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Floating in Nothing

In his unpigmented suit and tar black lunar boots, the man floated his bulky body, now only one-sixth of the weight it was on earth, towards the dusty ground. The shiny tint of orange rays beamed off the side of the round, glass globe on his head as he made his way down a thin gray ladder. Step by step, the man carefully maneuvered his nearly weightless body in the direction which gravity was pulling him, always keeping his eye on where his foot would fall next. The distance between the spacecraft--lined with something that looked like a large, dark, orange piece of tinfoil--and the ground seemed like a gap more massive than the grand canyon. Slowly but surely, the man floated downwards while only feeling a partial amount of weight from the enormous oxygen purge system and portable life support system attached to his back. Clenching his hands tightly to the side of the silvery ladder, the man initiated his final descent, and subsequent landing, by thrusting himself perpendicularly to the ship. This event left the man suspended in nothingness for what seemed like an eternity, floating at a sideways angle towards the ground while his body simultaneously levitated within his suit. The pace of his breath began to steady as he pictured himself like a jellyfish suspended within the incredible depths of the ocean, calmly making its way to the bottom of the sea.

Once connected to the ground like a piece of kelp in the sand, he looked out into the distance. All he could see was darkness, and more darkness followed every so often by faint shimmering lights from distant stars. Rotating his tense head to analyze the horizon of the dusty colorless planet further, the man’s somber gaze landed on a blue orb populated with scattered white blotches: this was home. Shivers ran through his body, and the goosebumps running up and down his arm scratched irritatingly along the coarse snowy material that encapsulated his body. As the pace of his breathing increased, the glass shield protecting him from the outer vacuum of space fogged up, distorting the vision of home he had moments prior. The smokey fog matched the strands of silver hair in his bushy beard and long, blonde hair.

After the fog dispersed into tiny water droplets and slid across the slick pane in front of his face, he gazed into the distance at the blue orb once more. A small hot tear slipped down the side of the man’s chiseled face as he pictured his family that was now over two-hundred thousand miles away. The man stared into the vast nothingness of space, and his tattered feet shifted uneasily in the gravel-like ground, making soft crunching noises that were inaudible in the vast abyss of nothingness.

His rough palms began to sweat, body tense. A bead of salty water started to slither down his broad hairy chest. The man’s hazel eyes widened as a minuscule piece of debris flew in his direction at a staggering speed. The tiny object bolted towards the man, shining like a pearl in the sun, as he attempted to move out of the way as fast as was physically possible. His boots scratched against the rugged surface of the ground as he tried to propel himself in the opposite direction of the object, but there was not enough time. *Pow!* An intense hissing noise was now present from an area on the right side of his pants next to his urine collection transfer assembly connector. Yellow liquid floated in front of his suit as warm blood trickled down his hairy leg and made a small pool in between his big toe and middle toe after seeping through his bleached cotton sock. The leg was the least of the man’s worries on the other hand. The oxygen in his suit was rapidly depleting, and soon he would be left with no more air to breathe. He checked the pressure gauge of the suit on his right arm to estimate how much time he had before he would go into cardiac arrest: one minute. Simultaneously, the man was thrust in a circular motion, making his body pirouette like a ballerina. Grasping for a utility compartment on the backside of his armor, he rummaged hastily through materials in search of the one thing that would save his life. Finally, he felt the squishy wad of Kapton tape stuck to his pressure glove and viciously pulled it out. He reached down and smothered the hole with the material that resembled a thick glob of black electric tape. The pressure within the suit started to stabilize, but the man’s heart still pulsated faster than it ever had after running on earth: there was still a hiss coming from his suit.

The piece of debris that had punctured his suit had only grazed his leg and came out the other side, creating two holes instead of just one. Going back to search through the same compartment in which he found his original saving material, the man now found nothing. Pirouetting around, he was able to see that all of the objects from the compartment were drifting into space. A screwdriver, a recycled-plastic pouch with water, photos of the smiling faces of his family, and the rest of the black Kapton tape drifted away into the distance: there was no way to reach them. His breath shortened and he hastily attempted to plug the hole in his suit with his hand, but the unsatisfying squeal of air leaking continued. He started seeing stars twinkle in his vision, and his head felt as if it was inflating like a hot-air balloon. With no oxygen in space, he started having the bends, and he knew that soon he would go into cardiac arrest. He stopped flailing around for a solution: this was the end for him. He drew his final breath while staring back at home.