

Sunrise

By

Andrew Huggins

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ahuggins0128@gmail.com

FADE IN

EXT. SPACE - DAY

SUPER IMPOSED TEXT: THE COLONY - 2340.

A structure, comprised of four large space stations attached to one another, hovers in space. The planet Mars and its two moons, Phobos and Deimos are visible behind the structure.

INT. SCIENCE LABORATORY - DAY

LISA BELL, a twenty-nine year old female with short red hair moves swiftly between tables. She wears a gray shirt and pants, not typical lab garb. She stops abruptly at a table with documents spread all over, labeled "Howard Bell - Lead Researcher."

She sees a document entitled, "Advanced Chemical Mining - Deimos 2 Facility." She turns around and walks to the computer monitor behind her. She presses a few keys and the text "Howard Bell" comes up on the screen.

AUTOMATED VOICE

No messages for thirty-six hours.

Lisa moves back to the table and shuffles through the "Deimos 2" documents. There is a picture of Howard and a woman, both no older than thirty, standing in front of a beautiful house. Lisa briefly glances at the picture, stops shuffling through the papers, and leaves the laboratory.

INT. KAREN'S BEDROOM - DAY

KAREN BELL, sixty-one years old, sits hunched in a chair by her window wearing an old, dirty robe. Part of her looks like the woman in the picture with Howard, but most of that beauty has deteriorated. She knits slowly while she looks out of the window at a very small planet Earth.

The door to the room begins to open slowly. Lisa appears from behind the door.

LISA

Ma?

Karen clicks her knitting needles methodically.

(CONTINUED)

LISA (CONT'D)
Ma? See anything worth seeing?

Karen's head doesn't move from where she is looking and the needles continue to click. Lisa moves closer.

LISA (CONT'D)
I'm leaving. I'm going to Deimos 2.

Lisa waits for Karen to react, but nothing happens.

LISA (CONT'D)
Don't you want to know why? Dad's
been gone since yesterday morning.
He hasn't transmitted since he
left.

Lisa turns and walks to the door. She looks back at Karen.

LISA (CONT'D)
I should only be a few hours. Bye,
ma.

She exits the room and closes the door gently.

INT. LISA'S SHUTTLE - DAY

Lisa steps inside. The inside is cramped and shows signs of great use. She boots up the navigation system and straps into the pilot's seat with brevity and expertise. The autopilot monitor reads, "Deimos 2."

As she finishes her routine, her eyes hesitate briefly on a small, pewter car that sits on the "dashboard" of the shuttle. Her eyes stay on the toy as she flips a switch on the computer terminal.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - MORNING (2318)

Thirty-seven year old Howard Bell flips on the light switch in Lisa's bedroom. The room is sparsely decorated and mostly different shades of gray.

HOWARD
(mockingly stern)
Get up, get up! We have chores to
do all day!

Lisa, seven years old, bounces up in her bed, wide awake.

(CONTINUED)

LISA

Chores? There aren't any chores on Christmas!

HOWARD

Christmas? Who said anything about Christmas?

LISA

Today is Christmas!

HOWARD

(smiling)

Well if today is Christmas, you must have presents to open.

Lisa, joyful, springs off the bed and into Howard's arms. She gives him a hug then runs out of the room.

INT. BELL FAMILY LIVING ROOM - DAY

There is a miniature Santa Claus statue in a corner of the room but no Christmas tree. Lisa is opening presents on the floor. Howard sits with Karen on the couch, lovingly watching Lisa as she opens her presents.

KAREN

What is it, Lisa?

Lisa clears the last bit of wrapping paper from the present.

LISA

It's a game!

She studies the very old and worn game box for a few seconds.

LISA (CONT'D)

MO-NO-PO-LY. What's Monopoly?

HOWARD

It's a game that my father taught me how to play when I was your age. It's always been one of my favorites.

Lisa tries to appear happy. Karen notices her disappointment.

KAREN

Come on, honey. Let's go finish baking those cookies!

Lisa abandons the game box and bounds towards the kitchen. Karen looks at Howard sympathetically, kisses him, then follows Lisa into the kitchen.

END FLASHBACK

INT. LISA'S SHUTTLE - DAY

Lisa's shuttle drifts quietly through space. She sits peacefully behind the navigation controls. The autopilot monitor begins to beep and reads, "Code failure. Please reprogram by referring to manual."

Lisa looks surprised and reaches for a compartment behind her right shoulder. She opens the door and sees a pile of books covered in dust. She grabs the books and begins to look through them.

The second book in the stack reads, "Pilot's Manual." She briefly flips through the manual and types on the keyboard for the autopilot monitor. The beeping stops.

She looks relieved as she moves to put the books back in the compartment. She stops as her gaze fixes on one of the books. Its title reads, "The Hobbit." Her fingers linger on the cover of the book, then she slowly opens it.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. SCIENCE LABORATORY - DAY (2327)

Lisa, sixteen years old, slams a large book shut on one of the laboratory tables. Howard, forty-nine, stands at an experiment station on the other side of the laboratory.

HOWARD

What's wrong?

LISA

(exasperated)

I can't get it. No matter what I do, I can't get it. Will you just show me?

HOWARD

I could. But then you'd never learn how to actually do it yourself. You know the formula. Just transfer the proper units into usable ratios.

(CONTINUED)

LISA
I've done that. But the book says
I'm wrong. Can't I just use the
terminal to transfer?

Lisa gestures to a series of monitors across the lab.

HOWARD
If you learn to do it this way,
you'll feel sure about your
results.

LISA
(sarcastic)
I feel just fine when I use the
incredibly advanced technology that
we have at our disposal.

HOWARD
(smiling)
As long as you know how to do it
this way, you can use anything in
here that you want.

LISA
(sighs)
Okay. I'll do what you say. I just
don't really like books. It seems
like there are faster ways to get
things done.

Howard walks over to Lisa and begins to take off his gloves.

HOWARD
Well, there certainly are. But not
all books are inferior to
technology.

Howard opens and reaches in to a drawer underneath the
table. He retrieves a very old, tattered book.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
Happy early birthday.

He hands the book to Lisa. She takes it and looks it over
carefully.

LISA
It's so old. What is it?

HOWARD
It's a timeless book. A piece of
fiction that has been passed down
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD (cont'd)
through my family for a very long
time.

Lisa opens it and begins thumbing through the pages.

LISA
"The Hobbit"...What does that mean?

HOWARD
Just read it. It's adventurous.
It'll serve as a nice break from
all of the hard work you do in the
lab.

Lisa looks up from the book.

LISA
Thanks, Dad.

END FLASHBACK

INT. LISA'S SHUTTLE - DAY

Lisa closes the book and returns it to the compartment. She settles back in to the pilot's seat. In the distance through the right window of the shuttle sits Mars. A faint, red glow comes from the planet. As Lisa's shuttle continues to cruise, a moon slowly comes in to view directly in the distance. Lisa types into the shuttle's flight monitor.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Docking at Deimos 2 Mining Facility
in approximately ten minutes.
Please have landing gear prepared
to dock.

The stars above Deimos shine brightly as the shuttle approaches the facility.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. BELL FAMILY KITCHEN - NIGHT (2334)

The room is well lit as the stars glow brightly outside of the kitchen window. Howard, fifty-six, chops vegetables by the sink. Lisa reads a book on the couch in the living room, right outside of the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD

Lisa, will you get your mother?
I've taken the time to use these
vegetables, I want both of you to
try this pasta.

Lisa looks up from her book.

LISA

Yea, I'll get her. How old are
those noodles?

Lisa looks at Howard as she passes the kitchen.

HOWARD

Not that old. Well, kind of old.
But they're noodles. They last
forever.

Lisa smiles at him and continues down the hallway.

LISA

Mom. Dinner's about done. Come to
the kitchen.

INT. HOWARD AND KAREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lisa turns from the hallway and walks into her parent's
bedroom. The room is decorated with earthly things such as
analog clocks and hand stitched quilts. Karen sits on the
bed, knitting diligently.

LISA

Mom, it's ready. Let's eat.

Karen stays focused on knitting.

KAREN

I'll be there in a minute. I'm
working.

LISA

You're not working. You're
knitting. Knitting, like always.

KAREN

Don't be disdainful, Lisa. I have
to finish this.

LISA

(trying to be patient)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LISA (cont'd)
Dad's been in the kitchen for an hour. He worked really hard. You need to come eat with us.

KAREN
I will. Actually, just save me some. It might be a while.

LISA
(agitated)
MOM! You're coming to eat with us tonight.

Karen throws down her knitting needles.

KAREN
(exasperated)
Fine! Fine. I'm coming.

Lisa and Karen enter the kitchen as Howard is putting pasta onto the plates at the dinner table. They sit at the table in silence for a few minutes as they begin to eat.

HOWARD
Well? Is it good?

LISA
(eating)
Really good. Great job, Dad.

Karen eats slowly.

HOWARD
(smiling, to Karen)
So? What do you think?

KAREN
It's good. Better than what they were serving in the cafeteria tonight, I'm sure.

Howard looks unsatisfied. Karen is twirling her pasta.

HOWARD
Lisa and I finally diagnosed those minerals today. The ones from our expedition to Phobos 1 last week? The diagnosis will probably play a large part in our annual report.

Karen stops twirling her pasta.

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD (CONT'D)
We could use your help, Karen. We
have a lot of material to go
through.

Lisa looks up from her plate, apprehensive. Karen begins to
eat again. Howard's gaze is fixed on Karen.

KAREN
(eating)
Maybe. I've got a lot to work on.

Howard stops eating.

HOWARD
What are you working on? Maybe I
could help you.

LISA
Dad...

HOWARD
What? Oh, I'm sorry. It's probably
another quilt. Is that it?

Karen stops eating and puts her fork down.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
Well, we can't ever have too many
of those.

Karen backs her chair away from the table and turns down the
hallway. Lisa watches her leave. Howard puts his fork down.
Lisa looks at him.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Lisa. It gets to me
sometimes. I'm sorry.

Howard gets up and leaves the table. Lisa sits alone.

END FLASHBACK

INT. LISA'S SHUTTLE - DAY

Deimos 2 is fully in view from the shuttle. The shuttle
glides gracefully towards the docking station.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Now docking at Deimos 2. You have
arrived at your destination.

The shuttle slowly docks and powers down. Lisa pauses in the pilot's seat for a few seconds before walking out of the shuttle.

INT. DEIMOS 2 MINING FACILITY - DAY

She stands in front of a large door that reads, "Deimos 2." She enters a code on to an electronic pad by the door and it smoothly opens from the middle. She walks through the door and in to the facility.

As Lisa makes her way through hallways and doors, smoke begins to drift around her. It grows thicker as she walks, causing her to stumble and grasp the walls for balance. She is at the main chamber, an open room clouded with smoke.

She quickly makes her way to a large drilling machine at the back of the room, beginning to cough. As she gets nearer, she sees blood splattered across one of the sides on the machine.

LISA
(crying)
No...

She slows her pace, hesitant and afraid. As she rounds the corner by the blood, she stops and drops to the ground. Howard sits pinned to one of the arms of the drilling machine, dead. Lisa and Howard, both on the ground become enshrouded in smoke.

INT. MINING FACILITY HALLWAYS - DAY

Lisa walks through the hallways with a steady pace, carrying her father's body. The smoke is thick, but the tears on her face are visible. She exits the large door and makes her way on to the shuttle.

INT. LISA'S SHUTTLE - DAY

The shuttle doors close behind her as she lays Howard's body down in the cargo section behind the pilot's seat. Her face, smeared black from the smoke and tears, appears emotionless and stays fixed on Howard.

The shuttle exits the docking bay and begins to glide back towards the direction of the colony.

(CONTINUED)

LISA
 (over comm)
 Maintenance request, Deimos 2
 facility. Equipment malfunction.

BEN
 (O.S)
 This is Ben, Lisa. Malfunction?
 Which machine?

LISA (CONT'D)
 The master drill.

BEN
 (O.S.)
 Are you alright?

The communications clicks off.

INT. COLONY COMMON AREA - DAY

Lisa walks off the shuttle and enters the common area. Families are lining up for food and some are already eating dinner. A sloppy looking twenty-five year old man wearing a maintenance uniform with the name "Benjamin" on the front walks up to Lisa.

BEN
 (concerned)
 Lisa! Hey! Everything alright?
 Why'd you shut me off? What went
 wrong with the master drill? NASA
 will kill us, Lisa. If anything's
 wrong with that drill, it's gunna
 be our heads.

Lisa looks at Ben then turns and looks in front of her. She falls to the ground, her legs collapsing beneath her.

BEN (CONT'D)
 Hey! What happened, Lisa? Come on,
 I'm taking you to the medical bay.

Lisa tries to get up but can only move to a seated position.

LISA
 My Dad, Ben. My Dad.

BEN
 Where is Mr. Bell? It seems like I
 haven't seen him for a couple of
 days.

(CONTINUED)

Lisa begins to cry, attracting the attention of some of the people in the common area. A few men and women walk over to Lisa and Ben. Ben looks confused and tries to move them away from Lisa.

FADE OUT

BEGIN FLASHBACK

SUPER IMPOSED TEXT: Phoenix, Arizona - 2310

EXT. PARK - MORNING

Howard, twenty-nine years old, and Karen, thirty-one years old, sit together on a bench in the park. His arm is around Karen as she rests her head on his shoulder. The sun is beginning to rise in the distance.

KAREN

Can you believe this is the last time? The last time we'll sit here and watch the sunrise?

Howard opens his mouth as if he is about to speak then waits a few seconds before responding.

HOWARD

Yes, it is the last time we'll be in here. On this bench. Our bench. Watching the sun come up. But we have plenty of memories to make up there.

Howard motions towards the rising sun.

KAREN

I know. But part of me is sad. I can't help it. I want her to see this. What if she never has the chance?

Karen rubs her stomach lovingly.

HOWARD

We've talked about this. What she does up there will help this world. She will be a part of history. WE, will be a part of history.

(CONTINUED)

KAREN

Helping a world she may never get
to see for herself.

Howard grips Karen closer to his shoulder.

HOWARD

The good outways the bad, Karen.
We've both worked hard for this
chance. And Lisa will have a normal
life. I promise.

The sun is almost fully visible on the horizon.

KAREN

I'm going to miss this.

FADE OUT

END FLASHBACK

INT. KAREN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lisa opens the door. She wears a white lab coat, and her hair is long and messily fashioned in to a ponytail. The stars illuminate the room. Karen sits in her chair, staring out the window at Earth in the distance. Her knitting needles lay still in her lap. Lisa stands in the doorway.

LISA

You always wanted to go back. You
never actually said it. But I knew.

Karen picks up her needles and begins to knit.

LISA (CONT'D)

I've always wanted to go too.

Lisa walks over to Karen and sits down beside her.

LISA (CONT'D)

I always thought Dad knew what was
best for me. I always believed that
whatever I did here mattered more
there. He believed that, and so did
I.

A moment of silence passes. A tear forms in Karen's eye.
Lisa stands up.

(CONTINUED)

LISA (CONT'D)
I'm going back to the lab. We've
got a lot of work to do.

Lisa walks to the door with her hand on the knob, looks back at Karen, and leaves.

INT. SCIENCE LABORATORY - NIGHT

BETH, a thirty-five year old female scientist is working at one of the tables. She writes in some numbers on a report then puts down her pencil. She looks across the lab and sees Lisa. She sits at a table by herself, not working but looking forward.

Beth walks over to Lisa and puts her hand on her shoulder. Lisa jerks back, startled.

BETH
Sorry. Didn't mean to frighten you.

LISA
What's going on?

BETH
Just finishing up some reports.
Everything's normal. We're making
progress with the chemicals on
Phobos, but we really need to focus
on Deimos.

Lisa tries to appear like she is working on her report.

BETH (CONT'D)
(hesitant)
I...I'm sorry. I didn't even think
when I said it. It's only been a
few months. I didn't mean to bring
it up.

Lisa continues to scribble on her report.

LISA
(attempting a smile)
It's fine, Beth.

Beth looks sympathetically at Lisa.

BETH
Do you need anything?

(CONTINUED)

LISA

No, I'm fine. I think I'm just
gunna call it a night.

BETH

Lisa, how long have we known each
other? You can talk to me.

LISA

I'm fine Beth.

BETH

We can pick up on these reports
tomorrow. Get some rest.

Lisa gets up from her table, hangs her lab coat on the wall,
and walks to the door. Beth watches Lisa leave.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Karen walks in to the bedroom and closes the door. A quilt
is folded neatly under her arm. The room is slightly
illuminated by the starlight streaking through the window.

A shelf above Lisa's bed holds a lamp and various rarely
used household items. Amidst these is an old Monopoly game
box, a pocket watch, and a framed fifteen year old picture
of Howard, Karen, and Lisa.

Karen sits on Lisa's bed and looks around the room as if she
has never been there. She removes the quilt from under her
arm and holds it in her hands, looking forward.

She stands up and spreads the quilt out on the bed. The
quilt depicts a bright sun rising with rays spreading from
the sun to the corners of the quilt.

She leaves the room and closes the door. The quilt lays
peacefully on the bed.