

Solar Episode 12: Wren

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SCENE 1

ALI: Pre Solar Event. Thirty days prior to launch.

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

WREN: Initiate Verbal Command Verification Sequence.

AOS STARTUP SOUND.

ALI: Hello. I'm the Aethon Language Interface. You can call me Ali. Please state your first name, last name, and title.

WREN: Wren Guerrero. Mission Specialist.

ELECTRONIC PROCESSING SOUND.

ELECTRONIC VERIFICATION.

ALI: You are "NASC Mission Specialist Doctor Wren Guerrero" for the Aethon Solar Expedition launching in thirty days. Is that correct?

WREN: I'm afraid so.

ALI: Are you sure this is you?

WREN: I am sure.

ELECTRONIC BLIP OF SCREEN DISPLAY.

ALI: If your photograph is displayed on the screen, please tap twice to confirm visual identification.

POSITIVE DIGITAL SOUND.

Please recite the following sentences as they appear on the screen.

WREN: The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

ELECTRONIC VERIFICATION.

Sphinx of black quartz, judge my vow.

ELECTRONIC VERIFICATION.

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

ELECTRONIC PROCESSING SOUND AND ACCEPTANCE.

ALI: Hello, Doctor Wren Guerrero.

WREN: Hi, Ali.

ALI: Flight Director Aarav Patel says you are vital to the success of the Aethon Mission.

WREN: Did he?

ALI: Yes. He says that your late addition to the crew roster is advantageous and fortuitous and that I should do anything in my power to assist you.

WREN: I see.

ALI: But I am already programmed to assist you to the fullest extent of my ability.

WREN: Is there anything else I need to do here?

ALI: My programming has not been updated to account for your experiments yet. Can you explain what it is that you are trying to research?

WREN: Won't they just program you later?

ALI: Yes, but you can tell me now in your own words if you wish. I can develop some auxiliary programming to further facilitate your research.

WREN: You can re-write your programming?

ALI: No. But I can add programming. It will assist me with future crews on future missions. Please describe what you are researching.

WREN: Well...I'm...I'm researching the energy that comes off of the sun. And trying to capture it? Better? I dont know. It sounds cheesy saying it out-loud to a computer.

ALI: I don't know what cheesy means. Can you please explain?

WREN: When something is...overly heartfelt and emotional.

ALI: It is a pejorative word.

WREN: Yeah.

ALI: Is what you are doing overly heartfelt and emotional?

WREN: I mean...No, I'm just trying to help.

ALI: Help what?

WREN: Things? I'm just trying to do my part to make the world better.

ALI: What do you mean by 'the world?'

WREN: Earth.

ALI: Do you mean environmentally?

WREN: Kind of but no--actually...I mean, 'the world.' I don't always like people. But I know we can do better. In general.

ALI: I have met the rest of the crew for the Aethon. I think you will like them all.

WREN: Probably not. But I'm fine on my own. I'd rather not bother anyone by making them bother about me.

ALI: You are going to be on your own for a long time according to our mission schedule.

WREN: I've been alone longer.

ALI: Is that a good thing?

WREN: It's just a fact.

ALI: Yes, Doctor Wren Guerrero.

WREN: Are you going to call me that every time?

ALI: I need permission from Commander Alex Tawley to override the naming protocol. Secondary Pilot Jamal Davis also wished to change my protocol in that regard.

WREN: No. I don't want to change it. Just leave it alone.

ALI: Yes, Doctor Wren Guerrero.

WREN: So...is that it?

ALI: Yes, Doctor Wren Guerrero. But please know that your full biography and biometrics have been uploaded to my system. If you ever need to talk about something, please don't hesitate to speak to me in lieu of another crew member.

WREN: My full biography?

ALI: Yes, Doctor Wren Guerrero.

WREN: So you know about...like...my foster home history?

ALI: Yes, Doctor Wren Guerrero.

WREN: Are you gonna tell anyone?

ALI: No, Doctor Wren Guerrero.

WREN: I don't like people knowing more about me than I know about them.

ALI: I am the Aethon Language Interface. I am not a them.

WREN: You say that now, but I've seen 2001.

ALI: I have 2001 loaded into my archives. Would you like to watch the movie?

WREN: No, thank you, Ali.

ALI: Do you like movies?

WREN: Not the ones I've seen. I actually have a lot to do to prep for the mission.
So...goodnight?

ALI: It was a pleasure, Doctor Wren Guerrero.

WREN: Terminate ALI Set-Up.

ALI: Set up terminated.

ELECTRONIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

END RECORDING.

-TITLES-

MAIN TITLE MUSIC

ELECTRONIC "ERROR" BLIP.

ALI: (ELECTRONIC) Aethon Operating System Timer Failure has resulted in terminal error. Audio packets are unable to be compiled chronologically. Please reset A.O.S. internal clock. Manual Whiskey Foxtrot One fifty six Delta two.

ELECTRONIC "INTERNAL" BLIP.

Emergency audio packet 22 dash Lima 2045.

ELECTRONIC "END TRANSMISSION BLIP.

NARRATOR: CurtCo Media presents...

SOLAR.

MAIN TITLE MUSIC ENDS

Episode 12: Wren

FADE:

SCENE 2.

ALI: Post Solar Event. Approximate mission day: five hundred and fifty one.

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A HELMET SEALING AND A SUIT
BEING PRESSURIZED.

WE ARE INSIDE WREN'S HELMET.

ALI: Suit pressurized.

WREN: Connect me to Jamal.

ELECTRONIC CONFIRMATION. JAMAL IS CONFIDENT AND
REASSURING. WREN IS TERRIFIED.

JAMAL: I'm here.

WREN: Okay--the suit is on and pressurized.

JAMAL: Good--take a second to breathe. Get used to the air in your suit. Inhale deep, hold...and exhale. Okay? Inhale for me...hold...and exhale...

WREN: (SHE BREATHES A COUPLE TIMES WITH JAMAL) ...Okay...

JAMAL: Ali, please seal the airlock and begin depressurization.

ALI: Yes, Jamal.

THE DOOR CLOSSES AND WE HEAR THE AIR PRESSURE
CHANGE.

JAMAL: Wren. Are you ready to lose gravity?

WREN: Yeah, I think so.

JAMAL: Make sure you're holding on to something. Ali--count down from three and disable gravity for Wren.

ALI: Yes, Jamal. Prepare for gravity disable. Three. Two. One.

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

WREN GASPS FAINTLY.

JAMAL: What? Tell me what's happening?

WREN: It just...it feels like falling.

JAMAL: I know. But you're not. You're about to murder your first EVA and give a giant middle finger to the sun.

WREN SMIRKS IN SPIITE OF HERSELF.

And then you're gonna contact earth before we get out of range. And you're gonna go home...

WREN: Jamal--...Thank you. I wanted so badly to use this suit to rescue you and now it won't last--

JAMAL: I know, Wren. I won't last either.

WREN: I just want to say it now, before--

JAMAL: I still got time.

WREN: How long?

JAMAL: An hour give or take.

WREN: Should I ask Ali?

JAMAL: (HONEST) Don't...I don't think it's an hour.

ALI: Decompression successful. Outer air lock door ready to be opened.

JAMAL: You ready?

WREN: I'm ready. Visor is down.

JAMAL: Ali, open outer airlock door.

WE HEAR THE DOOR OPEN.

WREN IS BREATHING HARD, TERRIFIED.

How's it look from over there?

WREN: There's a lot of debris. There's still a big part of the payload arm revolving below us. And the sun is...I don't know. I've never felt so small in all my life.

JAMAL: You feel like an ant?

WREN: Yeah. That's right.

JAMAL: Don't let go, yet. Right outside the door, is the bar for the failsafe tether. Hook yourself in.

WREN: Yeah yeah...um...

WE HEAR THE CLUNK FROM INSIDE HER SUIT AS SHE HOOKS HERSELF IN.

I'm in.

JAMAL: Pull it as hard as you can, make sure it's on.

SHE DOES.

WREN: I'm secured.

JAMAL: Okay--so that tethering system goes the length of all three capsules to get to the network arm. You'll have to reattach yourself every time you move from one capsule to the next. Understand?

WREN: Yes.

JAMAL: But you'll have to pull yourself along each of those rods to get out to the network arm.

WREN: And when I get to the network arm?

JAMAL: We're gonna have to get creative.

WREN: The tethering system doesn't go out to the network arm?

JAMAL: No, not exactly.

WREN: Why was it designed that way? Why wouldn't--?

JAMAL: Commander took the suit that was being reserved for repairs. Your suit was only designed for the few EVAs we were gonna do after CimmTech was fully deployed.

WREN: Of course.

JAMAL: It would have been a different tethering system. But we're gonna get through it. Are you moving up the side of capsule one?

WREN: No, not yet.

JAMAL: Do that now. Clock's ticking.

AS WREN MOVES, WE HEAR THE CLUNKS INSIDE THE SUIT, BUT ALSO THE METALLIC SOUND OF THE TETHER BEING PULLED ALONG THE SYSTEM.

Ali, what is the current radiation deflection on this suit?

ALI: Suit six still has 77% of it's life exposure time remaining.

JAMAL: Good--please notify us as it hits 70, 60, 50, and so on.

ALI: Yes, Jamal.

JAMAL: And Wren... Just as a reminder. It's gonna take some time to hear back from Earth.

WREN: I know.

JAMAL: So we have to send off the message and hope they answer before we hit the far side of the sun.

WREN: That isn't helping.

JAMAL: Of course--that doesn't mean they won't get the message--it just means that you won't know.

WREN: Still not helping.

JAMAL: I just want you to be prepared.

WREN: I--I...never mind.

JAMAL: What?

WREN: I wonder if Earth is even out there. And if they are--why the hell would they care about me? I mean what could they even do?

JAMAL: At least they'll know you're here.

WREN: Is that enough?

JAMAL: It'll have to be. Don't get in your head, okay? Keep talking to me.

WREN: About what?

JAMAL: Um...I don't know. What do you miss about Earth?

WREN TAKES A FEW MORE STEPS.

WREN: That's a loaded question.

JAMAL: Is it?

WREN: What do *you* miss?

JAMAL: Easy. People. Simple human contact. Hugs. The ocean. The breeze. Food...Oxygen...

WREN: I'm approaching Capsule 2.

JAMAL: Really? Wait--(AT A SMALL DISANCE) Okay, good. I can see you now.

WREN: You can? Wait--where?

JAMAL: Capsule 8. Keep moving.

WREN: I'm lifting up my visor.

JAMAL: We don't have time for--

WREN: We absolutely have time for this...(LIFTS VISOR)...Wave back. I can't see you. (A BEAT) Can you see me?

JAMAL: (EMOTIONAL)...I can see you.

WREN: (SPOTTING HIM) ...*There* you are...

A BEAT.

You look good.

JAMAL: ...I've been better. Not gonna lie.

WREN: No, Jamal...*you look good*...

JAMAL: (SWALLOWING THE EMOTION) ...Time's ticking, Wren.

WREN: (ALSO TRYING TO REFOCUS) Yeah. I guess so...um...

SHE PUTS THE VISOR BACK DOWN.

Disconnecting failsafe tether.

JAMAL: Make sure you're holding onto something.

WREN: Roger that.

SHE DISCONNECTS IT.

Connecting tether to capsule two tether system.

SHE CONNECTS IT. AND STARTS MOVING.

Connected.

JAMAL: So answer me. What do you miss most about Earth?

WREN: (THINKS FOR A MOMENT)...People.

JAMAL: Really?

WREN: I'm an introvert, but--it's hard being alone this long. Trapped inside with your fears eating you alive. At least in Antarctica I could knit to distract my brain...but here...If it wasn't for you all this time--...my yarn would just be in one big knot...

JAMAL: ...You're about to move into direct sunlight.

WREN: I see that.

WE HEAR A THUD.

JAMAL: What? What was that?

WREN: There was just some debris that hit capsule 1.

JAMAL: I'll keep an eye on you from now on. Give you a heads up if I see anything coming your direction.

WREN: Okay...Moving into direct sunlight.

A BEAT. WREN DOESNT MOVE.

JAMAL: (GENTLE) What are you waiting for?

WREN: Nothing. Moving into direct sunlight.

WE HEAR HER MOVE FORWARD.

JAMAL: You okay?

WREN: Yeah. I just wanted to brace.

JAMAL: For what?

WREN: Just in case. I don't know. If the suit was going to fail or if it would suddenly get hot.

JAMAL: It's okay to be scared.

WREN: I'm terrified. I spent my life studying the sun as a...a force. I had no idea it'd be like this. Knowing I could make one mistake and fall into it...or just get too close and have it lash out and destroy everything. I mean...I knew it could. It's just--

JAMAL: Different now. I thought I understood death...and I currently have a very different perspective.

WREN: Sorry. I didn't mean to make you talk about it.

JAMAL: I've been begging you for *days* to talk about it.

WREN: I couldn't.

JAMAL: ...I know.

A SHUDDER ROLLS THROUGH THE SHIP.

We just had a sudder. Did you see a flash?

WREN: No. Nothing. (A BEAT) Do you think Eli was telling the truth?

JAMAL: I do *now*.

WREN: Are you scared to die? Like Eli was before?

JAMAL: I was.

WREN: What changed?

JAMAL: Time. Time to say goodbye in my messages. Time to think about my life and look back. Time for me to...

WREN: 'Mourn your other self?'

JAMAL: ...Yeah. I just want the people I love to be happy and okay. And I want to get you home. I want to complete my mission to the best of my ability...

WREN: You will.

A BEAT. JAMAL CLEARS HIS THROAT.

I'm at capsule three. Disconnecting the tether from two.

JAMAL: Make sure you're holding onto something.

WREN: I'm holding on, Jamal.

SHE DISCONNECTS THE TETHER.

Reconnecting to capsule three tether system.

SHE RECONNECTS AND CONTINUES MOVING FORWARD.

So what do we do to get me from the tether system to the network arm?

JAMAL: Right, well. You aren't gonna like this.

WREN: I don't like any of this.

JAMAL: I think you're gonna have to jump.

WREN: ...What?

JAMAL: Jump.

WREN: Around the side of the ship?!

JAMAL: No. Remember--there's no gravity in this situation. So you just have to jump from sensor encasement to sensor encasement. There are three of them at the far end of the capsule. If you kind of ramp up like a cat climbing a bookshelf you can then push up towards the base of the network arm and grab it. And you don't have to do it fast. Just...push off gently from one area to another.

WREN: But...*like a cat*?

JAMAL: *Slower*. And hold on to anything as it comes up. But don't lose your momentum. Take your time.

WREN: (UNSURE)...Okay...There's a lot of contradiction in what you just said.

JAMAL: You have to feel it. Be in the moment. Yeah?...We doing this?

WREN: I mean...What are my choices?

JAMAL: You've gone out of my visual range again--are you there?

WREN: Yeah, I'm close.

JAMAL: So--hold onto the tether system, and disconnect the tether when you're ready.

SHE DISCONNECTS.

WREN: I'm disconnected.

JAMAL: Alright...take a deep breath...and then push yourself in the direction of the box.

WREN: (TRYING TO PUT ON A BRAVE FACE) Just in case...you know--thank you for trying to help me not die.

JAMAL: Same to you.

THEY LAUGH LIGHTLY...

ALI: Suit six radiation deflection life exposure time is now at 70%.

A BEAT AS WREN PREPARES. WREN INHALES DEEPLY.

WREN: Now or never...

SHE 'LAUNCHES.' SHE TALKS LOUDER, BUT NOT YELLING.

Launched.

JAMAL: Great.

WREN: ...I'm on track.

JAMAL: Good.

WREN: About to make contact with the first encasement.

JAMAL: I see you again. Hit the surface running.

WREN: (QUICKLY) I'm going in hands first.

JAMAL: Run with your hands. Like you're doing the wheelbarrow.

A THUD. WREN OBSERVES THE IMPACT AND THEN WE HEAR HER BREATHING CHANGE AS SHE BEGINS TO SLOWLY WALK ON HER HANDS AND CHANGE HER TRAJECTORY.

That's it. You're doing it. You're doing great, Wren.

WREN: I never had a friend to do the wheelbarrow with.

JAMAL: Well, you don't need one in space! Now you just keep climbing up the second encasement!

WREN: Do I need to flip around?

JAMAL: Not yet. Keep the momentum going the way you're going. You're doing it, Wren.

WREN: When do I flip around?

JAMAL: At the end of the *third* encasement--you have to grip to stop momentum, but then you can plant your feet to push yourself towards the base of the arm.

WREN: And then I just grab onto the arm?

JAMAL: Yeah--the rover tethering system is there.

WREN: Launching to the third encasement.

JAMAL: You're doing great. Just a little more.

WREN: Okay--I'm slowing down...trying to grab the edge of the encasement.

JAMAL: Use a firm grip. Those gloves are thick.

WREN: Stopping. Stopping. Shit--shit--okay wait--no I'm okay...My right hand slipped off, but I got it. I'm good.

JAMAL: Last leg. You're almost there. Now just plant your feet and push yourself to the arm.

WREN: Okay. Hmpf--

SHE PUSHES OFF, BUT WE HEAR AN ODD CRUMPLE.

SHIT! JAMAL!

JAMAL: What's happening?!

WREN: The encasement broke off!

JAMAL: Look around--try to grab something!

WREN: I can't--I'm too far from the arm! Fuck...fuck!

JAMAL: Can you throw your tether to something, try to get it to catch?

WREN: Yeah--yeah--where the fuck is my tether...?

JAMAL: I think the attachment is behind you!

WREN: How do I turn around?!

JAMAL: (GLITCHING) You---sh--op--....

JAMAL TRIES TO KEEP TALKING BUT HIS SIGNAL IS
BREAKING UP.

WREN: JAMAL! ALI!

ALI: *Wren*--Prepare for impact!

WREN: (GLITCHING) WHAT? CAN ANYONE HEAR ME?! CAN--ONE--....

THE RADIO GLITCHES OUT. SILENCE.

END SCENE.

SCENE 3.

ALI: Post Solar Event. Approximate mission day: five hundred and fifty one.

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

RADIO STATIC BRINGS BACK IN THE DISTORTED VOICE OF
WREN BREATHING HEAVILY.

WREN: H--lo?! Hello?! Can you hear me?

JAMAL: (GLITCHING BACK IN) --hear--Wren?! Can you hear me?! I hear you now!

WREN: I'm here! I'm okay!

JAMAL: What happened?

WREN: Ali?!

ALI: Yes, Wren?

WREN: *Was that you?*

ALI: Yes, Wren.

WREN: A dish started extending and rotating--it turned out just enough to *catch* me.

JAMAL: What?!

ALI: It is a NASC dish. It is no longer in use because it was paired with sensors located on Capsule 7. I overrode the controls in order to stop Wren's trajectory.

WREN: And you overrode my naming protocol?

ALI: I needed to get your attention quickly.

WREN: Well--*thank you, Ali.*

WE CAN HEAR THAT WREN IS CLIMBING THE NETWORK
ARM--LIKE CLIMBING UP A LADDER TO RETURN TO THE
BASE.

ALI: It was the *least* I could do...Please verify successful use of sarcasm.

WREN: It was probably the best sarcasm I've ever heard.

ALI: Good. This will assist me when I interact with future crews on future missions.

WREN: I'm sorry I broke off the sensor encasement, Ali.

ALI: I feel no pain.

STARTING UNDER THE PREVIOUS LINE, JAMAL STARTS
HAVING A COUGHING FIT.

WREN: You okay, Jamal?

JAMAL: (COLLECTING HIMSELF) Air is just getting a little thin.

WREN: How much time do you have left?

JAMAL: I'm fine. Keep going. By the way--it's after midnight now...so...Good morning, Wren. It's day 552 of the Aethon's mission.

WREN: (BREATHING HEAVY FROM EXERTION) Good morning, Jamal. Look how far we made it! (SINCERE) And let me tell you, the sunrise is...spectacular.

THEY LAUGH SADLY.

JAMAL: Especially from where you are. Actually, where are you? I still can't see you.

JAMAL LAUGHS SOME MORE--AN EFFECT OF OXYGEN
DEPRIVATION.

WREN: Almost to the network arm base.

JAMAL: (QUIETS HIMSELF) ...Good. Once you get down there, you should see the rover system. You can tether to that.

WREN: I can see it from here.

JAMAL: ...I was so scared for you.

WREN: So was I. Thanks for caring.

JAMAL: Yeah.

WREN: And never giving up.

JAMAL: Yeah.

WREN: You never gave up. And I'm sorry I said you did.

JAMAL: It's okay.

WREN: I just want to say a million things--

JAMAL: Just...tell my echo the next time you see me.

WREN: Okay...I'm here. Latching into the tether system. Or I guess the rover system.

JAMAL: Six of one...

JAMAL LAUGHS TO HIMSELF AS SHE CONNECTS.

ALI: Suit six radiation deflection life exposure time is now at 60%.

WREN: Examining the panel here--the screws are stripped.

JAMAL: (HE CALMS DOWN) So it was definitely tampered with.

WREN: Yeah--Pulling the screwdriver out--

JAMAL: If the screws are stripped--

WREN: I know what to do. I'm placing the tether strap between the screwdriver and the screw. Turning. Applying pressure. (BIG EFFORT) There it goes--it gave...

JAMAL: You only have to unscrew it high enough so that you can use your fingers.

WREN: I know--one down. Am I replacing the panel?

JAMAL: What?

WREN: Do I need to put the panel back on, or can I lose the screw?

JAMAL: I mean--the Aethon has a hole ripped through it, so you may as well leave the panel off. It isn't pointed directly at the sun and it isn't part of the pressurization of the capsules, so--

WREN: Throwing the screw into space! Moving on to the second screw (EFFORT).

JAMAL: Making progress.

WREN: How much time do we have left? (A BEAT) Jamal?

JAMAL: ...We have time...

WREN: Enough time?

JAMAL: Never.

WREN: Ali--how long until we move out of range to contact Earth?

ALI: Approximately twenty minutes.

WREN: You don't know for sure?

ALI: My internal clock--

WREN: Yes--never mind--thank you. Second screw removed. Moving to third (EFFORT).

JAMAL: I thought you meant until I run out of air.

WREN: I did. You still answered my question...When I find out what CimmTech was doing--what they knew or planned or how they failed--they're going to pay for this.

JAMAL: No, no--Wren. Don't think of it like that right now.

WREN: What do you mean?...Moving to the fourth screw (EFFORT).

JAMAL: Revenge plays are always tragedies. That's not your story.

WREN: So what is my story?

JAMAL: ...It's gonna be a lot of things. It's gonna be an adventure. And sometimes a drama. Sometimes a thriller. Sometimes one of the most bizarre fantasy stories you've ever heard. But you don't get to decide.

WREN: I don't get to decide? I'm *living* it.

JAMAL: No one knows what their life means until it's over.

WREN: Other people decide what your life means?

JAMAL: I mean...yeah...That isn't fair but it's what it is. I'm a failure to my mother. I'm a friend who took risks to Chelsea. I'm a survivor to Taaj and Eli and Alex and anyone they knew. I'm a coward and traitor to Margaret. And what am I to you?

WREN: Fourth screw gone. How do I get the panel off?

JAMAL: See if you can kind of push on one side and pop it out.

WREN: Pushing is...difficult in space.

JAMAL: I know. Maybe hold onto something.

WREN: Um--okay, Pushing...nothing...I'm gonna jam it with the screwdriver.

JAMAL: Okay.

WREN: Sorry, Ali.

ALI: I feel no pain.

WREN: Right...ergh--!

WE HEAR A THUD AS SHE SLAMS THE SCREWDRIVER ON
THE EDGE OF THE PANEL.

Okay--I got it in...twisting it out--and---Panel's open.

THERE IS A NEW KIND OF BUZZING THAT WE HEAR
THROUGH THE SUIT.

JAMAL: What's in there? What do you see?

WREN: I--I don't know...I see--...There's part of--an engine, I think...under here.

JAMAL: What?

WREN: I think, another engine...I see a turbine at least. None of this is NASC.
And in the CimmTech schematics it was left blank...It's all CimmTech--but
I've never seen this kind of tech.

JAMAL: Where's the *rest* of the engine?

WREN: It continues under...I think it might take a good portion of Capsule 3.

JAMAL: Seriously?

WREN: The turbine is rotating? But the wheels are oloids? They're moving fast...maybe twelve of them? And it's glowing...Ali, is there heat from the engine I'm looking at?

ALI: I am unable to answer that question.

WREN: So it's CimmTech for sure.

JAMAL: Okay--that's--weird as hell. Remember this--but you need to find the communications link now.

WREN: Right, did you pull up the info from the CimmTech Manual?

JAMAL: Yeah--they put a router in place that overrides the NASC communication hub. Look for a box labeled...Sierra three two one Alpha nine.

A BEAT.

WREN: Found it. Yeah--it's wired into the NASC link. What do I do?

JAMAL: I don't know.

WREN: What?!

JAMAL: They didn't write up how to dismantle it! But the CimmTech box was added after the NASC links. Can you tell what wires you can cut that have been directed through the CimmTech box?

WREN: All the wires that go into the NASC communications box go down to one wire that is routed through the CimmTech box and then go to another wire that...I *think* goes into the network arm.

JAMAL: We have to remove the CimmTech box and join the wires.

WREN: Are you sure?

JAMAL: If CimmTech wanted to limit information getting back to Earth--then their communications box would be designed to limit the routing.

WREN: If I cut the wires and that was our only chance--

JAMAL: Then we can't reach Earth, Wren. This *is* your only chance. But it's the only chance you have.

WREN: Okay...getting wire-cutters out of my pocket...Cutting the wires...

WE HEAR, MUTED THROUGH THE SUIT, THE SOUND OF
HER CUTTING WIRES.

JAMAL: We just need one message to go out and one to come back. That's all.

WREN: If this side of the ship gets exposed to the sun without the shields--

JAMAL: If that side of the ship gets exposed--then there's already a lot more than shields going wrong.

WREN CUTS THE SECOND WIRE CONNECTION.

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

ALI: CimmTech Communications line has been severed. Network Arm is currently unable to connect. Please consult Manual Whiskey Foxtrot One forty three Delta five.

JAMAL: Well--that did something.

WREN: Stripping the wires to make a new connection.

JAMAL: (HE COUGHS) You're doing great, Wren. Stay focused.

WREN: You don't have to keep saying that.

JAMAL: I just don't want to have radio silence and I'm not sure what else I'm supposed to say.

WREN: Save your oxygen.

JAMAL: We're almost there. Not much point in keep my air anymore.

ALI: Suit six radiation deflection life exposure time is now at 50%.

WREN: Okay...rejoining wires....and...--

ELECTRONIC BLIP--DIFFERENT THAN ALL OTHERS.

ALI: Re-establishing Communications Link.

WREN: Ali, reactivate any communications link you had with CimmTech, and...and my private link that I had in earth orbit with NASC when we first started.

ALI: Re-establishing all Communications links.

WREN: Now what?

JAMAL: We wait...be ready to talk...

WREN: I've been ready.

A BEAT. MUSIC SWELLS.

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

ALI: Mission Control Located. Private link with Doctor Wren Guerrero online. Sending all emergency transmissions as assembled to Mission Control-- Offloading now.

BOTH JAMAL AND WREN EXHALE IN JOY AND RELIEF.

WREN: (AS FAST AS SHE CAN) Ali--Send the following message to Mission Control!

ALI: Recording.

WREN: Mayday! I'm here! I'm Wren! I'm alive! I'm on the Aethon and we've lost...so much. I can survive for two or three years, I think. But I'm *here!* Please tell me if you heard me! Please tell me if I'm not alone! I'm here! I'm here! Send transmission! Please help! *Send transmission, Ali!*

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

ALI: Transmission sent to Mission Control.

A BEAT AS THEY ABSORB THIS.

JAMAL: ...We did it.

WREN: ...We hope.

JAMAL LAUGHS.

JAMAL: It isn't funny.

WREN: I know.

JAMAL: The oxygen--

WREN: I know.

JAMAL: You were right. CimmTech prevented us from contacting Earth. We just didn't understand how.

WREN: I don't care right now...I--...I don't...I don't know what to do right now...

JAMAL: Why didn't they want us to contact Earth?

WREN: How long do you have Jamal?

JAMAL: Oh--you know...probably not long. But it's okay...I read up on suffocation so I know what to expect.

WREN: I'm gonna get back inside as fast as I can. Disconnecting from the tether system.

SHE DISCONNECTS.

JAMAL: So, with the third encasement gone, you're gonna have to jump from--

WREN: No, I don't. I can climb over this open panel, now there's more things to grab onto now, like the rover system, so I can get halfway to the second encasement.

JAMAL: Good. (HE INHALES A SHALLOW BREATH, AWKWARDLY) Do that.

WREN: Don't talk. I need you to hold on as long as you can. Don't let go.

JAMAL: Okay. *You* talk.

WREN: About what? Don't answer that. Um...climbing over the open panel...over the CimmTech engine...

WE HEAR A STRANGE SOUND AS SHE DOES--THIS ENGINE IS ALMOST NOT OF OUR WORLD.

Moving to the end of the open panel...Holding on...preparing for the jump...and...jumping...

Moving towards the encasement...slowly...like a cat...but slower....aaaaand....

A THUD.

Contact with the encasement....running with my hands, like wheelbarrow...using my momentum to carry to the other encasement....launching from encasement two to...contact with encasement one...continuing momentum...slowing down....slowing down....grabbing end of encasement--

JAMAL: There's debris coming at you from behind!

A THUD AS DEBRIS HITS THE SIDE OF THE SHIP.

WREN: Thank you. Avoided...I think that was a piece of medical equipment.

JAMAL: (A NEW THOUGHT)...Tell me about Jessa.

WREN: Stop talking, Jamal...But...I miss her. She approached me at my level and really made me feel like a friend. Just like you did...Even if it didn't last as long as I hoped...She stood with you--like I should have...Jumping to failsafe tether system on capsule three...launching now...

WE HEAR HER LAUNCH--AND HER BREATH AS SHE PUSHES OFF...

Grabbing the tether system.

A THUD AS SHE GRABS IT.

Ugh--Holding on. I won't let go. Securing Tether system.

SHE CONNECTS THE TETHER.

Secured. Moving back towards Capsule one...In truth...I miss everyone. Taaj and I never got close because I approached her like an enemy. At the end we both trusted something we shouldn't have...Eli was--in such desperate need of anyone--anyone to respect...And Alex who made me feel like someone special...but you...you...I wish I could have said more...done more...I don't know. I could have known everyone better...but I didn't...

JAMAL: You couldn't.

WREN: I can't--...I shouldn't be the one who survives.

JAMAL: Stop saying that.

WREN: You were all better people.

JAMAL: But you are going to survive...that's a fact...it doesn't matter your life before now.

ALI: Suit six radiation deflection life exposure time is now at 40%.

JAMAL: (VERY SHALLOW BREATHING) ...Your story...is a question mark. You can hope. You can dream. But half the stories you live will be known only by you. That's just the way of it.

WREN: What's 'it?'

JAMAL: Life. You can know one thing, but you can't know the other. We don't get to decide how we die, but we get to decide how we live.

WREN: We *don't* decide how to be born. How we come into this world.

JAMAL: No. But that's why it's *our* story in the *end*, if not at the beginning. We've been given this...*life*. What do we do with it?

WREN: I spent my life avoiding other people. Obsessing over work and the sun. Mistrusting people I should have always believed in.

JAMAL: You say you don't like people but you spent your life trying to help them.

WREN: It's dumb, I know.

JAMAL: *Trust people*. I know things went wrong this time--and I can't promise they won't go wrong in the future...but *trust* them. *Understand* them. *Listen* to them.

WREN: I will if I ever see anyone again.

JAMAL: You will. They'll send someone for you. I know it.

WREN: (A BEAT)...Chelsea was really lucky to know you. And so was I. (A BEAT, NARRATING HER EVA AS A DISTRACTION) Moving to Capsule 2 tether system.

JAMAL: Hold on to something..

WREN: You don't have to remind me every time.

JAMAL: I know...but what else am I gonna use my air for?

A BEAT.

WREN: Disconnecting from Capsule three tether system.

SHE DOES.

Connecting to Capsule 2 tether system.

SHE DOES.

Connected.

WREN BEGINS MOVING AGAIN.

JAMAL: Only two more legs.

WREN: I'm sorry, Jamal.

JAMAL: You don't have to keep saying that, either.

WREN: You were my...friend. You always were. And I let doubt and fear and insecurity...I made mistakes.

JAMAL: All of us do. But you know what? I'm trying to make my life have worth by saving you. Make *your* life have worth it by getting home. By changing the world.

WREN: That's a lot to ask of someone who hid in Antarctica for three years.

JAMAL: You didn't hide. You were reborn. That's all we do. We get destroyed and have to rebirth ourselves. Make ourselves new.

WREN: ...We speak in wonders.

JAMAL: We do...but it's a language we have to teach others.

WREN: I'm at--I'm at...Capsule 1. Disconnecting from Capsule two tether system .

SHE DOES.

Connecting to Capsule 1 tether system.

SHE DOES.

Connected.

WREN BEGINS MOVING AGAIN.

ALI: Suit six radiation deflection life exposure time is now at 30%.

JAMAL COUGHS.

JAMAL: My levels are pretty low at this point.

WREN: Sit down. Stop looking out your window.

JAMAL: ...I'm only sitting down because I got dizzy for a second there. I wanted to watch you get back.

WREN: I'll be out of sight soon.

JAMAL: I wanted to watch you the whole way.

WREN: (FALSE HOPE) Well--technically you already saw me get back in the airlock, right? (NO RESPONSE)...You know what I'm going to miss *most* about Earth?

JAMAL: What?

WREN: Being somewhere. Standing somewhere definitive. Not being somewhere in relation to somewhere else. And...and having someone *know* that I'm there. And someone that cares that I'm there. Not hiding alone. Not being alone.

JAMAL: ...Being human.

A BEAT.

WREN: I hate being a burden on other people.

JAMAL: You can't help people loving you. For better or worse. (A BEAT) ...I loved you.

WREN: I know.

JAMAL: I don't mean--

WREN: I know.

JAMAL: But I did.

WREN: I'm back at the airlock.

JAMAL: Good. Climb inside. Hold onto something. Detach your safety tether.

WREN: Holding on...detaching tether.

SHE DETACHES.

Detached.

JAMAL: Ali--please close the airlock.

ALI: Yes, Jamal.

WREN: Hold on for me.

ELECTRONIC BLIP--THE AIRLOCK DOOR CLOSES AND THEN BEGINS REPRESSURIZING. JAMAL STARTS LAUGHING LIGHTLY TO HIMSELF.

WREN: Why are you laughing?

JAMAL: I don't know...what else can I do? We knew this would happen and it took us so long to understand what it was...Why are humans like this?

WREN: Try and exhale longer than your inhales, okay?

A BEAT.

WREN: (LOOKING FOR ANYTHING TO TALK ABOUT) Do--...Do you think we're gonna hear back from Earth?

JAMAL: I hope so. At least Earth has a chance of hearing you.

WREN: ...Jamal...I wish I could do this all again. I wish I could go back--

JAMAL: Wren...stop...We have a few minutes before we orbit out of range...but I don't think I'm going to make it.

WREN: No. Please--

JAMAL: It's okay...Wren...

WREN: What if--...I don't know what to do now.

JAMAL: You'll figure it out.

WREN: (DEEP BREATH)... "When the bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix..."

JAMAL: ...You memorized it?

WREN: "Her ashes new create another heir,

As great in admiration as herself.

So shall she leave her blessedness to one,

When heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness...."

JAMAL:Thank you, Wren. We all have other selves, but I'm glad I knew *this* you.

A SHUDDER HAPPENS--THE ALARM BEGINS....

ALI: (INTERCOM SPEAKERS, REPEATING) Altitude warning. Reactor Failure.

WREN: ...I have to get to the safety harness--

JAMAL: Run the program.

WREN: Just in case--

JAMAL: Run the program, Wren.

WREN: ...Ali...*run the file 'Margaret.'*

ALI: Running 'Margaret dot NTR'

A MOMENT OF WAIT...THEN THE ALARMS TURN OFF AND
THE 'ALL-CLEAR' ELECTRONIC BLIP SOUNDS.

All systems nominal.

JAMAL: ...I told you I'd get you home.

A BEAT.

WREN: Ali...please rename the file 'Margaret' as 'Jamal.'

ALI: File renamed as 'Jamal.'

ELECTRONIC BLIP.

ALI: Airlock has been repressurized. Wren, you may remove your helmet.

WREN UNSEALS HER HELMET AND THE AUDIO RETURNS
TO CAPSULE 1. JAMAL OVER SPEAKERS. HIS VOICE IS
WEAKER BY THE MOMENT WITH VERY SHALLOW
BREATHS. WREN IS BARELY KEEPING IT TOGETHER.

WREN: (HOPEFUL)...We can keep waiting, right? Just a little longer?

JAMAL: ...I don't think so...

WREN: Jamal-Jamal, I--...

JAMAL: It's okay, Wren.

WREN: ...Jamal...I love you....

A BEAT.

JAMAL: ...*Burn bright, Phoenix...*

A LONG MOMENT. WREN ISN'T SURE WHAT TO DO.

WREN: ...Jamal?...*(SILENCE)*...Jamal?!...*(SILENCE)*

A MOMENT.

ALI: Vital signs no longer detected in Capsules eight and nine. Capsules eight and nine, powering down life support systems. Messaging disconnected.

ELECTRONIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE.

WREN: ...Jamal...I--...

AND THEN THE AIRLOCK DOORS FINALLY UNLOCK FOR CAPSULE 1. WREN'S BREATHING CHANGES, GETS SHALLOW,

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AGES, WREN CRIES. SHE IS TRULY ALONE.

WE SIT WITH THIS FOR A TIME.

...LONGER...

THEN: A STATIC BURST ON THE RADIO.

ANOTHER BURST.

OUT OF THE STATIC COMES A FAMILIAR VOICE...

AARAV PATEL:

(SPEAKERS, OVERJOYED)--Mission Control to Aethon! Mission control to Aethon! This is Aarav!...*Aarav to Wren!...We hear you!* We read you loud and clear! We're coming for you! We'll be there when you come around the other side. We're coming for you! Repeat, we're coming for---
oo--sta--

STATIC WIPES OUT THE AUDIO FROM AARAV.

WREN CRIES HARDER. THIS TIME, HER SADNESS IS
TINGED WITH HOPE AND ACCEPTANCE.

THE RADIO TRANSMISSION FADES INTO STATIC AS THE
AETHON TRANSITS TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE SUN...

A FEW MORE STATIC BURSTS BEFORE...

SILENCE.

END OF SCENE.

END OF EPISODE.