

For The Company

Written By

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FADE IN:

INT. THE ANUBIS - CRYO CHAMBER

An industrial, dimly-lit room. A worn logo adorns the wall; WAINWRIGHT INDUSTRIES. A cold mist hangs in the air. A dozen bulky cryogenic sleeping pods cram the space, each with a metallic placard: ALVERAZ, JONES, ROSARIO, KALANI, LARSON.

A red light flashes on a pod labeled "TORRES". A nearby screen blinks to life, displaying vital signs and a temperature gauge, which rises quickly. A cloud of steam seeps out of the pod, accompanied by a sharp hiss as the front of the pod slowly lifts, revealing DR. ANA TORRES, a Filipino-American scientist in her mid-30s. She lies motionless, peacefully slumbering. A light blinks on the wall as a voice comes through a speaker.

BARTY

(without emotion)

Good morning, Dr. Torres.

Torres lets out a low groan. Her eyes flutter open. She sits up, groggily rubbing her face.

TORRES

...Who's there?

A projection of a robotic eye appears in front of Torres. Torres cries out, startled. The eye considers her coldly. This is BARTY, the ship's artificial intelligence.

BARTY

It's only me, Doctor. The effects of cryosleep are still wearing off. Your mind may take some time to readjust.

Torres takes a moment to calm her breathing. She squints at the eye, struggling to think clearly.

TORRES

...of course. Sorry, I almost didn't recognize you, Barty.

BARTY

Of course. How are you feeling, Dr. Torres?

Torres shakily climbs out of the pod. Her legs tremble, and she stumbles. She grabs hold of another cryo pod, holding herself steady.

TORRES

Definitely some muscle atrophy. I suppose that's to be expected after ten years.

BARTY

Actually, you have been asleep for six years, forty-eight days, seven hours, and twenty-three minutes.

TORRES

Christ, Barty, that was just a general-

(she stops)

What did you say?

BARTY

You have been asleep for six years, forty-eight days, seven-

TORRES

I get it!

(beat)

Six years...

Torres glances at the other cryo pods.

TORRES

It's a ten year trip back to Earth.

BARTY

That is correct

TORRES

There's still four years to go.

BARTY

Three years, three-hundred seventeen days, twenty-one hours-

TORRES

Why the hell am I awake?

BARTY

There has been an... incident.

INT. THE ANUBIS - CONTROL ROOM

Loose debris drifts peacefully in zero gravity through the heavily damaged control room. A coffee mug pirouettes slowly through the room, passing by large gaps where the walls have been shredded and punctured, allowing glimpses of the

endless starscape beyond. The mug clinks against a thick metal door. Torres stares in awe through a window on the door.

INT. THE ANUBIS - CORRIDOR

Torres steps back from the door. Barty's holographic eye watches her, unblinking.

TORRES
When did this happen?

BARTY
The Anubis was hit four hours,
twenty-two minutes ago.

TORRES
I don't... How could this happen?
How do we hit a debris field out
here? How the hell can there even
be a debris field out here?

BARTY
The odds are indeed astronomical.

TORRES
Have you sent a distress call?

BARTY
The sub-space frequency array was
destroyed by the impact.

TORRES
So we have no means of
communications?

BARTY
Short-range communications are
fully functional.

TORRES
...So we have no means of
communication that are currently
useful.

BARTY
Correct.

Silence.

TORRES
We need to wake up the crew. This
is bad. We need everyone on this.

BARTY
I'm afraid I cannot do that.

TORRES
Excuse me?

BARTY
Cryo-chamber functionality was damaged by the impact. Your pod was the only one unaffected.

TORRES
What does that mean? Is the crew...

BARTY
The crew is safe for now. I simply cannot wake them up. You are the only one I could safely release from cryo sleep.

TORRES
That's absurd! How does that happen?

BARTY
I can explain the exact nature of the malfunction if you like, but I believe there are more pressing concerns at the moment.

TORRES
That's... Ok, that's fair. How bad is the damage? Are we in danger?

BARTY
Most of the ship's essential systems are relatively intact. The most pressing issue is the Energy Capacitor.

TORRES
What's wrong with it?

Barty's eye darts back to the control room.

BARTY
That's it out there.

A large chunk of debris spirals gracefully through space, visible through the jagged holes in the control room.

TORRES
...That means-

BARTY

The ship is running on reserve power.

TORRES

And running out of it.

BARTY

Correct.

TORRES

We need to shut down all non-essential systems. Preserve as much power as we can.

Torres glances at the control room.

TORRES

Tell me you can do that remotely.

BARTY

That functionality was damaged in the impact.

TORRES

...Great. And the only place I can alter the ship's systems is...

BARTY

The control room.

They both glance at the control room.

BARTY

We don't have time to waste. If you don't act quickly, the research data gathered on this mission could be lost forever.

TORRES

Right. The research data. Good to know where your priorities are.

BARTY

My priorities are to serve the best interests of the Company. Significant resources have been expended to ensure the collection of that data. It's preservation should be your concern as well.

TORRES

We'll agree to disagree.

(she sighs)

Okay, I need to get in there. That means... Tell me we still have suits.

BARTY

Vacuum suits are primarily stored in the Armory-

TORRES

The Armory! Yeah, we can...

Torres looks back through the control room. On the opposite side of the room, a flickering sign labeled "Armory" adorns a doorway.

TORRES

...Right. Great. That's just...

Torres slams her fist against the window, letting out a cry of frustration.

BARTY

... Vacuum suits are primarily stored in the Armory, but an emergency suit can be found in Primary Storage.

Torres looks at the wall beside her. A sign on the wall points to the CONTROL ROOM in front of her, but also notes that the CRYO ROOM, MESS HALL, and PRIMARY STORAGE are back the way she came. Torres takes a second to collect herself.

TORRES

Maybe lead with that next time, Bart. Okay, so I'll get the vac suit, you open this door-

BARTY

I'm afraid that functionality was damaged in the impact.

TORRES

Are you saying you can't even open a goddamn door?

BARTY

Correct.

TORRES

You...

(she groans)

What exactly can you do?

BARTY

I still maintain control of the external airlocks.

TORRES

Great. External airlocks. How exactly does that help...

(a realization)

No. No way. I'm not doing a damn spacewalk.

EXT. THE ANUBIS

Tiny lights glimmer across the exterior of The Anubis, a long, narrow, ugly behemoth of dark metal. Sharp pylons and dim flickering lights run the length of ship. Torres stands out in the darkness, clad in a bulky white spacesuit emblazoned with the colorful logo of the Wainwright Corporation. She stomps slowly across the side of the ship, magnetized boots keeping her attached to the ship but making each step a battle.

TORRES

(slightly muffled)

I'm doing a damn spacewalk.

Barty's holographic eye flickers to life on the glass of Torres' helmet.

BARTY

There's nothing to be concerned about, Dr. Torres.

TORRES

Yeah. Nothing. No way this suit could fail, or my oxygen could cut out, or my boots could break down, or I could get hit by debris and get sucked into a void of nothingness while I suffocate slowly over several hours with zero hope of rescue and zero chance for survival and-

BARTY

You are losing focus, Doctor.

Torres takes a breath.

TORRES

I'm cool. Okay. Goddamn. I just...
I kind of have a thing with space.
Don't like it. Never have.

BARTY

You never mentioned that in your
interviews.

TORRES

Yeah, well, I didn't think the
Company would want to take the
candidate with crippling
space-phobia on their deep-space
mission.

BARTY

Was this mission that important to
you?

TORRES

...What do you care?

BARTY

I don't. I find engaging people in
in conversations about their past
keeps their minds off of the
current situation.

TORRES

(sarcastic)

Well, you're doing a great job.

(beat)

...Look, I probably should be
saying this to the Company robot,
but I really don't care about the
mission. I just needed to go
somewhere, get away, and you can't
get further away from Earth than
goddamn space.

BARTY

You make it sound like you were
fleeing something.

TORRES

I wasn't fleeing anything. I
just...

(beat)

I needed to leave. Get away from

(MORE)

TORRES (CONT'D)
everything.

BARTY
Away from your wife?

Torres stops.

TORRES
What-

BARTY
Divorce proceedings are public
record. The Company likes to be
thorough with it's hiring process.

After a moment, Torres continues to walk down the ship.

BARTY
So was that the reason you wanted
this position?

TORRES
... Not exactly. Sheila and I...
(Torres takes a breath)
I realized, you know, once Sheila
was gone, I was alone. I had
nobody. There was nothing for me on
Earth.

(beat)
And that was my fault. I was top of
my field, and boy, did I know it. I
was selfish. Got a real bad ego.
Pushed away everyone who cared
about me. Even Sheila, who put up
with so much shit...

(Torres sighs)
I just needed a clean break. 20
years away from Earth, then I could
come back and start my life over
again. Everyone who knew me has
probably forgotten me by now. One
final selfish act, then a clean
slate. I'm really looking forward
to that. You know, assuming we can
even get home-

BARTY
We've arrived.

Torres stops right before a gaping hole in the hull of the
ship. She peers inside, then looks back the way she came.

TORRES

How about that. Yeah, this is our stop.

BARTY

I feel as though I should mention, Doctor; the Company was aware of your issues when they hired you.

TORRES

Excuse me?

BARTY

They knew the mission was not your priority. That you lied during your interviews about your dedication to the Company's goals.

TORRES

Then... Why bring me on? Why am I here?

BARTY

The Company valued your expertise enough to take the risk. The hope was that by giving you what you needed, you would realize that it is in your best interest to serve the Company's best interest.

(beat)

The Company has invested a lot in your recovery and success. Something you should be aware of.

TORRES

Uh-huh. Good to know.

Silence.

TORRES

Shall we?

INT. THE ANUBIS - CONTROL ROOM

Torres makes her way to the computer console in the center of the room. She knocks a floating coffee mug out of her way and taps on the console.

TORRES

What systems can we do without?

BARTY

To maintain enough power to

(MORE)

BARTY (CONT'D)

guarantee a return to Earth, we would need to shut down all systems except for Navigation and Life-Support.

TORRES

Wait. What about Cryo? If we shut that down-

BARTY

If the Cryogenic systems remain online, the ship would lose power in two years, seventy-three days-

TORRES

Not happening. I'm not pulling the plug on the crew.

BARTY

Our priority is ensuring the safe return of the mission data. Deactivating Cryo would ensure not only the security of the data, but your own survival.

TORRES

Yeah, well, I'm the one who can actually push buttons, so what I say goes. And I say we keep Cryo online. Besides, if I go back on ice, we can ditch Life Support entirely.

BARTY

I'm afraid that's not an option.

TORRES

Like I said, my buttons, my call.

BARTY

What I mean is that you cannot return to Cryo sleep.

TORRES

...let me guess. That functionally-

BARTY

Was damaged by the impact, yes. And even if it were possible, Cryogenics is a massive power drain. There's no guarantee the ship would make it back to Earth.

TORRES

...But there's no guarantee that it wouldn't.

BARTY

...It is possible. Cryogenics is an unpredictable system. But without Life Support, you-

TORRES

I know what that means.

BARTY

You have spent the last sixteen years, forty-eight days, nine hours, and thirty-three minutes waiting to return home.

TORRES

I know.

BARTY

This is the plan that best serves your interests. And the interests of the Company.

Torres looks out at the stars.

BARTY

You know what you need to do.

TORRES

...yeah, I do.

She types into the console and flips a switch. The lights in the room go dim.

BARTY

What are you doing?

TORRES

What I need to do.

She flips several more switches. The lights in the corridor flicker out.

BARTY

You are rerouting Life Support power to the Cryo Chambers.

TORRES

So I am.

BARTY

Without Life Support, you will not survive. Your suit will only keep you alive for so long. After a week, you will start suffocating slowly. It is not a pleasant way to die.

TORRES

I appreciate your concern, Barty.

BARTY

You don't have any attachment to these people. You have no loyalty to them.

Torres flips another switch. A series of lights flash red across the console.

BARTY

You never even met these people, did you? Can you name a single fact about any of them? Do you even remember their names?

(beat)

The Company has put immeasurable resources into this mission, into your success and wellbeing, and you would betray their investment for a few humans you barely know.

TORRES

For a few humans who don't deserve to die just so I can have my "clean slate" bullshit. The whole point was so I would stop making the selfish choice.

BARTY

It's likely they will die anyways. The crew and the data would both be lost due to your vapid moralizing. Is that not the selfish choice?

TORRES

Maybe. But I don't get to make that call. They deserve the chance to survive more than I deserve the guarantee.

BARTY

And what about the data? That's not
(MORE)

BARTY (CONT'D)

yours to risk. That data could be the next step in advancing human civilization, to expanding the reach of your species to beyond the stars. You would jeopardize all of that for nothing.

TORRES

Those people aren't nothing. You can shut it with that Wainwright "Betterment of Humanity" bullshit. You don't get to throw away lives like they're nothing and then act like you have humanity's best interests at heart.

BARTY

After all that they've done for you, the Company will be very disappointed to hear-

TORRES

Fuck the Company.

Torres flips a switch.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. WAINWRIGHT INDUSTRIES LAB

Two figures, a middle-aged EXECUTIVE in a grey suit, and Barty, a young technician in casual clothes, stand surrounded by several monitors. On the wall behind them is a pristine logo; WAINWRIGHT INDUSTRIES. On each monitor is a name: ALVERAZ, JONES, ROSARIO, KALANI, LARSON. Two of them prominently display "ACCEPTED", while the rest display "REJECTED". The two figures stare intently at a monitor labeled TORRES. Below the name is a list of data:
 ANUBIS TEST 1 - FAILURE - TIME ELAPSED 00:09:43
 ANUBIS TEST 2 - FAILURE - TIME ELAPSED 00:07:24

And so on, up to a final entry that just now appears on the screen:

ANUBIS TEST 32 - FAILURE - TIME ELAPSED 00:08:33

The Executive sighs.

EXECUTIVE

I've seen enough. You can stop running the simulations.

BARTY
(nervously)
You sure, boss?

EXECUTIVE
Yes. It's obvious Dr. Torres'
priorities don't align with the
Company.
(beat)
Pity. She was by far the most
qualified candidate.

BARTY
Damn shame.

EXECUTIVE
Make sure you purge her mental
snapshot from the system.

BARTY
Always do, Boss.

EXECUTIVE
Thank you, um...
(The Executive glances at
Barty's nameplate)
...Bartholomew.

BARTY
It's Barty.

The Executive stares at him. Barty clears his throat.

BARTY
Nevermind, boss.

The Executive marches out of the room. Barty lets out a sigh of relief. He types vigorously at his station. "REJECTED" appears over the TORRES data.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

An impatient Dr. Ana Torres sits at the table. She glances around nervously. The door opens. The Executive walks in, carrying a folder.

EXECUTIVE
Dr. Torres. I apologize for the
wait. I'm afraid the Wainwright
Corporation is going to have to
terminate your candidacy for the
Anubis mission.

TORRES

...I see. May I ask why?

EXECUTIVE

While we respect and admire your expertise, the Company has its doubts your motives, and has decided that you are not worth the risk.

TORRES

I don't... I'm not sure I understand.

EXECUTIVE

I don't suppose you do. Have a pleasant day, Dr. Torres.

Torres stands uncertainly and exits the room.

FIN