

The Smugglers Apprentice - Fiction Podcast Short

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INTRO MUSIC

Int: Cockpit of a Spaceship in some far off galaxy.

[SFX: Mechanical hum of a spaceship]

Narrator:

Mason felt as if he wasn't supposed to be sitting in the jumpseat. The worn padding and the stabbing metal of the frame were digging into the back of his legs. The once familiar instrument panel of the rugged spaceship now looked foreign and hieroglyphic. The whizzing lights of unfathomable colors and shapes made his head spin as they entered hyperspace. He saw his reflection staring back at him, green eyes, mussed hair, and tanned skin with a look of utter bewilderment shining clearly through the lights. It had been around three years since he left his home planet of Ajamu. It was plagued by the Dartford virus for half a decade. The Trustful ones, the sworn protectors of Ajamu were nothing but crooked oligarchs hoarding the last of the planet's supplies and used a militant police force by the name of the Guards to protect the status quo and keep ninety percent of what was left of the population down. Mason had been alone since the age of thirteen after his mother had died of the crippling disease. With no other choice he had to resort to stealing, extortion, and scamming just to get enough to eat. It was two years of just plain survival before the opportunity of escape collided with his life and with all other

options exhausted, he made the decision to leave his dying world behind with the help of one the least known smuggler's in all the galaxies.

[SFX: Mechanical hum grows in intensity]

Narrator:

The rugged ship's hyperdrive kicked in even harder and the lights of the hyperspace caused his mind to race faster and faster. While trying to maintain his grip on reality he hastily shifted his gaze down to his hands. The scar of a former life stung when his eyes met it. As if the knife was still carving those godforsaken circles into the back of his left hand. Mason could still hear them laughing at him for crying.

[SFX: Reverb laughing and soft crying.]

Scene Change to a dirty alleyway in a massive futuristic city.

[SFX: Sounds of people, dogs barking, and cars can be heard in the distance.]

Narrator:

The dirty alleyway was plagued with an unforgettable stench. Dead strays, rotting garbage, and the gang of unwashed boys all yelling at Mason to toughen up and accept the infamous circle

scar. Mason looked up for a moment, at the smog filled Allesplatz sky, truly questioning if this had become his new reality. The few vans and speeders floated overhead stirring up the dust and dirt floating throughout the sullen air. He saw the 'clean' clothing hanging off lines as smoke slithered out of the makeshift chimneys poking out of the metal building's windows. It had only been a month since he had his mother cremated. There were no burials anymore, not since the Dartford virus killed a third of his homeworld. He felt a magnetic pulse as another guard van floated past the entrance to the alleyway.

[SFX: Magnetic car passing]

Tyle: Is the coast clear?

Gang Member 1: Yeah, we're clear.

Narrator:

Tyle was the leader of the self-proclaimed infamous Second street gang. He was a tall young man already reaching the height of one-hundred ninety centimeters by the age of sixteen. He moved and spoke in the manner of a General. Although his army of orphans, runaways, and thieves were some of the foulest smelling and often sick boys, he was always healthy, clean, well-fed, and most importantly well dressed. He would often claim he was immune to the Dartford virus, but then other times he would say he knew the cure but was being silenced by the guard and the Trustful ones. He knew his words would be eaten up like the last ration packet from the airdrop.

Tyle:

Bronson! Prepare the blade!

Narrator:

Bronson rose from a knelt position, however, he gained very little in height. He was a very small boy barely taller than Mason. A double chin and bubble cheeks only made his pig-like nose protrude further upwards into the narrow slits that could be mistaken for eyes. His title was second in command but in reality he was just Tyle's unwavering slave. Bronson would follow any order given no matter the morals or intent. His sausage fingers gingerly stroked the crude makeshift pocket knife as he dipped the blade into a night-black liquid.

[SFX: Knife being dipped and scraping against a bowl]

Tyle :

Listen here Mason, this here is the cure to everything! Even death itself.

Narrator:

Bronson forced Mason down onto his knees, the coarse stones and dirt of the alley digging into his skin, bringing tears into Mason's eyes.

[SFX: Sounds of gravel being ground]

Tyle:

Thirteen years old and still crying, ha! Does the little baby need his mommy?

Narrator:

Tyle grabbed Mason's left hand at the wrist and jammed the tip of the knife down hard into the backside of Mason's hand and started the carving. Mason could feel the blowtorch of pain telling every part of his body to run as fast and as far away as he could. Mason instinctively tried to jerk his hand back but Tyle held fast and paused to press the knife down harder.

Mason:

(Screams in muffled pain)

Bronson:

Oh what? Can't handle a few cuts?

Mason:

SHUT UP! (PAUSE AND BREATHE) I am not a baby, I can do this!

All members of the gang:

(Loud gasps and sounds of awe)

[SFX: Slap to the face]

Tyle:

(FURY) DON'T YOU EVER DISRESPECT ME! I am your General and you will treat me as such.

Narrator:

Blood dripped down his hand and pooled into the dirty alleyway as Tyle continued slicing the emblem into Mason's hand. Mason closed his eyes and thought only of his mother. Before the doctor's visits and hospital beds.

[SFX: Reverb Ambulance Sirens.]

Narrator:

Before the glass "quarantine" prison where he couldn't even feel the soft touch of her hands holding his. Before the soft glow of her face in the midnight sun had turned to pale yellow as the Dartford virus took hold. Before her piercing green eyes that could stop even a guardsman in his tracks turned into white galaxies of an unseen horror.

Tyle:

You're a member of the Second Street Gang now, we are soldiers! (PAUSE) Impervious to all enemies, both on and off-planet! NO disease will sicken us! NO guards will stop us, NO invaders will conquer us, soon the whole world of Ajamu will know the name, Mason Castillo the third.

All members of the gang:

(Cheer and shout)

Narrator:

The rest of the Blood Baboons gang surrounded Mason, cheering and shoving him, giving a sense of a new family. Though his hand was aching it was the first time he was able to crack even a half-smile.

One of the smaller boys sheepishly sauntered up to Mason. He had long greasy hair tangled into a billion knots, almost reaching the points of dreadlocks falling out of a dirt-covered beanie. He was barefoot with torn cut-off pants unsuccessfully hiding a long burn scar down his left leg.

Smaller boy:

(STUTTER) M-m-mason was it?

Mason:

(IN PAIN) Yeah, what do you want?

Smaller boy:

(STUTTER) S-s-sorry, I just thought maybe you needed some help with your hand. I'm M-m-mortiz, I have some bandages if you'd like. I s-s-stole s-s-some from Tyle. It's good stuff.

Narrator:

The pair left the main group down a smaller alleyway. With seeming psychic power Mortiz pressed a small panel in the seamless metal building and a microscopic tunnel creaked open.

[SFX: small gears turning and metal door slowly opening]

Mortiz:

(STUTTER) Come on in here M-m-mason.

Narrator:

Mason, looking around, was a bit apprehensive and hesitated to step in.

Mortiz:

(STUTTER) M-m-mason, come on I don't bite. (PAUSE) Not even Tyle knows about this place.

Narrator:

Mason, against his better judgment stepped into the tunnel. After a brief moment and as his eyes adjusted to the light, he realized why Mortiz didn't tell Tyle about this place. It was a million times better than the "war camp" Tyle had provided for all the boys. A soft double bed held up by a single stripped hover motor, mostly clean sheets, the soft glow of old chem tubes dropped during the initial outbreak lit the grotto in a warm but haunted glow.

Mortiz:

(STUTTER) Come on s-s-sit down, I'll s-sort out your hand.

Mason:

Where did you get this Mortiz?

Mortiz:

Where did I get what?

Mason:

This place, I mean like the bed, the motor, the lights?

Mortiz:

Oh, right... (TRAIL) I..I mean we s-s-stole it. I'm not proud of it.

Mason:

Okay but, from where, or better question from whom?

Mortiz :

Look! I s-s-said I'm not proud of it, what does it matter? M-mason you were lucky, Tyle went much easier on you than me.

[SFX: Bandage ripping as Mortiz bandaged Mason's hand.]

Mason:

What do you mean?

Mortiz :

Oh well, I m-mean for me they were ruthless. I was one of the first recruits and Tyle was insistent that we must feel the most pain to make us into s-s-soldiers.

(Mortiz mocks Tyle's voice)

You are soldiers! You feel no pain! You know no fear!

(Mortiz reverts to his normal voice)

That's just a load of crap, all we do is s-steal food and beg for what little credits people are willing to give, and then Tyle and the fat pig Bronson just take it and leave us the s-s-scraps.

Mason :

Oh so is that how your leg got burned?

Mortiz:

(Unintelligible) No, m-m-m-mm-m-m-mom and dad were killed. During the frfr-frfr friss first blackouts.

Mason:

It's okay Mortiz, you don't have to tell me if you don't want to.

Mortiz:

(STUTTER) N-nna-no it's okay Mason.

(Breathe)

During the first blackouts, my parents had used candles to light everything in our apartment. They didn't trust the Guards so they refused any and all help, always telling me 'M-M-Moritz you must only trust yourself! You must be s-s-self-reliant!' They would always have more than enough food but would never share. They didn't want to be helped nor did they think anyone s-s-should help anyone else. One night the ration drop didn't come, neither did the next, nor the following. I think it was a full week without rations. One of the neighbors found out my parents s-s-still had food left and demanded they s-s-shared. When they refused, a few of the neighbors had broken down the door to our apartment knocking over a few candles in the process.

[SFX: Sound of fire spreading.]

Mortiz:

The fire soon s-s-spread and trapped me in my room. I heard the gunshots that killed both my parents and I can still feel the piece of burning wood that came down on my leg.

[SFX: Gunshots and people screaming.]

Narrator:

Mason just sat there speechless. Not sure of what to say next he just held on to Mortiz's shoulder knowing there was nothing that he could say to ever compare to Mortiz's story.

Mortiz:

What happened to your parents?

Mason:

Oh well, I only ever knew my mom. My mom always told me that my dad was a famous explorer and was on a big mission for the guards that I couldn't be told about. I know now that was a lie, but at the time it was the greatest story ever told. I really wanted to be like him. Do great things for the Guard. But, I guess we both know that truth.

Mortiz:

What happened to your mom?

Mason :

Oh, she was just a simple healer but was soon transferred to the medics guild during the outbreak, and well, you know how well the Trusted Ones treated the guild.

Mortiz:

I'm so sorry M-m-mason. I'm not sure what to say.

Mason:

It's fine. I mean what is there to say? The Trusted Ones always said how much the guild was a group of the bravest heroes Ajamu would ever know. And my family name is on a cracked wall that no one has looked at in well over a year and now I have to steal and beg just to survive.

What a grand life we live.

Snap out of the flashback

[SFX: Alarms blaring in the cockpit of the spaceship.]

Narrator:

Mason snapped back to reality with every single one of the ship's alarms and warnings blaring at him and the captain, Mahaaguru, yelling. Mahaaguru was an older man, however, the only indication was the wisps of grey in his jet black beard. He was bald but had several cryptic tattoos covering the back of his neck all the way down to his hands and feet. He was very dark in his complexion but he never had told Mason which planet he had come from, only that he had seen tremendous interstellar travel and never to ask a man where they are from.

Mason:

Shit, Mahaa what's happening!

Mahaa:

I don't know Mason, you've been with Titania for two years now what do you think?

[SFX: Engines shutdown fully]

Mason:

I don't know, there is always something wrong with this piece of sh..(interrupted)

[SFX: Slap to the back of the head]

Mahaa:

Mason, focus! What are the readings?

Mason:

Okay, okay, it's saying that the drive is overheating and we have zero pressure in the reactor core.

Mahaa:

Good Mason, what's next?

Mason:

Okay um, crap, oh! I know I need to drop the spent fuel rods, crack the vent and let all the heat out of the back hole thing.

Mahaa:

(SIGH) You mean the exhaust port?

Mason:

Yeah, of course, that's what I said.

Mahaa:

Okay, so then what are you waiting for Mason?

Mason:

Wait, while I go fix the engine what are you going to do?

Mahaa:

Oh Mason it is very simple, I am going to go make tea. (LAUGH)

Narrator:

Mason got up with a huff to dawn his spacesuit and took one look out the window before asking.

There was nothing but inky blackness and the few dim fairy lights of distant stars.

Mason:

Hold on, Mahaa aren't we in uncharted territory? What if there are bandits?

Mahaa:

Space pirates? You can't be serious Mason, perhaps this is uncharted territory for you but I've already seen this part of this galaxy, there's nothing here.

Mason:

(QUIETLY) Oh yeah because you've seen the whole universe.

Mahaa:

What was that?!

Mason:

Nothing!

[SFX: Airlock opening]

Narrator:

Mason finished putting on his spacesuit and squeezed the tight helmet over his head. He finished tying off all the tools to his belt with bungee cords and with the doors locking behind him he slammed the glowing red button to open the door to the outside of the ship.

[SFX: Airlock closing]

Narrator:

Even though had gone on dozens of spacewalks to fix up the Titania over the years he had spent with Mahaa he still felt his stomach lurch as he took his first step off the edge. He had grown accustomed to the different planets and suns to greet him during the break downs. But this time was different, Mason had never been this deep into space before. Only the smallest pixels of lights from distant suns were able to pierce his eyes. Something about this spacewalk felt wrong. Barely able to see he went to flip on his helmet lights on and with the press of a small button on the table on his wrist, nothing.

[SFX: Tablet beeps and error sounds.]

Narrator:

He jammed down harder on his tablet but still nothing. Mason, feeling frustrated, gave one big knock to the side of his helmet and with clear annoyance, the lights flickered on.

Mason:

(Internal Mono) Finally, you stupid thing.

Mason:

(RADIO) Mahaa comms check?

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Mason, I may have been in a military, but I'm not your commander nor are you a soldier. You can just say hello.

Mason:

(RADIO) Oh right sorry, old habits die hard I guess.

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Indeed they do. Well hurry up, if you're worried about the space pirates then I wouldn't want to be outside for long. (LAUGH)

[SFX: Tea kettle whistle]

Mason begins his crawl along the ship and sounds of metal gear clanging and heavy boots stomping on the ship are heard

Mason:

(RADIO) So Mahaa, want to finally tell me which planet's military you served in?

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Why does it matter Mason? Haven't I always said that all Militaries are the same? No matter who's in charge. No one really fights a war but the top brass, everyone else is just a civilian casualty.

Mason:

(RADIO) Yeah true, but then how do you explain your piloting and weapons knowledge? I mean for the love of god you have a panel in the ship just dedicated to just rifles. Speaking of, when can I finally start carrying one of the rifles? No offense but my little pistol doesn't really do it for me.

Mahaa:

(RADIO) You can carry one of MY rifles when you realize the full cost of carrying any type of firearm, especially a pistol. You're too willing to show it off. I've lost count of how many times you go to pull it out during any minor argument. You must learn more self-control. As for how I explain my skills I will again repeat, you never ask-(CUT-OFF)

Mason:

(RADIO) You never ask a man where he is from. Yes I know. What I really mean is I already told you my story. With the gang and my mom and everything. Only think it's fair that you tell me your story.

[SFX: Pulling a metal rod out of a cylinder]

Mason pulls one of the spent fuel rods out of the engine and throws it out to empty space.

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Mason, what you choose to tell me is your decision as it is my decision to not tell you my story.

[SFX: Loud sip directly into mic]

Mason:

(RADIO) (YELL) Mahaa! Do you have to sip your tea right into the microphone? You're making my ears bleed!

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Well of course I do, why wouldn't I? (LAUGH)

Mason:

(RADIO) And as always you give a confusing answer to my question.

Mahaa:

(RADIO) No, I gave an answer, it just wasn't the answer you were looking for. How much longer are you going to be? I want to get a move on. This shipment really shouldn't be late.

[SFX: Pulling a metal rod out of a cylinder]

Narrator:

Mason finished pulling the last of the spent fuel rods and was now moving to the underbelly of the Titania to fetch three fresh rods.

Mason:

(RADIO)

Is there a reason you can't tell me what this shipment is? I mean you've told me every other shipment but why not this one? Can be any more dangerous than the last shipment. I mean live octo-dogs for that fighting ring. Which I want to state again I was super against. My bite hurt for weeks!

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Mason my boy, I don't pay you to ask questions. Only to be my co-pilot/mechanic.

[SFX: Loud sip directly into mic]

Mason:

(RADIO) You don't pay me at all. (PAUSE) Also why do I have to exchange fuel rods manually? We should take turns or upgrade the ship to do it automatically.

Mahaa:

(RADIO) (SIGH)

Mason, I pay you in that fact that you get to learn from the best smuggler in the universe and I feel you are forgetting the fact that the Guard on your homeplanet was about ready to string you up if it wasn't for me. I had to give up any and all rights to do business on Ajamu. Secondly the ship used to be able to exchange fuel rods automatically. Are you forgetting your 'accident' on Mekong? Because I forget exactly what happened. Could you remind me.

Mason:

(RADIO)

Mahaa I told you that was a legit accident!

Mahaa:

(RADIO)

Having one too many drinks and falling for the oldest scam in the book?

Mason:

(RADIO)

What scam? It's not like it's my fault that parts were stolen!

Mahaa:

(RADIO)

It is absolutely, one-hundred percent, without a doubt your fault. You were led off by two pretty girls, one of which wasn't even a girl, let alone a human to go, how did you put it? Judge a bikini contest? When I come back with dinner I find about six scavengers starting to strip Titania for parts. If I had come back any later then Titania would have stripped down to her bones.

Mason:

(RADIO) Oh yeah, like you wouldn't have fallen for that.

Mahaa:

(RADIO)

No I wouldn't have. Not on a literally ice planet in the middle of winter Mason.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

[SFX: Pushing a metal rod of a cylinder]

Mason:

(RADIO) It still isn't my fault.

Mahaa:

(RADIO)

Ugh, Mason this is what I mean. You have to act with honor, take responsibility for your actions. I know I've made a lot of mistakes in my life but you need to be a better man than me. You were going down the path I was going down, stealing and hurting people just to make ends meet. To put food on the table. I know what we're doing isn't the cleanest line of work, but Mason, you have more potential than you realize. You can lead a beautiful life.

[SFX: SCI-FI CANNON BLAST]

Narrator:

A cannon blast came shooting out of the darkest missing Mason by millimeters, rocketing him off the Titania into empty space. Having only been caught by the bungee cord attached to the ship

Mason:

(RADIO) (SCREAM) What the hell was that?

Mahaa:

(RADIO) What was what? Did the space pirates get you? I didn't hear anything.

[SFX: LOUD SIP INTO MIC]

Mason:

(Radio) That cannon blast! Did you not hear that?

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Mason, haven't you ever heard the saying, 'no one can hear you scream in the vacuum of space' I think it was in a movie or something. (LAUGH)

Mason:

(RADIO) No, Mahaa! I'm serious. I think someone or something is trying to attack us.

Mahaa:

(RADIO) I don't think so Mason, nothing is showing up on my scanners. Just more empty space, and as I said before there's nothing and nobody for several parsecs.

Mason:

(RADIO) Mahaa, I'm not joking around! I know what I saw!

Mahaa:

(RADIO) Well then, if you're so worried that we're being under attack then you should probably hurry it up with the engine right?

Narrator:

Mason began installing the second fuel rod as fast as he possibly could. As he started sliding the last fuel rod into place, three rapid fire blasts of an unseen cannon skimmed across the nose of the Titania.

[SFX: Three sci-fi cannon blasts]

Mahaa:

(RADIO) (SCREAM) Holy hell! Mason! Get your ass back inside, we're under attack!

Narrator:

Three smaller ships snapped out of hyperspace only a few hundred meters behind the Titania and opened fire at the ship.

[SFX: Constant low firing of sci-fi cannons]

Mahaa:

(RADIO) (SCREAM) Mason! Get back inside now! Don't make me go outside and get you!

Mason:

(RADIO) The last fuel rod isn't installed and I haven't dumped the heat from the drive yet!

Mahaa:

(RADIO) It's fine! She's run on far less before! GET BACK INSIDE NOW!

Narrator:

Mason jumped from the engine bay right as a cannon blast slammed into the panel, blasting it off its hinges. He managed to grab the corner of the door to the airlock with the very tip of his fingers and swiftly pulled himself inside. He smashed the glowing red button cracking it slightly to close the airlock.

[SFX: Button smash and airlock door closing]

Narrator:

Before he could even open the next door to get inside the ship Mahaa had already punched the throttle, throwing mason back up against the door to the outside of the ship.

[SFX: Engines firing and body slamming against door.]

Narrator:

After regaining his footing he sprinted down the hall to the cockpit. Mason tore off his helmet and dove feet first into the jumpseat.

The start of an intense battle starts and both Mason and Mahaa are in the cockpit.

Mason:

I told you! I flipping told you Mahaa! How did they manage to shoot us from hyperspace!

Narrator:

Mahaa's piloting skills were being put to the test as he dove and rose in a sporadic but controlled path.

[SFX: Space battle continues]

Mahaa:

Mason, now is NOT the time for a 'told you so'!

Mason:

Who are these people? How did they manage to do that?

Mahaa:

I don't know! They must be either military or extremely wealthy or both! Right now I need you to shut up and focus. Get our hyperjump ready!

Mason:

I've never done that before!

Mahaa:

It's kind of hard to plan a hyperjump and out maneuver these assholes!

Mason:

(UNSURE) Uhh, Okay, okay how many parsecs? And to where?

Mahha:

I don't care! Fifty, a hundred it doesn't matter just anywhere but here!

Narrator:

Mason finished punching in the data into the hyperdrive and with a daring maneuver Mahaa pulled a one-hundred eighty degree turn and faced the bandits. Mahaa punched the hyperdrive throttle and the telltale lights of unfathomable colors raced past the nose of the Titania.

[SFX: Sounds of a hyperdrive warming up.]

Narrator:

Mason could see the reflection of the cannon blasts in the bandits' goggles as they slipped back into the tunnel of light.

After both breathing a deep sigh of relief, Mahaa turned his gaze deep into Mason.

Both:

(SIGH)

Mahaa:

Mason, I need you to be as honest as you've ever been. Did you tell anyone what we were doing
on Mekong?

Mason:

(PAUSE) Well um...

Mahaa:

(SCREAM) Mason!

Mason:

(STUTTER) I might have told those girls we were on a top secret delivery for the Guardians of
Ajamu.

Mahaa:

(FEARFUL) Oh no, no, no, no! Why in the name of all that is holy would you tell anyone that?
Even after I told you several times not to, I repeat NOT to tell anyone what we were doing?

Mason:

I don't know, I thought they liked me and if I may remind you, I had, in your words, 'a few too
many drinks'. Why doesn't matter? It's not like we ever carry anything of any real value. They
were just some wealthy jerks trying to steal some stuff.

Mahaa has a small breakdown of fear and frustration.

Mahaa:

Mason, if they were already wealthy why would they need to steal anything?

Mason has a small breakdown of fear.

Mason:

Mahaa what were we transporting?

Mahaa:

Mason we are transporting a strain of the Dartford virus. I promise you I had a good reason-

(CUT-OFF)

[SFX: white noise]

Narrator:

Mahaa continued on talking but all Mason could hear was a hissing white noise. Feeling like his soul was being ripped out of his body. Feeling that everything Mahaa has ever told him was a lie. Mason looked down at his old space suit and felt every single negative emotion boil up to a fever pitch. He thought of his mother, the friends he had to live behind. The death, and destruction that he was unknowingly enlisted to bring to other worlds. Mason was ready to punch Mahaa until

his hands were bloody and broken but the Titania's hyperdrive controls crackled with arcs of electricity and the entire ship went dark.

[SFX: Electrical sparks, computers breaking, and powering down]

Narrator:

The ship was violently ejected from hyperspace and the sudden jolt tossed Mahaa and Mason up and out of their jump seats like rag dolls and sent the teapot flying and shattering behind them. Mason climbed up the jumpseat to see where they were and was blinded by the light reflecting off the biggest planet he had ever seen. So large Mason could only see one of its massive horizons, it was covered mostly by an ocean with hundreds of islands breaking up the deep hue of green and blue. Two suns shone in their intense heat from behind the ship. On the crest of the planet's visible horizon there were light shades of purple and red light waltzing back into space.

Mason:

(FEARFUL) Mahaa, where are we? I don't know this planet.

Mahaa:

I have no idea, but what I do know is that we need to get going as soon as possible before gravity pulls us in and we crash.

Mason:

What are you talking about? I thought Titania was immune to the effects of gravity?

Mahaa:

Not if the engine's dead Mason. Man the controls I have to go try and choke out a bit more life
out of the engine!

[SFX: Running down metal hallway]

Narrator:

Mahaa dashed down the hallway into the depths of the ship. Mason just sat there holding a dead
yoke trying to make sense of what Mahaa had just told him. He could see the planet getting
bigger and bigger as the effects of gravity were pulling them closer in.

Mason:

(YELL) How's it going Mahaa? I can already feel us getting pulled in!

Mahaa:

(OFF-MIC) Just hold the yoke steady! I almost got it!

Mason:

We're moving faster! Hurry!

Mahaa:

(OFF-MIC) What do you think I'm doing?

[SFX: Burning of metal reentering the atmosphere]

Mason:

Mahaa! Why are we carrying the Virus that killed everyone I knew and loved!?

Mahaa:

(OFF-MIC) Mason, now is not the time!

Mason:

Actually yes, seeing as we're probably going to die here in a couple of minutes!

Mahaa:

(OFF-MIC) Mason, we're NOT going to die. Focus on the controls I don't want us to spin or roll over.

Mason:

No, you said you had a good reason! I want to know the reason! Now!

Mahaa:

Mason right now I want you to shut up and focus on keeping the nose straight! Got that!"

Narrator:

The orangish hue of reentry was turning a solid red and as the ship began to pick up speed, red streaks of fire raced and sliced across the windows.

Mason:

Mahaa! Hurry the hell up!

Mahaa:

(OFF-MIC) Mason put your helmet on now! We might break apart! But, I think I got it!

Narrator:

Right as Mason heard the last click of his helmet latching onto his suit, the friction of the atmosphere had burned through the Titania's hulls and was starting to eat away at the structure.

Mason felt the intense heat roasting his feet through his boots.

[SFX: Engine firing]

Narrator:

With a loud bang the engine fired and Mason felt the ship's controls come alive but it was already too late. The heat was too much and the Titania broke in half splitting the engines and the cockpit into pieces. As the cockpit started tumbling the view out the busted window transformed into an incomprehensible blur of brown, blue, and green. As the G force increased Mason could

feel himself starting to black out. The last thing he saw before he felt the fire of reentry burning of his suit was his mother's face telling him everything would be alright.

[SFX: Shuttle explosion and crash into ground]

OUTRO MUSIC

CREDITS

END