

KENTAKU

Science fiction series in 6 parts.

Michael Till-Lambrecht

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Science fiction series in 6 parts

LOGLINE

Their mission is to prepare Mars for colonization. But strange acts of sabotage threaten to derail the project. Then the least experienced team member discovers an ancient interstellar transportation system and accidentally activates it.

SYNOPSIS

Ilma has made it! As a psychologist, she is part of the ten-person team that is the first to fly to Mars to prepare it for colonization. But she soon realizes that her qualifications are being questioned by other members of the mission. The circumstances of her predecessor's last-minute withdrawal are too mysterious, and the fact that her father's company is one of the sponsors of this multinational project also creates room for speculation. But she is determined to prove it to everyone this time!

Once on Mars, disillusionment sets in: unusual acts of sabotage bring the entire mission to the brink of failure, and the question arises: who is responsible? Is there someone on the team who is playing the wrong game? Or is it an outside influence?

On her own, Ilma sets out to find the missing assembly robot, unaware of the danger she is in. With a lot of luck, she manages to avert a fall into great depths, only to find and accidentally activate an ancient alien artifact that is part of an ancient interstellar transportation system.

KENTAKU

Science fiction

Michael Till-Lambrecht

Episode 1 - Arrival

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FADE IN:

1. EXT. SPACE, NEAR MARS - DAY/NIGHT

Space - a sea of glittering stars on a matte black background. The Spaceship Unity II emerges out of this darkness. It is heading straight for the nearby planet Mars.

2. INT. UNITY II, COCKPIT - DAY/NIGHT

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ and JASON T. BURNS sit at the navigational controls of the spacecraft. Behind them, TAKAJIN ARAKAWA is seated in front of a control panel display. Mars can be seen up close through the front window.

JASON T. BURNS
Cruise engine shut down. Course
vector at optimum.

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA
Thrusters ready to go.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ
Beginning entry maneuver - now!

3. INT. UNITY II, RECREATION ROOM - DAY/NIGHT

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM stands near the window and gazes out, spellbound. Mars is visible behind the glass. BETJE VERMEULEN joins her.

BETJE VERMEULEN
So here you are.

Ilma turns to Betje with a smile. Betje also approaches the window.

BETJE VERMEULEN (CONT'D)
I can understand that. The view is
truly magnificent.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Yes, it is ...

BETJE VERMEULEN
And that we have come this far -
the first men on Mars.

(MORE)

BETJE VERMEULEN (CONT'D)
Ilma! Do you realize that no human
has ever been this far from home?

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(thoughtfully, quietly)
So far from home ...

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

4. INT. SWEDEN, CAFÉ - DAY

The modern café is especially popular with the younger crowd. A FEMALE STUDENT sits alone at a table, in front of a milkshake, and puts her cell phone aside. Then she looks up, smiles at the door and stands up. The younger Ilma Sundström approaches her, beaming with joy. They hug and sit down.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(beaming with joy)
I have received an answer.
Accepted!

FEMALE STUDENT
So we will study together.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
You too?

FEMALE STUDENT
(proudly)
Yes, I have been accepted as well.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Oh, that's a load off my mind. We
have had great luck.

FEMALE STUDENT
Luck? Well, your father didn't want
to rely on that ...

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(horrified)
My father? What does he have to do
with this?

FEMALE STUDENT

(hesitantly)

He once asked me if I wanted to study the same subject as you - so I told him about our plans. And that things might turn out differently. He told me not to worry - that he would take care of everything.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

You're telling me this now?

FEMALE STUDENT

Because he wanted it to be a surprise. He asked me not to tell you at first.

Ilma stands up with a jerk, visibly shaken.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

And I trusted you!

With tears in her eyes, Ilma grabs her bag and hurries out of the café.

5. EXT. SWEDEN, STREET - DAY

Ilma is walks quickly down the street, crying. The female student comes running up behind her.

FEMALE STUDENT

Ilma! Wait for me!

Ilma does not turn around, but walks even faster. But the girl finally catches up with her.

FEMALE STUDENT (CONT'D)

What's going on anyway?

Ilma stops and turns to face her.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

What's going on? You betrayed me! That's what's going on.

FEMALE STUDENT

Betrayed you? Why? It was a good thing - for us.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

What's good about my father using his connections to get us into university? I thought you understood me. I want to make it on my own. But no - once again my father is directing everything from the background. And you're helping him too!

FEMALE STUDENT

I'm sure you could have done it, but me? Don't you realize what this means to me? It's not just our friendship, it's my whole future! With a degree you can make it in business - but without?

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Oh. It's about your life. Not mine?

FEMALE STUDENT

Hey, this is good for both of us!

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

You should know what's good for me. You know the facts about everything. About me, about my father and how he interferes with my life ever since my mother died and how he has run everything according to his own ideas. I wanted to free myself from that by studying!

FEMALE STUDENT

But he's never around! What's unfree about that? You have it all and you just have to snap your fingers when you want something.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

A golden cage is still a cage. Even though he is out in the world a lot, everything in my life is always under his control at all times. I can't make a move without him finding out.

(MORE)

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)
I really thought you understood how terrible it is and that I want to get out of there. Just being away - as far away as possible.

END OF FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

6. INT. UNITY II, RECREATION ROOM - DAY/NIGHT

Ilma and Betje stand at the window to space, behind which you can see Mars.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(quietly)
Yes, very far away - further is hardly possible. I hope it goes well.

BETJE VERMEULEN
(encouragingly)
Think positively! Why do I have to tell you how important that is - you're the psychologist.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
That's true. It's just - well, I wonder if the whole thing is a bit too big for me.

BETJE VERMEULEN
Just don't let it show! Especially not when the pictures that are meant for Earth are taken later. You know that the first pictures will go around the world.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
I will do my best.

BETJE VERMEULEN
No, you will make it!

7. INT. UNITY II, COCKPIT - DAY/NIGHT

Ramiro Hernandez and Jason T. Burns sit at the navigational controls of the spacecraft. Behind them, Takajin Arakawa sits in front of a control panel display. Mars can be seen up close through the front window.

JASON T. BURNS
70 ... 30 ... 20 ...

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ
Counter-thrust!

A DULL HUMMING sounds.

JASON T. BURNS
5 ... 0.

The DULL HUMMING stops.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ
Status?

JASON T. BURNS
Main engines idle. Thrusters off.
The Unity II is now in a stable
orbit around the planet Mars.

Ramiro Hernandez leans back, relaxed, and nods approvingly at Jason.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ
Straight to the point. Very good!

Then he turns to Takajin.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
Takajin, what does the data say?

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA
All in the green, sir.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ
Thank you very much. Now comes the
official part.

Ramiro takes out a piece of paper and activates the ship's internal communication system. He reads from the paper.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)
Ladies and Gentlemen! We have
arrived.
(MORE)

8. INT. UNITY II, STORAGE - DAY/NIGHT

TIM SCHWARTZ is standing among the crates with a tablet in his hand, checking their labels. At the sound of Ramiro's announcement sounds, he stops and looks up.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D) (V.O.)
Below us is Mars, the destination
of our long journey.
(MORE)

9. INT. UNITY II, CHANDRA'S CABIN - DAY/NIGHT

CHANDRA DARSHANNA sits cross-legged on her bed meditating. She opens her eyes and listens to the announcement.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D) (V.O.)
And at the same time the beginning
of a new, much greater journey for
all of humanity - as we all know.
(MORE)

10. INT. UNITY II, LABORATORY - DAY/NIGHT

FAUSTO BENEVENTI holds a laboratory container with a brownish liquid in his hand, shakes it and examines it closely. At Ramiro's announcement, he hastily closes the container and hides it in a cupboard.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D) (V.O.)
Now it is up to us to take the next
important step:
(MORE)

11. INT. UNITY II, MAINTENANCE FACILITY - DAY/NIGHT

YUE WAN LIAO works on an opened robot, pauses and listens to the announcement.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D) (V.O.)
The foundation of the first
permanent human settlement on Mars.
(MORE)

12. INT. UNITY II, HANGAR - DAY/NIGHT

PEDRO GONZALES stands at P1 - Pegasus Shuttle no. 1 - and checks the engines. He listens intently as the announcement is made.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D) (V.O.)
Years of planning and preparation
lie behind us - now the time for
implementation has finally arrived.

13. INT. UNITY II, RECREATION ROOM - DAY/NIGHT

Ilma and Betje stand at the window listening to the announcement.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D) (V.O.)
Bueno, let's get started! We will
proceed as planned. Team 1: Report
to the hangar in half an hour. You
will be the first to go down on P1.
Team 2: You have been given your
assignments. Unity II needs our
attention now. So - let's go!

The announcement ends with a CRACK. Ilma and Betje look at each other.

BETJE VERMEULEN
You're lucky enough to be part of
Team 1. What are you waiting for?

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
I would have liked to leave that
luck to you. But you're right, I
should go to the hangar.

BETJE VERMEULEN
See you - on Mars.

14. INT. UNITY II, HANGAR - DAY/NIGHT

Jason T. Burns enters the hangar and approaches Pedro Gonzales who is standing by the P1 shuttle.

JASON T. BURNS
Everything all right, Pedro?

PEDRO GONZALES

Yes. Cargo on board and all systems checked. The P1 is ready to go.

In the background, Fausto Beneventi, Yue Wan Liao and finally Ilma board the P1 shuttle.

JASON T. BURNS

Perfect! Then nothing stands in the way of the launch.

15. INT. UNITY II, COCKPIT - DAY/NIGHT

Ramiro Hernandez checks some settings on a display.

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

Sir!

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

Whats up?

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

I am receiving strange data from the base camp. The assembly robot cannot be reached.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

Is it broken?

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

Either that, or the camp's central system is providing incorrect data.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

Okay, thank you. Please inform Yue. This is her specialty. Tell her to take care of it as soon as she gets downstairs.

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

Aye, sir.

16. EXT. SPACE, MARS ORBIT - DAY/NIGHT

The Unity II is floating in orbit around Mars. The hangar door opens on the bottom of the ship.

The much smaller Pegasus shuttle P1 leaves the mother ship through this opening.

The P1 accelerates and flies down in a gentle arc towards Mars.

17. INT. PEGASUS SHUTTLE P1 - DAY

Jason pilots the shuttle. Through the cockpit window, he can see Mars getting bigger and closer fast. Also strapped into their seats in the P1 are Yue Wan Liao, Ilma Sundström, Pedro Gonzales and Fausto Beneventi.

JASON T. BURNS
(grinning)
Hold on tight! It's about to get
bumpy.

Suddenly, turbulence begins to shake the shuttle. The P1 enters the Martian atmosphere.

Pedro Gonzales closes his eyes, crosses himself and mumbles something. Ilma Sundström clings tensely to the armrests of her seat and makes a face. Fausto Beneventi sees this and laughs mockingly. Ilma turns away from him.

18. EXT. MARS, ATMOSPHERE - DAY

The P1 shuttle first flies through the atmosphere, rumbling a bit. It sinks lower and lower as it approaches the surface of Mars. Gradually the flight becomes calmer.

19. INT. PEGASUS SHUTTLE P1 - DAY

Jason points to the left to some extent, never losing sight of the instruments.

JASON T. BURNS
You can already see the base camp
over there. Between the ridge and
the crater.

Pedro and Fausto turn to the left, toward the window. Ilma closes her eyes. Only Yue remains unmoved and motionless.

An ACOUSTIC ALARM sounds. Numerous warning lights are activated. The P1 rears up abruptly and then begins to lurch violently.

Jason becomes frantic and tries to stabilize the shuttle's flight. Ilma's OUTCRY echoes through the shuttle.

The passengers watch in horror as the shuttle flies directly towards a rugged mountain ridge.

ON-BOARD COMPUTER (V.O.)
Collision alert! Collision alert!

Jason tries to dodge the rock, but the shuttle continues to lurch more and more.

It CRACKS loudly. Then a bloodcurdling GRINDING NOISE is heard and the shuttle shakes violently.

20. INT. TV STUDIO, WORLD NEWS TODAY - DAY/NIGHT

In the World News Today studio, a FEMALE ANCHOR reads the news.

FEMALE ANCHOR
Alcântara. The Global Mars Colony Initiative - GMCI for short - has just announced that the first humans set foot on Mars today. We show you the first pictures of the landing.

This is followed by a short clip showing a Pegasus shuttle landing gently on Martian soil.

FEMALE ANCHOR (CONT'D)
We now go live to Alcântara, Brazil, to the GMCI headquarters, where my colleague Peter Randell is waiting.

21. EXT. GMCI, PARK, IN FRONT OF THE BIG SCREEN WALL - DAY

The park-like grounds around the GMCI headquarters are full of people. GMCI celebrates the Mars landing with a big party. PETER RANDELL stands in front of a big screen set up in the park, which plays images of the Pegasus shuttle's soft landing on Mars and other GMCI PR footage in an endless loop. Peter holds a microphone and smiles into the camera. LUKÁTS TARJÁN stands right next to him.

PETER RANDELL
I'm here at the GMCI Space Center, in Alcântara, Brazil, talking to its director, Dr. Lukáts Tarján.

Lukáts smiles and nods into the camera.

PETER RANDELL (CONT'D)

Dr. Tarján - congratulations on your successful Mars landing. How do you feel? Now that the GMCI has finally achieved its own greatest goal?

LUKÁTS TARJÁN

Thank you very much. Needless to say, that I am very proud of the incredibly good and highly motivated international team of GMCI - all the many people from different countries who have worked together to realize this great dream of mankind: The colonization of Mars.

PETER RANDELL

A task that was obviously too big for one nation alone.

LUKÁTS TARJÁN

Indeed. Mars has been the goal of individual nations several times in the past, but it was not until the formation of the GMCI - the Global Mars Colony Initiative - with the participation of many major nations, that this project was actually tackled in a concrete way. This shows once again: Together we can achieve more.

PETER RANDELL

Nevertheless, it took a long time until today's landing.

LUKÁTS TARJÁN

Yes, indeed! We have been working towards this moment for almost 20 years. And it was only 5 years ago that we started sending automated rovers to Mars. At first, we used them to transport machines and materials to prepare a small base.

(MORE)

LUKÁTS TARJÁN (CONT'D)

Today, it is up to our astronauts to make this base camp operational and expand it step by step. In this respect, the landing itself is a great success, but the real adventure is still ahead of us. To turn this small base into a large, self-sufficient settlement over time.

PETER RANDELL

A success, by the way, that a lot of people didn't think would be possible, right?

LUKÁTS TARJÁN

Oh yes, of course. There were critics from the very beginning. But that's normal. The bigger the project, the louder the criticism. And our project is undoubtedly one of the biggest projects in the history of mankind.

PETER RANDELL

The history of GMCI is also accompanied by failures, problems ...

LUKÁTS TARJÁN

Rumors! There was never any truth to them - we could always prove that. It regularly turned out to be slander. Unfortunately, we have to admit that there are also forces that begrudge us our success - for whatever reason. But what we have achieved today should be the best proof of how unrealistic the many false claims were and how extremely well the cooperation in the GMCI actually works.

22. EXT. MARS, DESERT, AT THE MOUNTAIN RIDGE - DAY

After a rough emergency landing, the P1 shuttle sits in the martian desert, not far from a mountain range. There are numerous scratches, dents, and long scuff marks on the outer hull of the P1. The entrance hatch is open.

Yue Wan Liao (in a spacesuit) stands in front of it and takes a look at the extent of the damage to the shuttle.

YUE WAN LIAO

It looks bad. But the damage seems to be superficial.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

Thank you, Yue. This is what the internal assessment says. No decompression. I guess we got lucky again.

YUE WAN LIAO

When misfortune is at its peak, so is happiness.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

Possibly, but do take a look to the south-southwest.

Yue turns around.

YUE WAN LIAO

Base camp?

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

Exactly. We are less off course than we thought.

YUE WAN LIAO

Computer! Distance measurement.

YUE'S SPACESUIT COMPUTER (V.O.)

The target is 1932.5 meters from your current position.

YUE WAN LIAO

Just under 2 kilometers away. We could reach the base camp on foot from here. What if everyone who isn't needed on the shuttle now goes over there? That way we will lose less time.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

That's what I was going to say, Yue. Please walk to the base camp with Pedro, Fausto and Ilma.

(MORE)

JASON T. BURNS (CONT'D)

Take one of the rovers for the most important equipment. I'll take care of the shuttle myself and join you later.

23. INT. GMCI, KALINOWSKA'S OFFICE - DAY.

KONSTANCJA KALINOWSKA stands at the window of her office with her arms crossed. She looks out at the park in front of the GMCI building, which is currently a bustle of activity.

There is a KNOCK AT THE DOOR before ALAN M. HEFFERMAN enters the office and, after some initial hesitation, walks over to Konstancja. She does not react, but continues to look out of the window.

KONSTANCJA KALINOWSKA

What a spectacle.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN

Soon it will be my turn.

KONSTANCJA KALINOWSKA

Have you finished everything?

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN

Yes, the OPS is secured, the original data is locked.

Konstancja turns to Alan and gives him a challenging look.

KONSTANCJA KALINOWSKA

Are you sure?

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN

I am sure.

KONSTANCJA KALINOWSKA

I hope so. Otherwise that whole circus down there would be completely for the garbage can. It makes me sick just thinking about the cost.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN

I think Director Tarján is doing a very good job. He has a knack for this kind of thing.

KONSTANCJA KALINOWSKA
(ironically)
Oh yes, he does.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN
He has a vision and he sells it
well.

KONSTANCJA KALINOWSKA
Anyone who has visions, should see
a doctor. What really gets us are
tangible goals and people who are
willing to achieve them -
consistently and unconditionally.

24. EXT. GMCI, PARK - DAY

Peter Randell takes long strides through the park. He keeps dodging oncoming groups, looking for the fastest way through the crowds that have gathered around the information and food booths.

He waves to his CAMERA WOMAN, who is struggling to keep up with him, that she should follow him more quickly.

PETER RANDELL
Hurry up! We are late.

The Camera woman is a little out of breath, raises her eyebrows, but then nods loyally and moves faster. Suddenly they are in front of a barrier. A security guard is standing in front of them.

SECURITY GUARD
This is as far as it goes!

PETER RANDELL
Hey, take it easy. I'm with the
press.

SECURITY GUARD
Then you should talk to my
colleague over there.

Shaking his head, Peter turns away from the man and gestures to the camerawoman to move.

CAMERAWOMAN
What is so important about this
presentation?

PETER RANDELL
(scornful)
Important? Nothing at all.

The camerawoman looks at Peter blankly.

PETER RANDELL (CONT'D)
(seriously)
Remember, the really important
things are not even communicated at
GMCI.

CAMERAWOMAN
I see - your conspiracy theory ...

PETER RANDELL
(furiously)
Stop! I know some of my colleagues
at the network are making fun of
me. But I'm really working on a
very hot story. One thing is for
sure, things are not always what
they seem inside the GMCI.
(short pause)
But now let's go! They're not
waiting for us.

25. EXT. MARS, DESERT, AT THE MOUNTAIN RIDGE - DAY

Standing in front of the emergency landed Pegasus shuttle P1, Yue Wan Liao (in spacesuit) checks the fit of the cargo stowed on a small transport rover. A short distance from Yue, Ilma Sundström, Pedro Gonzales and Fausto Beneventi (all in spacesuits) wait together.

YUE WAN LIAO
Have you thought of everything you
will need in the camp?

PEDRO GONZALES
Yes.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
Certo!

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
I don't need anything, thank you!

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

(grins)

Very practical not to be needed at all ... uh, scusi! Not needing anything, of course.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

(irritated)

Anyway, I don't need to make jokes at the expense of others to stroke my own ego!

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

(laughs mockingly)

Hear, hear ...

PEDRO GONZALES

Hey, Fausto - what are you doing?

Yue activates the transport rover and walks past the others toward the base camp. The rover also starts to move and follows her.

YUE WAN LIAO

Let's go now.

The others follow Yue.

26. INT. UNITY II, COCKPIT - DAY/NIGHT

Takajin Arakawa and Ramiro Hernandez review the footage and logs of the shuttle landing.

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

Absolutely nothing, sir.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

There is no such thing! There must be some kind of clue.

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

Everything was running perfectly normal - until point in time X. Then suddenly all the equipment went crazy.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

Just like that? It's never happened before.

An ACOUSTIC SIGNAL sounds. Takajin looks up, turns to a display and activates it. It then shows an image of the Mars base camp from above.

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

You need to see this, sir!

Ramiro reluctantly pulls himself away from the reports, walks over to Takajin and stares at the monitor.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

Is this a recording?

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA

No, live. This is what the base camp looks like now - taken from the Unity.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

(horrified, quietly)

¡Por el amor de Dios!

27. INT. PEGASUS SHUTTLE P1 - DAY

The Martian landscape where the shuttle made an emergency landing is visible through the windows. Jason has opened a wall panel inside the interior and is up to his chest in the shaft behind it.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

Unity II to P1, please come in.

Jason hits his head on the dashboard as he comes out of the shaft. He curses and rubs his head.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

Unity II to P1.

Jason activates the shuttle's communication device.

JASON T. BURNS

Jason on reception. Did you find anything?

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

About the systems failure? No, unfortunately not.

JASON T. BURNS

Same here, sir. I can find absolutely nothing. I have rebooted the systems - and everything is back to normal. But there is nothing in the log files that preceded the failure - not a single error message, no abnormal values - everything within normal range. And since that can't be the case, I ...

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

Thank you, Jason. But that's not the point right now. We have now received the first pictures of the base camp - and they don't look good. Apparently the camp is not in the condition it should be. The solar panels are not open and the living and working modules are not set up. Only the central module is visible, but even that looks strangely deformed.

Jason stares into space in horror for a moment, then pulls himself together.

JASON T. BURNS

In other words: We have to expect that nothing will work there. No shelter, no power, no oxygen?

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

Correct.

JASON T. BURNS

Damn it! The others are already on the way to the base camp, by foot!

28. OUT. MARS, DESERT - DAY

Yue Wan Liao, Fausto Beneventi, Pedro Gonzales and Ilma Sundström (all wearing spacesuits) walk through the Martian desert. The loaded rover follows.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

P1 to field team. Yue, can you hear me?

Everyone stops.

YUE WAN LIAO

Yes, Jason. I hear you.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

All right! You should better get back to the shuttle. I've just received word from Unity that the base camp may not be ready for occupancy. Power and oxygen are also unclear.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

What does that mean? We've all seen the reports that all was done months ago.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

Me too, Fausto. But the fact of the matter is that Unity's external cameras are showing a completely different picture.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Unbelievable! Is there anything going right on this mission?

YUE WAN LIAO

What exactly are you seeing in these images, Jason?

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)

The fact that the solar panels are not open and only the central module is there, and also looks strange. Also, there was no contact with the assembly robot. So we don't know if there's any power or oxygen, let alone shelter.

YUE WAN LIAO

We are closer to the camp than the shuttle. Maybe we should take the risk and see for ourselves?

PEDRO GONZALES

The power and oxygen in the suits should be enough to get us there and back.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)
That may be. But then you'd have to
turn back immediately if you
realized you couldn't refill the
suits at the camp. Still, it's
risky. Its your call.

Yue looks around.

YUE WAN LIAO
What do you think?

PEDRO GONZALES
Keep going!

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
Merda! I didn't come this far to
give up now, on the last few
meters.

Everyone looks at Ilma.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(uncertain)
Okay. I'm in.

YUE WAN LIAO
Me too. We keep going then. Jason?
Did you hear that?

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)
Yeah, I got it. But let us know if
there are any complications.

YUE WAN LIAO
All right. Over and out.

JASON T. BURNS
Good luck! Over and out.

Pedro turns to face base camp.

PEDRO GONZALES
With zoom 30 you can already see
something.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
What do you see?

PEDRO GONZALES

What I can't see is probably more important - but maybe you can see more ...

Everyone else turns toward the camp as well.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Bob! Please show me an enlarged view, zoom 30, in line of sight.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

(scornfully)

Bob? Do we have a new invisible crew member?

PEDRO GONZALES

(soothing)

Fausto! Leave it alone.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Oh, I forgot. Our Mrs. Dottore has given her suit computer a name - Bob!

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

That's my business.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Oh yes, of course. I was just wondering what it says about the psyche ...

YUE WAN LIAO

Mr. Beneventi!

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

So what? I'm interested in psychology. Practically applied.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

(quietly)

Bob: Could you sharpen that up, please?

BOB (V.O.)

Sorry, Ilma. It is not technically possible at this high magnification.

YUE WAN LIAO

What do you want us to see, Mr. Gonzales?

PEDRO GONZALES

What cannot be seen - I said.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Spill it, Pedro!

PEDRO GONZALES

The solar panels! They should all be wide open to catch the sun's energy. They would be so big that you could see them from here. But we can't see them.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

So the pictures from above are correct.

YUE WAN LIAO

We'll see when we get to the base camp.

Then Yue starts moving again.

29. EXT. GMCI, PARK, PRESENTATION STAGE - DAY

Alan M. Hefferman stands in front of a large display on a small stage. A crowd has gathered around the stage, attentively watching the presentation. The large display shows the Unity II spacecraft hovering in orbit around Mars.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN

... and that's where Unity II will stay - forever! Because it is not just a spacecraft. It is much more.

The display shows how the segments of the spacecraft divide, separate, and reassemble into a ring.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN (CONT'D)

As you can see, it actually consists of 5 segments that can be assembled in different ways. As a spaceship or as a station.

The display shows the ring beginning to rotate.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN (CONT'D)

This is how the first manned space station in orbit around Mars is created. On the one hand, as a kind of safety boat for the astronauts - in case of an unforeseeable disaster or evacuation. On the other hand, it will be gradually developed into a spaceport for regular transportation between Earth and Mars. Its sister ship, the Unity III, will soon leave for Mars. It will bring more material and, of course, a new crew to replace it. The first team will then return to Earth with the Unity III, while the new team will continue the expansion on Mars.

APPLAUSE sounds.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN (CONT'D)

Our plans for the Mars settlement itself are similarly complex.

Earth and Mars are shown on the screen, and four spacecrafts are flying from Earth to Mars, one at a time.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN (CONT'D)

In recent years we have sent four unmanned spacecraft to Mars. Packed with supplies and equipment. Everything has been dropped in the target area.

A Martian landscape appears on the screen with a number of box-like objects scattered about.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN (CONT'D)

We have spent several years using robots to set up an initial base camp, ready for the human landing team that arrived today.

On the screen, you can see simplified robots scurrying between the crates in time-lapse. Gradually, the crates disappear and the outlines of each element of the base camp appear. The large field of solar panels, the round living and working modules of various sizes, and the two semi-transparent greenhouses.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN (CONT'D)

So our people don't have to start from scratch. Shelter, power and oxygen are already there.

Peter Randell brazenly pushes his way through the crowd, earning a few dirty looks and comments. The camerawoman follows him. Eventually he finds a good spot and the camerawoman starts filming the action on stage.

ALAN M. HEFFERMAN (CONT'D)

But, of course, this is just the first nucleus. Over time, many new areas will be added to the base camp, eventually creating a permanent, self-sustaining settlement.

The display shows a futuristic city that blends into the alien Martian landscape.

30. INT. UNITY II, CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DAY/NIGHT

Ramiro Hernandez sits in front of a display and sends a video message to the GMCI headquarters on Earth.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ

... and despite all our efforts, we have not yet been able to find any indication of the possible cause of the total failure of the shuttle during the landing approach. I therefore urgently recommend that a team of experts be sent to investigate the matter. The relevant data packages should have already reached you at GMCI headquarters. It is extremely important for us to get at least a rough idea of where the cause is likely to be found. Are there quality defects in our technical equipment? Are there unknown atmospheric phenomena on Mars that have affected the shuttle from the outside? Or is this deliberate sabotage?

(MORE)

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (CONT'D)

(short pause)

Unfortunately, there are other complications we have encountered here. Unity's external cameras have taken the first images of the base camp from orbit. They clearly show that the base camp is not in the condition it should be. The exact extent of the damage is still unclear, but once the first landing team arrives at the camp, I will be able to provide more detailed information.

Ramiro turns off the recorder.

31. EXT. MARS, BASE CAMP - DAY

Pedro Gonzales, Yue Wan Liao, Fausto Beneventi and Ilma Sundström (all in spacesuits) arrive at the base camp. Their gaze sweeps over the entire site one by one.

PEDRO GONZALES

So it's true. The solar system is inactive, and all collectors are in backup mode.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

And of all the living modules, only the central module was built - rather poorly. The dome looks like it has no atmosphere inside.

YUE WAN LIAO

Can anyone see the MX8?

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

What?

PEDRO GONZALES

The assembly robot that built everything here - or should have.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Oh, I see but no. How about you take care of it - I'm going to see the habitat.

Fausto goes to the entrance of the dome.

PEDRO GONZALES
I don't see anything either.
Shouldn't it be somewhere near the
main system?

YUE WAN LIAO
That's right. But it's not there.

In the background, Fausto stands at the dome, checking the readings on a large tank standing nearby.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
Good news, guys! The oxygen tanks
are full. We can refill our suit
systems any time. But the central
module is in fact empty inside. I'm
trying to figure out why.

PEDRO GONZALES
Then I'll take care of the solar
power system.

Without waiting for an answer, Pedro makes his way to the collectors. Only Ilma is still standing with Yue, looking at her inquiringly.

YUE WAN LIAO
(thoughtfully)
Strange. Very strange, all of it.
Let's see what the main system has
to say about this.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(uncertain)
Maybe, should I ...

YUE WAN LIAO
Yes? What?

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
I could ... well, I could look for
the missing robot.

Yue looks over at Fausto and Pedro. Then she turns to Ilma.

YUE WAN LIAO
Do that.

With that, Yue turns away and walks over to the main system. Ilma stands alone, looking around uncertainly.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(quietly)
Bob?

BOB (V.O.)
Yes, Ilma.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
What does this robot look like?

BOB (V.O.)
I'll show you a picture of this
kind of robot on the helmet
display.

The helmet display shows a picture of a 2.8 m tall robot. It resembles a 1.3 m diameter cylinder on a caterpillar drive, with 6 powerful gripper arms that can extend from the cylinder in all directions.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Wow! It's huge! Then it should be
visible from here.

BOB (V.O.)
That's right, Ilma.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
But it is not. How can that be?

BOB (V.O.)
Unfortunately, I cannot answer this
question. Insufficient data.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Of course ...

Ilma looks over to Yue. She is connecting a tablet to the main system and seems to be completely focused on her work.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)
Bob! Are your sensors picking up
any tracks here that might come
from this robot?

BOB (V.O.)
Yes, Ilma. These tracks do in fact
exist here.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Where do they lead?

BOB (V.O.)
The last set of tracks lead out of
base camp.

Ilma's helmet display shows the robot tracks as a semi-transparent overlay. They lead directly into the open Martian desert.

Ilma's gaze follows the tracks until she can see into the vastness of the barren Martian landscape. Far behind her, she can make out the rocky ridge and a prominent rock needle.

After a while, Ilma looks back at Yue, Fausto, and then Pedro. She sees that all three are intensely engaged in their respective activities.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(quietly, to herself)
What now?

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

32. INT. SWEDEN, UNIVERSITY - DAY

Ilma stands on the edge of a group of students. MALE STUDENT #1 raises his arm and looks in all directions.

MALE STUDENT #1
You've heard it. This is the Supply
Chain Management group assignment.
If you want to join me, come over
here.

Ilma cautiously approaches the student. But student #1 gives her a dismissive look.

MALE STUDENT #1 (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

Ilma stops, startled.

MALE STUDENT #1 (CONT'D)
In my group you are in the wrong
place. Here, everyone has to work
hard. Washouts who only got into
college with connections are not
welcome here.

The group bursts out LAUGHING.

MALE STUDENT #2

Why don't you go to your father,
maybe he'll buy you your own group
assignment here!

Ilma struggles to keep her composure and tries to fight back
the tears that are welling up.

A FEMALE STUDENT #2 comes from the side, takes Ilma's arm and
leads her away from the group.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

Forget these idiots, Ilma. Come and
join my group - I'd be delighted.

Ilma wipes the tears from her face.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Thank you so much! But you don't
have to.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

(laughs)
Of course, I don't. But I want to.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

(smiles cautiously)
Thank you.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

You see - already the world looks
very different again.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

(sighs)
If only it were so ...

FEMALE STUDENT #2

Oh, come on. Don't let them get you
down - you know how they are.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Not just them - that's what
everybody here thinks. The chick
who can't get anything done
herself, where her father takes
care of everything with money.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

Not me.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

I appreciate that too. But seriously, I'm completely wrong here. Everything is wrong!

FEMALE STUDENT #2

The only thing that is wrong is your mindset. You shouldn't care about other people's gossip. It's just envy!

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

No, what's wrong is my father, who interferes with everything in my life. No matter what I do, sooner or later it turns out that he had a hand in it. I'm not even sure anymore if it was really my own wish to study economics - it fits in too well with his plans for me..

(short pause)

I'm so sick of it!

(short pause)

I've had enough! I'm quitting everything! Right here, right now.

The female student #2 looks at Ilma shocked.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

You give up!

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

No. On the contrary: I've only just begun.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

How is that?

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

I will disappear - go into hiding. For a while now, I've been thinking about going my own way. I'm going to go abroad somewhere and try to study psychology.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

Do you seriously think that's possible? Your father will come after for you, it's just a matter of time.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

I know that. But with psychology,
I'll not only be able to thwart his
plans, I'll also - hopefully -
learn the best way to defend myself
against him. With any luck, before
he finds me.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

You really want to go through with
this.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Yes, I'm going my own way!

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

33. EXT. MARS, BASE CAMP - DAY

Ilma (in spacesuit) stands at the edge of the base camp
looking out into the Martian desert. The robot's tracks out
into the desert are shown semi-transparently on her helmet
display. The rocky ridge and the prominent rock needle can be
seen far in the background.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

(encouraging herself)

All right, let's go!

Ilma follows the indicated trail into the desert.

34. INT. PEGASUS SHUTTLE P1 - DAY

Jason stands in front of the shuttle's communication device.

JASON T. BURNS

This is all I can do here.
Everything is functioning normally.
So I'm going to fly the P1 over to
base camp now.

TAKAJIN ARAKAWA (V.O.)

All right, Jason. We'll monitor the
flight from up here. Please let us
know if there are any problems.

JASON T. BURNS

I will. Jason, over and out.

35. EXT. MARS, DESERT - DAY

Ilma (in spacesuit) walks through the Martian desert toward the rock needle.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Bob! Are you sure this is the right place?

BOB (V.O.)

Yes, Ilma. The trail leads straight up to the rocks in front of us.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

This is the area where the system failed on landing, isn't it?

BOB (V.O.)

That's right, Ilma.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Huh, strange coincidence.

36. EXT. MARS, BASE CAMP - DAY

Fausto Beneventi (in spacesuit) is working on the central module's air supply. A low hissing sound can be heard. Pedro Gonzales (in spacesuit) approaches from the side. Fausto flinches when he notices him.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Pedro! Do you have to scare me like that?

PEDRO GONZALES

(laughs)

Sorry - I didn't mean to. What are you doing?

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Letting the air in. Can't you see?

PEDRO GONZALES

What happened?

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Nothing happened. The only thing that was missing was air. I don't know why. In any case, I couldn't find any cracks.

PEDRO GONZALES
You can start heating right away.
There is enough electricity.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
For real!?

PEDRO GONZALES
Yes, the solar power system was
also fine. Only the collectors were
not working. At least for now. But
they must have been open before,
otherwise the station's batteries
would not be charged as 60%.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
Only 60%?

PEDRO GONZALES
No problem. That's enough for now.
Besides, the system is now working
normally again. The batteries
should be almost full in a few
hours.

Meanwhile, Yue (in a spacesuit) has joined them.

YUE WAN LIAO
This is good news. Unfortunately,
things are not looking so good for
the main computer.

PEDRO GONZALES
What about it?

YUE WAN LIAO
There were processes that were
running in a loop, and they were
shutting down the whole system. I
couldn't stop them.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
It obviously needs a hard reset.

YUE WAN LIAO
Yes, it was unavoidable.

PEDRO GONZALES
So the central system is in charge
of everything? That makes sense.
(MORE)

PEDRO GONZALES (CONT'D)
None of the other systems are
faulty, just the main system gave
them confused commands.

YUE WAN LIAO
Perhaps that is the case, but
unfortunately can no longer be
determined. The system has started
up normally again, but part of the
log files has been lost.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
(sarcastically)
Great!

The DRIVE of the approaching Pegasus shuttle can be heard.
All three turn around and watch as the P1 lands near the base
camp. Pedro raises his arm waving.

PEDRO GONZALES
Hello Jason! Is the shuttle running
again?

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)
Hello, like nothing ever happened.
How are you doing here?

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
The central module of the habitat
will be operational in an hour at
the latest. Then we'll finally get
out of these suits. But it will be
uncomfortable. Because the
construction of the living modules
won't happen so fast. But there is
enough oxygen and energy.

YUE WAN LIAO
Everything indicates that the main
system has a fault and that it is
responsible for all the other
failures. So far, nothing has been
found to be broken.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)
That sounds good!

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)
But one more thing, where is Ilma?

I can't see her from here. Just the
three of you.

Yue, Pedro and Fausto look at each other questioningly.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
Yue, you were chatting with the
girl last time.

YUE WAN LIAO
Me? Oh yes - she wanted to look for
the assembly robot.

JASON T. BURNS (V.O.)
(indignant)
And then what? What did she do
then? Turn invisible?

Yue and Pedro look at each other embarrassed. Fausto reacts
annoyed.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI
Well, she'll turn up somewhere.
After all, we're not her
babysitters. We all had something
important to do!

37. INT. PEGASUS SHUTTLE P1 - DAY

Jason sits in front of the communication device and shuts it
off with exaggerated force.

JASON T. BURNS
Oh, gee! This can't be true

Jason reactivates the comm.

JASON T. BURNS (CONT'D)
P1 to Sundström. Please respond.
(short pause)
P1 to Sundström. Ilma, come in!
(short pause)
Ilma Sundström - where are you?

All you can hear from the speakers is a low BURST NOISE and
occasional QUITE CLICKS.

JASON T. BURNS (CONT'D)
P1 to Sundström. Ilma, can you hear
me?

Annoyed, Jason hits the device.

JASON T. BURNS (CONT'D)

Damned!

Then he stops trying to make contact and restarts the shuttle's engine.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

Unity II to P1. Please report.

Irritated, Jason rolls his eyes.

JASON T. BURNS

P1 is listening. Burns here. Whats the matter?

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

That's what I wanted to hear from you, Burns. What is the status of the base camp?

JASON T. BURNS

Sorry, sir, I forgot. Uh, yeah, I don't think there's any damage at this point. The main computer has apparently gave the wrong commands to the other systems, that's all. Nevertheless, we now have to rework manually, i.e. build ourselves what should actually have been finished.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

The loss of time is annoying, but it can be made up. We would not have been able to replace completely failed systems so easily.

JASON T. BURNS

Yes, sir, but there's a new problem: Ilma Sundström is missing.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)

Missing?

JASON T. BURNS

Yes. She's obviously gone off on her own to find the robot.

(MORE)

JASON T. BURNS (CONT'D)
I've already tried to contact her,
but she's not responding. I was
just about to take off with the P1
to look for her.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
Under no circumstances! Abort
immediately!

JASON T. BURNS
(unsettled)
Excuse me, sir?

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
The payload has top priority! The
equipment that the shuttle is
carrying must be secured first.

JASON T. BURNS
But, sir, there is a crew member
out there somewhere who may already
be in trouble. She may need
assistance quickly.

RAMIRO HERNANDEZ (V.O.)
I am giving you a direct order to
unload the shuttle first! Did you
get that, Burns?

JASON T. BURNS
(swallows dryly)
Yes, sir.

38. EXT. MARS, AT THE ROCK NEEDLE - DAY

Ilma (in a spacesuit) is standing directly at the foot of the
rockneedle, watching the gentle rise before her. First there
is a CRACK and then an IRREGULAR DISTORTING NOISE from her
helmet receiver. Ilma stops.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Bob! What's that?

BOB (V.O.)
These are radio signals, Ilma.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
That's obvious. But where are they
coming from? What do they mean?

BOB (V.O.)

I am sorry, but I cannot answer that question. It could be random noise, but it could also be a highly distorted communication.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

I see.

(short pause)

Hello? Is anyone there? This is Ilma Sundström.

Nothing more is heard.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)

Hm, probably nothing after all.

Ilma looks up the hill again. Then she turns and looks back to where she came from.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)

However, this raises the question, if I should really go up there? Maybe I should turn back?

(short pause)

But empty-handed?

At this moment, a reflection of light can be seen further up, between the rocks. Ilma shields her eyes with her hand.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)

Bob! What is that?

BOB (V.O.)

Light, Ilma. Either there is a reflective surface up there that reflects the sunlight, or light signals are being emitted from there.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

(laughs)

Light signals! Here, on Mars - of course. There are probably little green men up there ...

BOB

I am sorry, but I cannot answer that question.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

This is the missing robot. It's obvious! The trail leads right up there.

(short pause)

So close. It is possible!

Ilma starts walking up the hill.

39. AUSS. MARS, BASE CAMP - TAG

Jason, Yue, Pedro and Fausto (all in spacesuits) are unloading the cargo bay of the Pegasus shuttle P1. Pedro turns to Jason.

PEDRO GONZALES

Did the boss say unload or stow?

JASON T. BURNS

Unload. Why?

PEDRO GONZALES

Because then we can start the search a lot faster. To follow his orders, all we have to do is get the equipment off the shuttle and leave it somewhere nearby. We don't have to take it to where it's supposed to be. We can do that later. What could possibly happen? After all, we're alone on Mars.

JASON T. BURNS

Very good! Thank you, Pedro. This really saves us a lot of time.

40. EXT. MARS, AT THE CRATER RIM

Ilma (in spacesuit) climbs up the slope with great difficulty.

A look to the right shows her that the rock needle is very close to a huge, very deep crater. This was not visible from below. Looking up, towards the rock needle, she sees the light reflection a little higher up.

Ilma takes a tentative step forward. The loosely stacked boulders seem stable enough to support her weight. She shifts her weight.

Suddenly the whole scree begins to slide, pulling her down with it. Ilma falls screaming into the depths of the crater.

41. EXT. MARS, BASE CAMP - DAY

Jason, Pedro, Yue and Fausto (all in spacesuits) retrieve the last crate from the hold of the P1 and place it with the other equipment, barrels and crates that have been randomly placed a short distance away. Jason closes the loading hatch of the shuttle.

JASON T. BURNS

That's it. Everybody on board now!
We will take off immediately.

Fausto gets in Jason's way.

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

Not me. I'm staying here.

JASON T. BURNS

Do I have to repeat myself?

FAUSTO BENEVENTI

No. But it's better this way. We don't all have to go looking for her. I'm more useful here. The central module is now in place. I'll stay here and set it up. That way we all have a place to stay when you get back.

JASON T. BURNS

You're right. This is how we do it.
(to Yue and Pedro)
You come with me.

42. EXT. MARS, ON THE LEDGE

As the swirling dust clears, it becomes clear that Ilma (in spacesuit) has ended up on a large rocky ledge. She lies on the ground and slowly, with great effort, gets to her feet, palpating her helmet and suit.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Bob. Is there any damage to the suit?

BOB (V.O.)
No, Ilma. The suit is sealed. No
cracks or damage detectable.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
(relieved)
Lucky me!

BOB (V.O.)
I have never heard this definition
of luck before.

Ilma looks up to the edge of the crater where she fell.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Bob! How can I climb back up there?

BOB (V.O.)
Unfortunately not, Ilma. Even if we
had the right climbing equipment,
the ground is not solid enough.
There would be more rock falls.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Bugger!

Then Ilma turns around, slowly approaches the edge of the
ledge and looks down. Startled, she takes a step back.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)
Oh God - it's deep!

BOB (V.O.)
Exactly 537 meters to the bottom of
the crater.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
What now?

BOB (V.O.)
I suggest we contact the others.
Unity II is out of range of the
suit's communications, but P1 and
Base Camp are within the maximum
radius.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM
Great! Instead of finding the
robot, I have to be rescued myself.
So I've really screwed up - again.
(MORE)

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)

(short pause)

But well - it's no use. Get up, brush off the dust, straighten the crown, and move on.

BOB (V.O.)

Attention! The communication device is malfunctioning.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

(horrified)

Is it broken?

BOB (V.O.)

Unclear, Ilma. All it says is that there is no signal. Absolutely nothing, not even noise or interference.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Does the transmission work?

BOB (V.O.)

Unclear. Without being able to receive, it is unfortunately impossible to determine if the device is capable of transmitting.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Okay, I see. So I'm just going to have to try - and hope that someone can hear me.

(short pause)

Ilma Sundström to shuttle P1. Please check in. Ilma Sundström to base camp. Can anyone hear me? This is an emergency! I need help. If anyone can hear me - I can't receive anything myself, so I can't answer. But I urgently need help. I'm on High Rock Needle, just north of Base Camp. There's a big crater next to it, and that's where I fell, but not all the way down. I need help! I can't get out of here on my own.

(short pause)

Sundström to P1. Sundström to base camp. Can you hear me? This is an emergency ...

43. EXT. MARS, BASE CAMP - DAY

The Pegasus shuttle P1, standing near the camp, lifts off cautiously and flies away slowly at low altitude.

44. EXT. MARS, ON THE LEDGE - DAY

Ilma (in spacesuit) is standing on the ledge.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

... I am on a ledge, 8 meters below the crater rim. Right next to the rock needle. I urgently need help. Sundström to base camp and P1. Can anyone hear me?

Then she breaks off.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)

Bob! Please send the recording of my distress call in an endless loop. Preferably so I don't have to listen to it - is that possible?

BOB (V.O.)

Yes, Ilma. That is possible. Shall I let you know if I get an answer?

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Absolutely!

45. INT. PEGASUS SHUTTLE P1 - DAY

Jason is at the helm, steering the shuttle. Through the large window facing forward, you can see the P1 flying slowly across the desert toward the prominent rock outcropping. Yue stands next to Jason and operates a search device, scanning the landscape ahead of them for signs of life. Pedro sits at the communication device and uses it.

PEDRO GONZALES

P1 to Sundström. Gonzales speaking. Ilma, can you see me? P1 here, Pedro Gonzales. Where are you, Ilma? We're looking for you ...

JASON T. BURNS

Don't stop, Pedro. We have to get to her eventually.

(to Yue)

And you, Yue? Do you see anything?

YUE WAN LIAO

Nothing. Just the tracks - and they lead us right to where our systems failed during the landing approach. I don't like this at all.

JASON T. BURNS

Me neither. But don't worry, I'm prepared for it this time.

46. EXT. MARS, ON THE LEDGE - DAY

Ilma (in the spacesuit) looks around the ledge. Then, some distance away, she spots something unusual: an apparently partially buried, spherical object made of a strangely dull, dark metal.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

What is it?

Determined, Ilma approaches the object.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM (CONT'D)

Bob! Is that one of us?

BOB (V.O.)

If you mean is it part of the GMCI equipment, no. I can't find anything resembling this object in any of my databases. I can't even identify the material.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

Wow! Then what is it? A crashed UFO?

BOB (V.O.)

Sorry, I cannot answer that question. Insufficient data.

ILMA SUNDSTRÖM

This is insane! So it really could be alien!?

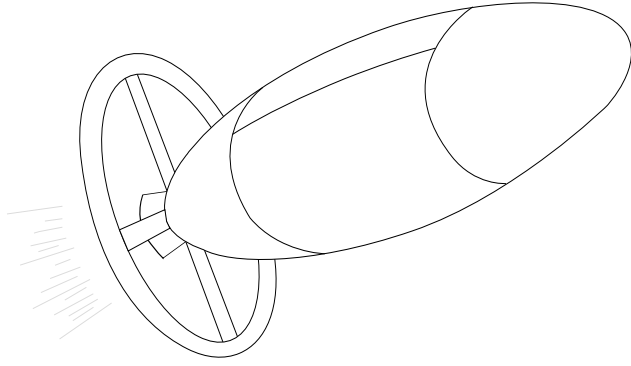
BOB (V.O.)

Sorry, I cannot answer that
question. Insufficient data.

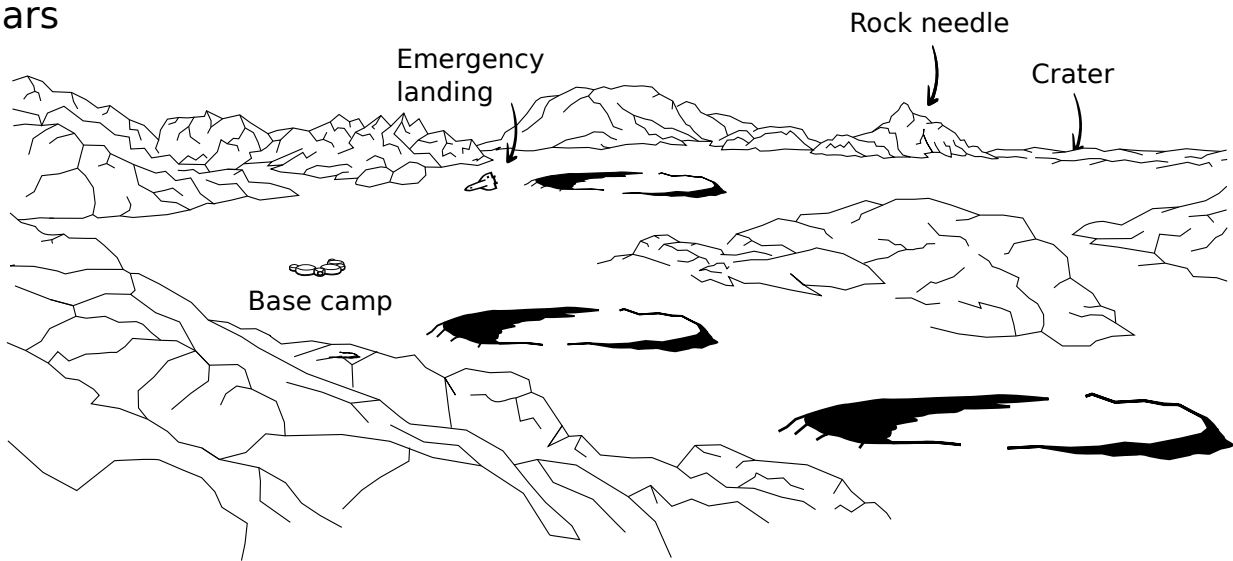
Once at the object, Ilma carefully walks around it. On the other side, she discovers a circular opening measuring 1.2 meters across. A kind of wafer-thin, milky-transparent paper seems to be stretched through this opening. Ilma carefully stretches out her hand to touch the paper. As she reaches out, bright glistening sparks begin to shoot out from the point in all directions. Startled, Ilma quickly withdraws her hand back.

FADE OUT.

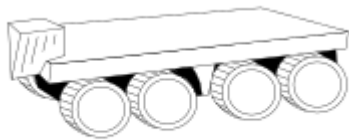
Unity II



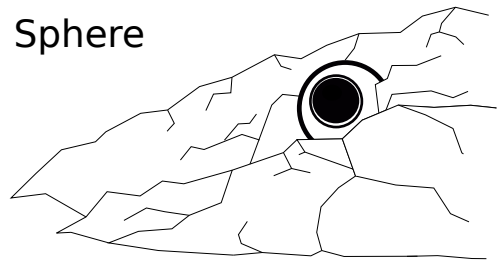
Mars



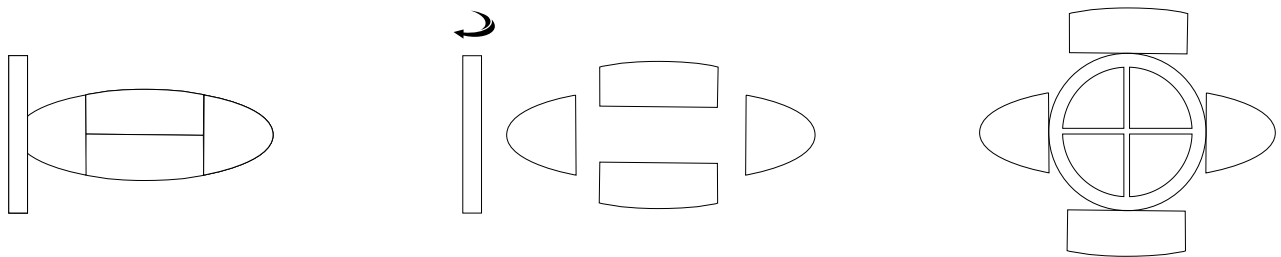
Rover



Sphere



How to transform the Unity II into a space station.



OVERVIEW OF THE EPISODES

EPISODE 1 - ARRIVAL

The Unity II arrives on Mars. Part of the crew remains on the spaceship while the other part sets off to land with the first shuttle. Suddenly, all systems fail and the shuttle threatens to crash onto a rock. At the last minute, Jason T. Burns is able to make an emergency landing in the desert sand. Back on Earth, at the GMCI - Global Mars Colonization Initiative - there are big celebrations. The world is shown images of a perfect landing. Lukáts Tarján, Konstancja Kalinowska and Alan M. Hefferman remain silent about the issues on Mars. Only Peter Randell, a reporter, suspects that something is wrong and is determined to find out more.

Upon arriving at the base camp, which was supposed to be ready for occupancy, the team discovers that it is not in the expected condition. Even the first habitat module is uninhabitable. While everyone is occupied with resolving the biggest technical issues, Ilma Sundström ventures out on her own to search for the missing assembly robot. Following its tracks she arrives at the edge of a large crater. A few meters further down, she falls upon a rocky outcrop and discovers a peculiar, half-buried sphere with a round opening. Ilma cautiously approaches the sphere to look inside. But as soon as she reaches the opening she realizes that it is sealed by an energy field.

EPISODE 2 - COMPLICATIONS

On Earth, an emergency meeting is held behind closed doors at the GMCI. Those in charge are discussing unpleasant reports from Mars and their implications for the further course of the mission. Then another report arrives from the Unity II indicating that now a crew member is missing. It quickly becomes clear that the successful completion of the mission is a long way off under these circumstances. Therefore, Konstancja Kalinowska makes a drastic decision: The search for Ilma Sundström must be halted immediately to potentially achieve the mission objectives.

When this instruction arrives on the Unity II, Ramiro Hernandez promptly attempts to pass it on to Jason T. Burns, who is leading the search for the missing woman. However, the P1 shuttle has once again entered the sphere of interference surrounding the area around the rock needle. Jason was just able to land the shuttle this time, but communication by radio is not available in this area.

Therefore, nobody on board the shuttle suspects that the search is to be abandoned. Instead, Jason and Yue continue to follow the tracks on foot, while Pedro remains in the landed shuttle.

Meanwhile, Ilma's air supply is running low and her hope of being found by the others in time is fading. The spherical object also proves to be completely alien. Ilma cannot find any signs of operating elements on this obviously technical object, whose access opening is blocked by a kind of energetic "curtain". However, she discovers by chance that solid objects can pass through the energy barrier So Ilma decides to go through it herself to find out what lies hidden inside the sphere.

EPISODE 3 - SURPRISES

Ilma feels only a slight tingling sensation when she passes through the energy barrier. However, the subsequent disappointment is immense. She realizes that the sphere inside is completely empty. There are no recognizable controls here either. So Ilma tries to go back outside. But from the inside, the energy barrier proves to be insurmountable.

On the Unity II, Commander Ramiro Hernandez is forced to send a supplementary report to the GMCI on Earth, informing them that three more crew members and a shuttle are missing. He then discusses the options for how to proceed with Tim Schwartz, Chandra Darshanna and Takajin Arakawa. While Tim Schwartz suspects the presence of unknown atmospheric disturbances, Takajin Arakawa is absolutely certain that it must be deliberate sabotage. He even assumes that the saboteur is one of them: Fausto Benneventi. He therefore demands to fly down to the base camp on the remaining second Pegasus shuttle, because Fausto is currently alone there. Chandra Darshanna, on the other hand, is more concerned about Jason T. Burns' condition. As the ship's doctor, she knows his medical history.

On Mars, Jason and Yue arrive at the point where the tracks split up. While Yue follows the robot's trail, Jason continues on Ilma's trail. He reaches the edge of the crater where Ilma fell. Well secured, Jason climbs down onto the ledge and finally discovers the spherical object to which Ilma's tracks also lead. However, Ilma is unaware that rescue is imminent as her senses are fading due to the low oxygen supply. In this twilight state between wakefulness and unconsciousness, Ilma thinks she hears a strange voice that keeps whispering "Kentaku" to her.

Finally, she rips off her helmet off her head and realizes that the inside of the sphere is filled with breathable air. After regaining consciousness, she says the word „Kentaku“ out loud, causing a bright light to flash.

Although Jason is already very close to the spherical object, he does not notice the flash of light. He stands directly in front of the sphere, sees how Ilma's tracks end here and takes a look inside. The opening is no longer covered by an energy barrier. However, the inside of the sphere turns out to be completely empty.

EPISODE 4 - ENCIRCLEMENT

Jason arrives at the artifact and wonders where Ilma has gone. Her tracks lead to the sphere, but it is empty. And there are no tracks leading away from the sphere. Additionally, the radio is working again. He receives an excited message from Pedro from the P1 shuttle, in which he reports that the order has been given to end the search for Ilma immediately. Jason replies with the information that he is standing in front of an alien artifact and requests to pass on this message to Commander Hernandez as quickly as possible.

On Earth, reporter Peter Randell receives anonymous information about mysterious events within the GMCI. He immediately tries to investigate. Meanwhile, the GMCI is already coming under increasing pressure from all sides. Ilma's father has also somehow learned that his daughter is missing and demands clarification. Director Tarján therefore devises a daring, multi-stage plan to prevent the alien artifact from becoming known for as long as possible. In case of doubt, technical problems should be reported first, followed by the potential loss of a crew member, in order to maintain the utmost secrecy. Because everyone involved is certain: firstly, Ilma must already be dead by then anyway, and secondly, the discovery of an alien artifact would arouse the interest of the major powers on Mars and thus herald the end of the GMCI. The GMCI must therefore succeed in strengthening its position as much as possible while this is still possible.

At the same time, the missing Swedish psychologist explores a mysterious corridor whose doorway opened after the flash of light in the sphere. And Jason refuses to give up the search for Ilma. For Commander Hernandez, this is a clear confirmation of Chandra's suspicion that Jason's old trauma has been triggered by the events.

He decides to remove Jason from his post as quickly as possible and bring him back on board the Unity II, where he can receive medical treatment. Meanwhile, Alan M. Hefferman is under pressure from Agent Flowers in Brazil. Flowers is employed by US military intelligence and demands for Alan to prevent the Russian Evseyev from participating in the planned Unity III mission to Mars.

Since the interference field around the rock needle on Mars has disappeared, Jason and Pedro fly with the P1 shuttle to meet Yue Wan Liao. The latter reports finding the assembly robot. However, Yue cannot confirm Jason's suspicion that the interference field could have something to do with the robot. She insists that the robot's batteries are dead and that she has not made any changes to it herself. So Jason concludes that the interference field must be connected to the artifact. This may align with the fact that the interference field disappeared, around the same time as the bang he thought he heard.

Meanwhile, Ilma, unaware of any of this, realizes that her passage is just a circular corridor that leads back to its beginning and contains nothing. Within the circular corridor, she discovers three openings, but behind each of them led to a completely empty spherical space, similar to the one she herself had escaped from.

EPISODE 5 - VENTURES

The GMCI's new mission plan includes building a second camp. Some of the less important modules and elements will be transported to the crater rim, above the artifact and below the rock needle, instead of extending the base camp. The second camp is set up there. While the base camp continues to be expanded as planned, but at a much slower pace, in order to enable the planned self-sufficiency, research into the artifact is to begin in camp 2.

All crew members are now on the surface of Mars. Only Commander Hernandez is still holding the fort on the Unity II. Although Takajin Arakawa has flown to the base camp primarily to convict the alleged saboteur Fausto Beneventi, he has evaded observation by switching to camp 2. Together with Jason, Yue and the repaired assembly robot, he works on setting up this new camp. By chance, Fausto witnesses Yue secretly leaving the camp at night and doing something strange on a rock that he cannot recognize. But he keeps what he sees to himself and doesn't talk to anyone about it.

On Earth, Peter Randell threatens to expose Director Tarján "the whole scam at the GMCI". Tarján then offers him a deal. The reporter receives all the information for an exclusive story, but must hold back on publication until Tarján gives the go-ahead. Peter agrees. However, Tarján's relief is short-lived when Alan M. Hefferman tells him about Agent Flowers and his demands. He also reports rumors that the US military is preparing for a possible takeover of GMCI.

On Mars, Takajin and Chandra take a shuttle to Camp 2 to pick up Jason and take him to the Unity II. Upon arrival, Fausto leads them to the artifact where Jason spends most of his time. There, the three witness how Jason uses the assembly robot to break open the artifact with brute force. Excited and with an enraptured smile, Jason assures them that Ilma is inside the sphere and still alive. Only after much persuasion do Chandra and Takajin finally manage to take Jason with them. Only Fausto stays behind with the artifact to clean up.

Meanwhile, Ilma Sundström manages to discover three additional hidden entrances, all pointing outwards from the ring corridor. The first entrance leads to a large room with numerous recesses in the floor and ceiling. There are strange devices on the side walls that provide drinking water and food balls. She also discovers a mysterious energy generator, which Ilma uses to recharge the battery of her spacesuit.

Fausto believes he hears whispering voices at the artifact. He thinks he is imagining it, but when he speaks the whispered word out loud, an energy curtain forms, closing the opening of the sphere. Repeating the word again causes the energy curtain to disappear again. Fausto decides to keep this secret to himself for the time being.

EPISODE 6 - REALIZATION

On Earth, World News Today announces a special live broadcast for the evening. In this program, Peter Randell aims to expose the gigantic deceptions and lies of the GMCI and the Mars project. Immediately, the most amazing speculations and wildest rumors begin to circulate around the world. The phones at GMCI's head office are ringing off the hook as investors have many questions they want GMCI to answer. Everyone wants to speak to Director Traján, but he is nowhere to be found. The GMCI employees are also becoming increasingly restless and strange rumors are spreading. When Alan M. Hefferman finally meets Lukáts Tarján by chance in one of the corridors, he excitedly tells him that the Russian Evseyev is probably a high-ranking FSB agent.

Director Tarján, however, only acknowledges this information with a grin.

Meanwhile, at the base camp on Mars, the heating in the newly installed greenhouses malfunctions and destroys almost all the seedlings they brought with them, causing sporadic oxygen failures in the habitat. Betje Vermeulen, Tim Schwartz and Takajin Arakawa are diligently working to find a solution to these issues.

On Earth, Konstancja Kalinowska rushes from one trouble spot to another at the GMCI headquarters. She tries to calm the employees and solve at least the most pressing issues. When she learns where Director Tarján was last seen, she sets off to confront him in anger.

Meanwhile, in orbit around Mars, the Unity II receives a distress call from the base camp. The crew requests immediate evacuation. Although Commander Hernandez considers this an exaggeration, he assures them of rapid assistance.

Konstancja arrives at one of the GMCI's outdoor construction areas on the edge of the airfield and meets Director Tarján. He welcomes her with a broad smile and open arms. He assures her that everything will be fine now. A countdown sounds, and at the end of it a bright flash of fire illuminates the outside. Through the large window, Konstancja observes the launch vehicle on the launch pad slowly rising into the sky. Lukáts Tarján informs her with a grin that he has brought forward the launch date for Unity III "slightly". Their flight to Mars is now unstoppable - come what may.

Meanwhile, Ilma abandons her attempts to open the second passageway due to a mysterious additional mechanism preventing it from opening. So she turns to the third passageway and finally succeeds in opening it. What she sees there takes her breath away! It is another room with unfamiliar devices, but this one has a huge window to the outside. Ilma doesn't see Mars behind it, but space, several slowly rotating planets and a massive blue sun in the center. It dawns on her that the artifact must be an interstellar transport system that she has activated