

THE ARARAT

Written by

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A companion short to:

Three Hail Marys

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Fog rolls over the grounds. Cobwebs. Tombstones. This place has the works.

JOSHUA, 29, military set, stands outside a gate, next to HANNAH, 31, scientist vibe. Both are dressed as if straight out of a 1980's horror flick.

JOSHUA

Remember, once we pass the gate,  
your greatest fears will manifest.

HANNAH

How does it do that?

JOSHUA

It just knows.

HANNAH

Not sure this was the best way to  
spend my time off.

She motions him on. He swings the gate open, steps through.

A CHILD, 8, super creepy, shuffles from the front door, stands on the porch, staring. Joshua shudders at the sight. The Child darts back inside.

HANNAH

You're afraid of children?

JOSHUA

Hannah says--from the other side of  
the gate.

Hannah reluctantly steps forward. They, very tentatively, climb the front stairs.

HANNAH

You gotta admit. That's funny. All  
things considered.

INT. MANSION - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dark. Dusty. Aging furniture.

Joshua, more scared than Hannah, hangs close as she leads them through the room. FOOTSTEPS scurry across the ceiling above them. Joshua jumps with fright.

Hannah laughs.

JOSHUA

When do we get to your fear?

As she reaches for the door to the next room, she steps in WATER...sleeping in from under the door.

They look around. Water pours from every crack and opening. Quickly, it's up to their knees.

HANNAH

Shit. Shit. Shit.

It's up to their waists. Hannah panics.

HANNAH

Make it stop! Make it--

Up to their necks.

JOSHUA

--Ararat! Reset!

Just like that, the water's gone.

Hannah fights to gather herself.

JOSHUA

I'm sorry. It's supposed to be scary, but in a fun way.

HANNAH

It's just...my dad. He drowned. I was six.

Suddenly, the pair are rocked sideways as a loud BANG resonates through the house.

The house FLICKERS--images of plain, gray walls intersperse with the haunted living room. Their clothes FLICKER, too--the 80s gear giving way to sleek white body suits.

JOSHUA

Ararat. End program.

INT. SPACE CRAFT - HOLO-DECK - NIGHT

The house, their 80s clothes, disappear. They're standing in a large, blank room.

HANNAH

Ararat. What was that?

ARARAT (V.O.)  
Analyzing. Collision. Damage to  
navigation systems. Forward hull  
breach.

They sprint from the room.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Joshua and Hannah rush around a corner, straight into: a dead  
BODY. A crew member. Sprawled on the ground.

HANNAH  
The others? The children?

JOSHUA  
Ararat. How many life forms on the  
ship? Children?

ARARAT  
Scanning. Thirteen life forms. Ten  
under the age of twelve.

JOSHUA  
The other crew member? Identify and  
locate.

ARARAT  
Remaining crew are Joshua Barrett  
and Hannah McDougal. Both in Aft  
Passage B.

Tiny FOOTSTEPS scramble across the ceiling, whatever it was,  
unseen, hidden in the vents above.

ARARAT  
Correction. There are now fourteen  
life forms present.

Joshua and Hannah look at each other: HOLY SHIT.

ARARAT  
Correction. Eighteen. Twenty-seven.  
Fifty-four. Eighty--

JOSHUA  
--Ararat. Enough!  
(to Hannah)  
We have to get the children.

The ship GROANS with the strain of metal echoing through the  
hall as they sprint through the corridors.

They pass a window, stop to see: a ship, in the distance, NIBAROS emblazoned across her hull. The ship's exterior crawls with thousands of small, black creatures.

The Nibaros EXPLODES into a million shards of metal.

JOSHUA  
The reactor core.

HANNAH  
That's us in a few minutes.

CARGO BAY

Joshua and Hannah sprint in. Ten stasis pods sit neatly in a row, each containing a sleeping CHILD.

JOSHUA  
Ararat. How many life boats operable?

ARARAT  
Three. Correction. Two. Correction--

JOSHUA  
Ararat! Close blast door C5!  
(to Hannah, re: the Children)  
Choose two.  
(off her look)  
That's all that we can save. You know the mission. One of each.

Hannah hesitates...points. They each grab a pod, furiously wheel it from the room.

CORRIDOR

They push the pods into a small craft. The pods barely fit...clearly no room for Joshua and Hannah.

ARARAT  
Reactor breach imminent.

HANNAH  
Should we wake them?

Joshua frantically pushes buttons, programming the pods.

JOSHUA  
Fifteen years to the closest livable planet. They'll wake when they get there. God help them.

He closes the vessel door, smashes a red button near the opening. The ship lurches with the release of the life raft.

The sounds of CREATURES ON THE HULL form a cacophony of noise around them. They both know what's coming.

JOSHUA  
Die fighting?

She shakes her head. No.

INT. SPACE CRAFT - HOLO-DECK - NIGHT

Joshua and Hannah stand in the middle of the bare room.

JOSHUA  
Beach? Mountain?

HANNAH  
Ararat. Run program McDougal A-1.  
(to Joshua)  
You mind?

JOSHUA  
Of course not.

The room lights up, spins to life.

INT. SMALL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Typical family home. Nothing special.

Hannah and Joshua watch as the front door swings open.

In walks: PETEY McDOUGAL, 28, Naval flight suit. He drops to a knee. YOUNG HANNAH, 6, runs to him.

PETEY  
How's my little pumpkin?

Hannah cries as she watches Petey stand, swing his little girl around and around.

HANNAH  
I will always love you, Dad--

The room explodes in a burst of white light.

FADE OUT.