



- 1) 17th April 1970, Apollo 13 took off from Earth without difficulty. The take-off did not create much interest. The tips of the Apollo spacecaps were beginning to warm early. The flight began like all the others.
- 2) Apollo 13 had been travelling for forty-two hours when the first trouble started. It came very silently. One tiny mistake in the equipment was going to have a terrible effect. The fuel tanks began the trouble. A warning light failed to show. Neither the astronauts nor the control room knew that the fuel tanks were in a dangerous condition.
- 3) Suddenly there was an explosion. A warning light now flashed in front of Mike, warning following. The first report of trouble was flashed to Houston.
- 4) "We've got a problem here!"
- 5) The control room on Earth was full simply when the call came. Only a small crew was at work. A few news writers were being around, waiting. Nobody expected anything important. Even television watchers had just turned to Apollo 13. They were watching something more exciting.
- 6) The crew in the control room were instantly alerted. "What was the matter with the spacecap?"
- 7) "This is Houston. Say that again please?"
- 8) Lovell quickly explained that there had been an explosion in the fuel tanks. Two of the three tanks were useless.
- 9) The astronauts, looking out of their windows, saw gas-scapes into space and pieces of the spacecap had been torn away and floated past the window. The spacecap