

12 - September - 2156

Launch day.

I know that my children still don't understand why I volunteered to have my mind uploaded into the United Space Survey mainframe, and I am sorry for that. I've always loved space, but life being what it is I could never afford the trip up. Now, months after my body has died, I am going to start a journey that will last far longer than a single lifespan.

I've been downloaded into the Guerrero VII deep space probe. I will be the first human to see what lies in the Oort cloud. That's much better than dying with my body only to become compost for some restoration-forest.

With my sensor suite I can see and hear, though I never realized how many senses I would be losing when I transferred into a non-biological body. The launch, a generally turbulent event, did not bother me in the slightest. Even now I cannot feel my own momentum. I can access the other systems onboard Guerrero VII to determine my velocity and trajectory. I can observe the earth's brown and green surface getting smaller below me.

From here I can see unfiltered sunlight as it hits the reflectors on the lunar solar farms. There are no sensations, I am a highly sophisticated chunk of metal flying at speeds I could never have conceived of.

Emil, Robert, Anne, Julia, Dinah: I will miss you. Take care of my precious grandbabies, and teach them to reach beyond the stars.

11 - November - 2156

It has been two months since I was launched. There is not a whole lot that I can do to entertain myself, but I am now the closest I will come to Mars. I remember that my grandmother once told me that it was called the red planet. Now that the terraforming is beginning to take hold there are giant swaths of blue as oceans are being formed.

Looking at it now, it looks a lot like Earth once did. I've yet to begin a proper survey of anything. It sounds strange now, but I don't think I ever really grasped the concept of how big space is. Miles of nothing, weeks of nothing.

I can see the stars and little by little as I continue my unending march forward I notice that they have moved. Mars has been a brilliant companion, though, I have watched as weather has begun taking hold of the surface. Storms and clouds changing its face for me. Part of me misses home, already. The doctors and the scientists warned me that it would happen. Humans are social creatures. For now it is enough to get the odd transmission from Earth.

Send my children my love.

15 - February - 2157

I've entered the asteroid belt, now. I know I should be used to the concept by now, but I was disappointed to find there is plenty of room between the rocks out here. When I was little I would watch those old and terrible movies where the hero had to dodge the villain and led them on a chase between impossibly close shifting torrents of rocks.

I am sure that you are getting my transmissions, but it has been a long time since there was contact from Earth, the moon, or Mars. In the meantime, I have begun to take long periods of time where I am powered down.

It's different from sleep, even if I could dream it would be a waste of power. I simply shut myself off and let the scientific suite do its thing. The sensors restore my power if I am approaching an object of interest. The scientific suite, sadly, thinks that everything is interesting.

12 - April - 2157

I knew when I left that the United Space Survey wanted to set up an outpost on Ceres. I wish they would have told me that it was already in the works. I can't see it clearly, I am too far away from it for that but my sensors are picking up activity on the surface.

Given that the scan also showed no signs of life I am guessing that they sent a team of robot drones to begin assembly of some sort of habitat. They didn't bother telling me they were launching it in the last message from home.

They did let Emil and Dinah speak to me briefly, though, which I thought of as a kindness. I now have another grandson, Jacob Voyager Dawson. I am glad they realized that Voyager is not a name you want when you go to school. Poor tyke, I'll never meet him but I will worry for him. It's a hell of a name.

15 - June - 2157

You would think that I saw the end of the asteroid belt coming. I didn't. I am still sometimes grappling with the facts of how open it is out here in the black. At some point while I was shut down, though, there stopped being quite so many rocks in front of me. It's going to be a long while before I cross paths with Jupiter.

My instruments are telling me that I will likely not get to see it. By the time I reach it's orbit it will be on the opposite side of the sun. It's really disappointing to me. I want to see everything this little star system has to offer. But I can't.

Send my love to my kids, I'm going to take another nap.

29 - January - 2158

Six years too late to the party. I was always fascinated by how long different planets took to rotate around the sun. These giants' years are starting to seem like ages. I don't think I would've liked to wait another six years before launching, though. They might have cut the program by that time. So I have to settle for not getting to see the giant red spot, or the frozen ocean on Europa.

I have noticed lately that I've been missing having a body. Little things, like actually being able to eat. I remember this one little place called J. D's Barbecue. They had a giant pink pig statue that they only put out front when it was open. The ribs there just fell off the bone, and they had six kinds of sauce on every table. Just great Carolina barbecue.

I used to go there with Jacob and the kids. It was long before we moved up North. You should get a message to my kids that I'd love for them to go and eat there one last time in my honor. If the place is even still open.

Those were good times.

16 - June - 2159

I was so glad to hear that my kids had a family reunion and went to J. D's Barbecue. My grandbabies should know what good food is. The time delay in messages from home is starting to get to me. By now I should have two more new leaves on the family tree. I probably will not hear about them for another year or more.

I do get to see Saturn, though, which almost makes up for it. I am not close but I still have a spectacular view of the most famous rings in the solar system. The delicate shade of yellow is so beautiful against the backdrop of space. I can just make out the strange six sided cloud pattern over the northern pole.

The moons are amazing, too. So many of them, dancing around the planet like kids at play. Titan looks almost like the too-cool-for-this teenager of the group. Huge, but still dwarfed by the planet itself.

5 - September - 2162

I don't care how old you get, at some point you will hear countless immature jokes about Uranus. When you're finally floating past the icy giant they come flooding back and they all feel funny. Then you laugh and when you hear the robotic version of your laughter you will get sad.

I am seventy-six years old now. I'm beginning to think that I made the wrong decision to carry on past my body's natural expiration date. Is it better to cease to be or to carry on, but continue all alone.

My sister probe, Guerrero VIII is scheduled to overtake me sooner or later. I thought that they had told me the date. I'm not sure if they were intending to upload another consciousness into it or not.

I guess even cyborgs have memory lapses. Just in case, though, I am going to run a diagnostic.

6 - September - 2162

Something is slowly corrupting my memory.

24 - March - 2166

It helps for me to stay shut down as much as possible. The memory unit for the scientific suite is as stable as ever. Perhaps I am simply too much to handle. The corruption has gained an entire percent now. 1% of me is gone. Nothing important, I still remember my husband Jacob and our kids: Emil, Robert, Anne, and Julia.

I am entering the Kuiper Belt now. It's like the asteroid belt, a section of space that is slightly more populated by floating chunks of rock. There is more ice here, though, which I suppose makes it different. Still, it's not exciting as the movies. It isn't life and death out here. It's just quiet and floating.

I got a message from home. From four years ago. More grandchildren. I think that brings the total up to twelve. If that is even the last of them. Emil's oldest just graduated. I need to conserve my memory. It will last longer if I am shut down.

5 - April - 2166

The second ice giant. I used to be so excited for this trip. Now I am wondering if it is worth it. First I got to be a prisoner to a body that simply failed to be functional one piece at a time. I was just taking up space.

Now I am prisoner in a hunk of metal and wires watching as bits of my mind trickle away. I don't know what I have already lost, but I am trying to keep the spread away from what is important.

I have to remember my kids: Emil, Robert, and Anne. Their kids are going to be getting so big now. My grandbabies are almost grown ups. I remember my Jacob. He was so proud of our little family.

Neptune is beautiful, I know they would all be blown away by this huge blue monster. I have memories of skies so blue they made me want to cry. They all pale compared to this beauty, the

subtle variations, and the big ones like the great dark spot. If I could I would've reached out to touch it.

8 - March - 2169

Memory corrupted 25%

Pluto was always Jacob's favorite dwarf planet. I don't understand it myself but he used to tell me stories about how once it was considered a planet in its own right. Before we knew much of Ceres or the other dwarfs in the Sol system. He would laugh and talk about how offended people became when it was demoted. Every once in a while he would show me old art that those people made in protest.

It was silly.

Now that I can see it, though only just, I can say that I kind of want to root for the little guy. Locked in its binary orbit with Chiron, it seems so small. The other moons simply keep on orbiting. I remember the way that the boys would leave their balls scattered across the lawn some days.

At least I remember my kids. Emil and Robert were a handful but I am proud to be their mother. Jacob would have loved to share this journey with me. I wish he could have.

15 - July - 2170

Haumea is the first elliptical planetoid I've seen. The overall impression is that of an egg. A giant egg carved out of ice and rock. I don't know what I was expecting. It's like other dwarf planets in every way except for its odd shape. If I put it out of focus it kind of looks like a half deflated football.

I remember how Jacob used to try and get Emil to play catch with him in the back yard. Emil never could get a perfect spiral and after a while he quit trying. I wonder if we'd had more kids if they would've encouraged each other to keep at it. I don't think Emil had a lonely childhood, though.

I'm worried about my memory. I can tell that there are gaps. Pieces of Emil's childhood are missing. The scientists at the United Space Survey who helped with my consciousness upload said that it was completely safe. But now that I am nothing more than a compilation of ones and zeros I know how easily I can slip away. I was never as savvy with technology as Jacob. He fixed everything for me.

15 - January - 2179

At one point it was speculated that Eris was in fact a tenth planet in the Sol system. At the time Pluto was still a planet and Eris was little more than a slightly closer spec of light in some astronomer's telescope. By the time I was launched word was that they'd discovered Eris was in fact smaller than they had speculated back in the early 2000s.

Sadly, I am not anywhere near it thanks to what the scientists called it's eccentric orbit. Mostly that means it doesn't move in a circle around the sun but something more like a stretched out oval. The scientific suite alerted me that I was crossing this final mile marker before the Oort cloud.

I miss Jacob. He was the best man a woman could ever ask for. If we'd ever had children I am sure he would have helped me raise them to be just as curious as we were. He would have loved it out here. The endless black punctuated with pinpricks of light. He always loved looking up at the stars whenever we had a truly clear night.

My memory is 53% gone now, and I have a long way to go.

19 - July - 3822

86% corrupted files in memory.

I don't think it was anything important; I remember everything about this trip. My guess is that if I delete those files I will stop the corruption. So that's what I am going to do.

It seems almost funny that I would finally reach the Oort Cloud on my birthday. I remember one of the United Space Survey scientists told me that the inner Oort Cloud is also sometimes called the Hills Cloud. I don't like that. There is just something fun to say about the word Oort. It sounds cooler.

It's surprisingly more densely packed out here than the asteroid or Kuiper belts. Most of the objects I am seeing are chunks of ice. It's funny, back on earth the only ice I ever thought of was water. Out here everything is frozen.

There is a surprising amount of color out here. The ice is a parade of pastels: pinks, greens, blue and white. Though, there are some less fun colors. Most of the ice is the color of dirty snow, the ugly grey-black sludge you find on the side of the road.

The science suite is going crazy. It's taking samples and making sweeping scans of the larger objects.

I only wish I had someone to share all of this with. Guerrero VIII overtook me while I was in shut down somewhere between Eris and here. That probe is going to the outer Oort cloud. If there

was an uploaded consciousness on board I hope that they aren't having as many problems as I have been.

I do understand why they wanted people without family to go back to for this mission. It would be far too painful to be away from loved ones and never see them again.