

Steady breath, a determined, beating heart.

{text:child\_name} raised {text:child\_gender\_1} head and reached for the controls with both hands.

“Stay steady,” {text:child\_gender} whispered. “Stay steady for just sixty more seconds.”

Time slowed. Each second stretched heavy and thick. The light pressed in from every direction. The shaking never stopped.

Sixty seconds passed.

Relief, quiet and enormous, filled the cockpit.

And then—something appeared ahead.

“Again.”

Another sixty.

{text:child\_gender} didn't think about the whole journey. Not the whole journey. Not the impossible distance ahead. Just this moment. Then the next. That was enough.

Then—silence.

The shaking stopped.

The light softened. From blinding white to warm gold.

The instruments flickered. Then returned.

A single green light appeared.