

CAPSULE

by  
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1 INT. CAPSULE - SPACE

SAM wakes up, yawns -- not in pain.

POD (OS)  
Good afternoon, Sam.

SAM  
(scoffs)  
Afternoon! Was I asleep?

POD (OS)  
You were unconscious.

SAM  
Unconscious? How?

POD (OS)  
The contact between the ventral  
command board, and your head,  
Sam.

Sam checks his head -- no blood.

POD (OS)  
I administered medicine, Sam.

SAM  
What happened? How did I bang my  
head -- hold on; why am I still  
in the capsule? Training's over.

POD (OS)  
We ejected, Sam.

SAM  
Ejected...?

He flicks a switch, and the window opens, revealing SPACE  
outside. Nothing else in sight.

SAM  
Where's the ship? It's not on  
scopes -- did we drift out?

POD doesn't answer.

SAM  
Did we drift out? Pod, where's  
the ship?

POD (OS)  
There was an incident.

SAM  
Where's the ship? Show me.  
(no answer)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SAM (cont'd)  
Remember our talk, Pod: Show me  
the ship.

POD (OS)  
Playback of external feed.

The SCREEN shows a SHIP in deep space. It EXPLODES. The  
screen goes black.

SAM  
...What happened?

POD (OS)  
Reading suggest a cascade power  
failure in the starboard fusion  
coils. Fail-safes triggered the  
launch of the capsule.

SAM  
...So, there are other capsules?

POD (OS)  
Negative.

SAM  
No, but others must have ejected!  
Maybe the, the blast shielded  
them from the scopes -- try a  
different frequency.

POD (OS)  
The capsules do not appear on any  
frequency.

SAM  
Well have you tried them all?

POD (OS)  
The capsules do not appear on any  
frequency.

SAM  
Try them all!

Pause. Silence.

POD (OS)  
I'm sorry, Sam.

SAM  
Sorry. Yeah, you're sorry -- the  
speaking clock.  
(pause; gathers himself)  
Okay. What do we have? No ship.

POD (OS)  
The capsule is secure.

SAM  
Food? Water? Stims?

POD (OS)  
The capsule is fully stocked,  
minus the supplies consumed  
during your training module.

SAM  
Yeah, training. Nothing useful.  
Okay. How far out are we, Pod?

POD (OS)  
Twenty million, six thousand,  
four hundred and  
eighty-three-point-four miles  
from Earth, Sam.

Sam whistles.

SAM  
Pretty far, then.

POD (OS)  
Affirmative.

SAM  
But it's do-able. Pod? Isn't it?  
It's do-able, isn't it?

Pod doesn't answer.

SAM  
How long? How long will it take  
to get back to Earth?

POD (OS)  
Six months, nineteen days and  
nine hours.

SAM  
Okay, that's a pretty long  
stretch. Stim packs and  
Disembodio for company -- great.  
But not impossible.

Silence.

SAM  
Pod?

POD (OS)  
Yes, Sam?

SAM

The life-support. How long does it have?

POD (OS)

Are you sure you wish to know, Sam?

SAM

Pod! Yes.

POD (OS)

Three days--

SAM

Three days?!

POD (OS)

--and two-and-three-quarter hours.

SAM

Three days?!

POD (OS)

And two-and-three-quarter hours--

SAM

Pod, that's not enough!

POD (OS)

Affirmative.

SAM

There's gotta be something you can do! Backup generator! Uhh, flush the, the cyclers, do a reboot--!

POD (OS)

The life-support system will shut down in three days and two-and-three-quarter hours--

SAM

I know!

Silence. Sam closes his eyes, breathes.

SAM

Can we send a message?

POD (OS)

Negative. There is too much interference from orbiting satellites.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Great. Doomed by white noise. Can we send out the black box?

POD (OS)

We have no approach vector.

SAM

Just aim us at the Earth! It's the big, blue ball in front of the Sun!

POD (OS)

We have no approach vector.

SAM

Right. No approach vector. Fire it anyway, Pod.

POD (OS)

We have no--

SAM

Please. Just fire it anyway.

POD (OS)

Affirmative. Would you like to record a message, Sam?

SAM

Sure. Why not?

POD (OS)

Activating record mode.

Sam faces the screen, looks lost.

SAM

Well. Uhh. I dunno what to say. My message back to Earth.

(shrugs)

How's the weather? It's sunny up here.

(pause)

I don't know what to say, Pod.

POD (OS)

Would you like to record a message for your family, Sam?

SAM

No. Of course I wouldn't. I should be down there with them, Pod -- I should be back in London with Mum and Jenny -- oh, Jenny.

(pause)

I had to go. Space. The final

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SAM (cont'd)  
frontier. Look at me; how could I  
turn it down?

(beat)

It was beautiful. The first day.  
Launched from Houston, all the  
other ships waiting up there, and  
I looked back...

(beat)

In all the pictures it looks  
small, but it was so big. So  
beautiful. The Atlantic, covered  
in rainclouds. The whole of  
America, all the states just  
lying there. England, too,  
somewhere; silly, tiny little  
thing. It made my life.

He turns away.

SAM  
I can't, Pod. Switch it off.

POD (OS)  
Are you sure, Sam?

SAM  
Just switch it off.

The SCREEN goes black. Sam holds his head in his hands.

2 EXT. CAPSULE - SPACE

The CAPSULE drifts.

3 INT. CAPSULE - SPACE

SAM pressing buttons, trying to hack the system.

SAM  
It won't let me reroute power  
from the auxiliaries, Pod.

POD (OS)  
The auxiliaries are supposed to  
have power, Sam.

SAM  
Yeah, but not right now. I can  
feed it into the oxy-tank.

POD (OS)  
The system won't allow it, Sam.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Well what else can I do?

POD (OS)

You could finish your message.

SAM

If I could get outside, I might be able to unhook the couplings manually, and swap them over...

POD (OS)

You should get some rest, Sam.

SAM

I'm not sleeping, Pod. I've got three days, I'm not wasting a second on sleep!

POD (OS)

It's important for your well-being, Sam. I am programmed to look after you.

SAM

Yeah, me too.

He goes back to work. Something beeps. The background noise slowly increases.

SAM

What's that? A sub-routine just activated. Pod?

POD (OS)

Affirmative.

SAM

What did you do?

POD (OS)

You should get some rest, Sam.

Alarms and lights are going, distracting Sam, taking over.

SAM

No, I need to -- keep working. I need to get home... I need--

Flash to black.



4 INT. CAPSULE - SPACE

SAM wakes up.

SAM

Huh? I fell asleep! Pod, why didn't you wake me up?

POD (OS)

You needed rest, Sam.

SAM

I don't need rest! I'm not on a holiday! I can't waste time.

POD (OS)

I have been monitoring all systems and frequencies in your absence.

SAM

It's no good sitting there monitoring things, Pod! We've got to do something!

POD (OS)

I have been doing many things.

SAM

Pod...? If you start whistling, I'm going to disconnect you.

POD (OS)

I am only trying to look after you, Sam.

SAM

I'm fine. It's this damn capsule that's the problem--  
(he halts)  
My arm doesn't hurt.

POD (OS)

I am glad to hear it.

SAM

No, my arm doesn't hurt. I got a cut when I was working under the console earlier.

He rolls up his sleeve -- no cut.

SAM

How long have I been sleeping?

(CONTINUED)

POD (OS)

Seven hours and twenty-three minutes.

SAM

Okay, cuts don't heal that quickly. What have you done?

POD (OS)

I am looking after you, Sam.

SAM

You're drugging me!

POD (OS)

I am administering medicine.

SAM

You sent me to sleep! Did you knock me out as well?

POD (OS)

Negative. That was not a result of the medicine. I do not like to see you hurt.

SAM

Wonderful, the Tin Man's found a heart. Pod, I don't need you making decisions for me. I need to keep working!

POD (OS)

Why, Sam?

SAM

Because I'm going to die! If I don't get out of here, I'm going to tumble off into space--!

POD (OS)

That cannot be prevented, Sam.

SAM

God damn it, show a bit of compassion!

POD (OS)

I'm afraid I cannot do that, Sam.

Silence.

SAM

I'm sorry, Pod. Don't worry -- not that you can worry -- it's all right. Not your fault.

POD (OS)  
Affirmative.

SAM  
(almost a laugh)  
Smug.  
(pause)  
I'd like to finish my message  
now, Pod.

POD (OS)  
Affirmative. Resuming record  
mode.

SAM  
(into screen)  
Hi. Me again. Lost in space.  
Well, I've got a day or so left  
by now, so there's still time. I  
guess I'll keep drifting. Might  
make it to Earth in the end --  
might miss it completely. Who  
knows? No approach vector.  
(pause)  
I think it's all right, though. I  
might find something. A wormhole,  
or something. I might come out on  
the other side.  
(pause)  
I love you. And I'm gonna miss  
you very much. Bye, then. Pod?

POD (OS)  
Message saved. Shall I eject the  
black box now, Sam?

SAM  
Sure.

POD (OS)  
Initiating eject sequence.  
Ejecting.

Sam watches the BLACK BOX drift off into space.

POD (OS)  
Can I ask you a question, Sam?

SAM  
Go for it.

POD (OS)  
How do you feel?

SAM  
I'd rather you asked me what my  
favourite colour is.

(CONTINUED)

POD (OS)

Very well. What is your favourite colour--?

SAM

(laughs)

No, it's all right. I don't know how I feel, Pod. It's... a bit difficult for me to tell.

POD (OS)

If not you, Sam, then who else?

SAM

It's not like that. All those stars, all those galaxies -- that's what I feel. A big, whirling, brilliant mess spinning around forever. It's too big, Pod. I'm going to die in less than a day's time. I can't process it. Not enough space.

POD (OS)

I don't think I understand, Sam.

SAM

No, neither do I. How do I feel? Honestly, Pod... I don't know.

5 EXT. CAPSULE - SPACE

The CAPSULE drifts on, into the darkness.

FADE OUT