

And the sun comes up

Ship Log January 1, 2030

Captain Jack Storms of ZMS Cornelis de Houtman

We have now left our planet exactly one year ago. Finally we are so far outside our solar system that the main engine can be started safely. It remains incredible that a small country like ours now leads the march of civilization with this invention. It has become so easy to leave Earth that we could become rich and were able to build this magnificent ship to be the old pioneer again. The VOC is back.

The morale needs the change the transition gives. The construction of the ship, Cornelis de Houtman, is so boring that people quickly become depressed. Fortunately, there is enough entertainment. There are movies, games and sports facilities. The mixed crew also provides additional liveliness .

I myself will miss my little radio. No Radio Veronica for a year or so.

I will do the next log after the first transition.

The giant spaceship slowly came to a halt a few tens of billions of kilometers beyond the heliosphere. The thrusters were the latest type with a combined gravitational and internal combustion engine. They were very efficient and yet it took almost a day before the ship came to a complete stop. The ship had to lie still to make his next step in the journey.

"Houston. We will start the main engine. Further communication will be impossible momentarily. This is the last message of Cornelis de Houtman. Till in about a year. "

Dead quiet the main engine came to life. Just as quiet it built a gravitational field with the power of a small star. Strong enough to pierce the walls of the space-time. In one step the spacecraft would move a few million light years.

"Captain, the computer calculated what it now should look like on the other side."

Captain Jack Storms moved next to Sarah, the navigation specialist.

"We will arrive just outside of a solar system, which is now ten planets."

"I wonder if that's true."

A tall man entered the bridge. Sarah looked up, pushed her dark blond hair out of her face and showed a confident smile on her young, pretty face.

"Of course that's true! I am the best navigation specialist in the world, Tom! "

"Yes Yes! And if we end up in a star no one will be able to argue with her. "

"Yes, Tom, I know you want to be as smart as I am," Sarah looked mockingly to Tom.

"But this ship is not big enough for two geniuses!"

"Not big enough," Tom said as he spread his arms wide. "This ship is five damn kilometers long!"

"People pay attention. The gravitational field is at fifty percent. Now we'll see if five kilometers is still good for something. "

"Aye Captain."

Tom sat down at his computer next to Sarah.

"The hull has no problems yet," he said.

"65%"

"Nothing to worry about."

Slowly, a slight tremor was feelable. The rest of the crew trickled in, until all twenty stood packed together on the bridge.

"69%"

The vibration decreased again.

Tense everyone looked at the displays. A few people tried looking outside through the narrow tunnel-like windows, but there was only blackness to see.

"75%"

"Soon, the vortex cascade will occur. We will be sucked out of this part of space like a jellyfish through a straw. " Tom grinned when he made this visualization.

Outside the giant spaceship a giant invisible deformation of the space time occurred. The ship sank in the well, which formed. The light from the stars slowly changed color. The light of the sun disappeared. Instead, the light of the star, where they were heading, appeared. Soon they would no longer be in the Milky way.

The ship began to tremble and shake. Everywhere creaking could be heard. With the last percentages it increased and then, suddenly, it was all gone.

"We've arrived!" A delighted Tom looked around. "We are further from home than any explorer has ever been."

The people awoke from their tense staring at the screens. They cheered and clapped their hands with joy and also with great relief. Just for a few seconds, for suddenly an alarm went off. Its tones shrilled harshly. The crew flinched.

"What ?!" the baffled Captain Storms demanded from Claire, who was the only one still sitting behind a computer.

"Everyone, put your gas mask on! There is something in the air! " she cried.

For a moment people looked at each other, amazed and shocked. What? Something in the air? Then everyone rushed to grab the mask they wore standard on them. The air cleaning system went on and

the air was sucked out of the room. Then pure nitrogen was pumped into the room. This was also aspirated, after which the room was filled with clean air. The procedure took a few minutes.

"What was it? A leak? A burst pipe?"

"No, Captain. Truly a new, uh, something in the air. The computer doesn't know what it was. It's gone now. I'll run the program until it has determined what it is. "

Captain Storms turned to a tall dark woman.

"Doc, everyone needs to be checked."

"Aye, Captain."

Ship News January 2, 2030 18:30

Captain Storms

We made it! We are in the Andromeda System, 2.1 million light years from home. We have covered more distance in one day than the entire human race in its lifetime together. It's almost. No! It is a miracle!

The navigation calculations have been 99.9% correct. That 0.1% has put us within a billion miles from the farthest planet from the solar system, where we were going. Unfortunately, we will now have to fly a month on ordinary engines to get enough room for the next step.

The alarm has been triggered due to a foreign substance in the air. It seems to have been a false alarm. Everyone is checked and nothing has been found.

Despite the disappointment of that month there will be a party tonight.

Next log in about five days.

Ship News January 5, 2030; interim

Head Technology Klaassen

The hull is inspected from the inside. The outer three shells are pressed together. The force required for this is unimaginable. We have become a total of three meter smaller. Still 497 meters and we will implode. It remains a strange idea to have twice as much body as content.

The spacecraft was build pretty straightforward. In the front was the bridge, which was at the end of a short hallway where the engineering lab and the captain's cabin were situated. The corridor began as a branch of the circular corridor that lay around the living room. The living room was located in the middle of the ship. The living room was for eating and relaxation. The bedrooms all came out on the circular corridor.

From the circular corridor three hallways sprang. One of them lead to the back of the ship, towards the engine. On this corridor the doctor's room and technical workshop came out. The hallway to the left led to the shower and right to the gym.

Sarah was alone sitting in the living room reading an old book, when Mona came in.

"Hey, Sarah, do you have a minute? I just had such a weird experience. "

Sarah nodded.

"I was in the shower when all the showers went on and a few seconds later out again. Then I heard a moaning sound and a thump. "

Sarah thought for a moment and then said, "mmm, those showers is just a error."

Sarah put her book away.

"Those things are partially regulated centrally."

Sarah thought about it a moment.

"I think the hull is moaning. It has had quite a blow. "

She looked intently at Mona.

"You know that he was pressed together nearly two meters . Maybe it is coming apart again. "

Sarah shrugged lightly.

"Or maybe it was a meteor."

Mona looked a little embarrassed.

"Yes, it must have been something like that."

"I wouldn't worry about it, Mona."

Mona shivered involuntarily.

"The ship, it's a scary thing to. Oppressive. Like being underground. In a coffin. "

Sarah stood up.

"Come here."

She gave Mona a hug.

"Do not be fooled by this ship. It's just a thing. A bit of a bruised thing, but still, just a thing. "

Ship News January 8, 2030

The doctor

Ha, the system accepts "the doctor". Hahaha! Next time, I'm going to see what it will do more.

It's been almost a week since we arrived. We are still flying away from the solar system where we almost arrived in.

Morale is not getting any better. A number of people is struggling with mild depression symptoms, fatigue and headache.

Mona thinks she suffers from hallucinations. I do not think so. I prescribed her some medicine.

All in all, the great contrast between a few million light years in a few minutes and a few million miles in a day, is what people dislike. After the transition people felt even closer to home than before the transition.

I suggested the captain to celebrate his birthday. Only he and I know it's been about three months ago. The captain is not a birthday person. I assume that people will accept the party without wondering why this is the first time that he celebrates it.

"Say, Captain, I did not even know you had a birthday. What age did you reach." Sarah leaned forward to give Captain Storms a birthday kiss. She was smaller than he. So he leaned forward and accidentally looked down her sweater. Startled, he turned his head aside. He should not look at her breasts. And then was kissed fully on the mouth. Just a bit too long.

"Uh, uh, I thought, eh." He stepped back, a little red. "I thought we let these circumstances something not pass up."

He looked around quickly. Tom and the doctor had seen it. The rest was talking with one another. John and Mona were very close together. If they wouldn't hook up today he wouldn't believe it. Too bad he was the captain, otherwise

"Eh, eh, you've got a present for me, Sarah?"

Only after he had said it he realized how ambiguous that could sound. He discolored again. Sarah stepped closer, stood on her toes and whispered something in his ear.

"Boys and girls! A toast!" the doctor called at that time. "Stand together. We actually have champagne!"

Nobody saw that John and Mona seized the opportunity to quietly escape unnoticed. Everyone took some champagne and toasted with each other. It was a great party, where everyone could forget his worries.

Mona frisked away from John. She had already unbuttoned her blouse. Because of the bend in the passage she could keep escaping from John's sight. She quickly disappeared into the hallway to the showers. She took her blouse completely off and threw it behind her. So John could follow her. Quickly she ran into the showers.

John was not too far behind her. He wanted to tease her back. He stopped by her room and wanted to go inside when he saw Mona's blouse.

"Mmm, that is nice! In the shower. Exciting!"

He hurried to the showers. At the door were Mona's clothes. The space was filled with steam. All showers were on. John hastily undressed himself.

"Monaaa," John whispered loudly and played menacingly. John took a step forward.

"Ouch! Mona !! "John jumped backwards. The water was boiling hot.

"Mona! Mona !! MONA !! "

"Help me, help me."

John could hardly hear it.

"Mona! Monaaa !! "

John quickly looked around to find something to be able to walk through the boiling rain. Just as he had decided to go and get others, the alarm went off. Haggard John looked around before he realized that a few seconds later all the air would be sucked out.

"Mona, your mask! Your gas mask, put it on! "

John picked up his gas mask and put it on. The glass was fogged. Wiping away the fog John saw that the showers stopped. On the other side of the shower Mona was standing naked and red and blistered leaning with her hands against the wall. Before her was a coat hook on the wall. John shouted. Mona looked back. The alarm went off. The air was sucked out. Mona whispered, "Help me."

Just as John started moving towards Mona, she threw her head back and then gave the hook in front of her a headbutt. Her body made a few jerky movements and went limp. Her head hung on the hook, her neck snapped back. Blood flowed in a red haze to the ground.

John stood frozen in pure horror, staring at the dead body of Mona, the woman he loved. At given moment someone shook his shoulder.

"John, John !! W ... what happened? "

Sarah, the doctor and captain Storms stood behind him and looked stunned at the gruesome scene.

Ship News January 8, 2030

Doctor Kleinsma

Mona is dead. A coat hanger has invaded her brain through her eye socket. As unlikely as it sounds, she did it herself. John was first suspected, but turned out to be completely dry. Mona had, moreover, no bruises.

What exactly has happened is a mystery to me. Mona is going to stand in the shower under a scalding shower. Her body is almost 95% covered with burns. When she stood against the wall, as John described, she should actually no longer have been able to do so.

John, I have given some sedatives and put to bed. Some rest can't hurt. Everyone has gone to bed. I'm going to make a last round and then I'm going to try to have a good night sleep.

The doctor logged off, got up and checked whether the drape was wrapped well around the dead body of Mona. She wanted to avoid any part of her was visible. On Earth she would have been in a chilling drawer, but the builders of the spacecraft, the doctor thought, didn't anticipate that someone would die on their magnificent ship. She shrugged her shoulders dejectedly.

The doctor looked around and let her gaze rest once more on the sheet where Mona was. The doctor felt a sting in her heart, or rather in her soul. Such a lovely, lovely woman. She sighed.

Just a round, she thought.

The doctor left the room, glanced to the left to the door, which gave access to the main engine and wondered what it would be like there. She walked into the living room. Which was empty. Everywhere there were still empty glasses. The garlands hung to be the silent witness of the party that was so rudely disturbed.

The doctor left the space on the other side, and walked to the bridge. She first entered the technical laboratory, stopped for a moment and looked at the other doors. They were close. She stepped into the room. Again, no one was there.

The doctor left the lab and crossed the hall to the captain's cabin. She glanced sideways. The door to the bridge was open. It took a moment before she realized what she saw. The door, the door was open, but not before.

Quickly the doctor walked onto the bridge. She looked around the room. No One! She turned and ran toward the living room. She looked right and left into the corridor. Nothing. She stepped into the living room and could just see the door on the right close. She ran to the door. When the door opened, she quickly looked around. To the right saw a shadow just disappear from sight. She ran after it.

The shadow seemed to disappear into one of the bedrooms. The doctor ran to the spot where that probably happened, the room of John. The doctor typed her special access code and pressed the button. The door slid open. The light from the hallway shone into the room and she saw a sleeping John. The doctor turned on the light. There was no one except John and he seemed to sleep. The doctor could of course check if that was correct. The pills the doctor had given John, could do best a pain test. A wake someone would respond anyway. John did not cry.

The doctor rushed to the bedroom of the captain. She rang the bell. A sleepy captain answered.

"Captain, someone has been on the bridge. It seemed as if it had been John, but he is flat out. I do not know what happened. Who every was there, he ran away quickly. It can't be good. "

"Come," said Captain Storms and he walked in his underpants to the bridge. Once there, a number of computers was flashing quietly because of their ongoing work. Quickly the captain looked at the different computers.

"I see nothing. We need to run a diagnosis. I'll put Sarah and Tom on it immediately. Call Ronald on it too. "

Ship News January 9, 2030

Chief Technician Klaassen

Tom and Sarah are running the diagnosis and I'm searching the bridge for suspicious packages, wires, and if something has been opened. We're considering putting a lock on the door of the bridge.

I think it's logical to just ask everyone if they might have made an evening stroll.

Next log in three days when I've finished the inspection of the outside of the ship.

Captain Storms and the doctor talked the whole day with everyone. No one had been out of their beds. Claire had reluctantly admitted to have spend the night with Jonas, the second adjutant Chief Technician, but more than that had not happening.

Ship News January 11, 2030

Navigation Specialist Sarah Koert

The diagnosis did not give a clear picture. No virus was found, but the IT specialists had just last night installed a program to keep track of how the hull was being pressed together during the next transition. That was unfortunately a necessary new program and thus could not be removed. That program was identified as new and unknown. John was one of the ICT specialists responsible, but he was passed out in his bed that day.

Ronald was getting ready to make a spacewalk. It would be quite a journey to get outside. First eighty-one air locks had to be passed, and then a new outer hatch had be placed in the compressed outer hull. That meant by certain cutting through 40 cm steel with a plasma torch.

Ronald and Jonas would do the job together. After five hours they arrived at the last air lock. There they had to don their spacesuits. Thereafter, they were going to cut a hole in the outer hull, and would be exposed to the vacuum of space.

Fast and agile they donned their suits. Which were so much better than in the first years of space travel. New graphene applications had been discovered in the past decade, which had made suits thin, flexible and hard as diamond. A new plastic, templex, ensured a comfortable temperature, even during heavy physical labor. They were now helped during heavy labor, especially on heavy lifting and towing, by an ultramodern exoskeleton. They had to carry a couple of extremely heavy parts for the new door and would otherwise have been unable to take them with them.

In good spirits, the men went to work. After a few hours they were through the hull and the door could be installed. That would take an hour or two.

"So, Jonas, that should do it."

"Yes, a fine job, if I do say so myself."

"Jonas, would you like to see inside if it all checks out. I want to inspect the hull a little. If you use that first diagnosis station after the second air lock from here, you can back in about 30 minutes. That should give me enough time. "

"Yes, boss."

Ronald fixed his magnetic boots to the hull. He looked around. Of the beautiful surface that he knew so well, was nothing left. This was more a moonscape of craters, where the weak pieces were pressed deeper than the firm. Not a single piece was smooth anymore. He did in any case need not to be afraid that he might fall through something. God oh god, his poor spaceship.

The intercom came to life. Sarah had been in contact with them the whole time, but she had just been at least as busy as the two men.

"Hey, Ronald, I've finally got alone. Hahaha! "She laughed." How is it out there? What does it look like? "

"Hi, honey. Yes, finally alone with my other dear. She is in a terrible state. "

"Don't stay away too long!"

"No, you know, Jonas and I agreed on thirty minutes."

"Okay, fine."

Sarah resumed her duties. She was already working on the calculations for the next transition. This time they would move a billion light-years and she did not want to arrive so close to a solar system. This required calculations, recalculations and more recalculations.

Tom walked onto the bridge.

"Are you managing?"

"Yes, yes, I'm still the best," Sarah said with a wicked smile.

"Oh yeah, rub it in," growled Tom, as he sat down at his station. He looked briefly to the left and then looked at what happened on his computer.

"Say, Sarah, Ronald still outside?"

"Yup."

"Have you turned on the main engine?"

"Uh, no, is it on? Turn it off! "She stood up abruptly and looked anxiously at the computer of Tom.

"Ronald? Ronald! Go back inside! "

Intercom gave static for a short while and then came back to life.

"Sarah, what is it?"

"The main engine is on!"

"It's almost at 1%," Tom cried in panic

"Ronald, did you hear that?"

"Yup. Then the locks have been locked," Ronald said somewhat controlled.

"That new door, close to you. Jonas, Jonas, do you hear me! Is that locked?" Sarah shouted into the intercom. "Open it! Claire! The captain !! Tom, turn it off! "

Tom was furiously ticking and clicking.

"It's not working! It's not working! "

"Ronald, jump off! We'll pick you up again soon! Then we come back for you! "

"Sarah, Jonah here! What is happening? I don't get it to unlock! "

"Sarah, Ronald here, nothing is happening. Gravity is too strong! "

"Put on your jetpack! Full throttle !! "

"Did that already!"

"Sarah, it is already at 1.1%," said Tom desperate. "That's 50 times the force of gravity. You need a jet to get away. "

"Ronald, think, think, what can we do !?"

"Turn it off. My suit..... is..... being..... crushed. "

"Sarah, Tom, report!"

"The main engine has started. Ronald outside. Jonas in the second outer ring. "

"Jonah, captain here, can you get away?"

Captain Storms meanwhile was typing all sorts of things into his computer.

"No, sir"

Storms pointed to the door.

"Tom, manual control!"

Tom ran away to the rear of the ship.

Sarah broke the connection with the two men outside.

"Captain, it's already too late. The scale is not linear. 100% is a million times the force of gravity. A tenth and Ronald is dead. The question is whether Jonas still survives the 50% "

Captain did not listen, but now rammed the keys. Claire walked in quietly with two mugs of steaming hot coffee.

"Captain !!" Sarah shouted.

Startled Claire put down the coffee and spilled it.

"Ouch!"

"They're dead, Captain! Whatever we do! "

Captain Storms stopped ramming. Defeated, he hung his head. His arms lay as if paralyzed on the keyboard. Claire slumped into a chair.

"2%"

Sarah looked meaningful around and made connection again.

"Ronald? Ronald ?! "

It remained silent.

"Sarah?" a smothered voice wispered.

Sarah looked hopeful and sat up strait. "Ronald?"

"No, it's Jonas."

Sarah looked anxious to Captain Storms.

"I see the hull coming at me, Sarah. He crumples! Stop the ship! "

A cracking sound Jonas made unintelligible.

"Aaaah !! Uh. "

"Jonas !!"

Tears were running down Sarah's cheeks.

Sarah, Claire and Captain Storms stared beaten ahead. Minutes passed.

The intercom came to life.

"Captain, captain, Tom here. It's gone. Someone has torn off and taken the control panel. We can't control the ship manually. "

"10%, 15%, 20%. Captain, the field is increasing much faster than usual "

Sarah awoke from her paralysis.

Captain Storms stared desperately at his computer. Then he let out a despondent sigh.

"I have no idea what is happening. I do not know why the field risesso quickly. I have no idea. We can only hope we'll survive it. "

He had just finished his sentence when the ship began to vibrate intensely.

"75%. 85%. "

Coffee mugs almost tumbled off the table. Claire ducked down and grabbed the mugs with arms wide before they fell off the table on each side. Some coffee gushed out.

"Ow, ow, damn coffee."

Angry Claire put the mugs in front of her and sat back. Tears ran down her cheeks.

"Stupid Jonas, why did he have to be there."

She hung her head back and stared blankly at the ceiling.

"90%, 91%. We almost go! "

Five or six people walked on the bridge. Marnix, the highest ranking technician stood behind Claire. The rest stood with the captain and Sarah.

"95%! There we go! "

Everyone braced himself. A sort of shudder went through the ship. Then it was over. The ship was quiet. Water dripped, but otherwise it was quiet.

"Marnix, there's a leak," the captain shouted without looking away from his monitor. Sarah was busy too checking what had happened and what they could expect.

Marnix did not respond.

"Marnix" cried the captain again. Again nothing. Captain Storms turned. No Marnix.

"Oh my God!!"

Captain Storms paled. Three others also turned to look. One shouted, one vomited and the third grabbed Sarah's head.

"Do not look!"

Marnix was gone. Claire's head was gone. Blood dripped to the ground and not water. Lots of blood.

"Doc, help!" Cried Captain Storms into the intercom. He then staggered to his feet. He walked to the table, pushed it aside, throwing down a coffee mug. On the chair at the table sat the corpse of Claire. Her head was gone. He stared in horror.

"David, Sarah, Martin, go search Marnix. Sarah, do not look.

Captain Storms had regained himself.

"Julia, help me make more room."

"Captain, your arm. The coffee! Your arm was burned. "

Captain Storms striped up his sleeve.

"No, nothing."

"How can that be?"

Julia grabbed the remaining mug.

"The coffee is cold !! Not two minutes ago, it was boiling hot! "

Floor, Kees and Lieke sat in the living room drinking the same boiling hot coffee that had been given the captain when the ship was counting the final percentages. Floor sat next to Kees and held his hand. Ellen sat on the other side and looked in the direction of the engine in the ship.

"I think that engine is the work of the devil."

Lieke shivered as she said it.

"You and your devils and demons! Hahaha! "

Floor laughed. Kees looked a little in love to the beautiful woman next to him. Ellen put on a quasi-angry face on. The ship began to vibrate.

"And now do not say that ..."

The trembling stopped.

"Do not tell me what?"

Water clattered on the ground. Kees looked at Ellen. Her mouth was open. All color had left her face. She did not move. Suddenly she fell forward. With a thud she hit the table.

"What the ...," Kees cried when he saw the back of her head was missing.

Ellen was split in half, there on the spot, dead. Kees jumped back, slipped in the blood on the floor and fell hard on his back. Floor screamed it out. Kees threw up on himself.

Ship News January 9, 2030

Captain Storms

We are somewhere in the universe. The calculations weren't finished and we were still moving when we made the transition. Presumably we are 1.2 billion light years from home. We did not arrive in the vicinity of a star. The ship is still moving.

The countdown has started again. Sarah works like crazy to make the calculations. The next transition will even be 3 billion light years.

Claire and Lieke are dead. Pieces of them are missing. Marnix has completely disappeared, like Andre. The ship has been completely searched and nothing has been found. No Marnix, no nothing not. The outer hull plates are pressed together so much that no one can leave the ship. It's a mystery where they have gone. We have four hours to find out what exactly happened. The clock is ticking.

Ship News January 9, 2030

Doctor Kleinsma.

It's a mystery. Claire and Ellen have both lost body parts. Claire's neck just stops and the entire back of the Lieke's torso is no longer there. There are no cut marks. Everything is flawless intact up to the 'cut'. It's a mystery.

John is still completely numb. With what I have gave him that will still take about four hours.

The door of the doctor's room slid open.

"Doctor, I feel strange."

The doctor turned around swiftly.

"John, how ..."

John was in the doorway. Half of his body was limp.

"Jesus, John, you should not be able to walk at all!"

"There's something wrong."

"Yes, sit down or rather lie. I'll give you something so you can move better. "

"Thank you, Doctor. I'd rather stand. That's easier. "

The doctor nodded and grabbed a bottle and a packaged syringe. She turned the bottle and wanted to get the syringe from the package.

"Roll up your sleeve. Hey, shit, that rotten packaging. Please wait. Scissors, scissors. Ah, there. "

The doctor took a large fabric scissors Femke had left behind the last time she had been sewing clothes at the doctor's office. There was an old-fashioned lamp with a magnifying glass on the desk. That was, according to Femke, super convenient for fine stitching. With one big cut the packaging was open. The doctor laid the scissors on the side, filled the syringe and held it up to tip the air out.

"So, up with the sleeve and arm up here and you will be your easy peasy old self again. This stuff works very fast."

The doctor turned away from John to throw away the needle. A sliding sound of metal on a table was followed by: "OemphfDok"

The doctor turned back.

John pulled with one hand the scissors, which the doctor had just used, from his own belly and had with his other hand his wrist.

"Help, doctor, help!"

With all his power one hand moved the scissors in a circle away from John to stab him in a different place in his body. With the other John tried to prevent this.

The doctor stared bewildered at the struggle the man had with himself.

"Dock"

The doctor awoke and also reached in blind panic for the hand with the scissors.

"Dock"

With the two of them they kept the balance. It did not come closer, but did give way either. A psychotic man has the power of many, flashed through the head of the doctor. Why do we manage to resist him. Then suddenly gave John in. He let himself stumble. The rest of John and the doctor were only pulling and with no power stopping then they hit their hands against the table. The body of John followed fast and hard. The doctor in a last act of desperation threw herself between John and where John was going. Unfortunately, too little, too late. John fell on the scissors and due to his stumbling it came full in his chest.

The doctor fell to the ground. John fell on top of her. The blood gushed on the doctor. The alarm went. The doctor tried with all her strength to get away from under John. She needed to get her gas mask. The air was sucked out. The heavy corpse of John was full at the doctor. Pure nitrogen filled the room. The doctor could do nothing. Hold her breath. How long did she have. One and half minutes. The time ticked away. How long still.

Sarah worked like a woman possessed. This time it's been no man's land and statistically that was also the most likely, but then there were no further additional factors relevant. The computer was tampered with, so you could, you should not assume that cold statistics were only thing .

Captain Storms and Tom came in.

"Sarah, is it working?"

"No, no way!"

Just when the captain and Tom wanted to sit down the alarm went off.

"Jesus, again!"

The procedure was followed and three to four minutes later it was over.

"Tom, check again what it can be."

Sarah threw her arms in the air and then turned to Captain Storms.

"Captain, that fucking clock tells us nothing. When starting, that is with an assumption of the time which the motor takes to start up again supplemented with an estimate of the time that the calculations cost. That tells us nothing, because the distance determines the recalculation time and because we continue to go further with every jump that time is getting longer, but as we are moving the engine startup time is much shorter. We thus have more of the clock, but in fact less time.

The field is already at 2% and will rise exponentially faster and going flying into the transition this will go even faster. We need to brake, but calculating with delayed acceleration, in which both the acceleration and deceleration are uncertain is impossible. We also currently have no frame of reference. So even when we able to calculate it then we would not be able to measure what we need to know for the calculation. "

"Sarah, Tom, try to put something together that can help us to determine how long we have."

"Aye, Captain," said Sarah. "I think I know something. We test it here in the lab. Will you join me, Tom "

Tom nodded.

"All the crew, all crew. In a few minutes the next transition will occur. Brace yourself. It's going to be rough! "

The captain desperately looked at the others. Then he thought of something.

"Dock, dock," he shouted into the intercom. "Come here now!"

Everyone went back to work. Five minutes later the doctor was still not.

"Julia, Julia, where are you? Go and see where the doctor is. "

"Yes, Captain. I'm in the living room. David will go. Two minutes! "

Julia stepped away from the intercom and looked at David sweetly.

"Pleeeeeeasssee ..."

David growled, grinned and walked away. Julia sat down beside Martin and put her legs on a chair on the other side of the table.

David walked to the doctor's room. He pressed the button and the door opened. The door slid away and gave an image price that David would harass the rest of his life. John lay on top of the doctor, who was lying in a pool of blood. Her eyes were wide open frozen in horror of her agony.

David staggered to the intercom button.

"Jesus, captain! Captain, they're dead! "

"Who? Who? David, who? "

"John and the doctor."

"What?"

"John and the doctor." There was a pause. "Doctor! Doctor? Dock ... "

"David, what's happening?"

The alarm went off.

"98, 99%. Transition "

"What?"

The ship had not even vibrated and they were already 3 billion light years further. Nothing had happened after the alarm.

Julia screamed. Martin looked wildly around.

"My legs! Where are my legs ?! "

Half of Julia's legs was gone. The blood gushed from her lower legs. Martin was desperate and grabbed some napkins to stop the bleeding.

Julia walked into the room and screamed. Martin looked back.

"What?"

Perplexed he stopped. Everyone gaped at each other. Julia died.

"Martin!"

Julia pointed to herself

"I, I'm dead!"

Julia fainted.

Captain Jack Storms sat alone on the bridge hammering in a blind panic on all sorts of keys.

"Julia? Dock? Martin? What is happening? David? Sarah? "

The door to the bridge opened, silently and smoothly. Captain Storms did not hear. Gently someone pushed closer. Jack Storms did not hear it. A hand was laid on his shoulder.

"Jack?"

Jack stiffened in his chair. He did not look. He knew who was there.

"Dock?"

Ship News January 9, 2030

Navigation Specialist Sarah Koert

We do not know where we are. The clock says we have four hours, but that can't be true. No idea how much it should be. We're working on the new clock.

Captain Storms was sent to bed for a short while. He looked exhausted. He had to recover.

David knows nothing. He lies in bed to recover. Juliet is dead, but alive. Two people, I do not know who, gone.

More later.

"Julia? Julia? "

Martin stood bent over her. Sarah sat down beside her squatting.

"Julia ?!" Sarah cried now.

Julia awoke. She blinked again and realized what had happened. She paled.

"No no, Julia !!" Sarah shook her. "Do not think!"

Martin held out a hand to her. "Can you stand?"

Julia stood up and was led to a chair. She sat nervously.

"It'll be okay," said Sarah.

"No, no, it's not okay! When are we? "

"January 9 2030."

Julia paused. She looked around.

"Where's David?" She asked.

Sarah looked around. "No idea. How So? "

"I had just discovered something, when David called for me."

"So?"

"He was not where he said he would be, and when I came back my research was erased. I do not trust him. I was just looking for when I "

The door to the living room opened. Martin turned to look.

"Hey, David."

Julia flinched. Sarah looked at her surprised. "What?"

"He has to go. I must tell you what I found. "

Martin turned to David, who entered calmly.

"Hey Martin. What is up? "

"Julia is still a little upset. Can you give her a minute? "

"Yes, she only has a moment."

Martin first understood something else and then it was so late. Bleeding, he crashed to the ground. David walked further with the big scissors dripping blood in his hand.

Sarah didn't hesitate for a second and took Julia's arm. She dragged her along. Screaming for help they ran into the corridor. David responded immediately and put in a sprint.

Halfway to the door of the living room he caught up with the women. He immediately stroke.

"Ah!"

Julia was hit in the shoulder. She grabbed the scissors and held on to it in panic.

"Run! They do not move. "

David pulled the scissors loose and struck again. Julia caught it with her hand.

"Aaaahh! Sarah! Save yourself. "

Sarah ran. The door opened. Storms captain came out and his antique double-barreled shotgun at ready. He shot both barrels empty.

Julia cried: "Look for the non-moving uh. "

David was hit full in the chest and thrown back. Julia was hit by a single hail bullet. The projectile pierced its way through the side of head into her brain. Her head slumped backwards.

"Sarah! You alright? "

Jack Storms locked her in his arms. Sarah burst into tears. He led her away.

Three hours after the death of Julia and David the seven surviving crew members of Cornelis de Houtman were together in the living room. The room was cleared and cleaned, but the dead leave indelible traces. Julia had died twice. Storms captain had tried to save her, but failed. Sarah was angry, sad and had been even angrier, but Jack had sworn that he did not think he would hit her. Sarah believed him, but could still hardly take it. Now they were sitting here waiting for the next transition.

Captain Jack Storms looked around the group.

"When I came here the field was already at 37%. It may now happen again anytime. We can wait here together or each go our separate ways and we will soon see who is still there. What do you think? "

Nobody said anything, but Floor and Kees grabbed each other's hands. Femke also grabbed Floor's hand.

Tom looked at Sarah expectantly. She looked at Jack and nodded.

"So we stay."

The final percentages ticked away. A kind of shudder went through the ship again and they were billions of light years further. No alarm went, no one was missing and no one had died. It was almost as if nothing had happened and perhaps that was correct.

Ship News January 10, 2030

Emergency Doctor Femke Scheepmakers

I have made a new scan of all images from around the time when the alarm went off. Julia had told Sarah to look things not moving. First, I found nothing. Then I did a frame by frame viewing and success. One hundredth of a second before the alarm goes off, the picture is filled at once with microscopic critters. One frame later they are all in another place and then they are all gone again.

Either they are animals that are able to fly more than 3.5 billion kilometers per hour or there is something else going on. Weird.

I have to talk to Sarah right away.

Ship News January 10, 2030

Navigation Specialist Sarah Koert

We have now made by three transitions without losing anyone. We've lost half a table and a full mug of coffee. Unfortunately we can't stay together all the time and have to move through the ship during the transitions. I believe it is only a matter of time before something goes wrong with someone.

"Captain? Jack? " Sarah said after she had made her log. The captain looked up from his monitor.

"Yes, Sarah?"

" No logs are kept anymore."

"By whom?"

"Because everyone. You too. "

"I .. I can't concentrate so well anymore."

Sarah stood up and walked over to Jack. She crouched next to him and put a hand on his leg.

"What's troubling you? You could not know that you could happen to Julia. "

Jack nodded. He looked down at Sarah.

"We're all in the same problems," she continued. "It's not your fault."

Jack let his gaze fall further. Sarah had another nice and loose shirt on. He stared unabashedly at her cleavage. She noticed and laid a hand on it. He looked into her eyes.

"You, Sarah, you keep my mind busy. Do you remember what you said on my birthday? "

"But Jack, that was then. So much has changed. "

Jack flushed.

"That was then? That was then ?! That was two days ago! "

"Jack !?" Sarah stammered surprised.

"What, Jack. You offered your nice breasts and now it is be too late. "

He grabbed her.

"Jack, let me go. You're not yourself! "

Sarah pulled away and started to get up. Jack grabbed her again. She scratched his hand.

"Ouch! Bitch! "

He lashed out with his fist. He hit her full on her jaw. The stump was hard and she fell backwards hitting her head hard on the ground. She lost consciousness.

Femke sat in the doctor's room. She ran more scans and perform tests to find out what they were facing. Where did those animals, things, or whatever it was come from and where they go when they disappeared. They seemed to disappear in the people. But then? What then?

The door slid open. Femke looked up. Captain Jack Storms stood in the doorway.

"What are you doing?" He asked irritably.

Femke quickly locked the computer. "Uh, nothing."

"Why do you lock your computer?"

"No reason."

"Release it."

"No."

"I do not have time for this!"

Jack pulled his gun from behind his back and pointed it at Femke. She held up her hand fending.

"Noooo"

Jack pulled the trigger. With a thunderous bang the rifle threw his deadly load into space. The face of Femke was turned into a bloody mass of flesh.

Kees and Floor sat snug on a couch in the living room when they heard a muffled bang. They looked at each other in horror.

"Jesus, what happened?"

Kees stood up. Floor took his hand.

"Please stay here."

Tom walked in hurried.

"Was it here?"

"No, Tom, it sounded like it came from the doctor's office. But please do not go there. "

Tom still went to the door leading to the hallway where the doctor's room was. Kees grabbed him by the shoulder.

"Do not, Tom. This ship is the work of the devil. Who knows what you'll find there. "

"Mike, don't you think that if the devil was there, he would also come here. I'm not waiting here for my destiny. I also think it's just an accident or a leak or something. But stay here comfortably waiting for the Devil. "

Tom grabbed Kees' hand and dropped it beside his shoulder. He left the room and never saw Kees and Floor again.

Sarah woke up. She was tied up in a cabin, which was probably the captain's. He had tied her legs apart and her shirt was already pulled open. There was a bang in the distance. Fortunately, he apparently needed to do something else, she thought bitterly. That gave her time to escape.

Sarah looked around to see if there was something that could help her with the ropes. She moved to one side and back to the other. She noticed that she could turn her body very far. She tried with one hand to loosen the knot on her other. With just a little effort she succeeded already.

"Well," she whispered to herself.

She was free within a few minutes. It seemed as if he wanted her to escape. He wanted to take her on that bed and now she could escape from his grasp. She pulled her shirt close and took the letter opener that lay on his desk. Not that she thought it would really do something in an open confrontation, but you never knew.

She stood just in the doorway when there was a bang. Sarah screamed.

"Sarah? !!

Sarah took off running. She fled to the bridge.

Kees and Floor stood hand in hand in the middle of the living room. They were both pale. Softly trembling they were waiting for the devil. Minutes passed.

Just when they hardly take it anymore the door slid open. They felt that also lasted an eternity.

In the doorway stood Captain Jack Storms. In his hand he held a double-barreled shot gun that still smoked. He grinned.

"Ah, here you are."

He turned the gun and casually from the hip shot both barrels empty. Kees tried to maneuver in front of Floor, but only managed partially. He was half torn to pieces. Floor was blown back and then sprawled to bleed out on the floor. She could hear the scream of Sarah and tried to call her. The hysterical cry Jack drowned her. He ran away.

Sarah ran literally as if her life depended on it. Jack shot but missed completely. Many bullets bounced off the walls and flew past her ears. they lashed her arms and face, but fortunately no more than that. She drew additional strength from it.

"SARAH !!" bellowed Jack. He broke into a run.

He shot twice while running without success.

Sarah ran through the corridor almost all the way around and then ran to the bridge. The door of the bridge was made of steel and since the intruder there was also a lock on it. That had to be her salvation.

"Sarah, come here! Your captain needs you! "

She came almost skidded to a halt at the door of the bridge. In panic she jerked at the door, which slowly slid shut.

"Close, damn thing!"

There was a bang and the hail of bullets thudded against the door. Sarah could hide behind it just in time. With a roar, she yanked again at the door and could just see the crazy look on Jack's face. Immediately she locked the door. With a roar Jack yanked the door.

"Sarah !!"

He pounded on the door.

"Open!"

Sarah stepped back.

"Last chance, Sarah!" Jack growled menacingly.

Sarah sobbed bitterly.

Jack shot at the door. The door shook in his grooves, but held. Jack tugged at the door, shot it again and jerked back. The lock and the steel of the door were Sarah's rescue. Jack Storms shot his double-barreled empty at the door. He shot just dents and holes in it. Then there was a long silence.

Jack came back.

"Sarah! Let me in. "

Jack banged on the door.

"Sarah, that's an order!"

Sarah was crying in her chair and shook very hard no.

Behind her the computer was calculating the next transition.

"Saraaaaaahhhh! Please let me in. "

Jack cried. The banging was softer, with a flat hand and more like a caress.

"Saraah!?"

It went silent. Sarah looked anxiously towards the door. She crept to the door and put her ear against the cold surface. At that time something boomed against the door.

"Aaa!!"

Sarah jumped back. Jack had beaten a narrow but deep dent in the door. He had found a fire ax. Calm he took on the door.

"Saraahh!" Exclaimed Jack horrent.

Sarah flinched further back. I need something, she thought, a stick, a rod or a hatchet to defend myself. She quickly looked around. Nothing! Perhaps in one of the cabinets or behind a door. Like mad she pulled open the two cabinets. Nothing. Spare parts, manuals and some small tools. She quickly looked around. The hatches! She pulled a pair of top hatches open. From the third the panel that could control the engine manually fell. Someone hid it here. Sarah picked it up and stared at it.

"Saaaraaaaah!"

Jack brutally disrupted her musings. He had cut a hole in the door where he could see through. He peered with one mad looking eye through the crack.

"Sarrrrrrraahhh!"

He wriggled his fingers through it and tried to pull the gap bigger. Blood welled up where the sharp metal cut in his fingers. It did not bother him.

Sarah became panicked more and more. She ran to the other side of the bridge. There were many high hatches under the screens that displayed the flight. She drew two open. But there were just racks of computers. The renewed pounding of the ax on the door did make Sarah cower a bit with each stroke.

"The last one, then," she whispered desperately to herself.

She pulled open the hatch. The corpse of the doctor fell out. It fell on top of Sarah. Sarah screamed it out. She looked straight into the wide opened eyes.

"Saraaaahhh! Do not be angry. Saraaahh. I just had to get rid of her. "Jack voice changed tone. "Sarah, let me inside. I'll just clean it up. "

The ship began to shake gently. Jack looked his crazy look through the hole.

"Here we go again! Hahaha, welcome to my world! "

A bang. Through the hole blood, meat and pieces of skull sprayed. Sarah felt raining down on her. She threw up emptying her stomach. Then it was quiet.

"Sarah?"

Tom's voice was hesitant.

"Sarah, are you there?"

"Yes," Sarah sobbed.

"Can you get to the door?"

"Yes."

Sarah struggled from underneath the body of the doctor. She rose unsteadily to her feet and stumbled to the door. The lock had endured firmly, but it was still intact. She opened the lock of the and the door slid open a little. The large hands of Tom clasped the edge.

"We will have to pull. Can you help me? "

Together they went on the door. The mutilated body of Captain Jack Storms lay there half against the door and rolled with it. Sarah stared in horror at the gruesome scene.

"I had no choice, Sarah. I really had no other choice. He had become insane. Crazy! "

Sarah sobbed.

"I know, Tom"

Tom stepped onto the bridge and put his arms around her.

"It's over."

Sarah sobbed for a moment, but Tom broke away.

"We must stop the transitions, Sarah."

"I found the engine control panel."

Sarah picked up the panel and gave it to Tom. He looked at it.

" I'm able to install that again."

Sarah sighed with relief.

"If you then try to stop the transitions we'll soon be back in control of the ship."

Sarah nodded. Tom walked away. Sarah remained. She sat at her computer. Shivers ran down her back. Her head turned almost naturally from the body of the doctor to the door to check if the corpses lay where they were. She could not concentrate.

The clock counted down again. Sarah stood up and sat down at the computer of the captain. As she sat with her face to the door, she could see the corpse of the doctor. She went to work. Half an hour later, Tom came back.

"I put the panel back. We are slowing down again. "

Sarah looked relieved. Tom smiled sweetly.

"And the transitions?"

"I'm almost there. I think I know how we can modify the computer. I'll tell him to think that he does exactly what he should do without it happening. I just need to adjust the coordinates selection. "

"I'll help you with that."

Forty-five minutes later they were ready.

"Success !," she cried out right.

"I'll get champagne!" Exclaimed Tom and jumped up.

Sarah gave a thumbs up. Tom walked away. He was gone a minute when the main engine started and began to build a field.

"Hey, it should not do that!"

Sarah went to her own computer and saw that it was deadlocked.

"Oh yeah, you know! I can't believe it. "

Sarah went to Tom's computer and sat down. She looked, saw what it said and all color drew from her face. For a moment she stared at the screen. When she looked back. Tom wasn't back yet. She started tapping like mad man. A few minutes later, Tom came back.

"What are you doing!?! " He roared. He jumped at her and slammed her down.

"Stupid bitch!"

Sarah fell hard and needed a moment to regain herself and stand up. Before she was ready, Tom was with her and pounded her in the face with his fist. She was knocked out. He sat back down at his computer.

Moments later she came to. She was tied up in her chair. Tom had used her shirt and now scratched her bare skin with a large kitchen knife.

"Aaa"

"Ah, you're back."

"Tom, what are you doing?"

"We're going home, baby. Well, I'm going home. "

He turned around.

"Yes, that's right! You almost screwed it up. "

"Tom, you can't do that. You lead those nasty things to earth. Everyone will die! "

Tom looked at her pityingly.

"We want to!"

"Tom!? No! "

Tom looked at his screen.

"We're not Tom! And you won't be there anymore anyway. 90% already. Well done. "

Tom turned to Sarah.

"Tom would have liked to get in your pants, but alas. Tom is no more. "

Tears came to Sarah's eyes. Tom, or what's left of it was bent to her and slowly drove the knife into her belly.

"Aaaaa !!" Sarah screamed. She slumped forward.

The ship made the transition. Immediately there was an alarm.

"What!?"

Tom looked up at the screens.

"A star!? That bitch! "

Tom jumped up and grabbed Sarah's shoulder. He shook hard.

"Aa"

"What have you done !?"

Sarah breathed heavily. Tom wanted to be answered right away and pushed into the wound in her abdomen.

"AAAAAA !!!!"

"What have you done ?!" he screamed maniacally.

"I ... wanted ... to sendus ... into..a star "

"Ha! You missed! Tom is still the best. He would have succeeded. "

Tom sat down at the computer of the captain. He started the regular motors.

"Ha." Sarah smiled painfully, coughed and cringed. "Not the sun .."

Tom swore to himself. He looked at the screen, to the computer, back to the screen and then back to the computer.

"It must be!"

Tom turned on the main engine. He looked around smug to Sarah, who really was almost dead.

"I told you, you wouldn't be around anymore. Now, the coordinates. "

Tom turned around, looked surprised at the screen and stammered: "what's happening?"

"Engines ..linked ... bigger field."

Sarah head slumped sideways.

The ship made a gravitational field of nearly two small stars, too much in such a short distance of a star. The ship and the star pulled together. The star moved a few thousand kilometers and the ship was launched to the star.

Tom stood up, walked quietly to Sarah and hit her with the flat of his hand in the face. Once more came to Sarah.

"Well, you did it. We're all going to die. "He was interrupted by noise from the radio.

"... ..radio Veronica, you really hear us everywhere!"