



Eternity

Matt de la Peña

SCHOLASTIC INC.

For Ryan Byrne, warrior and reader.  
— M.d.I.P.



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## PROLOGUE

THE HEAT from the fire was unbearable as Dak Smyth tried to claw his way out of the elaborate seat belt. Sweat streamed down his face. It soaked his shirt and pants underneath his bulky suit. It even soaked the protective diaper he found himself wearing. He was glad Sera wasn't around to see *that*.

Or even worse, Riq.

But the diaper was no laughing matter. The more sweat that collected in the suit, the more difficult it was for him to move around. He glanced at the fire inching closer to the control panel. Closer to him.

He needed to get out of the way *now*!

But there was nowhere to run. That was the problem with being in outer space. Well, *one* of the problems.

Fire didn't behave the same on a low-gravity spacecraft. The flames didn't shoot upward in a peak the way they did back home. Up here, they hovered around whatever was burning, a deep blue hue.

"Come on!" Dak shouted as the belt slipped out of his gloved fingers again. A drop of sweat ran into his right eye, momentarily blurring his vision. He blinked away the stinging sensation and looked to his left, where the two other astronauts—who weren't much older than

him — were now peering out the window, screaming like little babies. “Uh, little help over here?” Dak shouted.

They didn’t even turn around.

He heard a low buzzing sound, barely audible over the screams, but when he looked all around, he couldn’t identify the source.

When Dak was finally able to free himself, he drifted awkwardly out of the cockpit, toward the wall with the fire extinguisher. He snatched it in his gloves, removed the safety, and aimed the nozzle at the angry blue flame, which now claimed almost a third of the cockpit. Instead of shooting out straight, though, the white substance oozed out at an upward angle, toward the ceiling. He’d forgotten to take into account the lack of gravity.

Dak adjusted his aim accordingly and drew closer to the fire.

But just as he was starting to gain control of it, the guys near the window started screaming even louder, this time diving toward the center of the cockpit, ignoring the flames, holding on to each other.

Dak dropped the extinguisher and bounded over to the window to see for himself.

And suddenly he was screaming, too.

His eyes were bugging out of his head.

A massive asteroid, more than twice the size of their vessel, was spinning recklessly through space directly toward them. . . .