The Mission to Begin All Missions

It was their fiftieth consecutive week in outer space and yet Ashfi was unbothered. As he went through the video logs he had recorded, Yaqoub was monitoring the cameras installed in the various machines sent onto the nearby planets to check on any sudden activity. Kshitij was playing with an electrical wire of some sort, while Muntakim had decided to take a nap on the bunk underneath the dome-shaped glass roof. Their station was planted on the moon so each individual was able to move freely without the worries of there being a lack of gravity. The moment seemed peaceful and calm, until a pencil dropped from a table and triggered an alarm. Loud ear-shrilling bursts filled the room, causing Ashfi to get up to disable the alarm. In the commotion, Muntakim sprung up from his nap and bumped his forehead against the dome, after which curses were muttered. “How nice it is for you to join us. Don’t you know that men sleep at night and work during the day?” Yaqoub scolded, while giving Muntakim a stern look. Kshitij dropped his wire and decided to join in on the conversation. “Technically we’re in outer space and time makes no difference to our daily patterns, so he can be sleeping while we’re awake. Vice-versa can be true as well. Also, it is noted that naps improve memory retention as well as longevity, therefore Muntakim is not at fault.” dictated Kshitij with few breaths between his words. Yaqoub was about to chide Kshitij, when suddenly the large screen spanning the front wall of the station turned on. It was none other than Agent Keras, the government executive responsible for the actions of the Space Monkeys. This was due to the fact they were deemed dangerous and thought to be unpredictable. “Okay Cadets, listen up!” boomed her thunderous voice through the station. “I have yet another task for you four. “ A holographic folder appeared on the steel table beside Kshitij. “This is a highly classified file that only selected teams have access to, which happens to include the Space Monkeys.” Agent Keras stated. Muntakim dropped from his bunk and headed on over to the rest of the crew to read the file Agent Keras sent them. “There is a locker at the back of the space station which appears to be part of the wall. There is no lock, but a secret word to reveal its contents. The secret word is ‘butternut’.” Ashfi read aloud. In a minute’s time, Kshitij scurried to the back of the station and placed his hand on a metal chink in the wall. “Butternut” he yelled, causing the door to fly open, smacking Kshitij on the nose. This left the rest of the team in hysterics. Even Yaqoub managed a faint smile, despite his tendency to detest tomfoolery during missions. After recovering from the blow, Kshitij found a system unit along with a monitor and various cables (including an Ethernet cable) stored inside. “You must disassemble and reassemble this system unit, to receive the launch code for hundreds of nuclear missiles.” Agent Keras informed them. “Why does that involve us? We’re a space cadet team.” Muntakim questioned. “Good question. You see, it’s safer that people harder to reach, such as you four are given this task. This way, the mission and its recipients are safe from human danger. However, I can’t guarantee the system unit won’t cause harm if dealt with inappropriately. This is an essential task to carry out. ” she replied. “Also, how do we obtain the launch codes? They can’t just appear on the monitor after the system unit is reassembled.” Yaqoub asked. “You will use the Ethernet cable to connect to the Internet. You will find a word file on touque.ca, which is our government division’s website. This word file was obtained through several field missions and contains the code to disabling the missiles, however only this system unit contains the decoder for us to be able to use it. The disassembling and reassembling will ensure that the system unit is set up accordingly to prevent unnecessary accidents. Are you guys up for it? Just to make it clear, we are using these codes to disable the missiles.” In unison, they Space Monkeys replied “Yes ma’am!” “I know you guys love technology so I want to advise you not to get emotionally attached to this computer. After we get the codes, we will blow this computer to smithereens, so nobody gets their hands on these codes. Hey Kshitij! What do you think you’re doing?” Kshitij had gotten his hands over the system unit, and opened it up, marveling at its beauty. “I was just checking if everything is okay with our baby-I mean system unit.” Kshitij claimed. “You guys may begin. Good luck.” Agent Keras cheered. “We will not let you down, ma’am!” Ashfi declared, before the screen went black. Each member of the team sprung into action, carefully clearing tables to make room for the computer. “Let’s boot it up to see if it’s working.” Muntakim suggested. They connected the Ethernet cable between the system unit and port attached to the wall. They plugged the system unit and monitor. They connected the monitor, mouse, and keyboard to the system unit. After setting up the computer for use, they booted it up and accessed an Internet browser. Thankfully, their space cadet team was also one of few with access to the Internet and various other internets from outer space! They booted it up to download a test file from touque.ca. They opened it up, causing Kshitij to jump up and down in excitement, to which Yaqoub rolled his eyes. The Space Monkeys quickly disconnected the peripherals and cable from the system unit. They placed them back inside the locker. Once again, Kshitij popped open the case of the system unit, revealing its internal contents to the rest of his team. He shielded it, in fear of losing the system unit to his friends. “Kshitij, remember what Agent Keras said?” Muntakim demanded. “Oh…. I forgot. Sorry about that.” Kshitij apologized. As Ashfi and Kshitij began to remove the connecting cables and take out the CD drive and floppy disk drive from the inside, Muntakim and Yaqoub got on one of their other computers and started to report their activity back to their allies on Earth. When they got up to help Kshitij and Ashfi with disassembling the system unit’s hardware contents, they removed the ribbon cables and power supply. When attempting to remove the Random Access Memory, Ashfi let out a yelp. “Be careful with that! It is a very sensitive component. Hold it at the edges. Though it is not as sensitive as the Central Processing Unit, which controls the execution of a computer and its basic arithmetic operators, the Random Access Memory is almost as vital. The Random Access Memory, which is called RAM for short, is the only storage of information that can be directly accessed by the computer.” When the time came, Muntakim dealt with the Central Processing Unit with a great amount of care. As they neared the end of disassembling the system unit, Ashfi realized Kshitij couldn’t go any further without breaking down. He ultimately removed the motherboard, after which he shut the case. He gave a look to Muntakim and Yaqoub. Before Yaqoub or Ashfi could say anything, Muntakim calmly said “I can see that look you have. I often have that look. It’s not worth it. No matter how intriguing it may seem, you must remain alert. Just think of all of the lives we can save if we complete this mission successfully.” With that last thought, Kshitij resisted his urges and put his righteousness before his impulses. Ashfi’s jaw dropped in surprise, and Yaqoub nodded in respect. Muntakim was finally beginning to bloom into the leader Ashfi had expected of him. Each member of the team grabbed a component and quickly began to reassemble the system unit. They set aside their differences and began to work together; they began to work as a team! Ashfi quickly placed the motherboard back in its original spot, while Muntakim connected the ribbon cable between the CD drive and the motherboard. As Kshitij situated the RAM sideways onto the motherboard, Yaqoub positioned the power supply at the motherboard’s side as it was placed before. In mere minutes, the hardware components were repositioned in their original spots. The system unit looked as if it hadn’t been touched! The team quickly set up the system unit with the Ethernet cable, monitor, mouse, and keyboard. They accessed the Internet and downloaded the file containing the launch codes. After decoding them, they sent them to Agent Keras, which allowed her to disable the missiles. “I thank you for your bravery and achievement. Good work team.” she praised. Each and every member of the team was smiling ear to ear, when Kshitij was the one that spoke up. “Guys aren’t we forgetting something? We need to send the system unit out of the station!” he claimed. With that last word, he flung it out of the opening at the side of the station. The system unit exploded before it reached the ground. This is known as the first true feat of the Space Monkeys. It is the first time they displayed their skills as one unit; as one team. Hereafter, Muntakim began undertaking the ways of Ashfi, to expand his knowledge and abilities at leadership. Kshitij began to work with Yaqoub, despite their conflicting views in terms of liberal and conservative actions. They found equal ground to overcoming their weaknesses. The Space Monkeys are now one of the Canadian government’s most reliable resources and valuable assets.