

MAYBE NOT MARS

written by

Brandon Stephens

iambrandonstephens@gmail.com

Copyright (c) 2017 This screenplay may not be used or reproduced for any purpose including educational purposes without the expressed written permission of the author

EXT. MARS

Nothing but red dirt. The dustiness moves as the wind blows. Space boots cut across this arid wasteland, moving fast, running. The boots belong to JIMMY. Jimmy is in a space suit and he is running for his life.

He darts back and forth, full speed, one hand in the air. Out of breath, he keeps checking behind him and up in the sky. He's panicked.

Jimmy is running...from a KITE. The hand in the air holds the string. As he runs, a shark shaped kite flies in the air behind him. He kicks up dust, moving swiftly.

Well, of course, Jimmy trips. BAM, he slaps the dirt. His head rests on the red dirt. His face sweats beneath his clear face mask. His eyes stare forward.

JIMMY (V.O.)

I know what you're thinking. Yes,
that is a kite. Yes, I'm on Mars.

Jimmy heaves himself up slightly, dirt covers him. Defeated, the shark kite wavers to the ground in front of him, pathetic. He sits up.

JIMMY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It's conditions such as these -
monotony, idleness, tedium, sensory
deprivation, loneliness. That is
what the NASA psychologists said.
THAT was their concern. I call it
boredom.

JIMMY

Did you catch that?

He looks over at a MARS FLYING ROVER. This simple little hovering drone beast with it's stupid little camera head just stares at him.

EXT. MARS - POV OF MARS ROVER CAMERA

JIMMY

Of course you did, you are always
there.

EXT. MARS

The drone rover doesn't move.

Jimmy struggles to stand, the suit is cumbersome. Finally, he's up.

JIMMY (V.O.)

That's right. A trip to Mars, with its invisible technology and vast, unprecedented distance from home, that can estrange or alienate a crew to an unprecedented degree.

Jimmy walks over to his shark kite.

JIMMY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Has created an entirely new kind of boredom, impossible to imagine on Earth.

The shark kite is covered in dust and the rope all tangled. Jimmy tries desperately to get it unraveled. Agitated, he swings his arm to throw the kite. It flops down right in front of him, going nowhere.

Defeated, he picks up the stupid kite and trudges on. The dirt surrounds him.

JIMMY

(mumbling to himself)
Go to Mars! It'll be fun!
Experiments! "World" traveler.

He throws up the double quotey fingers.

JIMMY (V.O.)

They said there would likely be a very depressive period, because all the most exciting moments were over, the landing on Mars was over... It was hard, but I had achieved the most important goal...

He stops and looks over. The Rover follows him everywhere. Flying alongside him, filming. Jimmy tries to startle and scare it away. He waves his arms frantically.

JIMMY

BAAAAAAA! GA!

The rover doesn't even flinch. Jimmy stares. The rover stares.

Suddenly, Jimmy darts away. He weaves back and forth. The Rover gives chase, following his every swerve!

Jimmy gives up. The rover slows and stops.

JIMMY (V.O)
 I admit, I'm often inspired to try
 new things on Mars, whether it's
 new kinds of writing, sketching, or
 picking up an instrument.

Jimmy writes under an umbrella in the dirt of mars.

Jimmy draws a illustration of the rover with its head chopped
 off, bloody.

Jimmy rocks out on a snare drum and cymbal. LOUD.

JIMMY (V.O)
 I even tried Yoga.

Jimmy is in meditation mode. On Mars.

JIMMY (V.O.)
 What kind of person gets bored?
 Only a boring one, ha-ha. Or,
 children who have piles of toys but
 no motivation to play. Also
 teenagers, who use Instagram as a
 megaphone to fascinate, or bore the
 rest of us. But to be bored as an
 adult? ON MARS. Pft!

INT. MARS POD

Jimmy goes into the bathroom.

INT. MARS POD BATHROOM

He situates himself in the tight space. Settles in.

INT. MARS POD

Jimmy comes out of the bathroom and stops. The rover is
 staring at him, again. Jimmy has a magazine of some sort in
 his hand.

JIMMY
 What?

Rover stares.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
 Seriously? This?! You! You're gonna
 judge me!

Jimmy throws the magazine down. It's an adult mag judging from the cover.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
I have needs!

Jimmy storms off.

EXT. MARS

Jimmy dances. A LOT. He's getting down right now to some Taylor Dayne. GETTING DOWN. He's got decent moves.

JIMMY (V.O)
You might be wondering...where is everyone else, is he alone on Mars? Where is the team? What is he there for? Is he a scientist?

Jimmy does the Cupid Shuffle in the middle of the Martian desert.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
To the left, to the left, to the right, to the right. Now, walk it by yourself, walk it by yourself...

Jimmy now has a selfie stick and GoPro. He swings himself around in circles.

JIMMY (V.O) (CONT'D)
I am what you can call a scout. I'm the first one. The rest will be here soon.

Jimmy slams into the ground with his GoPro. Too many circles Jimmy. He lies there for a minute, stares at the sky.

JIMMY (V.O.)
I... am but an amoeba, seeking out sensory stimulation - new smells, tastes, sights, sounds or experiences.

He sits up abruptly and faces Rover.

JIMMY
(yelling)
How is it my fault that the research burned up on entry!

Rover stares.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

I'm lucky to be alive?! At least I have food and my hab?! But my research, my purpose! If without that, what is my mission! What IS THE MISSION!

He screams to the sky. Rover doesn't budge.

He lays back down.

A few seconds pass...he makes a snow angel in the sand.

He hops up, stares at his work. Unsatisfied, he destroys it with his feet and hands, with gusto. He walks away.

He's back. He has a metal bar or some piece of debris.

He starts to draw in the sand, this huge figure.

He takes a step back and smiles to himself, his masterpiece complete.

He looks over at the drone Rover. He pauses. Then, he reaches around to his pack and reveals a remote controller and screen. It makes a noise and he flips his fingers over the controls.

The drone quickly flies high into the sky, Jimmy watches it come to hover way above him.

POV DRONE

ON HIS SCREEN is the image of Jimmy and the Martian landscape and his work in the sand. It is a giant penis and balls. Jimmy finds this amusing.

BACK TO JIMMY

He turns up to face the drone and waves, a shutter sound is heard. Jimmy checks out the photo on his screen. Happy, he puts the remote away and the drone flies right back to hover next to him.

INT. MARS POD

Jimmy comes out of the bathroom again, same magazine in hand. The rover stares. Jimmy is surprised again.

JIMMY

Seriously?!

EXT. MARS

Jimmy does a series of workouts with a shake weight.

The drone hovers on.

JIMMY

Gotta stay fit they said.

EXT. MARS

The sun fades and darkness begins.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Humans have a long history of setting off into the unknown on our own planet and space travel beyond low-Earth orbit and the moon, and what it means for the mental well-being of human crews is a new frontier...

INT. MARS POD

Jimmy lays down for the night and closes his eyes. Suddenly, the lights kick on, an alarm clock sounds. Jimmy's eyes pop open.

SUPERIMPOSE "Day 2" on screen.

Fade out