

KINGS OF HEAVEN

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EXT. SPACE

A panorama of space and planets.

BETHANY (V.O.)

By Twenty-Ninety-Nine, hundreds of manned probes had gone out into the inhabited universe. Most were never heard from again. In Twenty-One Eighty-Seven the National Space Council abandoned its expeditionary program. But the hope remained, however remote, that some day some of them would find their way home.

INT. BETHANY'S CUBBY, PEGASUS

A LOUD BANG awakens BETHANY (30s) She struggles from a mummy bag attached by Velcro to her bunk.

BETHANY

Wha...?

INT. CRAWLWAY, PEGASUS

Bethany rubs the sleep from her eyes as she floats and bounces down the claustrophobic hallway towards the control room.

EXT. SPACE

Seven small ships in the void. Among them Bethany's ship, the Pegasus.

SUPER: "MARS EXPEDITIONARY GROUP - 2252. 120 YEARS FROM EARTH."

INT. CONTROL ROOM, PEGASUS

Bethany leans over CAESAR's (30s) shoulder, looks at the instruments. Caesar looks out the windows above him.

CAESAR

(into headset)

M.E.G., this is Pegasus. We don't know what hit us. Do you see anything? Over.

BETHANY

Caesar, what happened? Are we under attack?

CAESAR

We're not sure. Paulo's in the back trying to patch it. We're losing air.

INT. CRAWLWAY, PEGASUS

Bethany hurries towards the back of the ship, worried.

INT. ENVIRONMENTAL BAY, PEGASUS

Bethany enters a crowded room with several incubator tanks full of algae. PAULO (30s) patches the hull with a futuristic torch.

PAULO

I've just about got it, here, but it's pretty big. We're leaking insulation fluid on the outside.

BETHANY

I'll suit up.

INT. AIRLOCK, PEGASUS

Bethany and Paulo put on their suits.

BETHANY

Caesar, we're going to step out for a minute. Monitor us, will you?

Caesar's voice comes from a speaker in the wall.

CAESAR

(filtered, over radio)
Raj, monitoring your E.V.A.

EXT. SPACE

Bethany and Paulo floating out the airlock door, patching equipment in hand.

They inspect the leak. A viscous fluid seeps from a hole caved in the hull and collects in globules in the vacuum.

BETHANY
This looks like a shell puncture.

PAULO
Raj, definitely man-made.

Caesar's voice crackles over their intercom. Bethany and Paulo prepare their equipment.

CAESAR
(filtered, over radio)
There's nothing on the screens.
Those that are working, anyway. Can
you fix it?

BETHANY
We'll try.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, PEGASUS

Paulo and Bethany come in, exhausted. Caesar's at the wheel.

CAESAR
(into headset)
Raj, M.E.G., copy your
transmissions. Assessing damage.
Pegasus out.

BETHANY
It's patched. Any word on our
attackers?

CAESAR
No. The other ships confirm. We're
all alone out here.

INT. CRAWLWAY, PEGASUS

All three head back, checking the ship.

BETHANY
Where did it come from, then?

CAESAR
It could have been fired a hundred
years ago. Nothing but dumb luck.

BETHANY
Dumb is right. Any other damage?

INT. ENVIRONMENTAL BAY, PEGASUS

Paulo checks the instruments.

PAULO

Oxygen levels have stabilized.
We've decompressed by about thirty
percent. The air's gonna be a
little thin in here for a while.

Caesar punches at a keyboard mounted on the wall.

CAESAR

Navicomp's down too, not that it
matters.

BETHANY

Hasn't worked right for years,
anyway.

Caesar scowls at the monitor.

CAESAR

Yeah. I'm still determining what
other systems may be affected.
Everything's on the blink. These
screens keep going on and off.
Electrical may be shot.
Environmental's not responding.

Bethany stands with her hands on her hips, deciding.

BETHANY

Okay, Caesar, we'd better check
that out first. If we can't get the
oxygen levels replenished, we're in
real trouble. Keep me informed of
any other changes. Come on, Paulo.

INT. CRAWLWAY, PEGASUS

Bethany and Paulo make their way back to the control room.

PAULO

This shouldn't have happened. If we
hadn't had to use so much of our
shielding to repair the Titan--
(he stops short)
Sorry, Bethany. I didn't mean to
mention your husband.

BETHANY

It's okay. All in all it'd be a better way to die. Smashed quickly by a meteor, rather than ... I hope it happens that way to me. Just not so soon.

PAULO

And preferably not while I'm on the same ship as you.

BETHANY

Sure, Paulo. Okay.

Bethany stops to fiddle with an instrument in the corridor.

BETHANY (CONT'D)

Sometimes I wonder what our ancestors were thinking, sending out many small ships to the new home world instead of one big one.

PAULO

Eggs and baskets. Safety in numbers. That sort of thing.

BETHANY

And what's the result? We scavenge each other until there's nothing left. And I have to live with you two.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, PEGASUS

Bethany flops in the cockpit next to Caesar.

BETHANY

Well, that's it. Electrical will probably continue to give us trouble, but that's the least of our worries.

They look at each other.

CAESAR

Environmental.

BETHANY

The incubators are shot right through.

(MORE)

BETHANY (CONT'D)

We won't be getting much more out of them. There's not going to be enough to feed us long, much less get the oxygen levels back to normal.

CAESAR

And because the cycle is upset...

BETHANY

We hold our breaths.

CAESAR

Don't we have any repair parts?

BETHANY

I'm going down to look again, but I doubt it. I know where they all went.

CAESAR

The Titan?

BETHANY

Yeah.

Caesar puts a hand on Bethany's shoulder.

CAESAR

It's a real shame, Bethany. That stupid fire, and then the meteor. We all really--

She shrugs him off, tense.

BETHANY

I know that, dammit! I just wish everyone would stop mentioning it!

CAESAR

Hey, sorry! You brought it up.

Bethany takes a deep breath.

BETHANY

I'll be down in supplies. Just radio the Zadok and tell them what's going on. We need everything but the reclamators and the casing.

INT. STOREROOM, PEGASUS

Bethany takes a look around.

She leans on the console, head in hand, chokes back the sobs.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, PEGASUS

Bethany comes back. Caesar and Paulo turn to face her.

CAESAR

Bethany? It's the Jupiter. They're
coming alongside.

They all exchange uncomfortable glances.

EXT. SPACE

The Pegasus cruises beside the Jupiter.

Bethany drifts across the space between them in her suit.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, JUPITER

Bethany, helmet under her arm, enters the room and pauses to
glance briefly at,

HER POV

A dedication plaque lists the names of the ship in the group.

"MARS EXPEDITIONARY GROUP. LAUNCHED 2132 TO SETTLE HD 11232.
JUPITER, SOL, NEPTUNE, PEGASUS, IO, ANDROMEDA, ICARUS, MINOS,
DEMETER, HERMES, TITAN, VULCAN"

The names of the Sol, Minos, Demeter and Titan are scratched
out.

BACK TO SCENE

Bethany looks towards the back of the ship where THE ZADOK
(90s) hovers bathed in an eerie overhead light.

His alcove in the back of the Jupiter's control room is as
much like a temple as a functional ship can manage.

SIRAH (50s) hardened by responsibility, floats in front of
him.

BETHANY

How is the Zadok?

SIRAH

He is well. What have you to report?

BETHANY

We've patched the leaks, so we're not in immediate danger, but there is irreparable damage to our algae incubators. We're not going to be able to produce enough to re-supply our atmosphere and feed us, too.

SIRAH

So we were informed.

BETHANY

Any word on the spare parts we requested?

SIRAH

We've searched the stocks. Unfortunately, they are depleted. We can't spare anything from the existing incubators without crippling our own supply.

BETHANY

We estimate we can hold out a week, maybe more. It depends on how hardy the algae prove.

Sirah looks endlessly tired.

SIRAH

Measures are being taken to transfer you to another ship. This may take some time. As you know, we are all pressed to full capacity.

BETHANY

Without the supplies on the other ships, we may already have missed our objective. We're wandering blind.

SIRAH

We are working on ways to increase productivity, but in the event that a solution becomes impossible... we cannot risk further deaths or the mission to HD 11232 by spreading our supplies too thin. The group must survive.

Bethany realizes she's getting nowhere.

BETHANY

That makes sense. I'll inform my crew.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, JUPITER - LATER

Bethany uses the Jupiter's radio. JARED (30s), the Jupiter's navigator, sits nearby.

BETHANY

(into radio)

They're trying to figure something out, but it's as we expected. If they can't do it, they're going to cut us loose.

CAESAR

(filtered, over radio)

Figures.

BETHANY

I guess I'll come back over there, unless Sirah needs me for anything else.

Jared does a double-take at his screen.

JARED

Sirah, I've got something on long range. Machined metal. Could be a ship.

Sirah floats up behind him to see what has taken his interest.

SIRAH

Report.

BETHANY
(into the radio)
Hold on a second.

The window's HUD brings up an enhanced image.

CAESAR
(filtered, over radio)
We're reading it too. What is it?

JARED
It is a ship. No running lights.
Attitude inconsistent with vector.
Looks derelict.

Bethany, Sirah and Jared stare into the black.

BETHANY
It's an Earth ship.

JARED
Nebula Class.

SIRAH
Can you make out the designation?

JARED
Affirmative. It's the Cygnus.

SIRAH
Oh my god. It's Alistair's ship.
Decelerate, match its velocity.

EXT. SPACE

The convoy rockets along.

JARED
(over radio)
Attention all craft. This is the
Jupiter. Reduce velocity to thirty-
nine thousand k.p.s.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, JUPITER

Sirah looks at Bethany without emotion.