

# Coming Home

## Script

This is the Public Affairs Officer at Ground Control in Brownsville, Texas. The final countdown for STS-30 has begun at 11 AM on June 2nd , 2090 . The astronauts are ready to enter the atmosphere and prepare for landing.

William Pierce and Araki Yasusada were recruited by Officer Carl Brandon to be the first ones of human kind to ever attempt to go to Anarres, a planet out of the solar system. The enormous amount of pollution accumulated on the Earth through its years of life has damaged the atmosphere which cannot protect anymore the Earth from the UV radiations coming from the sun. So, scientists had been trying for years to find a planet with similar characteristics as Earth's to allow the human kind to live there. Anarres showed up on their computers as the closest planet to the solar system that had O<sup>2</sup>, breathable oxygen.

William Pierce is a 29 year old guy, who has just proposed to his girlfriend Mary and he promised her that he would be back to get married, having their wedding on the Moon.

Araki Yasusada is a Japanese already well-experienced astronaut with 30 years of experience working in the field.

10 years earlier, two other astronauts were sent out, but they never came back. Mr. Pierce and Mr Yasusada. both knew that they were agreeing to a suicidal mission, but the only thought that they could have been part of such an amazing discovery for human science, made them sign that contract to depart on this journey.

They had to travel at the speed of light but everything went smoothly and they managed perfectly on the planet.

They found out that Anarres had more things in common with the Earth than they ever thought. It had oceans and it was predominantly steppe<sup>1</sup>. But, best of all, this planet wasn't exactly deserted, since they found trace of life.

Apparently, they had very advanced technology and it didn't take them too long to be let into the community and to get to know them.

After a day, they decided to get on their spaceship again to depart for Earth.

They were aware that getting there wasn't difficult, but going back would have been

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<sup>1</sup> In physical geography, a **steppe** is an ecoregion, in the montane grasslands and shrublands and temperate grasslands, savannas, and shrublands biomes, characterized by grassland plains without trees apart from those near rivers and lakes.

almost impossible. The scientists weren't sure whether the spaceship would have taken another trip at the speed of light into the solar system.

W. and A. cannot wait to go back and tell about their discovery. Right before getting on the ship, an Anarresian sneaks on it to sabotage the fuel tank. They were very friendly with them but they didn't want W. and A. to go back and reveal that there is life on that planet, because they did not want to share it with anyone else.

Time Code: **00:00**

William and Araki are on the spaceship leaving Anarres behind them admiring once more through the porthole the beauty of the planet and how much they would love to live there with their families. The destiny of the Earth could finally be saved by these two brave men.

**(00:48)**

They are ready to switch on the speed of light engine but they decide to give a hug first and wish 'good luck buddy!' to each other. The journey to get into the solar system is full of turbulences and there is an asteroid storm approaching. At that speed it is very hard to dodge through all of them. Araki has a lot of experience as an astronaut and Williams has the reflexes of a young man. They both make an excellent team together and they manage perfectly through them without a scratch.

They are celebrating until they realise that they're losing fuel. The tank is leaking and they wonder how that might be possible. They cannot believe with their own eyes that they did it but now they do not seem to have enough fuel to get through the solar system and land on Earth.

**(1:20)**

Suddenly, from cheering, they have lost any hope that they will make it back to Earth. They try to go through any possible solution that could save their lives but as scientists, they are aware that the statistics are against them. They will never land safely and they will crash before even preparing for landing.

William Pierce had proposed to his girlfriend and he loves her too much to give up.

So enough with negative thoughts, he decides to take the lead and attempt a free fall.

**(2:02)**

They decide that if they wanted to have a chance to make it, then they had to get rid of all of the material collected on the planet as proof of their staying. The lighter the spaceship is, the better chances they would have to aim for Earth because the ship would be of easier control. The spaceship was well designed for emergencies like this, which allows to drop any weight off the ship in case of necessity without being sucked out into space.

The tension grows stronger but they are not afraid of dying. They want to make it home and kiss once again their families. Mary gets called in by Officer Brandon and manages to speak to William. She says: "Please William come home!", bursting into tears. William is now even more motivated. He's not afraid, he will be back soon to his future spouse.

They are finally able to center the Earth and they begin to get through the atmosphere. They are really close to arriving but the ship unfortunately catches fire because of the free falling speed. The ship can take fire up to 10 minutes so they do not have much time left. The fire alarm goes off and there is tension in the ship. The aircraft yoke is not responding anymore. It's really heavy to maneuver. The tank keeps losing fuel, which increases the chances for the cockpit to catch fire as well. William looks at Araki and he's surprised to seeing him giving up. He is muttering words and his friend asks him: "Man, help me out here! What are you doing?" and Araki responds: "I'm praying, pray with me my friend, it's the only hope we have left". William did never go to church, but he decided to follow his friend's advice and started putting words together that would sound as close as possible to a prayer.

The ship is becoming too hot for the human bodies to resist, their bodies start bruising up quite quickly but they finally see the ocean from up there. William says: "Buddy we made it! Wake up! Wake up please!". Araki is not responding anymore and has lost consciousness. The ship lands miraculously and safely on the water, helicopters are all around the ship ready to help.

Until William wakes up in his bed at home and realised that he had dreamed everything because his mission would begin that very same day. So he decides to drop out of the mission and marry Mary before too late and enjoy the last moments of Earth available together.