



It was the
Apollo
before Christmas

1
00:00:17,960 --> 00:00:21,500
It's hard to believe it's been 50 years
since NASA embarked on an amazing

2
00:00:21,509 --> 00:00:26,909
journey in which three humans left the
planet Earth for the first time to visit

3
00:00:26,909 --> 00:00:31,980
another celestial body. Through
coincidence and orbital mechanics this

4
00:00:31,980 --> 00:00:38,810
journey would fall over Christmas time,
the epic journey of Apollo 8.

5
00:00:39,579 --> 00:00:45,879
'Twas t minus ten with the world looking
on, three brave souls prepared an epic

6
00:00:45,879 --> 00:00:52,840
journey at dawn. The rocket was stacked
on the pad so precise with oxygen

7
00:00:52,840 --> 00:00:57,850
billowing 'neath tanks wreathed in ice.
Launch controllers were nestled at

8
00:00:57,850 --> 00:01:04,340
console so, near watching temperatures,
voltages, making sure all was clear.

9
00:01:05,740 --> 00:01:08,680
Atop the Saturn three hundred feet high off
the ground

10
00:01:08,680 --> 00:01:14,710
the astronauts faced skyward, where
they'd shortly be bound. Destined to fly

11
00:01:14,710 --> 00:01:20,740
two parts far and unknown the first
humans in history to truly leave home.

12
00:01:22,120 --> 00:01:26,880
Around our neighbor they'd circle before
turning back, returning home to the blue

13
00:01:26,890 --> 00:01:34,080
marble, suspended in black. As the seconds
tick down the rocket rumbled to life.

14
00:01:34,080 --> 00:01:40,210
Millions of parts humming in a sequence
so precise. The world held its breath in

15
00:01:40,210 --> 00:01:46,550
awe of the site, as engines awakened and
shot forth their first light.

16
00:01:46,550 --> 00:01:51,950
And eruption of flame chased by
incredible sound! The people of Florida

17
00:01:51,950 --> 00:01:57,920
feeling quakes in the ground. Rocket left
skyward as the world rejoiced, the

18
00:01:57,920 --> 00:02:06,520
mission now heralded by a thundering
voice. Now Borman! Now Lovell! Now Anders! Take flight!

19
00:02:07,180 --> 00:02:12,280
For Kennedy! For Grissom! For Chaffee and White!

20
00:02:12,280 --> 00:02:17,790
To the farthest of reaches! To the
heavens beyond! Now fly away! Soar away!

21

00:02:17,790 --> 00:02:27,280

Slip free the Earth's surly bonds! Mere minutes passed by three stages dropping away.

22

00:02:28,020 --> 00:02:34,940

Two more hours till it's time for Houston to say, "Apollo 8. You are go TLI."

23

00:02:35,800 --> 00:02:40,640

The engines roused from their slumber, toward the moon they did fly.

24

00:02:41,420 --> 00:02:45,960

With stars guiding their way like explorers of old, the brave travelers

25

00:02:45,970 --> 00:02:52,570

spiraled on in a "barbeque roll". Then three days later they passed out of

26

00:02:52,570 --> 00:02:59,260

sight, to the far side of the Moon and an orbit just right. Around and around the

27

00:02:59,260 --> 00:03:05,800

gray landscape they flew, seeing sights for humans all new. Reporting on

28

00:03:05,800 --> 00:03:12,370

craters, some round some bland, so that those soon to follow would know where to

29

00:03:12,370 --> 00:03:18,400

land. Four circuits complete, when to their Christmas surprise, peeking over

30

00:03:18,400 --> 00:03:25,299

the horizon, a magnificent Earthrise. "There's the Earth coming up," cried Anders

31

00:03:25,299 --> 00:03:33,990
enraptured. Then the snap of a shudder,
and for all time history was captured.

32
00:03:33,990 --> 00:03:39,340
After nine rings around the grayish
bleak ball, a camera brought the world

33
00:03:39,340 --> 00:03:45,280
aboard for a Christmas Eve call. While
lunar vistas streamed across millions of

34
00:03:45,280 --> 00:03:52,420
screens, people of this good Earth sat in
thrall by that scene. They set sail for

35
00:03:52,420 --> 00:03:58,120
the good Earth on their chariot of fire.
Houston reporting, There is a Santa Claus,

36
00:03:58,120 --> 00:04:06,180
a phrase to admire. It was then two days
flight toward a globe growing in size.

37
00:04:07,000 --> 00:04:12,640
Before a fiery plummet that would light
up the skies. Their windows grew hazy is

38
00:04:12,640 --> 00:04:17,620
the bright plasma flare, while safe in
their chairs the brave explorers

39
00:04:17,620 --> 00:04:24,700
prepared. A jolt of the parachutes and
then a long float on down, to splash in

40
00:04:24,700 --> 00:04:31,790
the ocean now home safe and sound.
With an end to their journey they were

41

00:04:31,790 --> 00:04:36,840

hailed heroes true. The first men in
history to get so close to the moon.

42

00:04:37,720 --> 00:04:42,840

Soon thereafter others would follow in line,
to continue the greatest adventure

43

00:04:42,840 --> 00:04:48,140

across all space and across all time.