

La Comédiathèque

Surviving Mankind

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Surviving Mankind

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Translation by the author

On a Planet Earth ravaged by climate change and rendered uninhabitable, mankind is living out its final hours. Two men and two women are set to take off in a spaceship for an unknown planet that might be their only chance for survival. The mission of these four "chosen ones" is to give humanity one last chance to save itself and carry on its evolution. But does mankind deserve a second chance if self-destructive madness caused its extermination? The passengers cannot agree...

Characters

Adam
Eve
Juliet
Romeo

2 men/ 2 women

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ACT 1

The command post of a spaceship named "The Ark" (the name may appear on an element of set or on the crew members' suits). Juliet is standing in front of a futuristic electronic control table with a screen, busy with mysterious manipulations (adjustments, checks, measurements). Romeo enters.

Romeo – What's the weather forecast saying?

Juliet – The winds are still very violent on the surface of the ocean. It would be suicidal to take off now.

Romeo – I see... But the temperature keeps rising. The water is boiling just above our heads. If we wait too long, our cooling system won't hold up.

Juliet – It's already hot as hell... Anything else?

Romeo – I've spotted a leak in the launch silo. The concrete is fractured for over ten meters, and water is rushing in through the breach. If the wall suddenly gives way, we'll end up like lobsters in a pot of boiling water.

Juliet – A lull is forecast in five or six hours. We have to hold on until then, we have no choice...

Romeo – Okay. I'll keep an eye on that crack in the meantime.

Juliet – Unfortunately, there's nothing else we can do for now... (She turns away from her instruments and stands up.) How did it come to this...?

Romeo – I don't know.

Juliet – I wasn't really expecting an answer.

Romeo – I know...

Juliet – Do you think we're the last ones? Apart from our two team-mates, of course...

Romeo – According to the images provided yesterday by the last satellites still in operation, there is no more land left on the surface of the globe.

Juliet – So that's it... Earth is nothing but a single ocean...

Romeo – The air temperature reaches several hundred degrees. Even those who managed to get on a boat can't survive for long in such conditions.

Juliet – Maybe a few nuclear submarines, for a month or two...

Romeo – But unlike us, they can't hope to take off to another planet and escape this hell.

Juliet – Earth used to be a paradise. We created this hell ourselves.

Romeo – Not a piece of ice left... Not a drop of fresh water... Not a patch of land to set foot on... And this temperature keeps rising. The process is set in motion. This time it's irreversible...

Juliet – We should have stopped this infernal machine earlier.

Romeo – Yes... but now it's too late. We have to think about the future...

Juliet – The future?

Romeo – Whether we like it or not, it's the end of our world. The only thing we can still hope for is to save our own skins.

Juliet – We caused the extinction of all the animals that lived on this planet. Now it's our turn. We are the last specimens of a dying species. And if we die without descendants, humanity will die with us.

Romeo – "The Ark"... At least they kept their sense of humour until the end...

Juliet – I feel like one of those animals Noah took with him on his boat, locked up in cages...

Romeo – The question is whether we'll be able to reproduce in captivity...

Juliet – And, above all, whether we'll find a new land where we can rebuild an embryonic civilisation. Do you really believe that?

Eve enters.

Eve – We have no choice. We have to believe. Y214 is the only planet likely to welcome us, at a distance we can reach with this spaceship. If we can get it off the ground, of course...

Juliet – Another hurricane is passing right above us. We'll have a launch window in a few hours.

Eve – Two men and two women to save humanity...

Juliet – It feels like a reality TV show.

Eve – It's strange, we were chosen by lottery among thousands of candidates... Why do I not feel like being one of the four finalists is a stroke of luck?

Romeo – Do you think "The Ark" can get us there?

Eve – Who knows? It's a first. This rocket is a prototype. It's propelled by engines using an entirely new technology, supposed to make us travel at the speed of light.

Juliet – But this revolutionary technology has never before been tested in real conditions.

Romeo – We've never sent a spaceship this far with passengers on board. Manned flights were abandoned years ago.

Eve – Not profitable enough.

Juliet – And then there's this uncertainty about such a prolonged hibernation. Will our bodies be able to withstand it? The experiments we tried lasted one or two months at most. Now we're talking about over ten thousand years.

Eve – Yes, theoretically, it's possible. But I'm not even sure if I want it to work.

Romeo – Well, I do... It's our only chance for survival. Even if it's slim, I don't intend to let it slip through my fingers.

Eve – Yeah...

Romeo – Juliet?

Juliet – It's all we have left. Might as well hold onto this hope. Otherwise, we'll just let ourselves die.

Eve – I wonder if it wouldn't be better. At least it would be simpler.

Romeo – Please, Eve, pull yourself together. We're going to need everyone to navigate this ark to safety.

Juliet – And that's why they chose us, isn't it? We've got a mission!

Eve – To save humanity...

Adam enters.

Adam – But does humanity deserve to be saved?

Romeo – Oh well... Excuse me, Adam, but I just want to save my own skin. So, philosophical debates...

Adam – If mankind had cared more about philosophy than profit, we wouldn't be in this mess... It's out of selfishness and greed that humans sawed off the branch they were sitting on.

Eve – And finally they cut down the whole tree and the entire forest to make paper pulp.

Adam – And all while feeling good about it, thinking the paper would be recycled.

Romeo – Okay, but once we've said that, what do we do? If we don't take off before tonight, we'll all be dead. Why not take our chances elsewhere?

Adam – Because do you really think it's a chance? A chance for whom, first of all? Definitely not for the planet we're planning to colonise.

Romeo – It's a chance for the four of us. Our last chance. And we don't have time for idle chitchat.

Eve – For the moment, unfortunately... Apart from waiting for the wind to calm down, there's nothing else we can do in right now...

Silence.

Romeo – Very well, then let's go! Let's chat a little... Just to get to know each other... There's not a human being left on this Earth besides us, so we better get along, don't you think? (*Pause*) By the way, Adam and Eve, Romeo and Juliet... Are those code names? At this point, we could use our real names, don't you think? Well, my name is actually Romeo, but what's yours? What are your real names?

A pause.

Juliet – My name is actually Juliet.

The other two remain silent.

Romeo – No? So that's also a coincidence? Well, I'll take that as a sign, then... Adam and Eve, Romeo and Juliet... It works for me. (*With a significant glance toward Juliet*) I volunteer to repopulate this new planet.

Adam – Well... That planet is in for a wild ride...

Romeo gives him a fiery look.

Romeo – Whoa, whoa... Easy there. I have a sense of humour, but only up to a certain point.

Romeo steps forward threateningly, and Adam confronts him.

Adam – Only until others start making jokes? In fact, it's only your own shitty jokes that make you laugh, isn't that it?

Juliet intervenes.

Juliet – Oh, boys, let's calm down on the testosterone, okay! Even if we make it to that planet and if it's habitable, it won't be Temptation Island. We'll have enough on our plate as it is, trying to survive day after day in a totally unknown.

Eve – I agree with Juliet on that. On Earth, everything seemed simple because thousands of generations had passed down their experience to us, distinguishing edible plants from toxic ones, harmless animals from dangerous ones, hospitable regions from uninhabitable ones...

Juliet – We'll have to learn everything all over again. Danger will be everywhere. Every step we take will be a leap into the unknown. And as there are only four of us, we won't have the right to make any mistakes.

Eve – We were selected for our skills in medicine, aeronautics, astrophysics, biology... But in a completely new and possibly hostile world?

Romeo – We know things. We're not starting from scratch. We're not cavemen.

Eve – Our knowledge is purely theoretical. What use will it be to us to know how a car, a computer, or a phone works when we no longer have an industry to produce them?

Juliet – We'll have to start from scratch. Learn to build a shelter, hunt with a bow, make fire with two flints, light a torch...

Adam – And prehistoric man knew a lot more about that than we do.

Eve – After two or three generations, our beautiful memories of the world before will become completely useless and turn into fabulous tales that our descendants will end up forgetting.

Adam – Or they will start distorting and embellishing them to create a new Bible.

Juliet – Adam and Eve, it's true that it's tempting...

Silence

Romeo – Alright, then let's play Robinson Crusoe. It's every kid's dream, isn't it?

Eve – Yes... but Robinson's island was on Earth.

Romeo – At least I won't have to deal with Friday. If the idea is to perpetuate the species... Two men, two women, that's at least two possibilities, right?

This time he looks intently at Eve.

Eve – If you don't change your tune a bit, I think you're doomed to lint for the rest of your life. Because when it comes to flirting, you need to think about an immediate update.

Romeo – Alright, so what shall we talk about?

Juliet – If we reduce the Earth's history to 24 hours, man was born at two minutes to midnight. And in those two minutes, he managed to make his planet uninhabitable. Doesn't that deserve a moment's reflection?

Romeo – Sooner or later, the Earth would have become uninhabitable. In the long run, it's a certainty due to the programmed explosion of the sun.

Adam – Yes, but that's billions of years away. Man would have died of old age. This is a collective suicide. Homo sapiens was barely 300,000 years old. Dinosaurs ruled the Earth for nearly 165 million years!

Eve – And they weren't the ones who caused their own demise, by conscientiously destroying the planet.

Juliet – And over billions of years, we would have had time to prepare. To organise the move. But now, it's like the Raft of the Medusa.

Eve – And we're already at each other's throats...

Juliet – Are we really a hundred percent sure about Y214?

Eve – Not a hundred percent. On paper, it's a twin planet of Earth. Almost exactly the same characteristics.

Juliet – In theory... But no one has ever been there to see.

Adam – And even if this spaceship works perfectly well, the journey to this possible refuge will be very long and uncertain.

Eve – We could collide with an asteroid at any moment.

Romeo – Nothing is certain until we get there, of course, but based on current information, all the lights are on green, right?

Silence

Adam – What if that habitable planet is already inhabited?

Juliet – Inhabited?

Eve – By intelligent beings.

Romeo – If that's the case, we're probably talking about a primitive civilisation. We haven't seen any signs of advanced life. Radio waves, artificial satellites, cities emitting light or heat...

Adam – They might be environmentalists...

Romeo – Or savages.

Adam – Savages?

Eve – When we see what the Spanish did to the Incas when they landed in America... Yes, there may be a glimmer of salvation. But at what cost? I agree with Adam, we have to ask the question: does mankind deserve to be saved?

Adam – It would be a service to the world to prevent it from being saved.

The other three give him a worried look.

Romeo – What do you mean, specifically?

Adam – Humanity today is like a dying plant. Just before the end, in order to perpetuate the species, it projects its pollen into space, in the hope of colonising another land after having exhausted its own.

Romeo – If we start using metaphors now...

Adam – But this plant is toxic, and we are the bad seeds.

Juliet – What are you suggesting, exactly?

Adam – To prevent this evil pollination. The future of humanity is in our hands. We have the power to stop it. And we would elevate ourselves by consciously making that choice.

Dead silence.

Romeo – They selected four of us, and we had to end up with a madman! (*Romeo looks to Adam and Eve for support.*) And what about you, what do you think? Do you agree with collective suicide?

Eve – Collective suicide... it has already happened, hasn't it?

Romeo – Okay, so there are at least two in the sect. And you, Juliet?

Juliet – Of course. We can't say that humanity's track record is stacked in its favour. But to accept death without trying anything... that may be a bit radical, don't you think?

Eve – Humanity is like a colony of termites. When they settle down somewhere, it's only to eat away at the framework and move on when the house is ready to collapse.

Romeo – Well, to put it plainly, because I'm not into metaphors, I don't give a damn about humanity. What I want is to save my skin.

Adam – It's not that simple. By saving your own skin, you also risk saving humanity.

Romeo – Alright... so what do we do? Take a vote? Do we commit suicide or try to survive? (*Raises his hand*) I am in favour of taking my chances. Who else?

Juliet raises her hand.

Juliet – I am for life. At any cost. And yes, I am afraid of dying.

Romeo – Eve?

Eve – Frankly, considering the chances of success for this mission, I wonder if it's worth it. Why not accept our fate and die with the others? Let our remains, at least, rest on our home planet... alongside our own kind.

Adam – That's also my opinion. Let the cradle of humanity also be its coffin.

Romeo – Alright. Two votes against two... We're really making progress... But after all, if you're so determined to die, that's up to you. All you have to do is stay here. The exit hatch is right there.

Juliet – The ship will be much more difficult to manoeuvre with just two people. It will further reduce our chances of survival. Not to mention the survival of humanity, of course...

Adam – What is at stake is not saving four lives or saving two lives. It is to definitively put an end to the story of humanity.

Romeo – Wait, Adam, there's still one detail I'm missing... We were chosen by lottery from a panel of scientists to give humanity a chance to survive. If you wanted to die with the others, why did you volunteer?

Adam – Precisely for that. To prevent this cancer from spreading its metastases throughout the universe.

Romeo – So, in fact, you lied. You're a traitor. An infiltrator. A mole from the losing side. And you're the one lecturing us on morality?

Adam – I stand by that lie. The end justifies the means.

Romeo – Fine... (*Defiantly*) But are you sure you have what it takes?

They are about to confront each other again, and Juliet intervenes once more.

Juliet – We're not going to fight... But I agree with Romeo on one point. What if we want to live? Are you going to decide for us? What are you going to do? Kill us?

Romeo – Knowing him a little, I imagine he's thinking of something more twisted. Like sabotage, for example. What if he caused the crack in the silo?

Eve – What crack?

Romeo – We were only four, and we had to end up with a fucking terrorist.

Juliet – Is that how you want to save the world, Adam? By becoming a criminal?

Adam – I'd rather convince you... But if not, I'll take responsibility and deal with my conscience.

Juliet – And you, Eve?

Eve – No, I'll only decide for myself. I don't consider myself God. Let those who want to live be free to do so. It's up to them to decide whether it's worth it...

Juliet moves closer to her instruments.

Romeo – Any news?

Juliet – The weather forecast has changed slightly. The wind is already starting to calm down. There will be a slight lull in three hours.

Romeo – It's now or never. There's a window of opportunity, and it's going to be the last one. We've just got time to get ready for the launch. And anyone who isn't with me is against me.

Romeo glares at Adam. Adam and Eve leave the room, although it's not clear whether they're preparing for the launch or showing their opposition. Romeo and Juliet exchange a worried look.

Romeo – I don't trust them...

Juliet – Eve won't do anything against us, but him...

Romeo – Do you think he would go as far as sabotaging the Ark?

Juliet – He's an idealist. He's capable of anything.

Romeo – In that case, we have no choice.

Juliet – What do you mean?

Romeo – It's either them or us.

Juliet – No, that's not an option.

Romeo – I remind you that we have a mission.

Juliet – But we no longer have to report to anyone. Except ourselves.

Romeo – We have a moral responsibility. We committed to saving humanity. That's why we were allowed to live while everyone else is already dead.

Juliet – A moral responsibility? You've got to be kidding me. Earlier, you said you only wanted to save your own skin...

Romeo – Maybe I did, but what about you? You're an idealist too. What are you willing to do to give humanity a chance to survive?

Juliet – Not to kill, that's for sure.

Romeo – I can handle it. I don't mind doing the dirty work, I'm used to it...

Juliet – But if I let you do it, I'll be an accomplice.

Juliet glances at her instruments.

Romeo – Any problem?

Juliet – A short circuit in the thruster room... We can't ignite reactor number three.

Romeo – We'll need to give it our all to escape Earth's gravity... Can it be fixed?

Juliet – Maybe, but we need to act quickly, or we'll miss the launch window.

Romeo – What if it was him?

Juliet – It could also be a simple technical glitch...

Romeo – We don't have to kill them. We can just... neutralise them.

Juliet – Neutralise them?

Romeo – A strong sleeping pill, and we put them in the freezer ahead of time. At least they'll leave us in peace for a few thousand years.

Juliet – And this sleeping pill, how do you get them to take it? By force?

Romeo – There's a bottle of bad champagne left in the fridge. We could drink it to seal our great reconciliation... To celebrate our departure... or our collective suicide?

Juliet seems hesitant.

Juliet – Alright... But first, take care of the short circuit.

Romeo – I'll see what I can do...

He exits. Juliet tends to the controls. Eve returns.

Eve – I've just bumped into Paul. I know all about the breakdown.

Juliet – And, of course, you had nothing to do with it.

Eve – I already answered that. I won't do anything to jeopardize the mission. But if an accident prevents us from leaving, it will definitively solve all our problems...

Juliet – And Adam?

Eve – What about him?

Juliet – Do you think he could sabotage the ship?

Eve – I don't know... but I can understand him.

Juliet – Indeed, I find you very... understanding towards him. Be careful, Eve. We have a mission. Our feelings should not interfere with our decisions.

Eve – Are you jealous?

Juliet – No. But you'll have to choose sides. Are you with us or against us?

Adam returns.

Adam – So that's where we are?

Juliet – You're the one who wanted it this way, aren't you?

Adam – I don't take it personally, if that's what you mean.

They glare at each other.

Eve – Taking it personally? What does that mean? Did you know each other before boarding this ship?

Awkward silence.

Juliet – I'll ask you once, Adam, and I won't doubt your answer. Did you cause this short circuit?

Adam – No.

Juliet – Alright. That's good enough for me.

Adam – That doesn't mean I won't oppose this departure in one way or another.

Eve seems uncomfortable.

Eve – I'll help Romeo, it will be faster.

She exits.

Juliet – Did you know I would be on board?

Adam – No. Not for sure. But we were already a small group, and it was a serious possibility. I saw your name on the shortlist. From a scientific point of view, you had all the required qualifications. And you were very close to the military who governed us at the time...

Juliet – Don't tell me you did all this out of revenge against me. And that, just to cause my downfall, you would be willing to sacrifice all of humanity.

Adam – I loved you, it's true. Passionately. And you haven't changed a bit.

Juliet – Thanks.

Adam – That wasn't a compliment. Your ego is still... oversized.

Juliet – I think men call it ambition. And it's considered a quality.

Adam – You're right. In fact, it's curious.

Juliet – What?

Adam – All those prejudices that society imposed on us. Sexism, among other things. It all makes no sense now that society has totally disappeared.

Juliet – Unfortunately, as long as there's a macho left, we won't be done with machismo.

Adam – You're right. The worm is in the fruit. It will always end up eating it from the inside. It's in our genes.

Juliet – So you think men are fundamentally bad?

Adam – They've proven it, haven't they?

Juliet – Some men, maybe. Not all.

Adam – Hitler, Pol Pot, Donald Trump...

Juliet – Mozart, Picasso, Bob Dylan...

Adam – Under certain conditions, any man is capable of the worst.

Juliet – Or the best... If Hitler had passed his entrance exam to the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts... the face of the world might have been changed.

Adam – But men would still have turned Earth into a massive extermination camp.

Juliet – I pity you, Adam. How can one hate to such an extent?

Adam moves closer to her.

Adam – If you had loved me, maybe I would have learned to love myself a little too.

Juliet – So it's my fault, actually... The end of the world, all that... It's because of me, then.

Adam – Perhaps. Not just you, obviously, but people like you.

Juliet – People like me?

Adam – Those who, for centuries, decided to live carefree and led this planet to its ruin.

Juliet – Alright. So you're pure, if I understand correctly. You've lived in constant worry, that's true. But Adam, is life worth living without a little carefree spirit? Have you been happy, at least? Alone in your ivory tower. I'm not talking about being happy all your life, I'm talking about those little pleasures that from time to time make life bearable. Have you been happy at least once in your life, Adam?

Adam – I don't know... Maybe during the few months I spent with you.

Juliet approaches him.

Juliet – I loved you too. Maybe even more than you loved yourself. But between us, it couldn't work.

Adam – Why not?

Juliet – Because of this precisely. What still separates us today. I need to believe in something. Against all evidence. I need lightness. And you... you'll never escape gravity. (*They're about to kiss, but she regains control.*) Why don't you help me get this rocket off the ground?

He hesitates.

Adam – Sorry, but no... I'm not taking part in that.

Juliet – Then I solemnly ask you not to do anything to stop it.

He leaves without responding, crossing paths with Romeo who returns. They exchange a wary look.

Romeo – It's fixed now. Fortunately, it wasn't so serious. This time...

Juliet – Adam swore he had nothing to do with it.

Romeo – He might be lying.

Juliet – I don't think so.

Romeo – How can you be sure?

Juliet – I have my reasons...

Romeo – He's got a crush on you, isn't he?

Juliet – Stay out of this. What's the situation with the water in the silo?

Romeo – It's not getting better, but it could last another two or three hours.

Juliet – You look worried. Is there something else preventing us from leaving that isn't linked to the rocket itself?

Romeo – None of the sea creatures could withstand the temperature. They're all dead, and their bodies are floating on the surface. Tens of metres thick in places. Not to mention all the rubble washed up by the ocean after all the inhabited land was submerged. Buses, cars, containers, tree trunks, animals, human beings... You'll have to cross this wall of rubbish and decomposing flesh to reach the surface.

Juliet – The rocket's structure won't withstand it. What do you suggest?

Romeo – Just before launch, I'll send a missile to try and blow a hole in this wall that separates us from the surface.

Juliet – Do we have any missiles?

Romeo – I remind you that this program was initiated by the army.

Juliet – But... why missiles?

Romeo – In case the inhabitants of the planet we're colonising aren't as welcoming as we'd hoped.

Juliet – I see... I didn't know that. And the other two, are they aware?

Romeo – I was the only one who knew. Until now.

Juliet – Then it's better that they continue to be unaware...

Romeo – Yes, that's my opinion too.

Juliet – You seem to know a lot of things we don't... Who told you all this? After all, you're a civilian like us. (*Romeo doesn't respond and seems a bit embarrassed.*) You're not a civilian?

Romeo – I was part of the army, with the rank of colonel. Since the accidental death of the general who was supposed to accompany us on this mission, and who was supposed to pilot this machine, I represent the military government on this ship.

Juliet – The government... Where is the global government today? A few senile generals designated to lead us to the edge of the abyss, but marching in pairs, in step, and keeping their mouths shut...

Romeo – There were a few Resistance fighters. I'm not aware that you were one of them.

Juliet – How do you know?

Romeo – I was in a position to know...

Juliet – I see... You were part of the political police, right? In short, you're also an infiltrator.

Romeo – That's all literature. I'm here today, whether you like it or not.

Juliet – Yes... Instead of this general... By the way, what happened to that poor man? You didn't happen to hasten his end to take his place aboard this Noah's Ark, did you?

Romeo – It doesn't make any sense now anyway.

A pause.

Juliet – Are you at least sure you know how to launch a missile, Colonel?

Romeo – I never served in combat units. But it shouldn't be that complicated.

Juliet – So, it's not for your scientific expertise that you're here. In fact, you're the only one of us four with no particular skills.

Romeo – I'm very good at tinkering, and I have balls. The perfect husband, you could say. And as you said yourself, if you want to survive and reproduce in a hostile environment, that's just as useful as a doctorate in astrophysics.

Romeo busies himself at his control station.

Juliet – Do you think your missile can work to clear a path for us to the stars through the cemetery above our heads?

Romeo – We'll see. Do you have any other ideas?

Juliet – No.

Romeo – Then go ahead, launch this fucking rocket!

Juliet (ironically) – At your command, Colonel... I'll start the checklist. Then we can initiate the countdown. I'm going to the upper cockpit. Can you ask Eve to replace me? We also need to monitor the weather... and the water level in the silo.

Romeo – Do you think we can trust her?

Juliet – I'll take responsibility for that.

Romeo – I'll tell her to come.

He exits. Juliet busies herself for a moment with her instruments. Eve returns.

Juliet – Thank you. We'll need you to launch this spacecraft. I'm a biologist, not a rocket pilot. I don't even have a driving license.

Eve – The good news is that where we're going, you won't need it anymore. Assuming we ever succeed in rebuilding a car and a road, there won't be any cops to give you a ticket.

Juliet – Well, the end of the world should have some advantages...

Eve – Is there a problem?

Juliet – In front of Romeo, I pretended to know what I was talking about, using the words "checklist" and "countdown," but I have no idea what to do to get this rocket off the ground. Do you?

Eve – I received just a few hours of training, like you. In a hurry, just before the space centre was submerged under water. But... I managed to save the on-board manual.

She takes a booklet out of her pocket.

Juliet – If we have the user manual, then... We're saved. And humanity with us. I hope it's simpler than assembling furniture from a kit...

They sit side by side and begin manoeuvring their instruments while occasionally glancing at the manual.

Eve – I think I've grasped the general idea. It doesn't seem so complicated after all.

Juliet – Yes, that's what Romeo was telling me about...

Eve – About...?

Juliet – I can't remember... Well, I trust you then... Can I leave you for a moment? I need to go upstairs.

Eve – There are already two people in the upper cockpit. Do you think they need you?

Juliet – No... But I need to pee.

Eve – Okay. Go pee, and we'll save the world afterward. Can I ask you a question before you go?

Juliet – Okay, but make it quick... I told you, it's urgent.

Eve – If Adam were to be in a relationship with me, would that bother you?

Juliet – If it would convince him not to oppose our mission, I'd even encourage you.

Eve – But then you'd be left with only Romeo...

Juliet – Looking at it that way, it's true that... Romeo is an idiot, alright. And maybe even a bastard. But at least he's alive.

Eve – Yes. It's funny. Being just four people left on Earth suddenly makes us very forgiving of each other's flaws.

Juliet – Well, now I really need to pee.

Juliet exits. Adam returns.

Adam – So, have you changed sides?

Eve – I'm not at war, Adam. I share your analysis. Humanity probably doesn't deserve to live. But men...

Adam – What distinction do you make between the two?

Eve – I hate, like you, the worst crimes that humanity has spawned. But I can't help but love certain men... Like you, for example.

He seems a bit unsettled.

Adam – I'm not the right man for you, believe me.

Eve – I've always loved hopeless causes...

Adam – You deserve better than me, I assure you.

Eve – Of course I deserve better than you! But do you think I have a choice now? It's either you or Romeo...

Adam – From that perspective, obviously.

Eve – Is she your ex?

Adam – Who?

Eve – Juliet! There are only two people left on Earth besides us. Unless you prefer men... which would further reduce the chances of survival for the human species.

Adam – We had... an affair.

Eve – And it didn't work out...

Adam – I was married at the time, but not to her... And she found me too intransigent.

Eve – No kidding...

Adam – She decided to end our affair.

Eve – An affair? I've always found that word amusing when used to describe a love story. I can just picture a couple discussing business at the bar of a fancy hotel.

Adam – While most of the time, having an affair simply involves booking a room online in a cheap hotel where you can pay in cash. But if our love story were to begin on this unknown planet, it definitely wouldn't be at the bar of a luxury hotel.

Eve moves closer to him.

Eve – So you're still considering the possibility of having an affair with me...

Adam – I'm mainly considering putting an end to all this. But if we were to survive after all... Juliette and I, it's been over for a long time. So, as you mentioned, with only four of us, there aren't many options.

Eve – What you're saying really touches me. It's very romantic.

Adam – I thought our mission was to reproduce.

Eve – If it's a duty, then... But it doesn't matter, I'll take it...

Eve embraces him. Juliet returns.

Juliet – I hope I'm not interrupting the beginning of something...

Eve composes herself.

Eve – The weather will be optimal in exactly two hours.

Juliet – I'd advise you to get some sleep. We're going to need everyone to get this spacecraft off the ground..

Adam – You prefer us to be sleeping, is that it?

Juliet – I promise not to take advantage of it. To kill both of you, I mean...

She exits. Eve moves closer to Adam again.

Eve – It might be the last time, Adam. The last night on this Earth. The last opportunity for a man and a woman to prove that love is stronger than anything.

Adam – Why do I want to believe you?

Eve – Eros and Thanatos, those two always go well together. It's a well-known fact that the prospect of dying makes you want to fuck.

Adam – It's even said that some hanged men get an erection while swinging at the end of their rope.

Eve – You sure know how to talk to women, don't you? And you're still wondering why Juliet left you?

She takes his hand, and they exit.

Fade to black.

Act 2

Romeo and Juliet are at their stations, busy with various manipulations.

Juliet – As far as I'm concerned, all parameters are OK.

Romeo – Same here. And we can't wait any longer. The launch silo wall is about to collapse. The water is rising minute by minute. It's already reaching the base of the rocket. We need to initiate the countdown.

Juliet – Shouldn't we wake them up first?

Romeo – So we can get back to these pointless arguments? We've offered them the chance to leave the Ark. Now, whether they like it or not, they're going on the journey.

Juliet – Alright. I'll start the protocol. (*She performs a few manipulations.*) Here we go... Only ten minutes until departure.

Romeo – I launch the missile to get us through this pile of shit.

Juliet – This pile of shit, as you call it, is also mad up of what remains of all of humanity.

Romeo – Yes, that's exactly what I was saying.

Juliet – Go ahead.

Romeo busies himself at his post, under Juliet's concerned gaze.

Romeo – It's launched. Impact in 75 seconds.

Juliet – Okay.

Romeo – You're going to laugh, but I wasn't sure how to launch this missile.

Juliet – You're going to laugh too, but I'm not entirely certain how to get this piece of junk take off the ground...

Romeo – One minute until impact. We have to wait...

A moment.

Juliet – How did we end up like this?

Romeo – I think you've already said it. I told you I didn't know, and you replied that it wasn't really a question.

Juliet – How is it possible that we couldn't stop this? That's the real question...

Romeo – There have been many attempts, though. Each time another step was taken towards this predicted end of the world.

Juliet – Each time, the measures taken were insufficient. Half-measures taken to address problems that had got worse in the meantime.

Romeo – When they were actually implemented. Every government in every country in the world was cheating.

Juliet – By claiming they had other more urgent concerns.

Romeo – Keeping the economy running.

Juliet – Feeding the planet.

Romeo – Don't upset the voters too much.

Juliet – Until the moment when elections were abolished.

Romeo – I believe the beginning of the end was when Donald Trump came into power. Do you remember that?

Juliet – I wasn't born yet... but yes, I've heard about it.

Romeo – From that moment on, it was really screwed.

Juliet – When all the idiots who vote choose the biggest idiot among them as their king, things can only go wrong.

Romeo – After that, everything happened very quickly. The nuclear war between India and Pakistan, which triggered the Third World War. Religious fundamentalism. The establishment of dictatorships. Genocides. Famine. Accelerated global warming. Rising sea levels...

Juliet – And then, it became irreversible.

Romeo – I can't even remember exactly who initiated this last-chance program that might save our lives today.

Juliet – I believe that everyone had forgotten about this program. That's probably why, miraculously, we were able to see it through its completion.

Romeo – Initially, it was about reconstructing a new Noah's Ark. But in the end, it's just us.

Juliet – It's all so absurd. What a tremendous waste. Is it still worth it? It makes me want to cry...

Romeo also appears moved, for the first time, and he gestures to comfort Juliet.

Romeo – Come on... As long as there's life, there's hope.

Juliet (*holding back her tears*) – It's crazy how these stupid phrases suddenly take on their full meaning in certain exceptional circumstances...

Romeo – I have more if you want...

Juliet – Like what?

Romeo – It's after the fair that you count the dung.

Juliet – You'll have to explain that one to me...

Romeo – It means that...

Juliet – No, but not right now. We've got to save humanity.

Romeo – Okay.

Juliet regains composure.

Juliet – Thank you... In the end, you're a philosopher, Romeo. We just had to wait for the right moment for the whole world to realize it.

A deep rumble is heard.

Romeo – The impact has occurred. What does it look like?

Juliet looks at her screen.

Juliet – The layer of debris is slightly thinner at the point of the explosion. But it's still there. I hope that's enough.

Romeo – We need to take off immediately, we have no choice.

Adam and Eve return.

Juliet – Ah, here's Adam and Eve... *(With a playful undertone)* So, how was your sleep?

Adam – I was awakened by the rumble of an explosion. What's going on?

Juliet – I don't know...

Adam – Don't take me for a fool.

Romeo – I launched a missile to clear a path for us through the rubble floating on the surface.

Eve – A missile?

Adam – I didn't know we were aboard a warship...

Romeo – Christopher Columbus's caravels were also equipped with cannons.

Adam – So you had also hidden that from us.

Juliet – I wasn't aware, I swear.

Adam – I'm against this departure. I refuse to let the possible inauguration of a new humanity begin with the massacre of the inhabitants of Y214. Because I imagine you also know that this planet is inhabited.

Awkward silence.

Juliet – Romeo? What else do you know that you haven't told us?

Romeo – A habitable planet is inevitably inhabited. Nature abhors a vacuum. We don't know how developed this civilisation is, but yes, there is... something.

Eve – That changes everything.

Romeo – It makes no difference to me.

Eve – But for me, it does.

Adam – It's no longer just about finding a refuge for humanity. It's about colonising a new world, by subjugating or exterminating the native populations.

Romeo – And what do you plan to do to stop it?

Adam – I could kill you.

Romeo – But you won't.

Adam seems hesitant.

Adam – So I propose a deal to you.

Romeo – Well, well...

Adam – I won't oppose this departure. Since it's what all three of you want, I agree to let you go. And even to go with you and do everything in my power to make this journey a success.

Romeo – But...

Adam – I demand that all the missiles be launched before our departure.

Eve – Me too. If we survive, I refuse it to be at the cost of another massacre.

Juliet – I agree. We cannot rebuild a civilisation on the ruins of the one we destroyed to take its place.

Eve – We'll try to get along with the native population. Otherwise, we'll be the ones who perish.

Romeo seems hesitant.

Romeo – Alright.

Adam – Then launch them now.

Romeo – Okay. Here we go for the grand finale. Anyway, we have to make our way through all this rubbish. And the first shot wasn't enough.

Romeo proceeds with various manipulations.

Eve – What rubbish?

Juliet – I'll explain...

Romeo – Impact in ten seconds. I'm getting better...

Dead silence. A few distant rumblings can be heard.

Juliet – So?

Romeo – I believe the path is clear now.

Juliet – Perfect... Departure in four minutes and twenty-one seconds.

Adam – That's not all.

Romeo – What else?

Adam – It doesn't bother me if we all survive.

Romeo – Thanks for your generosity.

Adam – As long as humanity disappears with us.

Romeo – Well, well... And what do you propose?

Adam takes out a vial and hands it to Romeo.

Adam – Permanent chemical sterilization.

Romeo – Is this a joke?

Adam – I'm a doctor, you know. We developed this product to control births in India. It's completely painless and one hundred percent effective.

Juliet – This isn't funny, Adam.

Adam – It's not a joke.

Eve – You're going too far.

Adam – I've always believed that humanity doesn't deserve to exist. Today, its survival is in my hands. I'm not going to let this unique opportunity to put an end to the human race slip through my fingers.

Romeo – And you couldn't come up with anything better?

Adam – I won't settle for a promise. I'm a doctor, I can perform my own sterilization and Romeo's.

Romeo – So you want to castrate me? You think you're a vet and I'm a mutt?

Juliet – I think he thinks he's God. That's always been his problem.

Adam – I only mentioned sterilization... You'll remain a man, don't worry.

Romeo – Mr. Kindness...

Eve – You've gone mad, Adam. How can you propose such a horrible thing?

Juliet – No, Adam, we won't accept living to be the last of the Mohicans. If it's meant to happen, it will. But it can't be a choice. At least, it's not mine. Yes, humanity is capable of the best and the worst. That's called freedom. And there's nothing like freedom to make life worth living. What do you want? For us to be guided only by our instincts, like animals? For us all to be perfect, like only robots can be? Yes, if humanity survives, it will likely repeat the same mistakes. The same monstrosities.

Adam – Even Auschwitz?

Eve – Maybe Auschwitz. Maybe not. That's called free will. And that's what man is all about.

Adam – Alright, we had the choice to make this earth a paradise or a hell. And what have we done?

Romeo pulls out a futuristic-looking gun.

Romeo – That's enough now.

Juliet – Where did you get that weapon?

Romeo – You want to die, I'll grant your wish. But you won't stop us from living.

Adam – Are you sure you know how to use that? Be careful, you could hurt yourself...

Juliet – He's not joking, Adam. He knows how to handle a weapon, and he's already used it to eliminate those who got in his way. He was a member of the military police.

Adam – A cop, I should have guessed...

Romeo aims the gun at Adam.

Eve – Don't shoot! He's insane, but he doesn't deserve to die. And if I understand correctly, you're no better than him.

Juliet – You're going to kill him, and then what? Are you going to kill us too?

Eve – When you're the last representative of the human species in the universe, and there's no one left to contradict you, do you think you'll be in a better position?

Juliet – We can't do without him, Romeo. We can't do without anyone. Two couples are the minimum to hope to save the human species.

Eve – And simply to survive in a very difficult environment. Do you think we're too many as it is?

Juliet – I's remind you that he's a doctor. You might regret killing him on the day you're injured or sick.

Romeo seems hesitant.

Romeo – You're lucky to have your fan club... Tie him up.

Juliet approaches to restrain him.

Juliet – Sorry, you leave us no choice.

Romeo – In any case, we've got to move fast now. What's the countdown?

Taking advantage of a moment of inattention, Adam lunges at Romeo and after a brief struggle, manages to wrestle the gun from him and aims it at him.

Adam – Stop the departure protocol immediately. We're not going anywhere.

Juliet manipulates some buttons.

Juliet – Procedure interrupted.

Adam points his gun at Romeo.

Eve – Don't shoot!

Adam – Give me a good reason not to shoot!

Eve – I'm pregnant.

Adam, who was staring at Romeo, turns to Eve.

Adam – By him?

Eve – No, not by him! Can you imagine me fucking that idiot?

Romeo – Thanks...

Adam – From me?

Eve – We just made love together. How could I claim to be pregnant by you? Are you sure you're really a doctor?

Romeo – Well, well... He wanted to sterilise me, and he's already knocked up half the crew...

Adam – So, who got you pregnant?

Eve – My husband, simply. He was supposed to leave with me. He died three weeks ago. You took his place...

Romeo – But when you say he took his place, you mean...?

Eve – You shut up, or I swear I'll be the one to kill you.

Romeo doesn't take this threat lightly. Adam is destabilized.

Romeo – Since when have you known?

Eve – A month. Given the circumstances, I didn't think it necessary to inform you.

Juliet – It's a sign, Adam. Are you going to condemn this child or give him a chance to live? You're a doctor...

Adam hesitates before lowering his weapon.

Adam – Alright, I'll cooperate... Anyway, we have very little chance of survival, even if we combine our efforts.

Juliet – I'm restarting the protocol.

Eve – I'm going to the upper flight deck..

Adam – I'll come with you.

They exit. The other two start working to prepare for take-off.

Romeo – So, Adam and Eve are a couple. It was bound to happen.

Juliet – Yes. But Eve is already pregnant, and Adam is not the father. It's not very Catholic, all this...

Romeo – Jesus wasn't his father's son either.

Juliet – And to think that these people preached to us until the end...

Romeo – In any case, now we have no choice... I mean, the two of us...

Juliet – That's the worst declaration I've ever heard.

Romeo – Romeo and Juliet, we were meant to meet, right?

Juliet – But if I remember correctly, Romeo and Juliet doesn't end well...

Romeo – Oh yeah? Well, at this point...

Juliet – You're right... Can a story that starts as badly as ours really end even worse?

Fade to black.

Act 3

Romeo, Juliet, Adam, and Eve are at their posts, focused on the preparations for take-off.

Romeo – This time, we're there. It's the moment of truth.

Eve – Thirty seconds until take-off.

Special sound and light effects to mark ignition.

Juliet – All four engines are ignited.

Romeo – All the lights are green.

Eve – Here we go.

Adam – The rocket has left the silo.

Juliet – We're accelerating.

Eve – We're less than a hundred meters from the surface.

Juliet – We're going through the layer of rubble still floating above us. It's going to be a bit bumpy...

New disturbances.

Romeo – We've cleared the obstacle. We're in Earth's atmosphere!

Juliet – I hope the structure hasn't suffered too much and the cockpit isn't damaged.

Adam – All parameters are OK. We're gaining altitude.

Eve – We're at five thousand feet.

Juliet – We're leaving Earth's atmosphere.

A moment of emotion, they exchange a relieved yet serious look.

Adam – Take a good look at this planet drifting away. This Earth that we've turned into a giant graveyard, it's the last time you'll see it.

Eve – And our children will never see it again.

Juliet – Not for hundreds of generations, at least, before mankind, if it manage to survive, is able to rebuild a spacecraft like this.

Romeo – It will require rebuilding a civilization. An industry.

Eve – While making sure that this industrial revolution doesn't lead us to the edge of the same precipice.

Romeo – We've left Earth's gravitational pull. I'm activating artificial gravity.

Juliet – The Earth is already far away. We're going to orbit around the Moon.

Eve – The fate of humanity is in our hands.

Adam – For better or for worse. It's up to us to choose.

Even Romeo seems moved. He approaches to shake Adam's hand.

Romeo – No hard feelings, Doctor.

Adam accepts the handshake.

Adam – You can count on me.

Eve – We don't have a choice, we'll have to work together.

Romeo – I'm aware of the responsibility we have. I've also lost my whole family. My friends.

Adam – We'll have to write all of this in a book for future generations. To prevent them from making the same mistakes.

Juliet – But will they believe us?

Eve – Actually, all of this, everything that's happening to us, was already written in the Bible. The flood, Noah's Ark...

Juliet – We thought they were just tall tales...

Eve – Even without believing in God, we should have understood the symbolic significance of this book that comes from ancient times.

Adam – How can we ensure that our message remains intact for those who come after us? Thousands or even millions of years from now...

Romeo – I don't know.

Juliet returns to her command post.

Juliet – I've activated the autopilot.

Romeo – I managed to save a bottle of Russian champagne.

Juliet gives him a disapproving look.

Juliet – Do you really think there's something to celebrate?

Romeo – You're right, we'll open it when we get there.

Eve – Now we need to go to the cryo-chambers. To save our oxygen reserves. We'll need it upon arrival.

Adam – If we ever wake up. Because a lot of things can happen during a journey of a few thousand years in a spacecraft traveling at the speed of light.

Juliet – And if we do wake up, the question remains whether it will be in heaven or hell...

Eve – In the meantime, the onboard computer will handle any problems that may arise and make decisions on our behalf.

Adam – Let's hope that at least it won't make any mistakes.

Juliet – Well, it's time to say goodbye.

Eve – Or farewell...

They hug each other.

Adam – Good luck.

Eve – And may God's grace be with us.

Adam – I don't believe in God, but I hope he believes in us.

Juliet – We'll find out soon enough.

Adam – So, see you... in sixteen thousand years. Maybe...

Fade to black.

Act 4

Adam and Eve slowly wake up from their slumber.

Eve – Adam?

Adam – Eve?

Eve – Are you alright?

Adam – It seems so.

Eve – At least we're still alive.

Adam – Yes... Well, I think so...

Eve – It's strange. I feel great.

Adam – Me too. I've never felt better.

Eve – Maybe it didn't work...

Adam – What?

Eve – The hibernation. How long did we sleep?

Adam – I don't know... It feels like I slept for an hour.

Eve looks at a dial.

Eve – We slept exactly... sixteen thousand two hundred fourteen years, seven months, three weeks, two days, and one hour.

Adam – Oh, that's quite something...

Eve – That's what you call a long lie-in.

Adam – I won't ask you what day it is.

Eve – On Earth, it would be Friday.

Adam – But all of this... it doesn't mean anything anymore.

Eve – Our home planet is thousands of light-years away, and all life has probably disappeared from its surface.

Adam – Have we reached our destination yet?

Eve – Not quite. The onboard computer was supposed to wake us up as we approached this new solar system, 24 hours before entering Y214's atmosphere.

Adam – And the other two?

Eve – They're still asleep, apparently.

Adam – It would be a good time to get rid of them. (*She gives him a disapproving look.*) I'm joking.

Eve – Let's wait a bit longer. Cryonics is a delicate process. It's better not to rush things.

Adam – And your child? He's still moving, too.

Eve – He was just an embryo when his mother was frozen sixteen thousand years ago. He's not going to move for a while.

Adam – The longest gestation period in the history of mankind... What will we name him?

Eve – Definitely not Cain. But we still need to find him a new home.

Adam – Y214... We'll have to find a name for our planet too...

Eve – Nevertheless... This is an extraordinary moment. For the first time, humans are going to come into contact with a totally unknown form of life.

Adam – It's exciting, that's true. And it's also frightening...

Eve – I feel like Christopher Columbus a few hours before landing in America.

Adam – America was still the same planet, though.

Eve – Are we going to be able to adapt?

Adam – And will this planet and its potential inhabitants be able to adapt to us? Even just to the viruses we inevitably carry with us.

Eve – We'll find out soon enough.

Adam – It could have been a wonderful moment. But mankind had to bring humanity to an end to come to this.

Eve – We're approaching the first planet of this solar system. Apparently, it's completely uninhabitable. Too far from its star.

Adam – Everything confirms that Y214 is indeed habitable. The atmosphere and gravity are very similar to Earth's. Slightly less gravity. But it's negligible.

Eve – How to lose a few pounds effortlessly... Just change planets.

Adam makes a tender gesture towards her.

Adam – You look amazing like this. Sixteen thousand years, and not a wrinkle...

Eve – Thank you...

They kiss.

Adam – Maybe we should wake them up.

Eve – Go ahead... I'll oversee the navigation. We're getting closer to our final destination... if the computer hasn't lost us on the way. The navigation system is down for now...

Adam approaches the cryo-chamber where Juliet lies.

Adam – It feels like waking up Sleeping Beauty.

Eve – I forbid you to kiss her...

He leans over the cryo-chamber.

Adam – No...

Eve – What?

Adam – There's no one in the cryo-chamber.

Eve – That's not possible...

Eve approaches the chamber where Romeo is supposed to rest.

Eve – No one here either...

Adam – Could they already be awake?

Eve – They might be up there...

Adam – I'll go check.

Eve – Don't leave me alone for too long, because it's really creepy. Don't you want me to come with you?

Adam – Someone needs to stay at the controls.

He exits. Eve busies herself with the controls. She looks surprised, then worried. She manipulates various instruments.

Eve – Oh, damn...

Adam returns after a while, looking defeated.

Eve – So?

Adam – Yes, they're up there...

Eve – But...?

Adam – They're dead.

Eve – Dead? Tell me you had nothing to do with it.

Adam – I had nothing to do with it.

A pause.

Eve – But how did they die? How long ago?

Adam – I don't know exactly. Obviously for a very long time. I'll spare you the details...

Eve – What could have happened?

Adam – I don't know. Something must have gone wrong with their hibernation. The process was accidentally interrupted. They probably woke up when the ship was halfway there.

Eve – No way to turn back, and too long of a delay to reach the destination alive.

Adam – They survived for a while, a few months, a few years, and then they died.

Eve – They couldn't go back into hibernation. They died of old age.

Adam – It's unbelievable... They could have woken us up... Killed us... There were only two cryo-chambers left in working order.

Eve – They could have sacrificed us to save themselves.

Adam – But they didn't. They let us sleep for sixteen thousand years.

Eve – You see. Sometimes humans are capable of the best.

Adam – Yes... Or maybe she's the one who stopped him.

Eve – We'll never know exactly what happened.

Adam – I hope at least we'll find a place to bury them.

A pause.

Eve – So now, we're truly alone in the universe... Alone with this child growing inside me.

Adam – Thank goodness it's not mine. If we make another one and count on them to perpetuate the species, at least it will only be half an incest.

Eve – At this point, we're not that concerned about it anymore.

Adam – And the Bible wasn't so strict about that... To perpetuate the species, the children of Adam and Eve must have married each other, right?

Eve continues to look at her instruments.

Eve – There's something I don't understand.

Adam – What?

Eve – We're not where we're supposed to be.

Adam – Where are we then?

Eve – The measuring and navigation instruments aren't working anymore. We have almost no electricity left. We have no way of knowing where we are.

Adam – And even less where we're going...

Eve – So what do we do?

Adam – We can only wait. The automatic pilot is still working. We'll see where it takes us.

Eve – Let's hope we get there safely...

Blackout.

Act 5

Adam and Eve are seated at their control stations. They are focused on their tasks and look worried.

Eve – We have just entered the atmosphere of this unknown planet. And we're under its attraction.

Adam – Even though most of our instruments are currently out of order, the automated landing procedure seems to be progressing normally.

Eve – I managed to restore one of the solar panels. The batteries are starting to charge. We should receive some information soon.

Adam – It's about time because the ground is approaching very quickly.

Eve – If we land on a dead star, it will be the end. We have no more fuel, and it will be impossible to leave for another destination. This planet will be our refuge or our tomb.

Adam – Let's hope it's indeed Y214...

Eve – It would be a miracle if the onboard computer found another habitable planet.

Adam – We're only 10,000 meters away from the surface. We can start to see something with the naked eye.

Eve – It looks like a vast ocean with some land masses.

Adam – The question is whether that ocean is indeed made up of water, whether the atmosphere is breathable, and if these lands are habitable.

Eve – Habitable for human beings like us, you mean. This planet could very well be inhabited by a life form that has adapted to it but would be completely uninhabitable for organisms like us.

Adam – We can see some spots of colour, mostly green.

Eve – Vegetation?

Adam – Maybe. If there's vegetation, there could also be animals.

Eve – Even an intelligent life form.

Adam – By intelligent, you mean a species like ours, capable of destroying its own home planet within a few centuries?

Eve – Let's say a reasonable species then.

Adam – We're starting to make out the details.

Eve – Yes, that's right. An immense ocean dotted with islands, lush vegetation.

Adam – We don't see any signs of civilisation...

Eve looks at a screen.

Eve – There we go, the batteries are sufficiently charged. The onboard computer is starting to send information.

Adam – And?

Eve – It's incredible how similar this planet is to Earth.

Adam looks at the screen over Eve's shoulder.

Adam – It has the exact same characteristics.

Eve – Yes... It's like it's a 99% match. It's incredible...

Adam – Is there a problem?

Eve – If you want to call it that...

Adam – What?

Eve – The computer has finally located us.

Adam – And?

Eve – We're not where we're supposed to be.

Adam – We're not on Y214?

Eve – During our sleep, the onboard computer must have decided that the planet we were aiming for wasn't actually habitable. So it decided to change the flight plan.

Adam – Or maybe it was them...

Eve – Them?

Adam – Romeo, Juliet... They realized that this journey would lead us to death, and they changed course.

Eve – In that case, they decided to turn back.

Adam – Turn back?

Eve – This system is our solar system. The planet we just passed was Neptune. And our destination is the Earth.

Adam – The Earth?

Eve – We will be landing in a few minutes. After a journey of sixteen thousand years through the galaxy.

Adam – So much for that... So, in the end, we're returning to die on the land where we were born...

Eve – Not necessarily...

Adam – What?

Eve – According to the information I'm receiving, during those sixteen thousand years, the planet has become habitable again.

Adam – The Earth is no longer just a vast ocean. We can clearly see a chain of islands.

Eve – The polar ice caps have partially reformed.

Adam – What is the surface temperature?

Eve – Still around 80 degrees at the equator, but milder elsewhere... Around twenty degrees on the island where the computer decided to land us.

Adam – The ocean is no longer boiling.

Eve – The planet is habitable. Partially, at least...

Adam – Habitable... but no longer inhabited.

Eve – No... Apparently, there's no one left... No trace of human life...

Adam – Maybe a few animals, though.

Eve – Fish, probably. Some species that survived extreme depths and gradually became amphibious again.

Adam and Eve look together toward an imaginary window facing the audience.

Adam – We'll have to start everything from scratch.

Eve – Trying not to make the same mistakes again...

Adam – I can see the spot where we're going to land. I even see a palm tree.

Eve – Are you sure it's not an apple tree?

A rumbling sound is heard, and an alert signal flashes.

Adam – What's that?

Eve – The autopilot is not responding. I'll switch to manual control.

Adam – We'll try to land smoothly.

They both work at their control stations. Another rumbling sound and a new alert signal.

Eve – What's happening now?

Adam – Manual controls are not responding either.

Eve – The Ark is out of control. Its trajectory is changing. If we don't eject now, we'll end up in the middle of the ocean...

Adam – The shuttle won't survive the impact.

Eve – At best, we'll be stranded in the middle of this ocean without any means to reach the shore.

Adam – What should we do?

Eve – We have to eject. Finish the descent with parachutes.

Adam – So, farewell to the last remnants of the pre-civilization. We'll arrive on Earth in our birthday suits.

Eve – Almost like Eve and Adam.

They stand up to put on their parachutes and move to the front of the stage as if they were going to jump from that side. They hold hands.

Adam – Welcome to the Garden of Eden. Ready to reinvent humanity with me?

Eve – If we survive, it's up to us to decide whether we'll turn this land into heaven or hell once again.

They take one more step forward and freeze.

Adam – Go?

Eve – Go!

Blackout.

Flashback of sixteen thousand years (optional)

Romeo and Juliet slowly awaken from their respective capsules.

Romeo – Already?

Juliet – We were supposed to hibernate for sixteen thousand years...

Romeo – Feels like I've only slept for an hour or two.

Juliet checks a dial.

Juliet – We've only slept for three hours...

Romeo – That can't be possible!

Juliet looks at a screen on the cockpit.

Juliet – Someone changed the programming I had set...

Romeo – Adam?

Juliet – Who else...?

Romeo – That bastard... and he's still asleep.

Juliet – Eve too... (*She looks at their cockpit's screen.*) They will sleep for sixteen thousand years.

He takes a step toward Adam's capsule.

Romeo – Not if I forcefully wake them up from their freezers.

She stops him.

Juliet – Wait a moment...

Romeo – What do you suggest?

Juliet – I'm thinking...

Romeo – We could reprogram our two cryo-chambers.

Juliet – Unfortunately, it's not possible.

Romeo – Why not?

Juliet – These chambers are for one-time use.

Romeo – What if we take their places?

Juliet – We would deprive them of any chance of arriving alive on this new Earth, but it wouldn't save us either.

Romeo – So, we're doomed...?

Juliet – I told you, these chambers are designed for a single cryogenic process. If we wake them up, we condemn them to death, just like us. But we won't be able to take their places.

Romeo – That scumbag... He wanted to end the human species. In the end, he succeeded...

Juliet – Not if they survive.

Romeo – Believe me, they won't survive for long.

Juliet – By condemning them, you would be condemning all of humanity!

Romeo – I don't understand... Why would he do this?

Juliet – Because that man is diabolical. By doing this, he won't have killed anyone. And he hopes to turn us into murderers. He's placing the fate of humanity in our hands.

Romeo – And what will happen to us?

Juliet – We can't return to Earth. There's nothing waiting for us there.

Romeo – And we're still sixteen thousand light-years away from our destination planet...

Juliet – We have oxygen and supplies for barely a few weeks... We were supposed to hibernate, all four of us.

Romeo – I'm going to kill him...

She grabs the weapon.

Juliet – No, I'm the one who will have to kill you.

She points it at him.

Romeo – But... why?

Juliet – So that they can both live. And so that with them, mankind has a chance to survive. Despite everything...

Romeo – Please, don't do it.

She pulls the trigger. He collapses. She stands in front of the window, facing the audience, to admire the spectacle of the stars. Music.

Fade to black.

The End.

About the author

Born in 1955 in Auvers-sur-Oise (France), Jean-Pierre Martinez was first a drummer for several rock bands before becoming a semiologist in advertising. He then began a career writing television scripts before turning to theatre and writing plays. He has written close to a hundred scripts for television and as many plays, some of which have already become classics (*Friday the 13th*, *Strip Poker*). He is one of the most produced contemporary playwrights in France and in other francophone countries. Several of his plays are also available in Spanish and English, and are regularly produced in the United States and Latin America.

Amateur and professional theatre groups looking for plays to perform can download Jean-Pierre Martinez's plays for free from his website La Comédiathèque (<https://comediatheque.net/>). However, public productions are subject to SACD filing.

For those who prefer reading or working from books, printed versions of his plays can be purchased from Amazon for a price similar to that of photocopying this document.

Other plays by the same author translated in English:

A Cuckoo's nest

A simple business dinner

An innocent little murder

Casket for two

Cheaters

Crisis and Punishment

Critical but stable

Four stars

Friday the 13th

Heads or Tails

Him and Her

Is there a pilot in the audience?

Is there an author in the audience?

Just a moment before the end of the world

Lovestruck at Swindlemore Hall

New Year's Eve at the Morgue

One marriage out of two

Quarantine

Running on Empty

Strip Poker

The Ideal Son-in-Law

The Smell of Money

The Window across the courtyard

The Worst Village in England

Welcome aboard!

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