

The Martian *Shooting Script*
"The MAV is still upright."

2.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE (RADIO)

Watney, you keep leaving your channel open...

FIND COMMANDER MELISSA LEWIS across the way, overseeing a drill experiment.

LEWIS

Which leads to Martinez responding, which leads to us listening, which leads to me being annoyed.

MARK

Martinez, Commander Lewis would like you please shut your smart mouth.

VOICE

Speaking for the smart people of the world...

INT. HAB - DAY

DR. CHRIS BECK studies samples on slides at his station.

BECK

We would prefer you use a different adjective to describe Martinez' mouth.

EXT. MARS - DAY

MARTINEZ

Did Beck just insult me?

MARK

Doctor Beck. And yes.

VOICE

Happy to turn their radios off from here, Commander...

INT. HAB - DAY

BETH JOHANSSSEN sits inside at her computer, tracking (among other things) the group's communications.

JOHANSSSEN

Just say the word.

EXT. MARS - DAY

MARK

Johanssen, constant communication is the hallmark of a --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEWIS
Shut 'em off.

Click. Mark and Martinez' radios go SILENT.

As Lewis works, we see Mark throwing up his arms in the background, like "Hey! C'mon!"

LEWIS (CONT'D)
I apologize for my countrymen, Vogel.

ALEX VOGEL wears the EUROPEAN UNION patch on his shoulder.

ALEX
Accepted. How many samples do we need, Commander?

LEWIS
Seven. One hundred grams each. Drill at least thirty centimeters down.

While the two of them use a SPECIMEN DRILL to bore holes in the ground, we see Mark waving his arms in the background: *C'mon, turn my radio back on...*

INT. HAB - DAY

Johanssen frowns as she receives a MISSION UPDATE from Houston. Her face goes PALE...

JOHANSSEN
Um... Commander? You should come inside...

EXT. HAB - DAY

JOHANSSEN (OVER RADIO)
You're gonna want to see this.

Lewis reads the tension in Johanssen's voice.

LEWIS
What is it?

JOHANSSEN
We got a mission update. Storm warning.

LEWIS
I saw the warning in the morning briefing. We'll be inside long before it hits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHANSSSEN

They've upgraded their estimate.
(beat)

The storm's gonna be worse.

LEWIS looks to the skies. IN THE DISTANCE: a STORM darkens the horizon.

Angle MARK: as the dirt in front of him starts to blow in the incoming WIND...

INT. HAB - DAY

Lewis reads the update. Everyone else is inside as well. Mood is grim -- this is not good news.

LEWIS

"...twelve-hundred kilometers in diameter, bearing 24.41 degrees..."

JOHANSSSEN

That's tracking right towards us.

LEWIS

"...based on current escalation, estimate a force of...

(shit)

"Eighty-six hundred Newtons."

MARK

What's the Abort Force?

BECK

Seventy-five hundred.

MARTINEZ

Anything above that and the MAV could tip.

VOGEL

We're scrubbed?

LEWIS

(reading)

"Begin abort procedures."

Everyone tries to hide their crushing disappointment.

MARTINEZ

Maybe it won't be as bad as they say.

VOGEL

They're estimating with a margin of error. We can wait it out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK
(nods)
Let's wait it out.

ON LEWIS. This news hits her worst of all. She tries to consider all her options. Mind RACING.

JOHANSSSEN
Commander?

Fuck.

LEWIS
Prep for emergency departure.

MARK
Commander --

LEWIS
We're scrubbed.

EXT. HAB - STORM - DAY

The HIGH WINDS slam into our five astronauts as they exit the airlock. They struggle to stay on their feet as they fight their way through the punishing storm.

LEWIS
Visibility is almost zero. If you get lost, home in on my suit's telemetry. The wind's gonna be rougher away from the Hab, so be ready.

Sand continues to slam them as they take step after agonizing step towards the MAV. It's brutal; they fight for every inch.

MARK
Hey. Maybe we could shore up the MAV. Make tipping less likely.

LEWIS
How?

MARK
We could use cables from the solar farm as guy lines.

Mark pauses to catch his breath. Starts forward again...

MARK (CONT'D)
The rovers could be anchors. The trick would be getting around the--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WHAM! A massive section of antenna SLAMS INTO MARK out of nowhere. He's lifted off his feet and YANKED away into the storm. It happens FAST. One second he's there...

And then he's gone.

JOHANSSSEN

WATNEY!!!

LEWIS

What happened?

JOHANSSSEN

Something hit him--

LEWIS

Watney, report --

(no reply)

WATNEY, REPORT!

JOHANSSSEN

*He's offline.
where he is--*

I don't know

BECK

*-- Commander, before we lost telemetry,
his decompression alarm went off--*

JOHANSSSEN

*Shit! Johanssen where did you
last see him?*

*-- He was right in front of me and then
he was gone. He
flew off due west--*

Lewis surveys the scene. Visibility is NEAR ZERO. She can barely see the people next to her. Tries to keep her heart from POUNDING out of her chest.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

Okay... okay... Martinez, get to the MAV and prep for launch. Everyone else, home in on Johanssen.

JOHANSSSEN

(stumbling)

I can't see anything --

VOGEL

Doctor Beck! How long can a person survive decompression?

BECK

Less than minute.

LEWIS

Line up and walk west. Small steps.

(CONTINUED)

He's probably pronouncing it wrong. I don't want to
step over him.

7.

CONTINUED:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The group fights through the chaos --

INT. MAV - CONTINUOUS - DAY

WHOOSH! Martinez dives into the airlock, forces the door closed. Waits for agonizing seconds as it pressurizes...

Pressurized. Martinez races up the ladder, slides into the pilot's couch and boots the system.

MARTINEZ

Commander -- The MAV's got an 8degree tilt. It'll tip at 12.3--

EXT. HAB - STORM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

LEWIS

Copy that --

Beck checks the readout on his arm computer.

BECK

Johanssen, Watney's bio-monitor sent something before going offline. My computer just says "Bad Packet" --

JOHANSSEN

It didn't finish transmitting.
(works her arm computer)
I have the raw packet. It's plaintext:
BP 0, PR 0, TP 36.2.

BECK

Copy.
(then)
Blood pressure zero. Pulse rate zero.
Temperature normal.

LEWIS

Temperature normal?

BECK

It takes a while for the... it takes a while for the body to cool.

Everyone stops short as that news lands.

MARTINEZ (OVER RADIO)

Commander. Tilting at 10.5 degrees now, with gusts pushing it to 11.

LEWIS

Copy. If it tips, can you launch before

(CONTINUED)

The Martian *Shooting Script*
it completely falls over?

7.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTINEZ (OVER RADIO)
(hesitates)
Uh. Yes. Ma'am. I could take manual control.

LEWIS
Copy that. Everyone home in on Martinez's suit. That'll get you to the airlock. Get in and prep for launch.

VOGEL
What about you, Commander?

LEWIS
I'm searching a little more. Get moving. And Martinez, if you start to top, launch.

MARTINEZ (OVER RADIO)
You really think I'm leaving you behind?

LEWIS
I just ordered you to. You three, get to the ship.
(as they hesitate)
GO.

INT. MAV - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Vogel, Beck, and Johanssen stumble into the airlock.

EXT. STORM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Lewis can't see a thing in any direction. *C'mon, think,*
Melissa, think...

She reaches into the pack on her back and removes two of the one meter drill bits she was using earlier to take samples. She holds one in each hand, dragging them on the ground as she trudges through the sand.

LEWIS
Johanssen, would the rover IR camera do any good?

INT. MAV - CONTINUOUS - DAY

JOHANSSEN (INTO RADIO)
Negative. IR can't get through sand any better than visible light.

They rip off their helmets. Scramble up the ladder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BECK

What's she thinking? She's a geologist.
She knows IR can't get through a
sandstorm.

VOGEL

She's grasping. For anything.

MARTINEZ

Commander. We're tilting 11.6 degrees.
One good gust and we're tipping.

LEWIS (OVER RADIO)

*What about the proximity radar? Could it
detect Watney's suit?*

MARTINEZ

No way. It's made to see Hermes in
orbit, not the metal in a single suit.

LEWIS (OVER RADIO)

Copy. Give it a try.

Beck slides into his acceleration couch.

BECK

Commander, I know you don't want to hear
this, but Watn... Mark's dead.

LEWIS (OVER RADIO)

Copy.

(then)

Martinez, try the radar.

MARTINEZ

Roger.

As Martinez waits for the radar, he glares at Beck.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)

What is wrong with you?

BECK

My friend just died. I don't want my
Commander to die too.

EXT. STORM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Lewis fights her way through the storm.

MARTINEZ (OVER RADIO)

Negative contact on proximity radar.

(CONTINUED)

INT. MAV - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Martinez fights the controls. Beck and Johanssen share nervous glances. Finally:

LEWIS (OVER RADIO)
Copy. On my way.

JOHANSSEN
11.6... 11.5... holding at 11.5...

INT. MAV - AIRLOCK - CONTINUOUS - DAY

WHOOSH. Down below, Lewis slams the airlock door shut. She tears off her suit. Makes her way to the flight cabin.

She doesn't say a word as she straps herself in to her couch.

For a moment, nobody speaks. Then:

MARTINEZ
Still at pilot release. Ready for launch.

Lewis closes her eyes. Nods.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Commander. You need to verbally --

LEWIS
Launch.

Martinez nods. Activates the sequence. The pyros FIRE. The main engines IGNITE...

CLOSE ON LEWIS. Just as the MAV LURCHES UPWARD, we --

CUT TO:

INT. NASA - PRESS ROOM - DAY

THEODORE "TEDDY" SANDERS, Director of NASA, steels himself before he steps to the podium. Normally, he leaves these briefings to his press secretary.

Today is different. He opens a RED FOLDER.

TEDDY
At around 4:30 a.m., central standard time, our satellites detected a storm approaching the Ares 3 mission site on Mars.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEDDY (CONT'D)

By 6:45, the storm had escalated to "severe," and we had no choice but to abort the mission. Thanks to the quick action of Commander Lewis, astronauts Beck, Johanssen, Martinez, and Vogel were all able to reach the Mars Ascent Vehicle and perform an emergency launch at 7:28 central time.

(then)

Unfortunately, during the evacuation, Astronaut Mark Watney was struck by debris and killed. Commander Lewis and the rest of her team were able to intercept safely with the *Hermes* and are now heading home...

(wavers, then)

But Mark Watney is dead.

As the CACOPHONY of questions erupts from the press --

EXT. MARS - DAY

Clear skies above the surface of Mars once again.
sound of an ALARM: *ARRR... ARRR... ARRR...*

PRELAP the

A BODY lies facedown, half-covered in red sand at the base of a hill. We catch a glimpse of the nametag on the spacesuit:

"Watney."

The OXYGEN ALARM inside the helmet continues to BLARE. And just as it builds to crescendo...

Mark Watney gasps for air.

He jerks back into consciousness. He's disoriented, alarms BLARING inside his helmet. As he struggles to move...

He screams in pain. Glances down. Sees:

A JAGGED LENGTH OF ANTENNA has pierced his spacesuit and stabbed straight into his abdomen. CAKED BLOOD all around the wound.

Mark's training kicks in -- *the suit is breached* -- he struggles to his knees -- gasping in pain -- he reaches to the side of his helmet for the BREACH KIT -- pulls the valve free -- grabs hold of the antenna... grits his teeth...

AND YANKS the antenna out of his side. The antenna SNAPS FREE -- the suit is exposed to atmosphere -- the pressure inside DROPS -- Mark CRIES OUT, goes woozy --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:
But stays conscious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He slams the breach kit over the hole. Seals it. Checks his arm readout. The oxygen stabilizes. He's still alive.

For now.

He struggles to his feet. Picks up the length of antenna. Begins the LONG CLIMB up the hill.

EXT. MARS - HAB - DAY

We're WITH MARK as he makes the climb, and as he crests the hill we swing around to reveal:

THE ARES 3 HABITATION (a.k.a. "The Hab"): The large, white tent-like structure where the six crew members lived during their time on Mars.

It's been battered by the storm, but it's still intact. Mark registers momentary relief. But then his eyes dart over to the MAV LAUNCH SITE.

It's empty.

He keeps walking.

INT. HAB - AIRLOCK - DAY

Mark fumbles his way into one of the hab's airlocks. As soon as the airlock equalizes, he tears off his helmet...

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark stumbles into the main area. Peels off his jumpsuit. WINCES as he rips the blood-caked fabric away from HIS WOUND.

His fingers probe the puncture. It's deep. *That's bad.* He checks his back for an exit wound. There's none. *That's good.* He grabs the broken antenna he brought with him. His fingers trace the bloodied end. It's jagged -- as though a piece of the antenna broke off inside him.

That's really bad.

Mark stumbles over to the first-aid station. Grabs supplies. Anesthetic. Syringe. Forceps. Needle. Suture thread.

(This is not exactly going to be easy to watch.)

Sweat pouring off his brow, Mark loads up the syringe with anesthetic. Grits his teeth. Injects it into his wound. Gasps. Breathes. Grabs the forceps. Hesitates. *I don't want to do this.* He takes a deep breath...

And digs the forceps into his wound.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He CRIES OUT in pain. Nearly goes unconscious. Fights it. *Don't pass out, Mark.* He probes with the forceps, grimacing in agony. He can't find it. Pushes the forceps in deeper. And DEEPER. Jesus. Mark's face goes WHITE.

He finds it. Yanks the forceps free. Sees the small piece of shrapnel. *It's out.* Hallelujah.

Mark grabs the needle. Tries to thread it. His hands won't stop shaking. He makes fists. *C'mon Mark.* Steadies himself *just enough.*

He begins to stitch himself up. Bit by agonizing bit. His hands keep shaking, but he refuses to stop until the wound is closed. Finally...

He's done. He clips the sutures. Collapses back into his chair. *Oh Jesus.* Tries to catch his breath.

We slowly ANGLE IN ON MARK as he struggles to breathe...and breathe...

And as we settle into a CLOSEUP, we see the full reality of Mark's situation hit him. He's in agony. Left for dead. All by himself.

The only man on the planet.

His eyes drift to the middle distance. Then...

MARK

Fuck.

CUT TO TITLE:

THE MARTIAN

INT. HAB - DAY

CAM ANGLE: we're looking through what (we assume) is a NASA camera. Mark's head peeks into frame. He adjusts the camera, seems unfamiliar with how to work the video journal.

MARK

Okay. Okay...

He types on the keypad. We see the NASA TIMESTAMP appear on the frame.
There, it's working.

MARK (CONT'D)

This is... Mark Watney. Astronaut. I am entering this log for the record, in case I... don't make it. It's...

CONTINUED:

CONTINUED:

MARK (CONT'D)

oh-six-fifty-three on Sol 19. And... I'm still alive.

(thinks)

Obviously. But I'm guessing this is going to be a surprise to my crewmates. And NASA. And... the world. So... surprise.

(then)

I didn't die on Sol 18. Best I can tell -

Mark holds up the jagged piece of antenna.

MARK (CONT'D)

-- this length of our primary communications antenna tore through my bio-monitor. And ripped a hole in me as well. It was horrible thank you for asking. But the antenna... and the blood... managed to seal the breach in my suit. Which kept me alive. Even though the team must have thought I was dead.

(then)

Commander Lewis... If you ever hear this... Listen. It wasn't your fault. Just bad luck. You did what you had to do, and if I had been in your position I would have done the same. I'm glad you guys made it.

(then)

All right, though. That's where we're at.

Mark Watney, stranded on Mars. I have no way to contact NASA because our communications antenna broke and stuck into my stomach. Which we've covered. And even if I could, it will take... four years before the next manned mission gets here. And I'm in a Hab designed to last thirty-one days.

(then)

If the oxygenator breaks, I'll suffocate. If the water reclaimer breaks, I'll die of thirst. If the Hab breaches, I'll just sort of... implode. And if, by some miracle, none of that happens... eventually I'm going to run out of food. So... yeah.

Mark trails off. It's one thing to know it. It's another to say it out loud.

MARK (CONT'D)

Yeah.

CONTINUED:

MARK (V.O.)

I've created one-hundred and twenty-six square meters of soil. But each cubic meter needs forty liters of water to be farmable. So, I gotta make a lot of water. Fortunately, I know the recipe. Take hydrogen. Add oxygen. Burn. Unfortunately... *burn*.

(then)

I have hundreds of liters of unused Hydrazine from the MDV. If I run the Hydrazine over an iridium catalyst, it'll separate into N2 and H2...

INT. HAB - DAY

Science time. Quick cuts now as Mark shows us how to make water by burning rocket fuel:

-- Mark duct tapes torn trash-bags to create a tent, which he uses to cover his work table.

-- He tears an air hose from one of the space suits, tapes it to the tent, hangs it from the roof. Now he has a chimney.

-- Mark vents pure oxygen from a tank, lights it with a spark from battery wires. Whoosh. Points the flame at the wood shavings. Now he has a small torch.

-- Mark holds the torch, starts the Hydrazine flow. The Hydrazine sizzles on the iridium and DISAPPEARS.

FOLLOW Mark's gaze up to the chimney. FLAME BURSTS start sputtering out from the hose. Mark grins. *It's working.*

Mark checks his instruments. Watches the temperature carefully. Repeats the process.

We may also notice Mark is wearing the protective inner lining of his EVA suit. Along with goggles. An oxygen mask hangs around his neck.

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark talks directly to camera. We may notice he is standing in the middle of what looks like a mad-scientist's chemistry experiment.

MARK

Then I just need to direct the hydrogen into a small area and burn it. Luckily, in the history of humanity, nothing bad has ever happened from lighting hydrogen on fire.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mark just stares at the camera. Then continues.

MARK (CONT'D)

Believe it or not, the challenge has been finding something that will hold a flame. NASA hates fire. Because of the whole "fire makes everyone die in space" thing. So everything we brought with us is flame retardant. With the notable exception of... Martinez' personal items.

He holds up Martinez' pack. Removes a small wooden cross.

MARK (CONT'D)

Sorry, Martinez. If you didn't want me to go through your stuff, you shouldn't have left me for dead on a desolate planet.

He starts shaving the cross down with a knife.

MARK (CONT'D)

I figure God won't mind, considering the situation.

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark's still at it. He looks exhausted. He goes through the procedure once again. Glances at the atmospheric analyzer.

Hm. Is that right? Doesn't give it a second thought. He strikes the

torch again...

BOOM!

The explosion is LOUD, FAST, and CONTAINED. It blasts Mark clear across the room. He hits the ground like a wet rag.

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark talks to camera. His clothes are somewhat scorched. His hair is singed in patches.

MARK

So. Yes. I blew myself up. (then)
Best guess? I forgot to account for the excess oxygen I've been exhaling when I did my calculations. Because I'm stupid.

He's still dazed. A little out of it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:
Moving faster and FASTER:

(CONTINUED)

walks through security ~~The Martian~~ ~~Shooting Script~~ ~~we can~~ glimpse of their screens: 24.

CONTINUED:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A CNN TITLE reads: "President Speaks At Watney Memorial."

INT. NASA - VARIOUS - DAY

As Vincent makes his way through NASA, we notice EVERYONE IN THE BUILDING is watching news reports of the Watney service.

ON THE SCREENS: We catch a brief glimpse of a female astronaut floating in zero-g, eulogizing Mark.

INT. NASA - TEDDY'S OFFICE - DAY

A man sits at his desk, staring out the window. We recognize him from the beginning of the movie.

TITLE: TEDDY SANDERS, DIRECTOR OF NASA

ON THE TELEVISION, we see Teddy shake hands with the President at the service.

Vincent gives it a passing glance as he enters.

VINCENT

I thought you gave a lovely speech, by the way.

Not one for small talk, Teddy gestures for Vincent to hand him the request form he's holding.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I need you to authorize my satellite time.

Teddy gives it a quick glance, shakes his head.

TEDDY

It's not gonna happen.

VINCENT

We're funded for five Ares missions. I think I can get Congress to authorize a sixth.

TEDDY

No.

VINCENT

They evac'd after eighteen sols. There's half a mission worth of supplies up there. I can sell another mission at a fraction of the cost. I just need to know what's left of our assets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEDDY

You're not the only one who needs satellite time. We've got the Ares 4 supply missions coming up. We should be focusing on the Schiaparelli Crater.

VINCENT

I'm talking about securing us another mission. We have twelve satellites in orbit, we can surely spare a few hours --

TEDDY

It's not about the satellite time, Vince.

Vincent shrugs -- *then what is it?*

TEDDY (CONT'D)

We're a public domain organization. We have to be transparent about this.

VINCENT

And?

TEDDY

The second we point the satellites at the Hab... I broadcast pictures of Mark Watney's dead body to the world.

VINCENT

(disbelief)

You're afraid of a PR problem?

TEDDY

Of course I'm afraid of a PR problem. Another mission? Congress won't reimburse us for a paper clip if we put a dead astronaut on the cover of The Washington Post.

VINCENT

So... what do we do? He's not going to decompose. He'll be there forever.

TEDDY

Meteorology estimates he'll be covered in sand from normal weather activity within a year.

VINCENT

We can't wait a year for this. We have work to do.

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MINDY (CONT'D)
Security? This is Mindy Park in SatCon.
I need the emergency contact number for
Dr. Kapoor. Yes, him. *Yes it's an
emergency --*

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - NIGHT

A hard-charging WOMAN stares at us in SHOCK --

WOMAN
Oh you have GOT to be SHITTING ME --

TITLE: ANNIE MONTROSE, Director of Media Relations, NASA

Annie, Vincent, and Teddy all huddle in the conference room.
IMAGES of the HAB site on the screens around them.

TEDDY
How sure?

VINCENT
Nearly 100%.

ANNIE
Do you understand the shitstorm that's
about to hit us?

TEDDY
Annie, one thing at a time.
(to Vincent)
Prove it to me.

VINCENT
(points to images)
For starters, the solar panels have been
cleaned.

TEDDY
They could have been cleaned by wind.

VINCENT
Look at Rover 2. According to the logs,
Commander Lewis took it out on Sol 17.
Plugged it into the Hab to recharge.
It's been moved.

TEDDY
She could have forgotten to log the move.

VINCENT
Here's the clincher. Check the MDV.
It's been taken apart. There's no way
they do that without telling us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE

Why don't we talk to Lewis? Let's go to CAPCOM and ask her directly right now.

Vincent shoots Teddy a glance. After a moment, Teddy understands what it means.

TEDDY

No. If Watney is really alive... we don't want the Ares 3 crew to know.

ANNIE

What? How can you not tell them?

TEDDY

They have another ten months on their trip home. Space travel is dangerous. We need them alert and undistracted.

ANNIE

They already think he's dead.

VINCENT

And they'd be devastated to find out they abandoned him alive.

ANNIE

You're on board with this?

VINCENT

We have to protect the crew. There's nothing they can do anyway. Let them deal with the emotional trauma when they're not trapped in a spaceship.

TEDDY

How do we handle the public?

ANNIE

We have twenty-four hours before we're required to release the pics.

TEDDY

We'll need to release a statement with them. We don't want people working it out on their own.

ANNIE

"Dear America. Remember that astronaut we thought we killed and had a nice funeral for? Turns out he's alive and we left him on Mars. Our bad. Sincerely, NASA."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

 TEDDY
 (stands up)
I need to get on a plane to Chicago.

 VINCENT
 (Why? Oh...)
Mark's parents.

 TEDDY
 (nods)
They should hear it from me before it
breaks on the news.

 ANNIE
They'll be happy to hear their son's
alive, at least.

 TEDDY
He's alive. But if my math is right,
he's gonna starve to death long before we
can help him.
 (then)
I'm not exactly looking forward to that
conversation.

Vincent's eyes drift to the images of Mars.

 VINCENT
Can you even imagine what he's going
through? He's fifty million miles from
home. He thinks he's totally alone and
that we all gave up on him. What kind of
effect does that have on a man's
psychology?
 (then)
What's he thinking about right now?

EXT. SPACE - MARS - TO ESTABLISH

 MARK (PRELAP)
I'm gonna die up here...

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark stares directly into camera.

 MARK
...if I have to listen to any more
goddamn disco music.

We now notice that Vicki Sue Robinson's "Turn the Beat
Around" is playing on the computer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (CONT'D)

And yeah, problem C is if I don't figure out how to make contact with NASA in the first place, none of this matters anyway. So... yes, in the face of overwhelming odds, I am left with only one option:

(then)

I'm gonna have to science the shit out of this.

MUSIC UP: The bouncing bass line of "Rubberband Man" by The Spinners carries us through --

EXT. HAB - DAY

-- Mark attaches the battery to Rover 2 with a makeshift harness.

EXT. HAB - DUSK

-- Mark sits behind the wheel of his wagon train. Takes it for a test drive. It's not pretty, but the spare battery HOLDS. As do the solar cells.

INT. ROVER - NIGHT

Mark speaks to the camera. His teeth are chattering.

MARK

Okay, so... success? I've doubled my battery life by scavenging Rover 1. BUT. If I use the heater, it'll eat up half my battery power every day. If I don't use the heater, I will be slowly killed by the laws of thermodynamics.

(tries to stop shaking)

I'd like to solve this problem, but unfortunately my brain is frozen.

Mark drives back towards the Hab.

EXT. MARS - DAY

Mark drives the Rover across Acidalia Planitia. IN THE DISTANCE: a GREEN FLAG is planted at the top of a hill.

MARK (V.O.)

Good news: I may have a solution to my heating problem.

Mark climbs the hill.

MARK (V.O.)

Bad news: it involves me digging up the Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Now, if I remember my training correctly,
one of the lessons was titled, "Don't Dig
Up The Big Box of Plutonium, Mark..."

Mark begins to dig up the big box of plutonium.

MARK (V.O.)
I get it. RTGs are good for spacecraft,
but if they rupture around humans... no
more humans. Which is why we buried it
when we arrived. And planted that flag
so we would never be stupid enough to
accidentally go near it again.

Mark unearths the RTG. It looks like a small missile.

MARK
But. As long as I don't break it...
(hesitates)
I almost said "everything will be fine"
out loud. My point is...

INT. ROVER - DAY

Mark talks to camera while he drives the rover. He's covered
in sweat. He even has his shirt off.

MARK
I'm not cold anymore. And yes, I could
choose to think about the fact that I'm
warm because I have a decaying
radioactive isotope riding shotgun next
to me, but right now I have bigger
problems on my hands. I've scoured every
single data file on Commander Lewis'
personal drive, and this is officially
the LEAST disco song she owns.

Mark hits play on the computer. "Hot Stuff" by Donna Summer
starts playing. It's super disco-y. Mark drives, stone-
faced, while it plays.

EXT. MARS - DAY

The rover heads towards the Hab in the distance, growing smaller and smaller in frame.
*Gotta have some HOT LOVE baby this
evening... Hot hot hot hot... stuff..*

INT. NASA - PRESS ROOM - DAY

SATELLITE IMAGERY: from above, Mark's rover cuts across Mars.

REPORTER 1
Where is Watney going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A CNN REPORTER conducts an interview with Vincent in the NASA MEDIA ROOM. Annie watches like a nervous stage mom.

VINCENT

We believe he's preparing for a journey. He's conducting incremental tests -- taking Rover 2 out for longer and longer trips each time.

REPORTER 2

To what end? Why would he leave the relative safety of the Hab?

VINCENT

Communication. We believe he plans to travel to the Ares 4 launch site in order to make contact with us. But it would be a dangerous gamble.

REPORTER 3

He'd be risking his life to talk to you?

VINCENT

(nods)

This is the problem Mark faces. He's alone. And he needs to make contact to survive. But if we could talk to him, we'd tell him to stay put. Mark needs to trust we're doing everything in our power to bring him home alive.

INT. NASA - DAY

Venkat walks quickly down the halls with Annie...

ANNIE

Don't say "Bring him home alive." It reminds the world he might die.

VENKAT

You think people might forget that?

ANNIE

You asked how you did and I'm giving you my answer. My answer is "Eh." And yes, I'm going to make everyone forget there's a strong likelihood Mark Watney is going to die because that's what you pay me for and unfortunately I need this job because I'm currently paying alimony to two deadbeat ex-husbands because somehow gender equality has bitten me square in the ass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VENKAT
Hard to believe tha--

ANNIE
I left them.

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Vincent and Annie enter just as the rest of the Department Heads are settling for the meeting. Teddy glances up --

TEDDY
Don't say "Bring him home alive,"
Vincent.

VINCENT
You know, these interviews aren't easy.
God forbid I try to say something
proactive and positive.

TEDDY
Annie...

ANNIE
No more Vincent on television. Copy
that.

Vincent starts to muster an "are you kidding me?" as Mindy passes out a brief to the department heads.

TEDDY
Seventy-six kilometers. Am I reading
that right?

Nobody's quite sure who Teddy is asking.

MINDY
Are you asking me?

TEDDY
I am.

MINDY
Yes, sir. Mark drove straight away from
the Hab for almost two hours, did a short
EVA, then drove for another two. We
think the EVA was to change batteries.

A man who seems to embody the word "gruff" stares at Mindy over his brief. *Who is this kid?*

GRUFF MAN
Are we doing a daddy/daughter thing
today? Where's the Director of SatCon?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TITLE: MITCH HENDERSON, Hermes Flight Director, NASA

VINCENT

Ms. Park is the person who figured out Mark was alive in the first place. She's in charge of tracking him now.

TEDDY

Quit being a dick, Mitch. Where's Mark going? Is this another test?

MINDY

He's seventy-six kilometers away from the Hab. If it's a test and it doesn't work... he's dead.

TEDDY

He didn't load up the Oxygenator or the Water Reclaimer?

MINDY

I didn't see that happen, no sir.

TEDDY

You didn't see it?

MINDY

Every forty-one hours, we have a seventeen minute gap. It's just the way the orbits work. So... it's possible we missed something.

TEDDY

I want that gap down to four minutes. I'm giving you total authority over satellite trajectories and orbital adjustments. Make it happen.

MINDY

(um...)
Okay.

TEDDY

Let's assume Ms. Park didn't miss something, so Mark's not going to Ares 4. Yet. But he's smart enough to figure out that's his only chance. Bruce, what's the earliest we could get a presupply there?

Teddy looks to the brilliant-but-constantly-harried man skyping in on the computer screens.

TITLE: BRUCE NG, Director, Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUCE

With the positions of Earth and Mars,
it'll take nine months. And it'll take
us six months to build it in the first
place.

TEDDY

Three months.

(off Bruce)

You're gonna say that's impossible, then
I'm gonna give a speech about the
blinding capabilities of the JPL team.
And then you'll do the math in your head
and say something like "The overtime
alone will be a nightmare."

BRUCE

(oh god I didn't even think
of that)

The overtime will be a nightmare.

TEDDY

Get started. I'll find you the money.

MITCH

It's time to tell the crew.

VINCENT

Mitch, we discussed this.

MITCH

You discussed this. But I'm the one who
decides what's best for the crew. They
deserve to know.

TEDDY

Sorry, Mitch. I'm with Vincent. They
need to concentrate on getting home.

MITCH

Bullshit.

TEDDY

Once we have a real rescue plan, we'll
tell them. Otherwise it's moot. Bruce
has three months to get the payload done.
That's all that matters right now.

BRUCE

We'll do our best.

TEDDY

Mark dies if you don't.

CONTINUED:

VINCENT

What obstacle? It's Acidalia Planitia.
There's nothing out there but --

Vincent stops short. Mindy looks at him: what?

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I need a map.

Vincent bolts away. Mindy follows.

INT. NASA - BREAKROOM - NIGHT

Vincent hurries into the employee break room. A lone
TECHNICIAN sits, sipping coffee. ON THE BACK WALL: a large
poster of Mars (the type they sell in gift shops.)

Vincent rips the poster off the wall.

TECHNICIAN

Hey -- c'mon --

VINCENT

I'll buy you a new one.

(to Mindy)

What's the Hab's location?

MINDY

31.2 degrees north, 28.5 degrees west.

Vincent marks it off on the map with a sharpie. Draws Mark's
location. He needs a ruler. Looks around, grabs the
Technician's notebook out of his hands. Uses the spine to
connect the dots. Studies it. Grins.

VINCENT

I know where he's going.

Vincent, lost in his own world now, bolts for his office. As
he hurries away (leaving Mindy and the Technician behind):

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I need to get on an airplane!

TECHNICIAN

Who's he talking to?

MINDY

I'm honestly not sure.

EXT. MARS - DAY

Mark's Rover 2 crests a hill, approaching HIS DESTINATION:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There, buried in a mound of Martian sand, we catch a glint of metal in the sunlight.

As Mark drives towards it...

INT. JPL LOBBY - DAY

Bruce waits in the lobby as Vincent walks through the front doors.

TITLE: Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, California

They shake hands.

INT/EXT. JPL STORAGE - DAY

Bruce and Vincent hurry across the JPL campus. In the background, deer frolic. (NOTE: This is real. Deer frolic out in the open on the JPL grounds. NOTE: It's awesome.)

VINCENT

What are the odds Mark can get it working again?

BRUCE

Hard to say. We lost contact in '97. We think it was battery failure.

(then)

Though I'd like to point out it lasted three times longer than expected in any scenario.

VINCENT

Nobody's criticizing JPL's work, Bruce. I want talk to everyone who was here in '97.

BRUCE

They're already waiting for you.

EXT. MARS - DAY

Mark, on foot now, digs at the location. As he begins to reveal the buried metal...

INT. JPL - GARAGE

Vincent and Bruce enter the cavernous JPL garage. A large crowd mills around an APPARATUS covered by a sheet.

VINCENT

This the replica?

Bruce nods, pulls off the sheet to reveal...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Pathfinder.

The American spacecraft launched in 1996. It's in two notable sections -- the large LANDER and the smaller SOJOURNER ROVER.

Vincent's eyes gleam as he stares at the craft.

EXT. MARS - DAY

Mark has now uncovered Pathfinder. He stares at it with a similar gleam in his eye. Then he drags the Lander to the back of Rover 2, begins lashing it to a makeshift hitch...

TITLE: Sol 109

EXT. HAB - DAY

Sojourner now sits beside the workbench outside the Hab, watching as Mark methodically takes apart the Lander.

It looks like he's been at this a while. He removes the battery, replaces it with an environment heater. Like a surgeon performing a heart transplant.

He locks the heater into place, and as it CLICKS we --

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. JPL GARAGE - DAY

Titles (s)

**PATHFINDER LOG: SOL 0 BOOT SEQUENCE INITIATED TIME 00:00:00 LOADING OS...
PERFORMING HARDWARE CHECK... INT TEMPERATURE: - 34C, EXT TEMPERATURE:
NONFUNCTIONAL, BATTERY: FULL, HIGAIN: Okay, LOGAIN: Okay, METEOROLOGY:
NONFUNCTIONAL, SOLAR A: NONFUNCTIONAL, SOLAR B: NONFUNCTIONAL, SOLAR C:
NONFUNCTIONAL, HARDWARE CHECK COMPLETE**

THEN:

BROADCASTING STATUS

LISTENING FOR TELEMETRY SIGNAL... LISTENING

FOR TELEMETRY SIGNAL... LISTENING FOR

TELEMETRY SIGNAL...

THEN:

SIGNAL ACQUIRED.

INT. JPL GARAGE - DAY

Vincent, Bruce, and the JPL team see the words come up on the main screen. The room begins to BUZZ...

EXT. HAB - DAY

Mark stares at the high gain antenna on the Lander. It starts to MOVE... angling towards Earth.

Mark begins to dance.

INT. JPL GARAGE - DAY

Vincent and Bruce cluster around the station of TIM GRIMES.

TIM

As soon as I received the high-gain response, I directed Pathfinder to take a panoramic image.

VINCENT

Have you received it yet?

TIM

Yes, but I thought we would all rather look at this black screen instead of a vibrant red planet.

BRUCE

(off Vincent's look)

Tim is our finest comm tech, and we all appreciate his acerbic wit.

Bruce mouths "I will fire you" to Tim.

TIM

Incoming.

ON THE SCREENS: the panoramic starts to appear, one vertical stripe at a time.

VINCENT

Martian surface... more surface...

BRUCE

There's the Hab!

VINCENT

What's that?

The image reveals a handwritten note, posted on a metal rod.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCENT (CONT'D)
"I'll write messages here. Are you receiving?"

The image reveals two more notes, spaced a few feet apart.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
"Point here for yes." "Point here for no."

TIM
Thirty-two minute round trip communications time. He can only ask yes/no questions, and all we can do is point the camera. This won't exactly be an Algonquin round table of snappy repartee.

BRUCE
Tim.

TIM
Roger that. Pointing the camera...

EXT. MARS - DAY

Mark watches as the camera moves towards one of his notes. We ANGLE IN on the paper, focusing on one word in particular:

"YES."

MARK (PRELAP)
So here's the rub...

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark addresses camera.

MARK
Somehow, we need to have complex astrophysical engineering conversations using only a still-frame camera. From 1996. Luckily, the camera spins 360, so I can make an alphabet. I just can't use our alphabet. Twenty-six letters plus question card into 360 gives us 13 degrees of arc. Too narrow. I wouldn't know what the camera was pointing at. So. Hexadecimals to the rescue...

EXT. HAB - DAY

Mark methodically sets up cards marked "A-F" and "0-9" in a circle around the camera.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (V.O.)
I figured one of you guys kept an ASCII
table somewhere...

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark sits in Johanssen's bunk. Scrolling through her laptop.

MARK (V.O.)
Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you
supernerd Beth Johanssen, who also had
copies of Zork 2 and Leather Goddesses of
Phobos on her laptop. Seriously,
Johanssen... it's like the Smithsonian of
loneliness on there...

INT. JPL GARAGE - DAY

Tim consults an ASCII chart as he points the camera...

EXT. HAB - DAY

The camera swings from card to card...

MARK (V.O.)
Not that I'm complaining.

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark translates the numbers with his ASCII table:

"HOW ALIVE"

Mark ponders the question. Begins writing his response.

INT. JPL GARAGE - NIGHT

"Impaled by antenna. think me dead. Bio-monitor destroyed. Not their fault. Crew had reason to

INT. ROVER - NIGHT

Mark inputs the code into the rover's computer.

WATNEY (V.O.)
Now that we can have more complicated
conversations, the smart people at NASA
have sent me instructions on how to hack
the rover so that it can talk to
Pathfinder. If I hack a tiny bit of
code, just twenty instructions in the
Rover's operating system, NASA can link
the rover to Pathfinder's broadcasting

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:
frequency... and we're in business.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mark waits patiently at the computer.

Text pops up on Mark's screen. As he reads:

VENKAT (V.O.)
"Mark, this is Vincent Kapoor..."

INT. JPL - GARAGE - NIGHT

Vincent and Bruce huddle around Tim's console while Vincent dictates and Tim types.

VINCENT
We've been watching you since Sol 54...

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - NIGHT

Teddy, Mitch, Annie, and the rest of the team watch Vincent's text cross the screen.

VINCENT (V.O.)
"The whole world is rooting for you.
Amazing job, getting Pathfinder. We're
working on rescue plans. Meantime..."

INT. ROVER - NIGHT

Mark reads the text. His first human contact in quite some time.

VINCENT (V.O.)
"We're putting together a supply mission
to keep you fed until Ares 4 arrives."

INT. JPL GARAGE - NIGHT

Vincent and Bruce huddle around Tim's console.

TIM
(reading)
"Glad to hear it. Really looking forward
to not dying."

Everyone laughs, cheers.

Tim notices *there's more...*

TIM (CONT'D)
"How's the crew? What did they say when
they found out I was alive?"

Vincent and Bruce share a glance. Vincent thinks about it.

BRUCE
Tell him. Hm. Tell him...

INT. ROVER - NIGHT

Mark watches the text pop up onscreen:

VINCENT (V.O.)
"We haven't told the crew you're alive yet. We need them to concentrate on the mission."

INT. JPL GARAGE - NIGHT

The whole room waits patiently. Tim reads the response.

TIM
He says... "They don't know I'm alive? What the--"
(hesitates)
"What the... f-word... f-word in gerund form... f-word again... is wrong with you... f-words."

VINCENT
Mark, please watch your language...

INT. ROVER - NIGHT

Mark reads the response.

VINCENT (V.O.)
Everything you type is being broadcast live all over the world.

Mark's eyes narrow as he types his response. Hits ENTER.

INT. JPL GARAGE - NIGHT

The group reads Mark's response. They go PALE. *Oh, Jesus.* Vincent hangs his head. Tim tries not to smile and fails.

INT. NASA - TEDDY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Teddy is on the phone as Mitch approaches.

TEDDY (INTO PHONE)
Yes sir... he's under a tremendous amount of stress... I understand. We're working on it. Thank you, sir.

Teddy hangs up. Glances at Mitch.

TEDDY (CONT'D)
I just had to explain to the President of the United States what a "bureaucratic felcher" is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MITCH

I made the mistake of typing it into Google.

(off Teddy's look)

Don't.

(then)

Problem is, Mark's right. This is only gonna get worse the longer we wait. We need to tell the crew.

TEDDY

You're bringing this up while Vincent's in Pasadena so he can't argue the other side.

MITCH

I shouldn't have to clear this with you or Vincent or anyone else.

(then)

It's time, Teddy.

Teddy thinks about it.

EXT. HERMES - PRESENT - SPACE

THE HERMES: the massive spacecraft makes its way through space on its long journey back to Earth.

TITLE: Four Months Since Mars Departure

We ANGLE towards one of the windows to FIND COMMANDER LEWIS staring out at the starfield...

JOHANSSSEN (O.S.)

Commander Lewis...

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Lewis is alone, in a secluded section of the ship. She keys the console.

LEWIS

Go ahead.

JOHANSSSEN (OVER RADIO)

Data dump is almost complete.

LEWIS

Copy. Coming to you.

INT. HERMES - CORRIDOR - SPACE

Lewis floats towards the Semicone-A ladder. MARTINEZ beats her there. As he floats up the ladder...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEWIS

You're in a hurry.

MARTINEZ

My son turned three yesterday. Should be some pics of the party.

As they make their way down the ladder, the centripetal force from the rotating craft creates artificial gravity. Halfway down, they have to use their hands on the ladder...

INT. HERMES - REC ROOM - SPACE

Lewis and Martinez enter the Rec Room. The others are already there -- the data dump is the highlight of the day.

JOHANSSSEN

All right, we've got a batch of personals. Dispatching them to your laptops... I don't need to read Vogel's weird German fetish emails...

VOGEL

They are telemetry updates.

JOHANSSSEN

Whatever does it for you. We've got a system update, I'll take care of that, and... huh. There's a voice message. Addressed to the whole crew.

LEWIS

(shrugs)
Play it.

Johanssen opens the message. Hits play.

MITCH (MESSAGE)

Hermes, this is Mitch Henderson. I have some news. There's no subtle way to put this: Mark Watney is still alive.

The news hits the crew like a freight train.

MITCH (MESSAGE) (CONT'D)

I know that's a surprise. And I know you'll have a lot of questions. Here are the basics: he's alive and healthy. We found out two months ago and decided not to tell you. I was strongly against that decision. We're telling you now because we finally have communication with him and a viable rescue plan.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MITCH (MESSAGE) (CONT'D)
We'll get you a full write up of what happened, but it's not your fault. Mark
stresses that every time it comes up.

Take some time to absorb this. Your science schedules are cleared for tomorrow. Send all the questions you want and we'll answer them. Henderson out.

For a moment the group sits in stunned silence.

MARTINEZ
He... He's alive?

Vogel cracks a smile.

VOGEL
Watney lives.

Beck starts to laugh. Relief pouring out of him.

BECK
Holy shit. Commander! He's alive!

But Lewis is still in shock. Her words barely a whisper:

LEWIS
I left him behind.

JOHANSSSEN
Commander... it wasn't...

BECK
We all left together.

LEWIS
You were following orders.
(then)
I left him behind.

The group trades glances, but nobody knows what to say.

Without another word, Lewis turns and exits the room.

EXT. MARS - SPACE - TO ESTABLISH

TITLE: Sol 128

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark removes water from the water reclaimer. Goes down the rows of plants, watering one by one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (PRELAP)
Now that NASA can talk to me, they won't
shut up...

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark talks to camera.

MARK
They've got a room full of people trying
to micromanage my crops. Which is
awesome. Look, I don't mean to sound
arrogant here, but I'm the best botanist
on the planet. So.

Mark adjusts the camera to show more of the lab. We see the
lush greenery of the potato plants EVERYWHERE.

MARK (CONT'D)
In other news, there's been a request for
me to pose for a picture on the next
transmission. I'm debating between "High
School Senior..."

Mark leans one elbow against an imaginary pillar and hooks
his other thumb on his imaginary belt loops.

MARK (CONT'D)
And "Coquettish Ingenue..."

Mark turns his back to camera, looks at us over his shoulder,
and bites on his thumb suggestively.

MARK (CONT'D)
But I'm not sure how that will translate
with the spacesuit on.
(then)
One big bonus of this NASA communication:
Email! Just like the days on the Hermes,
I get data dumps. Not just friends and
family, but NASA also sends choice
messages from the public. Rock stars,
athletes, even The President. The
coolest one is from my alma mater, the
University of Chicago. They say once you
grow crops somewhere, you have officially
"colonized" it. So, technically, I
colonized Mars.
(then)
In your face, Neil Armstrong.

MUSIC UP: "Right Back Where We Started From" by Maxine
Nightingale takes us into...

EXT. HAB - DAY

-- Mark stands outside in his suit. Positions himself in front of the camera. Holds up a notecard. We're behind him, we don't see what the notecard says. As he poses --

CUT TO:

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Annie tosses a photo on the conference room table:

Mark, in his spacesuit, gives the camera a big thumbs-up. He holds up a note that says, "Ayyyyyyy!"

ANNIE

I ask for a picture and I get the goddamn Fonz?

Vincent and Bruce are both on monitors from JPL.

VINCENT (ONSCREEN)

Just be grateful you got something, Annie.

ANNIE

It's not gonna work. I need something with less-Happy-Days and more... Mark's face.

VINCENT (ONSCREEN)

I could tell him to take his helmet off, but then he'd, you know, die.

TEDDY

Let's release the photo when we detail the rescue operation. I want to announce we're launching some supplies to him next year during the Hohmann Transfer window.

VINCENT (ONSCREEN)

I'm on a plane to you this afternoon. We'll have the release ready.

TEDDY

Good, but Annie will handle camera appearances.

Vincent gives a look that says "Et tu, Teddy?"

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Bruce, is your team still on schedule?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUCE (ONSCREEN)
It'll be tight. But we'll make it.

TEDDY
Nine-month travel time, that puts the probe to Mars on Sol 868. Did we get the Botany Team's analysis?

VINCENT (ONSCREEN)
They estimate Mark's crops will last him until Sol 912. They grudgingly admit Mark is doing great work.

MITCH
Grudgingly?

VINCENT (ONSCREEN)
Mark has a tendency to tell them to have sex with themselves whenever they question one of his decisions.

TEDDY
Get him in line, Vincent. We can't afford any miscommunication. I hate this margin. 912 sols worth of food. We get there on 868. And that's assuming nothing goes wrong...

EXT/ INT. HAB AIRLOCK - DUSK

Mark finishes putting on his spacesuit. Snaps his helmet into place. Grabs his toolkit.

Mark steps into the airlock. Closes the door behind him. As he does, we begin ANGLING towards the carbon-thread canvas lining the side of the airlock.

As the depressurization process begins, the canvas starts to STRETCH...

And the sheet RIPS.

The Hab *breaches*. In one-tenth of a second, the tear travels the length of the airlock --

The full force of the Hab's atmosphere rushes through the breach...

KAAAA-BOOOOM!

The airlock (with Mark in it) is LAUNCHED LIKE A CANNONBALL. It flies forty meters through the air --

INT/EXT. AIRLOCK/HAB - NIGHT

The airlock has traveled the fifty meters so that it's now close to the Hab.

Mark exits the airlock. He's wearing the patched-up suit. Which means his faceplate is completely covered with fabric, and he only has one arm free.

He points the free arm in front of him and begins to walk.

INSIDE THE SUIT:

Mark is using the camera in his arm computer to navigate. The camera projects an image onto the inside of the faceplate. Which is now fabric. It's crude, but it'll work.

MARK'S POV: Mark hurries through the rip in the airlock. Stumbles through the deflated Hab, past the mess of debris, heading for the bunk. Finds what he's looking for...

Martinez' SUIT.

INT. HAB - NIGHT

Mark stands in the center of the Hab. We finally get a good look at it. And it's A MESS. Equipment overturned, debris everywhere. But the worst part?

Mark's crops are RUINED.

Mark stares at the disaster of frozen soil and uprooted plants. All his work. His *lifeline*. Destroyed.

He stares at the mess for a long time.

Then he begins to clean it up.

INT. ROVER - NIGHT

Mark sits at the keypad.
do I explain this?

Takes a moment to compose his words. *God, how*
As he begins to type...

VINCENT (PRELAP)

The crops are dead...

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Vincent, Teddy, Annie and a team of others study the analysis reports. Mood is somber.

VINCENT

Complete loss of pressure boiled off most
of the water.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Any bacteria that survived, died in the sub-zero temperatures when exposed to Mars' atmosphere.

ANNIE

How long does he have?

VINCENT

He can still eat the potatoes he has, he just can't grow any more. We estimate they'll give him about 200 sols.

TEDDY

And rations get him to what? Sol 409?

VINCENT

(nods)

So with potatoes he can stretch to 609.

ANNIE

By Sol 868 he'll be long dead.

TEDDY

We're gonna have to launch as soon as possible. Which changes our travel time.

MITCH

We're working on it. Prelim estimates call for a four-hundred fourteen day trip.

TEDDY

(does math)

It's Sol 135 now. We need thirteen days to mount the boosters and perform inspections. Which gives Bruce and his team...

(fuck)

Forty-seven days to make this probe.

ANNIE

How long does it normally take?

VINCENT

Six months. Minimum.

TEDDY

I'm gonna let you call Bruce and give him the news.

INT. JPL BULLPEN - NIGHT

Bruce and his team sit around a speakerphone. They've just hung up with Vincent. Everyone looks suitably SHELLSHOCKED.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTINEZ

"How's the Hermes? Cramped and claustrophobic? Every day I go outside and look at the vast horizons just because I can."

(then)

"Tell the others I said hello."

Martinez types. We see his response on his screen:

"Will do."

EXT. HAB - DAY

Back to work. No choice. Mark clears the detritus from inside the Hab. Stares at the hole in the airlock.

INT./EXT. HAB - DAY

Mark covers the hole with Hab canvas. Begins strapping it in place with duct tape. Doubles up the tape in a circular pattern. Studies his work. It's not pretty, but with a little luck...

Mark repressurizes the Hab. Watches the canvas stretch as the pressure equalizes. He holds his breath...

The canvas holds.

INT. HAB - NIGHT

Mark takes inventory of his remaining potatoes. Outside, gusts of wind slam the canvas.

Mark tries to stay focused on the matter at hand. Tries not to think about the fact that his life is currently held together by duct tape.

Keep working, Mark...

INT. JPL - RICH'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A man sleeps in his office, half-on and half-off his small love seat. He snores ever-so-slightly.

TITLE: RICH PURNELL, ASTRODYNAMICS, NASA

On his computer screen, we see orbital computations running. Vectors between Earth and Mars cycle over and over.

VOICE (O.S.)

Rich?

MIKE WATKINS pokes his head in Rich's office. Rich stirs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Rich? Wake up. Sorry, they're asking for the probe courses.

RICH

What time is it?

MIKE

3:42.

Rich nods. Grabs the old cup of coffee from his end table. Takes a big drink. His face registers shock. He opens his mouth and lets the coffee fall directly on the floor.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I know we're coming at this backwards, but we can't commit to a firm launch date with this many unknowns.

RICH

It's all right. All twenty-five models will take four-hundred fourteen days to reach Mars. They vary only slightly in thrust duration, and the fuel requirement is nearly identical.

MIKE

(looking at Rich's calculations)

Four-hundred fourteen days. Not an ideal time to launch, is it?

RICH

Earth and Mars are really badly positioned. Heck, it's almost easier to...

Rich trails off.

MIKE

Almost easier to what?

RICH

(lost in his head)

I need more coffee...

MIKE

Almost easier to what?

Rich walks out of the room.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You understand I'm your boss, right?

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Vincent dictates a message to Mark. Mindy types while he talks.

VINCENT

"...the probe will take 414 days to reach you, and will deliver enough food to last you to Ares 4."

MINDY

Tell him about the name.

VINCENT

"We've officially named the probe 'Iris'..."

INT. ROVER - DAY

Mark reads the message in the Rover.

VINCENT (V.O.)

"After the Greek goddess who traveled the heavens with the speed of wind. Among other things, she's also the goddess of rainbows."

Mark types his response...

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Mindy reads Mark's response on his screen as Vincent waits. Mindy suppresses a smile, throws it up on the main screens:

"Gay probe coming to save me. Got it."

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Teddy addresses the group from the head of the table.

TEDDY

Okay, let's ask the...

(consults his files)

Two hundred million dollar... sorry, five hundred... That's a "five?"

(off their looks)

Let's ask the very, very expensive question: is this probe gonna be ready on time?

Bruce looks noticeably more exhausted than everyone else.

BRUCE

We're behind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEDDY

Give me a number.

BRUCE

Fifteen days. If I had another fifteen days, I could get it done.

TEDDY

All right, let's create fifteen days. Thirteen days to mount the probe. Can we reduce?

VINCENT

It... actually only takes three days to mount it. We can get that down to two. But the other ten are for testing and inspections.

TEDDY

How often do those inspections reveal a problem?

The room goes silent. Everyone trades nervous glances.

MITCH

Are you suggesting we don't do the inspections?

TEDDY

Right now I'm asking how often they reveal a problem.

VINCENT

About one in twenty launches. But that's grounds for a countdown halt. We can't take that chance.

TEDDY

Anyone else know a safer way to buy more time?

Nobody does.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Tell Dr. Keller to stretch Watney's rations four more days. She won't like it, but that'll get us to fifteen. And we'll cancel the inspections.

VINCENT

Teddy...

(CONTINUED)

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Full house. Mitch presides over the room, in his element.

MITCH
Do you believe in God, Vincent?

VINCENT
Several. My mother's Catholic and my
father's Hindu.

MITCH
We'll take all the help we can get.

Mitch puts on his headset.

MITCH (CONT'D)
This is the Flight Director. Begin
Launch Status Check.

LAUNCH CONTROL (OVER COMMS)
Roger that, Houston...

And as Mitch runs through the status check...

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Teddy watches the countdown clock from the observation room. He looks over what appears to be a SPEECH. We catch a few words, including, "...successful launch..."

Teddy closes the speech in a BLUE FOLDER. As the clock approaches 00:00:15....

MITCH (ON THE FLOOR)
This is Flight. We are go for launch on
schedule.

TIMER CONTROLLER (V.O.)
10...9...

ON THE FLOOR: Vincent leans against the wall. Deep breath.

TIMER CONTROLLER (V.O.)
8...

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

ANNIE paces in front of the NINE TELEVISIONS in her office.

TIMER CONTROLLER (V.O.)
7...6...

INT. JPL - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

BRUCE sits with his engineers, all in rapt attention.

TIMER CONTROLLER (V.O.)

5...4...

INT. JPL - RICH'S OFFICE - DAY

RICH PURNELL works on orbital calculations at his computer. Isn't paying attention to the launch at all.

TIMER CONTROLLER (V.O.)

3... 2...

EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL LAUNCHPAD - DAY

TIMER CONTROLLER (V.O.)

1...

LIFTOFF. Clamps RELEASE, the booster FIRES --

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

TIMER CONTROLLER (V.O.)

...and liftoff of the Iris Supply Probe.

CHEERS course through the room.

While team members congratulate one another, the LAUNCHER INTERFACE frowns at his station.

LAUNCHER INTERFACE

Getting a little shimmy, Flight.

MITCH

Say again?

INT. HULL - DAY

A VIOLENT SHIMMY rattles the payload as the craft ACCELERATES. The bolt at the forefront CRACKS --

EXT. IRIS CRAFT - DAY

As the first stage depletes its fuel, it JETTISONS the stage-clamps. As the stage begins to fall away from the shimmying craft, it CATCHES HOLD, swinging unnaturally to the side.

The second stage engines IGNITE --

INT. HULL - DAY

WHOOSH -- the acceleration SHAKES the craft. The BOLT SHEARS CLEAN OFF -- the payload ROCKS -- THE OTHER FOUR BOLTS SNAP --

Iris slips from its supports, and SLAMS INTO THE HULL --

INT. NASA - CONTROL ROOM - DAY

ALARMS and LIGHTS flash across the consoles. A cacophony of urgent voices from the floor:

LAUNCHER INTERFACE

Whoa! Flight, we're getting a large precession!

GUIDANCE

Force on Iris at 7 G's.

TELEMETRY

Intermittent signal loss.

MITCH

Launch, what's happening?

LAUNCHER INTERFACE

It's spinning on the long axis with a 17 degree precession.

COMMS

We've lost readings on the probe, Flight.

MITCH

(goes cold)

Shit. It shook loose in the bay.

LAUNCHER INTERFACE

Loss of signal, Flight.

GUIDANCE

L.O.S. here, too.

TELEMETRY

Same here.

The voices go SILENT. The alarms BLARE. Then:

MITCH

SatCon?

SATCON

No satellite acquisition of signal.

Mitch looks to the main screen. It GOES BLACK, with LARGE WHITE LETTERS reading: "L.O.S."

CAPCOM

Flight, US Destroyer Stockton reports

(CONTINUED)

debris ~~file~~ ~~Marina~~ from ~~Shooting~~ ~~Script~~

64.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(then)
Tell them I said I can live with that.

EXT. CNSA - TO ESTABLISH - DAY

An impressive headquarters in the heart of Beijing.

TITLE: CHINA NATIONAL SPACE ADMINISTRATION

INT. CNSA - DAY

ONSCREEN: Teddy and Vincent answer questions from reporters.

VINCENT (ONSCREEN)
...we substituted protein cubes for the standard rations. The thrust of the launch, combined with the simultaneous lateral vibration, liquefied the cubes and created an unbalanced load.

REPORTER 4 (ONSCREEN)
Why wasn't this accounted for in the inspection phase?

TEDDY (ONSCREEN)
In order to make our launch window, we were forced to accelerate our schedule.

REPORTER 4 (ONSCREEN)
You skipped the inspections?

TEDDY (ONSCREEN)
Yes.

We hear a MAN'S VOICE. He speaks in SUBTITLED CHINESE.

VOICE
Their astronaut is going to die.

Reveal A MAN AND A WOMAN watching the monitor. The voice belongs to:

TITLE: ZHU TAO, Under-Director, CNSA

ZHU

Perhaps. Perhaps not.
(hands Guo the brief)
The *Taiyang Shen's* booster. Our engineers have run the numbers, and it has enough fuel for a Mars injection orbit.

TITLE: GUO MING, Director, CNSA

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUO
(are you kidding?)
Why hasn't NASA approached us?

ZHU
They don't know. Our booster technology
is classified.

GUO
So if we do nothing...

ZHU
The world would never know we could have
helped.

GUO
Then. Merely for the sake of argument,
let's say we decide to help them...

ZHU
We'd be giving up a booster and
effectively cancelling Taiyang Shen.

GUO considers this. But he's already made the decision...

GUO
We need to keep this among scientists. A
cooperation between space agencies...

INT. NASA - TEDDY'S OFFICE - DAY

We're SLOWLY PUSHING IN on Teddy as he listens to the voice
on the other end of the phone detail the terms.

Teddy closes his eyes. Relief washes over him. It takes him
a moment to realize they're waiting for his answer.

TEDDY
Yes.

INT. JPL - BULLPEN - DAY

Bruce stands at the white boards, addressing his department
heads. He's energized, writing like a madman while he talks:

BRUCE
All right, thanks to our friends in
China, we get one more chance at this.
We finished the Iris probe in sixty-three
days. Now we get to do it again in
twenty-eight...

INT. NASA - SUPER COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

Rich Purnell stares at the calculations on the screen. *Can these be right?* He runs the numbers again. As he sees the readout on his screen, he grins: *holy shit, I'm right.*

INT. NASA - HALLWAYS - DAY

Rich hurries through the halls.

INT. NASA - VINCENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Vincent's on the phone.

VINCENT

We're jettisoning any sort of landing system -- the idea is we're only sending rations, so they can crash land on Mars...

SECRETARY

Wait --

Rich barges into to Vincent's office.

RICH

You should hang up the phone.

VINCENT

I'm sorry -- who are you?

RICH

My name is Rich Purnell and I work in astrodynamics and you should hang up the phone right now.

VINCENT

(into phone)

I'll call you back.

Rich hands Vincent his summary.

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

We're FOLLOWING ANNIE as she hurries into the briefing room. Vincent, Rich, Bruce, and Mitch are already there. Annie's reading the email on her phone.

ANNIE

What the hell is "Project Elrond?"

VINCENT

I had to make something up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE
"Elrond?"

MITCH

(realizing)
Because it's a secret meeting.

ANNIE
How do you know that? Why does "Elrond"
mean "secret meeting?"

BRUCE
The Council of Elrond. From Lord of the
Rings. It's the meeting where they
decide to destroy the One Ring.

ANNIE
I so quit right now.

TEDDY
(entering)
If we're calling something Project
Elrond, I would like my codename to be
"Glorfindel."

ANNIE
Oh my god I hate every one of you.

MITCH
Teddy doesn't even know what this is
about?

VINCENT
Tell them exactly what you told me.

RICH
I can get the *Hermes* back to Mars by Sol
561.

Wait... what? Jesus. It's as though Rich just dropped a
bomb in this room.

MITCH
What?

TEDDY
How?

Rich looks around. Grabs items off the table to demonstrate.

RICH

(CONTINUED)

Okay... ~~The Adams~~ ~~pretend~~ ~~Shooting Script~~ stapler is the
Hermes. And you are... I'm sorry, what's
your name again?

69.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TEDDY
Teddy.
(then)

I'm the Director of NASA.

RICH
Okay, Teddy, you're Earth. And right now the *Hermes* is heading towards you and is about to start its month-long deceleration to intercept. But, instead, I'm proposing...

(demonstrates)
We start accelerating immediately, to preserve velocity and gain even more. We don't intercept Earth at all, but we come close enough to use a gravity assist to adjust course. While we're doing that...

He grabs the pen out of Teddy's pocket.

RICH (CONT'D)
We resupply with the probe --

VINCENT
The Taiyeng Shen.

RICH
Pick up whatever provisions we need... and then we're accelerating towards Mars.
(to Annie)
You're Mars. And we're going too fast at this point to fall into orbit, so it's a flyby.

BRUCE
What good is a flyby if we can't get Watney off the surface?

VINCENT
Watney would have to intercept using the MAV.

Vincent demonstrates, blasting his pen off of Annie's shoulder. Rich catches it, and points everything back towards Teddy...

RICH
And we head back home. I've done the math. It checks out.

The group sits in stunned silence. Teddy's the first one to grasp the full magnitude of what they've just proposed. He locks eyes with Vincent --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Rich? TEDDY

Yes sir? RICH

Get out. TEDDY

And there's no mistaking Teddy's tone, so Rich does exactly that. After he leaves the room --

 TEDDY (CONT'D)
Is he right?

 VINCENT
I believe so.

 TEDDY
And we need to use the Taiyeng Shen?

 VINCENT
Yes.

 ANNIE
What am I missing? Why is that important?

 VINCENT
Because we can only do one.

 TEDDY
Send Watney enough food to last until *Ares 4*, or send *Hermes* back to get him right now.

 VINCENT
(nods)
Both plans require the *Taiyang Shen*, so we have to choose.

 ANNIE
What about the *Hermes* crew? We'd be asking them to add...
(does the math)
533 days to their mission.

 MITCH
They wouldn't hesitate. Not for a second. That's why Vincent called this meeting. He wants us to decide instead.

Vincent nods. That's correct.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MITCH (CONT'D)

Bullshit. It should be Commander Lewis' call.

VINCENT

It's a matter of life and death, Mitch. We need to make this decision.

MITCH

She's the Mission Commander. Life and death decisions are her damn job.

TEDDY

Can the *Hermes* function for 533 days beyond the scheduled mission end?

VINCENT

It should. The *Hermes* was made to do all five Ares missions, so it's only halfway through lifespan.

ANNIE

But if something went wrong...

VINCENT

We would lose the crew. And the Ares Program with them.

BRUCE

So... what? We either have a high chance of killing one person, or a low chance of killing six people. How do we make that decision?

VINCENT

We don't. Teddy does.

All eyes on Teddy now. The room sits in silence. Teddy thinks for a long time. Feeling the full burden of leadership. Then:

TEDDY

We still have the chance to bring five astronauts home safe and sound. I'm not risking their lives.

MITCH

Let them make that decision.

TEDDY

Mitch. We're going with option one.

Mitch stares at Teddy. Quietly seething.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MITCH

You goddamn coward.

EXT. HAB - DAY/DUSK

Mark trudges out of the airlock, goes about his routine. He walks over to the solar panels, starts to scrub them for (what seems like) the thousandth time...

And stops.

He can't do it anymore. He stares at them for a long time. Then drops the brush.

He walks to the top of the hill. Sits down.

He closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

Later. Mark hasn't moved. The sun is beginning to set. The temperature ALARM on his suit is beginning to BLARE. It gets cold FAST on Mars.

Mark overrides the alarm. Sits in the silence. As he glances back towards the setting sun, something METALLIC glints in the dust beneath him.

Hmm. Mark gets up. Walks towards it. It's Vogel's specimen drill. Dropped when the storm hit. Mark looks around, sees the HOLES drilled in the rock formation.

His fingers trace the unfinished work.

He picks up the drill.

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

SATELLITE VIEW: We can see Mark making his way to the Rover.

MINDY

He's been doing EVAs throughout the day.

Vincent is hovering over Mindy's station.

MINDY (CONT'D)

There's a pattern to them. He goes out three hundred meters. Then stops. Three hundred more meters. Then stops.

VINCENT

And nobody gave him instructions? Did JPL schedule something?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mindy shakes her head.

MINDY
He's at the Rover.
(then)
We're receiving a transmission.

She pulls it up on the screen. Frowns. It's a jumble of numbers and data.

MINDY (CONT'D)
"Chem analysis... sample batch 1A-7C..."

Vincent's the first to figure it out.

VINCENT
Commander Lewis' geo-compositing
experiments.

Mindy frowns. *I'm sorry, what?*

Vincent looks at the screens. Admiration in his eyes.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
He's finishing the mission.

INT. HAB - NIGHT

Mark addresses camera while he works at the experiment table, diligently crushing the rock samples and testing them with his chemistry set. Still somber. But he's working.

MARK
We evac'd eighteen sols into a thirty-one sol mission... Which means we've got thirteen sols of experiment and research schedules. For each of us. So. Commander Lewis... your work's in good hands. Beck -- I'll be honest with you, I don't understand chemolithotrophic detection. At all. But I'm doing my best. Johanssen, I know you don't like it when I touch the ChemCam, but guess what? I'm touching the ChemCam. Vogel, I think I've got a new cataloguing system for the core samples that I've titled "Das Core Samples" out of respect for the Fatherland. And Martinez... I still don't know what it is you do. Why did we bring you? No idea.
(then)
I'm trying to keep everything documented and organized.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (CONT'D)

I know that's not exactly my strong suit, but I want it all to make sense, in case... you know. Maybe you can teach it in class someday. The Watney Syllabus. "How to Make a Bathtub Using NASA Tubing and an Old RTG." "How to Cook a Potato Six-Thousand Different Ways." "How to Make Water Out of Rocket Fuel. To Keep You Alive. For Just A Little Longer."

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

From his computer, Vogel runs a diagnostic check on the ship's engines. As he finishes his work for the day, he turns his attention to his Email. Frowns when he sees:

"Subject: *Unsere Kinder*"

Our children? That's strange. He tries to open the attachment, but it's unreadable.

INT. HERMES GYM - SPACE

Vogel glides along passage to the Rec Room. Johannsen jogs within the rotating drum. Vogel approaches.

VOGEL

I have a problem.

INT. HERMES GYM - SPACE

Johannsen leads Vogel into the gym.

VOGEL

It's an email from my wife. The subject line says "Our Children," but the computer won't open the attachment.

JOHANNSEN

Let's take a look.

(as she works)

Huh. This isn't a jpg. It's a plain ASCII text file. Looks like... I don't know what this looks like. Math equations. Does this make any sense to you?

VOGEL

(reads)

"Rich Purnell Maneuver." Ja. It is a course maneuver for the Hermes...

And as Vogel tries to make sense of what he's looking at, one phrase in particular stands out on the screen:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"SOL 561."

VOGEL (CONT'D)

Mein Gott.

INT. HERMES REC ROOM - SPACE

All five crew members are seated around the main table in The Rec -- the cramped area of the ship used for personal time. Lewis finishes briefing the team.

LEWIS

...and the mission would conclude with Earth intercept 211 days later.

She gives the others a chance to absorb the news. They trade astonished glances.

MARTINEZ

Would this really work?

LEWIS

We ran the numbers. They check out.

VOGEL

(nods)

It's a brilliant course.

BECK

Why all the cloak and dagger?

LEWIS

NASA rejected the idea. They'd rather take a big risk on Watney than a small risk on all of us. Whoever snuck it in Vogel's email obviously disagreed.

MARTINEZ

So. We're talking about going directly against NASA's decision?

LEWIS

Yes. If we do the maneuver, they'll have to send the supply ship or we'll die. We have the opportunity to force their hand.

JOHANSSSEN

Are we gonna do it?

LEWIS

If it were up to me, we'd already be on our way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTINEZ

Isn't it? Up to you, I mean.

LEWIS

Not this time. This is something NASA expressly rejected. We're talking about mutiny. Which is not a word I use lightly. We do this together, or not at all. Before you answer, consider the consequences. If we mess up the supply rendezvous, we die. If we mess up the Earth gravity assist, we die. If we do everything perfectly, we add 533 days to our mission. 533 more days before we see our families again. 533 days of unplanned space travel where anything could go wrong. Something might break that we can't fix. If it's mission critical, we die.

MARTINEZ

Sign me up.

LEWIS

Easy, cowboy. You and I are military. There's a good chance we'd be court-martialed when we got home. As for the rest of you, I guarantee they'll never send you up again.

BECK

If we go for it... how would it work?

VOGEL

(shrugs)

I plot the course and execute it.

JOHANSSSEN

Remote Override. They can take over the *Hermes* from Mission Control.

LEWIS

Can you disable it?

JOHANSSSEN

Hermes has four redundant flight computers, each connected to three redundant comm systems. We can't shut down the comms; we'd lose telemetry and guidance. We can't shut down the computers; we need to control the ship. I'd have to disable the Remote Override on each system... It's part of the OS, I'd have to jump over the code...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BECK

Johanssen used to go by the hacker handle "Lady Sorrow" in high school. Just so we're all on the same page.

JOHANSSSEN

Beck is a liar. And he should keep our conversations private.

(then)

But, yeah. I can do it.

LEWIS

It has to be unanimous. If anyone says no, that's it. We go home as planned. But I vote yes.

MARTINEZ

I vote yes.

VOGEL

If we do this, it would be over nine hundred days of space. That is enough space for one life.

(then)

Yes.

Beck thinks about it long and hard. Then:

BECK

Let's go get him.

And then there was one. All eyes turn to Johanssen.

LEWIS

Johanssen?

As Johanssen glances up at us, feeling the full weight of the world on her small shoulders --

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - NIGHT

BRENDAN HATCH oversees Mission Control from 1 a.m. to 9 a.m. The shift is much quieter than the day shift. Usually.

CAPCOM

Flight, CAPCOM.

BRENDAN

Go CAPCOM.

CAPCOM

Unscheduled status update from *Hermes*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRENDAN

Roger. Read it out.

CAPCOM

I...I don't get it, Flight. No real status. Just a single sentence.

BRENDAN

What's it say?

CAPCOM

Message reads: "Houston, be advised: Rich Purnell is a steely-eyed missile man."

BRENDAN

What? Who the hell is Rich Purnell?

ALARMS start ringing out on the various stations.

GUIDANCE

Flight, Guidance.

BRENDAN

Go Guidance.

GUIDANCE

Hermes is off-course.

BRENDAN

CAPCOM, advise Hermes they're drifting. Guidance, get a correction ready --

GUIDANCE

Negative, Flight. It's not drift, they've adjusted course. Deliberate 27.812 rotation.

BRENDAN

What the hell? CAPCOM, ask them what the hell.

CAPCOM

Roger Flight. Message sent. Minimum reply time 3 minutes, 4 seconds.

BRENDAN

Telemetry, any chance this is instrumentation failure?

TELEMETRY

Negative, Flight.

BRENDAN

Oh god. Guidance, Flight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GUIDANCE

Go Flight.

BRENDAN

Work out how long they can stay on this course before it's irreversible.

GUIDANCE

Working on that now, Flight.

BRENDAN

And somebody find out who the hell Rich Purnell is!

INT. NASA - TEDDY'S OFFICE - DAWN

Teddy's staring out the window when Mitch enters. Teddy makes him wait.

TEDDY

Annie will go before the media this morning and inform them of NASA's decision to reroute the Hermes to Mars.

MITCH

That seems like the smart move. Considering the circumstances.

TEDDY

You may have killed the whole crew.

MITCH

Whoever gave them the maneuver only passed along information. The crew made the decision on their own.

Teddy looks at him. *Don't give me that horseshit.*

TEDDY

We're fighting the same war. Every time something goes wrong, the world forgets why we fly. I'm trying to keep us airborne. This is bigger than one person.

MITCH

No. It's not.

Teddy relents. Just slightly. *God, I hope you're right.*

Then:

TEDDY

When this is over... I'll expect your resignation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MUSIC UP: The opening CHORDS of "Starman" by David Bowie take us to...

EXT. HAB - DAY

Mark, in his MAV SUIT, stands on top of Rover Two. He holds the large ROCK SAMPLE DRILL like a jackhammer, drilling holes through the roof. It's grueling work.

He's been at this a while: we catch a glimpse of the SEVEN-HUNDRED HOLES he's drilled around the edge of the roof.

He finishes the last hole. Then he grabs a SCREWDRIVER. And a ROCK. Jams the screwdriver between the holes like a chisel. WHACK! He hits it with the rock.

WHACK! He hits it again. And again.

EXT. MARS - DAY - BEGIN MONTAGE

"Didn't know what time it was the lights were low, oh, oh..."

Mark positions the partially-disassembled rover in front of the camera. Frames his handiwork. Waits.

INT. NASA ROVER ROOM - DAY - MONTAGE

"I leaned back on my radio, oh, oh..."

Vincent and his engineers study Mark's photograph. Okay, good. The engineers start sketching out what to do next...

EXT. CNSA - DAY - MONTAGE

"Didn't know what time it was the lights were low, oh, oh..."

A bleary Teddy and Mitch step into the lobby of the China National Space Administration. They find Zhu and Guo waiting for them with an entourage. As they shake hands...

INT. HAB - KITCHEN - DAY - MONTAGE

"There's a starman waiting in the sky..."

Mark, inventories his remaining ration packs while he eats a potato.

He labels a few ration packs as he sets them aside:
"Departure," "Birthday," "Last Meal..."

EXT. HERMES - SPACE - MONTAGE

The Hermes approaches Earth, slowing rotation...

INT. HERMES - VIDEO BOOTH - REC ROOM - SPACE - MONTAGE

Martinez talks to his wife, MARISSA, on a screen in the video booth. She's upset with him.

MARISSA

Five hundred and thirty-three days longer? And you said yes to this?

MARTINEZ

I did. He would have done the same for me. You know that.

MARISSA

And you think I'm gonna forgive you?

MARTINEZ

I do.

Goddamn it, he's right. After a moment, she holds her hand up to the screen.
He does the same.

INT. JPL - WHITE ROOM - DAY - MONTAGE

Bruce and his team oversee the Iris 2 Probe as it's loaded into shipping containers.

A few Chinese members of the CNSA (dressed in protective gear) watch as well.

INT. HERMES - VIDEO BOOTH - REC ROOM - SPACE - MONTAGE

Lewis, floating now due to the lack of centripetal gravity, talks on the computer to her husband, ROBERT. It's clear they love each other.

ROBERT (ONSCREEN)

I found it at the flea market. Original. Pressing.

Robert holds up a vintage 1973 copy *Abba's Greatest Hits* album.

Lewis squeals when she sees it. Claps with delight.

EXT. LAUNCH PAD - CHINA - DAY - MONTAGE

The Iris 2 Probe is attached to the booster.

INT. CNSA - DAY - MONTAGE

Mitch engages in a heated argument with the Chinese Flight Director.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MITCH

*All due respect to your CNSA protocol, we haven't done things
that way since Apollo 9 --*

The translator tries to translate his words. Zhu raises his eyebrows, glances at Teddy -- *is this guy for real?*

Teddy shakes his head, *Don't look at me, man.*

EXT. HAB - DAY - MONTAGE

Mark seals the tent to the roof of Rover 2, then pressurizes it. Checking for leaks. It's like a hot-air balloon.

INT. NASA - WORK ROOM - MONTAGE

Vincent and his engineers are doing the exact same thing -- they have a mirrored set of Mark's equipment. They try to figure out how to fit the Oxygenator into the pop tent.

INT. HERMES FLIGHT DECK - SPACE - MONTAGE

Vogel entertains his WIFE and their young CHILDREN. He flips from a low-G area into a non-G area. ON THE SCREEN: The kids laugh and laugh.

INT. CNSA - DAY - MONTAGE

The Taiyang Shen LAUNCHES. Mitch, Teddy, and the Chinese scientists all clap, shake hands.

EXT. MARS - DAY - MONTAGE

"He told us not to blow it 'Cause he knows it's all worthwhile..."

Mark, bops his head to the music as he drives Rover 2 across the dunes.

EXT. IRIS 2 PROBE - DAY (STOCK)

The Iris 2 probe separates from its booster rocket.

INT. HERMES FLIGHT DECK - MONTAGE

Martinez takes control of the probe. He pilots it towards the Hermes...

EXT. HERMES - SPACE - MONTAGE

The probe approaches the Hermes as the docking procedure begins...

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 3 - SPACE - MONTAGE

Beck, geared up in his EVA suit, tethered to the wall, guides the probe to the docking port.

INT./EXT HERMES - REC ROOM - SPACE - MONTAGE

Johannsen watches anxiously through the window port as Beck secures the docking.

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 3 - SPACE - MONTAGE

Beck, geared up in his EVA suit, tethered to the wall, guides the probe to the docking port.

EXT. HERMES - SPACE - END MONTAGE

"Let the children lose it, let the children use it, let all the children boogie..."

The Hermes, rotating once again, soars through space on its return journey to Mars. It leaves the Earth behind...

And the music slowly FADES OUT.

EXT. MARS

As we hold in silence on the Red Planet, the title takes a little longer than usual to appear onscreen....

TITLE: Sol 461

MARK (PRELAP)
I've been thinking about laws on Mars...

EXT. HAB - DAY

And it's OVER SIX MONTHS LATER, so a lot has changed.

MARK (PRELAP)
There's an international treaty saying no country can lay claim to anything that's not on Earth.

Both Rovers are now hitched together. Pathfinder rides on top of Rover 1 like Granny Clampett. Rover 2 houses all the equipment. The whole thing looks like a Gypsy caravan made of billion dollar NASA equipment.

MARK (PRELAP) (CONT'D)
And by another treaty, if you're not in any country's territory, maritime law applies. So Mars is "international waters."

INT. HAB - DAY

The Hab is similarly transformed. All the major equipment has been stripped for parts. Sections of the canvas have been cut down, re-glued, making the tent lopsided in places.

MARK (PRELAP)

NASA is an American non-military organization, and it owns the Hab. So, as soon as I step outside, I'm in international waters.

INT. HAB - DAY

Mark talks directly to camera. The six months have transformed him as well. He's GAUNT. His hair is longer. His impressive beard shapes his face.

MARK

Here's the cool part. I leave this morning for the Schiaparelli crater, where I will commandeer the Ares 4 lander. Nobody explicitly gave me permission to do this, and they can't until I'm aboard the Ares 4. So I will take control of a craft in international waters without permission. Which, by definition, makes me a pirate.

(then)

Mark Watney, Space Pirate.

It's better than winning the Nobel Prize.

INT. HAB - DAY

Last day in the Hab. Mark shaves his beard. CUT TO:

Mark organizes the boxes and boxes of experiments he was keeping alive during his time in the Hab. Among the labels we see "**Das Soil Samples.**" CUT TO:

Mark pulls on his suit. Performs final shutdown. All the computers, lights, heaters go DARK. Silence.

EXT. HAB - DAY

Mark depressurizes the Hab. Stares at it for a moment. Thank you for keeping me alive.

EXT. ROVER - DAY

Mark opens Rover 2. We catch a glimpse inside: it's filled with frozen potatoes and scavenged equipment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mark tosses the box of remaining rations inside. We catch a glimpse of one of the labels: "**Goodbye, Mars.**"

INT. ROVER - DAY

Mark climbs into Rover 1. Powers up the system. *Here we go.*

EXT. ROVER - DAY

Mark rolls out of the Hab site. Heading towards the horizon.

EXT. MARS - VARIOUS - DAY

MARK (V.O.)
Everywhere I go, I'm the first. It's a
strange feeling.

Mark leaves FOOTPRINTS in the red dirt as he walks.

MARK (V.O.)
Step outside the rover? First guy to be
there. Climb that hill? First guy to do
that.

Mark takes careful note of one of the Martian moons (PHOBOS) in the sky. Finds his course.

MARK (V.O.)
Four and a half billion years... nobody
here. And now... me.
(then)
I'm the first person to be alone on an
entire planet.

EXT. MARS - DAY

Mark sits outside the rover in his MAV suit while he waits for the solar panels to charge.

He takes in the view. Phobos arcs through the sky.

It's beautiful.

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

SATELLITE VIEW: Mark's caravan makes its way around the impressive Marth Crater.

Mindy watches at her station. Vincent approaches.

VINCENT
How's our boy doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MITCH

The problem is the intercept velocity. The Hermes cannot enter Mars orbit, or they'll never have enough fuel to make it home. The MAV is only designed to get to Low Mars Orbit. So in order for Mark to escape Mars' gravity entirely and intercept the Hermes...

VINCENT

He needs to be going fast.

BRUCE

(nods)

Which means we need to make the MAV lighter. A lot lighter. Five-thousand kilograms lighter.

VINCENT

You can do that?

Bruce gives him a look that says, *well, that depends on your definition of "do that," Vincent.* He begins to deconstruct a scale model of the MAV:

BRUCE

There were some gimmes right off the bat. The design presumes 500 kilograms of Martian soil and samples. Obviously, we won't do that.

MITCH

There's just one passenger instead of six. With suits and gear, that saves another 500. Then we ditch the life support. We don't need it. We'll have Watney use his EVA suit for the whole trip.

VINCENT

How will he use the controls?

MITCH

He won't. Martinez will pilot the MAV remotely from the Hermes.

VINCENT

We've never had a manned ship controlled remotely before.

(off Mitch's look)

But... I'm excited for the opportunities that affords.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUCE

If we go remote, we can lose the control panels. Then we dump the secondary and tertiary comm systems.

VINCENT

You're going to have a remote controlled ascent with no backup comms?

MITCH

He's not even to the bad stuff yet, Vincent.

Really?

VINCENT

You better skip to the bad stuff.

BRUCE

We have to remove the nose airlock, the windows, and Hull Panel 19.

VINCENT

(what?)

You're taking the front of the ship off?

BRUCE

Sure. The nose airlock alone is 400 kilograms.

VINCENT

You're going to launch a man into space with a giant hole in the front of the ship?

BRUCE

Well... no. We're gonna have him cover it with Hab canvas.

Vincent puts his head in his hands.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

The hull's mostly there to keep the air in. Mars' atmosphere is so thin you don't need a lot of streamlining. By the time the ship's going fast enough for air resistance to matter, it'll be high enough that there's practically no air.

VINCENT

You're sending him to space under a tarp.

BRUCE

(CONTINUED)

Yes. ~~Can Martin~~ on? *Shooting Script*

89.

CONTINUED: (2)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (CONT'D)
(thinks about it)
I do like it. I do like the way it
sounds.
(then)
Okay, fine. Let's do this.

MUSIC UP: "Waterloo" by ABBA begins to play...

EXT. MAV - DAY

Mark stands at the base of the MAV. He holds a large wrench in his hand, almost like a weapon.

As Mark stares up at the MAV with a gleam in his eyes...

"My my at Waterloo Napoleon did surrender..."

INT. MAV - DAY

Mark tears the acceleration chairs out of the cockpit.

EXT. MAV - DAY

WHUMP. One after another, the acceleration chairs hit the dirt in a pile. WHUMP.

INT. MAV - DAY

Mark tears out the control panels. He's having fun.

EXT. MAV - DAY

WHUMP. The controls hit the dirt. The pile is growing.

MUSIC UP: "Waterloo" by ABBA begins to play...

INT. HERMES FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Martinez runs through a flight simulation at his station. It's not going well. "Collision with Terrain" blinks in angry red letters on his screen.

JOHANSEN
And... you killed him.

Lewis shrugs. The taskmaster.

LEWIS
Try it again.

Martinez reboots the simulator...

CONTINUED:

BECK

He might be in bad shape. The stripped down MAV will get up to 12 g's during the launch. He could be knocked unconscious and may have internal bleeding.

LEWIS

Well, then it's a good thing you're our doctor. What's the intercept plan?

BECK

We finished attaching the tethers into one long line. It's 214 meters long. I'll have the MMU, so moving around should be easy.

LEWIS

How fast a relative velocity can you handle?

BECK

Once I get to Mark? I can grab the MAV at 5 meters per second. 10 is like jumping onto a moving train. Any more than that and I might miss.

LEWIS

We've got some leeway. The launch will be 52 minutes before the intercept and it takes 12 minutes. As soon as Mark's engine cuts out we'll know our intercept point and velocity.

BECK

Good. And 214 meters isn't a hard limit, per se.

LEWIS

Yes. It is.

BECK

I take off the tether, I could get way out to --

LEWIS

Not an option. Vogel, you're Beck's backup. All goes well, you're pulling them back aboard with the tether. If things go wrong, you're going out after them.

VOGEL

Ja.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCENT (CONT'D)
(resolute)
We want to be broadcasting this.

Mitch takes his position as Johanssen's VOICE rings out:

JOHANSSEN (OVER COMMS)
Fuel Pressure green.

EXT. STREETS - BEIJING - DAY

Crowds watch the screens in Beijing as Johanssen's voice RINGS OUT:

JOHANSSEN (OVER COMMS)
Engine alignment perfect...

EXT. ST. PETERSBERG - DAY

The cold is not keeping the crowds from watching the screens in the Palace Square.

JOHANSSEN (OVER COMMS)
Communications five by five...

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Lewis nods. She's been waiting for this moment for some time. Keys the console --

LEWIS
About two minutes, Watney. How you doing down there?

INT. MAV - COCKPIT - DAY

Mark tries to keep his emotions under control as he waits in the cockpit...

MARK
It's good to hear your voice, Commander.
I'm eager to get up to you.

He fails. His voice breaks.

MARK (CONT'D)
Thank you for coming back for me.

INT. HERMES FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

LEWIS
We're on the case. Remember, you'll be pulling some pretty heavy G's. It's okay to pass out. You're in Martinez' hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK

Tell that asshole no barrel-rolls.

LEWIS

Copy that, MAV. CAPCOM...

CLOSE ON JOHANSEN, at her station.

JOHANSEN

Go.

LEWIS

Remote Command...

CLOSE ON MARTINEZ, grinning in anticipation.

MARTINEZ

Go.

LEWIS

Recovery...

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 2 - SPACE

CLOSE ON BECK as he floats in the open airlock. Beneath him, the Red Planet blazes in all its brilliance.

BECK

Go.

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)

Secondary recovery...

CLOSE ON VOGEL, clamped to the floor behind Beck.

VOGEL

Go.

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

CLOSE ON LEWIS:

LEWIS

Pilot...

And finally...

INT. MAV - COCKPIT - DAY

CLOSE ON MARK WATNEY, in his EVA suit, strapped into his acceleration seat.

MARK

Go.

CONTINUED:

 BECK (OVER COMMS)
He's probably passed out. He pulled 12
G's on the ascent. Give him a few
minutes.

 LEWIS
Copy.

 JOHANSSSEN
I have interval pings. Intercept
velocity will be 11 meters per second...

 BECK (OVER COMMS)
I can make that work.

 JOHANSSSEN
Distance at intercept will be --
 (goes pale)
We'll be 68 kilometers apart.

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 2 - SPACE

 BECK
Did she say 68 kilometers? *Kilometers?*

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

 MARTINEZ
Oh my god...

 LEWIS
Keep it together. Work the problem.
Martinez, do we have any juice in the
MAV?

 MARTINEZ
Negative, Commander. They ditched the
OMS system to make launch weight.

 LEWIS
Then we have to go him. Johanssen, time
to intercept?

 JOHANSSSEN
39 minutes, 12 seconds --

 LEWIS
What if we point our attitude thrusters
all the same direction?

 MARTINEZ
Depends on how much fuel we want to save
for attitude adjustments on the trip
home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEWIS

How much do you need?

MARTINEZ

I could get by with maybe 20 percent of what's left.

LEWIS

Johanssen --

JOHANSSEN

(already working it)

Use 75.5 percent of remaining attitude adjust fuel. That'll bring the intercept range to zero.

LEWIS

Do it.

JOHANSSEN

Hang on -- that gets the range to zero, but the intercept velocity will be 42 meters *per second* --

LEWIS

Then we have 39 minutes to figure out how to slow down. Martinez, burn the jets.

EXT. HERMES - SPACE

WHOOSH. The attitude thrusters FIRE. The Hermes changes course --

INT. MAV - DAY

CLOSE ON MARK as his eyelids flutter. He winces in pain as he slowly regains consciousness.

BENEATH HIM -- the orbiting MAV offers an unobstructed view of Mars. The great red planet's horizon stretches out forever as the wispy atmosphere gives it a fuzzy edge.

It's breathtaking. Awe-inspiring.

Mark holds up his middle finger.

Fuck you, Mars.

MARK

MAV to Hermes --

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)

Watney?!

MARK

Affirmative, Commander.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
What's your status?

MARK
My chest hurts. I think I broke some
ribs.
(then)
How are you?

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
We're working on getting you. There was
a complication during launch.

MARK
Yeah. The canvas didn't hold...

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

MARK (OVER COMMS)
I think it ripped early in the ascent.

LEWIS
That's consistent with what we saw.

MARK (OVER COMMS)
How bad is it, Commander?

LEWIS
We've corrected the intercept range, but
we've got a problem with the intercept
velocity.

MARK (OVER COMMS)
How big a problem?

LEWIS
42 meters per second.

INT. MAV - DAY

We're CLOSE ON MARK as that news lands.

MARK
Well. Shit.

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Everyone struggles to find a solution. Mark's voice
interrupts the silence:

MARK (OVER COMMS)
Commander?

INT. MAV - DAY

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
Go ahead, Mark.

MARK
I could find something sharp in here and
poke a hole in the glove of my EVA suit.
I could use the escaping air as a
thruster and fly my way to you. Since
the source is on my arm, I could direct
it pretty easy.

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

LEWIS
I can't see you having any control if you
did that. You'd be eyeballing the
intercept and using a thrust vector you
can barely control.

MARK (OVER COMMS)
Those are very good points. But.
Consider this:

INT. MAV - DAY

MARK
I would get to fly around like Iron Man.

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

LEWIS
We should have left him on Mars.

MARK (OVER COMMS)
Iron Man, Commander. *Iron Man.*

Lewis rubs her face. Thinks. Hmm...

LEWIS
Maybe it's not the worst idea.

MARTINEZ
No, it actually is. The worst idea.
Ever.

LEWIS
Not his part. But using atmosphere as
thrust...
(springs into action)
Martinez, get Vogel's station up and
running...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTINEZ

It's up. What do you need?

LEWIS

I need to know what happens if we blow the VAL.

Both Martinez and Johanssen straighten up. What?

MARTINEZ

You want to open the Vehicular Airlock?

LEWIS

It would give us a good kick.

MARTINEZ

Yeah. And it might blow the nose of the ship off in the process.

JOHANSSEN

And... all the air would leave. And we need air. To not die.

LEWIS

We'll seal the bridge and reactor room. We let everywhere else go vacuo.

MARTINEZ

But we'd still have the same problem as Watney. We can't direct the thrust.

LEWIS

We don't have to. The VAL is in the nose. We just point the ship at Mark.

MARTINEZ

(reading the numbers)

A breach at the VAL would decelerate us 29 meters per second.

JOHANSSEN

Which gives us a relative velocity of 13 meters per second.

LEWIS

Beck -- you hearing this?

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

MARTINEZ

How do we open the airlock doors? There's no way to open them remotely, and if anyone's nearby when it blows...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 LEWIS
Right... right...
 (thinks)
Vogel?

 VOGEL (OVER COMMS)
Go ahead, Commander.

 LEWIS
Take your suit off.
 (then)
I need you to come back in and make a
bomb.

INT. MAV - DAY

 MARK
Did you say "bomb?" You guys are making
a bomb without me?

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 2 - SPACE

 VOGEL
Um... Again, please, Commander.

 LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
You're the chemist. Can you make a bomb
with what we've got on board?

 VOGEL
Probably. But... I feel obliged to
mention that setting off an explosive
device on a spacecraft is a terrible,
terrible idea.

 LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
Copy that. Can you do it?

 VOGEL
 (thinks; then)
Ja.

INT. MISSION CONTROL - NIGHT

Lewis' voice rings out through the room:

 LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
Houston, be advised: we are going to
deliberately breach the VAL to produce
thrust.

CHAOS erupts at Mission Control.

WHAT DID SHE JUST SAY?

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

LEWIS

Beck -- leave your suit on. Meet
Johanssen at Airlock 1. We'll open the
outer door. I need you to place the
charge on the inner door...

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 2 - SPACE

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)

...and climb back to Airlock 2 along the
hull.

BECK

Copy. On my way.

INT. HERMES/MAV - SPACE - INTERCUT

Mark RIPS free a jagged edge of metal scrap from what used to
be the console.

MARK

Commander, I can't let you guys do this.
I'm ready to puncture the suit. Let's go
with the Iron Man plan.

LEWIS

Absolutely not.

MARK

The thing is, I'm selfish. And I want
the memorials back home to be just me. I
don't want the rest of you losers in
them.

(earnest)

Commander... call it off.

LEWIS

Oh. Okay. Well, if you want us to call
it off, then I guess we have to oh
wait... wait a minute. Yep. I'm looking
at my shoulder patch and it turns out I'm
Commander. So shut up.

MARK

(mutters)

Smart ass.

INT. HERMES REC ROOM - SPACE

Vogel works fast. He pours SUGAR into a strong glass beaker.
Drills a hole in the stopper as Johanssen enters --

(CONTINUED)

INT/EXT. HERMES - VAL (AIRLOCK 1) - SPACE

As the OUTER DOOR opens, revealing SPACE, Beck finishes securing the improvised bomb to the inner door.

BECK
Bomb is set. On my way.

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

As Johanssen races back to her post, Martinez works quickly at his station.

MARTINEZ
Guys, I'm running the numbers -- even with optimal VAL blow, we're gonna be off on our angle.

LEWIS
What's the new intercept distance?
(impatient)
Johanssen.

JOHANSSEN
260 meters. Approximate.

LEWIS
That's too far...

She thinks for a moment. Then she races off the flight deck.

MARTINEZ
Commander?

EXT. HERMES - SPACE

Beck climbs out of Airlock 1, and makes his way along the hull of Hermes, using the handholds. We FOLLOW HIM as he traverses the ship, and as he makes his way into Airlock 2...

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 2 - SPACE

...he finds LEWIS, fully suited up, waiting for him.

LEWIS
The intercept distance is gonna be too far. I'm going untethered.

BECK
Commander, I can do this --

LEWIS
It's not a debate, Beck. I'm not risking another crew member.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Beck sees there's no arguing with her.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Johanssen, time to VAL blow?

JOHANSSEN (OVER COMMS)
15 seconds...

LEWIS
We sure know how to cut it close.

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Vogel rushes into the flight deck.

JOHANSSEN
10 seconds...

MARTINEZ
Strap in.

They tighten the restraints on their chairs.

JOHANSSEN
5... 4... 3...

LEWIS
Brace for deceleration.

JOHANSSEN
2... 1... Activating Panel 41.

She presses ENTER.

INT. HERMES - VAL (AIRLOCK 1) - SPACE

We're CLOSE ON THE BOMB as the current hits it...

KA-BOOOM! The EXPLOSION RIPS THE AIRLOCK DOOR TO SHREDS --

As the Hermes decelerates, Lewis and Beck are SLAMMED up against the wall --

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Martinez, Vogel, and Johanssen endure the deceleration in their chairs. After four seconds, the ship stabilizes --

JOHANSSEN
Bridge seal holding.

MARTINEZ
Damage?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
Worry about that later... What's our
relative velocity?

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 2 - SPACE

JOHANSSSEN (OVER COMMS)
12 meters per second.

LEWIS
Copy.

And with that, Commander Lewis places her feet against the
back wall for leverage...

AND JUMPS.

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
What's our intercept range?

Johanssen stares at the calculations.

That can't be right...

JOHANSSSEN
312 meters.

INT. MAV - DAY

Mark hears the news. Oh SHIT.

MARK
You said 312? Great. I'll wave at you
guys as I go by.

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
I have visual on the MAV --

EXT. HERMES - SPACE

Lewis sails clear of the ship, controlling her movements with
her MMU. We SPOT the rotating MAV way off in the distance --

LEWIS
Mark -- you're still WAY TOO FAR -- I'm
not gonna make it --

INT. MAV - DAY

Mark hears the news. Steels himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK
Commander. Seriously.
(then)
I got this.

Mark unclips his harness. Slams his makeshift knife into his suit. WHOOSH -- the air shoots out through the puncture --

EXT. MAV - DAY

And we're OUTSIDE THE MAV -- as it tumbles away from us --

Mark Watney soars out of the ship.

MARK
(having the time of his
life)
I have visual on the Commander.

AHEAD IN THE DISTANCE -- there's Lewis. Mark tries to adjust course as they rocket towards each other.

LEWIS
Johanssen -- what's my relative velocity
to Mark?

And as our SCORE begins to BUILD...

INT. HERMES - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

ANGLE JOHANSSEN -- knuckles white as she types --

JOHANSSEN
5.2 meters per second...

ANGLE MARTINEZ -- on the edge of his seat --

LEWIS (OVER COMMS)
Copy. Adjusting course --

ANGLE VOGEL -- heart in his throat --

JOHANSSEN
3.1 meters per second...

INT. HERMES - AIRLOCK 2 - SPACE

ANGLE BECK -- watching the two figures rocket towards each other below --

JOHANSSEN (OVER COMMS)
Distance to target -- 24 meters --

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

...and NEW YORK as news reports break the story of Mark's rescue on the big screens.

EXT. BEIJING - DAY

...and CHINA...

EXT./INT. AIRLOCK - DAY

LEWIS guides MARK towards the airlock with her MMU.

LEWIS (INTO COMMS)

Beck, prep the sick bay. We're bringing him to you. Everyone else, meet me in Airlock Two.

MARTINEZ, JOHANSSSEN, and VOGEL race down from the bridge to meet them. They're not in suits -- they have to wait for the outer airlock to close. THROUGH THE OBSERVATION WINDOWS: they see Lewis and Mark touch down in the airlock.

The outer airlock closes -- WHOOSH -- Mark collapses, exhausted. The inner airlock opens. Martinez, Johanssen, and Vogel race into the room, grab Mark. Supporting him. Holding him.

MARK

Hi guys.

Everyone fighting back tears.

JOHANSSSEN

Oh, hey Mark. Haven't seen you in a while.

MARTINEZ

Yeah. What've you been up to?

MARK

Oh. You know. Same old, same old.

Click. They help him with his helmet. As they pull it off, everyone is suddenly taken aback. *Oh my god...*

VOGEL

You smell horrible.

MARK

I haven't showered in a year and a half. Cut me some slack.

Johanssen's eyes are watering.

Good lord, he smells bad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK (CONT'D)

Question Two: "When you were stranded and alone up there... did you think you were gonna die?"

And there's a pause as Mark thinks about it. The rare moment of reflection for our hero.

He nods. Genuine:

MARK (CONT'D)

Yes.

Then...

MARK (CONT'D)

And it'll happen to you, too. You should know that going in. It's space. It's filled with chance, circumstance, and bad luck. It doesn't cooperate. At some point, I promise, at some point every single thing is gonna go south on you, and you'll think: this is it. This is how I end.

(then)

And you can either accept that... or you can get to work.

He lets those words land.

MARK (CONT'D)

That's all it is. You simply begin. Solve one problem. Then the next one, then the next.

(then)

You solve enough problems... and you get to come home.

Mark opens his notebook.

MARK (CONT'D)

All right. Questions?

Every hand in the class shoots into the air.

MUSIC UP: "LOVE TRAIN" by The O'Jays carries us to...

EXT. LAUNCHPAD - DAY

A SPACECRAFT is readied for launch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE (PRELAP)
...as soon as Mission Control finishes
their pre-flight checks, we will begin
launch procedures...

INT. NASA - PRESS ROOM - DAY

ANNIE MONTROSE stands at her place at the podium. Annie's a little older, a little wiser, but can still command a room.

ANNIE
The Ares 5 team will rendezvous with the
Hermes approximately 48 minutes after
launch. From there, they've got 414 days
of space travel ahead of them, arriving
at Mars on March 30th. And I'll let the
Director of Mars Missions, Vincent
Kapoor, brief you on the particulars.

VINCENT steps to the podium. He's calm. At ease. Much better on television than we've ever seen him.

VINCENT
Good morning. Their mission is scheduled
for 41 Sols. Your briefs detail the
research and experiment schedules...

And the MUSIC CONTINUES THROUGHOUT as...

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL

The room is ABUZZ WITH ACTIVITY as they prepare for launch.

MINDY PARK takes her place at her STATION. She's moved up in the world, now bears the title of:

MINDY
Flight, CAPCOM. Ready to begin preflight
check.

BRENDAN HATCH takes his place as the new FLIGHT DIRECTOR.

BRENDAN
Go ahead, CAPCOM.

UP ABOVE: In the VIEWING ROOM... TEDDY SANDERS watches the activity from his solitary seat. He has his GREEN FOLDER at the ready beside him.

EXT. JPL - MORNING

A DEER trots through JPL grounds... it's still early yet at the Jet Propulsion Labs in Pasadena....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But BRUCE NG is awake. And he still looks as exhausted and ruffled as ever. But he's in a good mood. He eats breakfast with his team outside as they watch the news reports detailing the "ARES 5 LAUNCH."

Bruce and his team laugh, make jokes with each other. One of them tosses food to the deer.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

"People all over the world, join in..."

Five BEAUTIFUL BLONDE CHILDREN race through the house, wearing NASA t-shirts and jumpsuits -- we get the sense this is the Superbowl for this family.

ALEX VOGEL grabs his youngest daughters as they race past. He scoops them up in his arms. They laugh and laugh.

INT. SPACECRAFT - DAY

The Ares 5 astronauts secure themselves into their acceleration chairs. We settle on one astronaut:

WEN JIANG. *The first Chinese national to go to Mars.*

CAPCOM (OVER COMMS)
Guidance.

WEN
Go.

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL

ZHU TAO and GUO MING stand at the back of the room, listening with pride as Wen runs through his check. A historic moment for their country.

EXT. PARK - MORNING

MITCH HENDERSON watches his grandson run around the park. We get the sense (the forced) retirement is treating him well.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

"Let this train keep on riding, riding on through..."

CHRIS BECK accepts a bouquet of flowers from a nurse. Sets them down next to the others as he checks on...

His wife. BETH JOHANSEN. Who's holding THEIR NEWBORN BABY GIRL in her arms.

Beck climbs into the hospital bed next to them.

INT. SPACECRAFT - DAY

As we hear the TIMER CONTROLLER initiate the COUNTDOWN...

TIMER CONTROLLER (OVER COMMS)
10... 9... 8...

We settle on the final member of the ARES 5 team:

RICK MARTINEZ. He grins as he feels that all-too-familiar surge of adrenaline. *Here we go again...*

INT. HOUSE - DAY

We're MOVING DOWN THE HALLWAY of a quaint house. On the WALLS: vintage albums and posters...

Donna Summer's LAST DANCE on 7"... C'est Chic... A framed top that looks like something Gloria Gaynor wore...

TIMER CONTROLLER (OVER COMMS)
7... 6...

And mixed in among the glittery paraphernalia:

The NASA Distinguished Service Medal... The Congressional Medal of Honor...

MELISSA LEWIS is glued to the television. She doesn't look up as her husband brings her a cup of tea.

She's with the crew in this moment. Her husband doesn't take offense.
He gives her a loving pat and exits.

TIMER CONTROLLER (OVER COMMS) (CONT'D)
5... 4...

INT. NASA - MISSION CONTROL

"People all over the world, 'round the world y'all, join hands..."

WIDE ON THE WHOLE ROOM as the team stares back at us in eager anticipation.

TIMER CONTROLLER (OVER COMMS)
3... 2... 1...

Launch.

The crowd erupts into cheers. They reach for one another.

We drift up to find...

EXT. SPACE

Earth. Blue and beautiful.

Home.

THE END