

MISSION TO MARS

by
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CATHERINE ELLEN SHERMAN (FICTION)

RECEIVED
FEB 10 2014

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INT. SPACESHIP ~ THE BRIDGE

CAPTAIN EDITH SLOAN, having just awoken from her 6 month hyper sleep is now gaining her bearings back and preparing her team for their landing on Mars. According to all the data that her computer, affectionately named SIREN, has provided, the ship has preformed dutifully while the crew was in their comatose state. This crew of 2 have been selected to be amongst the first in a line of civilians to go to Mars to begin the regeneration process. They only have minutes now to set the ship into its correct orbit in order to ensure that they land at their precise location. If they miss their landing point they will be lost on Mars without any provisions to help them.

Without warning SIREN begins to go off.

SIREN (O.C.)
WARNING!!! WARNING!!! WARNING!!!

CAPTAIN SLOAN rushes to the monitor to see what the fuss is all about.

CAPTAIN SLOAN
Talk to me Siren, what's
happening?

CAPTAIN SLOAN, looks at the monitor in front of her. Siren is alerting the Captain. IMPENDING SOLAR FLARE STRIKE.

CAPTAIN SLOAN (CONT'D)
Is this for real. A Solar Flare is
about to hit us? What's the
projected impact on our ship?

Rushing in from the lower deck. First Officer Maggie Klutz, the CAPTAIN's second in command and most trusted friend, stumbles and wobbles slightly on her own feet. She is still feeling the affects of six months of hyper sleep.

OFFICER KLUTZ
Not good Captain. Not good.

CAPTAIN SLOAN
Klutz. You're awake. About time.

OFFICER KLUTZ
(wry smile)
Sorry Captain, I hit the snooze
button on my alarm. It looks like
the solar flare is gonna strike
the starboard side of the hull.

(MORE)

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OFFICER KLUTZ (CONT'D)

In 3 mins. The cargo bay, along with the engine room. You know what that means?

CAPTAIN SLOAN

We need to power everything down now. If that engine bay is affected the nuclear reactor could be damaged and then...

OFFICER KLUTZ

And then were a floating metal tin can, to far from home to float back.

CAPTAIN SLOAN

Or worse. We run out of air up here long before anyone can rescue us.

Klutz looks at the monitor again.

OFFICER KLUTZ

Captain, we have another problem. We have to begin lining up our ship for orbital entry to Mars. We miss this Cap, and we just spent the last 6 months taking a really long nap for nothing.

CAPTAIN SLOAN

If we power everything down now, will we have time to start the engines back up to get our orbit lined up?

KLUTZ looks at the monitor.

OFFICER KLUTZ

(overly dramatic) I'm not sure Captain. I'm just not sure.

SIREN sounds off again.

SIREN

Haul breach in T-minus 1 min.

Prepare for Impact.

OFFICER KLUTZ

We have to do something Captain.

Captain Sloan quickly looks out the window of the bridge for answers. An idea hits her like a bolt of lightening.

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CAPTAIN SLOAN

What if we shifted the ships axis point? We may still take a hit from the flare, but we could minimize the damage. Possibly averting a nuclear melt down in the ships core.

OFFICER KLUTZ

Yeah Cap, the ships shields may be able to deflect some of the flare's wrath.

SIREN

Impact in T-minus 30 seconds.

CAPTAIN SLOAN

Quick, get this ship turned around. If were lucky the solar panels may be able to absorb most of the effects of the solar flare on our ship.

OFFICER KLUTZ

Good thinking Captain. This might just work.

They are now seated firmly in their seats. Re-positioning the ship for impact.

SIREN

Impact in T-minus, 10...9...8

OFFICER KLUTZ

Fingers crossed.

Klutz closes her eyes preparing for impact.

SIREN

6...5...4

CAPTAIN SLOAN

To infinity...

SIREN

2...1.

Everything goes black. The bridge shakes. Both the Captain and the Corporal are tossed around.

Their is a long silence as the ship recovers from the impact of the solar flare.

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OFFICER KLUTZ
All systems functioning. Only
minor damage to the exterior hull.
We did it Captain. It worked.

CAPTAIN SLOAN
No time for celebrations just yet.
We need to get this ship turned
around and back on orbit for our
landing. Mars is the prize. Not
surviving space.

OFFICER KLUTZ
Right Captain. I'm on it.

They get busy working.

End scene.