

Other Space

Written By

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ACT ONE

LEGEND OVER BLACK

A LEGEND APPEARS OVER BLACK AS WE HEAR A SERIOUS SOUNDING ANNOUNCER SPEAK OVER A LOW OMINOUS RUMBLE.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

In 2054, to celebrate the end of the war between the United States and Switzerland, the Universal Mapping Project was created. Its goal -- to map the known universe. In the 50 years since its inception, U.M.P. exploration ships have catalogued hundreds of planets, stars and galaxies. And today a new generation of courageous commanders are taking their ships farther and farther into the unknown reaches of outer space ...

EXT. SPACESHIP - ESTABLISHING SHOT

A LARGE SPACESHIP IS MOVING THROUGH SPACE. A TITLE APPEARS BENEATH IT THAT READS "THE YEAR 2104".

INT. BRIDGE OF A SPACESHIP - SPACE DAY

CAMERA PANS ACROSS THE VERY SERIOUS FACES OF CREW MEMBERS IN UNIFORMS AS THEY SIT AT THE CONTROL CONSOLE OF A LARGE SPACESHIP. OTHER CREW MEMBERS WORK AROUND THE BRIDGE.

CREW MEMBER #1.

Thrust drive up twenty three percent,
captain.

CREW MEMBER #2

Engine variant down four point eight five
millicycles, captain.

CREW MEMBER #3

Course bearing starboard at twelve
degrees into quadrant B-48. Should we
compensate, captain? (LOOKING BEHIND
HIM) Captain?

THEY ALL LOOK OVER AT THE CAPTAIN'S CHAIR IN THE CENTER OF
THE BRIDGE. IT'S EMPTY. AFTER A BEAT ...

VOICE (O.S.)

Oh, thank God ...

STEWART LIPINSKY, 21, GOOFY BUT CUTE, POPS UP FROM BEHIND THE
CHAIR, VERY RELIEVED, HOLDING A METAL BUTTON IN HIS HAND.

STEWART

I found my Star Trek pin. My dad would
have killed me if I lost this. It's like
a hundred and thirty years old. Can you
imagine? (TO CREW MEMBER #3) Oh, yeah,
compensate 6 point 9 percent.

STEWART PRESSES A BUTTON ON THE CHAIR ARM. A LITTLE DOOR
OPENS AND STEWART PULLS OUT A BANANA.

STEWART (CONT'D)

Anybody hungry? Potassium's good for
you. Anybody? Anybody? (NO TAKERS)
Really? Okay, well, when you all get leg
cramps, don't come cryin' to me.

STEWART SHRUGS, SITS DOWN AND PEELS THE BANANA. JUST THEN,
AN ALARM STARTS TO BLARE. WARNING LIGHTS FLASH.

CREW MEMBER #1

Unidentified object coming toward us at a
thousand parsecs from C quadrant.

STEWART GETS UP, SUDDENLY VERY SERIOUS. HOWEVER, THE ENTIRE TIME HE IS HOLDING THE BANANA, USING IT TO POINT AS THE FLAPS OF THE PEEL HANG DOWN AND FLOP AROUND.

STEWART

Increase the shields. Activate projection analysis.

CREW MEMBER #2

Negative shields, sir. We're showing a power drain of 85 percent.

STEWART

Oh, crap, it's an ion asteroid. Start evasive protocol 124.

THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW WE SEE A HUGE ASTEROID FLYING TOWARD US AT TOP SPEED. EVERYBODY LOOKS FREAKED.

CREW MEMBER #3

Sir, impact in ten seconds. There's not enough time to get around it.

STEWART

I know. (QUICKLY; TO HIMSELF) What would Kirk do? What would Kirk do? (THEN, AN IDEA) Run a spent fuel clean-out burst through the forward venting tubes.

CREW MEMBER #1

Sir, that could destroy the ship.

STEWART

Good to know. (POINTING BANANA AT CREW MEMBER) Do it!

THE CREW START PUSHING BUTTONS. THEY'RE ABOUT TO HIT THE ASTEROID.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, WE SEE A BURST OF LIGHT FLY OUT OF THE FRONT OF THE SPACESHIP AND HIT THE ASTEROID DEAD CENTER. THE ASTEROID EXPLODES INTO DUST.. THE CREW CHEERS.

STEWART (CONT'D)

(FALLS INTO HIS CHAIR, RELIEVED) Man, I picked the wrong day to put on a clean pair of underwear.

JUST THEN, THE LIGHTS ALL COME UP ON THE BRIDGE. IT'S A SET. A GROUP OF PEOPLE IN MILITARY UNIFORMS RUN OUT FROM BEHIND CAMERA AND SURROUND STEWART, APPLAUDING. THEIR LEADER IS GENERAL MALARKY, 50'S.

GENERAL MALARKY

That was amazing, Lipinski! You're the first person in fifty years to survive the asteroid. We only put it in the test to see how you'd deal with a fatal situation. We never even thought about doing a clean-out burst.

STEWART

So ... did I pass?

ALL THE OFFICIALS EXCHANGE LOOKS, COMMUNICATING SOMETHING UNKNOWN. STEWART WATCHES THEM, A BIT UNNERVED.

INT. UMP BOARD ROOM - LATER

STEWART IS STANDING AT THE HEAD OF A LARGE CONFERENCE TABLE. AROUND IT ARE UMP OFFICIALS AND BOARD MEMBERS IN ODD 1980'S LOOKING SUITS (INSTEAD OF TIES, THEY EACH WEAR A TENNIS-SIZED BALL ON THEIR COLLARS). AT THE HEAD OF THE TABLE IS HOWARD WOOLWORTH, 50'S, CHAIRMAN OF THE UMP CORPORATION. SITTING NEXT TO HIM IS GENERAL MALARKY.

STEWART

(WIDE EYED) You're making me captain of my own ship?!

GENERAL MALARKY

It's a simple one year collection mission so we thought it'd be a good chance to see how you do in a real situation.

STEWART

I thought the rules said I couldn't be a captain until I was thirty.

HOWARD WOOLWORTH

Rules are made to be broken, Stewart. And we here at UMP think that having a fresh-faced young captain in charge of his own handpicked, fresh-faced young crew can really help bring the public back to UMP.

STEWART

Has the public gone away from UMP?

HOWARD WOOLWORTH

Ah, you know. Everybody wants us to discover aliens. We don't and suddenly we're stuck with warehouses full of UMP merchandise. But, hey, people's attitudes change every day. You know, there was a time when all men wore ties. Today, that would look absolutely ridiculous. (POINTING AT HIS COLLAR) Can you imagine a guy not wearing a ball now?

THE MEN ALL LAUGH UPROARIOUSLY. A LONG HAIRE D SPACED OUT GUY IN HIS 40'S, ZALIAN FLETCHER, ENTERS THE ROOM, WEARING A TIE.

ZALIAN

(PARANOID) You guys aren't laughing at me, are you?

GENERAL MALARKY

Now, Zalian here will show you around your ship. It's a little old, but--

STEWART

Zalian Fletcher?! You mean I'm getting command of the Cruiser?! I had a model of it when I was a kid. (TO ZALIAN) It even had a little figure of you in the engine room. You were like my favorite engineer.

ZALIAN

I wasn't lying down, was I?

AN OVERWHELMED STEWART TAKES MALARKY'S HAND AND SHAKES IT GRATEFULLY. STEWART LOOKS LIKE HE MIGHT CRY FROM JOY.

STEWART

Oh, my God, this is so cool. Thank you, sir, I swear I won't let you down. I--
(THEN; VERY WORRIED) Oh no, this means I beat Karen.

GENERAL MALARKY

Your sister also had a perfect score going into the simulation. But she didn't avoid the asteroid. You did.

STEWART

Oh, man, she's gonna kill me.

GENERAL MALARKY

Nonsense, Lipinski. Your sister will understand. She's a pro. Besides, I'm making her your first in command. I know her. She'll be thrilled.

STEWART

(WITH DREAD) I don't think you know her as well as you think you do.

CUT TO:

INT. KAREN'S SHIPBOARD QUARTERS - THE NEXT DAY

A SCREAM. STEWART'S OLDER SISTER, KAREN LIPINSKI, 24, IS ANGRILY THROWING THINGS ALL OVER HER QUARTERS. CLOTHES, PILLOWS, BAGS AND BOOKS FLY EVERYWHERE. SHE FINALLY THROWS HER MATTRESS ACROSS THE ROOM AND STOPS. TAKES A FEW DEEP BREATHS TO COMPOSE HERSELF, THEN TURNS, CALMLY MOVES THE MATTRESS OUT OF THE WAY, OPENS HER DOOR AND EXITS.

INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

KAREN WALKS CALMLY OUT ONTO THE BRIDGE, WHICH IS CROWDED WITH PEOPLE. SHE WALKS UP TO GENERAL MALARKY AND SALUTES.

GENERAL MALARKY

All moved in? Quarters to your liking?

KAREN

(VERY OFFICIAL) Yes, sir. Just have a little cleaning up to do. Permission to ask you a question, sir.

GENERAL MALARKY

Granted.

KAREN

Why is the Academy doing this to me, sir?
Did I upset somebody?

(MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

Was I supposed to sleep with someone and I didn't? Because I will.

GENERAL MALARKY

Lipinski, I realize this isn't what you had in mind but I'm telling you, I think you could learn a few things under your brother's command. He's really amazing.

KAREN

Permission to kill myself, sir.

GENERAL MALARKY

Lipinski, calm down. Now, look, you'll serve this one year under your brother and then you'll be given command of your own ship. And a far more modern one than the poor old Cruiser here. I promise you. (CHUCKLES) And you don't even have to sleep with anybody. Okay?

KAREN

(AFTER A BEAT; SALUTES, RESIGNED) Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

MALARKY SALUTES AND LEAVES. KAREN LOOKS OVER AND SEES STEWART ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BRIDGE, WHERE ENGINEERS ARE DOING THEIR FINAL CHECKS. STEWART GIVES HER A FRIENDLY WAVE. SHE GLARES AT HIM, HOLDS UP HER HAND AND DRAWS TWO EYES AND A MOUTH ON HER PALM WITH HER INDEX FINGER. THEN SHE POINTS FROM STEWART TO HER PALM, INDICATING THE FACE IS HIS. THEN SHE PUNCHES HER PALM. STEWART FLINCHES, THEN SHEEPISHLY DISAPPEARS INTO THE CROWD.

A DROP DEAD GORGEOUS WELL-ENDOWED MODEL, NATASHA, APPEARS ON ALL THE COMPUTER SCREENS AROUND THE BRIDGE. SHE WEARS A SKIN TIGHT SEXY OUTFIT. (NOTE: SHE'S A REAL ACTRESS BUT IS SUPPOSED TO BE COMPUTER GENERATED)

NATASHA

Five minutes to departure. All
unauthorized personnel please exit.

AN ENGINEER IS FIDDLING WITH ONE OF NATASHA'S MONITORS. SHE
LOOKS AT THE ENGINEER, SUDDENLY INSECURE.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Can I ask you a question? (SHE APPEARS
FULL SCREEN) Does this wardrobe program
make my butt look big?

BY THE CONTROL CONSOLE, TINA HENDRICK, EARLY 20'S, PRETTY
GIRL-NEXT-DOOR TYPE, IS HAVING A TEARFUL GOODBYE WITH HER
HANDSOME BOYFRIEND, TED. TED WEARS AN OFFICIAL'S UNIFORM.

TINA

We're engaged, Ted. You won't forget
that while I'm gone, will you?

TED

Teen, of course not. Look, with the
communicator, we can talk every night. I
even installed new sensation software so
that our screen kisses will feel just
like the real thing.

THEY EACH HOLD UP THEIR OWN SMALL CLEAR PIECE OF GLASS AND
KISS IT, MAKING OUT WITH THE GLASS AS IF KISSING EACH OTHER.
THEY PUT THEM DOWN AND TED GIVES HER AN ENCOURAGING SMILE.

TINA

(SIGHS) Oh, Ted, it won't be the same. I
don't even know why they picked me to be
the navigator. I'm not the best in my
class. It's like somebody did it for
some other weird reason.

JUST THEN, STEWART WALKS UP TO THEM. WE CAN TELL FROM HIS BEHAVIOR THAT HE'S COMPLETELY IN LOVE WITH TINA.

STEWART

(VERY FRIENDLY) Hey, Tina, you made it.
This is so exciting, isn't it? (THEN, NOT
AS FRIENDLY) Oh, hi, Ted. Control said
they needed you in the tower.

TINA LOOKS TEARFULLY AT TED, THEN GRABS HIM AND KISSES HIM DEEPLY, A DRAMATIC GOODBYE KISS. WE CAN SEE IT BOTHERS STEWART.

STEWART (CONT'D)

(AFTER A BEAT) Um, I think they need you
right now, Ted.

TED

(PULLING AWAY FROM TINA) I'm on my way.
Goodbye, Tina Beana. I'll talk to you
tonight. Make me proud, baby.

HE RUSHES OUT THE DOOR AS TINA WATCHES AFTER HIM, HEART BROKEN, TEARS RUNNING DOWN HER FACE AS SHE TRIES TO COMPOSE HERSELF. STEWART TRIES TO BE SENSITIVE.

STEWART

Hey, Tina, um, if you ever need to talk
or anything, I'm here for you.

TINA LOOKS AT STEWART FOR A BEAT, THEN BURSTS OUT CRYING. SHE RUNS OFF. KAREN WALKS UP NEXT TO STEWART, FULL OF CONTROLLED RAGE.

KAREN

You're out of your mind, right?

STEWART

Um ... I think you're supposed to salute
me before we can talk.

(MORE)

STEWART (CONT'D)

(SHE STARES DAGGERS AT HIM) We'll let it go this time.

KAREN

You got lucky on that test, Stewart. It does not mean that you are more qualified than I am, got it?

STEWART

Hey, I didn't tell them to make me the captain! Don't get all mad at me. You could have used your head and destroyed that asteroid too, you know.

KAREN

(SEETHING) I'm going to make your life a living hell, Stewart. You're gonna wish you never stepped foot in that Academy.

(SHE STORMS AWAY)

STEWART

Oh, yeah? Well, you do and ... I'll tell mom!

AN ENGINEER WALKS PAST AND LOOKS AT STEWART, HAVING HEARD THIS. STEWART TRIES TO COVER, GIVING HIM A CAPTAINLY NOD.

STEWART (CONT'D)

(SERIOUS VOICE) Carry on.

THE ENGINEER MOVES PAST AS STEWART WATCHES AFTER KAREN, BUMMED.

INT. ENTRANCE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A DOOR LEADING INTO AN ENTRANCE HALLWAY SLIDES OPEN. YELLING IS HEARD. HOWARD WOOLWORTH COMES THROUGH THE DOOR, PULLING AN UNSEEN PERSON BY THE ARM. IT'S A FIERCE STRUGGLE.

HOWARD WOOLWORTH

Get ... in ... here ... right ... now.

KENT (O.S.)

No! Don't make me go! I wanna go home!

I get sick in outer space!

HOWARD STARTS TO GET PULLED BACK OUT THE DOOR BUT THEN GIVES ONE FINAL YANK. IN FLIES HIS EXTREMELY NERDY SON, KENT, 23, WHO FALLS AND SPRAWLS OUT ONTO THE FLOOR.

HOWARD WOOLWORTH

You're going, all right. If you want to be a scientist, then you have to get out there and explore things.

KENT

But I don't have to! I've got everything I need in my lab.

HOWARD WOOLWORTH

Yeah, well, guess what? Your mother needs that lab for her workout room.

KENT

She's not my mother. How can my mother be one year older than me?

HOWARD WOOLWORTH

Look, she doesn't like the term "stepmother," okay? It makes her feel like she's not part of the family.

(QUIET; INTENSE) Listen, Kent.

(MORE)

HOWARD WOOLWORTH (CONT'D)

I pulled a lot of strings to make you science officer on this mission, so you'd better not do anything to embarrass me. The press would just love it if the son of UMP's chairman turned out to be the worst crew member on the ship. (BECOMES FATHERLY) Now, promise me that you'll make the most of this. Okay? Will you make your dad proud? Son?

KENT STARES AT HIS DAD A BEAT, LOOKING LIKE HE'S GOING TO GIVE IN. SUDDENLY, KENT BOLTS FOR THE DOOR. HOWARD GRABS KENT'S FOOT, CAUSING KENT TO BELLY FLOP ONTO THE FLOOR. HOWARD THEN SITS ON KENT'S BACK TO SUBDUE HIM.

HOWARD WOOLWORTH (CONT'D)

You're going into space and getting out of my hair if I have to nail you to the outside of this ship!

INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

AS THE CREW TAKES THEIR POSITIONS FOR DEPARTURE, MICHAEL NEWMAN, EARLY-20'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN, ENTERS THE BRIDGE AND WALKS BRISKLY UP TO STEWART, FULL OF POSITIVE ENERGY.

MICHAEL

(SALUTING) Captain Lipinski, sir! Bridge coordinator Michael Newman reporting for duty. And might I just say, sir, it's an honor to be serving under you.

STEWART

Wow, Michael, really? That's nice of you. I thought you were gonna be all mad and stuff. Karen sure is.

MICHAEL

On the 'contrary, sir. I couldn't be happier being your third in command. I realized after my final flight simulation that I had some issues to work on.

STEWART

Yeah, that was a drag that you crashed your ship into a garbage scow.

MICHAEL

(A FLASH OF ANGER) It wasn't supposed to be there! (THEN) It was just a bad day, sir. Did I tell you that my girlfriend broke up with me before I took the test?

STEWART

Yeah, you mentioned that a couple of times in your commencement speech. Look, can I be honest? I'm gonna need your help. Could you kinda talk me up to Karen while we're out there? You know, tell her how good of a captain I am so that maybe she'll cut me some slack?

MICHAEL

Captain, I'd be more than happy to do it. Anything for you, sir.

STEWART

Thanks. And go easy on the "sirs."

(THEN, SINCERE) Man, this is so weird.

(MORE)

STEWART (CONT'D)

When we were kids and we used to play spaceship, you were always the captain. Hard to believe that I'm the captain now, isn't it?

MICHAEL

Not at all, sir-- um, Stewart. You deserve it.

STEWART GIVES MICHAEL A HEARTFELT SALUTE. MICHAEL SALUTES BACK, JUST AS HEARTFELT. THE MOMENT STEWART WALKS AWAY, THOUGH, MICHAEL COMPLETELY DEFLATES. HE'S MISERABLE, CLEARLY WISHING HE WAS CAPTAIN.

EXT. SPACE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

THEIR SPACESHIP, THE USS CRUISER, IS DOCKED AT A HUGE SPACE STATION. THE EARTH SITS LARGE BEHIND IT.

TED (O.S.)

(OVER SPEAKER) U.S.S. Cruiser, you are good to go.

INT. CONTROL TOWER - CONTINUOUS

TED IS SITTING IN FRONT OF A MONITOR PRESSING BUTTONS AND CHECKING READOUTS AS STEWART IS SPEAKING TO HIM THROUGH THE MONITOR.

STEWART

Initiating departure sequence, control. I can't tell you how excited all of us here on the bridge are to get going. Isn't that right, gang?

INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

REVEAL THE CREW LOOKING MISERABLE. KAREN IS STEWING. MICHAEL IS STARING INTO SPACE, PREOCCUPIED. KENT IS SITTING IN THE FETAL POSITION AT HIS STATION. TINA IS SNIFFLING AND WIPING HER RED EYES WITH A KLEENEX. STEWART LOOKS AROUND AT THEM FROM HIS CAPTAIN'S CHAIR. NATASHA STARES OUT FROM THE MONITORS, WEARING A DIFFERENT SEXY OUTFIT.

NATASHA

I'm not detecting any verbal verification on the bridge, captain. Should I run a life functions check?

STEWART

Michael? We're all excited on the bridge, right?

MICHAEL

Huh? Oh! Yes, sir, captain, Stewart, sir! Very excited. We all can't wait to head out under your command, sir.

KAREN LOOKS OVER AT MICHAEL LIKE HE'S NUTS. MICHAEL LOOKS BACK AT HER AND FORCES A SMILE. STEWART REGROUPS, THEN TAKES A DEEP BREATH, EXCITED, MOVED, DRAMATIC.

STEWART

Then it's time to say something I've been waiting my whole life to say ...

KAREN

(LOUDLY; MOCKING) "Past the moon, past Mars, let us sail to the stars!"

STEWART

"Past the--" (REALIZING; BUMMED) Uh, yeah, what she said. Let's just go.

STEWART LOOKS OVER AT KAREN, WHO GIVES HIM A SMUG LOOK. HE SIGHS, SEEING WHAT HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO PUT UP WITH.

EXT. SPACE STATION - CONTINUOUS

THE USS CRUISER MOVES AWAY FROM THE SPACE STATION, THEN BURSTS AWAY AND STREAKS OFF INTO THE GALAXY. WE HEAR A LOUD WRETCH AND A SPLAT.

TINA (O.S.)

Um, Stewart? Kent just threw up.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DINING HALL - LATER

THE CREW IS SITTING AROUND THE DINING TABLE IN THE RECREATION AREA. THE TABLE HAS A RAISED AREA IN THE MIDDLE WITH LIGHTS AND BUTTONS ON IT. STEWART IS STANDING AT THE HEAD. NATASHA IS WATCHING FROM A MONITOR. KENT LOOKS VERY NAUSEOUS.

STEWART

Okay, everybody. I feel like we might have gotten off on the wrong foot today, but it's only because we haven't had time to bond as a team. So, on this, our first night together, I think we deserve a little celebratory meal. Who wants turkey?!

AND WITH THIS, SMALL DOORS IN THE RAISED AREA IN FRONT OF EACH CREW MEMBER SLIDE OPEN AND PLATES FILLED WITH TURKEY AND ALL THE TRIMMINGS ARE PUSHED OUT BY SMALL METAL ARMS. IT LOOKS DELICIOUS. STEWART LOOKS PLEASED AS THE CREW STARE AT THEIR PLATES, SURPRISED.

KAREN

Stewart, that's grandma's dressing.

STEWART

I know. I took her whole Thanksgiving recipe program. It's just like she used to output for us. You guys are gonna love it.

TINA

(STARTS CRYING) Turkey was Ted's favorite.

KENT

I can't eat tryptophane. It makes blood
come out of my ears.

STEWART

Oh, c'mon, you guys. This meal's been
downloaded by the Lipinskis for
generations. The secret ingredient ...
is love. Well, that and a ton of salt.
(PICKS UP HIS FORK AND PLATE) C'mon. To
our new family. We're all in this
together. Let's never forget that.
Okay? (SINCERE, TO KAREN) Sis? Will you
at least do it for grandma?

STEWART GIVES HER A VERY SINCERE LOOK. SHE ROLLS HER EYES
AND GIVES IN. EVERYONE EXCHANGES CONCILIATORY LOOKS, THEN
PICKS UP THEIR FORKS. STEWART SMILES PROUDLY, THEN GIVES
THEM A NOD TO START EATING. THEY ALL GET A FORKFUL OF FOOD
AND EAT IT. THEY ALL EXCHANGE LOOKS. AFTER A BEAT, THEY ALL
SPIT THE FOOD BACK ONTO THEIR PLATES, GAGGING.

KAREN

Oh, my God! That tastes like grandma!

KENT

(PUTTING HAND OVER MOUTH) Here comes
breakfast.

STEWART

Wait a minute. It's rancid. Natasha,
how old is this food tank?

NATASHA

It was installed on May 14th, 2070.

STEWART

That was thirty four years ago! Why don't we have a new food tank?!

NATASHA

Because no one replaced it. And please don't yell at me.

KAREN

Stewart, you didn't check the food tanks?!

STEWART

It's not my job! Natasha's supposed to do it.

NATASHA

(DEFENSIVE) No, I'm not. I'm supposed to analyze data and monitor the mechanical functions of this ship. The ship's engineer is supposed to take care of all human supplies.

STEWART

Oh, no. Zalian.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE ENGINE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

STEWART, KAREN, AND MICHAEL WALK UP IN FRONT OF A DOOR MARKED "CAUTION: ENGINE ROOM -- HEAVY RADIATION ZONE." STEWART PUSHES THE BUTTON TO OPEN THE DOOR BUT A SIGN FLASHES "LOCKED." STEWART KNOCKS.

STEWART

Zalian? Are you in there? Open up.

ZALIAN (O.S.)

(THROUGH DOOR) Uh ... okay. Just a minute.

INSIDE THE ENGINE ROOM WE HEAR A HUGE COMMOTION, AS IF ZALIAN IS TRYING TO HIDE SOMETHING. A STRANGE VOICE IS HEARD.

VOICE (O.S.)

(MUFFLED) Careful, that's my foot!

MORE SCRAMBLING AND CRASHING. AFTER A BEAT, THE DOOR OPENS AND ZALIAN STANDS THERE, OUT OF BREATH BUT COVERING.

ZALIAN

Oh, hey there. What's up?

KAREN

You're in big trouble, that's what!

STEWART

Karen, let me handle this. Zalian, can we come in?

ZALIAN

(A NERVOUS GLANCE BACK) Uh ... sure.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

THEY ENTER THE ENGINE ROOM, WHICH IS A HUGE MESS. IT'S BASICALLY A TECHNICAL CONSOLE IN THE MIDDLE OF WHAT LOOKS LIKE A COLLEGE DORM, WITH RATTY OLD FURNITURE. HOWEVER, WE SEE THE BACKS OF TWO BIG NUCLEAR ENGINES THAT EMIT A LOW HUM.

KAREN

This place is disgusting.

ZALIAN

You shoulda seen it half an hour ago.

STEWART

Hey, Zalian, were you supposed to change the food tank before we left?

ZALIAN

(JAW DROPPING) Oh, man, I was. Oh, wow, I completely spaced it out.

(MORE)

ZALIAN (CONT'D)

It used to be the computer's job to do that until they installed Natasha.

KAREN

That's really great. Did you also space out how we're supposed to survive a year in space with no food?

ZALIAN

I've got food in here you can all have.

HE POINTS OVER AT A STACK OF BOXES IN THE CORNER. THEY'RE ALL STAMPED WITH THE LOGO "GRANDMA'S OLD FASHIONED FUDGE."

STEWART

Uh, Zalian, I don't think we can eat fudge for a year.

ZALIAN

I've been living on it since 2080.

MICHAEL

(HOLDING HEAD) Does anyone else feel like their head is about to explode?

ZALIAN

Oh, it's just the radiation. You'll get used to it after a while. In fact, you kinda start to like it.

STEWART

(SIGHS, BUMMED) Well, we'd better turn back and get more food. God, I'm gonna look like such a failure.

KAREN

Yes, Stewart, it's always all about you.

STEWART GIVES KAREN A DIRTY LOOK AND SITS HEAVILY ON A COVERED FOOTSTOOL. SUDDENLY, THE FOOTSTOOL MOVES AND STEWART FALLS ONTO THE GROUND.

ART (O.S.)

Ow! What are you tryin' to do, break my gyros?

THE COVER FLIES OFF THE FOOTSTOOL, REVEALING THAT IT'S ACTUALLY A GOOFY, SPINDLY ROBOT NAMED ART. ART STANDS UP. HE'S ABOUT FOUR FEET TALL.

STEWART

Who are you?!

NATASHA POPS ONTO THE MONITOR IN YET ANOTHER OUTFIT.

NATASHA

(ANGRY) Ah ha, I knew it! I knew he was on this ship but I couldn't see him. You've got a cloaking bolt on, don't you?

ART

Maybe I do. Maybe I don't.

KAREN

What the hell's going on?

NATASHA

He's an ART, an obsolete A-24-RT human to computer interface. He should have been junked when I was installed yesterday. But Zalian didn't deactivate him.

ART

How'd you like me to junk you, sweetheart?

NATASHA

In your dreams, scrap heap!

KAREN

If he was supposed to be deactivated,
then he shouldn't be on the ship.

NATASHA

Yeah, let's shoot him out the airlock.

ZALIAN

Hey, you can't do that! He's my best
friend.

STEWART

You guys, shut up! (THEY DO) Look, if Art
is Zalian's friend, then he can stay.
What's the big deal? At least he wants
to be here. And we can always use more
help. Now, let's just stop yelling, turn
around and go get the food, okay? (INTO
INTERCOM) Tina, take us home.

TINA (O.S.)

(OVER INTERCOM; HAPPY) Yes, sir!

JUST THEN, THE SHIP ACCELERATES QUICKLY, THROWING EVERYONE
OFF BALANCE. STEWART ROLLS HIS EYES, FRUSTRATED.

STEWART

God, she really can't wait to get back to
that stupid boyfriend of hers. (INTO
INTERCOM; VERY NICE) Uh, Tina, you wanna
go easy on the gas?

TINA (O.S.)

(OVER INTERCOM; WORRIED) Stewart ... I
didn't do that.

ZALIAN

(LOOKING AT SCREEN) She's not kidding.

My engines didn't accelerate.

EVERYONE EXCHANGES LOOKS, THEN BOLTS OUT OF THE ENGINE ROOM.

INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

TINA IS HITTING BUTTONS, LOOKING VERY FREAKED OUT. KENT HAS HIS HEAD BETWEEN HIS KNEES.

TINA

Nothing's responding.

KENT

(LOOKING UP) Can you slow down? I think I'm going to throw up again.

STEWART AND THE CREW RUN ONTO THE BRIDGE.

STEWART

What's our speed?

MICHAEL

(LOOKING OVER TINA'S SHOULDER) 500 parsecs and increasing by 30 percent per second. We're caught in some gravitational field.

KAREN

Run an escape protocol, Stewart!

STEWART

Gee, duh, Karen. Thanks for the newsflash. (TO TINA) Start escape protocol 159.

KENT

Oh, my God ... Look!

KENT POINTS OUT THE FRONT WINDOW. THEY ALL LOOK. IN THE BLACKNESS OF SPACE, A LONG SLIVER OF LIGHT IS OPENING UP. JETS OF GAS ARE SHOOTING OUT OF IT. SPACE IS TEARING OPEN.

STEWART

Reverse thrusters!

TINA

We don't have enough power!

MICHAEL

We're gonna hit it!

STEWART

Hang on!

THEY ALL BRACE THEMSELVES.

EXT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

THE USS CRUISER FLIES STRAIGHT INTO THE LIGHT. CLOUDS OF GAS AND LIGHT EXPLODE OUT OF IT AS IT SWALLOWS UP THE CRUISER.

INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

THE BRIDGE IS FLOODED WITH LIGHT AS THE WHOLE BRIDGE SHAKES AND THE CREW HOLDS ON FOR DEAR LIFE.

SUDDENLY, THERE'S A BLINDING FLASH. THE CREW ARE NOW ALL BABIES, SITTING IN THEIR OVERSIZED UNIFORMS. EACH BABY LOOKS LIKE THEIR ADULT COUNTERPART. BABY ZALIAN HAS LONG HAIR. ART IS NOW A PILE OF IRON ORE. ON THE MONITORS, NATASHA HAS TURNED INTO A GAME OF PONG.

ANOTHER FLASH AND THE BRIDGE DISAPPEARS IN WHITE LIGHT. THEN IT GOES DARK AS EVERYTHING GOES TOTALLY SILENT. AFTER A BEAT, THE INSTRUMENT LIGHTS FLICKER ON, CASTING AN EERIE GLOW OVER THE BRIDGE.

SLOWLY, THE CREW APPEAR FROM BEHIND THE MAIN CONSOLE, BACK TO NORMAL AGAIN. THEY PEER OVER IT AND LOOK OUT THE FRONT WINDOW. THEY SEE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LOOKING UNIVERSE OUT THERE. RIBBONS OF COLOR RUN THROUGH IT, TONS OF STARS AND PLANETS, COMETS AND METEORS FLASHING PAST. THIS IS A WHOLE NEW REALITY.

STEWART

Uh ... anybody know where we are?

ART

Toto ... I don't think we're in the Milky
Way anymore.

AS THEY EXCHANGE FREAKED OUT LOOKS, WE:

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOINT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

THE CREW IS STILL CROUCHED BEHIND THE CONSOLE, STARING OUT AT THE NEW UNIVERSE OUTSIDE THE WINDOW. IT'S DARK ON THE BRIDGE, EXCEPT FOR THE INSTRUMENT LIGHTS.

MICHAEL

Are we dead?

KAREN

If we are, I'm gonna kill Stewart.

SUDDENLY, ALL THE LIGHTS COME BACK ON WITH A LOUD CLUNK! EVERYBODY JUMPS. STEWART TRIES TO COLLECT HIMSELF.

STEWART

Look, we're all fine, so that's the good part. Natasha, do you know what just happened? Did we go through a wormhole or something?

NATASHA

My preliminary data shows that we encountered a rupture between our universe and some parallel entity.

KENT

Whoa. We hit a brane.

EVERYONE LOOKS AT KENT, WHO SLOWLY STARTS COMING TO LIFE.

KENT (CONT'D)

Brane's short for "membrane." The Brane Theory of the universe has been around for about a hundred years but it's only ever been theoretical.

(MORE)

KENT (CONT'D)

It says that our universe is like a big flat jellyfish floating in the water, surrounded by other universes that are doing the same thing. And sometimes they bump into each other. And every once in a while they hit hard enough to tear each other open. And we were actually there when it happened! It's unbelievable!
(THEN) Hey, I don't feel sick anymore.

STEWART

(AMAZED) So we just discovered a tunnel to a new universe? We are so cool.

NATASHA

It's more of a tear than a tunnel. The hole we went through was only open for ten point three six seconds.

STEWART

But it'll open up again, right?

NATASHA

Yes. Judging from the undulation rate on both sides of the tear, I calculate that it will reopen in precisely ... five thousand seven hundred and forty eight years.

EVERYONE'S JAW DROPS. TINA GASPS.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Give or take a few months.

KAREN

But there's other openings, right?

NATASHA

It's possible but I can't predict where they'll be. I can't even tell you where we just were. The time warp dropped us deep inside this universe. We're kinda lost. And trapped.

EVERYBODY STANDS, LOOKING STUNNED.

KENT

I feel sick again.

TINA PULLS OUT HER COMMUNICATOR AND STARTS TAPPING IT FRANTICALLY, YELLING INTO IT.

TINA

Ted! Ted! It's Tina Beana! Can you hear me? Ted, pick up! We need help.

NATASHA

He's not going to hear you. Transmission between membranes is impossible. As far as our universe is concerned, we have simply disappeared.

ZALIAN

(PLEASED) Hey, cool. There go the alimony payments to my old lady.

THEY STAND IN SILENCE FOR A BEAT, TAKING IT ALL IN. THEN ...

MICHAEL

(SUDDENLY PANICKING) All right, everybody just calm down!

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Panicking is not going to help! We all just have to stay cool and work together and figure out how to get out of here! We can't think about how we've only got fudge to eat and how our families are all going to think we're dead and how UMP will probably figure we were vaporized by some asteroid and simply give us posthumous medals and then bury empty coffins in our honor. (GETTING DIZZY) We have ... to remain ... calm.

AND WITH THIS, MICHAEL FAINTS, COLLAPSING ONTO THE FLOOR. AFTER A BEAT, KAREN STEPS FORWARD.

KAREN

(VERY CALM) You know what? Believe it or not, Michael's right. We have to figure out a solution. And here's the first thing we have to do ... (WALKS UP TO STEWART, SALUTES HIM) Stewart Lipinski, I am officially relieving you of your duties as captain of this ship.

STEWART

What? You can't do that.

KAREN

Section 3.0.5 of the Universal Mapping Project Rules of Conduct states the following: (MORE)

KAREN (CONT'D)

"A captain may be relieved of duty by his second in command if his actions are deemed to place the lives of his crew in jeopardy." Well, we are now in jeopardy.

STEWART

Oh, yeah, like this was my fault.

KAREN

(SNAPPING) Whose fault was it, Stewart?! You're the captain, not me!

STEWART

(ALSO SNAPPING) Gee, really, Karen? Am I the captain? I didn't realize that. You only bring it up every two seconds! Why don't you just deal with the fact that I beat you instead of standing around crying about it all day like a little baby?

KAREN

(AN ICY STARE; THEN) You're a joke, Stewart. Do you know that? You know what people used to call you at the Academy? "Stew-weird Lame-pinski." And now your lameness got us trapped in another universe. Way to go, nibs!

STEWART

Hey, don't call me "nibs" in front of the crew! And this was a total accident!

(MORE)

STEWART (CONT'D)

What could I have possibly done to keep it from happening?!

KAREN

Well, gee, Stewart, let me think. First of all, you could have gotten us a real navigator. (TO TINA) You know why you're on this ship? Because Stewart's got a crush on you and he thought you were stupid enough to fall in love with him if he trapped you on a spaceship for a year.

STEWART

Hey, shut up! Tina, that's not true.

KAREN

And what about the Cruiser, Stewart? (INDICATING THE SHIP) The "USS Loser." If you had demanded they give you a newer ship, we would have had enough engine power to escape that hole.

ZALIAN

(INSULTED) Hey, the Cruiser rocks.

KAREN

Shut up, you fudge eatin' hippie. Long hair went out of fashion in 2069!

NATASHA

Actually, it made a two year comeback in the early 90s when powdered wigs and jodhpurs came back into style.

KAREN

(DRIPPING WITH SARCASM) Oh, yes, and then there's Natasha, the worst analysis program ever designed. The only reason she even got installed was because she came bundled with our food prep software.

NATASHA

Hey, leave me out of it, period girl.

KAREN

Well, guess what, Stewart? It's over. I'm taking command of this ship and you're gonna sit in your room and keep your mouth shut or I'm gonna shoot you out of the air lock, brother or no brother!

SUDDENLY, ALL THE LIGHTS GO ON, REVEALING THAT WE'RE ACTUALLY ON THE FLIGHT SIMULATION SET, JUST LIKE WE WERE FOR STEWART'S TEST AT THE BEGINNING. THE CREW ALL LOOK AROUND, SURPRISED.

GENERAL MALARKY (O.S.)

(CLAPPING) All right, all right!

Excellent!

GENERAL MALARKY AND OTHER UMP OFFICIALS WALK OUT ONTO THE BRIDGE. THE CREW LOOK COMPLETELY CONFUSED. GENERAL MALARKY WALKS UP TO KAREN. HE'S PLEASED.

GENERAL MALARKY (CONT'D)

(TO KAREN) Lipinski, that was perfect.

Way to take control.

STEWART

But ... this is all just a simulation?

GENERAL MALARKY

I'm afraid so. This is the final test we give to all our potential captains. The only way to truly know how someone will do in a crisis is to make everyone involved believe it's real. We put Stewart in charge to see how his sister would deal with it and the way she did proves that she should be given command of her own ship. And that free trip to Hawaii she's always wanted. Congratulations, Captain.

GENERAL MALARKY SALUTES KAREN, WHO LOOKS BEYOND HAPPY.

KAREN

(SALUTING) Oh, my God. You're kidding!
Thank you! I won't let you down, sir.

A LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE WALK OUT ONTO THE BRIDGE AND BEGIN APPLAUDING FOR KAREN. TED IS AT THE FRONT. TINA SEES HIM, SQUEALS WITH DELIGHT AND RUNS OVER, HUGGING AND KISSING HIM.

TINA

Oh, Ted, thank god! I thought I was never going to see you again.

TED

Don't worry, Tina Beana. You're home.
Everything's fine.

AS THEY CONTINUE TO HUG, HOWARD WOOLWORTH STEPS OUT OF THE CROWD AND WALKS UP TO KENT.

KENT

Dad? I can't believe this. It all felt so real. I even threw up.

HOWARD WOOLWORTH

I know, son. And I'm sorry for putting you through this. The Academy just figured that it'd be a better test for Karen if someone as reluctant as you went along. Now, let's go home. Your lab's all cleaned up and waiting for you.

KENT LOOKS EXTREMELY RELIEVED AS HOWARD PUTS A FATHERLY ARM AROUND HIS SHOULDER. TWO WOMEN, LUCY AND MAUREEN, STEP FORWARD. MICHAEL AND ZALIAN BOTH LOOK SURPRISED.

MICHAEL

Lucy?

ZALIAN

Maureen? Holy crap.

LUCY

(CRYING) Oh, Michael, this has been so hard. The Academy wanted me to make you think I was leaving you to see how it would affect you under pressure. I only did it because I know how much your career means to you. Please forgive me. I love you so much.

MICHAEL

Oh, Lucy. I'm not even cut out to be a captain. And none of this means anything without you. Do you really still love me?

LUCY

More than anything in the world.

MICHAEL LOOKS LIKE HE'S ABOUT TO CRY. HE HUGS LUCY TIGHTLY AS MAUREEN WALKS UP TO ZALIAN.

ZALIAN

Maureen, look, I know you haven't gotten the check yet but I needed that money to buy Art a new civility chip and so--

MAUREEN

Zalian, wait, I'm not here about the check. I just wanted to let you know that I'm getting married. You don't have to pay me alimony anymore.

ZALIAN

Huh?

MAUREEN

I just came to get your blessing for my new marriage. (PULLING OUT BAG) And to give you this giant sandwich.

ZALIAN

(STARES IN DISBELIEF, THEN) Baby, you're the greatest!

ZALIAN GIVES HER A HUGE, RELIEVED HUG. STEWART AND ART ARE STANDING OFF TO THE SIDE, WATCHING ALL THIS HAPPEN. STEWART LOOKS VERY PUZZLED.

STEWART

This is just too weird. There's no way this was all fake. And look at the readings that are coming from outside. The ship's surrounded by life forms. That can't be part of a simulation program.

(MORE)

STEWART (CONT'D).

And why is all this good stuff happening to everybody all of a sudden?

ART

I don't know. Sure as hell ain't anything good happening to me.

JUST THEN, MARY, A FEMALE ROBOT WHO LOOKS ALMOST EXACTLY LIKE ART BUT WITH A METALLIC HAIRDO, JEWELRY AND MAKEUP WALKS UP NEXT TO ART. SHE HAS "MA-762-RY" STENCILLED ON HER CHEST. ART GLANCES AT HER, THEN DOES A DOUBLE TAKE.

ART (CONT'D)

Mary! Jumpin' Jehoshaphat, what are you doing here?

MARY

I broke up with Zarlaga 1.3 and I heard that you were finishing up your mission. You wanna go power up together?

ART

Do I? (TO STEWART) Later days, nibs. The Love Boat is in the harbor.

ART AND MARY HEAD OFF INTO THE CROWD. STEWART LOOKS REALLY PERPLEXED NOW. HE LOOKS OVER AT NATASHA, WHO HAS JUST BEEN CROWNED MISS AMERICA AND IS WALKING DOWN THE RUNWAY WAVING TO THE CROWD ON HER MONITOR.

STEWART

How is this possible?

JUST THEN, TINA WALKS UP TO STEWART.

TINA

Stewart, about what Karen said. Did you really bring me on board just to try and get me to break up with Ted?

STEWART

Oh, God, Tina. Look, I really do think you're a great navigator and I just thought it'd be nice to work with--

TINA

Stewart ... (SHYLY) ... I just wanted to say that I'm glad you did.

STEWART

(THROWN) ... You are?

TINA

I've had a huge crush on you ever since we started at the Academy together. And I was only going with Ted because, well, I didn't think you would ever love me.

STEWART

Oh, my God. Tina. I love you more than I've ever loved anybody in my life. Ever since I first saw your hair floating weightless in the anti-gravity chamber.

TINA

Have you ever dreamed about kissing me?

STEWART

(SWALLOWING HARD) ... For years.

TINA

Well, you don't have to dream anymore.

TINA SLOWLY LEANS IN TO STEWART, WHO LOOKS LIKE HIS HEAD IS ABOUT TO EXPLODE. HE MOVES IN AND THEY KISS DEEPLY. AFTER A FEW BEATS, THEY PULL APART. STEWART LOOKS OVERWHELMED.

STEWART

Tina, I can't believe this. I never thought this would happen. (THEN) How can this possibly be happening?

TINA SMILES AT HIM, PUTS HER FINGER GENTLY ON HIS LIPS.

TINA

(SWEETLY) It just is. Accept it.

TINA STARTS TO LEAN IN FOR ANOTHER KISS. STEWART GETS A VERY SUSPICIOUS LOOK, THEN GLANCES UP AND SEES TINA ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BRIDGE HUGGING TED TIGHTLY. STEWART'S EYES GO WIDE. HE LOOKS BACK AT THE FANTASY TINA IN HIS ARMS. SHE SMILES.

TINA (CONT'D)

(SEXY WHISPER) Open the air locks and let's go have some fun.

STEWART'S EYES GO WIDE. HE'S SUDDENLY FIGURED SOMETHING OUT. JUST THEN, ACROSS THE BRIDGE ...

GENERAL MALARKY

(TO KAREN) Captain Lipinski, let's open all the air locks and go celebrate. The drinks are on me!

EVERYONE CHEERS AS KAREN REACHES OUT TO PRESS THE AIR LOCK RELEASE BUTTON ON THE CONSOLE. SHE'S COMPLETELY GIDDY.

KAREN

I hereby declare this mission over!

STEWART

Oh, my God! Karen! NO!!!

STEWART BOLTS ACROSS THE ROOM, DIVES ONTO THE CONSOLE, AND CUPS HIS HANDS OVER THE BUTTON, BLOCKING IT FROM KAREN.

KAREN

Stewart, what are you doing?!

STEWART

It's a trap, Karen. They're trying to get us to open the air locks so that we'll all get sucked out into space.

KAREN

Oh, Stewart, that's so pathetic. Just because you're a sore loser, you don't have to insult everybody.

GENERAL MALARKY

(ANGRY; TO STEWART) That's right, Lipinski. You're already on thin ice.

STEWART

Karen, think about it. This couldn't all have possibly been a simulation. You saw what happened to us in the time warp. That was real.

GENERAL MALARKY

This new simulation program is more advanced than anything you've ever experienced. Of course it felt real. Now, open the air locks, captain!

KAREN

Stewart, you are not going to blow this for me. Let go of that button!

STEWART

No! You're gonna kill us all!

KAREN TRIES TO PRY STEWART'S HANDS OFF THE BUTTON. HE STRUGGLES BUT SHE'S STRONGER THAN HE IS.

STEWART (CONT'D)

Karen, listen to me! Tina said she's in love with me. You always told me that would never happen in a million years! Remember?!

KAREN STOPS, THEN LOOKS AT STEWART. THINKING. THEN ...

KAREN

Oh, my God. You're right. This is all fake. (MOVING OVER TO GENERAL) What are you trying to pull here?

STEWART ROLLS OVER ON HIS BACK, RELIEVED. AS HE DOES, KAREN DIVES BACK TOWARD THE BUTTON. STEWART SEES THIS AND GRABS HER HAND JUST IN TIME. WITH HIS OTHER HAND, HE REACHES OVER AND HITS A LARGE RED PANIC BUTTON. A SHRILL HIGH PITCHED ALARM GOES OFF. THE ENTIRE CREW GRAB THEIR EARS IN PAIN, AS THE GUESTS AND OFFICIALS LOOK SCARED. SUDDENLY THERE'S A HUGE FLASH OF LIGHT THAT BLINDS US. WHEN THE FLASH IS GONE, ONLY OUR CREW MEMBERS ARE LEFT. THE LIGHTS ON THE BRIDGE ARE BACK TO NORMAL.

TINA

Look!

THEY LOOK OUT THE FRONT WINDOW AND SEE A GLOWING BALL OF ENERGY RACING AWAY FROM THE WINDOW. IT STOPS ONCE IT'S WELL AWAY FROM THE SHIP, THEN PULSATES A FEW TIMES AS IF CATCHING ITS BREATH, THEN ZOOMS AWAY INTO THE DISTANCE.

STEWART

Put the shields up now!

MICHAEL

What the hell was that?!

STEWART

It must have been some sort of mind control anti-body. This whole universe is alive and it just tried to kill us.

KENT

(LOOKING AT HIS READOUTS) Man, it is alive! This brane must have its own immune system. I guess the anti-body got in when our shields were down. It tried to use our inner desires to destroy us like we were some kind of germ. Jeez, we really have to be careful in here.

STEWART

Man, no kidding. It all felt so real.

TINA

(SADLY) It felt too real. And now that it's not, it means we're all still stuck in here. Forever.

SUDDENLY, THE REALITY OF IT ALL SINKS IN TO EVERYBODY. THEY GO QUIET. KAREN LOOKS STUNNED. SHE LOOKS OVER AT STEWART, WHO GIVES HER A SUPPORTIVE SMILE. AFTER A BEAT, SHE TURNS AWAY, LOOKING VERY GUILTY AND EMBARRASSED.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEWART'S BEDROOM - LATER

STEWART IS IN HIS CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS, WHICH LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE A SMALL BEDROOM IN A HOUSE, EXCEPT FOR SOME MONITORS AND INSTRUMENT LIGHTS. HE IS LAYING ON HIS BED, LOOKING AT A FRAMED FAMILY PHOTO OF HIM, KAREN AND THEIR PARENTS. THERE'S A KNOCK ON HIS DOOR.

KAREN (O.S.)

Stewart? Can I come in?

STEWART

(SITTING UP) Oh, hey. Yeah.

THE DOOR SLIDES OPEN AND KAREN ENTERS. THE DOOR CLOSES BEHIND HER. SHE STANDS THERE FOR A BEAT, UNCOMFORTABLE. THEN ...

KAREN

Thanks for stopping me from killing us.

STEWART

You're welcome. (THEN) You think we'll ever see mom and dad again?

KAREN

I don't know. This is pretty bad.

STEWART

How's the crew?

KAREN

Depressed. Zalian passed out fudge but it just gave everybody a headache.

STEWART

We've gotta find food. There's stuff we don't even know about that's trying to kill us. And I have no idea how to get us out of here. And on top of everything you hate me.

KAREN

Stewart, I don't hate you. It's just ... remember when I went to dance school? You decided you wanted to go too and then you ended up getting a solo in the recital and I got stuck in the chorus line with a bunch of fat girls. Well, I feel like I'm one of the fat girls again.

KAREN PLOPS DOWN ON THE BED NEXT TO STEWART, DEPRESSED.

STEWART

I think they only gave me a solo because
I was a boy.

KAREN

No, they gave you a solo because you were
a better dancer than I was. I'm sick of
being in your shadow all the time,
Stewart. You're my little brother.
You're supposed to be in my shadow.

STEWART

(BEAT) You used to beat me at chess all
the time.

KAREN

Because you used to let me win.

STEWART

Not always. (CAUTIOUSLY) Karen, I just
think you kinda try too hard sometimes.
I mean, maybe you need to relax a bit.
You know, you're really great when you're
not being all mean and stuff.

KAREN

I'm not being mean! I'm just trying to
be a professional.

STEWART

I know. And it's kinda making you come
off like an amateur.

KAREN LOOKS AT STEWART FOR A FEW BEATS, LIKE SHE'S GOING TO
YELL, THEN STOPS. GETS A VULNERABLE LOOK.

KAREN

Really?

STEWART

It's okay to be tough, but ... it's kinda important to make people like you too.

KAREN STARES AT HIM A BEAT, THEN LAUGHS TO HERSELF. GIVES STEWART A SMALL, SISTERLY SMILE.

KAREN

Yeah; I guess so. (THEN) Too bad we won't be alive long enough for it to matter.

KAREN SIGHS, GETS UP AND LEAVES. STEWART WATCHES AFTER HER, THINKING.

INT. DINING HALL - MOMENTS LATER

THE CREW IS SITTING AROUND THE DINING HALL TABLE, DEPRESSED. TINA IS STARING INTO HER COMMUNICATOR SADLY. ZALIAN AND ART ARE TRYING TO CHEER THEM UP. ART AND ZALIAN ARE LAUGHING.

ART

(IN HYSTERICIS) ... So then the R-84 emulator drive starts translating reactor code into platform code! (A FIT OF LAUGHTER) Zalian, take over, I can never get through this one.

ZALIAN

Oh, sure, make me tell the funniest part.

STEWART WALKS IN AND SEES ART AND ZALIAN LAUGHING.

STEWART

(SMILES) Hey, great. Looks like everybody's feeling better.

KAREN, TINA, MICHAEL AND NATASHA ALL LOOK AT STEWART WITH FACES THAT SHOW THEY'RE IN MISERY.

STEWART (CONT'D)

Oh. Well, you know what? I was just sitting in my room feeling the same way. And then I did something crazy. I looked out the window.

STEWART WALKS OVER AND PUSHES A BUTTON ON THE WALL. A SCREEN OPENS REVEALING A WINDOW WHICH SHOWS THE BEAUTIFUL NEW UNIVERSE THEY'RE IN. PLANETS, STARS AND GALAXIES EVERYWHERE.

STEWART (CONT'D)

We all went to the Academy because we loved outer space. We loved science fiction. We wanted adventure. Well, guess what? (POINTS OUT WINDOW) This isn't school, it isn't fake, and it looks like it's got a whole lot of adventure. Look at all those planets. They're alive. We'll find food on one of them. We'll find things that no one on Earth has ever dreamed of. (THEN) You know what we're gonna do? We're gonna pull an Elvis.

TINA

A what?

STEWART

Not a what. A who. Elvis Presley was this hugely popular singer back in the 20th century who died when he was 42. But people never stopped listening to his music.

(MORE)

STEWART (CONT'D)

And then in 2012, the guy reappeared. Turns out he wasn't dead. He just went away to write new songs. And people liked his new songs so much that the guy ended up being more popular in his 70s and 80s than he was when he was young.

NATASHA

So, we're all gonna write songs?

STEWART

(EXCITED) No, think about it. We've got the opportunity of a lifetime! We can go all over this new universe and discover things and record them and analyze them and when we finally find our way back to Earth, we'll change the way people think about the universe forever! We'll come back as the greatest explorers who ever lived!

MICHAEL

If we get back.

THEY ALL THINK ABOUT THIS FOR A FEW BEATS. THEN KAREN STANDS UP.

KAREN

We'll get back. Stewart's right. Think about how huge this all is. We can find our way out of here. We were the best in our class. They wouldn't have sent us out here if we weren't.

TINA

Apparently I wasn't.

NATASHA

Yeah, I hear they got me out of the
discount bin.

KAREN

Oh, c'mon, you guys. I didn't mean any
of that. We're a team and we're gonna
kick this new universe's ass! Uh ... you
know, figuratively. (THEN, TO STEWART)
Isn't that right, captain?

KAREN GIVES HIM A SALUTE. STEWART LOOKS SURPRISED, THEN VERY
HAPPY. HE SALUTES HER BACK.

STEWART

That's right, co-captain. (TO CREW) All
right, everybody. Let's go find us some
dinner!

THE CREW EXCHANGE A LOOK, THEN GIVE DETERMINED SALUTES.

THE CREW

Ay ay, captain!

THEY ALL HEAD OFF TO THE BRIDGE. STEWART STOPS TINA.

STEWART

Hey, um, Tina, you know, I was serious
before. If you ever need to talk ... or
want a back rub or anything, I--

TINA

Stewart ... don't ruin a good moment.

SHE GIVES HIM A "NICE TRY" SMILE AND EXITS.

STEWART,

(TO HIMSELF) She'll come around.

HE SMILES CONFIDENTLY AND HEADS OFF TO THE BRIDGE.

EXT. SPACESHIP - A NEW DAY

AS THE CRUISER HEADS OFF INTO THIS STRANGE NEW UNIVERSE, WE HEAR STEWART WRITING IN HIS JOURNAL.

STEWART (V.O.)

Dear Diary. Today we are setting off to discover this strange new universe.

Between you and me, I have no idea if we'll even survive long enough to tell anyone what we've seen. But I do know one thing -- this is gonna be really cool. "Past the moon, past--"

KAREN (V.O.)

"--Mars, let us sail to the stars!"

STEWART (V.O.)

Karen! Stay out of my room!

KAREN (V.O.)

Hey, just keeping an eye on my little brother.

THE CRUISER SPEEDS OFF INTO THE DISTANCE AS WE:

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW