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Down To Earth

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Letting my suitcase and trolley win the race, I was rushing to the security check to lose the weight with which I would board the plane. All the people seemed muted, for I had lent my ears for the announcement to board. It was my first flight and my nerves were getting onto me, for I could feel the height of take off even before boarding the plane. But I cooled myself with the hot warming vapours of coffee and the news heating up in the newspaper which I was stitched into. Among the hiking prices, the election polls, the stolen votes, the new born tiger, the lost match, the news that struck me to the last of its line, was that of an Astronaut landing safely on the moon, except for the loss of weight not due to loss of mass. And as I let my vocal drums shout in anxiety, which was the obvious reaction to the news world in which I let my thoughts swim, yet I seemed weird to the awkward faces around me. Though I closed the written doors of the newspaper, I couldn't stop the vibrations of anxiety falling up and down as waves in my mind that was driven by that out of gravity news. And finally the moment has come when I would have to draw a graph between distance and time that it is was the time to board the lifeless bird, the flight. The echoing steps towards the journey to follow startled my mind as I was going off beat. The fastening belt fastened my breadth as the speed of the plane had crossed my heart beat. And as it lifted up, I felt we were in water, yet erased my illusion when I reasoned it running on the track of buoyancy.

My eyes started to put on weight as the plane reached stability, but not for long they could close, to see a weird world around. Nothing could I trace, for there were neither the clouds nor the microscopic habitats, except for the scorching sun so near, yet it was dark as if the particles have lost their ability to scatter light. Rather it was an endless night knitted with the black thread of visibility. And just as during any other night, my eyes started to search for the moon that always stood out in darkness. But I couldn't reason its absence for there was still an ample time for it to hide behind the earth from the sun. The sky was dipped in unending darkness, yet I stretched the lens in my eyes to see a blue yet white, a white yet green moon. And soon I realised to my astonishment that it was earth. What was I doing out of the earth? How did I release myself from its clutches of gravitational force? And these questions went on multiplying for there were no answers to nullify. And as my flight landed its wheels on an uneven white land as if like a white chalk ready to write on the black board, the dark sky, I realised that I was on the moon which I had been searching in my distressed thoughts. Yet we never landed on the moon for we were floating between the gravitational forces of earth and moon, but a bit closer to the smaller one. We didn't know how to step out of the plane for we were toggling upside down as fishes out of the native pond. I somehow managed to dive out

towards the exit with the oxygen mask I was provided during the take off. The steps to descend down plane seemed useless for we were taken off as hot air balloons strung to the force of the moon. It was a desert of white sand heaping in dunes, and falling in craters, without even a mirage of water. The feeling was really out of earth, rather out of the world.

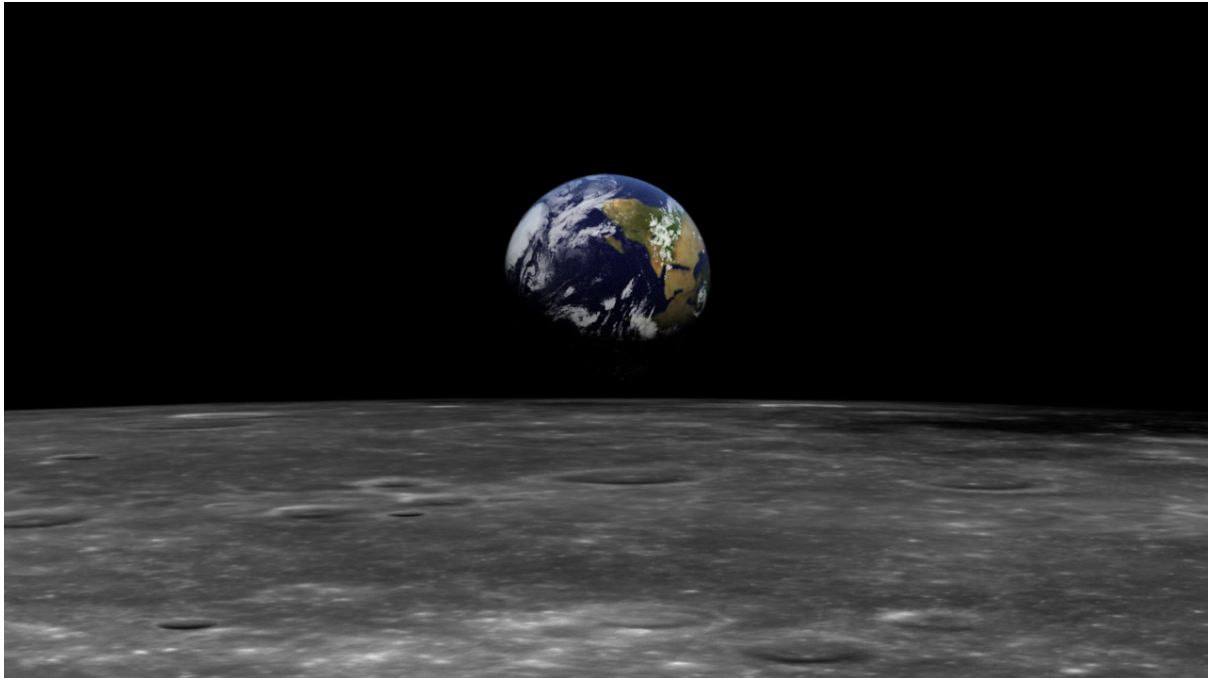


Figure 1: Caption: I stretched the lens in my eyes to see a blue yet white, a white yet green moon. And soon I realised to my astonishment that it was earth. What was I doing out of the earth?

And as I bounced in the buoyancy of an unknown fluid, I found the rusted flags stipulated by the Astronauts in my science textbooks. Among the torn identities, there was a new tricoloured flag; maybe it was planted by the Astronaut whose news startled me in the morning sunrise at the earth. The fluttering flags of achievements made me feel that the astronauts were like mountaineers climbing the highest peak beyond the earth's atmosphere, on over the illusionary mountain of space. At every second sight there were craters, the empty lakes; maybe moon is a silent warrior, calmly bearing the frequent punches and hits of the Asteroids revolving in undefined orbits. The meteoroids and comets were the many balls spun by the cricketers of gravity over the extending pitch of the moon, whose imprints were carved as craters. I felt nothing was there on the moon except the craters, which reminded me of the illegal mining on earth which left similar imprints, until did I fell into one of the craters that pulled me with a whirling force against the buoyant float that had been lifting me since an year at moon equivalent to a day on earth.

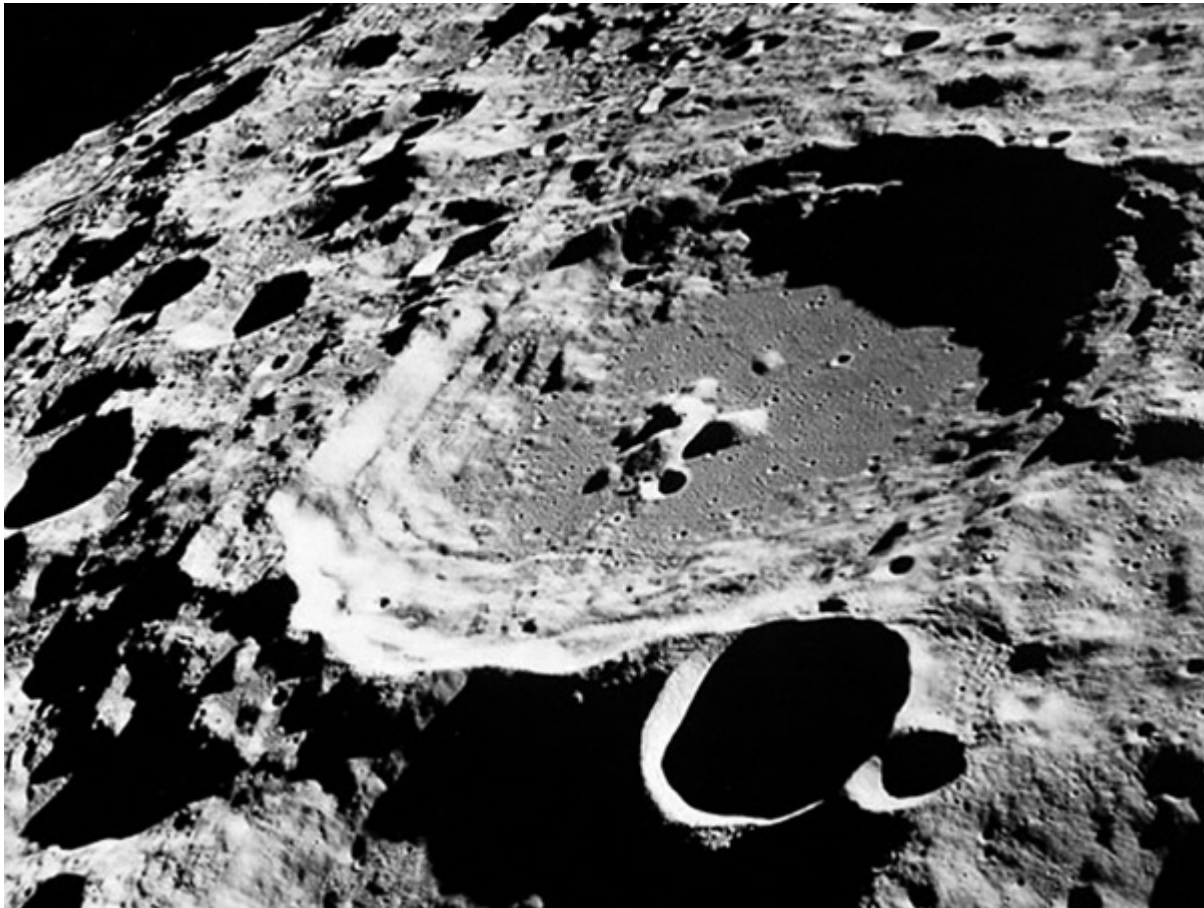


Figure2: Caption: At every second sight there were craters, the empty lakes; maybe moon is a silent warrior, calmly bearing the frequent punches and hits of the Asteroids revolving in undefined orbits.

That was a deep fall which was accompanied by my acoustic screech and scream that could never reach my ears or to any others, for sound was cribbed as it could not travel in compressions and rarefactions because there was no atmosphere on moon to produce sound out of words and colours out of light. But as I reached a surface without even a scratch owing to the variable force, I found a whole new world painted with wrong colours, a green sky, and the red waters, blue sand and a black habitat. As my oxygen mask expired of its breathing gas, I felt I would die in that no-man land, but as I removed the mask I found no difference as if I was still breathing oxygen. Yes it was oxygen! I took a deep breath and expanded my deflated organs. My hunger enzymes were at the peak of agitation; it was as if a lion roaring in my stomach. The red waters seemed slimy and stagnant, yet I had to live for that I had to drink that unknown liquid which I called 'water', as it survived me and my choked throat. And as the reasons to live increased so did my want to satisfy my senses. There were black stationary creatures which resembled the plants on earth, yet its leaves didn't bend, its flowers bloomed at the roots, and fruits with pulp within the seed. Defeated by the acids in my aching stomach I ate the pulp within the seed. Its taste was weird, it was neither salty nor sweet, it wasn't sour nor bitter, a taste which I never experienced on earth.

I strolled on the blue sand and was stunned to see the sand heaping up at my footsteps unlike the imprints or depressions formed on the sand as I walk in my blue planet. It was a strange bereted place, and this strangeness crept into my body. I could feel the awkwardness outside as well as inside; my heart started to beat 300 times a minute increasing to four times of my normal heartbeat. I closed my eyes against both my body and the environment around and opened the doors of dreams which are though unknown but not strange like the world I was in. I was woken up by an echo of a thundering sound.

There were brown clouds squeezing the rain of blood and breaking the sky, which lit the purple light of birth, giving life to uncanny creatures crayoned with yellow shades. They had hands not ending in fingers, feet all around their body which made them walk in somersaults; their yellow eyeballs were dotted in many coloured cornea. They were of the size of my palm yet the impulse of fear crept into my neurons as they multiplied in tens, hundreds, thousands born from the shadows of one another. The sand behind me heaped up as I stepped back in the blink of blanking thoughts. I began to sweat in blood, the red water, and frozen in the recurring steps I had chosen to run back. The farther I ran, the closer they approached me, and the closer I was their steps tumbled to catch me. Then I understood that the lens in their eyes blur the image when the object is within 100 meters of circumference, contrary to the 25cm in human beings. I used their inability to save myself and ran within the orbit of 100 meters radius. I was safe when near to them and in danger when far, though I know it's the reverse. Yet these creatures erased their inability using the weapon of unity. Their somersaults versed consecutively where the farthest one focused me in its eyes and conveyed where I was in somersaults of ascending speed to the nearest one. Each creature in advance knew the next action of the adjacent, which it had to do. It was as if the same creature turned in thousand somersaults, yet it was thousand creatures, each performing a somersault. It was a feast of unity that amazed me to such an extent that I forgot to save myself from their attack. As they touched me in echoes, I felt a thousand volts passing into my body. I fell down in the hiccups of breadth that stopped as I was losing my weight, my life. The death seemed endless, extending as life, as I woke up from the dispersed dream to really see myself losing weight in the landing of the plane. Alas! It was dream. Alas! My life is given another chance to live on the safest planet ever, the earth. I was happy to see the sun in the correct position, and the surroundings painted in the correct colours, the blue sky, the blue waters, the brown sand and the green habitat. And as I stepped out of the plane I breathed a sigh of relief as I walked on the ground against the buoyancy of air. It was a dream I never want to recollect, and a thought that I can never erase. Now earth seemed a new place to live, after the dream to land on moon had turned into a nightmare. Before the dream I wondered if I ever could leave this boring planet and reach heights of extraterrestrial space, but now I want to fall down by the earth's gravity feeling its presence in me, I have rather become 'down to earth'. I am a changed man but with the same luggage to carry back home.