
Get Us Off Of This Moon
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The moon wasn't large. You could probably start at one point, walk in a straight line, and get to your starting point again in less than an hour. There is probably some kind of math equation that would be able to measure the circumference of this moon, but I'm trying to conserve my air. I think doing math consumes more air. I read that in a book somewhere. Maybe it was a cereal box.

We ejected from our ship right before it crashed on the moon. It may be some miracle or act of divine intervention, but the ship was not completely destroyed. It just broke into four parts and we are now on the hunt to find these four parts. If we can gather the hull, the engines, the navigational systems, and the seats, my three colleagues and I will be able to get off this moon. We need to get off this moon.

We decided that it would be best to simply split up. We could see where each of the parts had landed, we just needed to make sure we could get them. Boberson headed north, Barnaby went south, Xiao Meng went east, and I went west. My breath fogged up my visor. Admittedly, I was getting nervous.

The air monitor on my wrist was still green though.

The first communication we all received was from Xiao Meng. Apparently she found the navigational system intact and just sitting there on the top of the moon dust. I consider that a lucky find. She said she'd try to meet up with Boberson. Even if we all individually got the parts, we'd still have to meet up to put them together and if we were really spread out we may not have enough air to get out of here.

I looked into what seemed like an empty crater and found a triangular shaped moon rock. It had a few holes in it, was a creamy white and yellow color, and felt pretty dense. I was holding it in my right hand when something unexpected happened.

The second communication we all received was from me. I had run into an alien who seemed to be standing guard against the seats of our ship. I wanted to make sure my exchange was being heard across the comms in case anything happened. The alien pointed at the moon rock in my right hand. Slowly I raised my arm and gave the moon rock to the alien, who quickly grabbed it and scuttled off. I had the seats.

The air monitor on my wrist turned from green to yellow. I was running out of air.

The third communication came from Boberson. He told us that Xiao Meng had met up with him and they had the ship hull in their possession. It seemed like we had three out of the four pieces and had a really good shot at getting off this moon.

The fourth communication came from Barnaby who told us he had found the engines. Based on how we were spread out on the moon, the best thing would be for us to meet him. We rushed over as quickly as we could, avoiding any random encounters so as to conserve our air.

The air monitor on my wrist turned from yellow to red. That's when the beeping started.

We gathered around the final ship piece. Barnaby was given all the parts and he started assembling all the pieces of the spaceship. The hull, navigational systems, and seats were quickly put together as the rest of us stared at the air monitors on our wrists flashing a red light of doom, beeping incessantly. Barnaby dragged the combined three ship pieces to the engines and started to hook up the final wires and connectors. With a final twist of a final screw, we could see all the lights flicker on inside the ship.

Beep. Beep. Beep.

We were elated. We all raised our hands. We celebrated and cheered. We piled into the ship and left the moon behind as a now distant memory we could share with a round of drinks. At least, that's what would have happened. What actually happened was when those lights came on, we felt a deep rumbling beneath us. A large crater sank beneath Barnaby's feet. In a flash a huge gust of moon gas shot him into the sky along with the completed ship. They landed 100 yards away. We raced toward Barnaby, darting our eyes between the air levels and the ship. We could make it. We had to make it.

"I'm sorry," was the last thing Barnaby said and the last thing we heard. Our ears were overcome with the beeping of our air level monitors and then it became silent. We watched the ship lift off into space. We watched each other fall one at a time. I saw my family and then I saw infinite darkness.

Around the Fire

Sadie Cat closed the book and stared at Mao. "This is the kind of stuff you like to read?" Mao shrugged and took the book back. Sadie Cat blinked a few times and laid down. She brought up the blanket closer around her neck and drifted off to sleep. She hoped that she would not have dreams about being left behind on a cold, distant, moon. She slept and didn't dream about a single thing at all.