

THE END'S BEGINNING

by

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For The Impact

(Late in Act Three)

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EXT. BACK STREET. ALICE SPRINGS, AUSTRALIA - NIGHT

Background noise of panic and chaos. Astro-geek JAMES ANDERSON stands on a corner, numb, watching drunken brawlers pass by. He checks his watch; not long now.

James notices old-timer DON, another astronomy buff, staring at him from the back of a rundown bar. James nods. No response. Puzzled, he crosses the street and enters the

INT. BAR

No one behind the counter; the stock seriously depleted. Don sits alone nursing a bottle of whisky. James approaches. Hesitates. No invitation to join Don, but he does so anyway.

JAMES

Not seen you for a while. How have you... Are you OK?

DON

How have I taken the news? Your asteroid. KT 1887.

JAMES

I know. Catchy.

DON

Your bombshell.

JAMES

Yeah, well. Don't shoot the messenger.

DON

No? This terror. Devastation. All down to J. Anderson, media star.

JAMES

Come on, I only spotted it.

DON

You didn't have to tell.

JAMES

How could I not tell?

DON

Five people saw it. Just five Billy-No-Mates, gazing at the stars because there's no one to go

home to. If you'd kept your gobs shut, people would have been none the wiser till the bloody thing was nearly on 'em. We'd be in bed.

JAMES

They had a right to know.

DON

Every astronomer's dream: first to spot a heavenly object. Had to have your moment of glory, your phone call to NASA - whatever it cost the rest of us.

JAMES

No, that's not why -

DON

It was my spot. I was the first to see that asteroid, over a week ago.

James takes a deep breath, everything falling into place.

JAMES

And then you disappeared.

DON

Because I wouldn't inflict this on everyone for a quick burst of fame.

Don swigs from his bottle and goes to the door. James follows.

JAMES

That's not why I reported it.

Don leaves, ignoring him. James sees a YOUNG BOY run from a house UP THE STREET, and embrace his MOTHER, rushing to get home. The GRANDPARENTS also come from the house to meet her.

BOY

Mummy, you made it!

MOTHER

Nothing would have stopped me.

James watches the family embrace and say they love each other.

JAMES

That's why I did it.