

# Alien Invasion

Voss slowly opened her eyes, the suit's alarm bleeping away in her ears. At first, she thought she may be blind; everything was black. Then a bright circle drifted past the visor of her helmet.

"Commander Dryden!" a human voice called through her ear-piece as the bright shape spun away and blackness returned. "We're under attack! We haven't much time!"

Her head was throbbing and she felt dizzy as the alarm continued to bleep. Voss tried to rub her eyes, but instead her gloved hand hit the outside of her space helmet. She tried to remember where she was. The bright circle drifted past once again, but this time her eyes were able to focus on it. It was a planet; a large, blue planet.

The blue planet whizzed past again, and then something else; something that looked like a spaceship. No – two spaceships! One of them was on fire, parts of it drifting into space.

"Commander!" the human voice cried.

"Warning," a different, computer-sounding voice said, "Oxygen levels critical. Thirty seconds remaining."

Voss suddenly realised that she was the one spinning, not the planet. "Stabilise," she ordered, and everything came to a stop. She twisted round. The blue planet was Earth and the spaceship on fire was the Vanguard Explorer. She remembered how it had come under attack, the aliens forcing their way on board. She remembered the explosion that left her unconscious and spinning into space. And she remembered what needed to be done. "Forward thrusters," she coughed. The suit pushed her towards the outer hull of the Vanguard where an amber button was flashing beside a small control panel. Voss keyed in the 10-digit password, and pressed the self-destruct button. "Sorry," she whispered.

"They're here!" the human voice screamed in her ear.

"Oxygen levels depleted," the computer voice said.

There is no sound in space, but if there was, the sound of the Vanguard exploding into a million pieces – and the alien ship along with it - would have been heard all the way to Earth.



1. Why did Voss think she was blind at first?

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2. What was the bright circle that kept drifting past?

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3. 'And she remembered what needed to be done.'

What do you think Voss was thinking to herself at this point in the story?

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4. "Oxygen levels depleted,"...

Why has the author used such technical language for this direct speech?

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