

## DESVANECIMIENTO PROLONGADO

Película Implausible # 1

*Desvanecimiento Prolongado* (Long Fade) is the first of Dulce Aranea's series of unrealized films called *Las Películas Implausibles* (The Implausible Films). It is based on an equally unrealized film *El Primer Evento* (The First Event). *El Primer Evento* was the last film in a series of films conceived by Dulce Aranea's father, Etéreo Aranea, which he called *Las Películas Imposibles* (The Impossible Films).

Although *El Primer Evento* was never realized, Etéreo Aranea wrote an introductory text – as is the case for all of his impossible films — which he intended to read in a dark cinema to the film's hypothetical audience:

“Please lean back. Relax. Keep your eyes open or closed, it doesn't matter, whatever makes you feel more comfortable. Relax your jaws. Let your mouths drop. In fact, if possible, relax all of your orifices. It is important that you put yourselves in an open, receptive position. As all of you must know by now – and if you think you don't, believe me, a part of you already knows and has been trying to tell you for a long time, you just have not been paying attention – the sun is dying. The sun is dying and there is nothing we can do about it. The sun is dying, and we don't even know why. We certainly don't know how to make it stop. The sun is dying and, to be honest, the only thing we can do, the only thing we *must* do is to be present for its demise. We must be witnesses to its fade to total black.

For too long we have been worshipping false suns and they have done nothing but blind us with their pathetic illusions. The cinematic fade is an aberration. The only real fade must come from the sun. It is said that the death of the sun will only happen billions of years from now. Nonetheless, we can't be absolutely sure it won't happen much sooner. It could happen a hundred years from now. It could happen next week or in the next hour or even before I finish...this ...sentence. You see, what I'm trying to say is that we have no control over the sun. So, we must begin to prepare for its death now. Not only

must we prepare for it. We should hope it happens as soon as possible. That is why we are gathered here.

Now, it would be presumptuous to think that those of us gathered here have the ability to fade the sun. Naturally there is no human act that can directly influence the sun's behavior. At least not yet. So for now, we will concentrate together and urge for the sun to fade to dark.

What about an eclipse you might ask? Well, that is not even close to the type of darkness I'm talking about. Nonetheless, think of the awe that usually accompanies that type of cosmic event. Of course, it is always undergirded by the comfort of knowing that it is fleeting. But what if it were total and final? Should we panic? Should we despair? No, our emotional response should be unboundedly larger. Our wonder should be limitless.

Which is why we must sit here in this artificial darkness and wish for the gift of true darkness. If our spirits are true and worthy, we will receive this ultimate gift. For the next 90 minutes every fiber of our beings should concentrate on the sun and its death. Perhaps it will happen while we are gathered here, and this unreal darkness that surrounds us will become true darkness, supreme darkness.

Now, if it doesn't happen in the allotted time, I will ask you all to sign a very special contract. It is a ten-billion-year contract. This contract states that, from this moment on, you will dedicate yourself entirely to ensuring the survival of the human species so that your descendants will be present for the inevitable death of the sun. You will promise to cling to existence with all your might so that billions of years from now, after escaping from the dead rock that used to be the earth, a group of our descendants will gather on the surface of one of the moons of Jupiter and watch the sun fade to absolute black. So please, relax, sit back and pray for the darkness of the sun."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It appears that Aranea got the timescale wrong. From what we now know, in about 4.5 billion years the sun will become a red giant. At that point it will swallow the earth. After a couple billion years it will run out of nuclear fuel and contract into a white dwarf. As a white dwarf the sun will no longer generate heat but it will continue to give off light for about another 10 trillion years, after which it will become a

Thirty years after Etéreo Aranea devised this film, his daughter began to work on her series. Dulce, worried that no audience would commit to the pledge that her father had demanded, decided to design a series of rooms that would help viewers prepare for the sacred darkness. She called them “waiting rooms for the end”. Over a decade she built miniature models of her waiting rooms. Her plan was to gather an initial group of darkness enthusiasts and have them build one of the rooms. There they would sit and wait for the sun to fade. No other activity would take place inside the room. They would sit and concentrate their attention on the gradual fading of the sun. Eventually, they would be able to feel the sun’s power diminishing ever so slowly. The group’s time in the room would gradually increase until the only other activities they would carry out would be those necessary for the biological survival of the group. Sleeping, eating, procreating, and eliminating bodily waste would be done in the most expedient manner. All other efforts would be geared toward preserving the room and its ritual of waiting.<sup>2</sup> It was this ritual which she saw as her first implausible film. This “film” would be passed on through the generations. Dulce Aranea envisioned a time in the distant future where all of humanity would spend all of their time in versions of her waiting rooms living out her film. She was never able to build any of the waiting rooms.

Last year we were granted access to Dulce Aranea’s surviving models. Using these models, and under the same title, we created an adaptation of her first implausible film.

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black dwarf. That is so far in the future that not a single black dwarf exists yet since the universe as we know it is not old enough to have spawned any. So the contract should have at least been for 10, maybe 11 trillion years.

<sup>2</sup> One has to imagine that some of these efforts would include building the ships that would get the human race to the moon of Jupiter to witness the end suggested by her father. We imagine that in between waiting they would need to find time to build the ships and then on the moon they would again build a room for waiting. Unless of course she was aware of the futility of getting to the moon of Jupiter and expected the end, at least for humans, to happen on this planet.