

A mighty roar blasted through the still, morning air, and Harvester shuddered. A flock of birds roosting in trees a mile away startled upward in close formation like a black cloud, wheeling and swirling, confused by the thunderous noise.

The men experienced heavy, bone-rattling vibration, even causing their teeth to clatter as the giant ship violently shuddered in response to the powerful rockets.

Then, "Abort! Abort! Abort!" came over the intercom.

"What the hell?" Jim said into his helmet microphone.

The Saturn V rockets immediately began to power down.

Tony spoke over the CRV's internal intercom via his helmet mike. "Don't worry, this sort of thing happens often. Ground control will tell us what went wrong as soon as they've spoken with the engineer who called the abort."

About 5 minutes later the intercom squawked, "This is Ground Control. Sorry, guys. Two of the twenty Saturn rockets didn't ignite."