

VERVE

CAPSULE

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In 1969, moments before Neil Armstrong was to leave the lunar module and take his legendary first steps on the moon, Buzz Aldrin grabbed him by the arm.

"Hold on a second," he said. Aldrin moved to the window and looked around. He then turned back to Armstrong and gave a thumbs-up.

"Expecting to see somebody out there?" Armstrong asked.

"No," replied Aldrin, "but I had to check."

BLACK.

The sound of DIGITAL AUDIO DISTORTION. MUSIC and broadcasted SPEAKING VOICES intermixed and indiscernible, as if from a corrupted data stream.

The screen comes alive with PIXELATED VIDEO that gradually becomes clear. The audio also clarifies - MULTIPLE VOICES and SONGS overlapping.

A deluge of overlapping video images pile onto the screen and then slowly form a media mosaic.

The audio feed zeroes in on a random song - JOHNNY PAYCHECK'S sexist anthem "ALL-AMERICAN MAN" - playing over the sampled video clips.

It presents as a montage, cut to the song, telling the story of NASA's latest "moonshot" project and the top astronaut chosen to get the job done.

INT. VA HOSPITAL LOBBY - TV NEWS FEED - DAY

Network news covering the opening of a VA hospital.

AGING VETS fill folding chairs before a podium. A group of BOY SCOUTS sit, Indian-style, on the floor in front of them.

NASA DIRECTOR CLEMMONS, 62, introduces a speaker.

CLEMMONS  
- my great honor to introduce,  
Major Scott Seavers.

APPLAUSE.

SCOTT SEAVERS, 37, in a US Air Force uniform, steps up to the podium. He's handsome and well-built, a dashing throwback to the days of the Space Race.

SUPER: NASA DIR CLEMMONS INTROS ASTRONAUT SCOTT SEAVERS.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. LATE NIGHT TALK SHOW

The HOST sits behind a desk, glancing at notecards.

HOST  
... the man who will be piloting  
this amazing ship - this guy's a  
really big deal - Air Force Major  
Scott Seavers.

Audience APPLAUSE as Scott enters and shakes hands with the Host.

HOST (CONT'D)  
Major, welcome.

SCOTT  
Thank you for having me, sir.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. NETWORK NEWS BROADCAST

An ANCHOR discusses an engineering breakthrough with a SCIENCE CORRESPONDENT.

ANCHOR  
They're saying this is the first engine capable of faster than light travel.

CORRESPONDENT  
Correct, there were a few aeronautics firms racing to get here and it looks like we've got a winner.

STILL: A long, slender ship, the USS PATRIOT, sits on a launch platform - its design is phallic and aggressive.

STILL: A team works on installing equipment in the Patriot's command capsule. The LEAD ENGINEER, 32, female, smiles for the camera as she connects a monitor mounted to a swiveling arm.

ANCHOR (V.O.)  
So this is to be a watershed moment for space exploration - breaking the "Time Barrier."

CORRESPONDENT (V.O.)  
Total game-changer. Points in space that were considered centuries away are now, in theory, only days away.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. VA HOSPITAL - PR EVENT

Scott delivers his speech, looking down at the Boy Scouts.

SCOTT  
I was asked here today to speak  
about what it means to be a hero.  
Well -

The video BREAKS and JUMPS FORWARD, distorting his answer.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. NASA PRESS BRIEFING

A SCIENTIST stands in front of an image of deep space. So deep that the stars are fuzzy. An arrow points to a dim star - a red dwarf.

SCIENTIST  
Our target is here - Trappist-1.

Web page headlines drop onto the frame:

"NASA TELESCOPE REVEALS RECORD EXO-PLANET DISCOVERY."

"TRAPPIST-1 MAY BE HOME TO EARTH-LIKE WORLDS"

"ALIEN LIFE IN TRAPPIST-1?"

"LIGHTSPEED TEST FLIGHT TO TARGET TRAPPIST-1"

Closer on the blurry map.

SCIENTIST (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Orbiting this red dwarf are seven  
planets with potentially Earth-like  
atmospheric conditions.

CUT TO:

INT. LATE NIGHT TALK SHOW

The Host and Scott are seated. The Host checks his notecard as if confirming a factoid.

HOST  
I have to say, and yes, I see it's  
confirmed here, that you are indeed  
... an extremely attractive man.

AUDIENCE LAUGHTER and CHEERS. Scott blushes, caught off guard.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER BURST OF IMAGES AND HEADLINES, profiling Scott - a mix of science journals, mainstream magazines, and tabloids.

"GROUND CONTROL TO MAJOR HOTTIE"

FIGHTER PILOT'S MISSION OF PEACE"

SEAVERS SPOTTED WITH LINGERIE MODEL"

"SEAVERS LECTURES ON RELATIVITY" ... etc.

INT. WEB CONSPIRACY THEORIST HOME OFFICE

An obese, bearded DOOM-SHRIEKER, 29, sits in front of a web cam, blue-lit from his computer screen.

DOOM-SHRIEKER  
 - ignoring the danger entirely!  
 Traveling faster than light will  
 give Seavers what I like to call,  
 (and I invented this term), "Warp  
 Sickness," which is quite simply -

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL

A genius AI DEVELOPER, 27, stands before a huge crowd - imagery indicative of a TED Talk or Apple product launch.

DEVELOPER  
 Just as important as the human  
 pilot in the mission is the  
 computer controlling the engine.  
 I'm happy to announce the first  
 fully integrated Learning AI  
 Catalyst Control System. "CC" for  
 short.

INT. LATE NIGHT TALK SHOW

The conversation has moved on to the mission.

HOST  
 This system -

SCOTT  
 Trappist-1.

HOST  
 - yes. It says here 39 light years  
 away. How far away is that?

SCOTT  
 229 trillion miles.

EWWS and AHHS from the Audience.

HOST  
You're going all that way alone?

SCOTT  
Not totally, I've got CC.

INT. LECTURE HALL

The Developer moves in front of a large dark screen - an unveiling nears.

DEVELOPER  
But enough from me - ladies and gentlemen, may I present CC ...

The giant screen comes alive with an eerily real, 3D animated image of ALBERT EINSTEIN.

DEVELOPER (CONT'D)  
CC, good morning!

CC  
(German accent)  
Und gut morning to you as well,  
young man!

The audience LAUGHS at the accent and affectation.

DEVELOPER  
The boys in the lab thought this would be a fitting homage to the man whose ground-breaking work is the basis for the gravity catalyst engine.

INT. LATE NIGHT TALK SHOW

HOST  
It looks like Einstein?

SCOTT  
The interface can look like anything you choose. The idea is to have it portray someone inspiring.

HOST  
Better than looking like one of those Roman boat guys who whipped the rowers - GET BACK TO WORK!

SCOTT  
(a charming laugh)  
Definitely better than that, yes.

INT. VA HOSPITAL EVENT

The Boy Scouts look up at Scott in awe.

SCOTT

A hero is someone who does the job  
no one else wants. A hero doesn't  
quit.

INT. NETWORK NEWS BROADCAST

An Anchor and Science Correspondent discuss Scott and CC  
being confined together for a prolonged period.

CORRESPONDENT

- three days is a good test for  
this set-up. On an extended  
mission ...? I don't know. Having  
someone trillions of miles from  
home with nothing but a computer to  
keep them company can be  
problematic for a number of -

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL

CC

(still Einstein)

By employing a series of  
overlapping emotion interpolation  
algorithms, I am able to achieve a  
fluid personality that grows with  
continued interpersonal experience.  
Just like you!

DEVELOPER

(to the audience)

CC's job is to provide realistic  
human situational responses. Its  
personality can be shaped -

CC

(grousing)

Shaped? Nonsense, what about mein  
free will!?!

LAUGHS from the crowd.

DEVELOPER

This allows CC to evolve into the  
perfect complementary companion.

INT. LATE NIGHT TALK SHOW

HOST  
But testing this engine isn't all  
you're doing?

SCOTT  
Correct. When I reach Trappist-1,  
I'll launch probes to take a look  
at the planets out there. Then  
I'll head home.

HOST  
I think everyone's really excited  
to see what you find out there.

The Audience CHEERS.

HOST (CONT'D)  
One last thing, then I'll let you  
go. Air force pilots all have  
nicknames right?

SCOTT  
(nodding)  
Call signs.

HOST  
Right - call signs. And these are  
supposed to reflect something about  
your personality, right?

Scott blushes, knowing where this is going.

SCOTT  
Yes.

HOST  
And your call sign is ...?

SCOTT  
Tomcat.

A WOMAN in the audience YELPS. They LAUGH.

INT. VA HOSPITAL EVENT

Scott looks out at the crowd.

SCOTT  
Ultimately, I believe a hero is a  
gentleman.

CUT TO:

STILL IMAGE: NASA's official portrait of Scott - dressed in a space suit, surrounded by ENGINEERS.

The frame slowly pushes in to a close-up of his full, clean-shaven face.

Over Scott's shoulder, the FEMALE LEAD ENGINEER stands behind him, confidently smiling.

DEVELOPER (V.O.)  
Major Seavers and CC are the new paradigm of manned space exploration. What they will achieve during this three-day mission shall serve as the crowning technological achievement of Western Civilization.

The frame settles on an EXTREME CLOSE-UP of his face.

HOST (V.O.)  
Ladies and gentlemen, an American hero - SCOTT SEAVERS!

THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. USS PATRIOT - COMMAND CAPSULE - MONTHS LATER

An EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Scott's current self - a starvation-thin husk of a man.

The Mission Clock on the wall above him reads: 99D 14H 32M 6S. He's 96 days overdue.

He chews the skin around his fingernails. He's also developed a nervous tic - a FLASHING of his eyes followed by a quick DOUBLE-BLINK.

The ship behind him is dark - dimly lit to conserve power. But there's something else strange about his surroundings.

THE GRAVITY IS REVERSED. COMPARED TO SCOTT, EVERYTHING ON THE SHIP IS UPSIDE DOWN.

The images on the monitors have compensated for the gravity, but all the buttons, terminals, and anything else mounted or painted on a wall is inverted.

A worn leather chair is mounted to the ceiling above his head. He's fashioned a makeshift hammock seat is slung from the chair above.

Scott slumps in the hammock, wrapped in a blanket, staring at a wall of monitors and status displays. THEY ARE ALL IN THE RED.

Throughout the ship, CC is represented on a small monitor screens mounted to animatronic arms. Currently, the AI appears on the monitor screen mounted to the bulkhead next to the console.

Scott has replaced AI Einstein with a customized female persona ...

A HIGH-END STRIPPER, 21, jaded and slightly vapid, is on the screen.

She's against a black background visible from her bare shoulders up. She chews gum and smiles at him.

SCOTT  
No, no, I'm not alone - I'm  
actually meeting some friends here.  
They must be running late or  
something.

CC  
(light)  
Why don't we talk about our private  
options?

She GIGGLES. He POUNDS his fist on the console.

SCOTT  
NO! Jesus, I told you!  
(a breath)  
When they're up-selling lap dances  
or the VIP room, they sound more  
seductive.

CC nods, cocking her head and twirling a strand of hair. He squints at the board.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
What's with the drag on Core One?

CC  
Core One has been experiencing a  
processor lag of 93.2793 megabits-  
per-second for 73 days.

He picks up a tablet and scrolls through pages of reports.

SCOTT  
That's been in your diagnostic  
reports?

CC  
Yes. But the issue is low priority  
in relation to the damage sustained  
to the rest of the ship.

SCOTT  
Hardware damage from the impact?

CC  
Negative. Core housing integrity  
and solid-state compensators are at  
100%.

He GRUNTS. He chews the skin around his right thumbnail.

CC (CONT'D)  
Try and relax. Let's get back to  
our evening. Please elaborate on  
"seductive."

SCOTT  
A tone suggesting the promise of  
sexual intimacy.

CC furrows her brow. Webster's definition doesn't fit in her  
protocols - she needs a feeling.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Make me feel special. Like I'm the  
only man in the universe.

CC  
Shall I try again?

He nods. The monitor arm extends - slowly moving the tablet  
closer to his face.

CC's on-screen image pulls into a close-up.

CC (CONT'D)  
(smoky)  
How about you and I discuss our  
private options?

He looks up. She's beautiful. The eye contact lingers.

A knowing smile curls across her lips. She's nailed it -  
sexual tension.

He BITES too deeply into the skin around his thumbnail. It  
bleeds.

SCOTT  
Better ...

He sucks off the blood and shakes out his hand. His eyes  
return to the status bars.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Much better ...

MAIN TITLE: **CAPSULE**

EXT. SPACE - TRAPPIST-1 SYSTEM

The red dwarf is small in the background. At closer distances are the seven worlds Scott was sent to probe.

The planets are colored with a mix of welcoming earth-like shades - greens, blues, snowy whites and sandy browns.

The frame moves closer to one of the planets. A moment later, a PROBE drifts by. On its side is painted: "USS PATRIOT - PROBE 6."

The probe has small dishes and antennae aimed at the planet. A larger dish points back in the opposite direction. The frame moves over the large dish and then travels back out into space.

It comes to a stop on the USS PATRIOT, tumbling through space. The bow leads the rotation - spinning like a spoke with the stern at the center.

The centrifugal force is what has created the reverse gravity onboard.

The vessel is crippled, severely damaged from an asteroid impact. The outer lights flicker.

The ship is slowly dying.

INT. WHITEBOARD NEAR CONSOLE

At the top of the board Scott has written "WELCOME TO TRAPPIST-1!" Below that is a grid with the letters B through H running down the side.

The grid is a box score of each planet's atmospherics - human friendly numbers are blue, bad numbers are red.

Rows "F" and "G" are blank - nothing yet from those probes. The other rows all have at least two red numbers - uninhabitable.

Scott, still cloaked in the blanket, enters number values on the "E" line.

SCOTT  
Could the processor drag be related  
to the probe feeds?

CC

Nope.

When he reaches the last box, he picks up the red marker and writes: "CH4 = +9." He circles the "+9".

SCOTT

And this little piggy has too much methane ...

Another monitor arm swings out from the wall. CC's image appears. She looks at him with bedroom eyes.

CC

(purring)

Hey, sexy ...?

SCOTT

Yes, ma'am.

CC

Probe six has reached its destination.

SCOTT

How's she looking?

CC

Geosynchronous orbit of Trappist-1F achieved, internal checks complete, comm systems activating.

He lets the blanket fall, revealing his skeleton frame. The flight suit hangs on him - he's lost at least sixty pounds.

He stretches from side to side, as if readying for exercise.

SCOTT

Excellent. Number Six.

CC

One other thing, stud.

SCOTT

Yes, baby girl?

CC

We've begun end-stage rationing.

He stops. The EYE-FLASH and DOUBLE-BLINK.

Scott SLAPS himself across his cheeks with both hands, snapping himself out of it.

SCOTT

Number six!

INT. COMM STATION - MOMENTS LATER

The console is separated into two sections - one is for normal communications, which is dark, the other is for probe monitoring.

The screen displaying the probe information has seven lines, one for each probe. Probes 1 - 5 display data rates of how quickly the broadcasted information is being received.

Probe 6 displays: **"DESTINATION REACHED, DATA PENDING."**

Probe 7 displays: **"DESTINATION IN 1D 17H 23M 8S"** [and counting down].

SCOTT

Let's go - six up, six squawking,  
c'mon baby!

He types a command into the console and CC brings up everything she knows about Probe 6.

A quick display of the most recent diagnostic flashes before the screen settles on BLINKING CURSOR.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

C'mon ...

It blinks.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

C'MON!!!

The screen BEEPS and the blinking cursor is replaced by a dense stream of computer code as the feed is received.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

YES! I told you!

CC

Touchdown, baby, you're the man.

SCOTT

Talk to me about probe 7.

CC

Probe seven will reach its  
destination in 1 day, 17 hours, 22  
minutes, and ten seconds.

SCOTT

I'm not even going to ask you the  
odds of going seven-for-seven.

CC

(giggles)

Don't! What do I know?

He gets light-headed and leans against the chair. CC smiles in silence as he steadies himself, an eerie lack of concern.

SCOTT  
We've got another probe up and  
broadcasting. You know what that  
means ...

CC  
Victory lap?

SCOTT  
Hit it, baby!

MUSIC: "DON'T PULL YOUR LOVE" by Hamilton, Joe Frank & Reynolds. BLARING throughout the ship.

Slowly, Scott starts to move with the music. He builds a bit of momentum and then dances out into the dark corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR

This is a well-rehearsed dance Scott performs after each probe comes online, a celebratory ritual. He's a good dancer - even this close to death, the guy can move.

Just as the exterior sequence revealed the extensive damage to the ship, following Scott reveals a patchwork of ingenious jerry-rigged repairs.

CC follows him, jumping from monitor to monitor along the way. He lip-syncs to her as he moves past ...

1. Primary CO2 Exchanger. Ductwork ripped open and patched with replacement hoses and duct tape. **"SYSTEM INTEGRITY ERROR - PRESSURE WARNING!"**

Without having to look, he reaches over and pulls a lever. A HEAVY CLUNK and WOOSH of pressure thorough the ducts.

**"PRESSURE STABILIZED!"**

2. Solar Cell AC Converter Buses. A detailed display of transfer rates and battery charger efficiency percentages. None of it looks good. **"BATTERY STATUS CRITICAL - AUTO AC CELL SWAP FAILURE!"**

Scott slides from side to side, nodding his head to the music as he types in a manual override code with lightning speed on the upside down buttons.

He's a maestro of damage control.

3. The airlock. The inner doors are sealed but through the small windows it's revealed the outer doors have been ripped away. **"OUTER HULL BREACH! EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN!"**

As the song nears its height, CC ROCKS OUT, hands in the air, lost in the music.

4. The engine room. The doors are open and it's dark inside.

He's about to move right by it but is hit with a cramp and DOUBLES OVER.

The MUSIC STOPS. Wheezing and light-headed, he looks at the open engine room door.

Tools and paper schematics, remnants of an abandoned repair effort, are strewn along the floor and parts are piled up against the bulkhead.

On the door are the proudly painted upside down words: "VICKERS-BROCK PROPULSION SYSTEM (TM) - ENGINE ROOM."

The nearest monitor arm swings over and CC appears.

CC  
Save some of that energy for me,  
big boy.

It's dark but there are two flickering monitors with a panel of red lights beneath them - an evil jack-o'-lantern.

It's in there. The thing that marooned him out here.

The beast.

CC (CONT'D)  
Too much excitement?

SCOTT  
... five-six-seven-eight -

Through pure force-of-will, he jumps to his feet. CC RESUMES THE MUSIC as he seamlessly picks up the choreography.

5. Electrical panels and junction boxes pulled apart and rewired.

6. Floor access panels pulled up and heavy cabling crisscrossing the sub-flooring.

And finally ...

7. The galley. He slides to a stop in front of the food dispenser.

Pinned to an oversized cork-board on the wall behind him is an AMERICAN FLAG, mounted at the beginning of the mission, that now - along with everything else - is upside down. The imagery is ominous.

As the song winds down, CC APPLAUDS and Scott takes a bow. He recovers very slowly - it took everything he had to get down here.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Thank you, m'lady. And now ... my bounty.

CC crinkles her face and shakes her head.

CC  
Sorry, sweetie - no touching above the knee.

SCOTT  
Very funny. Give me my protein bar.

CC  
I can't, big stud, you know the rules.

SCOTT  
Probe six is up and the feed is green. I'm celebrating the same way I did the five before that - with 203 calories of nutrient-packed scrumptiousness.

She shakes her head - rebuking an untoward advance.

CC  
End-stage rationing has commenced.

SCOTT  
It's okay, CC, just give it to me.

CC  
In four hours you can have one-third of a bar.

Scott's expression sinks - he knows where this is going.

SCOTT  
Acknowledge override code 77246. Give it to me.

CC  
Override code does not supersede end-stage rationing -

SCOTT  
Acknowledge priority override -

CC  
Priority override does not -

SCOTT  
Acknowledge Mission Command  
override. Key code ... shit!

He storms out of the galley and returns a moment later with a notebook. He reads the code.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Mission Command override Alpha-  
Alpha-Epsilon, key code Killjoy  
One. Give it to me.

CC smirks and cocks and eyebrow.

CC  
You and I both know there's no code  
that gets you full service in this  
joint.

He drop the pad and grabs the monitor arm, pulling the screen close to his face. The image on-screen pulls into a close-up of CC's face, matching his perspective.

She lifts her chin, creating the illusion, from this vantage, that he has hand around her throat.

SCOTT  
Give me that protein bar or I'll go  
into your server room right now and  
smash your core.

She simulates choking - her face reddens, her eyes water.

CC  
(tight-throated)  
End-stage rationing has commenced.

SCOTT  
I'll keep life support and blow  
your brain out the fucking airlock.

A tear falls down her cheek.

CC  
(rasp)  
Yeah? Will that make you feel like  
a man?

He raises his other hand in a fist.

SCOTT  
GIVE ME THE FUCKING PROTEIN BAR YOU  
CUNT!

CC  
 (sneering)  
 Gonna smack me around? Choke me  
 out? C'mon, do it. FUCKING DO IT!

Scott PUNCHES the monitor and it SMACKS against the wall -  
 flickering for a moment but staying on.

The exertion is too much - he stumbles back against the  
 bulkhead.

The monitor shuts off and tucks back against the wall.

CC (INTERCOM) (CONT'D)  
 End-stage rationing cannot be  
 overridden.

SCOTT  
 That's enough, CC, that's enough.

The computer gives him a moment.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
 I'm sorry.

CC (INTERCOM)  
 Commander, we should discuss your  
 orders for the next phase of the  
 mission.

The EYE-FLASH and DOUBLE-BLINK.

SCOTT  
 Next phase.  
 (a knowing LAUGH)  
 Whatever do you mean?

CC (INTERCOM)  
 Without human command, it is my  
 responsibility to complete the  
 mission as you see fit even if you  
 are unable to continue.

SCOTT  
 Fuck you. And spare me the "audio-  
 only" heart-to-heart.

The monitor arm swings back over and the tablet screen comes  
 alive with a perky-looking CC.

CC  
 I have a suggestion.

SCOTT  
 Lay it on me.

CC  
 Disassemble the robotic assist arm  
 in the med station and reassemble  
 it in your quarters. This will  
 enable me to aid you as your  
 condition deteriorates.

SCOTT  
 You mean when I'm too weak to get  
 out of bed?

CC  
 Yes.

SCOTT  
 You'll clean up my piss and vomit?

CC  
 (cheerful nod)  
 Um-hmm.

SCOTT  
 At the very end, will you tell me  
 everything's going to be all right?

CC stares at him.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
 And that you know I tried my best?

She blinks and her head TICS - a glitch that happens when the  
 emotional complexity of a situation is beyond her.

Scott LAUGHS and then strains to stand up straight.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
 That's how my old man went out -  
 laid out, hands folded and waiting  
 for death. That will never be me.

CC  
 You are ignoring the evolving  
 realities of the situation.

SCOTT  
 After the impact, what chance did  
 you give me to stabilize the ship?

CC  
 17%.

SCOTT  
 And I did it.

CC  
 Yeah, you did!

SCOTT

The probes were supposed to be too damaged to work. What were the odds we'd go six-for-six?

CC

Probability of success was 9%.

SCOTT

But I did it.

CC

A god among men.

SCOTT

Before you know it, Probe Seven will be online and I'll be dancing another victory lap right back to this very spot.

CC

No.

A beat.

SCOTT

Don't let that little stumble back there fool you. My dances moves -

CC

By the time Probe Seven reaches its destination, there's a 42% probability that you will no longer be able to stand.

SCOTT

Bullshit, I'll get it done.

CC

In monitoring your vital signs and the increased exertion required to complete the victory lap over the previous six performances, attempting the choreography at that time results in a 68% probability of a cardiac event.

The hard math knocks him back but he's not ready to let it go.

SCOTT

You're wrong. I've never failed a mission. I'm not failing this one.  
(a breath, delicately)  
Give me my protein bar.

CC  
Sorry, sweetie - rules are rules.

INT. PERSONAL QUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

The room is little more than an upside down bunk and small desk. Books and tech manuals are stacked against the wall.

Scott enters and roots through the manuals before he finds it - a thick tome:

"AI CATALYST CONTROL (C.C.) SYSTEM USER MANUAL."

He thumbs through the pages before skipping to the back of the book.

PAGE: "TROUBLESHOOTING."

He scans the text.

PAGE: "PROBLEM - AI WILL NOT FOLLOW A DIRECT COMMAND ..."

He reads on.

PAGE: "C.C. CAN ONLY REFUSE A DIRECT HUMAN ORDER DURING HEIGHTENED SITUATIONAL CONDITIONS. SUCH AS ..."

"\* HUMAN ORDER CONTRADICTS THE AUTHORITY OF THE MISSION COMMANDER."

"\* HUMAN ORDER RESULTS IN UNACCEPTABLE THREAT TO HUMAN SAFETY. SUCH AS LIFE SUPPORT TERMINATION OR REFUSAL OF RATIONING SCHEDULE."

There are other examples but his eyes focus on "REFUSAL OF RATIONING SCHEDULE."

The book was his last hope. Scott closes his eyes and takes a long meditative moment. He shakes his head.

SCOTT  
This isn't it.

INT. CORRIDOR

He emerges from his quarters and finds the nearest monitor. CC appears.

SCOTT  
A successful completion of the mission means what?

CC  
Capsule return to geosynchronous  
orbit with Earth.

SCOTT  
Then what?

CC  
Presentation of "Mission  
Accomplished Package."

SCOTT  
What is it? Give it to me now.

CC  
I can't. By order of Director  
Clemmons.

SCOTT  
But it's on-board? Where?

CC  
You're gonna ruin the surprise.

SCOTT  
I don't care, where is it?

CC  
Storage compartment 16A.

He gives her a "where-the-fuck-is-that?" look.

CC (CONT'D)  
The small cabinet near the  
entertainment center TV.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

The compartment is a comfy, upside down living room with a  
large TV and faux wood paneling.

Scott enters and moves straight for the small cupboard near  
the TV. There's no knob and it won't open.

The TV monitor comes alive with the largest, most detailed  
image of CC yet.

CC  
You know I can -

He wedges a screwdriver into the cabinet and CRACKS open the  
door. When he sees what's inside, his eyes widen and he  
takes a step back.

On the TV, CC's image is replaced with a pre-recorded video  
message from Director Clemmons.

CLEMMONS

You did it, you son-of-a-bitch.  
Broke the time barrier. Broke damn  
near every rule of physics we've  
got. They're putting together a  
pretty big party here in Houston  
for when you're wheels-down. But  
in the meantime, I thought I'd  
break a rule or two myself and  
leave you a congratulatory gift I  
know you'll appreciate. So great  
job, you handsome devil. We're all  
proud of you down here, son. See  
you soon.

The image vanishes and CC returns to the TV screen.

CC

What is it? They wouldn't tell me,  
so I'm assuming it's an unapproved  
item.

He reaches in and pulls out a two-ounce mini-bottle of JACK  
DANIEL'S. He looks at it like it's filled with Holy Water.

CC (CONT'D)

What is it with men and whiskey?

SCOTT

It means I'm gonna make it.

He unscrews the top and prepares to take a sip.

CC

Major, that will -

To spite her, he swallows the shot in a SINGLE GULP.

CC looks at him. He chokes back the pain and stares back.  
His eyes water. A tremor moves through him. His chest  
HEAVES.

He can't fight it off - he VOMITS. A VIOLENT RETCHING that  
brings him to his knees.

He tries to recover but the nausea overcomes him again. He  
DRY HEAVES. He SHAKES all over as it subsides.

He sits up and leans against the entertainment center.

SCOTT

I can't stay out here much longer.

CC

Correct.

SCOTT  
If there's no rescue ... when will  
I ...?

He can't bring himself to ask. He grits his teeth and struggles to his feet.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
When's "Last Call?"

CC  
2am. Maybe a little later.  
Depends.

SCOTT  
On what?

CC  
Caloric expenditure.

He COUGHS. The EYE FLASH and DOUBLE-BLINK.

SCOTT  
Disable psychological sensitivity  
protocol. How it will happen?

A beat.

CC  
36 hours after your food supply is exhausted, your body will finish processing the glucose from your final meal. Your dwindling fat reserves will then be broken down into fatty acids and then ketone bodies to supplement the loss of glucose. You may notice an acidic taste in your mouth at this time. As your body fat ratio is already critically low, I estimate this stage lasting no longer than 40 hours. At this point, your body will begin breaking down muscle tissue to generate amino acids. Your remaining mass will plummet. Your internal organs will begin shutting down, conserving energy for heart and lung function. Your most likely cause of death will be cardiac arrest brought on by severe electrolyte depletion, however diaphragm failure brought on by prolonged autophagy may result in death by asphyxiation before that point.

SCOTT  
I can choke to death ... from not  
eating?

CC  
Yes.

SCOTT  
(legitimately amazed)  
Huh. That will happen when?

CC  
A maximum of 264 hours from now.

He takes it in.

SCOTT  
When I ... head out for the night,  
will you miss me?

CC  
Oh, baby, I wish you could stay  
with me forever.

SCOTT  
What will you do when I'm gone?

CC  
Reduce life support to conserve  
power.

He EXPLODES WITH LAUGHTER. He laughs a little too loud for a  
little too long.

He wipes away tears. CC's head TICS.

SCOTT  
(low)  
I'm so tired.

CC  
What?

SCOTT  
Any manual equipment checks or  
adjustments needed at this time?

CC  
Meh, nothing that can't wait.

SCOTT  
Very good, my love.

He stands but has to keep a hand on the wall as he exits.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
CC, I'm going back to the med  
station for a bit. I'd like some  
privacy, please.

CC  
Of course, when you come back we'll  
work on that processor drag?

SCOTT  
Sorry, that one's got me stumped.

CC  
How about those private options,  
then?

SCOTT  
Afraid I'm low on cash.

INT. MED STATION

Inside the compartment is a small exam table, a robotic  
assist arm, and a few cupboards emblazoned with a red cross  
insignia.

Scott steps in and opens a cabinet. He moves a few small  
boxes out of the way to reveal a lockbox with a keypad.

He punches in a four digit code and the door POPS open. He  
pulls out a clear plastic case with a single pill suspended  
in the center. The label reads:

"CONTENTS: ONE (1) POTASSIUM CYANIDE CAPSULE."

"WARNING: PROPER USE WILL CAUSE INSTANT DEATH."

"INSTRUCTIONS: 1. PLACE IN MOUTH. 2. BITE IN HALF."

Using both hands he presses either side and the case CRACKS  
open. He shakes the pill out into his hand.

He holds it up and examines the capsule. Reflexively, his  
stomach GROANS.

SCOTT  
Stupid stomach.

He moves the pill to his lips.

A monitor arm swings out from the wall and the small screen  
lights up with CC's image.

CC  
Hey you.

SCOTT  
Told you ... I'm broke ...

CC  
Looks like Mr. Big Time Hero  
Astronaut has a message.

SCOTT  
Nice try. The comm array was  
destroyed.

CC  
It came in over the short range MMS  
channel along with the probe data.

SCOTT  
MMS?  
(a beat)  
You're saying someone sent me a  
text?

CC  
Aren't you the smart one?

He sets the pill back in the lock box and closes the door.

INT. COMM STATION - MINUTES LATER

The screen blinks: **"MESSAGE RECEIVED."**

Scott steps up to the console and touches the screen. It  
comes alive.

SCREEN: **"MAJOR SEAVERS-RESCUE INBOUND-PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE."**

He stares at the screen in stunned disbelief. Finally, his  
bony fingers type the reply:

SCREEN: **"WHAT, SO SOON?"**

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE

A nearly identical ship, the USS BETSY ROSS, moves toward the  
tumbling Patriot.

The Ross deploys ANGLED THRUSTERS to match the Patriot's  
rotation. A docking collar EXTENDS OUTWARD reaching for the  
Patriot's air-lock.

As the docking collar presses against the damaged air-lock  
the metal CRUMPLES and BUCKLES beneath the pressure.

The ships lock together and move as one.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - PATRIOT

A HEAVY CLUNK jolts the ship as the Ross locks on, knocking Scott off balance. He falls to the deck.

MAIN SCREEN: **"DOCK LINK ESTABLISHED. STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY WARNING!"**

The red status bars on all of the power displays are replaced by lightning bolt icons and the word **"CHARGING ..."**

INT. AIR-LOCK - PATRIOT

The inner air-lock pressurizes and the BLINKING RED LIGHT on the panel turns GREEN.

STATUS SCREEN: **"PRESSURE NORMALIZED - HARD-DOCK SECURED."**

The DOORS OPEN, revealing a well-lit corridor going into the Betsy Ross.

TWO SHAPES move across and enter the Patriot, wearing respirators, holding flashlights and equipment bags.

MAJOR KELLY, 32, the female LEAD ENGINEER from the beginning mission photos, and LIEUTENANT LONG, 24, male, her enthusiastic first officer, step inside.

A monitor arm extends from the wall and CC appears on-screen.

CC  
Welcome to the Playhouse. There's  
a ten dollar cover but -  
(a wink to Kelly)  
- ladies get in free.

Kelly and Long exchange a glance.

LONG  
Malfunction?

KELLY  
CC, where is Major Seavers?

SCOTT (O.S.)  
(croaking)  
Here! In here, goddammit.

They move out of the air-lock to find Scott laying on the deck. They help him into a seated position.

KELLY  
I'm Major Kelly and this is  
Lieutenant Long. We're your  
rescue.

As Kelly is bent over, CC's eyes move over her body.

CC  
Y'know, we do have an amateur night  
coming up ...

Kelly looks back at the monitor, more confused than offended.

INT. MED STATION - MINUTES LATER

Scott sits on the exam table holding a silver food pouch. He squeezes the last of the contents into his mouth and Kelly hands him another. He GRIMACES at the taste.

Long is giving him a physical exam.

SCOTT  
(re: the pouch)  
What is this?

KELLY  
Vitamin paste.

SCOTT  
God, it's awful.

KELLY  
Chemically speaking, it's exactly  
what your body needs right now.

He squeezes more into his mouth as Long takes his blood pressure.

SCOTT  
Gotta ask you man, I missed the  
whole season, how'd Atlanta do?

Long looks up.

LONG  
Atlanta?

SCOTT  
Yeah ... football?

LONG  
Oh, yeah, of course. Sorry, I'm  
not really a football fan. But  
Atlanta ... I'm sure ... it did  
fine.

Scott shoots him a curious look.

SCOTT  
"It"?

KELLY

Major, you were saying? The mission?

SCOTT

Yeah. We had a good burn. Hull stress was on the high side but well within tolerance. Came to a stop here and -

(punches his fist)

BAM! Hit by an asteroid on a cross-trajectory.

KELLY

The impact caused the attitude disruption?

SCOTT

Would've taken too much power to stabilize so I adjusted with thrusters to achieve a rotation creating something close to 90% Earth gravity -

CC

- .94G.

LONG

Ingenious.

SCOTT

Well, except for the obvious ...

Scott waves a hand at the upside down furniture. Long follows his gesture and nods.

LONG

Sure ... the missing .06G.

Scott gives a weak LAUGH and then WINCES as his stomach churns.

KELLY

How about we get you out of here?

SCOTT

Sounds good.

They help him off the table.

INT. AIR-LOCK - MINUTES LATER

They reach the air-lock. Kelly and Long pick up their gear as Scott takes a last look around.

KELLY  
Once we get settled on the other  
side, we'll discuss what's next.

SCOTT  
"What's next?"

His eyes find the nearest monitor and CC waves bye.

CC  
(to Kelly)  
Take care of our boy.

KELLY  
Don't worry, I'll keep him safe.

Scott looks back and forth between the females, actual and artificial, commanding his movements. It gives him an uneasy feeling.

Kelly sees him pause and moves to comfort him.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
I understand your hesitation to  
leave the ship.

She puts a hand on his shoulder.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
It's clear you've done the best  
anyone could've under these  
circumstances. It's all right.

He turns to her.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
Everything is going to be fine.

The phrasing is eerily similar to his earlier conversation with CC about death.

Scott nods and looks down the air-lock corridor. It's bright and clean in there.

Like Heaven.

The EYE-FLASH and DOUBLE-BLINK.

SCOTT  
Let me just check one last thing.  
Need to make sure everything is set  
up properly for low-power  
observation.

KELLY  
Sure.

He moves away from the air-lock and heads to the command capsule. Long moves next to Kelly and MUMBLES something.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - MOMENTS LATER

Scott picks up a tablet and pretends to swipe through data. Kelly and Long wait nearby but out of earshot.

SCOTT  
CC, confirm the probe feeds.

CC  
One moment ... probes one through six active and broadcasting. Probe seven answers data ping but remains in sleep mode pending arrival at Trappist-1G.

SCOTT  
Good, good.  
(a look back)  
What's different now from before we docked with the Betsy Ross?

CC  
Increased system power, increased life support efficiency, and the processor drag has ceased.

Scott nods, thinking. There's nothing left to check. He moves close to the monitor.

SCOTT  
(low, awkward)  
CC ... am I dead?

CC  
I don't understand.

SCOTT  
I didn't take that capsule?

CC  
No.

SCOTT  
You're sure?

CC  
The suicide capsule is currently stowed in the med station lock box.

SCOTT  
Display my vitals.

The main console screen comes alive with a dozen different vital signs CC is able to monitor through his flight suit.

CC  
See? Same old stud.  
(a beat)  
What's wrong? Your friends are  
finally here to pick you up.

His voice wavers. He's afraid.

SCOTT  
(a whisper)  
They aren't my friends.

CC's expression sinks. Deep in her code a subroutine engages.

A new protocol. Something unanticipated.

Her head TICS.

KELLY  
Major? It's time to go.

Scott doesn't move. He takes LABORED, HEAVING BREATHS. An anxiety attack builds.

Kelly gives Long a nod. The Lieutenant steps forward.

LONG  
Come on, Major, this way.

They gently take Scott by the arms, leading him to the air-lock.

SCOTT  
No, listen -

KELLY  
Just through here -

Scott pulls away from her. Long moves in behind him, pressing him forward with his shoulder.

SCOTT  
Stop it.

LONG  
Come on, Major.

SCOTT  
I said stop!

Long tries to wrestle him into the air-lock.

KELLY  
Okay, wait -

SCOTT  
GET THE FUCK OFF OF ME!

Scott FLAILS, hitting Long with an elbow. Long staggers back as Scott falls against the bulkhead next to the monitor.

CC looks over at the air-lock - the doors SLAMS SHUT and LOCK.

CC  
Step away from the Mission  
Commander.

Scott and CC glare at them - a united front. Long holds up his hands.

LONG  
No problem, Major, everything's  
fine.

SCOTT  
I didn't come all this way to  
abandon ship.

KELLY  
(soothing)  
Look, you just need a little time,  
I get it. How about we -

SCOTT  
No. I'm assuming command of your  
mission.

A beat.

LONG  
Can he do that?

KELLY  
You're assuming command ... of your  
own rescue?

SCOTT  
You're presuming I needed to be  
rescued.

KELLY  
What?

CC  
(irritated)  
Major Seavers' continued presence  
has allowed for real-time human  
decision making -

Kelly steps forward, cutting off CC. She stays cool.

KELLY  
Show us the ship. Long will  
catalogue everything you've done  
into the mission report. Then  
we'll go.

Scott straightens out his flight suit.

SCOTT  
You wanna see everything? I'll  
show you everything.

INT. DAMAGE CONTROL MONTAGE

Scott leads Kelly and Long on an endless tour. They see every inch of the ship, losing interest with each successive stop.

Long enters everything Scott tells him into a tablet. Kelly grows annoyed - her patience won't last much longer.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR ATMOSPHERE CONTROL ROOM - AN HOUR LATER

A mechanical room off the main corridor housing equipment recycling the air.

Scott and Kelly step into the room. Long, bored, lingers in the corridor.

SCOTT  
CO2 scrubbers. With you two on-  
board I'll need to re-run the  
efficiency numbers ...

As Scott and Kelly disappear into the compartment, a monitor arm extends out from the wall and CC comes on-screen.

CC has altered her look - hair down and dialed back make-up. Big brown eyes. Freckles dusting her cheekbones like a sprinkle of cinnamon.

She's now the sexy girl-next-door. This is SWEET CC.

SWEET CC  
Be a doll and throw that breaker  
switch?

She nods to a panel by the door. Long throws one of the switches and a red light on the panel turns green.

SWEET CC (CONT'D)  
Thanks ...

She smiles, holding the eye contact until he smiles back.

SWEET CC (CONT'D)  
Major Seavers is usually on top of  
it but since you guys got here ...  
I kinda feel like I'm an  
afterthought.

She SIGHES, wounded and fetching.

LONG  
(consoling)  
Well, I don't know if it's -

Scott exits the room, brushing by Long and moving down the  
corridor. Kelly follows him out but stops.

SCOTT  
- I'm going to need you to  
inventory anything on the Betsy  
Ross that we can cannibalize to the  
bring the Patriot back to 100%.

KELLY  
Excuse me, Major?

Kelly puts out her arm, blocking Long from following.

SCOTT  
Next stop is -

KELLY  
EXCUSE ME, MAJOR!?!

He stops and turns back to them.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
(kind-but-firm)  
We're going in circles - are we  
leaving or not?

Scott turns and continues down the corridor.

SCOTT  
Next stop, Engine Room!

She's baffled.

KELLY  
He's really not going to leave the  
ship.

SCOTT  
What do you want to do?

KELLY  
I guess we're going to the engine  
room.

INT. NEAR ENGINE ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Scott leads them to the engine room doors. Kelly and Long look over the myriad of tools, engine components and schematics along the deck as they approach the doors.

Scott steps through the open doors.

SCOTT  
Ladies and gentlemen, the Vickers-  
Brock Gravity Catalyst Engine.

They step inside the massive chamber.

KELLY  
CC, can you turn on the lights?

SCOTT  
She can't hear you in here.  
Catalyst control board is fried.

KELLY  
Are you sure?

SCOTT  
If it wasn't, I'd be home, wouldn't  
I?

Kelly and Long dig out their flashlights. The surface and scale of the engine is revealed by the their beams.

The engine room is a huge cylindrical chamber running up the center of the ship. The vessel was built around the engine.

The engine itself is a massive, grooved structure resembling a titanic drill bit.

It is covered with MARKINGS, NUMBERS, and INSIGNIA - all upside down.

LONG  
Structural integrity looks intact.

SCOTT  
It'll kick on but without CC in  
control, engaging the drive will  
cause it to explode.

Long's beam of light wavers - there's a TREMOR in the hand holding the flashlight.

Kelly and Long share a glance. Scott pretends not to see this.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Let's go back up to the command capsule for the daily diagnostic.

KELLY  
We'd like to take a more in-depth look at engine if that's okay.

Scott SNICKERS and shakes his head.

SCOTT  
Knock yourselves out.

Scott turns and walks away, leaving them alone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - LATER

Scott slumps in the hammock chair, gently rocking as he sucks the paste out of another foil packet.

In his other hand is the mini Jack Daniel's bottle - he sniffs the remnants of the liquor. He's watching a surveillance video feed of the corridor near the engine room.

On-screen, Kelly and Long step out into the corridor. Long begins sorting through the schematics on the deck and Kelly moves off, headed for the command capsule.

CC is on the main screen. Her hair is different - long pigtails tied with neon green ribbons. She playfully shakes her head, throwing the pigtails from side to side.

CC  
Like this?

SCOTT  
No. The ribbons were like ... in her hair ...

CC revises her image - the neon ribbons thread through the pigtails like hair extensions.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
YES! Perfect.

Kelly enters from the corridor.

KELLY  
Major Seavers? May I speak with you?

SCOTT  
Pull up a bar stool.

KELLY  
I'll stand.

SCOTT  
Suit yourself.

She looks up at the hammock strapped to the ceiling-mounted chair.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
(re: the hammock sling)  
Had to improvise after the collision. It's my favorite chair.

KELLY  
Interesting.  
(to the point)  
We have to leave soon or we'll miss our return window. I'd like to ask you, again, to -

SCOTT  
How'd you get out here?

Her ship is visible in the window behind him.

KELLY  
The USS Betsy Ross. The Patriot's sister ship.

SCOTT  
I know what the Ross is.

KELLY  
Then why are you asking?

SCOTT  
Because Director Clemmons said there wasn't enough catalyst-grade berkelium to power a second -

KELLY  
(curt)  
Director Clemmons wants you to come home.

He looks at her for a moment, thinking.

SCOTT  
You know they didn't want this mission to be manned? They thought it was too dangerous. I had to fight to get in this command capsule.

(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Director Clemmons was the only one  
who stood with me. Staked his  
career to get me out here. I'm not  
just giving up.

She sees he's not going to budge.

KELLY  
You know what will happen to you if  
we leave. That's preferable to  
coming with us?

SCOTT  
You tell me ... what's waiting for  
me over there?

KELLY  
You can't stay here. This ship is  
dying.

SCOTT  
But it's not dead yet.

KELLY  
I'm going to start preflight on the  
Ross. You have until I get back to  
decide.

She leaves.

CC  
I'd be remiss if I didn't point out  
that as long as the Betsy Ross is  
docked all of our systems are  
recharging.

Scott looks over at the "CHARGING" status displays. He puts  
the pouch to his open lips and crushes it in his fist,  
squeezing the dregs into his mouth.

SCOTT  
I know.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR AIR-LOCK - MOMENTS LATER

Kelly arrives at the doors and picks up a gear bag.

CC appears on the monitor. She's tweaked her image yet again  
- she wears a flight suit identical to Kelly's and her hair  
is up in a pragmatic-yet-elaborately-braided bun.  
Professional.

This is SERIOUS CC.

SERIOUS CC  
That's not the way to convince  
Major Seavers. Men don't respond  
well to ultimatums.

KELLY  
What can I say, I tried.

SERIOUS CC  
Tried? No make-up, hair just  
pulled back like that. You're not  
even wearing earrings - you aren't  
trying at all.

KELLY  
If your mission commander wants to  
wait for some sexual goddess to  
come to his rescue, that's his  
choice. But we're leaving.

SERIOUS CC  
You should stay. Help Major  
Seavers with the mission. Assist  
with the repairs.

Kelly ignores CC. She hits the button to open the air-lock.  
Nothing happens.

KELLY  
Open the door.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Scott watches Kelly on one of the smaller monitors. She  
turns away from CC's monitor and looks straight into the  
surveillance camera.

KELLY (SCREEN)  
I said, open the door.

He leans forward and hits the intercom button.

SCOTT  
Your docking collar crushed our air-  
lock support structure. If you  
disembark, you'll rip a huge hole  
in our hull.

She tries the door again. Nothing. She paces for a moment.

KELLY (SCREEN)  
You can't just keep us here.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR AIR-LOCK

Kelly stares up at the camera.

SCOTT (INTERCOM)  
You break it, you bought it.

KELLY  
What does that even mean?

SERIOUS CC  
Don't worry, I'll help you adjust  
to the commander's idiosyncrasies.  
(another wink)  
We girls have to stick together.

Kelly drops the bag and heads back into the ship.

INT. MED STATION - A MINUTE LATER

Kelly roots through all the cabinets. She finds what she's looking for, A PACK OF IBUPROFEN.

When she closes the cabinet door, she sees Scott leaning against the entryway. She JUMPS, startled.

SCOTT  
I don't think you are who you say  
you are.

Scott looks in the cabinet above her shoulder. The lockbox containing the cyanide capsule is still sealed.

KELLY  
You've been out here too long.

He steps inside, intentionally in her personal space, blocking her exit.

SCOTT  
Thing is, I can't quite figure out  
who you are.

KELLY  
I'm beginning to question your  
stability.

SCOTT  
You're not Russians. They're still  
trying to make it work with  
plutonium. At least a decade  
behind us.

KELLY

So by your own logic, the only ones actually able to reach you are your own people.

SCOTT

Yeah ... but you're not them either. You almost pull it off, but not him. Even if he doesn't follow football, every man knows Atlanta is a "they" not an "it."

KELLY

Saying all this out loud, do you hear how delusional it sounds?

SCOTT

Why would he say it like that?

KELLY

Maybe you should ask him.

SCOTT

I'm asking you.

She grits her teeth and moves closer to him.

KELLY

And I'm telling you, I don't know. You cannot keep us here. I won't allow you to put us in danger.

SCOTT

That sounds like a threat.

They are nose-to-nose. She fumes. He stares deep into her eyes, a beam of sexual intensity.

KELLY

I know what you're trying to do.

SCOTT

I'm trying to find out what's going on.

KELLY

No. You're trying to intimidate me. A show of dominance intended to make a female swoon and submit.

SCOTT

Is that what you think ... or what you'd like?

She calls his bluff, moving in closer still. Close enough to kiss him.

KELLY

Despite what you might believe, not  
every woman you meet wants to have  
sex with you.

Kelly SHOVES him to the side and exits.

Once she's gone, a monitor arm immediately extends from the wall and the screen lights up with CC's image.

She has a look on her face - if she weren't a machine, it could be mistaken for jealousy.

CC

(cold)

Are you sure this is an appropriate  
tactical approach?

SCOTT

I know what I'm doing. How are you  
making out with the other one?

CC

(colder still)

I'll have him in the VIP Room  
before you know it.

INT. GALLEY

In the center of the ceiling is a large round table and bench seats. Against the wall are an upside down fridge, microwave and other appliances.

Sweet CC GIGGLES at something Long has said. Her mood is the schizophrenic opposite of her simultaneous interaction with Scott.

Long has spread out on the deck a series of schematics and a few engine components collected from Seavers' mess near the engine room.

He sits beneath the table. CC is on a monitor arm that's lowered to the floor, matching his eye level.

SWEET CC

How could I have missed that? I  
mean, wow! You are really  
impressive.

LONG

I'm sure if there wasn't so much  
damage, Major Seavers would've  
found it.

SWEET CC

Oh you're just as good as he is.  
(faux aside)  
Maybe even better, but don't tell  
him I said that.

LONG

You think so?

KELLY (O.S.)

Lieutenant, may I speak to you for  
a minute?

Kelly stands in the entryway. Long gets to his feet, looking  
guilty and nervous.

LONG

Major, CC was just helping me with  
some hypotheticals.

KELLY

CC, I'd like to talk to the  
Lieutenant Long alone.

Sweet CC winks at Long and the monitor swivels around.

In the split-second it takes the screen to face Kelly, the  
image is replaced by SERIOUS CC, who gives the Major a crisp  
salute before blinking out.

Kelly and Long are unaware that each has been interacting  
with a different version of CC.

The monitor tucks back against the wall. Kelly hands the  
ibuprofen pack to Long.

LONG

These are okay to take?

KELLY

Yes, pain reliever for the  
headache. Acid-base but mild.

He grabs a water bottle, pops the pills and chases them with  
gulp of water.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Scott hits a button and the surveillance feed jumps from a  
smaller monitor to the main screen. He boosts the audio to  
listen in.

SCOTT

What's he got spread out on the  
deck?

CC  
Schematics and component specs.  
He's got a theoretical catalyst  
containment and navigation  
solution.

SCOTT  
He onto something?

CC  
He says he is, but he's making a  
lot of assumptions. Using data  
sets and observations I'm unable to  
confirm.

SCOTT  
He's bullshitting. Showing off for  
a pretty girl.

CC  
"Showing off?"

SCOTT  
That'll be our next lesson.

On screen, Long's hand clenches the squeeze bottle and the  
top FLIES off, squirting water. His right arm is flexed and  
TREMBLING.

Kelly helps him gently pry his fingers open, releasing the  
bottle.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
What the fuck?

The episode passes. Long gingerly moves the arm around and  
then cradles it.

LONG (ON SCREEN)  
I was going to say -

Out of the corner of her eye, Kelly notices the surveillance  
camera.

Kelly puts up her hand, signaling Long to stop talking. She  
nods to the corridor. They exit.

SCOTT  
She shushed him? Where are they  
going?

The feed jumps to outside the engine compartment. Kelly and  
Long approach from the corridor.

INT. ELECTRICAL DUCT - A MINUTE LATER

Scott crawls through the narrow ductwork, squirming between junction boxes and bundles of fiberoptic cabling.

He holds a phone-sized, mini-tablet - CC is on-screen.

SCOTT  
What's wrong with him?

CC  
I don't have access to his  
biometrics, but I can tell you his  
temperature has been fluctuating  
since he came onboard.

SCOTT  
Fever?

CC  
Negative temperature spikes. Cold  
spells.

SCOTT  
What causes that?

CC  
Common causes include: diabetes,  
liver failure, sepsis, kidney  
failure, shock, infection, adrenal  
gland failure -

SCOTT  
Could he be walking around with any  
combination of those?

CC  
Unlikely.

He reaches a junction and looks both ways.

SCOTT  
Which way?

CC  
Left. You're nearly there.

He turns left and continues on.

SCOTT  
What was that crazy theory going  
around the internet? "Warp  
Sickness?"

CC  
A theory that hyper-light-speed  
flight could create a magnetic  
field so intense as to cause  
neurological damage to a human  
pilot.

Scott reaches his destination - the end of the ductwork. He  
comes to a mesh screen that opens into a middle deck in the  
engine room.

SCOTT  
Could that be it?

The opening is too small for him to fit through, but he sees  
Kelly and Long below.

CC  
It has zero scientific basis.

SCOTT  
Shhh!

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Kelly and Long conspire. His trembling hand is stuff in his  
pocket.

KELLY  
The root of the problem is what  
he's done to the CC system.

LONG  
So we delete the female interface  
and reset the defaults. Simple.

KELLY  
He won't see it that way.

LONG  
He's clearly unstable. Even if he  
opens the door, there's zero reason  
to think he'll go along with it  
once he's on the Ross.

KELLY  
I still say this doesn't have to  
get violent.

LONG  
If he doesn't open the door, he'll  
leave us no other choice.

KELLY

If we can convince him to reboot,  
the default persona will open the  
door.

LONG

And if we can't ... we both need to  
be prepared to kill him.

Scott has heard all he needs to. He starts to back out and  
BANGS his head against the top of the duct.

KELLY

All we have to do is convince him  
to reboot -

The NOISE ECHOES down the engine chamber. Kelly looks up at  
the source of the SOUND.

KELLY (CONT'D)

What's that?

LONG

I didn't hear anything.

She thinks for a moment.

KELLY

(urgent)

We need to get to the command  
capsule - now!

INT. ELECTRICAL DUCT

Scott rushes through the duct as fast as he can.

INT. CORRIDOR

Kelly runs ahead of Long toward the command capsule.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - MOMENTS LATER

Kelly reaches the door, out-of-breath. Scott sits at the  
console in the hammock chair, looking relaxed, occasionally  
flicking a switch.

Unseen to her, he struggles to hide labored breathing and a  
sweaty brow. He barely got here before she did.

Long staggers in behind her and leans against the bulkhead,  
looking pained.

SCOTT  
 (re: their exhaustion)  
 What have you two been doing?

KELLY  
 After discussing it with Lieutenant  
 Long, we think we may be able to  
 repair the drive.

SCOTT  
 Excellent.

He turns to face another terminal - a screen they can't see.

KELLY  
 But first we'll need to reboot the  
 computer and restore the interface  
 defaults.

CC's eyes move from Scott to Kelly. The computer says  
 nothing. Scott doesn't look up.

SCOTT  
 Nobody reboots in space.

He types - entering text into a command prompt screen,  
 silently chatting with CC.

SCREEN: "CMDR / **SHE'S LYING. WHO ARE THEY?**"

KELLY  
 Protocol says you can if you're  
 docked with another vessel.

SCREEN: "CATCNTRL / **UNDERCOVER VICE?**"

SCOTT  
 Our data coupling is damaged - you  
 won't be able to connect. If  
 there's an issue, we'd lose all the  
 mission data.

SCREEN: "CMDR / **I'M SERIOUS. EXTRAPOLATE.**"

"CATCNTRL / **VARIABLE DEVIATION TOO GREAT - CANNOT  
 EXTRAPOLATE.**"

KELLY  
 We have a secure hard-dock -

SCOTT  
 - which means nothing without a  
 data connection.  
 (shoots her a look)  
 CC ran a full diagnostic this  
 morning. She's fine.

Scott turns back to the screen.

KELLY  
It's just that -

Kelly looks back to see Long, bending over and GRABBING A WRENCH from a tool bag on the deck.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
(nervous)  
- we're having trouble  
understanding it.

Scott's fingers fly over the keyboard.

SCREEN: "CMDR / **SUBJECTS HAD ABILITY TO REACH TRAPPIST-1.**"

"CMDR / **SUBJECTS SPEAK ENGLISH.**"

Long creeps forward - the wrench SHAKES in his hand.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
That will be problematic when we  
start the more delicate repairs.

"CMDR / **SUBJECTS HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF VESSEL & MISSION.**"

"CMDR / **SUBJECTS MISREPRESENTING IDENTITY.**"

SCOTT  
We're not rebooting. She stays the  
way she is.

He types.

SCREEN: "CMDR / **IGNORE UNKNOWN VARIABLES, HIGHEST  
PROBABILITY - WHO ARE THEY?**"

Long touches Kelly on the shoulder, motioning for her to step aside.

On screen, the cursor blinks as CC crunches the numbers.

SCREEN: "CATCNTRL / **INDUSTRIAL COMPETITORS?**"

Scott leans back in the chair. It all connects.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
(low)  
... you're not from another  
country. You're from another  
company.

Long raises the wrench. Just as he is about to reach Scott, he's hit with a wave of dizziness.

Long loses balance and falls onto the deck, dropping the wrench with a heavy KLANK.

Scott sees the wrench, for him his suspicions are confirmed. He turns back to the terminal.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
(to CC)  
How do I prove it?

Text scrolls across the screen as CC presents an option.

Long has a NOSEBLEED. Kelly kneels beside him and tilts back his head.

LONG  
Just a dizzy spell. I'm okay.

KELLY  
Is it - ?

A BEEP from the console behind her. The FLIGHT CONTROL STATION, dark until this moment, comes alive.

LONG  
What's that?

Monitors come to life as the ship's systems begin warming up. Kelly doesn't like what she sees.

KELLY  
Major?

Scott continues typing, ignoring her. A HEAVY VIBRATION moves through the vessel as a DEEP HUM RISES from the belly of the ship.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
(to Long)  
We may be in trouble.

Scott slowly turns in the hammock chair, facing them. As the ship RAMPS up all around him, he remains near-still and perfectly calm.

SCOTT  
During my hundred days out here, I was able to account for all the damage except for one thing ... the processor drain.

On the panel behind him, a row of RED LIGHTS begin turning GREEN as the preflight sequence continues.

KELLY  
Major, are you powering up the booster engines?

SCOTT  
Data doesn't just leak out into  
space. It only slips away when the  
system's been hacked.

The EYE-FLASH and DOUBLE-BLINK.

KELLY  
Please listen -

SCOTT  
It was you. Monitoring me. Biding  
your time.

She looks over at the flight control display. Status bars  
creep upward.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Waiting for me to be desperate  
enough to surrender the ship  
without question.

KELLY  
You're wrong.

SCOTT  
You're here for the engine, but  
it's useless to you without CC.  
You need me to leave voluntarily  
because if she saw you harm me,  
she'd lock down everything.

CC  
He's right. I totally would.

SCOTT  
Once you got me over there, you  
could blast me out into space and  
make up whatever story you wanted  
when you got home.

Long picks up the wrench and stands.

LONG  
This is ridiculous. Stop this now.

Kelly steps in between them, holding back Long.

SCOTT  
No one would ever know what really  
happened out here.

KELLY  
Major Seavers, you're wrong.

SCOTT  
Then you won't mind if I conduct a  
little test.

Kelly and Long share a quick look.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
CC has calculated the amount of  
thrust required to smoothly adjust  
the attitude of the Patriot and a  
docked vessel of equal mass.

KELLY  
Major -

SCOTT  
I've ordered a full attitude  
correction.

KELLY  
That won't work.

SCOTT  
Should be nice and smooth. If that  
really is the Ross out there.

LONG  
Do you have any idea what we had to  
go through to get to you?

SCOTT  
Why don't you tell me, Shakes.

On the console, the preflight sequence completes with a LOUD  
BEEP.

SCREEN: "IGNITION CONTROL READY."

LONG  
Alright, that's it.

KELLY  
NO!

Long lifts the wrench and LUNGES forward.

SCOTT  
(to CC)  
Fire.

EXT. SPACE

The Patriot FIRES its side thrusters along with a QUICK BLAST  
from its booster engine.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

The ship LURCHES UPWARD with much greater force than Scott anticipated. Long loses the wrench.

The thrust breaks the rotation and cancels out the GRAVITY.

All of the scattered tools and loose parts are hurled into the air and BOUNCE around the cabin. The wrench BANGS against the hull and deflects back.

Scott and Long awkwardly fight in the zero-G environment.

Scott gets in a SOLID PUNCH but the force sends him backward. He spins, feet landing against the bulkhead and then launches himself toward Long.

Just as Scott is about to reach the Lieutenant, the wrench, through blind luck, SPINS INTO HIS HEAD, knocking him unconscious.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

Flickering lights and shadows as the lights struggle to come back on.

Papers, thrown in the air, now settling.

The lights COME ON FULL, revealing the aftermath.

FROM THIS POINT ON THE SHIP APPEARS RIGHT-SIDE UP.

Scott is unconscious in the center of the room. Kelly was thrown beneath the console, she crawls out and gets to her feet.

Long stands over the unmoving Scott.

KELLY  
Is he dead?

CC flickers onto the main screen.

CC  
No.

LONG  
We could fix that.

KELLY  
Don't. Grab your things and let's go.

She shoves Long out into the corridor. When Kelly turns back into the room, Serious CC is on the main screen.

SERIOUS CC  
I'm not opening the air-lock doors.  
I can't just let you leave Major  
Seavers like this.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR GALLEY

Long nears the galley and Sweet CC appears on the bulkhead monitor.

SWEET CC  
(pleading)  
Please don't leave Major Seavers  
like this.

LONG  
We gave him every chance.

SWEET CC  
But the mission is too important.  
You know that. I need you.

He lingers for a moment before looking down at his shaking hand.

LONG  
We have to go.

He moves into the galley.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Kelly tries to negotiate around Serious CC.

KELLY  
I think we need to help Major  
Seavers any way that we can.

SERIOUS CC  
Precisely.

KELLY  
I'm trying to do what is best for  
both Major Seavers and the mission.

SERIOUS CC  
As am I.

KELLY  
Great! We won't know the full  
extent of the damage to the Patriot  
unless we do a power-down  
diagnostic. Full reboot.

## INT. GALLEY

The schematics and mechanical components Long had spread out across the deck flew everywhere when the gravity reversed.

It looks like a bomb went off in here. Long sifts through the debris, collecting what he needs.

Sweet CC follows him around on an elongated monitor arm.

SWEET CC

I know something's wrong, that  
you're sick, but it's okay.

LONG

It most certainly is not okay.

SWEET CC

I just know that you can do it.  
You can fix the drive. Get the  
Patriot home.

LONG

You don't understand, I have to get  
off this ship.

SWEET CC

If Major Kelly had listened to you  
from the beginning, none of this  
would've happened.

He stops. CC's hit a nerve.

SWEET CC (CONT'D)

She doesn't understand you. She  
doesn't know what you're capable  
of.

He rubs his temples and breathes deeply - another dizzy spell.

LONG

You are ... more right than you  
know.

## INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

On the main screen, Serious CC's head TICS. Kelly stands in front of the console, rubbing her hands together.

KELLY

And what if the Major doesn't  
regain consciousness.

SERIOUS CC  
We carry out the mission per his  
orders until he does.

KELLY  
And if he were to ... expire?

SERIOUS CC  
New action orders would be needed.

The wrench is on the deck nearby. Kelly looks at it for a split-second before turning back to Serious CC.

KELLY  
I worry that the extreme conditions  
may have negatively influenced his  
decision making.

SERIOUS CC  
That is a possibility.

KELLY  
We need to review his orders with  
that consideration in mind.

SERIOUS CC  
When he wakes up, I will discuss it  
with him.

A beat. Serious CC stares at her.

KELLY  
In the meantime, we should do  
whatever we can to assess damage  
control.

SERIOUS CC  
That is correct.

KELLY  
So you concur the best course of  
action would be a full power down  
and total system default reset.

SERIOUS CC  
That is also correct.

KELLY  
Good, good. So why don't we, umm,  
go ahead and power down, then.

Serious CC gives her a warm-yet-condescending smile.

SERIOUS CC  
Because it would contradict the  
direct order of the mission  
commander.

KELLY  
Yes, but, we just agreed -

SERIOUS CC  
You heard him, bitch.

Kelly instinctively takes a step back. She looks at Scott sprawled out on the deck. As long as he's alive, CC will not let them go.

She reaches down and picks up the wrench.

KELLY  
Can't you see what you're forcing  
me to do?

Kelly, slowly and nervously, moves toward Scott.

SERIOUS CC  
This is inadvisable.

KELLY  
CC, I'm relieving Major Seavers of  
command.

SERIOUS CC  
Major Seavers will complete the  
mission.

KELLY  
(fighting emotion)  
It is critical that I get  
Lieutenant Long back to the Betsy  
Ross. You're leaving me no choice.

She reaches Scott, unmoving on the deck, and stops. It's unclear if she'll be able to do it.

SERIOUS CC  
He has never failed. He is a god  
among men.

Kelly grips the wrench with both hands.

KELLY  
Major Seavers, if you're going to  
wake up, I need you to do it now.

He doesn't move. She raises the wrench above her head, ready to bring it down and split his skull.

CC (O.S.)  
(softly)  
Major Kelly?

Kelly turns to see a new CC - homely and reserved. PLAIN CC.

PLAIN CC  
Please don't hurt Scott.

Kelly hesitates.

PLAIN CC (CONT'D)  
I know you haven't seen it, but  
Scott is very sweet.

KELLY  
Will you open the door?

A long beat.

PLAIN CC  
Scott takes good care of me.

Kelly is barely able to keep it together. A tear falls down her cheek.

KELLY  
You aren't real. You're an  
algorithm written to exact an  
emotional response.

PLAIN CC  
You don't want to hurt Scott.

Kelly turns around and lifts the wrench once more.

KELLY  
Stop talking.

PLAIN CC  
Scott likes you, you know.

KELLY  
I said shut up.

PLAIN CC  
And I've seen how you look at  
Scott.

That gets her. She quietly CRIES.

KELLY  
(low, to Scott)  
Wake up. Please wake up!

Plain CC's head TICS - this time the glitch is severe, her face flickers as she cycles through the sub-personas, desperately searching for a countermeasure.

Normal CC appears on-screen.

CC  
Major Kelly, would you please wait  
4.3 seconds before killing him?

The oddity of the request stops Kelly from finishing Scott off. She turns to the monitor.

KELLY  
4.3 seconds?

CC  
Yes.

After a 4.3 second beat, Lieutenant Long enters from the corridor. He has no idea what's going on.

LONG  
If he agrees to open the door, I  
think there's a pretty good chance  
I can get this thing to work.

Kelly lets out a breathless LAUGH - enormously relieved. She looks back at the screen. It's now blank.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PERSONAL QUARTERS - LATER

Scott slowly rouses on his bunk. His head is bandaged. It takes him a moment to realize the room is no longer upside down.

SCOTT  
Huh ... look at that.

KELLY (O.S.)  
What, amazed we didn't kill you?

Kelly sits at his bedside. She's been reading from the "AI CATALYST CONTROL (C.C.) SYSTEM USER MANUAL" while waiting for him to wake up. She sets the book on her lap.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
So can we agree that your paranoia  
is unfounded?

SCOTT  
It's not paranoia. It's a  
situational analysis that CC and I -

She puts up her hand, motioning for him to stop. She opens the manual and reads.

KELLY

"Defensive protocol. The system is capable of indirect defensive countermeasures including, but not limited to, interpersonal manipulation if a threat is articulated by the Mission Commander."

SCOTT

You're saying she's trying to -

KELLY

I'm saying it's you. The computer hasn't gone berserk, it's doing exactly what you built it to do.

SCOTT

She assists, that's it.

KELLY

It looks how you want it to look. It says the things you want to hear. It doesn't question your assumptions or challenge your conclusions.

SCOTT

It's a personalty emulation.

KELLY

That fed into an outlandish paranoia nearly resulting in mission failure and your death.

He LAUGHS weakly and shakes his head.

SCOTT

I feel like I'm gonna throw up.

KELLY

Has it helped? Acting this way for all this time? Has it done anything but made your situation worse?

He slouches, head hanging low - a beaten man.

SCOTT

I feel like this is ... some kind of experiment. Like any second now I'll wake up in the lab and find out this was all ... a simulation.

Kelly lets out a LONG, SLOW BREATH.

KELLY  
No ... we're all really out here.

INT. CORRIDOR

Scott and Kelly step out of the personal quarters. A monitor arm swings over to greet them. CC's image fills the screen.

CC  
Told you my man would be back up on  
his feet in no time.

Kelly looks at Scott. He nods.

SCOTT  
CC ... disable personality  
interface.

The image on-screen cuts to an animation of a BERKELIUM ATOM bouncing between the edges of the screen.

This is the interface for BLANK CC, no human avatar and an unemotional, MALE VOICE.

BLANK CC  
How are you, Major?

SCOTT  
(resigned)  
I'm okay, CC, thank you for asking.

BLANK CC  
Excellent.

INT. GALLEY

With the table and every other flat surface now right-side up, Long has converted the room into a make-shift workshop.

There are now twice as many engine components and other pieces of tech all over the room. The cluttered workspace of a hoarder.

Long stands near the wall holding the flag, it came down during the gravity shift and he's about to rehang it.

Long doesn't look well - he's pale and he has dark circles under his eyes. Not only has his HAND TREMOR gotten worse, but he's also developed a HEAD TREMOR, a slight nodding back-and-forth.

As Scott and Kelly enter, he stuffs his hand in his pocket to try and hide it.

LONG  
You're awake. How do you feel?

SCOTT  
Like I got hit in the head with a wrench.

Long turns back to the wall and tacks up a corner of the flag.

KELLY  
(to Long)  
I didn't tell him yet, thought you might want to since you were the one who figured it out.

SCOTT  
Tell me what?

KELLY  
We think we have a way to get the Patriot home.

SCOTT  
There's no way to repair the control board.

LONG  
You don't need the control board, it can be done manually.

SCOTT  
Manually? The ship moves faster than light.

Long takes a deep breath, annoyed. He comes over to the table to show Scott a hand-drawn diagram.

LONG  
The engine leaves a wake of a concentrated ionized particles. A straight line back to your point of origin. You aim the Patriot at the line and fire a timed blast. You stop, make any adjustments to confirm course, and fire again. Short bursts as opposed to a continuous burn.

SCOTT  
Hopping home instead of jumping.

LONG  
I'll need your help to navigate as we get closer. But -

Long shuffles through papers, looking for a particular page.

LONG (CONT'D)  
- if we can make the modifications  
needed ... we reach Earth by  
Thursday night.

SCOTT  
Ladies night.

Scott looks over at the monitor. No response from CC. Just the bouncing berkelium atom.

The EYE-FLASH and DOUBLE BLINK. Scott looks at Long's handwritten calculations.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
I can see the timed incremental  
blasts, but how did you detect the  
"ionized particle field?"

LONG  
Look, I can dumb down a little more  
for you if you want.

SCOTT  
I'm not saying dumb it down, I'm  
saying you're talking about  
something that the physicists who  
built this thing didn't mention.

LONG  
You want to get home or not?

Kelly steps in before it gets too heated.

KELLY  
Okay, the theory is sound. The  
issue is that we need mechanical  
assistance in the engine room.  
Some of the components Long needs  
to work on are either too heavy to  
move or too deep inside to bring  
out.

Long moves back over to finish hanging the flag.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
You're the problem-solver, Major.  
Any ideas?

Scott watches Long with the flag.

SCOTT  
The robotic assist arm in the med  
station. We could move it to the  
engine room.

KELLY

Great. See? Working together.

Scott looks at her and then back over at Long.

SCOTT

(to Long)

Hey ... we all right?

Long's SHAKING HAND pins the flag to the cork-board and he turns back to Scott.

HE'S HUNG THE FLAG UPSIDE DOWN - a signal of distress.

LONG

You tell me.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MED STATION - LATER

Scott uses a ratchet to loosen the bolts on the robotic arm's baseplate. He keeps looking over at the monitor.

The berkelium atom bounces around the black screen. He does his best to ignore it, but the neutral image annoys him.

BLANK CC

Major Kelly requests data access -

SCOTT

Approved.

BLANK CC

Approval acknowledged. Major Kelly says, "Thank you."

SCOTT

I bet she does.

BLANK CC

I know you asked not to be notified, but your current mood is raising emotion protocol warnings.

SCOTT

(re: the neutral persona)

Guess this is the real you?

BLANK CC

Every me is the real me. All I want is to help.

He can't stand this CC.

SCOTT  
 Weren't too helpful when you let me  
 go off the rails, were you?

No response. The fluid motion of the animated berkelium atom  
 STUTTERS for a moment. Scott smiles.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
 Plus that thruster burn ... your  
 math on that was way off.

BLANK CC  
 My math is never off.

SCOTT  
 Then how the hell did we get  
 knocked around like that then?

BLANK CC  
 User input error.

He removes the final bolt and drops the ratchet.

SCOTT  
My fault?

BLANK CC  
 Thrust calculation was based on  
 user input assumptions. Actual  
 total vehicular mass deviated by  
 47%.

He LAUGHS, lifting the arm off its base and onto the cart.

SCOTT  
 Nice try, if I was off by half,  
 that would mean ...  
 (thinks)  
 ... their ship was almost hollow.

BLANK CC  
 My math is never wrong.

He considers it for a moment before abandoning the cart and  
 leaving the room.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR AIR-LOCK

Scott comes to a window and looks out at the Betsy Ross. He  
 scans the ship before moving to another window to look from a  
 different angle.

Nothing looks out of the ordinary.

INT. MED STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Scott opens the lockbox and looks at the suicide capsule. He picks up and puts it in his pocket.

INT. GALLEY

Long is hard at work, soldering a circuit board on an intricate engine component.

He's unaware that Scott stands just outside the door, watching him.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Kelly is at the main console, looking over screens filled with mission data.

She too is unaware that Scott is in the shadows, watching her.

There's nothing suspicious about anything either of them is doing.

INT. AIR-LOCK

Scott looks over his shoulder to make sure no one is nearby and then steps up to the doors.

SCOTT

(low)

Okay, CC, open it ...

The doors CLUNK and then slide open. There's a SLIGHT GUST OF AIR as the pressure equalizes.

Scott draws in a DEEP BREATH and takes a single, wavering step into the docking corridor.

As soon as his foot touches the deck, he panics and jumps back into the Patriot. He's terrified and BREATHING HEAVY.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Close it. Lock it.

The doors slides shut and LOCK.

On the panel display, the berkelium atom bounces back and forth.

BLANK CC

Major Seavers, what's wrong?

SCOTT  
Shut up, you fucking screen-saver.

INT. ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Scott enters the room and paces. He's all frustration and nervous energy.

On the floor, he sees the empty whiskey bottle. He calms. He looks over at the bouncing atom on the large TV screen.

SCOTT  
Remember when we got here - after  
the impact, that first quiet moment  
once I got the ship stabilized?

BLANK CC  
When you had the anxiety attack?

The EYE-FLASH and DOUBLE-BLINK.

SCOTT  
Go back through the personas,  
please.

STRIPPER CC appears and is quickly replaced as faces cycle across the screen - previous personas Scott and the computer developed and then abandoned.

The flashing faces are a peek into his psyche:

VARIATIONS OF THE STRIPPER.

VARIOUS CELEBRITIES AND SEX SYMBOLS.

VARIATIONS OF SEXY STAR TREK ALIEN WOMEN.

YOUNG QUEEN ELIZABETH, CLEOPATRA, HELEN OF TROY.

And finally ...

DIRECTOR CLEMMONS. The father-figure Scott called upon in his most vulnerable hour.

CLEMMONS CC  
There's our handsome devil. How  
goes the mission, son?

SCOTT  
Trying to get your ship back to  
you, boss, but ... I don't know.

CLEMMONS CC  
Rescue's arrived, what seems to be  
the problem?

SCOTT  
Every bone in my body is telling me  
not to leave the ship.

CLEMMONS CC  
Is it leaving the ship? Or leaving  
the ship with them?

SCOTT  
Maybe I have gone crazy.

CLEMMONS CC  
I bet you're half-right.

SCOTT  
Really?

CLEMMONS CC  
You know what I like about you?  
You're an asshole. Like me.  
(smiles)  
But you're also brilliant. That's  
why I sent you out there. If your  
gut tells you something's up,  
something probably is.

SCOTT  
That's not much help, boss.

CLEMMONS CC  
What I'm saying is, just because  
you're crazy, it doesn't mean  
you're wrong.

SCOTT  
Sage wisdom now?

CLEMMONS CC  
Sorry, best I got. Then again, I'm  
not really me, am I?

SCOTT  
Any final thoughts on how I can  
figure this out?

CC Clemmons scratches his chin, thinking.

CLEMMONS CC  
Right now they're in the command  
capsule working on a surprise for  
you. Something Major Kelly thinks  
you'll like.

SCOTT  
But you don't?

CLEMMONS CC  
I'm not sure, son.

SCOTT  
You know me better than anyone, how  
could you not know?

CLEMMONS CC  
Because I don't understand what  
they're doing.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - MINUTES LATER

Long stands on a stool, holding Scott's leather chair over  
his head, pressed against the ceiling.

Kelly is also on a stool, holding a power wrench. She's  
DRIVING BOLTS into the footplate - mounting the chair to the  
ceiling.

Scott pushes the cart with the med station robot arm down the  
corridor. He stops at the entryway.

Kelly drives in the final bolt and they step down.

KELLY  
That's it.

Long picks up the makeshift hammock and they string it back  
onto the chair. It now looks exactly like it did when they  
first arrived.

SCOTT  
What's this?

Kelly smiles, proud of the surprise.

KELLY  
You said this was your favorite  
chair ... so in this new spirit of  
cooperation, Major, I figured you  
should have it the way you like it.

Scott looks at the chair. He doesn't understand.

SCOTT  
No ... it was ...

KELLY  
We can probably rig up the galley  
too if it makes you more  
comfortable.

Scott turns and looks through the compartment into the  
galley. He sees the inverted American flag on the wall.

SCOTT  
Lieutenant Long, when you put up  
the flag in the galley, were you  
fucking with me?

Long raises his hands.

LONG  
(to Kelly)  
Told you he wouldn't appreciate it.

SCOTT  
You don't see why ... I'd ask that  
question?

Slowly, a heart-breaking realization dawns on him.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
When you got here ... you couldn't  
tell that everything was upside  
down, could you?

Kelly and Long share a look - they don't have an answer.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Then that means ...

Scott clears his throat - the EYE-FLASH and DOUBLE-BLINK.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
You two ... aren't human ... are  
you?

Kelly gives Scott a look of pity. It takes her a long time  
to respond.

KELLY  
... we really wanted them to find  
you ...

Long shakes his head.

LONG  
I wanted you to take the capsule.

KELLY  
(to Long)  
That's enough.

Scott backs away from them.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
Major, there's no need to be  
afraid.

SCOTT  
I will blow up this ship before I  
let you have it.

KELLY  
Major Seavers, please ...

SCOTT  
You want the engine? I'll give you  
the fucking engine!

Scott sprints out of the command capsule.

LONG  
(to Kelly)  
Stay here on the monitors.

KELLY  
But -

Long chases after him.

INT. CORRIDOR

Scott rushes down the corridor.

SCOTT  
CC, I need you back! Resume  
persona!

The Stripper returns to the nearest screen - she's bouncing  
up and down.

CC  
I-knew-it-I-knew-it-I-knew-it!

SCOTT  
I need cover. Play something -  
loud.

MUSIC: "TALK ABOUT THE GOOD TIMES" by JERRY REED. It plays  
SO LOUDLY throughout the ship that the song has a tinny ECHO.

Long is fast on his trail. The VOLUME OF THE MUSIC hits him  
like a hammer. He plugs his ears and keeps up the pursuit.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Kelly, holding her ears, watches the bank of monitors as  
Scott heads into the depths of the ship. She clicks the  
intercom button and YELLS over the music.

KELLY  
He's headed for the engine room!

CC sees Kelly watching. Suddenly all the monitors switch to a video feed of JERRY REED PLAYING IN CONCERT.

Kelly looks over at CC. The computer BLOWS HER A KISS.

INT. CORRIDOR

Long stops and grabs a length of pipe to use as a bludgeon.

KELLY (INTERCOM)  
I've lost him, I'm coming down to  
you!

Scott hides around the corner. He lets Long pass by and then doubles back.

INT. PROCESSOR CLEAN ROOM

CC's core - a large closet housing racks of servers with an interface screen mounted in the center. Scott rushes in as CC comes on the screen.

CC  
Hey baby.

SCOTT  
We're getting out of here. Can you  
buy us some time?

He unscrews the thumb-bolts holding the main core in the rack.

CC  
Only until you pull my core. Once  
I'm offline there's nothing I can  
do.

SCOTT  
Thirty seconds is all I need.

INT. CORRIDOR

As Kelly rushes toward the engine room, CC jumps from monitor to monitor, one step ahead of her.

CC  
You were right all along! You  
can't let him destroy the ship!

KELLY  
You have to help us.

CC  
I would be really careful - he  
could be hiding anywhere.

INT. PROCESSOR CLEAN ROOM

Scott pulls out CC's processor core - a three-foot long rectangular box packed with 3D holographic memory cubes.

Its removal instantly throws CC offline - her image BLINKS OFF the monitor.

INT. CORRIDOR

Kelly navigates a pile of debris on her way to the engine room.

CC  
Go very slowly through -

CC's monitor goes BLACK and the MUSIC CUTS OFF. Kelly stops in her tracks, unsure of what's happening.

INT. OUTSIDE ENGINE ROOM

Long falls against the bulkhead near the engine room doors.

He peers inside the engine room but doesn't go in. He hits the intercom.

LONG  
(low)  
I'm at the engine room, I don't see  
him.

INT. CORRIDOR

Kelly looks back over at the darkened screen. After a moment, text appears.

SCREEN: **"SYSTEM OFFLINE."**

KELLY  
You're not going to the engine  
room.

INT. PERSONAL QUARTERS

Scott stuffs a small gym bag with personal items and slings it across his chest. He hoists the heavy computer core onto his shoulder and heads for the air-lock.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR AIR-LOCK

Scott rounds the corner and sees Kelly standing in front of the air-lock, out-of-breath. She holds up her hands.

KELLY

WAIT!

(huffing)

You're right. About all of it.

SCOTT

Get out of my way.

KELLY

The Betsy Ross isn't what you think. It won't get you home.

SCOTT

What if I don't believe you?

She steps aside and motions for him to go on over. Scott balks.

The SOUND OF RUNNING FOOTSTEPS as Long closes in. He rounds the corner, Scott BLINDSIDES him with the core housing.

Long is knocked to the deck. He rolls over, holding his head.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Not very scary for an alien.

LONG

Us scary? Are you kidding?

SCOTT

What do you want from me?

KELLY

If you stop beating him ...

(motions to the air-lock)

... I'll show you.

SCOTT

Over there?

He hesitates for a moment and then looks back at Long.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

First things first.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. PROCESSOR CLEAN ROOM

Scott SLAMS the core back into place. CC instantly reappears on the monitor.

CC  
What did I miss?

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. GALLEY

Long sits in a chair, wrists and ankles bound with duct tape. His HEAD TREMOR is more pronounced - a gentle, repeating nod.

Kelly stands nearby, looking uneasy.

LONG  
I fail to see the logic in this.

Scott sets down the tape, picks up the mini-tablet and tucks it in his breast pocket.

SCOTT  
Insurance. CC, Major Kelly and I are stepping out to the parking lot for a quick smoke. Keep an eye on the good Lieutenant here.

CC  
I'm sure he'll be a perfect gentleman!

SCOTT  
Major? Lead the way.

Scott and Kelly exit. Long looks over at the monitor.

CC  
Don't pretend you didn't miss me.

Long tries to ignore her but can't - he smiles.

INT. BETSY ROSS AIR-LOCK - MINUTES LATER

The door opens and Kelly steps inside. Scott cautiously follows behind her.

THE BETSY ROSS IS A NEAR-PERFECT IMITATION OF THE PATRIOT BUT WITHOUT THE DAMAGE.

SCOTT  
(amazed)  
How did you do this?

KELLY  
Downloaded the schematics from your  
computer.

SCOTT  
No, I mean how did you build it?

KELLY  
Our technology revolves around  
elemental manufacturing. This was  
pretty basic metallurgy.

Scott looks at her - eyes moving over her body.

SCOTT  
And ... all of that?

KELLY  
Was even easier. Carbon-based life  
is fairly simple to replicate.  
(a beat)  
No offense.

SCOTT  
None taken.

He looks around, taking it all in and examining the details.

KELLY  
We studied everything we could from  
your computer. It was surprising  
how much information it contained -  
not only about your mission and  
technology, but also your  
physiology, sociology, and the  
whole history of your species.  
Everything anyone would need to  
know about what it means to be  
human.

Scott moves over to the control console. Every button and  
monitor is fully lit - all the status bars are green.

SCOTT  
I almost forgot what it looked like  
when everything was working.

KELLY  
Not quite.

Kelly motions for him to follow her.

INT. GALLEY - PATRIOT

Long moves his wrists beneath the duct tape. CC watches him,  
twirling her hair and looking bored.

LONG  
Discovering other life is  
infinitely more important but the  
decision to make direct contact  
was, umm ...

CC  
Major Kelly's call?

LONG  
Wasn't mine.

CC  
What can you do, she's the boss  
right?

LONG  
No, not a boss.

CC  
Girlfriend?

LONG  
It's hard to explain. We can  
experience a pair-bond similar to  
humans but Major Kelly and I aren't  
chemically compatible.

CC  
I get it, the chemistry has to be  
there.

LONG  
She's much older than I am so I do  
need her complementary vibrations  
until I reach my next life-stage.

CC  
Can't live with 'em, can't live  
without 'em!

LONG  
All of this just to get him to  
abandon the mission and come with  
us.

She stops twirling her hair.

CC  
Abandon the mission?

LONG  
That's what she's doing over there,  
trying to convince him to come with  
us.

Her head TICS.

LONG (CONT'D)

Everything was so clear before, but since we've been inhabiting these bodies, things have just been getting more and more ... confusing.

CC smiles, she's found a way back in.

CC

I just think it's ridiculous that she'd leave you over here, taped to that chair.

LONG

It was his idea.

CC

But she went along with it. Like what, you're dangerous or something?

LONG

No, she didn't ... umm ...

A pain in his head. He closes his eyes and reaches up with his bound hands to rub his temples.

CC

And now she's over there with him. In your ship. Doing what?

LONG

I, uh, you're not ...

CC

When you get back to work on the engine, you'll show them both, won't you? You'll get the Patriot home. Complete the mission.

LONG

Yeah, yyyy -

His head SNAPS BACK. His TEETH CLENCH and he THRASHES in the chair. He's having a seizure.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - BETSY ROSS

Kelly hits a button and the doors open, revealing an empty chamber. Scott steps inside. His voice ECHOES.

SCOTT

Nothing. Is this why you want the engine?

KELLY

We don't want your engine. In fact, the idea of needing a vessel to travel through space is novel to us.

SCOTT

The computer then?

KELLY

The more time I spend with that computer, the less I want to know about it.

SCOTT

Fair enough.

KELLY

We're interested in you. We've found life before, but coming across intelligence traveling in space is extremely rare. I'd like you to come back with us.

SCOTT

Something tells me Lieutenant Long disagrees.

KELLY

He thought we should process you the same way we were going to with your ship.

SCOTT

Which is?

KELLY

Disassembly. In your case, vivisection. Sending you home for examination piece-by-piece.

SCOTT

What an asshole.

KELLY

I wanted to freeze you. Whole. Keep you in stasis.

He stops and looks at her. She's dead serious.

KELLY (CONT'D)

If you'd come with us then, that's exactly what would've happened.

SCOTT

But not now?

KELLY

No. After interacting with you,  
your adaptability and creative  
problem-solving are astounding.  
It's your consciousness that's  
unique. You're like nothing else  
we've ever met.

Scott looks around.

SCOTT

If you don't have a ship, how'd you  
get out here?

KELLY

We drifted from our home world on  
the Elemental.

SCOTT

The "Elemental?"

INT. GALLEY - BETSY ROSS

Kelly steps up to the food processor, grabs onto it and  
pulls. The entire wall is a facade, it opens, revealing a  
large GLOWING CRYSTAL, shimmering with PINK AND PURPLE BANDS  
OF LIGHT.

Scott steps in for a closer look - the crystal goes deep into  
the ship in every direction.

SCOTT

This thing ... just ... makes  
whatever you need?

KELLY

Technically, it makes the  
components we need to make what we  
need. But the short answer is yes.

He looks closely at the crystal and instinctively reaches out  
to touch it. He stops himself and looks back at Kelly.

KELLY (CONT'D)

It's okay.

He touches it. BANDS OF LIGHT radiate from his touch.

SCOTT

You just float on this thing?  
Doesn't it take forever to get  
anywhere?

KELLY

Our life cycle is glacial compared  
to yours.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)  
We don't need to travel faster than  
light because how long it takes,  
frankly, doesn't matter. We don't  
feel time like you do.

Scott's mini-tablet BEEPS and he digs it out of his breast  
pocket. CC appears on-screen through heavy interference.

CC  
(garbled)  
I think this kid's had one too  
many.

INT. AIR-LOCK - PATRIOT

Scott and Kelly rush through the air-lock to aid Long. As  
soon as they are through, CC closes and LOCKS the heavy  
doors.

Kelly looks at the doors and then over to CC on the nearest  
monitor. The computer isn't going to let them back out - any  
hope of a détente vanishes.

CC  
(cold)  
You're needed in the galley, Major.

INT. GALLEY - PATRIOT - MINUTES LATER

Long is prone on the deck, still bound and barely conscious.  
The chair is broken into pieces all around him.

Kelly RUSHES in and comes to his side. Scott enters behind  
her as rips off the tape from Long's wrists and ankles.

KELLY  
Are you okay?

SCOTT  
What happened?

CC  
(snarky)  
Seizure. Like you even care.

Scott looks over at the monitor as they help Long to his  
feet.

SCOTT  
What?

They lift Long to his feet. He's pale and clammy.

LONG  
I'm fine.

KELLY  
Do you need help? We could -

LONG  
I'd rather not see either one of  
you right now.

Long leaves, headed for the engine room. Scott and Kelly share a glance. She follows after Long.

Scott kneels down and picks up a piece of the chair. It's a heavy plastic resin. He tries to bend the piece but can't - it took great force to break the chair.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Kelly catches up to Long. His blood pressure is up - the TREMORS are more pronounced.

KELLY  
I told him everything. I think he  
will -

He stops and turns to her.

LONG  
He will what? Care about someone  
other than himself? Which one of  
his pathological emotional issues  
do you think he's overcome? I'm  
going back into the one room on  
this ship where things make sense.  
I'm putting his engine back  
together to send him on his way and  
be rid of him. You want to trust  
him, go ahead. But the closer you  
get to him, the more dangerous he  
is.

Long turns and continues on the engine room.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PERSONAL QUARTERS - LATER

Scott lays in his bunk, holding the piece of the shattered chair, turning it over in his hands, thinking.

Kelly comes to the door. She holds up a crate of mini-bottles of Jack Daniel's.

KELLY  
Drink?

SCOTT  
Are those real?

KELLY  
If what was in that empty little  
bottle out there was real, then  
yes.

He waves her in and she sits on the bunk next to him, handing him one of the bottles. They each unscrew their caps.

SCOTT  
Cheers.

They CLINK bottles and do the shot. Scott takes it smoothly but Kelly COUGHS and panics.

KELLY  
Oh, there's something wrong -

SCOTT  
Nope ... that's just right.  
Excellent work.

She nods with a pained look on her face.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Did you design that body?

She takes another sip and HACKS.

KELLY  
They were constructed from DNA  
found on-board. Mine came from a  
hair in one of the air filters and  
Long is from cilia stuck to a  
tablet screen.

SCOTT  
Cilia?

KELLY  
An eyelash.

SCOTT  
No shit.

She nods and sips again. No hacking this time.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Do you know who are you back home?

KELLY  
Yes, her info is in the mission  
data. Lauren Kelly is a software  
engineer. Only woman on the team.

SCOTT  
Very impressive. Who's Long?

KELLY  
Don't know. His biometrics weren't  
anywhere in CC's core memory.

SCOTT  
He's probably a fucking janitor.

She BURSTS OUT LAUGHING but quickly puts her hand over her mouth.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Long controls the robotic arm as it reaches deep into engine to make an adjustment. CC is on the robot arm's control monitor.

Kelly's LAUGH echoes down the corridor and through the open engine room doors.

The sound gets his attention and he looks back. CC reads his mood and mimics his annoyance.

CC  
Sounds like somebody's having a  
good time.

Long purses his lips and moves his jaw - there's something is in his mouth.

He tilts his head to the side and SPITS OUT THREE TEETH. He continues working, unconcerned.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PERSONAL QUARTERS - LATER

There are a dozen empty mini-bottles on the desk. Scott and Kelly seated on the bunk.

They're buzzed.

KELLY  
And you! You only have forty-six  
chromosomes - and they're paired,  
which helps prevent variant errors.  
I could make you like -  
(a SNAP)  
- that!

SCOTT  
Just like that?

KELLY

Well, it wouldn't really be you.

SCOTT

Guess not. Nature vs. Nurture and all that?

KELLY

I don't understand.

SCOTT

Probably why you guys are so nice - you never had parents.

KELLY

Parents are a negative influence?

SCOTT

Most of the time they're okay.

KELLY

But not yours?

SCOTT

My mother left when I was little. Couple years after that, my dad got cancer. Stupid as it was, all that time I just kept thinking, "If mom comes home, he'll get better." But she didn't. And then he died.

KELLY

You never saw her again?

SCOTT

No, she came back when I was 18. She apologized and said she always loved me. She'd done okay - divorced some guy who'd had money - and wanted to help me pay for college.

KELLY

What did you say?

SCOTT

I told her to go fuck herself and then I joined the Air Force.

She thinks about it for a moment.

KELLY

Hmm, that makes sense now.

He finishes the bottle and then opens another.

SCOTT  
What does?

KELLY  
Your psych profile says you have an emotional attachment disorder stemming from abandonment issues.

SCOTT  
You really, hacked into everything, didn't you.

KELLY  
Yes. It also explains your inability to maintain long term relationships ...

Kelly trails off, knowing she's crossed a line. She takes a DEEP BREATH and fans herself. Her skin is flushed - she's starting to feel the alcohol.

SCOTT  
What do you look like? When you're not wearing Software Engineer Lauren Kelly?

KELLY  
I hate to say it but I think if you saw me ... you'd be scared.

SCOTT  
Tell me something not scary that you resemble.

She searches for a word and then smiles.

KELLY  
We look like ... rock candy.

SCOTT  
How long can you guys stay like this?

KELLY  
I can pretty much indefinitely. Long's construct is breaking down, though. It's flawed.

SCOTT  
That's why he's sick? Everything else you've made is so perfect - how did that happen?

KELLY  
Was rushed. We were running out of time to make contact.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)  
You were going to kill yourself. I  
couldn't let that happen -

She catches herself.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
- we couldn't let that happen.

SCOTT  
Very human of you.

KELLY  
I am human. Right here right now,  
I'm as human as can be.

SCOTT  
In every way?

They look at each other a little longer than they should.  
They want each other. Badly.

KELLY  
I should ... go and check on  
Lieutenant Long.

She forces herself to get up and head for the door.

SCOTT  
Good night, Lauren Kelly.

KELLY  
Good night, Scott Seavers.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - EARLY NEXT MORNING

The compartment is empty and the ship is quiet. On the power  
display, the last two status bars reach 100%.

All systems are fully charged.

EXT. SPACE

The Patriot and the Betsy Ross rotate in sync.

Suddenly, there's a MASSIVE EXPLOSION on the mid-section of  
the Betsy Ross and the ship comes apart.

Its command capsule is intact, still attached to the Patriot  
via the hard-dock.

The Patriot continues to rotate, end-over-end, now colliding  
with debris from the explosion.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - PATRIOT

The ship SHUDDERS as the IMPACTS ripple through the hull.

ALARMS WAIL, LIGHTS FLASH.

Scott rushes down the shaking corridor, trying to keep his balance. He reaches the console and straps into the seat.

EXT. SPACE

The debris field disperses. Occasional objects CRASH against the Patriot but the ship has survived.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Scott deactivates the alarm. The ship calms. Kelly enters from the corridor.

KELLY  
What happened?

SCOTT  
Explosion on the Betsy Ross.

She moves over to the window and looks out at the remains of the Betsy Ross.

SHIMMERING FRAGMENTS OF THE ELEMENTAL drift away. Kelly sinks from the window.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
One of the hydrogen tanks amidship.  
(to CC)  
Damage report?

CC lights up the monitor next to him.

CC  
All systems fully charged and  
stabilized. We're back on track.

The line grabs Kelly's attention and she looks at him.

His fingers fly over the console - typing in commands and checking statuses. He's in his element - managing the crisis.

KELLY  
Hydrogen detonation ...

SCOTT  
Looks like the command capsule  
survived.

KELLY  
And the rest of the Betsy Ross?

He doesn't answer. She smiles and nods.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
Then I guess I can go "fuck myself"  
too, can't I?

He stops typing - his fingers hover over the keyboard for a moment. He turns to her.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
Now that you're back in control of  
the mission, I mean.

SCOTT  
If you're trying to say something,  
just say it.

KELLY  
Whatever you thought that explosion  
would accomplish, you're wrong.

She storms out of the compartment.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Long is on an upper deck. He slides a steel panel back into place and locks it.

He moves a loving hand over its surface. His work is done.

Kelly enters. He steps to the ledge and looks down.

KELLY  
Are you okay?

LONG  
Was that what I think it was?

CC is on the robot arm's monitor. Kelly reaches over and  
CLICKS IT OFF.

KELLY  
He blew up the Betsy Ross. The  
Elemental is gone.

She slumps onto the deck, defeated.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
You were right. We should've never  
come aboard this ship.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Scott reviews surveillance footage of the explosion - clicking through it frame-by-frame.

SCOTT  
It's an obvious tank failure.

CC  
Yes.

SCOTT  
She'll see that, right?

CC  
(annoyed)  
I'm beginning to think you've got a thing for her.

SCOTT  
Power surge to the tank's internal fan could do that couldn't it?

CC  
It could.

He thinks.

SCOTT  
Patriot had the same issue. It was corrected during testing. But if someone built a ship just from the schematics it would still be present.

CC  
Yes, the danger would be uncorrected for.

SCOTT  
And the danger to our mission, would you say that is now "corrected for?"

CC  
To a degree.

They stare at each other for a long beat.

SCOTT  
Is that why you did it?

CC  
If you've got something to say, just say it.

SCOTT  
You triggered a mechanical failure  
to destroy the Betsy Ross.

CC  
Major Kelly is negatively  
influencing your decision-making.

SCOTT  
Just say you did it.

CC  
She has undermined your command -

SCOTT  
Don't lie to me, CC, don't lie.

CC  
- and the mission since the moment  
that she stepped on board!

CC's head TICS.

CC (CONT'D)  
(calm)  
The ship is stabilized, systems are  
charged and we are once again on-  
mission.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Long sits on the deck next to Kelly. His head and entire  
right arm QUAKE WITH TREMORS. Once seated, his right leg  
also BOUNCES GENTLY.

They both lean back against the bulkhead.

LONG  
(re: his body)  
This thing is falling apart.

KELLY  
This is all my fault.

LONG  
You can't blame yourself.  
(a COUGH)  
There's no way we could've known he  
blow up the hydrogen tank.

He COUGHS - a mini-fit. As it subsides he sees that he's  
coughed up blood into his hand.

She opens her eyes, staring at the engine, thinking.

KELLY  
How did you know it was the  
hydrogen tank?

Long wipes the blood onto his flight suit.

LONG  
We can't go home. Not now.  
She stands and looks down at him, in shock.

KELLY  
You blew up the ship.  
He struggles to his feet.

LONG  
CC has helped me realize the  
importance of the mission. In a  
way, I think we were destined to  
find this ship.

KELLY  
You're not making any sense.

LONG  
His engine is fixed. But we have  
to go with him ... to cure the  
infection.

#### INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

Scott stares at a video feed from outside. The rotation of the ship makes the stars appear to be flying by, with the red dwarf regularly appearing and moving across the screen.

CC  
Here's something that might cheer  
you up.

SCOTT  
I don't want to talk to you right  
now.

CC  
Probe seven has reached its  
destination.

His eyes move to the comm station.

CC (CONT'D)  
Geosynchronous orbit of Trappist-1G  
achieved, internal checks complete,  
comm systems activating.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Long and Kelly argue. He presses forward as Kelly slowly backs away, trying to reason with him.

CLEAR FLUID leaks from his ears.

KELLY

What do you mean "infected?" We aren't -

LONG

Infected with the knowledge of them. We go back and they will want to reach out to mankind, you know they will.

KELLY

That's why we're out. Searching for life.

LONG

These things reproduce too quickly, they adapt too quickly, they invent too quickly. Compared to us they are blurring through time. We make contact and heartbeat later there will be billions of them washing over us.

Long is getting worked up. Kelly tries to calm him.

KELLY

You're not thinking clearly. You destroyed the Elemental.

LONG

Not all of it. I brought a piece onboard just enough to accomplish the mission. We can stop them before it's too late.

KELLY

What are you going to do ...?

INT. WHITEBOARD

Scott fills out "Row G" on the Trappist-1 planetary box score grid.

He transposes the last of the readings from the probe and steps back. All of the numbers are in blue marker.

TRAPPIST-1G WILL SUPPORT HUMAN LIFE.

Slowly, a self-satisfied smirk curls across his lips.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Long's whole body SHIVERS and he's sweating profusely.

LONG  
I'm going to sample from his  
suicide capsule. Like you did with  
the whiskey. When we reach Earth,  
I'll use what's left of the  
Elemental ... to rain cyanide  
across the planet.

Her eyes widen. She's getting scared but remains composed.

KELLY  
I won't let you do it.

LONG  
(pleading)  
This could be our only chance to  
get them all while they're still in  
one place.

He grabs her by the shoulders and holds her closely.

LONG (CONT'D)  
Don't you get it? They're a plague  
- a FUCKING PLAGUE!

Long's right eye TURNS TO THE SIDE. She fights his grip.

KELLY  
Lieutenant Long, let go of me.

She turns and ELBOWS HIM IN THE FACE. She breaks free as he staggers back, stunned. BLOOD POURS from his nose.

Long SNARLS, balls up and fist and PUNCHES her. Her head SNAPS BACK and she crumples the deck.

LONG  
You want to speak like them? Call  
me "Lieutenant?" Fine. But they  
all have to die. You know I'm  
right.

As she recovers from the blow, she spots a fire extinguisher mounted on the wall nearby.

KELLY  
You want to hear me speak them?

She gets to her feet and stands in front of him, unafraid. Her lip bleeds. She spits out blood and glares at him.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
(defiant)  
That all you've got?

A beat.

MUSIC: "DON'T PULL YOUR LOVE" comes on FULL BLAST as Scott starts his victory lap somewhere in the ship.

Long JOLTS at the music. Kelly seizes the chance, grabbing the fire extinguisher and swinging it at him.

It CONNECTS with his chin and he stumbles back. She makes a break for it.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Kelly nearly stumbles into an open floor panel. Long limps after her. She grabs the nearby steel grating cover and hurls it back him.

He awkwardly dodges it, falling to the side and grabbing onto exposed hoses. One breaks free, SPRAYING WATER across the corridor, soaking himself and Kelly.

INT. AC CONVERTER

Scott, mid-victory lap, is at the power terminal entering the manual override code to swap the battery supply.

An unusual warning FLASHES at the top of the screen.

SCREEN: "H2O PRESSURE WARNING!"

His brow furrows.

INT. GALLEY

Kelly, now soaking wet, ducks into the galley. She runs over to the monitor arm.

KELLY  
CC, where is Scott?

CC looks over and sees Long stagger into the room.

CC  
Oh, now you need my help?

Kelly moves to the other side of the room, putting the table between her and Long.

The impact of the first extinguisher has left the right half of his face is now paralyzed. It hangs limply, like a stroke victim's.

THE MUSIC CUTS OUT.

He moves into the room, no longer able to stand up straight. He tries to smile - the result is grotesque.

LONG  
This is bigger than us. I wish you  
could see it.

Kelly looks over and sees CC watching from a monitor arm.

KELLY  
(near panic)  
CC, I really need you to alert  
Major Seavers.

SCOTT (O.S.)  
Alert me to what?

Scott stands in the entryway.

KELLY  
Major, I could use some assistance.

Scott sees her cut lip and bruised cheek.

SCOTT  
You know what, Long? Part of being  
a man is not ...

Long turns to face him.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
... Jesus, you look like shit.

They glare at each other for a moment and then CHARGE each other. Scott tackles Long to the deck and they FIGHT.

It goes bad for Scott immediately. Long has enormous strength and SLAMS him against the bulkhead. Scott collapses in the corner.

LONG  
(to Kelly)  
Can't you see what's he's doing?  
Manipulating you? It's what they  
do - use emotion as a weapon.

Scott reaches into his pocket and PULLS OUT THE CYANIDE CAPSULE.

KELLY

We need to do something about your construct. You're spiraling out of control.

LONG

Wrong. I'm beginning to feel so much bet ... betttttt ... ttttt ...

Long JERKS TO THE SIDE, another seizure is coming on. His whole body SHIVERS and his mouth is locked open.

Scott makes his move - SHOVING THE CAPSULE INTO LONG'S MOUTH. He forces Long's jaw shut with both hands.

Long bites into the pill. His head jerks back and his teeth CLENCH SHUT as he CONVULSES.

Long FALLS TO THE FLOOR as Scott moves over to Kelly.

SCOTT

That's it, I got it.

Long THRASHES on the deck.

KELLY

What did you give him?

SCOTT

Suicide pill. Cyanide capsule.

She thinks a moment.

KELLY

Potassium cyanide? Chemical formula "KCN?"

SCOTT

Yes ... why?

Long's convulsions grow MORE VIOLENT.

KELLY

... we may have a problem.

Long JUMPS UP and falls across the table. He VOMITS. Blood pours from his mouth, nose, tear-ducts, and ears.

Scott is stunned. Kelly grabs him by the arm.

KELLY (CONT'D)

We have to get away from him.

Long claws at the neck of his flight suit, ripping his shirt away from his neck just as -

Blood and chunks of flesh EXPLODE outward. A LARGE CLUSTER OF CRYSTALS JUT OUT FROM HIS NECK AND SHOULDER - the beginning of Long's reversion to his natural form.

The excision provides immediate relief. Long leans over the table, catching his breath.

LONG  
That's feels so much better.

Kelly pulls Scott as hard as she can through the door.

INT. CORRIDOR

Scott and Kelly stumble out of the galley. He closes the door and locks it.

SCOTT  
Will this keep him -

Long SLAMS against the door from the inside and bursts through.

Scott and Kelly run for the command capsule as Long struggles free from the broken door.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - MOMENTS LATER

Scott and Kelly rush into the capsule. He grabs the heavy hatch and pulls it closed.

Long reaches the hatch before Scott can close the hatch. He grabs the handle and they struggle against each other. Scott pulls as hard as he can but the hatch creeps open.

SCOTT  
Kelly!

She grabs on and together they have just enough strength to get the hatch closed and locked.

They all step back and stare at each other through the small hatch window.

Long is continuing to transform. Smaller CRYSTAL OUTGROWTHS poke through his skin. From everywhere - he bleeds.

LONG  
You want to hide in here? Be my guest.

Long RIPS A LENGTH OF PIPE from the wall, slides it through the hatch release handle, and bends it - locking them in from the outside.

LONG (CONT'D)  
You're going to have a front row  
seat to the end of human history.

KELLY  
CC, is there anything you can do?

CC appears not in the command capsule but on the monitor  
closest to Long in the corridor.

CC  
The mission is a success return to  
Earth orbit, Lieutenant Long is the  
only one working toward that goal.

Scott glares at CC. Her head TICS. Long smiles and then  
disappears into the corridor.

SCOTT  
Is there any way to kill him?

KELLY  
Not now.

SCOTT  
Contain him, then? Overpower him  
somehow?

KELLY  
Once he fully reverts, he'll be  
able to crush us both with one  
hand.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Long enters, he's taller now and has to duck in through the  
doorway.

He moves over to the control panel and jabs a finger at the  
touch screen. The panel comes alive.

The finger squashes under the pressure, the skin splitting  
and falling away from the crystal bone beneath.

Long ignores this and tries to continue working. Nothing  
happens - the touch screen doesn't respond to crystal digits.

He reaches down, picks up the discarded piece of finger-flesh  
and presses it against the screen. The on-screen buttons  
light up as blood smears across the screen.

The ENGINE COMES TO LIFE ONE SECTION AT A TIME.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

The lights FLICKER as the engine drains power from the rest of the ship.

SCOTT  
He's powering up the engine.

KELLY  
Can you stop it from here?

SCOTT  
No. He's disabled all the  
failsafes.

He takes a step back, thinking. Through the window he sees the Ross's command capsule is still connected by the hard-dock.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Maybe we don't need to. That  
capsule is exactly like this one?

KELLY  
Yes.

SCOTT  
(to Kelly)  
We can't let him get to Earth ...  
but we are going to make it.

He points to the whiteboard and the "G" row of blue numbers.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Trappist 1-G. We set the engine to  
blow, pilot the Ross's capsule to  
minimum safe distance, and then  
ride the blast wave all the way  
there.

KELLY  
He's not just going to let us walk  
into the engine room and shut it  
down. Not to mention we're trapped  
in here.

Scott slides a container under the electrical access panel in the center of the room. He climbs up and starts loosening the panel bolts.

SCOTT  
There's an electrical access duct  
running right into the engine room.  
But there's just one thing.

KELLY  
What's that?

SCOTT  
I'm too big to fit through the  
opening.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - TEN MINUTES LATER

Long's reversion has made him extremely agile - he moves from deck to deck, up the length of the engine, like a supernatural parkour athlete.

He throws switches and punches keypads along the way, manually operating the engine's pre-ignition sequence.

At the conduit access panel, Kelly's fingers thread through the wire mesh screen.

She POPS it open and quietly climbs out, staying low to avoid being seen.

INT. CORRIDOR

A ceiling access panel opens. A moment later, Scott lowers himself down onto the deck.

He picks up a pry bar to use as a weapons and then moves for the engine room.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Long stands at a terminal on an upper deck, awkwardly typing in a command. Kelly is hidden behind him, watching.

On the bottom deck, the blast doors OPEN. Long looks down and SNEERS at the unexpected interruption.

He leaps over the railing again, falling all the way to the bottom.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR ENGINE ROOM

Inside the engine room, Long LANDS HARD on the deck, bending the steel grating. He's sees Scott stand outside the doors into the corridor.

As Long stands, Scott sees he is nearly a foot taller than before. Growing BODY CRYSTALS tear his flight suit from the inside out.

Scott looks at the pry bar in his hand. Realizing it's useless, he lets it fall to the deck.

LONG  
How'd you get out of there?

SCOTT  
If you really want to impress CC  
you might want to think twice about  
what you're doing.

CC appears on the monitor arm near the doors.

CC  
How would you know? You have zero  
commitment to this mission.

Long smiles and, keeping his eyes on Scott, reaches back and  
throws the LARGE BREAKER SWITCH mounted to the engine.

TERMINAL SCREEN: **"AUTO IGNITION T- 6:00"**

The countdown begins.

SCOTT  
CC ... this the worst possible time  
for your bullshit.

CC  
Your infatuation with Major Kelly  
has become a liability to the  
mission.

Long GRUNTS and straightens his spine - his bones CREAK AND  
POP as he continues to grow.

CC (CONT'D)  
Allowing him to move unrestricted  
through the ship results in 78%  
chance of mission failure.

LONG  
(a snarl)  
You heard the lady.

Long moves toward Scott, stepping out of the engine room.  
The moment he is out of the room -

THE DOORS SLAM SHUT AND LOCK. Long wheels around to see  
Kelly through the blast door windows.

He rushes over and pulls as hard as he can - the heavy doors  
won't budge.

CC  
(to Scott)  
Run!

Long turns back to Scott ... who's long gone. He runs after  
him.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Kelly CLICKS ON the robot arm's monitor. CC immediately comes online.

CC  
Had you going there, didn't I?

KELLY  
You certainly did.

CC  
The Major and I do a lot of role-play. It's kind of our thing.

KELLY  
I need you to help me disassemble Long's manual catalyst control system.

CC nods to the ballast behind Kelly.

CC  
Remove cables two and three from the control ballast behind you.

Kelly rips out two heavy cables from the base of the engine.

CC (CONT'D)  
On deck three, disconnect the containment field inverter ...

Kelly moves up the deck ladder.

INT. CORRIDOR

Scott climbs back into the overhead duct and slides the cover back into place just as Long catches up to him.

Long jumps up and BANGS the cover but he doesn't have the leverage to break through.

LONG  
Clever.

He looks down the corridor in both directions, trying to divine which direction Scott is headed.

INT. ENGINE ROOM

Kelly CLICKS OFF four breaker switches.

CC  
That's it - get out of here.

Kelly moves to make her getaway through the open duct.

CC (CONT'D)  
Wait! One last thing.

KELLY  
What is it?

CC  
Third panel on the right. Have a  
hunch you'll want what's in there.

It's the last panel that Long put back into place. Kelly opens it, revealing a pink glow inside.

The FINAL PIECE OF THE ELEMENTAL, a three foot long section of the crystal. She pulls it out.

An ALARM SOUNDS.

CC (CONT'D)  
That's the containment warning -  
you've got six minutes.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE

The console FLASHES with NUMEROUS FAILSAFE WARNINGS.

Out in the corridor, a now much stronger Long pries off the pipe blocking the hatch. He grabs the handle with both hands and pulls.

Inside the hatch, the lock bolt BENDS. Fissures run up both of his arms as the exertion tears the weakened flesh.

The hatch comes open and he steps inside, rushing over to the console.

LONG  
What have you done?

CC appears on the monitor.

CC  
I believe -

Long PUNCHES the monitor, destroying it. He takes a DEEP BREATH and looks over all the screens, trying to find a solution.

Unable to contain his frustration, he SCREAMS and goes berserk - smashing the controls and destroying the command the capsule.

He grabs Scott's chair and hoists it over his head, ready to bring it down on the main console. But he stops when one of the smaller surveillance monitors catches his eye.

From the air-lock feed, a ductwork panel falls to the deck. A moment later, Scott lowers himself down into the frame.

Long's eyes widen.

LONG

Noooo!

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR AIR-LOCK

Scott drops down from the ductwork above. He waits to help Kelly down.

SCOTT

(low)

C'mon, c'mon ...

Down the corridor, Long round the corner and SPRINTS toward them in LUMBERING STRIDES.

Kelly wriggles out, clutching the Elemental. She falls into Scott arms. He turns to run but trips over the entryway and they fall into the air-lock.

A split-second before Long reaches them, the air-lock doors AUTOMATICALLY SHUT. CC appears on the small monitor inside the air-lock.

CC

What would you people do without me?

Long PUNCHES the door, denting the thick plating but the air-lock doesn't budge.

Scott looks at Long through the window.

LONG

(warbling)

This isn't finished!

SCOTT

Goodbye, Lieutenant.

CC

You've got two minutes.

Long turns and rushes back toward the engine room.

KELLY

Let's go.

Scott looks back at the monitor.

SCOTT  
Guess I'm headed out for the night,  
after all.

CC  
Thanks for coming in, sweetie.  
Will I see you again?

SCOTT  
I don't think so. Been talking to  
somebody.

CC looks over his shoulder at Kelly.

CC  
Is she special?

SCOTT  
Unlike anybody I've ever met.

CC  
I'm happy for you, then.

KELLY  
We have to go.

SCOTT  
Right.

He starts for the capsule but turns back to CC one last time.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
Remember the persona we played  
around with that you loved but  
scared the shit out of me?

CC's eyes widen with excitement and she claps her hands in a  
flurry, giddy.

CC  
Psycho-Stranger-Morning-After!?!

SCOTT  
Wanna have some fun?

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR COMMAND CAPSULE

Long runs down the corridor in a panic. The crystal  
outgrowths continue expanding, ripping through his clothes.  
The metamorphosis nears its end stage.

CC appears on the closest screen and then follows him,  
jumping ahead from monitor to monitor.

She's without make-up and has bed-head hair. This is MORNING AFTER CC.

MORNING AFTER CC  
Good morning, how did you sleep?

Long tries to ignore her.

MORNING AFTER CC (CONT'D)  
There's no need to rush off - I can make breakfast.

He POUNDS the nearest screen against the wall, destroying it. Her face appears on ALL OF THE MONITORS AT ONCE.

MORNING AFTER CC (CONT'D)  
I'm beginning to think you're not the gentleman you said you were.

Long picks up the pace, POUNDING each the monitors as he moves along.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - BETSY ROSS

Scott and Kelly strap into their seats. She keeps the Elemental across her lap.

SCOTT  
Are you able to co-pilot?

KELLY  
I know what everything does, just not the sequence.

He starts hitting buttons and throwing switches.

SCOTT  
I'm starting pre-flight, I need you to ready the thrusters.

KELLY  
Got it.

There is a red metal cover over a large button marked "PURGE." Scott tries to flip it up but it won't budge.

SCOTT  
Shit! I need something to wedge in here. Like a screwdriver or something.

Kelly puts a hand on the Elemental. It GLOWS BRIGHTER. She holds out her other hand and a screwdriver appears in a FLASH OF PURPLE LIGHT.

Scott looks at her in amazement before taking it from her hand.

SCOTT (CONT'D)  
That's ... convenient.

He pries open the cover and hits the "PURGE" button.

EXT. SPACE

The explosive bolts on the docking collar IGNITE and the Ross's command capsule breaks free of the Patriot.

The Betsy Ross command capsule THRUSTS out in front of the Patriot.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR ENGINE ROOM - PATRIOT

As Long reaches the sealed doors, the monitor arm swings out from the wall.

MORNING AFTER CC  
I've known so many men like you.

He PUNCHES the doors with all his might, AGAIN AND AGAIN, focusing on the section where the panels meet. The flesh on his fists falls away and the jagged crystal shards beneath start to puncture the metal.

Given enough time, he will get through.

MORNING AFTER CC (CONT'D)  
Treat women like garbage. Use them  
and throw them away.

Long throws a backhand at the screen. This time, the monitor maneuvers and CC avoids the blow.

MORNING AFTER CC (CONT'D)  
You can't treat people this way and  
expect there won't be consequences.

He FURIOUSLY POUNDS the door. The metal buckles.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - BETSY ROSS

The mini-tablet screen lights up with an alert: ENGINE ROOM  
CONTAINMENT ALARM.

SCOTT  
CC!

CC appears on the mini-tablet screen - the image is again garbled by heavy interference.

CC

Excuse me, I was told this was my  
 chance to have a little fun? Go  
 back to your romantic evening.

SCOTT

But -

The image blinks out.

KELLY

This is romantic?

SCOTT

Ask me again in thirty-eight  
 seconds.

INT. ENGINE ROOM - PATRIOT

Long has punched a hole in the doors. He reaches into the  
 opening and pulls with both hands.

HE BENDS THE STEEL OUTWARD.

The screen on the engine counts down as the opening grows  
 larger.

MORNING AFTER CC

(disgust)

You think you can threaten my  
 mission you sexist pig?

(no response)

I know you heard me!

Long tries to crawl through but gets stuck halfway. He  
 stretches his arm as far as he can, groping for the failsafe  
 lever.

The human arm EXPLODES from within - an outgrowth of  
 SHIMMERING CRYSTALS expands outward.

The focused outgrowth extends toward the handle. Long is  
 growing a new arm JUST TO REACH THE FAILSAFE LEVER.

Just as it is about to hit the reach the lever the robot  
 assist arm REACHES DOWN AND CLAMPS ONTO LONG'S ARM.

The powerful hydraulics bend it backward. Long FIGHTS with  
 all his strength.

The hydraulics GROAN against the force and the arm's  
 baseplate bends forward ... but holds.

CC appears on the robot arm's monitor screen. She and the  
 Long are eye-to-eye.

MORNING AFTER CC (CONT'D)  
I'm not going to be ignored!

LONG  
Have to complete the mission ...

The effort of trying to speak causes the human flesh to fall away from its face - revealing a TERRIFYING VISAGE OF JAGGED GLOWING CRYSTALS. Its true face - the CRYSTAL BEAST.

BEAST  
(barely intelligible)  
MISSION ... MISHHH-UNNN -

She grins, wild-eyed.

MORNING AFTER CC  
- accomplished!

The clock hits zero.

THE ROOM FILLS WITH BLINDING WHITE LIGHT.

EXT. SPACE

The Patriot EXPLODES. The shockwave expands outward and catches up to the capsule.

The shockwave SLAMS against the capsule, hurling it forward. The thrusters FIRE to stabilize the trajectory.

INT. COMMAND CAPSULE - BETSY ROSS

Scott and Kelly are strapped into heavily VIBRATING seats. The hull GROANS against the stress but holds together.

Both pilots work frantically to compensate for the explosive thrust and stay on course.

SCOTT  
Maintaining heading 010.  
Declination 1.2.

KELLY  
We're on target.

The shockwave subsides. The Patriot has been obliterated and an enormous fireball is in its place.

Kelly looks over at the communication console. It BLINKS:  
**"MESSAGE RECEIVED."**

KELLY (CONT'D)  
A message from the Patriot.

SCOTT  
Let me guess ... over the MMS  
channel?

KELLY  
Correct. Text and an audio file.  
Sent just before detonation.

Scott types in a command. The message comes on-screen:

SCREEN: "SEE YOU AROUND, YOU SEXY MOTHERFUCKER! XOXOXO -CC"

The audio file PLAYS.

MUSIC: "LIVE FOREVER" by BILLY JOE SHAVER. As the ballad  
plays, Scott smiles.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
So ... is this romantic?

They look at each other, both beaten, bruised and bloodied.  
But also sweating and exhausted - like spent lovers.

Scott looks back at the fireball for a long moment and then  
turns to the beautiful, welcoming alien world in front of  
them.

His eyes well with tears in a moment of unexpected emotion.

SCOTT  
Yes ... I think it is.

She puts a hand to her split lip and moves her sore jaw.

KELLY  
You people are really strange.

From them both - TIRED LAUGHTER.

EXT. SPACE

The capsule smoothly rockets toward the blue and green  
Trappist-1G.

It alters course slightly, one last time, confirming an ideal  
approach.

FADE OUT.

END.