

Echoes of the Void

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FADE IN:

INT. FUTURE NASA SPACESHIP - SPACE

The scene opens with alarms blaring and sparks shooting out of the walls and ceiling. We see ELI WARD (late 20s, lean build, efficient, and compassionate) run into frame holding a fire extinguisher running over to a small fire that has started on one of the control panels.

ELI

ECHO, what the hell was that!

A female AI voice comes over the intercom of the ship.

ECHO

That was a solar storm. It has shorted out all main systems.

ELI

Well reboot the damn ship.

Eli finishes spraying the fire extinguisher putting out the rest of the fire.

Then the everything shuts off except the oxygen and Eli begins to float.

ECHO

Rebooting now.

ELI

You should have woke me up from cyro if we were about to go through a storm.

ECHO

I did sir, it came out of nowhere, there was no time to warn you before it hit.

Right then, the power comes back on with screens and lights turning on around him, he then drops back to his feet.

Eli sighs in relief.

ELI

How much further to LV-427?

ECHO

Still around 6 years' time, away from the planet sir.

ELI
 (to himself)
 Why did I pick this job?

ECHO
 Systems appear to all be back
 online.

ELI
 Thank God.

Eli makes his way back to his cryo sleep pod and types in his combo into the controls and the glass on the pods slides down opening up for him to climb inside.

As he starts to get back into the pod to go back to sleep to continue the mission, a light begins flashing on the main console, followed by a signaling beeping sound.

ELI (CONT'D)
 Echo?

ECHO
 Seems to be some kind signal sir.

ELI
 What? How? Who sent it?

ECHO
 I'm not sure looks to be a distress
 signal though, weak and fading.
 Seems to be around 800 miles from
 here.

ELI
 800 miles from here in any
 direction is still deep space.
 Someone is stuck out there! When
 was the signal sent?

ECHO
 We won't be able to know, it's on a
 repeating cycle repeating every 6
 hours, and has been for who knows
 how long.

Eli sits back up from the pod and heads over to main computer that's flashing and beeping.

Eli taps the screen and signal enlarges; he then drags the signal over to a deep space navigational map and releases his finger from the screen, the signal then redirects on the map showing Eli where the signal is coming from and a route to get there.

ELI

There it is.

ECHO

That's 800 miles off course. What about the mission, we have to establish that operations base on LV 427. NASA and the world are counting on us to get the colony started.

ELI

I know, I know but it's only 800 miles, let's at least go and check it out.

ECHO

Sir I really think we should stay on mission.

ELI

Just give me the controls.

Eli walks over to the main control panel and sits down in the chair and grabs the stick controls and presses a button to switch the ship to manual control.

Eli redirects the ship about 80 degrees to the right and activates the ships engines and starts flying towards the beacon.

After a while they start to see where the beacon is coming from. A small shape is coming into view.

ELI (CONT'D)

What is that?

ECHO

I believe that is another craft sir.

As Echo is saying this the old shuttle starts to rotate to reveal an old and faded NASA logo.

ELI

What the hell?

They get closer and see that the craft is a very old NASA shuttle that looks to have been out in space for years maybe even decades.

ELI (CONT'D)

We have to get aboard now.

ECHO

Sir we don't know who or what could
be on that craft.

Eli gets up from his chair and heads over to a different part of the ship where his locker is and presses a button, a door then slides up to reveal his space suit.

ELI

I don't care; someone could be in
trouble.

Eli starts to put on his suit.

ELI (CONT'D)

Echo takes the controls, get us
close and prepare to board.

Echo takes back the control of the ship and starts redirecting it towards the old shuttle.

As Eli is finishing putting on his space suit, the ship starts rotating to align with the shuttle's door.

ECHO

Crafts aligned. Extending bridge
now.

A tube then extends from the ship connecting with the shuttle's side door. Gas then spills out the sides of the tube.

ECHO (CONT'D)

Bridge sealed.

Eli walks over to the door and opens it revealing an extended hallway leading to the shuttle now, instead of deep space.

As soon as Eli enters the bridge, he begins to float due the lack of gravity in the bridge.

Once he floated over to the other side where the shuttle door is, he grabs the latch and pulls up opening the door. As he is opening the door he sees something written on the side of the craft.

ELI

(Says to himself)

"Orion 5 2083", What the hell...
Echo, that's almost 60 years ago!

Eli opens the door fully and walks into the vacuum chamber, he then turns on his helmet flashlight and shuts the door behind him.

While still floating, Eli then opens the second door to get into the shuttle itself, exiting the shuttles vacuum chamber.

INT. OLD NASA SHUTTLE - SPACE

As he enters the shuttle is completely powered down it seems, so he shuts the door behind him and floats over to the main control panel in the cockpit.

ELI
Echo, what is that?

Eli points at a blinking light on the controls.

ECHO
(Through Eli's helmet)
That's the signal sir.

Eli then presses some buttons on the controls, and the shuttle starts to power on.

ELI
There, now we can see. There should
be enough emergency power to last
us a couple hours.

Eli switches off his helmet light, then drops to the floor of the shuttle as the gravity generators turn on

ECHO
Gravity and oxygen are back on.

Eli then removes his helmet and sets it on a table next to him. As he is surveying the room, he sees an old cryo pod in the back corner of the craft.

ELI
There!

He makes his way over to the pod, and wipes dust off the glass to reveal a man still asleep in the pod. Next to the glass has some writing, Eli wipes the dust off some more.

ELI (CONT'D)
"NASA Pilot James Hale"

Eli then presses a button on the control panel of the pod, and it begins vent gas out of the sides of the pod. Then lights turn on from the inside as the frost on the glass begins to melt.

The glass then raises up opening the pod. Once the glass is completely raised, the man, JAMES HALE (early 50s, bulkier build, serious) wakes up gasping for air and coughing.

ELI (CONT'D)

Easy now, you've been asleep for a long-time man. James, right? I'm Eli.

James then swings his legs out of the pod, setting his feet on the shuttle's floor. He then looks up at Eli

JAMES

God it's nice to finally see another face, you have no idea.

ELI

I can only imagine sir.

JAMES

What year is it.

ELI

Uh...2140.

James sets his face in his palms.

JAMES

(to himself)

Those bastards.

ELI

What? Who?

James sits up and faces Eli. He notices his suit has a NASA logo on his right sleeve.

JAMES

NASA... seems they are still running the show back home.

ELI

NASA? Well yeah, they run all Earth's space missions. They sent me to scout out a planet to start a new human colony on the newly discovered planet LV-427.

James starts to stand up; his legs are shaky and weak from the long sleep.

JAMES

Sounds familiar.

ELI
(curious)
What do you mean?

JAMES
I had the same mission, but to LV-398.

James walks over to a wall with a small closet with a robe hanging inside and puts it on. He then sits down in a chair that's sitting at a table.

JAMES (CONT'D)
The Earth has been overpopulated ever since the 2070s and they have been looking for possible "Life Viable" planets to branch out at before we start running out of recourses.

ELI
Of course, that's why I'm on this mission.

JAMES
But I was the first mission tasked to start a colony, before it all went to shit.

ELI
What happened?

JAMES
Once I got to LV-398, the planet seemed perfect... until it wasn't. The planet wasn't as barren as we thought.

ELI
What do you mean?

JAMES
The planet was a host for these humanoid lifeforms...and I...I can't talk about it.

James's memory flashes back to him on LV-398 and remembers encountering human like lifeforms but with a whiter and ashier complexion and around 8 feet tall on average.

ELI
Wait, you're telling me there are aliens out there?

JAMES

Once I tried to make contact, they instantly became aggressive.

Jame's memory again flashes back to him getting spears and arrows shot at him while he turns to run back to the shuttle.

Jame's closes his eyes and shakes his head to come back to the present situation.

ELI

Easy man, you alright? And how did you get stuck out here?

JAMES

I'll be fine, just been awhile since I've thought about this and this is the first time I've ever talked about it.

Another flashback happens while James talks.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(Voice-over flashback)

But I ran as fast as I could back to the shuttle and as I was taking off some kind of spear hit my left thruster, causing it to short out as I was exiting the atmosphere. Leaving me stranded in deep space.

Flash-back ends.

ELI

And no one was sent to rescue you?!

JAMES

I sent out a signal and stayed awake for almost 5 years aboard this ship waiting for someone to come rescue me, but no one ever came. Finally, after oxygen and recourses started to run out, I gave up and went to sleep in the cryo pod with no wake-up date.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I came to the conclusion, they must not have wanted this information getting out, so they left me.

ELI

(Angry and concerned)

What the hell!

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

How have I never heard of this?!
I'm NASA's top astronaut and they
never told me we made first contact
and that we aren't alone in the
universe!

James looks towards Eli more seriously.

JAMES

Same reason they ignored my beacons
and left me out here.

Eli pauses to think and stumbles back into a chair setting
his face in his hands.

Eli then looks up angry and confused.

ELI

(angry)

But why would NASA want to keep
this quite?!

James looks back towards Eli with a serious and concerned
look.

FADE OUT.