***Mr. Martian***

Day 257th of our very mission. It’s 21st July 2019 I think, according to earth’s calendar. Guess it’s cool to be a member of the first group of humans ever, to land on surface of the red big boy. Am I a citizen of Mars now? I guess I could say the whole diary is out of this world. Damn that’s a good joke, huh? What a great start. As they say though, first things first. Let’s start from the beginning.

Scrambled eggs. And some pancakes, with butter and some syrup spread all over them. And I bet you know it costs a leg and an arm to get some good syrup here, in Seattle. My wife always used to make amazing pancakes. That’s what my last breakfast before start of the mission looked like. I shared it with my family, enjoying ourselves, eating pancakes and slurping some tea. They could make a movie about that breakfast, that’s how emotional that moment was. You really start to appreciate basically everything you have when you are about to go on a mission for like 20 years. That meant no contact with your friends or family, no hanging out on Friday nights, no gloomy Sundays spent together at home; and no pancakes of course. All I really remember next is cars and incredible mess, whossh of highway, lights of NASA’s offices. Last talks, last kisses. That’s funny. You’d think that such a heart-breaking moment would stay in your memory for ever. Farewell with the love of your life and your kids. How romantic. Now I can even barely remember this moment. Time truly heals all wounds, huh? Next, flashes of the cameras. A crowd of journalists. And suddenly, no one knows how and when, I’m there. In a huge metal pipe, like canned sardine, basically sitting on a huge bomb filled with flammable and explosive material that’s somehow supposed to bring me and some other madmen, who turned out to be as dumb and ambitious as me, to the god damn space, deep into the unknown profundities of our solar system. I can feel every single beat of my heart. Suddenly everything is deadly quiet. I feel the same inside. It seems to take ages. And then I hear it. “Ten”. Too late to change our mind now. Too late to go for pee. “Nine”. I bet my heart just broke the world record but it seemed it took ages between single beats. “Eight”. Beat. “Seven”. Beat. “Six”. “Five”. I was on the edge of my durability. “Four”. My soul was about to exit my body. “Three”. Goodbye cruel world. “Two”. It felt as if time stopped. “One”. A long pause. And then a loud bang. Explosion of light and energy. Unimaginable rumble and extremely annoying noise, so loud it hurts. Are we dead already? I could imagine all these people out there stunned and fascinated while looking at an enormously large can filled with some humans and more that some electricity. I could imagine the loud cheers and happiness after the set off turned out to be successful. Who would’ve thought?
I bet many father told their children how brave and proud the people that were just sent into the space are. I bet many kids dream about becoming wealthy, almost superhero-like astronaut once they grow up. How childish. Although they are children after all, so what was I expecting. And all that was left after us was a long, grey bar of dust and smoke after we disappeared above the clouds, heading towards what’s unknown with enormous speed. You may consider it’s crazy but actually I sometimes wish the set off was not successful. I must say space made an amazing impression on me when I first saw it after we left the orbit. We slept during most of the journey. Thanks to some modern technology I will never understand we got sort of hibernated. Afterwards we got to our destination. And here I am. Sitting in the space base set on surface of Mars, writing this diary. I hope you will at least like it.

 I’m slowly falling into deadly routine, which is not that nice. We had everything like food, luggage, and all the technical work done for us. The whole mission was being prepared for almost 12 years (which is pretty quick by the way) and the space shuttle had been standing prepared for 2 weeks before set off. We basically examine the soil and dust every day. Then, we do some crazy scientific experiments. Just kidding, they’re actually quite boring. Haven’t met any green guys yet! Honestly I don’t know whether that’s good or not. At this point either we get crazy or start liking what we’re doing, which won’t be that easy. I realized that space exploring is not my cup of tea but I think it might be too late now.

Day 260th. Or maybe 259th? 259th I think. Anyway it’s about 130 days left. Bad thing though is that our journey back to the Earth is supposed to take us at least 8 years. God damn you space and your scale. Fortunately I got some good news too. We have started a scientific program about cultivating on Mars’s surface and the amount of nutrition in its soil. And I really feel like in one’s element while doing all these plants stuff. That’s the kind of work I like and biology is the thing that I’m crazy about. Not boasting, I’m both the best and the only botanist on Mars right now. Doesn’t that sound cool?

YOU WON’T BELIEVE THIS! Oh, right. The day first. 278. There you go. Guess what we found yesterday. Our good old buddy bacteria. Imagine me casually testing some ground and then boom! BACTERIA!

Day 280th. Oh sweet irony. We came here to look for what’s unknown to humans and still all we find is our own troops. Bacteria turned out not to be a new discovery. It was from earth and probably got here with our luggage. How embarrassing. We’re representatives of humankind in the very universe, exploring planets that have never been explored before. Whole operation costs hundreds of millions of dollars, engages 9 countries and we can’t even make sure we’re sterile. Tragedy.

Day 287th. Have been talking about irony?! Well irony it is, indeed. We found our bacteria? Their bacteria found us. Let’s start from the beginning. It was an exciting week. First of all, we destroyed one of the most important aspects of our mission and the most important tool of work, worth 43 millions dollars jeep if I could call it like that. Just a bunch of idiots crashing a jeep onto rocks, falling from the height of 23 yards on a foreign planet. Let’s just ride. Who normally pays attention to their track. What could go wrong? Great. Furthermore, Michael got hurt in the crash I mentioned. The weakness of Mars’s gravitation is the only thing that kept him alive. He suffers from broken collar bone and some inside injuries. And how the hell are we supposed to guarantee him medical treatment he needs? The worst for the last.

We… we’re sick. It’s not a normal illness of some kind. It’s… different. Caused by some Mars’s viruses. You might say it’s an amazing discovery. Indeed it is but imagine us, set in the middle of god damn space on a cosmic piece of rock, floating somewhere in the universe around huge ball of energy and flames. Sounds familiar? But we are unsure about our lives. It’s like a dream. A bad dream. You want to wake up but at the same point you are frightened. Even though it’s just a dream and you know it. Get it? Yeah but we will never wake up. We might actually fall asleep. We’re starting to suffer from fever and cough associated with strange pressure in our lungs. Maybe we will get better. Pray for us. Please.

Control centre on the Earth knows everything. But what can they do? We’re coming back. At least we’ll try but our future isn’t seen in bright colors. Oh God.

And if you ever find us. If you one day meet a floating piece of metal filled with conceited astronauts, being deadly quiet. Or if our space ship gets back to Earth, but only with our bodies, remember us. The first people on Mars. The first ever. We created history, at least that’s what we managed to do.

And remember. Never underestimate what’s unknown. What’s a mystery. Discovering the not discovered is what we live for. But it’s also what we may die for.