, and also knows he is seeing, in disaster, the probable end of the Mars Program, and the certain end of his own career. He doesn't, at first, hear the nearby VOICE.

NEW CAPCOM

Ray...? We've got some new data,
just coming in.

Beck looks up, his eyes red-rimmed. The CapCom shifts uneasily. He's holding a computer printout.

NEW CAPCOM

We just -- it doesn't make any sense.
We're not sure how to read this.

BECK

Data?

NEW CAPCOM

Yes sir. Telemetry reports the REMO
has left its orbit and reached the
Martian surface.

BECK

(pause)
Crashed?

NEW CAPCOM

No sir. Under power.

time Beck snatches the paper, staring at it. For the first
we see some life coming back into him.

BECK

When?

NEW CAPCOM

Sixty-three minutes after Mars
Recovery went off-line. Sir, the
graph reads like a controlled descent.
But that doesn't make any --

face, Beck suddenly understands. And it's a joy to see his
the tears of happiness that spring into his eyes.

BECK

They used the REMO as a lander.

of The CapCom stares back at him, feeling the same surge
hope.

BECK

It's McConnell, it's got to be! Nobody
else could have pulled this off. Son
of a bitch! They're alive.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. MARTIAN SURFACE. MARS ONE BASE CAMP. DAY

POV ANGLE - WIDE

In the As we see the Mars One Base Camp: silent, very still.
takeoff, distance, the massive ERV still looms, perched for
the bottom rungs of its ladder buried.

PANNING

well We see that sand has drifted high against the Hab, as
greenhouse, as the sides of the partially-deflated tunnel and

plant
by
breeze.

and the four-man rover. The oxygen still and propellant
are almost buried. Solar panels, some of them punctured
micrometeors, FLAP and CREAK eerily in the slight
And finally,

CLOSER TO CAMERA

pole,

We see the camp's American flag, still on its toppled
but nearly obliterated by sand.

ANGLE ON MCCONNELL, TERRI, AND PHIL

the

Who are spooked by this desolation. They've paused at
edge of the camp.

site a
and

They have dragged along with them from their landing
crude sledge, improvised from the REMO's hatch cover
some cargo straps. On this, their meager supplies.

keep
Brushing
the
for a
cost,

McConnell, glancing at the others, knows he's got to
their spirits up. He kneels, digs out the flag pole.
off the sand, he rights this and re-plants it firmly in
ground, packing the sand down with his boot. He stands
moment looking at the flag, his eyes moist. Despite the
they have made it to Mars.

moved.

When he turns, Terri and Phil are looking at him,

MCCONNELL

Better?

PHIL

(pause)

Damn right.

MCCONNELL

Terri, let's see if that oxygen still
is operational. Phil, you better
check out the ERV. I'll take the

Hab. If you find Luke's --

He catches himself. Phil and Terri look at him.

MCCONNELL

Just keep in touch.

EXT. ERV. DAY

begins
high
Phil steps from the umber sand onto the ERV's ladder,
to climb. The four-man rover is nearby, sand drifted
against its tires.

EXT. OXYGEN STILL. DAY

sand
Terri kneels by the oxygen still, begins to scoop away
with her gloved hands. She still looks numb.

EXT. HAB. DAY

MCCONNELL

(on radio)

I'm at the main airlock door.

tugs
creaks
settle.
He unlatches a panel, grips the emergency lever inside,
it. After a seeming eternity, the door groans and
open. Little puffs of dust and sand swirl about,

MCCONNELL

Entering Hab.

EXT. ERV. DAY

powered
cover.
sand.
Perched atop the ERV's ladder, Phil, using a battery-
drill, is just removing the final screw from the hatch
He lifts off the heavy cover, lets it tumble to the

PHIL

I've got ERV access. I'm going in.
Terri, you okay?

EXT. OXYGEN STILL. DAY

first
Terri is still scooping sand. She's just cleared the
row of gauges.

TERRI

Yeah. This is gonna take awhile to
get back to 100% capacity.

INT. MARS ONE HAB. DAY

recognize. He
McConnell walks through the kitchen, which we
crew
pauses to look at the table from which Luke and his
taped their final, fateful message.

HIS BIRTHDAY CUPCAKE

candle.
Still sits there, eerily, with its stub of burned-out
the
Half-finished, frozen cups of coffee. Suddenly, out of
spins,
corner of his eye, he catches a flash of white. He
startled, and sees

HIS OWN REFLECTION.

the
In his white pressure suit, staring back at him from
camera
screen of a video monitor. Above this is perched the
the Mars One astronauts used for their comm packets.

MCCONNELL SHIVERS

This place is filled with ghosts.

INT. ERV COCKPIT. DAY

computer's
startling
crazy
Phil, in the pilot's seat of the ERV, pushes a
power button. The screen flickers weakly to life,
him a bit, but all he sees on it are white streaks,
static.

PHIL

ERV appears structurally intact.
Computers are fried, just as we
thought.

EXT. OXYGEN STILL. DAY

her
Terri has cleared more gauges, valves. She sits back on
heels, studying the tangle of pipes.

TERRI

Copy that. I've got busted filters
here, clogged intakes. Helluva cleanup
job, but so far no major damage.

INT. GREENHOUSE. DAY

ENTERS.
**AN INNER AIRLOCK DOOR WHOOSHES OPEN, AND MCCONNELL
THEN STOPS, ASTONISHED. HIS POV**

plants
Some are
on
through
On a fantastic, almost jungle-like atmosphere. The
have been allowed -- encouraged? -- to grow wildly.
even pushing against the inflated roof. Water condenses
the leaves and the roof, then is captured and routed
pipes of every shape and size, dripping into a clever
assortment of collection jars. Liquid water.

MCCONNELL

comes up
implication,
else --
slightly
pressure in
Reaches into a bucket, touches the water. His glove
before his wondering eyes, dripping. Grasping the
he looks down at his forearm instrument pad.
Blinking red letters read "25 deg. C." And something
the puffy white material of his suit is starting to
deflate, revealing his arm's shape. There's air
here!

MCCONNELL

Punches in more numbers, and gets the readout:
"Nitr. 78%/ O2 20%/ CO2 1%/ Trace gasses 1%."

MCCONNELL

helmet. He
lungful
moment
towards

Slowly reaches up, unsealing the neck ring of his
hesitates, then lifts it off. Takes a deep, quenching
of pure air. Holds it in. Lets it slowly out. For a
he doesn't trust his own voice. Then speaks softly
his helmet.

MCCONNELL

I'm in the greenhouse. You better...
you better come see this for
yourselves.

INT. ERV. DAY

Through

Phil, still sitting at the cockpit controls, turns.
a side viewport he can just make out the greenhouse.

PHIL

What is it?

There's no answer. He rises.

EXT. OXYGEN STILL. DAY

figure

Terri rises, concerned, and turns. Through the distant,
translucent wall of the greenhouse, McConnell's shadowy
can be seen, moving slowly.

TERRI

Jim...?

INT. GREENHOUSE. DAY

pushing
dripping
Everywhere he
recycled,
ingenuity has

McConnell sets down his helmet, starts exploring,
through fronds as he makes his way down an aisle. The
foliage is so dense it almost chokes his path.
looks, he has the sense of a scrounged-together,
jury-rigged environment, where a great deal of
come into play. He pauses, looking up...

plastic
vent in
water
with

Overhead, a bellows, stitched together from pieces of tarp, slowly inhales and exhales, pumping air into a the upper deck of the Hab. Its power comes from a crude wheel, a buckets-and-strut assemblage, tidily sutured duct tape, like some giant Erector set.

ragged
with

As McConnell turns away from this, still marvelling, a figure leaps through the foliage! It smashes into him, a HARSH SCREECH, knocking him to the ground.

fighters
as
catches a

McConnell, on his back, straddled by his attacker, back as best he can. A blur of flailing arms and fists, he tries to push the creature away. Staring up, he glimpses of the almost unrecognizable

LUKE GRAHAM

swaying
above
together.
high
skull.
off.

Whose frightened eyes glare back at him through a curtain of dreadlocks. His skin is creased, weathered, a scraggly beard. His clothes are tattered, patched In one fist he grips a rock hammer, which he swings overhead, about to drive the claw through McConnell's McConnell grabs his arm desperately, trying to fend him

MCCONNELL

Luke, it's me! Jim McConnell!

yanks
trembles

We see a flash of uncertainty in Luke's eyes. Then he his arm free, and his hammer arcs up even higher, in the air.

LUKE

You're not here!

MCCONNELL

Luke, it's Jim!

LUKE

No, no, you're not... you can't be here.

MCCONNELL

Your wife is Debra! Your son is Bobby!
You were reading Treasure Island
with him...!

light up
from
ripped
McConnell

As he stares down at McConnell, Luke's eyes finally
with recognition. but before he can move, he is seized
behind and flung backwards to the ground, the hammer
from his grasp, as Terri and Phil pinion his arms.
scrambles to his feet.

MCCONNELL

Don't hurt him!

Phil
off

McConnell kneels beside Luke, signalling to Terri and
that it's okay to let him go. They stand back, pulling
their helmets. Everyone is panting, out of breath.

might

Luke sits up, slowly studying their features, one after
another, as if still not quite certain whether they
vanish. His voice is hoarse, rusty from disuse.

LUKE

Phil... Terri...

Luke looks with incomprehension at McConnell.

LUKE

Jim... I don't understand. You're
not supposed to be here... Why are
you here? Where's Woody?

MCCONNELL

He didn't make it Luke.

He

Luke stares at McConnell, trying to absorb everything.
looks to Terri, who looks down.

LUKE

Oh no.

on
McConnell
Luke shakes his head in dismay. He seems to shrink in
himself. It's all too much for him to take in.
kneels and puts his arm around Luke, comforting him.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. ELSEWHERE IN THE GREENHOUSE. DAY (MINUTES LATER)

greenhouse.
Luke sits on the side of his cot, in the little tented
sleeping area he's created in one corner of the
Nearby, his hotplate, pots, and some freshly harvested
vegetables and greens. The others crouch around him.

MCCONNELL

Luke, what happened here?

A flash of fear in Luke's eyes.

LUKE

(whispers)

We fired the radar. It came. They
all died.

MCCONNELL

What came?

LUKE

They all died, but I was spared.
Why? Had to be for a reason. Then,
all of a sudden, I knew why I was
spared.

His voice drops to a conspiratorial whisper.

LUKE

So somebody would be left to figure
out the secret.

twice.
He taps his forehead, significantly, then nods once or

The others exchange an uneasy glance.

MCCONNELL

Luke, we still don't understand.

LUKE

Come. Comecomecome.

hand,
Terri
the

He rises quickly and scuttles off, waving an impatient
without waiting to see if they'll follow. McConnell,
and Phil stare after him for a long moment. Phil breaks
silence.

PHIL

Is it just me? Or is he about two
mealpacks short of a picnic?

TERRI

Long term exposure to low gravity
can have an adverse impact on the
brain. He could be suffering from a
form of asphyxia.

MCCONNELL

Or maybe his whole crew died and
he's been marooned alone on Mars.
Let's give him time to adjust.

Phil,
trailing, mutters to himself.

McConnell and Terri follow in the direction Luke went.

PHIL

Greatgreatgreat.

EXT. MARS ONE BASE CAMP. DAY

looking
Phil
hear

Luke, now in a patched-up pressure suit and grubby-
helmet, stands peering down unhappily at the improvised
sledge, with its meager supplies. McConnell, Terri, and
walk up behind him, wearing their helmets again. They
Luke over his RADIO.

LUKE

So... let me be sure I understand
this. Your ship blew up, with all
its supplies. Then you emptied the
cargo out of the REMO, and it was
totalled on landing. You've got no
food, no water, no spare oxygen,

nothing but what I see here...?

McConnell and the others are silent, embarrassed. Then McConnell nods. Luke looks at him, a cracked grin.

LUKE

What kinda rescue mission is this?

MCCONNELL

That kind.

off He points to the computer repair case, as Phil lifts it
a sledge. Luke turns, looks at the case, then Phil.

PHIL

Check it out. New nav boards for the ERV. I got four round-trip tickets, baby, right in here.

LUKE

(softly)

Four.

seems In some mysterious way, this reminder of Woody's death
the to bring him fully back into himself. He takes Terri by
shoulders, deeply saddened. She meets his gaze.

LUKE

Terri... I'm so sorry. He was a good man.

TERRI

Thanks, Luke.

LUKE

When there's time, we'll talk.

She nods, grateful. A beat. He looks at the others.

LUKE

This way.

He starts off across the sand, and they follow.

EXT. GRAVE SITE. DAY

dirt, as They stand looking down at the three long mounds of
Luke completes his account of the disaster.

LUKE

...When I came to and dug myself out of the sand, my faceplate was cracked. Leaking badly. I barely made it back to Base. It was weeks before I could work up the nerve to go back out there and look for their...

He has to pause, collect himself.

LUKE

Renee was the only one I could find. But it didn't seem right, somehow, to dig just one grave.

steps.
dust
There is an emotional silence. Luke turns, takes a few
He stares into the distance, observing the swirling
around them. McConnell hesitates, notices Luke's gaze.

MCCONNELL

Has it been blowing like this for a while?

(Luke nods)

We saw a big storm from space. But Micker said it was turning south.

only he
seems to see.
Luke looks off into the distance, studies something

LUKE

If it holds course.

at
Luke.
McConnell pulls his gaze away from the horizon, looks

MCCONNELL

This -- whatever it was -- this force. You say it came directly out of the top of the mountain?

LUKE

You don't believe me. That's okay. But I'm not crazy, Jim.

McConnell isn't quite sure how to reply to this.

MCCONNELL

What did you mean by its "secret?"
What secret?

LUKE

(pause)

You better see for yourselves.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. MARS ONE HAB. DAY

Lab
helmets
frosty.

McConnell, Terri, and Phil follow Luke into the Science area of the Hab, then stop in their tracks. Their are off. It's very cold in here; their breath is

THEIR POV --

and
annotated
of

The Lab is crammed with rock and sand samples from many locations, all tagged and labelled. There are drawings diagrams covering the walls: Martian landscapes, maps, and over and over, obsessively repeated, drawings the vortex that destroyed the Mars One crew.

LUKE

See, where they made their mistake was, they must've planned for it to be visible from Earth...

electric
rubs

The others turn, looking at him. Luke is aiming an space heater at his computer. As the coils glow red, he his hands together, poised over the keyboard.

MCCONNELL

Who's "they"?

jittery

Luke reacts to their blank stares. He has a kind of feverish intensity, a secret excitement.

LUKE

Don't you understand? Hundreds of millions of years have gone by. You've

got erosion, sand storms, lava flows, meteor impacts -- hell, in that much time, the whole surface would've changed. So no wonder we never saw it before. Well, I mean, we saw it, but not like they meant us too. Too much dirt on it.

nuts? The others exchange worried glances. Is he totally

TERRI

Saw what?

LUKE

This.

On the computer screen they're looking at...

CLOSE ON THE MONITOR

ground- Pictures of the Face after the disaster, seen from
and level, in telephoto views. Rising out of a ring of rock
face. dirt rubble is the shiny-white profile of a gigantic
a The white is smooth, impenetrable. It has the scale of
unnatural. mountain, but the planes and angles are clearly

MCCONNELL, PHIL AND TERRI (INT. MARS ONE HAB.)

They are stunned. Can hardly believe their eyes.

PHIL

Jesus...

TERRI

What is that...?

LUKE

I don't know. But whatever it is, somebody built it. And not us.

A few moments of silence while they try to absorb this.

MCCONNELL

What about the sound? That signal you heard before the explosion?

LUKE

Good, Jim, good. That's the key.

the
A click of the mouse and they all HEAR, over speakers,
DEEP PULSING BASS TONE.

LUKE

Hear the pauses? That's what made me realize it's a pattern -- a repeating pattern.

MCCONNELL

Mathematical?

very
Luke is trembling with excitement. His words tumble out quickly. He's been waiting so long to share this.

LUKE

That's what I thought. There are distinct blocks in the pattern, and within each block the tones come in groups of three. Threethreethree. For months I struggled to analyze it, trying different constructs... Then I thought about dimensions.

MCCONNELL

X-Y-Z coordinates...

LUKE

Right! Three groups equals three dimensions... So I tried assigning different graphic values to each block, group and tone. And finally I got... this.

the
He types another command. They all look at the monitor, glow reflecting on their faces. They are amazed again.

CLOSE ON THE MONITOR

universally
Where we see the beautiful interlocking chain, the familiar double helix, of a DNA molecule -- the elegant blueprint of life.

BACK TO SCENE (INT. MARS ONE HAB.)

PHIL

My God... Is that what I think it is?

TERRI

DNA... that's a model of DNA!

LUKE

You see it, too. Thank God. I was afraid I was just suffering from a form of asphyxia.

earlier She glances at him, surprised that he overheard her diagnosis. But he smiles, not offended.

PHIL

So, okay, so -- somebody left this thing here, somebody -- other than human. But what the hell is it?

LUKE

My guess is, it's a signature. A self-portrait of whatever species created the Face.

MCCONNELL

But that DNA looks human.

TERRI

No way. It's missing the last pair of chromosomes. See?

MCCONNELL

Yeah, but it's close. Damn close.

TERRI

The difference between a man and an ape is less than three percent of genetic material. But that three percent gives you Mozart. Einstein.

PHIL

Or Jack the Ripper.

the They look at him. Then all four turn, stare again at slowly rotating DNA, pondering its awesome mystery.

MCCONNELL

screen. When he finally speaks, never takes his eyes off the

mystery

We can read in them the almost overwhelming grip this
has on his imagination.

MCCONNELL

It's been a long day. Let's get a couple hours sleep, then tackle this thing when we're fresher. Phil, your first priority will be to get the motherboards over to the ERV. Concentrate on getting communications up first.

(Phil nods)

Soon as we've got the juice, we'll send a packet to Micker, tell them Luke's OK, and that... everything else that's happened. The rest of us will take an inventory of supplies, see where we stand. Okay?

towards

Luke,

smiles,

The others nod in weary agreement. As they start out, the relative warmth of the greenhouse, Terri looks at at his scraggly beard and his long, lank hair. She brushing some locks off his forehead.

TERRI

C'mon. There's a pair of scissors in my medkit.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. MARS ONE HAB. ANOTHER SECTION. NEXT MORNING

oxygen

Luke

from

As in the Science Area, this space has enough thin for the astronauts to remain unhelmeted. McConnell and are still going through what few supplies were salvaged the REMO.

cheek.

enjoys

Luke pauses, rubbing the unfamiliar smoothness of his His beard is gone, his hair neatly trimmed. McConnell Luke's own wonder at his transformation.

MCCONNELL

How do you feel?

LUKE

Like I just got back my other three percent.

removing

McConnell smiles. Terri enters through the hatch, her helmet.

TERRI

The backup generator is salvageable, and two of the solar panels. I'm pretty sure I can get the oxygen still back into production, too. So we're not in such bad shape, considering.

LUKE

Good work, Terri.

already-
over

McConnell, rummaging through Phil's backpack, drops an opened bag of M&Ms. The CANDIES scatter and bounce all the floor.

MCCONNELL

Look at that. Phil's idea of absolute essentials.

M&Ms.
little
mind...

Luke and Terri smile. McConnell scoops up the fallen He slows down as he does it, looking at the scatter of round CANDIES. Something tugging at the back of his

FLASHBACK TO:

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. MARS RECOVERY. EVA AIRLOCK. DAY

woman",
plucking

Phil's intricately designed M&M model of his "ideal floating weightlessly, as McConnell drifts past it,

good-
McConnell's

away a couple pieces of the candy. Phil reacting, in
natured annoyance. The gap in the design left by
theft...

INT. MARS ONE HAB. ANOTHER SECTION. DAY

CLOSE ON MCCONNELL

As he trembles with excitement. With sudden
comprehension.

MCCONNELL

It's not a signature.

LUKE

(puzzled)

What?

MCCONNELL

That noise from the Face... It's not
a signature. It's a test.

Luke and Terri stare at him.

INT. MARS ONE HAB. MOMENTS LATER

science
model.
his new

McConnell sits in front of the computer back in the
lab area, staring once again at the mysterious DNA
Luke and Terri stand behind him. McConnell's energy,
certainty, is almost electrifying.

MCCONNELL

It's asking us for the right answer.
It wants us to put in the missing
pair of chromosomes.

LUKE

But why?

MCCONNELL

To prove that we're human.

understand.

Terri and Luke look at each other, starting to

LUKE

We fired radar into that thing.

Concentrated sound waves...

MCCONNELL

Which it interpreted as a wrong answer... Yes! It's like a, a security alarm. When it gets an incorrect response, it defends itself.

INT. ERV COCKPIT. DAY

wires
mike,
Phil is listening in on radio. He's got panels open, dangling, as he works his ongoing repair. He keys his uneasily.

PHIL

So what happens when it gets the right answer?

INT. MARS ONE HAB. DAY

As McConnell looks at Luke and Terri.

MCCONNELL

(hesitates)

I don't know. But we've got to find out.

(to Luke, pointing)

Can you work this the other way? Figure out which tones would be equivalent to the missing chromosomes? Then dub them into your recording of the signal?

LUKE

I think so, yes.

MCCONNELL

What about the radar gun? Will it accept that input? Can we transmit a completed signal back to the Face?

Luke stares at him, startled by what he's implying.

INT. ERV COCKPIT. DAY

Phil is also growing increasingly nervous.

PHIL

Whoa, whoa, hold on, Jim. What if you're wrong? Whoever goes out

there... I mean, what if you're wrong?
Three people have already died over
that thing.

INT. MARS ONE HAB. DAY

As Luke and Terri look tensely at McConnell.

TERRI

Four.

McConnell looks at her.

MCCONNELL

Terri, if we leave here without
getting some answers, they all died
in vain.

Terri shakes her head.

TERRI

We just don't know enough about that --
that thing out there to take any
more chances.

MCCONNELL

What are we here for, if not to take
chances...?

His passion startles them; they've never seen him so
emotional. He points at the computer screen.

MCCONNELL

This means we're not alone. It means
we're on the brink of the greatest
discovery in mankind's history. But
we've still got to prove it. Who
knows when someone else will get
back here? Or if they ever will? You
know what Congress is like. They'll
say it's too dangerous, too much
loss of life, let's go back to
unmanned flights. We could be the
last explorers to come here for
decades. We're it, guys.

(pause)

We're it.

LUKE

(quietly)

We don't have to go out there. There's
a better way.

They look at him, surprised.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DAY

across
back.
bass

The familiar, plucky little figure of ARES-8 wheels
oher sand, with the radar gun jury-rigged onto its
Ares' video snout WHIRRS out, extending. The familiar
rumble of the Face is very loud from here.

LUKE

Checking video feed...

INT. MARS ONE HAB. LATE DAY

he
streaks,
the

McConnell, Terri, and Phil have gathered around Luke as
pushes buttons, and a monitor CRACKLES to life. White
then a blurry image, which he tries to enhance. Finally
image starts to sharpen.

LUKE

There!

ON THE MONITOR

shot

They see the familiar stark white profile of the FACE,
from ground level, in a SLOWLY APPROACHING ANGLE...

THE FOUR ASTRONAUTS

than
joystick

Stare at the ominous sight. They're all more nervous
they want to show. Luke's fingers delicately work a
as he maneuvers the remote surveyor.

MCCONNELL

How close do we need to get?

LUKE

I'm not sure. Maybe we better stop

by that boulder.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. LATE DAY

partially
fire.
Ares-8 whines to a stop by a large boulder, which shields it from the Face, looming beyond. The radar gun swivels, locating its target. Then stops, ready to

INT. MARS ONE HAB. LATE DAY

the lid
protectively
nods.
Luke looks at Terri, Phil, and McConnell. Phil shuts of the box holding the new nav boards, snaps it down. He nods. Terri takes a deep breath, then she

of
who
button.
Luke's hand hovers over the red firing button; a moment awesome uncertainty and danger. He looks at McConnell, finally gives a nod of command. Then Luke hits the

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. LATE DAY

pitched
fork as
stops.
From the radar gun on Ares-8's back, a sharp, high-electronic burst is emitted, pulsating like a tuning it's fired towards the Face. After a few seconds it

For a moment nothing happens.

remaining
plains.
Then the deep bass rumbling stops as well. The only sound is of WIND, stirring up dust on the Martian

ANGLE ON THE FACE

begins
sliding
movement
rises,
As suddenly a huge, curved segment of the white surface to rise from the earth, like a gigantic hangar door, out of sight into an upper sheath of some kind. The is measured, stately, utterly silent. As the segment

Face. it reveals a blinding white light: the interior of the
No inside details can be seen.

INT. MARS ONE HAB. DAY

phenomenon, McConnell, Luke, Terri and Phil stare at this
awed. They're barely breathing.

PHIL

Oh my God...

LUKE

It worked... It worked!

MCCONNELL

Check for radiation.

Luke punches buttons, waits anxiously for a readout.

LUKE

Normal. Seismic... normal. Anemometer
steady. No sign of the vortex.

PHIL

I don't know what we did, but guys --
does that look to you like a hostile
gesture?

TERRI

No. More like an invitation.

LUKE

Or another test...

face, McConnell is staring at the mysterious opening. On his
a growing look of determination.

MCCONNELL

Luke, the four-man rover. Does it
still work?

they The others look at him, their expressions changing as
realize what he's implying.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. MARS ONE BASE CAMP. LATE DAY

airlock.
wind has
off

McConnell, once again helmeted, emerges from the Hab
Luke, Terri and Phil are coming out behind him. The
picked up, and fine dust is blowing. They stop, staring
in astonishment towards

A FRIGHTENING SIGHT

into
above.
kilometers
thousand
thousand-

The entire sky has darkened from its customary salmon
purplish-black at the horizon, with bloody streaks
The DUST STORM has turned their way; it's now sixty
away and closing. The main body of it reaches two
meters above the surface and stretches out along a
kilometer front.

THE ASTRONAUTS

turns to

Stare at this unholy juggernaut, alarmed. McConnell
Luke, whose expression is grim.

MCCONNELL

How long before it hits?

LUKE

An hour? Maybe less.

MCCONNELL

How bad?

LUKE

A storm like that? It could go
planetary. And last a year.

McConnell stares at him.

LUKE

It'll sock us in, Jim. We won't be
able to take off. If that happens,
with what few supplies we've got
left...? We'll starve to death.

The
again.

McConnell turns, staring off towards the killer storm.
others look at him with questioning gazes. He turns
There's the four-man rover, ready to go. Waiting.

MCCONNELL

Phil, how much longer to prep the
ERV?

PHIL

Maybe forty-five minutes. It'll be
tight, but we can make it.

MCCONNELL

Then there's still time for us to
get out there and back.

other.

He looks a question at Luke and Terri, one after the
Their eyes, tense but excited, signal agreement.

MCCONNELL

Stay here. Continue the repair. If
something goes wrong, you get out of
here before that storm hits.

PHIL

Go back... alone?

MCCONNELL

If we're not back in forty-five
minutes, I want you to prep and
launch.

(looks at his armpad
display)

That's 1950 hours.

PHIL

Jim --

MCCONNELL

It's not a suggestion, it's an order.
You understand?

PHIL

(reluctantly)

I understand. But --

MCCONNELL

You understand what?

PHIL

If you're not back by 1950, I prep
and launch.

McConnell nods, satisfied. Looks at Terri and Luke.

MCCONNELL

Let's go.

more
Phil
They start towards the four-man rover. Dust is swirling
thickly through the air, and the WIND IS LOUDER NOW.
stands watching them go, a lone, rather forlorn figure.

EXT. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. DUSK

across
the
lightning
tornadoes
In a WIDE SHOT, we see the rover approaching the Face,
the plains. The sky beyond the Face is almost black, as
storm approaches from that direction. It's marching
relentlessly across the planet, with flashes of
now rippling up and down its face, and even small
spinning off near its purple-black base...

INT. ERV COCKPIT. DUSK

main
him.
Phil has panels off. He's reaching into the guts of the
computer, working feverishly. His repair kit is beside

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. DUSK

Face and
light
rover
wheels.
In a HIGH SHOT, we look down across the side of the
its vast, open doorway, out of which the bright white
is streaming. Into this corridor of light, we see the
arrive, slewing to a stop, throwing sand from its

GROUND LEVEL SHOT

the
the
Looking at the cavernous vertical gap in the side of
Face. The opening towers to a dizzying height above us;

ENTER

white light strains our eyes. The three astronauts
FRAME as we see them, from behind, staring up.

ON THE ASTRONAUTS' AWED FACES

cosmic
Another

As they are stunned by the immensity of the scene, the
mystery before them. Luke and Terri look at McConnell.
moment of critical decision. He keys his mike.

MCCONNELL

Phil, do you read me?

INT. ERV COCKPIT. DUSK

Phil keys his own mike.

PHIL

Yeah, Jim. Your signal's breaking up
a little in the storm, but I read
you.

EXT. THE FACE. DUSK

light.

McConnell stares into the bright opening. Bathed in its

MCCONNELL

We're at the Face. We're gonna need
a few minutes here. Same deadline,
launch at 1950. With or without us.
Do you copy?

PHIL

(pause)
Copy that.

Terri and Luke exchange a tense glance.

TERRI

Jim, are you sure you want to do
this?

MCCONNELL

I'm not sure of anything anymore.
But I didn't come a hundred million
miles just to turn back in the last
ten feet.

Luke smiles. The three of them stare into the portal.

each of
breath.

McConnell, between the others, reaches out and grips
them by a gloved hand. They take a sort of collective
Then they walk forward together, into the light.

INT. THE FACE. DUSK

a

The astronauts continue forward, each of them extending
free hand.

walls,

The light is too dazzling for them to gauge distances,
textures, colors -- anything at all. They can't see
ceiling, even a floor.

MCCONNELL

Surface seems firm and level.

LUKE

Roger that. Texture is smooth.

TERRI

I've got good footing and no
obstructions. Let's check our --

airlock
go of
they
some

Behind them, there is an abrupt WHOOSH, like a giant
sealing shut. They turn, startled and nervous. Letting
each other's hands, Luke and Terri run back the way
came, but almost immediately are stopped by a wall of
sort. The vast hangar-type door has closed behind them.

TERRI

It's solid again! We're trapped.

MCCONNELL

Don't move! Keep this orientation.

The three scared, helmeted faces seem to float in the
brightness, some twenty feet apart.

MCCONNELL

(keys his mike)

Phil? Phil, can you still hear me?

INT. ERV COCKPIT. DUSK

the Phil, saying a silent prayer, reaches over and turns on
main computer. It works! He's immensely relieved.

PHIL

Computers are online! Ready to load software. But guys -- we're losing visibility here.

Then He glances out the cockpit window at the blowing dust.
realizes that he's hearing only silence over his radio.

PHIL

Guys...? Jim? Luke? Terri? Is anyone there...?

No answer. Phil stares at his radio in dread.

PHIL

Don't leave me.

INT. FACE. DUSK

see McConnell is staring at his spacesuit's sleeve. He can
revealing the that the suit material is starting to deflate,
He shape of his arm, just as it did in Luke's greenhouse.
his hesitates, then begins to unscrew the sealing ring on
right glove.

Terri and Luke see this.

TERRI

(alarmed)
Jim, what're you doing? You'll depressurize!

MCCONNELL

I don't think so.

there's the McConnell makes the final twist on his glove and
hiss of rushing air.

LUKE

Jim, seal it!

MCCONNELL

No. That was air going into my suit,
not out. Look at your own suits --
they're not rigid anymore. We've got
pressure in here.

Luke looks at his sleeve. McConnell's right.

TERRI

Above Mars atmospheric? That's
impossible.

MCCONNELL

We're millions of miles from Earth
and we're inside a gigantic white
face. What's impossible?

Terri types on her arm keypad. She's amazed.

TERRI

There's six psi in here...
(taps more keys)
Nitrogen and oxygen.

LUKE

Otherwise known as air?

ring.
Terri nods. McConnell starts unscrewing his helmet

Luke follows suit.

TERRI

Hey, there may be some lethal trace
gasses I haven't picked up yet, or...
or... oh, the hell with it.

all
against
Air.
passed
Terri starts taking off her helmet. In a few moments,
three helmets are off. They hold them, glowing softly,
their chests, as they breathe deeply and gratefully.
And then, at this very moment, as if they have just
another kind of test...

HIGH, STRIATED WALL

startled
bands,
Appears through the glare, soaring up before their
eyes. White, metallic, composed of complexly-linked

height
the
approach
from
astronauts.

plates, ramps. It's part of a STRUCTURE whose overall
and breadth keep us from understanding its purpose. But
hatch opening slowly in its side, at the top of an
ramp, is unmistakable. Radiant white light streams out
within, forming a glowing tunnel, down towards the

THE ASTRONAUTS BLINK

end

Raising their gloves against the dazzling glow. At the
of this tunnel of light, inside the hatch frame

A SHAPE MATERIALIZES

form,
regards the
if to
--

And slowly resolves itself into a glowing humanoid
which we somehow sense is female. She appears benign,
wondrous. This glowing MARTIAN -- a holograph --
astronauts for a few moments, then beckons to them, as
say "Enter." All her motions are both calm and calming
precise, unhurried, gracious.

MCCONNELL, LUKE AND TERRI

still
than
the
Martian,

Look at each other. They're awed into silence, and
tense, but now more out of excitement and anticipation
fear. Their eyes agree: Let's go.
They walk forward slowly, carrying their helmets, up
ramp and into the tunnel of light, following the
who retreats before them. They go through the hatch and
disappear inside.

INT. MARTIAN STRUCTURE. DUSK

open
floor,

Following the Martian, they find themselves in a round,
space, defined by light, with a smooth matte-metallic
but without apparent walls.

stop,
Martian

The Martian stops, turns, facing them. The astronauts too, uncertain what they're meant to do. Then the gestures again.

the
eerie

A cylindrical holographic column appears, rising from floor in front of the astronauts. Inside it, a swirl of lights, millions of them, like cosmic fireflies...

MCCONNELL, LUKE, AND TERRI

this
it, the
their

Set down their helmets, then cautiously converge around column, forming a loose triangle. As they stare into myriad lights are reflected off their own eyes and spacesuits.

IN THE HOLOGRAPHIC COLUMN

to

The whirling lights resolve into images, which relate them the story of ancient Mars:

A BLUE PLANET

we do not recognize. All is peaceful, beautiful.

INTERCUT

MCCONNELL

(softly)

Is that what I think it is?

LUKE

Yeah. It's Mars.

SUDDENLY A HUGE ASTEROID

Tumbles through space towards the planet...

TERRI

Oh my God.

ON THE PLANET - CLOSER VIEW

surface,

As thousands of small rocketships lift away from the
heading in a stream out of the solar system...

THE ASTEROID IMPACTS

boil

And a wall of fire and debris scours the planet. Oceans
and vaporize. Two gigantic hunks are blasted out of the
planet, spinning in flames...

MCCONNELL, LUKE, AND TERRI

Involuntarily flinch, bathed in the fiery images...

THE PLANET IS NOW DEAD

The

As dust storms roil across its cold, lifeless surface.
flaming hunks of molten rock cool into twin moons.

THE ASTRONAUTS

Stare at this devastation, deeply moved.

IN DEEP SPACE

as it
system.

The stream of Martian ships grows smaller and smaller
continues on its epic voyage towards a new solar
Then we zero in on

ONE PARTICULAR ROCKETSHIP

show
helix
our

As it peels off and goes in another direction. Graphics
a model of what the ship contains: the familiar double
of DNA. The ship heads towards another blue planet in
solar system...

EARTH

the

As it was then. More clouds than now, more ocean, and
landforms all wedged together.

TERRI

Her voice is soft.

TERRI

Earth, when it was still Pangaea.
Before the continents separated.

THE LONE MARTIAN SHIP

plunges
Makes a fiery streak through Earth's atmosphere and
into the ocean.

filling
Instantly the image of the DNA double helix grows,
and the entire holographic column, then it begins to spin
pulse, disintegrating into a phantasmagoric whirl of
new images...

MCCONNELL, LUKE, AND TERRI

as
Cry out, stunned by the strobelike power of the display

LIVING FORMS

organisms,
Flash into the holographic column, swimming, growing,
dinosaurs, crawling, leaping, flying: one-celled microscopic
stunning plankton, plants of all kinds, insects, then fish,
explosive birds, small mammals, larger mammals -- the entire
awestruck panorama of evolution, distilled into a single
sequence, as the images wash over the dazzled,

FACES OF THE ASTRONAUTS

column
Until finally the images whirl away, the holographic
concentric, dissolves, leaving only a circle of glowing,
staring colored rings on the floor. The astronauts are left
had at each other across the open space where the column
been.

THE MARTIAN

their
opposite
side. The
hands.
into

Now comes forward with outstretched arms and completes
circle, taking the fourth position. McConnell is
her glowing form, and Terri and Luke are at either
Martian reaches her arms out, inviting them to link
As they do so, the Martian seems to be staring directly
McConnell's eyes.

MCCONNELL

It's
sadness

Is in wondrous awe, his whole face radiant with joy.
the first time we've ever seen him utterly without
or reserve. Staring at the Martian, he understands.

MCCONNELL

They're us. We're them...

LUKE

We're Martians...?

MCCONNELL

That's what she means.

TERRI

Oh my God. The Cambrian explosion.

McConnell and Luke look at her.

TERRI

Almost six hundred million years
ago, there was a sudden expansion of
life on Earth. The first multi-celled
plants and animals appeared. No one
has ever understood why...

LUKE

They seeded Earth.

and
floor
yellow.

We hear a BELL-LIKE TONE, a single lingering high note,
simultaneously the outermost ring of the circle on the
begins to glow brightly. It is an intense chromium

THE ASTRONAUTS

the
the
finally
indigo
glitter

Step back, startled, unlinking their hands, and look at circle of colored rings. These shade from yellow, on outer rim, to a deeper yellow, then orange, then reds. Inside the final, deep red ring is a circle of blue, about a meter across. Small points of light here, like stars against a midnight sky.

THE MARTIAN

circle

Steps closer to McConnell. She has picked him out in particular. Now she beckons for him to move inside the of colored rings, to stand on the indigo core.

MCCONNELL

first
as
Vanishes.

Looks back at her, nods his understanding. For the time she seems to smile. Benevolence, reassurance. Then abruptly as she first appeared, she fades away.

sudden,
floor.

Luke and Terri look at McConnell, confused. There is a static-filled CRACKLE from their helmets, nearby on the

PHIL

(over radio)
...in, please. Can you... me?

Terri picks up her helmet, leans into its mike.

TERRI

Phil, we're here! We read you.

the

Even through the scratchy interference, they can hear relief in Phil's voice. And then the desperation.

PHIL

Thank God! Listen, this storm is really --
(loud static)
-- few more minutes, I can't --

(more static)
You've gotta get back to the ship!

And then they hear only STATIC. His signal is lost.

TERRI

Phil? Phil...?

register,
last of

Suddenly the BELL-LIKE TONE REPEATS, at a lower
with a more sustained note, and simultaneously, the
the yellow circles of light begins to fade, as

THE FIRST ORANGE BAND

this

Begins to glow brighter. McConnell turns, looking at
new color, then looks back at Luke and Terri.

MCCONNELL

We are in a ship. This is a ship.
And the countdown has already started.

Terri looks at Luke, alarmed.

LUKE

He's right.

TERRI

Then let's get the hell out of here!

catches
they
aware
still
of

She scoops up Luke's helmet, tosses it to him. As he
it, she's already starting back out, in the direction
came from, and Luke follows her. Until they both become
that McConnell isn't with them. They turn back. He's
rooted to the spot, his gaze locked on the indigo core
the colored rings.

LUKE

Jim...

McConnell doesn't turn.

LUKE

Jim, we gotta go.

MCCONNELL

I'm not coming with you.

TERRI

(stunned)

What?

Coming back, she sees how calm he is. How certain.

TERRI

What are you talking about? We've got to get home.

MCCONNELL

That's where I'm going. Don't you see? That's what all this is for.

(McConnell gestures
at the ship around
them)

You were right Terri. This is an invitation. To follow them. To follow them home.

this
half
He looks into their faces. Terri is trying to grasp
idea, still incredulous. Luke has the beginning of a
smile.

MCCONNELL

I have to go. This is the mission now. To find out who we are. Isn't that why we came here? Like Maggie said, "To stand on a new world and look beyond it to the next one."

remembers
them
Luke nods at the memory of Maggie's words. Terri
too. McConnell's passionate conviction is affecting
both.

MCCONNELL

You know, when you think about it -- I wasn't even supposed to be here -- all the accidents, everything that got us to this point, it's just... it's just... I just know it's right.

Terri looks at Luke. Luke is smiling. He understands.

MCCONNELL

I'm okay. I know what I'm doing. But you're running out of time. You've gotta get back to the ERV and get off this planet. Now please go.

Luke steps closer, looking at his old friend.

LUKE

I once felt like I was taking your turn. But now I think maybe you're taking mine. Guess I'm a little jealous.

They clasp hands for a moment. But in this moment is a lifetime of camaraderie, an eternity of farewell.

LUKE

Thanks for saving my life.

MCCONNELL

My pleasure.

helmet,
unspoken
Luke nods, deeply moved. He turns away, picking up his
as Terri comes closer, looking at McConnell, a long
beat. Her eyes are glistening.

TERRI

I wish Woody were here to see this.
He would've wanted to go too, Jim.

She's
Terri smiles. She is starting on the road to recovery.
going to be okay.

MCCONNELL

He's here, Terri. We wouldn't have made it without him.

pulls
closes
Terri nods. She digs into one of her suit's pockets,
something out. She hands it to McConnell, and his fist
around it.

TERRI

Take care, Jim.

turns,
McConnell smiles. Terri smiles back at him. Then she

paused, picks up her helmet, and crosses to where Luke has looking back.

LUKE

Hey, Jim...?

MCCONNELL

Yeah?

LUKE

Have a great ride.

MCCONNELL

Always do.

him, Luke and Terri exchange a final silent farewell with then hurry away, into the darkness.

MCCONNELL

Looks down at what Terri gave him.

IT'S WOODY'S NECK CHAIN

With the little Flash Gordon rocketship.

MCCONNELL

Grips this tightly as he looks up.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. MARS. THE FACE. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. NIGHT

of The hanger-like hatch has reopened, and Luke and Terri, helmeted again, emerge from the Face. The leading edge than a the dust storm is upon them. They can't see much more few meters.

that As they reach the rover, they hear, even in this chaos, They the deep pulsing tone of the Face has started again. McConnell look at each other, uncertain what this means. But is now beyond their help. Luke keys his mike.

LUKE

Phil? Phil, do you read?
(to Terri)
He's not reading.

TERRI

I can barely read you. Let's get the
hell out of here!

INT. ERV COCKPIT. NIGHT

PHIL

Is anyone there? Can anyone read me?

Phil gets no response. He is shaking, almost crying. He
hesitates, then starts hitting some keys.

CLOSE ON HIS COMPUTER DISPLAY

Which reads: "PRE-LAUNCH CHECKLIST."

INT. MARTIAN SPACESHIP. NIGHT

oxygen
Nothing
the
McConnell has shed his backpack, with its unneeded
tank. He steps cautiously onto the colored rings.
seems to happen. Moving further, he takes his place on
indigo circle at their core. He looks at

THE GLOWING TAKE-OFF COUNTDOWN INDICATOR

continuous
As it dips from orange into red; the BELL TONES are
now, very deep and rapid.

EXT. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. NIGHT

towards
Face
flying
dust
they
The rover, with Luke and Terri inside, races away
the safety of the ERV, as the maelstrom boils over the
behind them. The sky is purplish black, thick with
debris and eerie lightning flashes. Towering billows of
chase them over the plain, nearly enveloping them as
speed towards us, passing OUT OF FRAME.

INT. MARTIAN SPACESHIP. NIGHT

McConnell reacts, surprised, as suddenly

A TRANSPARENT, GLASS-LIKE CYLINDER

up
Begins to rise around him, swiftly and smoothly, coming
from the circumference of the indigo circle.

drops
Then a second, identical cylinder -- the top half --
fuse
down from somewhere overhead. The two sections meet and
as
in a flash of light, containing McConnell inside them,
tube.
neatly as if he were in a giant, transparent mailing

MCCONNELL

virtually
Fights against a stab of claustrophobia. Is he being
can't
imprisoned? Or somehow protected? Either way, he's
shift.
immobilized. In this tight space in his bulky suit, he
even move his arms. Only his head and neck can still

INT. ERV COCKPIT. NIGHT

flipping
Phil is going over his final pre-launch checklist,
switches and pressing buttons. He looks at his

DIGITAL CLOCK

Which reads "1350."

PHIL IS STRICKEN, TORMENTED

lips
His finger hovers over a "Fire" button. He licks his
nervously, squeezes his eyes shut, and hits the button.

CLOSE ON COMPUTER DISPLAY

And the words: "IGNITION SEQUENCE INITIATED"

INT. MARTIAN SPACESHIP. NIGHT

surrounds
his

McConnell is straining inside the cylinder that
him, when something catches his attention. He arches
neck, looking down.

A COBALT-BLUE TRANSPARENT LIQUID

some
are

Is beginning to fill the cylinder! It swirls in, from
unknown source, rising rapidly; already his lower boots
covered.

MCCONNELL'S EYES

cylinder

Widen in alarm. He strains against the sides of the
but

HIS GLOVED HANDS

Slide helplessly across the smooth surface.

MCCONNELL

Looks down again.

THE COBALT LIQUID

Is up to his knees. Now his thighs...

MCCONNELL

higher,

Cranes his neck, staring up. Can he wedge himself
can he somehow climb to safety?

ABOVE HIM

translucent. He
rising
itself.
water
on a

The entire "ceiling" of the Face is becoming
can see the dust storm, boiling overhead. And now,
into this, are fiery coils of energy from the Face
These swirl and twist in every direction, like angry
snakes; battered by the fierce winds. Two vast forces
collision course.

INT. ROVER. NIGHT

Terri
shout to

Luke drives the rover through the blinding storm, as
stares at a dashboard computer screen. They have to
be heard over the ROARING WIND.

TERRI

I've lost the Base Camp beacon!

Luke looks over alarmed.

CLOSE ON A DIAL

whatsoever.

As the needle spins freely, giving no direction

TERRI

No good! We're driving blind.

LUKE

I'll try to keep on a straight line!
It's our only chance.

TERRI

Don't worry! I've worked with Phil
for four years! I know Jim gave him
a direct order, but he won't leave
without us.

EXT. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. NIGHT

chasing
It

The Rover races towards us, the front of the storm
it from behind, then completely overtaking the Rover.
disappears from view!

INT. ERV COCKPIT. NIGHT

computer

Phil sits in the pilot's seat. He is looking at a
graphic that shows the engines readying to launch. With
resignation, he keys his mike.

PHIL

This is ERV, do you read? ERV to
Rover, do you read...?

red

Phil waits a second, then reaches slowly for a blinking

has
crackle

switch that reads "LAUNCH." He hesitates, then actually
his fingers on it, about to flip it, when he hears a
of static on the radio. Phil keys his mike.

PHIL

This is ERV, do you read?

LUKE

(very faint)

Save the fuel, Phil. We're coming
in.

tries

And Phil chokes back a sob. Blinking back the tears, he
to compose himself, then keys his mike.

PHIL

Uh, Phil's not here right now. He
left for Earth five minutes ago.
Please leave your message at the
beep.

EXT. THE FACE. NIGHT

rising
spinning
vortex.
crew,
streaks
chin,
flowing
Face
forming
clouds,

FROM GROUND LEVEL we see that the coils of energy are
from the forehead of the Face, from its "third eye,"
and looping faster and faster, starting to form a
But unlike the wind vortex that killed the Mars One
this is a vortex of fire. As we watch, more fiery
begin to emerge from the sides of the Face, from the
cheeks and temples. These all rush upwards, like lava
uphill, gathering in intensity as they leap free of the
itself and spiral into the atmosphere. The peak of the
vortex is already piercing the lowest layer of storm
causing a dark counter-swirl.

EXT. MARS ONE BASE CAMP. NIGHT

it

Phil stands at the bottom of the ERV's ladder, gripping

storm
out,
hands,
confused.

to steady himself, staring into the swirling dust.
THE ROVER appears out of the dust and sand, the immense
seeming to chase it from behind. Luke and Terri climb
struggle towards him through the wind. Phil grips their
helping them over to the ladder. He looks back,

PHIL

Where's Jim?

TERRI

He got another ride.

Phil stares at her, bewildered.

LUKE

Tell you on the way. Let's go!

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. MARTIAN SHIP. NIGHT

blue
his
ring.

LOOKING DOWN INTO THE CYLINDER, we see that the cobalt-
fluid has risen to McConnell's upper chest. Now it's at
shoulders! It pours into his suit through his neck

keep

He strains on tiptoes, craning his head back, trying to
his unhelmeted face above the rising liquid.

thrashing
mouth,

He sucks in deep desperate gulps of air, his head
from side to side. Then suddenly the fluid is over his
his nose, his forehead. His whole body is submerged!

top

The level of fluid continues to rise towards the unseen
of the cylinder.

MCCONNELL

Squeezes his eyes shut, holding his breath. Not so much

waiting fighting this anymore as simply floating in place,
for his inevitable death...

EXT. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. NIGHT

side to WIDEVIEW FROM ABOVE, as the energy vortex bends from
the side, pushing back the swirling storm that surrounds
cylindrical Face. As the vortex coalesces its energy into a
the shape, we see through its center to a rising form --
matte- Martian ship. It is a flattened convex circle whose
metallic angles replicate the "Face" imagery.

FACE
EXT. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. NIGHT. SIDEVIEW FROM INSIDE THE

begins to As the Face burns away around us, the Martian ship
rise and spin.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. NIGHT

As it The vortex is now a tight, rapidly spinning cylinder.
the draws more and more power from the disintegrating Face,
Martian ship in its center spins faster and faster.

INT. MARTIAN SHIP. NIGHT

MCCONNELL'S FACE

as the Is spinning and shaking too, more and more violently,
reminded huge buildup of G-forces tears at his body. We're
the of Nick Willis just before the vortex exploded him; is
same thing about to happen to McConnell?

from his His eyes remain tightly shut, bubbles are streaming

shaken

lips. His last breath is nearly exhausted, it's being
from his lungs.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. MARTIAN SPACESHIP. NIGHT

him,
THE
them
view
images
near-

As we MOVE IN CLOSER ON HIS FACE, we suddenly see, with
a SERIES of rapid-fire, almost subliminal IMAGES FROM
PAST. We recognize each one. Previously, though, we saw
as still photos; now they have movement, life, and we
them from new and slightly different angles. These
INTERCUT with glimpses of McConnell's pale, shaking,
death face in the present...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

THE YOUNG MCCONNELL

from
white

Under the Christmas tree, lifts his new model rocket
its box. He turns to us, smiling joyfully. A blinding
flash, and he disappears...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

THE TEENAGED MAGGIE

proud

Is on her porch, under a night sky, bending down to the
eyepiece of a TELESCOPE. She looks up at us with a shy,
smile. A blinding white flash and she's gone...

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

MAGGIE AND MCCONNELL

wing of
other,
In flight suits, holding their helmets, stand on the
a fighter jet. The radiant young couple turn to each
other,
kissing. A blinding white flash and they vanish...

MAGGIE MCCONNELL

us,
we
In an astronaut's pressure suit, drifts rapidly towards
reeling in along a tether. A man's gloved hand is
outstretched, reaching for her. As she grips the hand,
see her triumphant expression through her faceplate. A
blinding flash; she's gone...

MCCONNELL'S FACE - IN THE PRESENT

all at
once, the SHAKING STOPS.
Is shaking savagely; he is very near death. And then,

Time itself seems to stop.

then,
opens his
breathes
McConnell opens his eyes, staring STRAIGHT AT US. And
fully accepting his fate, he throws his head back,
mouth and takes in a deep lungful of the fluid. He can
it.

breathes
relaxes,
fully
his
image...
His eyes widen in surprise and understanding. He can
it! This fluid will keep him alive! His whole body
the tension draining from his head and shoulders, as he
trusts this launch for the first time. And then, with
eyes wide open, he sees, from memory, one final

BRIDAL VEIL IS LIFTED

shining
And REVEALS, in CLOSEUP, the beautiful face, the
eyes of MAGGIE MCCONNELL. Beatific, eternal. She gazes
directly INTO CAMERA, then smiles...

MCCONNELL

Smiles back.

EXT. PLAINS OF CYDONIA. NIGHT

from red-
its
vast,
surface,

WIDE VIEW, FROM ABOVE, as the energy vortex changes orange to blue-white. It ROARS with terrifying power as top starts to bend, angling like a telescope towards a specific point in the stars. Then the Martian ship -- a rounded darker form, little more than a blip within the blue-white column of energy -- shoots away from the surface, leaving only a blacked crater where the Face had been.

EXT. MARS. HIGH ATMOSPHERE. NIGHT

ship,
the
piercing
its
planet's

ANGLE FROM DEEP SPACE, LOOKING DOWN, as the Martian riding its blue-white column of energy, streaks up into vast blackness, like a narrowly focused spotlight the night. Down below, we can see the dust storm in all vastness still boiling orange and brown across the surface, which it now completely covers.

ship,
clouds on
comfortable

As the Martian ship flashes by us, it passes another much smaller and slower, rising through the storm a different trajectory. We recognize the familiar, sight of the ERV.

PUSHING IN QUICKLY ON THIS.

We see three figures in the cockpit.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. ERV COCKPIT. NIGHT

acceleration

Luke, Terri and Phil are strapped in, with their just starting to level off, when suddenly their cockpit

at the
gloved

interior is starkly bathed in white light. They wince
unearthly radiance, shielding their faceplates with
hands.

TERRI

Dear God. Look at that.

ship

Through their cockpit window, they watch the Martian
hurtle by them at a hundred times their speed.

PHIL

Is that him?

Luke nods. Their eyes are glistening. Luke's voice is a
whisper, both of prayer and farewell.

LUKE

Godspeed Jim McConnell.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

OMITTED

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. SPACE

ship
blue-
it is
limitless

Looking through the cockpit window we see the Martian
receding into the infinite distance of space -- a long
white scratch that in moments begins to fade. Finally
a tiny point of light, taking its place amongst the
expanse of the star-filled heavens.

THE END