

31/12/2030

This wasn't the New Year's Eve that I had hoped for. A weary, wounded and woeful man stranded on a Martian Moon, with no hope of getting home. A man who promised his now teenage daughter that he would make it alive. A man with the choice to save himself or save the world.

My team and I made history on December 8, 2029; the first crewed mission to Mars. My wife, Amelia, and daughter, Scarlet, took 2 months of convincing to allow me to go. I felt like a kid begging my parents to buy me a toy. We landed on Mars on August 12, 2030. My team, along with everyone back on Earth, possessed a euphoric joy that day, however our success was soon met with disaster. We gathered hundreds of microorganisms and dozens of peculiar insects and plants, some of the most valuable information in history. We again made history only hours ago when we took off from Mars to return back to Earth. Our spacecraft, only minutes after escaping the Martian atmosphere, was shot down by a photon blast of unknown origin.

Which leads me to now, the lone survivor of a jeopardized mission, stranded on the Martian Moon, Phobos. Bleeding, starving, low on oxygen and helpless. The cockpit was severely damaged but the evidence and space capsule were all intact. An epiphany struck me. The space capsule was the golden ticket. It would either allow myself to be reunited with the two most important women of my life or it would provide my entire home planet with the key to the future. This would typically be considered one of the most emotionally difficult situations that could ever be bestowed upon a human being, but for a reason that only God may know, I began to stash every last bit of evidence into the capsule, fully aware of the mourning that would soon follow. With my emotions cast aside for the time being, I ensured every dish of evidence was securely strapped, planned the navigation, enclosed a written letter inside the capsule, turned on autopilot and leaped off the capsule.

That was it. I made the decision before considering anything, and now there was no turning back. I dragged myself back to the cockpit and shovelled all the rubble and debris away with my hands. That was where my crew lay. I'm not even a religious man, but I decided to send a prayer to God to bid them a safe resting. My emotions slowly began to creep back on me, as a gentle and lonely tear streaked down my shivering face. "Thank you all," I whispered. I spent 5 years with my crew, and I considered them my second family. Several minutes passed and a short beeping noise ceased my weeping. I had only 5% of my oxygen remaining, so I decided to go for a walk. I thought about the consequences of my decision even though I had already made it. I had always valued logic over emotion, which is why I decided to send our findings back to Earth. But I thought about my wife and daughter. Two of the strongest, most supporting and most beautiful women I knew. How would they feel? Would they miss me? Would they have supported my decision? I laid down to rest, my blood seeping through the reinforced white cloth of my suit and spilling onto the dusty surface of the Martian Moon. As I closed my eyes, I remembered a lesson my wife taught me: You have to sacrifice something in order to gain something.