

INTO THE VOID

Written by

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Based on, If Any

Address
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FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE STATION - DAY

A magnificent space shuttle, bearing the logo of *InterstellarXpo* on its length, shutters and steams.

INT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE - DAY

Two MEN fiddle with the controls in the front, and another MAN and one WOMAN sit in the row behind; all of them are buckled up in their space suits.

A voice breaks the tension on the comms:

GROUND CONTROL
Ground control to Commander Fallon,
what's you're reading on the oxygen
levels.

A handsome, debonair man (late 30s) leans forward; this is COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
We're all green over here.

GROUND CONTROL
Roger that, Michael will be taking
over the launch shortly. But first,
the founder would like a word with
you all.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Roger that.

Commander Fallon presses a button on the side of his helmet:

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON (CONT'D)
Mr. Ackley's gonna talk to us.

INT. GROUND CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Rows of people are hunched over their monitors. At the front is a live video feed of the Icarus Space Shuttle.

In the back watching over everyone is Mr. Ackley (50s) in a garishly bright-white suit. He leans down to speak into his microphone.

MR. ACKLEY
Good morning, Icarus crew!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

The Icarus crew cheers.

INT. GROUND CONTROL

MR. ACKLEY

The world is in great peril, and it is up to you to give humanity a future. You have all been carefully selected to carry out this honor because of your ingenuity, integrity, perseverance, and teamwork. I have no doubt that if we do our job correctly, you will succeed in this mission. It'll be a long, hard journey, but if you ever feel down, remember why you're doing this.

INT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

Commander Fallon smiles.

MR. ACKLEY

Remember everyone back home, and the heroes you'll become.

Pilot BRENDAN POLARIS (40s) looks locked-in.

MR. ACKLEY (CONT'D)

Remember your families and the life that you'll give them.

Engineer PERTH SMITH (20s) looks bored.

MR. ACKLEY (CONT'D)

Remember the advancements in science and technology that you're a part of.

Biologist EVANNA MAIA (30s) looks around at her fellow crew members.

MR. ACKLEY (CONT'D)

Most importantly, though, remember your crew-mates because up there, you have only each other to rely on.

INT. GROUND CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

MR. ACKLEY
Mike will take over from here. Good
luck Icarus crew. Godspeed.

INT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

A humanoid voice speaks:

MICHAEL
Hello, Icarus crew. This is
Michael. We will be taking off
soon. I am very excited to be
guiding you all to Mars. Sit back,
relax, and I'll take it from here.

EXT. SPACE STATION - DAY

The supports for the shuttle detach. The engines rumble.

MICHAEL
Take off in T-minus 10...

INT. GROUND CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL
9...

Everyone is staring at the live feed in anticipation.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
8...

Mr. Ackley smiles with pride and unerring confidence.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
7...

INT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

The crew holds on tight to their restraints and has their
eyes closed.

MICHAEL
6...

Commander Fallon takes a deep breath.

EXT. SPACE STATION - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL
5 ignition.

The engines fire up.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
4...

The ground beneath quakes.

INT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

The shuttle shakes.

MICHAEL
3...

The crew's grips' tighten.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
2...

EXT. SPACE STATION - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL
1...

The shuttle rises off the ground.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Liftoff.

The ship soars into the sky, getting faster and faster.

EXT. EDGE OF ATMOSPHERE - DAY

The booster detaches and falls away. The second engine ignites, propelling everyone forward into the blackness of space.

TITLE CARD: *Into the Void*

EXT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE

Behind the shuttle is Earth, now a small blue and green ball, getting even smaller. The shuttle has an enormous wheel spinning around with rooms on it.

INT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE - MESS ROOM

The crew are all standing on the ground. Outside the earth spins. They hold steaming mugs of coffee.

Commander Fallon taps a spoon against his mug to get everyone's attention.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON

If I could just have your attention
for a moment, I just want to say
that it is an honor to be a part of
this expedition much less be
commander.

The crew claps and cheers.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON (CONT'D)

Throughout history, humanity has
come close to being wiped out by
storms, plagues, volcanic
eruptions, and other sorts of
catastrophes. Now, though, we are
close to destroying ourselves and
the world we live in. This crew is
humanity's second chance at
creating a sustainable
civilization. We are the seeds of
the world's future, and that is why
cannot--no, we will not fail. From
working with you all, I can see
that you are all geniuses in your
field, which is why I am confident
that, if we do our jobs, we will
succeed. We are at the peak of
human greatness technologically;
imagine what we will be able to
create on Mars with the lessons
learned from Earth. Imagine the
life we can give to the children of
the new world. Forget Erickson,
Polo, and Columbus, we the Icarus
crew are the greatest explorers,
braving the final frontier.

Commander Fallon raises his mug.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON (CONT'D)

To seven months!

Everyone raises their cup and drinks.

INT. COCKPIT - DAY

Pilot Polaris floats above his seat, reading *Moby-Dick*.
Outside is total blackness.

Commander Fallon enters. Pilot Polaris looks up.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Hard at work I see.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
Not much to do right now. Mike's
got it all handled; isn't that
right, Mike?

MICHAEL
That is correct Pilot Polaris.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
Call me Brendan.

MICHAEL
Okay, Brendan.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Ah, very clever.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
(playfully)
Did you come in here just to
criticize?

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Just wanted to make sure that we
were adjusting to our new roles.
You seem to have everything
handled, so I'll let you get back
to it. Just make sure Mike doesn't
steer us into an asteroid.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
If we can even find one.

Brendan turns back to the empty abyss and continues reading.

INT. GARDEN - DAY

The Garden is a large room full of aeroponic stations and a
field with fertile soil.

Biologist Evanna Maia is planting seeds in some orange soil.
After she finishes the row, she wipes sweat from her brow and
saunters over to a vacuum-sealed door.

INT. EGG STORAGE - CONTINUOUS

She enters the freezing storage room. She sighs in relief and then looks at the temperature: it's in the green.

INT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Commander Fallon enters, looking around for Biologist Maia.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Hello? Eva?

Biologist Maia exits the egg storage.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
Yes?

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
How's the eggs?

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
All green. Just cooling off.
Aeroponics is hard work.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Got anything good for us?

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
Soon we'll have potatoes, corn,
wheat... It'll beat the sludge we
have right now.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
It's not all bad, but I am looking
forward to some baked potatoes.
Keep up the good work.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
See ya Chris.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - DAY

Engineer Perth Smith floats in the engine room typing away on a laptop that is connected to come circuitry.

On the laptop is a stream of code.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
Hey Mike.

MICHAEL
Yes Engineer Smith.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
You're coders, what did they use as
a dataset?

MICHAEL
I am sorry Engineer Smith, but I am
afraid I cannot divulge any
information relating to my
creation.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
I just want to know how they made
an AI so sophisticated; you know,
I've always wanted to do that.

MICHAEL
Engineer Smith, I am only allowed
to discuss these matters with those
who were part of my creation or who
have clearance.

Engineer Smith looks abnormally angry at this. He glances up
at the camera watching him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Please understand that any leakage
could pose a threat to national
security.

Smith stares deep into the camera's black lens before turning
away.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
It's all good Mike. Just curious.

Fallon opens the sliding door and notices Smith's
disappointment.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
What's got you so dour?

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
Nothing.

MICHAEL
Engineer Smith was just asking
about my creation. I explained to
him that I am forbidden from
speaking about to anyone without
security clearance.

Smith glares at the lens again. Fallon notices this.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Thanks Mike, could we just have a
moment?

MICHAEL
Of course.

Fallon pulls himself closer.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
It's the first day. You'll have 7
months to learn about Mike.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
I know, still just disappointed
that I wasn't a part of it, you
know.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
I get it. Let's just focus on our
jobs here.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
Focus on what? There's nothing to
do.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
I don't know. Brendan took up
reading. Maybe find a hobby.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
I'm fine. I'll just... tinker on my
own things.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Alright. Keep your spirits up!
You're a part of something amazing.

Smith fakes a smile.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
Yeah I know.

Fallon turns to the door.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
See you around.

Smith nods.

INT. MESS ROOM

It's getting close to bedtime for the Icarus crew. Everyone's exhausted from the launch and just wants to get dinner over with and go to bed.

The crew is gathered around the table eating what looks like multi-colored pastes. There's an awkward silence.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
So... daily check in, how was
everyone's first day?

Everyone nods and mumbles something like "good."

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON (CONT'D)
Eva how's the garden looking?

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
Lookin' good. Got my seeds planted,
so Mike can take care of the rest.
The eggs are frozen uhh... Yeah.

Fallon nods eagerly.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Okay! Brendan, how're you liking
Moby-Dick?

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
It's got good prose just a bit slow
is all. Beats the view though.

There's that silence again.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS (CONT'D)
Uhh... I sent a recording to my
family.

Everyone smiles at that.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS (CONT'D)
Yeah, it's just hitting me, you
know. My little girl's gonna've
graduated college by the time the
colony's done.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
If the world lasts that long.

Everyone looks at Smith.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH (CONT'D)
Sorry, I didn't mean... I'm just
scared that we're gonna build the
colony, but humanity just couldn't
hold on, you know.

The tone has turned somber. Smith looks at Polaris.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH (CONT'D)
I believe in the mission. I
wouldn't be here if I didn't. It's
just a fear in the back of my mind.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
I think what Perth's trying to say
is that the situation back home is
dire. It's pointless to pretend
otherwise. And there is a small
chance that they won't make it. But
Mr. Ackley has faith in us. He's
back at home doing everything to
keep the world from falling apart
before we finish. If he can do
that, we can build a colony.
Everyone just needs to do their
job.

The crew looks a little relieved.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
What about you Chris?

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Hm?

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
How was your day?

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
It was good. Just checked in with
you all. Checked in with Ground
Control.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
Any word from them?

Christopher shakes his head.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
No, at least, nothing important.

EXT. ICARUS SPACE SHUTTLE

SUPER: Three Weeks Later

INT. COCKPIT - DAY

Pilot Polaris is back to the beginning of *Moby-Dick*. He looks up from the book for a second, taking in the view. It's pitch black with a few sparkling stars.

Something catches his eye on the control console. He pulls himself in.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
Hey Mike?

MICHAEL
Yes Brendan.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
It says we're shifting off course
by 2 degrees.

MICHAEL
That is strange.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
Yeah, could you just recheck the
flight path?

MICHAEL
Of course.

Michael calculates.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I am on the correct course.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
My navigation still says we're off.

MICHAEL
That must be an error on the
navigation system. I assure you
that I am on the correct path.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
Are you sure there couldn't be
something wrong on your end?

MICHAEL
I am sure.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS

Okay.

Brendan is disturbed. He presses a comm piece on his ear.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS (CONT'D)

Hey Chris, can I talk to you?

INT. GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

Evanna is sunbathing beneath the lamps in the garden. A few green shoots have risen from the ground.

The lamps turn off.

Evanna opens her eyes and sits up. The whole room's gone dark.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA

Mike?

MICHAEL

Yes Biologist Maia.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA

Is something wrong with the power?

MICHAEL

All systems are green.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA

Could you turn on the lights then?

MICHAEL

Oh... sorry about that.

The lights turn back on.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA

Thanks.

Evanna looks at the Egg Storage.

INT. EGG STORAGE - DAY

Evanna's put on her suit. She looks at the temperature. It's close to yellow: too close for her.

Her comm piece blares:

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON

Everyone in the mess hall, now.

INT. MESS ROOM - DAY

Perth enters. Everyone else is already there.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
I got an alert on my laptop.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
What was it?

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
It said there was an error in the
operating system.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Do you know what it is?

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
No I can't access Mike's code
without clearance.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
Shit.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
What's going on?

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
Mike's malfunctioning.

Chris puts a hand up.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON
We don't know that for sure.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA
The lights in the garden shut off
and the eggs are getting warmer.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
Even worse, we're not gonna make it
to Mars.

Perth looks up.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH
What?

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS
We're off by 2 degrees. If we keep
going like this, we're not just
gonna miss Mars, we'll be thousands
of miles off.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH

Jesus.

A moment of silence before Evanna shatters it.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA

I think we should go back.

Everyone looks at Evanna.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA (CONT'D)

We're only 3 weeks in. I say we deactivate Mike, head back home, and there they can fix him.

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH

It's either that, or we operate everything manually for 6 months.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON

What do you mean?

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH

We don't have any automated parts on the shuttle; it's all run through Mike. We don't have another autopilot, so we'd have to steer the ship manually; there's no systems to keep the crops growing or the eggs cool; and I can't check which systems are operating.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS

Why would they do that?

ENGINEER PERTH SMITH

They must've had a lot of faith in Mike.

PILOT BRENDAN POLARIS

Then I agree with Eva. We should just turn around and get Mike fixed.

COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER FALLON

Alright, everyone just calm down. I'm gonna talk to Ground Control. They can get this sorted out.

Fallon tries to remain calm. He strides out of the mess room.

BIOLOGIST EVANNA MAIA

I'm gonna make sure the eggs don't overheat.