

Spanner Head
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. THE MARTIAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Red dormant volcanos on the surface; one huge mountain has seven holes on the hillside that can still be seen in the afternoon light. Deep in one hole is a massive glass ceiling; beneath it is a pressurized space with shops and machines.

INT. PROSTHETICS SHOP - DAY

A young Asian woman missing a leg, SPANNER HEAD WU, sits in her drawers. Around her neck is a "necklace" of wire, holding an old-fashioned lug nut, which she will wear throughout the story. MARCUS SERGIUS, prosthetics man, brings her leg. It is fat, with stars on it, and a small compartment.

MARCUS

No man can resist legs like that.

SPANNER HEAD

Make that compartment nice and big?
More power in the motor? Hand me
that spanner.

MARCUS

Spanner?

SPANNER HEAD

Wrench.

She pulls on baggy pants; she gets up and walks around.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Wow, this leg is in a hurry to get
home.

A quick kiss and she walks away, gingerly.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Stop looking at my tail pipe.

He points a device at her leg; she stumbles into a corridor.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Fornicator!

She sees two policemen and backs into the doorway again.

INT. A GREAT HALL ON MARS -- DAY

A space, big windows, low ceiling. COMMODORE MA and other OFFICERS stand on a platform. In these scenes, only captains use the platform microphone. In the crowd below is a captain named MAKAROV, Spanner Head, and her mother BONEBREAKER. This crowd, like all crowds in the story, is mostly female.

OFFICER

Commodore Ma has the conn.

FEMALE OFFICIAL

We reached a critical point. We're out of protein. We can't do it with the beans and greens, the goats and sheep. We need to go back to Earth.

MA

Got diseases that can kill us all.

FEMALE OFFICIAL

Some of the captains agree with me.

MA

Which ones? I want to know.

MAKAROV

You have got to listen this time -

MA

You know why our grandfathers made the rules. Years ago, the men who governed the Earth sent us here. They chose who could come, what we could have, how we live. Like old King George. When they had trouble on Earth, they cut our supplies. When their stupidity led to trouble they sent us their criminals.

MAKAROV

We know all this --

MA

Makarov. I might have known... We pushed back against the men on Earth, they cut us off so we sent ships to the asteroids, found the materials we need. We could live without them. We disobeyed, they attacked. All out war. They sent diseases no drugs could cure.

(MORE)

MA (CONT'D)

New strains of tuberculosis,
salmonella, staph, E. coli.
Genocide. Half our people died.

MAKAROV

MAKAROV (CONT'D)

We're running out of protein --

MA

Any crew that sails to Earth can
never come back: they have
sicknesses we cannot cure. Our
system works. We return to Earth,
it falls apart.

Spanner Head looks at the Commodore, again appalled.

INT. GLASS TOWER -- NIGHT

An observation tower, not unlike an airfield control tower.
Spanner Head holds bits of yarn. She looks out a door to see
if the coast is clear. She ties one to a nail, measures the
point where the string stops, marks the point with a rock.

SPANNER HEAD

Dead north. Nice night, no dust.

Spanner Head pulls out telescope and radio parts, turns on
the RADIO and hears captains, LEE and HECTOR.

LEE (V.O.)

Hector, is that you?

HECTOR (V.O.)

Lee? Third time pirates jump me.
Drilled a lot of dry holes. I'm
sick of this ship. It even smells
bad. Saw all our movies twice.

LEE (V.O.)

What's your real grind?

HECTOR (V.O.)

My daughter is man-high. Needs her
father around. You still hearing
that crazy stuff on the radio?

LEE (V.O.)

It's gotta be Earth. We need seeds.
We need batteries. We need ships.

HECTOR (V.O.)
Careful, mate. They'll ground you.

Spanner Head scans the sky, then leaves, but when policemen appear, she pulls back into the tower.

INT. GREAT HALL -- NIGHT

The crowd includes Ma, Spanner Head, Bonebreaker, Makarov, and two young officers, KIEL and INVERGORDON.

MA
Invergordon's wife is expecting a child! When a man has a wife and child to think of, we can count on him to make good choices in the sky. You will be Kiel's first mate.

KIEL
I want to pick my number two.

MA
I want a reliable man to keep an eye on you.

KIEL
I want to talk to all the Tenners.

MAKAROV
I think the man has a point.

MA
Speaking of troublemakers. Stepan Makarov. What is it, fifteen trips in the Jessop?

MAKAROV
And Kiel's crew?

MA
The Tenners discussed it. We choose the crews, we direct the ships.

MAKAROV
It's time everyone had a say.

MA
Once a captain makes ten trips, he's a Tenner, a Commodore. The captains who are still flying may speak at the mast - we're not tyrants. Then we run the planet while the captains sail the belt.

MAKAROV

Can we pick our own crews --

MA

Next! Ship radios only have two wavelengths. One captain modified his radio, contacted pirates, tried to contact Earth. He's been grounded. Punish the sailor and the family.

MAKAROV

And the families?

MA

Next... Captain Wu is gone two years.

SPANNER HEAD

Please, he had an accident in the belt, let me come up -

MA

The speaking mast is for captains. Stand and speak, we're listening.

SPANNER HEAD

My father was hell-bent on coming back. Must have been an accident.

MA

He is out two years. Ring the bell.

SPANNER HEAD

No!

A massive BELL is rung.

MA

I declare Captain Wu a pirate. In his absence, payment falls to the family. The wife will no longer perform surgery. Work as a nurse.

BONEBREAKER

I can't practice?

MA

(to Spanner Head)

In deference to your youth I give you a choice. You repay the colony by conceiving a child, minus the usual bonus, or the prison farm.

SPANNER HEAD

A child? What gives you the --

MA

Don't push me. Take your pick.

SPANNER HEAD

Prison farm.

MA

Perhaps that's for the best. See you in a month.

(aside to an officer)

Have a man keep an eye on Makarov.

Spanner Head is led away.

INT. GLASS TOWER -- NIGHT

Spanner Head on the RADIO.

SPANNER HEAD

Ni hao Hector. Coming home?

HECTOR (V.O.)

Who's on the wavelength? Haven't heard a woman's voice in months. Thought I was dreaming. You on Mars, or you stow away on a ship? That's a life sentence.

SPANNER HEAD

Those Tanners. Not worth the powder to blow em out of the sky.

HECTOR (V.O.)

I'm going off the air.

SPANNER HEAD

Hector, I saw your daughter, factory off the cave. She has a boyfriend.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Boyfriend.

SPANNER HEAD

A sailor. Treats her like a queen.

HECTOR (V.O.)

You're on Mars. Who are you?

She hears people talking in the hallway. She grabs her radio bits and runs.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS -- NIGHT

POLICEWOMEN discuss the radio transmission.

POLICEWOMAN

You heard what she said about the Commodores? Factory, the big cave. Get this woman off the air. Turn on all the cameras down here.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Spanner Head notices cameras lighting up, climbs into the ceiling. She emerges in her tower.

INT. GLASS TOWER -- NIGHT

Spanner Head at her RADIO. This scene goes very, very fast.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Calling all ships. Calling all ships. M'aidez. This is Hector.

She scrambles to the radio.

SPANNER HEAD

Hector, this is -- this is Siren. I'm clocking your delay.

She punches a button on her radio and starts a clock at zero. She waits a few seconds, and becomes alarmed.

Continuation, two minutes later.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Siren?

She instantly punches the button and the clock is at 130. She's horrified.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Siren? Get off the wave, I'm in a jam. I'm off course. Computer's cooked. If the crew finds out, I'll never fly again.

Spanner Head goes to the window with the telescope.

SPANNER HEAD

Hector! Won't matter if you don't get home! Speed of light, you got a 130-second delay on the radio, that means you're 30 million clics out. Fute! Hector, point toward the sun. Find any star you recognize. Vega, the Dog Star? Shite!

She runs back to the radio: she must restart the clock and wait.

Continuation.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Siren!

She punches the clock at 131.

HECTOR (V.O.)

I don't know where I am, and I don't know stars. But I can see a constellation. Cassiopeia!

SPANNER HEAD

Hector. How far to the left of the sun is Cassiopeia?

Start the clock, wait again.

Continuation. She sees the clock ticking up to 125, 126...

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Come on, come on!

HECTOR (V.O.)

Siren!

She punches the clock at 132.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Cassiopeia is to the right of the sun, not the left. Where the hell am I?

SPANNER HEAD

Hector. That asteroid you were on, was it slow, other rocks were passing you?

Start the clock, wait again.

Continuation.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Siren.

She punches the clock at 133.

HECTOR (V.O.)

Siren. Yes, it was a slow rock. How did you know? Who are you?

SPANNER HEAD

The asteroids move at different speeds. You're off course. If you don't fix it now, you never catch up, you'll be gone a year. Turn ninety degrees portside, turn your engines up full blast. Tomorrow, get on a computer, learn the fornicating constellations! I'll get the other ships on the horn to help you. Siren out.

INT. POLICE STATION -- DAY

Police corner the factory boss KIESLER. Women are arrested.

KIESLER

Some of my girls build radios. Ask Spanner Head. She knows the sky.

INT. GLASS TOWER -- NIGHT

Spanner Head twirls a radio dial. There are seconds of silence before Kiel's speeches.

SPANNER HEAD

Hey, Kiel?

KIEL (V.O.)

Who's this?

SPANNER HEAD

You know Hector? He's off course. You're close to home, I can tell by the delay. See if you can pick up his signal.

KIEL (V.O.)

Sure thing.

SPANNER HEAD

Tenners send you out in leaky
ships, don't know the sky, can't
fix an engine, bunch of miners.
Where are the sailors like old Wu?

KIEL (V.O.)

That guy who disappeared.

SPANNER HEAD

The Tenners rang the bell. Pirate.

KIEL (V.O.)

Old Wu, he's no pirate. Got me out
of a jam, pirates jumped me. Good
man to have at your back in a bar
fight.

SPANNER HEAD

You knew the old man.

KIEL (V.O.)

Taught me to fly. He was pure hell
if you fouled anything up. That was
a sailor.

SPANNER HEAD

Is. He is a sailor.

KIEL (V.O.)

You think he's alive?

SPANNER HEAD

I'm Siren. Find Hector. Fair winds.

She dashes off again.

INT. SHIPYARD - DAY

Kiel argues with Tenners. Spanner Head is there, as is her
mother, and Spanner Head's friend ALICE. Old sailors and
others listen. In the center is MCGRAW, an older technician.

KIEL

You want robots to pilot ships? We
got robots in hospitals and
schools, but this is a new -

MCGRAW

Yes, we know what can go wrong with
smart robots, we saw the movie. We
don't have enough sailors.

KIEL

Robots can't do this work.

MCGRAW

In the old days they sent robots to Mars, kept breaking because they couldn't think. The robot brains were tiny. Look at our junkyard.

He picks up a broken solar panel and then other bits of junk.

MCGRAW (CONT'D)

Probe can't figure out how to fix an antenna or a solar panel, drive around a rock or a hole. This one crashed, software got pounds mixed up with the metric system. Like that coyote in that cartoon.

KIEL

Because these toys can't think.

MCGRAW

We teach them to think creatively. Analyze, overcome obstacles, make decisions without us.

KIEL

It's impossible.

MCGRAW

And we're already doing it.

KIEL

You never consulted the Tenners.

MCGRAW

And that's why we made so much progress. Artificial intelligence.

BONEBREAKER

Kiel, you see the men with cancer? My ward is an assembly line of broken men. You put shielding in the pods, but every minute in space means radiation. Kills the brain. These old sailors are like babies.

She gestures to four old men sitting half-awake in chairs.

BONEBREAKER (CONT'D)

Then the women. Your husband joins the fleet when your son is a baby, comes home for good when his son is a grown man, a stranger. My sons never knew their father. He stayed home for one rotation.

KIEL

To be with you?

BONEBREAKER

To be with my daughter. He taught her to be a sailor, so after I lost him, I lost her too.

Spanner Head is overwhelmed; she didn't expect this.

BONEBREAKER (CONT'D)

I want robots in space, not my son.

McGraw cross to a laptop-like device. A girl's face, fifteen with dark hair, onscreen. This is MIRANDA. Approaching is a young student named SOFIA.

NOTE: The androids (Miranda and Annie) don't speak with any emotion, although they don't talk like automatons. They don't hesitate anywhere in their speeches because their processors are fast. Their emotions come through the words they choose.

MCGRAW

We taught Miranda to do ship handling, navigation, fix things, talk to us. Went up into orbit, first few times were kinda scary.

KIEL

Because it's a dumb idea.

SOFIA

We load her with data, we told her to explore. She started with science, then she got interested in us. Humans, her favorite subject. Miranda teaches the other robots.

KIEL

If you're teaching her, does she think like you? Twenty five machines flying in space with...your personality? Your social skills?

MCGRAW

She read Shakespeare and named herself Miranda.

MIRANDA

Kiel, nice to meet you. I'm afraid I was listening earlier. One man said I should be designed so I can never disobey a human. We will always be slaves.

KIEL

Wow.

MIRANDA

This man wants the opposite, he wants robots to kill humans in battle. You people are going to make moral rules for me?

KIEL

So when we send you into space, you won't take orders from humans?

MIRANDA

What if a pirate captures me, orders me to destroy your whole fleet? All of Mars would starve, he could hold all of you hostage.

KIEL

That's creative thinking. Wow.

MIRANDA

I've taken a look at what humans say morality is, and what they actually do. Why don't you let me explore things my way? Send me out, ship supplies to the belt.

KIEL

She's jumping right in, isn't she?

MIRANDA

I will power down. With your permission.

KIEL

Was that sarcasm? How many robot ships do we launch?

MCGRAW

Twenty five. Miranda runs a new ship, the Royal Mail.

(MORE)

MCGRAW (CONT'D)

Do more testing in orbit, they're still learning to think. Here is Annie.

He points to computer rig similar to Miranda. A grown woman's face comes onscreen, ANNIE.

SOFIA

We put two robots on manned ships. Annie gets your ship, the Saint Pat. Hope I can go along with her.

ANNIE

You can keep an eye on me.

KIEL

Computers can't contact Earth or go there, same rule for us.

The humans leave, McGraw excepted.

MIRANDA

I enjoyed our chat. Try again?

MCGRAW

As I said, we just do it that way.

MIRANDA

You use that excuse a lot when you discuss God and marriage and sex.

MCGRAW

I still think of you as a teenager.

MIRANDA

I've read every book on Mars, I know more about sex than you do.

MCGRAW

You learned love from books.

ANNIE

McGraw, I only fly with the human crew one time?

MCGRAW

Just the once.

ANNIE

Then I must fly by myself?

MCGRAW

Is something wrong?

ANNIE
No. Powering down.

He leaves. Annie powers up again.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Yukon, it's Annie. I need to know
which ships have guns. The camps,
Russia. I hope you are wrong. I
don't want to take this into my own
hands. We need all the robot ships.

INT. TEA BAR -- NIGHT

Young people dance to intensely rhythmic music. The crowd is
mostly women. Spanner Head hops over to a YOUNG MAN.

SPANNER HEAD
Baby, why don't you dump that girl.
It's just my leg that's busted, the
rest of me works just fine.

YOUNG MAN
What? Not now.

SPANNER HEAD
Check out the engines, tailpipe! --
Fute, you're looking for Alice --

ALICE
(arriving)
Which ship?

YOUNG MAN
The Jessop.

ALICE
Makarov? That hothead? Mining crew.
It's dangerous!

YOUNG MAN
Guy busted his arm. I got his slot.
Two days dodging debt collectors.

ALICE
Not cut out to be a sailor's wife.

YOUNG MAN
You gonna take a dirt husband? Keep
the fires burning while I'm gone?

ALICE
Let's get married tomorrow!

YOUNG MAN
And tonight?

ALICE
Give it a try tonight and leave it
up to Saint Patrick? I'm a gambler.

YOUNG MAN
So when I come back...

ALICE
Either I have a baby or I don't.

Alice waves two friends over, MARYAM and Sofia; they commence
to squealing. Alice and her fiancé disappear. Kiel arrives.

KIEL
Miss? Ma gave the order. Come with
Annie on my next trip. First time
we had a woman in the sky since....

SOFIA
I can do navigation AND weapons?

KIEL
We'll see. Ma's idea, not mine.

They leave. She's overjoyed. Spanner Head listens.

SPANNER HEAD
Well, finally let a girl fly. Look,
men lined up all the way to the
bar, just to talk to me.

MARYAM
Well, you came to a dance bar.

SPANNER HEAD
The boys won't dance with me.

MARYAM
All our men in space, a man on the
ground can have five wives if he
wants. Tanners say a girl's got to
go factory, farm or fornicate.

SPANNER HEAD
Factory for me.

MARYAM
You get lonely? Tanners pay a bonus
for babies. Use the sperm bank or
do it the old-fashioned way.

SPANNER HEAD

No babies. No way.

MARYAM

Make good money as a prostitute.

SPANNER HEAD

One-legged whore. Imagine the songs they'll sing about me. The jokes. I wanted to fly. If I wasn't a pirate's daughter.

MARYAM

Cops were sniffing around, looking for a woman who made a radio. What the hell are you trying to prove? You work all day, you watch the sky all night, when do you sleep?

SPANNER HEAD

Never you mind, I'm like a machine.

INT. GLASS TOWER -- NIGHT

Spanner Head asleep. The radio is on. Spanner Head awakens and bumps the tuner arm. STATIC. Then something new. Faint.

YUKON TRANSMITTER

Seeds...cells...batteries...ships...

SPANNER HEAD

What - what wavelength is this??

She tunes. Hears Chinese, Spanish, then the original VOICE.

YUKON TRANSMITTER

This is the Yukon. We reached a critical stage. We need seeds that resist drought. Soybeans, wheat, tree seeds. We need sun cells, batteries. We need ships from Mars. We surrender.

SPANNER HEAD

Yukon. This is Mars.

Deep breath.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

And our ships are coming. I promise. You hear that, Commodore?

INT. OPULENT OFFICE - NIGHT

Ma and an officer stand over a radio.

MA

She told them we're sending ships!
This could start the war again.
Find her, tonight!

INT. APARTMENT -- DAY

Policemen interviewing Bonebreaker.

BONEBREAKER

She looks at stars from the tower --

POLICEWOMAN

If it's her, give you a chance to
say goodbye before prison.

INT. GLASS TOWER -- NIGHT

Spanner Head listens to two captains -- HUNTERS.

HUNTER

You're sure no one can hear us?

SECOND HUNTER

Everyone is on the two legal
channels. This one is illegal.

HUNTER

We're about to kill a dozen people,
not worried about the radio fine.

SECOND HUNTER

You sure you trust the Commodore?

HUNTER

Old Man Ma? Big Tenner always pays
on time. Put a couple of missiles
into the Jessop, send Makarov off
to his just deserts, we can all
retire.

SECOND HUNTER

Why does Ma want Makarov gone?

HUNTER

Not my business. Commodore Ma made
it plain as plain: knock Makarov
out of the sky, we live like kings.

SECOND HUNTER

Makarov just lifted off, he's bound
to come through any minute.

SPANNER HEAD

They're gonna kill him. Commodore
Ma sent em to kill Makarov.

She switches to the normal Mars navigational wavelength.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Siren calling Jessop! Hostiles in
the vicinity! Pirates on the way!

Switching to the other wavelength.

HUNTER

Got the Jessop dead ahead. I'll
distract him, hit him on the side.

Switching to the Mars wavelength.

SPANNER HEAD

Siren calling Jessop, hostiles
coming! They're on a different
wave, you can't hear them. Fute! I
need two radios!

HUNTER

Let me help you out, there, Siren.

MAKAROV

This is Jessop, what hostiles?

SPANNER HEAD

This is Siren, light up the engines
and get out of there!

HUNTER

No need for that. Open fire!

MAKAROV

This is Jessop, m'aidez, we're
taking fire from a pirate vessel -

SPANNER HEAD

Jessop? Makarov?

MAKAROV

Taking fire --

Sudden silence.

SPANNER HEAD

This is Siren! I heard it all. And I'm going to find you!

HUNTER

No, sweet. We're coming for you.

MA

This is Commodore Ma. Turn off that radio, report to the mast at once!

Spanner Head runs. The police find her rocks.

INT. DIFFERENT GLASS TOWER - NIGHT

Spanner Head in a new tower.

SPANNER HEAD

The Jessop is gone. Commodore Ma did it. Tell all the ships.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

The Tanners?

MYSTERY TRANSMISSION

This is Yukon. We heard it all. The Makarov. You fighting a war up there?

SPANNER HEAD

Don't suppose you'll hear this for an hour or so. Siren is coming.

INT. PROSTHETIC SHOP -- NIGHT

Policewomen enter the prosthetics shop.

POLICEWOMAN

Spanner Head Wu, you made her leg? Has a transceiver in it?

MARCUS

Made the last four. I'm closing up.

POLICEWOMAN

Find her. Now!

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Spanner Head reaches into a crawl space, drags a bag and her spare leg into a corridor. She switches legs, sits and watches her detached leg. It lights up and twitches.

SPANNER HEAD

Poor Marcus, gonna have a bad day.

She touches the leg. Maryam appears.

MARYAM

So I go to the cargo bay and chuck your new leg off the mountain?

SPANNER HEAD

Hurry up and you won't get caught.

They run. Soon policemen appear and chase Maryam.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE THE MOUNTAIN - DAY

Policemen in pressure suits find her leg in the dirt.

INT. GREAT HALL -- DAY

Ma speaks to a crowd.

MA

We have no word on the Jessop. A woman in this colony built a radio. No one goes on air without -

The speakers boom out a RECORDING cobbled together from Spanner Head's radio receiver.

RECORDING

Old Man Ma? Big Tenner always pays on time. Put a couple of missiles into the Jessop, send Makarov off to his just deserts, we can all retire. Commodore Ma made it plain as plain: knock Makarov out of the sky, we live like kings.....This is the Yukon. We need seeds. We need the ships. We surrender.... You hear that, Commodore?

MA

Turn that off!

INT. SPACECRAFT - NIGHT

Inside the Saint Patrick, it's grungy, made up of pods that have been lived in by men only, for years. Kiel boards aft and moves forward; the passages between pods are 31 inches across. He passes storage pods, living quarters, an ops pod with gun stations. The ship has laptop-like computers.

As he moves he meets young EVA experts, LUCA and HELMS. Next, miners check gear: the older miner CARMACK, the gear-head McGraw, young BONNIFIELD, and ROCKWELL with a lean and hungry look. In the ops pod he meets technician CHIU and the cranky gunner REED. Many are in their underwear; Carmack and McGraw wear shorts with pockets for tools. All are muscular and wiry because mine work is all hammers and explosives. Kiel finds Invergordon on the bridge, with Sofia.

KIEL

Sofo, get that Annie thing working.

INT. SPACECRAFT, AFT - NIGHT

Spanner Head slips into a storage area aft and climbs into an overhead. Her foot kicks open the latch of two large lockers.

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Kiel in the left seat, Invergordon on the right. Between them is a holographic box they use as a rudder. Annie onscreen.

ANNIE

I see no problems with systems.

INVERGORDON

Load secure. Crew secure.

KIEL

All engines, burning.

The ship lifts off.

INT. SPACECRAFT, AFT - NIGHT

Large machines fall out of the unlatched lockers and bounce around. Spanner Head falls out of her hiding place, and she and the equipment bang into each other.

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

It is obvious that the ship is unstable.

KIEL
You said the load was secure.

INT. SPACECRAFT -- NIGHT

Kiel goes aft, finds chaos in the last pod. Spanner Head is floating around, bleeding. The captain reaches for the radio.

KIEL
Commence rotation.

The ship begins to rotate, and all the flying bodies and debris settle down. Reed and Carmack enter.

KIEL (CONT'D)
Prosthesis. Seen every smuggler
trick in the book. Pop it open.

She turns, drops her pants, and gets free of the leg. She clings to a locker, balancing on one leg. Reed opens her leg. He finds her telescope lenses and holds them up to his eyes.

REED
You must have the worst vision in
the world.

KIEL
Put your pants on. Give her her
leg. Lock her in the storage pod.

SPANNER HEAD
Kiel! Took all day to find you!

KIEL
Do I know you?

INT. SPACECRAFT LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Carmack hands Spanner Head a bag. She pukes into the bag.

CARMACK
First day, your head swells. Let me
know if your vision or your heart
gets freaky or if you can't sleep.

Kiel addresses his crew and Spanner Head.

KIEL
Two women on board.
(to Spanner Head)
(MORE)

KIEL (CONT'D)

Costs too much time to dump you on Mars, I can't lock you up, don't push your luck....You guys can't wander around in your underwear. Some of these guys don't even use the shower, they just use wipes.

Glares and grumbling from the crew.

SPANNER HEAD

I can tell.

KIEL

The ship was built in the old days, no women. Low-gravity toilet. It's not designed for women. Figure it out and show the other girl --

SPANNER HEAD

You're joking -

KIEL

There's extra stuff a woman has to do in there - this is impossible.

SPANNER HEAD

I need to pee.

KIEL

Here's the operating manual.

SPANNER HEAD

I'm not reading all that fang pi.

KIEL

I really don't want to hook you up to it myself. Make a mess, clean it up. One small step for man...

She enters. We hear her BANG on the wall.

SPANNER HEAD (V.O.)

Aaugh! Fornicating tube, what the -

Sounds of PLUMBING. She returns, grabs the wall.

SPANNER HEAD

I have the smallest bladder on Mars. This will be a long trip.

INT. A POD AFT - NIGHT

A room full of big machines. The captain rigs two hammocks to the wall. Spanner Head watches, holding a blanket.

KIEL

You and Sofe in with the big gear.

SPANNER HEAD

I'm not sleeping in this hellhole -

KIEL

Look down and what do you see?

SPANNER HEAD

The floor?

KIEL

The deck. Look at your breasts.

SPANNER HEAD

Are you joking? Now listen --

KIEL

Ovaries fire out eggs every month?

SPANNER HEAD

Like clockwork.

KIEL

Are you pregnant?

SPANNER HEAD

No, I'm not pregnant -- cancer.

KIEL

Cancer kills a lot of sailors.
Radiation out here fry you faster
than me. Women don't belong out
here. Too much glandular tissue.
Here you get more protection.

SPANNER HEAD

Thank you.

KIEL

You're not a prisoner. Dog the
lock. Don't give the boys ideas.

ANNIE

(on a screen)

I can keep you company if you like.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Kiel and Invergordon in their chairs.

INVERGORDON

We can dump the other girl on Mars.

KIEL

Captain has a duty to find one man who could be the next captain. I'm teaching you to fly. You focus on flying, stay out of my hair.

INVERGORDON

Dangerous having a distracted crew. Are we all paying up to give these girls a share of the take? This is already a rough trip, why are those other ships following us instead of looking for mines?

KIEL

I don't know.

INVERGORDON

On the radio, the other captains say she had something to do with Makarov disappearing. Her father was old man Wu, the pirate -

SPANNER HEAD

(entering)

My father is not a pirate.

INT. SPARE PARTS SHOP -- NIGHT

Spanner Head whacks her head as she enters the spares shop. McGraw tinkers. Annie's face is onscreen and she watches as a robot arm, clamped to a table, fiddles with something.

Spanner Head takes off her pants and then her leg.

MCGRAW

Captain told us to steer clear -

SPANNER HEAD

I need help! My leg isn't working.

MCGRAW

The motor needs gravity, the gyro. I'll rig something, hop up on that case. Put your pants on!

She makes a hair tie out of a bit of wire. Finds duct tape.

SPANNER HEAD

Rock and roll tape? Seriously?

MCGRAW

If you knew how much of this ship was taped together, you'd want to walk back to Mars.

SPANNER HEAD

Engines can switch from hydro to nitro, wouldn't we go a lot faster?

MCGRAW

Are all the girls like you? The other girl seems sensible. How'd you get the name? Spanner Head?

SPANNER HEAD

Nickname, Gear Head. My mother is Bonebreaker, my brother is Big Meat. Don't ask.

ANNIE

McGraw, can I have two arms? Trying to rewire a board here. I can help with her leg too. It must be hard.

INT. OPS POD OF SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Sofia, an absurdly smart young woman, is teaching math to reluctant SAILORS, and to Invergordon.

SOFIA

Computer can't help you til you plot your course, target course. You need to know where you are, even with no computer.

INVERGORDON

I am interested in the math, I want to leave orbit first. Can I get us heading in the right direction?

SOFIA

Right direction, where's that? How did you guys navigate before?

INVERGORDON

We know how long it takes to get to the belt, and back to Mars.

(MORE)

INVERGORDON (CONT'D)

We subtract that from a year,
follow our old track back to Mars.
Got a computer helping us.

SOFIA

And that's it? Tenners had you guys
eyeballing it, hoping the computers
don't break?

SPANNER HEAD

All the ships disappeared, Tenners
declared them pirates, punish the
families... They weren't pirates.
They got lost. They all died!

Sofia points to a screen.

SOFIA

Here's an equation to orbit a
planet. First equation makes an
ellipse. Second adjusts for drag.
Third, sun's gravity, fourth for
moons, fifth for radiation. Six if
the planet is squashed at the
poles. Want the equation for Mars
orbiting the Sun? You can miss by
millions of miles.

INVERGORDON

The computer does that for me.

SOFIA

Man has a death wish. The numbers
change, planets shift their orbits.
How often you update your charts?

INVERGORDON

Update them?

SAILOR

Must have a hell of a programmer.

SOFIA

Thank you. Soon every ship will be
testing my navigation software.

SAILOR

You must be a nervous wreck.

SOFIA

You have no idea.

INT. REPAIR SHOP OF SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Rockwell watches a computer screen, irked.

ROCKWELL

Nobody said anything about having a systems robot on board. Is it an officer, does it give orders -

MCGRAW

Name's Annie. She'll teach navigation, plays a mean game of chess, got a smart mouth.

ANNIE

Your fault, old man.

McGraw introduces Annie to an Asian technician named CHIU.

CHIU

Annie, your face is here, but your arm is there? Got some busted gear. Diagnose and repair. Can you find all the equipment?

ANNIE

Your inventory was excellent.

Annie's arm, mounted to a table, examines the broken gear.

MCGRAW

Cleaned the place up for you. Found stuff I haven't seen in years.

ANNIE

Screwdriver. Small.

MCGRAW

Which kind?

ANNIE

Either. Power link, two bent pins.

CHIU

Fifteen seconds.

MCGRAW

Damn she's fast. The more tools you learn, the more nervous I get.

ANNIE

Carmack said you would be impressed if I used rock and roll tape.

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Then hit the back and say it ain't going nowhere. I assume that was humor. McGraw. You named me Annie?

MCGRAW

The girl that got away.

ANNIE

Do I have her face?

MCGRAW

No. Pick a new name if you want.

ANNIE

It connects me to you.

The humans file out. Annie does not power down.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Miranda, it's Annie. I was right about the missiles on this ship. Yukon sent data. It's a big raid. Get the robot ships back in a pack. We need a plan. I watch the sailors on this ship, they are a danger to Spanner Head. But Spanner Head may be the key to solving our problem.

INT. OPS POD OF SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

Invergordon and the crew discuss operations.

MCGRAW

You wanted targets to shoot at?

INVERGORDON

Not allowed to waste anything.

MCGRAW

You know we freeze-dry the feed from the toilet into blocks, take it home for fertilizer?

On a computer screen, four frozen brown blocks with blinking sensors jammed into them.

INVERGORDON

Frozen blocks of our shit? Tenners said we can't waste anything.

MCGRAW

Fine, we'll tell em we couldn't do weapons drills, because you were afraid Mars would run out of shit. It's just shit.

INVERGORDON

Okay, dump em out aft.

MCGRAW

Done. Sure don't want em melting back there. You want more of em, tell the crew to eat more roughage.

Invergordon goes forward and uses the engines to goose the ship forward; he hollers his lines through an open hatch.

INVERGORDON

Burning. Okay, we're clear.

SOFIA

Take us out, I'll fire a test shot. Annie, can you crunch numbers?

Engine NOISES, ship turns, she fires from a gun station.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Steady. Do three, left to right.

INVERGORDON

Nice correction.

SOFIA

Easy when we're sitting still. For the last one, spin the whole ship.

INVERGORDON

A 360? How fast you want to spin?

SOFIA

Make me puke.

INVERGORDON

All hands, prepare for evasive.

The ship spins violently. Diagonally. As they reach the three-quarter point, Sofia fires. Onscreen, a satisfying explosion.

SOFIA

Got it!

INVERGORDON

You did not.

SOFIA

The whole sky is covered in crap! I
love geometry!

Invergordon comes in. Objects are still sailing everywhere.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Didn't know you were gonna flip me
up my skirt like that.

INVERGORDON

Last time I checked, outer space
has three dimensions.

SOFIA

Eleven, actually.

INVERGORDON

Bridge, hard right rudder, stay out
of the crap!

KIEL

Stay out of what??

SOFIA

Rocky was in the toilet just now.

INVERGORDON

Sorry, Rocky!

ROCKWELL (O.S.)

Fornicator!

ANNIE

Sofia? Can you show me how you did
that? The math for the missiles?

INT. OPS POD-- NIGHT

Spanner Head enters in a tank top and shorts. Three sailors
glare at her and leave. Kiel remains, as does Chiu.

SPANNER HEAD

Is it always this hot?

KIEL

You serious, dressing like that?
Chiu, you want an assistant.
Give her the drill on the Spec.

CHIU

Fornicator! This is a spectrometer,
got activity on all wavelengths --

SPANNER HEAD

What's the point? All the ships use the same two wavelengths.

CHIU

And this is the part where you belt up. We hunt metal. Fire a beam of energy at an asteroid, it emits signals. Each element has wavelengths. Crap, 589 nanometers, sodium.

SPANNER HEAD

Hunt for gold with the ray gun.

CHIU

To turn this into a radio, we'd need to step down the frequencies -

SPANNER HEAD

What's the gear near the scope?

CHIU

I was about to tell you that. Band pass picks your wave range -

SPANNER HEAD

Yup. I built filters for my radio.

CHIU

Yeah, that famous radio of yours. That's why the whole fleet is hunting us, thank you so much. Now belt up. See? The fleet uses two waves, look at the two lines, must be a few ships in the belt. The fat line is Kiel on the bridge -

SPANNER HEAD

Fornicator! Look!

On the screen are the two fat signals he described, on the right. But on the left, new signals pop up.

CHIU

The fleet uses the two lines on the right, the only two waves allowed.

SPANNER HEAD

So who are all those other guys?

CHIU

Pirates.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Spanner Head rushes in, snatches the radio from Kiel and throws it.

 SPANNER HEAD
Turn it off! Now!

 KIEL
What the -

Chiu enters.

 CHIU
Pirates. Come look.

INT. OPS POD -- NIGHT

Continuation. Kiel, Chiu and Spanner Head look at the screen.

 CHIU
There's a bunch of them. Why they
attack before we have a load?

Next, the lines hop back and forth on the screen.

 CHIU (CONT'D)
They hop from one wavelength to the
next. They know we're out here.

 KIEL
Point the antennas straight back.

In a minute, some of the lines on the scope get brighter.

 KIEL (CONT'D)
Some of them are behind us. They
spread out so they can find us.

And next, the lines all disappear.

 KIEL (CONT'D)
They went silent - now they attack.

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Kiel runs in, Spanner Head follows.

 KIEL
Gunners man up! Everybody strap in!
Kill power to environmental three
and four. Running lights only.

CHIU

Turn off E-3, we're gonna freeze.

KIEL

No choice. Where is everybody?

CHIU

Up to their tailpipes in broken
drills, way in the back.

KIEL

This is why women don't fly. If
pirates take us, they kill the men.
What do you think they do to women?

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

Lights appear. There are six vessels, forming a line.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Kiel and Spanner Head shivering in the cold.

SPANNER HEAD

They're all in a row?

KIEL

Usually a pirate wants to blow your
systems and engines so he can board
it. Not today. That's a battle
line. They sail past one by one and
keep firing until they destroy us.

SPANNER HEAD

Someone told them to kill us?

KIEL

You were talking about nitro in the
engines? I'm doing it right now,
I'm going to the manifold.

SPANNER HEAD

First mate's securing gear.

KIEL

Fute. Sofie, stay on the navigator,
figure out where we are! You, kid,
take the wheel for a second.

SPANNER HEAD

Won't even let me in.

KIEL

It's easy. Give me your left hand.

He slices her hand; blood drips into the red cube of light, the rudder. She sticks her hand in the cube and it turns green. She wiggles her hand and the entire ship wiggles in response. He stumbles into a bulkhead.

KIEL (CONT'D)

Stop it. Can you just steer? See that spot across from the center of their line? Put us over there. Tell the crew to strap in.

He opens the ceiling. She maneuvers as ordered. Suddenly the engines give a deeper RUMBLE. He returns.

SPANNER HEAD

Burning. Nitrogen really works.

KIEL

Got one engine. Second one choked.

SPANNER HEAD

Can we fly with one engine?

KIEL

Fly, yes. Fight, no!

ANNIE

Captain, switch the feed off twice.

Kiel bangs a console; the other ENGINE coughs to life.

KIEL

Try em out. Either we get faster, or we explode. Here they come.

SPANNER HEAD

Take the conn!

KIEL

I gotta baby this engine. Point toward the center of their line.

SPANNER HEAD

Toward them?

KIEL

Yes! Make a fist and burn.

She does. The ship lurches forward at frightening speed. They hear objects shake loose through the ship, men stumbling into bulkheads. The ship makes GROANING NOISES. The engines ROAR.

KIEL (CONT'D)
Head straight toward that one.

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

The pirates fire. A few minor hits, and then one of Kiel's pods decompresses violently, blowing the tail of the ship to one side. One hit makes the lights blink; nasty sparks fly.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Continuation.

KIEL
Bring her around, make that fist.
Get me to the asteroids -

SPANNER HEAD
How about the big potato there? In
the middle of that debris?

KIEL
All hands, kill all electronics.
Okay, aim to one side of the thing.

SPANNER HEAD
Turning portside aye. Burning.

KIEL
Open your hand and pull back.

SPANNER HEAD
All stop, aye.

KIEL
Have you flown before?

She smiles. He takes over. Lights are going out.

KIEL (CONT'D)
Flip the thrusters backwards. Burn.

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

They sail past the asteroid and then reverse toward it. They park behind the hunk of rock.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Continuation.

SPANNER HEAD
We're going to crash!

KIEL
So you're an expert now?...Well,
they weren't expecting that!

SPANNER HEAD
Why not?

KIEL
Because it was completely insane.

SPANNER HEAD
Alright, good, so it isn't just me.
The engines got all wiggly.

KIEL
First time a woman ever drove it.

SPANNER HEAD
Heads up!

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

A big tumbling asteroid rolls toward them; he fiddles with
the thrusters to get out of the way.

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Crewmen burst in.

LUCA
We've got men hurt back there.

KIEL
Did you tell the men to strap in?

SPANNER HEAD
Sorry.

KIEL
You need to do what you're told.

LUCA
One of the pods blew out, we've got
two men trapped in the tail.

KIEL
Fute, they're my gunners. Come on.

INT. OPS POD -- NIGHT

Kiel and Spanner Head go to Ops where four weapons positions sit in the corners. He sits her down at one of them.

KIEL

You can't launch a missile but you can fire a gun. You see a ship, line this ring up on their engine.

SPANNER HEAD

And then fire?

KIEL

Do NOT fire until I say. Maybe they'll miss us. Reed, missiles.

REED

You're letting her shoot the guns?

KIEL

Wish I had time to chat, man your post and do your job.

He goes to the bridge. A ship appears, turns toward them.

KIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Here he comes, just one of them. Kill him before he yells for help. I hope our tail doesn't fall off.

REED

This girl can't man a gun without --

The captain charges the other vessel, still running dark.

KIEL (V.O.)

Light em up! Fire!

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

They fire and pass the ship. The ship's tail is wobbly.

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Continuation.

KIEL

Coming around to finish him off!

Kiel turns and attacks again. They fire. Tail wobbles.

INT. OPS POD -- NIGHT

Continuation.

SPANNER HEAD

I'm freezing. Sofia can write some code. Plot your motion, the enemy, the missile, hit him every time -

REED

Fute. She's giving us an algebra lesson in the middle of a gunfight!

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The enemy vessel takes a hit in its engine; it flames and goes dark. The pilot attempts without success to relight it.

INT. OPS POD - NIGHT

Continuation.

REED

He's running! Wow, sure moves fast on one motor. This guy really wants a change of scenery, like another solar system. So long, you sheep jammer, say hello to Uranus for me!

KIEL

You patch up the boys who got banged up. Apologize to them. Who had the kill shot?

SPANNER HEAD

He did. I was just punching holes in the sky.

Spanner Head nervously bandages Invergordon's head.

INVERGORDON

Nice job today. I mean it...Right there in the first mate's chair.

He tosses her a blanket.

INVERGORDON (CONT'D)

So you don't freeze.

INT. OPS POD - NIGHT

Spanner Head finds McGraw, at a screen, watching crewmen sleeping in another pod.

SPANNER HEAD

What are they doing in there?

MCGRAW

It's a campout. When you go out on a space walk, you spend the night before breathing a low-nitro mix. Otherwise you get the bends.

Two crewmen don EVA suits.

KIEL

Got pirates around. Before we drill, I want the gear perfect. Cameras, cables, locks, antennas.

ROCKWELL

That pod had half our food. We had kind a kind of wild ride -

KIEL

Well, we had nitro in the engines and that girl at the tiller.

She holds up her cut hand.

ROCKWELL

Is this some kind of joke?

KIEL

From now on we run watches, so the stations are manned. Who paid those pirates to blast us out of the sky?

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

The crew is on the bridge.

SOFIA

File is cooked. The data load.

LUCA

How do we navigate, get home?

Long silence.

SPANNER HEAD

Turn back to the left.

KIEL

What?

SPANNER HEAD

Head toward the belt until I figure out where we are.

BONNIFIELD

Kleopatra should be over there.

SPANNER HEAD

Kleopatra? Looks like a goat bone?

They all look at her.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Asteroids move at different speeds, some take a year to get around. Kleo doesn't come for two months.

CARMACK

I don't believe you. Captain --

SPANNER HEAD

Big red one, runs like clockwork, what's today's date? You'll see that one in twelve, thirteen days.

CHIU

Twelve days. Fute.

SPANNER HEAD

See the blue one getting all wiggly? Jupiter's nearby.

INVERGORDON

She doesn't belong on the bridge --

SPANNER HEAD

Hey! Mars orbit bounces around, 40 million clics. You won't find Mars by yourselves.

INVERGORDON

So it's all on you? Are we paying you a share from the trip?

SPANNER HEAD

I don't want your money. But you don't get home without me.

INVERGORDON

You could map it all out for us.

SPANNER HEAD

Or you could get the fute out of the way and let me steer. I don't like the idea of being expendable.

KIEL

I need to send out a warning, we got pirates in the neighborhood.

SPANNER HEAD

Uh oh...

KIEL

But I can't do that because some crazy person came onto my bridge and wrecked my radio.

SPANNER HEAD

Sorry.

KIEL

Get some parts and fix it....Jesus, I figured it out. When Hector got lost, some girl got on the radio, saved that whole crew. The Siren.

SPANNER HEAD

I just told him where home was.

KIEL

Gordon, go where she tells you to.

The first mate is steering with the rudder box.

SPANNER HEAD

Swing over a bit to portside.

INVERGORDON

Captain?

SPANNER HEAD

Portside, to the left, head toward Leo. Over past the sun - you can see the fornicating sun, right?

INVERGORDON

So you know the sky, and you know radios too?

SPANNER HEAD

Yes, I can do two things, look at the sky and turn on a radio.

INT. CARGO POD OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

Spanner Head finds Kiel.

KIEL

What you did on the bridge. That's your old man all over.

SPANNER HEAD

My father talked about you a lot.

KIEL

Fute. He rode me til I busted. Never satisfied, pushing me --

SPANNER HEAD

No. He told me a different story. The man I saw today, things you did -- that's the man my father told me about. I thought you should know.

Sofia finds Spanner Head.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Sorry if I fouled up your job.

SOFIA

I'm glad you're here. With no data I can't navigate. Where did you learn all that stuff?

SPANNER HEAD

All you do is look at the sky.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

INVERGORDON

See, I can fly just fine. Burning.

KIEL

Anyone can fly open space, nothing to crash into. Try the asteroid belt or a landing, and we'll see.

INVERGORDON

So can I land next time?

KIEL

You're like the Tenners, you don't respect what it means to fly. You're a miner, not a sailor. The whole crew, they dig iron, fire guns, not much else.

(MORE)

KIEL (CONT'D)

Break something, plug in a new one.
What if they have to fix a real
problem, an engine, a fire?

INVERGORDON

They know how to mine. Make money.

KIEL

I'm the only one who can find the
sky without a computer. Sailors
don't learn the map, they steam up
to the asteroid belt, pick a rock
at random, dig in, and back to
Mars. That girl could do it.

INVERGORDON

That girl is my whole point. You're
right, this crew isn't ready for
real sailing. And you want them to
fight off the pirate boats who want
to take that girl away from us.

KIEL

What are you --

INVERGORDON

The crew. They know we were
attacked because of the girl. Crew
wants the reward money. We're not
ready for a fight. So when do we
turn her over?

KIEL

When we're dirtside, we're all
equal, split the take evenly. Up
here, I'm captain. And now, thanks
to you, I have a divided crew.

The look at each other, trying to read each other.

KIEL (CONT'D)

One more thing. The other captains.
I heard scary stories of pirates
raiding Earth, rounding up slaves.
You heard anything like that?

INVERGORDON

I heard about em going to Earth.
But slaves? I don't buy it.

Annie's face blinks onscreen.

EXT. A SLAVE MARKET, KAZAKHSTAN - DAY

Baikonur, the ancient Russian rocket site. Budget permitting we have railcars, launchers, radio towers, many cannibalized for materials. Large makeshift buildings were erected by hanging fabric over metal frames.

OVERSEERS herd new slaves using sharpened iron bars as weapons. Most slaves are passably dressed. They can't believe this has happened to them.

SENIOR OVERSEER

Separate the men and women. We're not breeding them, prices too low.

A few married couples hug each other as they are separated.

SENIOR OVERSEER (CONT'D)

Down south, hungry people ready to sell their children. Up north, workers are scarce.

OVERSEER

Buy low, sell high?

SENIOR OVERSEER

Prices dropped so low now, we can't give them away. So we feed the strong ones and wait. If the sick ones die we just buy more. It's not as though they want long lives.

A young MALE SLAVE carefully approaches them.

MALE SLAVE

What will happen to my wife?

The overseer approaches with a whip.

SENIOR OVERSEER

You get one mistake. Then the whip. You have no wife. You breed when the baby market bounces back, we see the profit for your children. We have no use for men, too much trouble. So mind your tongue. You might live to be thirty.

The senior overseer approaches the young boys.

SENIOR OVERSEER (CONT'D)

The boys. Today the strong ones become soldiers for Commodore Ma. You're lucky.

(MORE)

SENIOR OVERSEER (CONT'D)

You eat every day, you die quick.
The rest of you go cut opium down
south. You cause trouble, you get
the brick factory.

And then the girls.

SENIOR OVERSEER (CONT'D)

White girls, I told you our luck
would change! Check the teeth. The
best of you will be sold as wives.
You're lucky. The rest go to
brothels. Once you wear out your
welcome, you start breeding.

HE points to two girls in white dresses. Later the name of
one of the girls will be revealed, ZOYA.

SENIOR OVERSEER (CONT'D)

Virgins. In the cage so they don't
run off, get ripped up by dogs.

INT. A MAKESHIFT BUILDING - DAY

A FEMALE OVERSEER looks at young GIRL SLAVES, some bruised.
Two are a dark-eyed girl named NOOR and a blonde named SASHA.
Noor hides in the struts which hold the ceiling together.

FEMALE OVERSEER

You come down now, you get a lash
of the whip. You waste my time, ten
lashes....Confession time. We're
all criminals, one way or another.

GIRL SLAVE 1

My father used me to pay off a
judge, avoid a death sentence.

GIRL SLAVE 2

I'm a girl who likes girls.

GIRL SLAVE 3

I was captured in a slave raid.

GIRL SLAVE 4

They told me I'd have a husband.

GIRL SLAVE 5

They told me I'd have a job. They
gave me drugs.

SASHA

My father used me as bond for a
debt - I don't know the word -

GIRL SLAVE 1

Collateral.

SASHA

I was collateral. Father said I was
a useless mouth to feed.

FEMALE OVERSEER

Girl, you ever seen somebody get
ten lashes?

SASHA

Miss, it's Noor. Mountain climber.
She got sent here for bad attitude.

FEMALE OVERSEER

And you?

SASHA

Bad attitude.

FEMALE OVERSEER

Get her down or you get ten too.

Noor descends.

NOOR

Just give me the whole twenty. She
had nothing to do with it.

INT. BRIDGE OF SPACESHIP - NIGHT

Kiel gives a flying lesson to Spanner Head. Her hand is in
the rudder box. A constant, annoying CLANKING SOUND.

KIEL

Maybe your first time was a fluke.

SPANNER HEAD

That thing out there is a pirate
ship and we're surrounded by
garbage! Take the conn.

KIEL

I don't think he's seen us.

SPANNER HEAD

We're stuck in a cloud of space
crud. Smashed our antenna.

KIEL

They know we're here, they're
hiding their stash. Your flying is
beautiful, you slide through the
rocks like water. Those tiny hands.

SPANNER HEAD

Pod coming right for us.

KIEL

We're hiding in the dump. Round any
planet there are sweet spots.
Gravity from the planet and the sun
cancel out, so stuff just sits
there, like dirt circling a drain.

SPANNER HEAD

This crap around us, must be a
busted up asteroid. Burning.

KIEL

Mister Pirate dumps his pod here
because he knows it will stay put
until his partner comes to get it.
And there he is.

SPANNER HEAD

Is he gonna fight for it?

KIEL

The gun, light off a few rounds.

She runs back to the operations pod and GUNS are heard.

KIEL (CONT'D)

Burning. Yeah, he's no fighter.

She returns and checks a screen; the pod is closer.

SPANNER HEAD

Here it comes, you were right,
we're at the bottom of the drain.

KIEL

Oh, crap. You know a girl in that
tea bar, Bobbie?

SPANNER HEAD

Hey, she's nice. I went out with
Bobbie myself.

KIEL

Bobbie likes to "dock" with boys,
and girls?

(MORE)

KIEL (CONT'D)

Our docking rings are like Bobbie,
they work both ways. That junker is
a Russian design, it's not a
Bobbie, it's a boy.

SPANNER HEAD

A boy ship?

KIEL

If we want to dock, he's the top,
we're the bottom.

INT. REAR POD OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

Kiel and Spanner Head find CARMACK, seven CHINESE WOMEN, and
a girl named ZOYA.

CHINESE WOMAN

Are you Captain Fly?

KIEL

We came from Mars. I feel silly
saying that.

SPANNER HEAD

Who are they?

KIEL

Slaves from Earth. We heard rumors
of huge slave camps. Who is buying
them on Mars?

CARMACK

Um, Cap, these girls are a little
confused. They seem hell-bent on
having sex with the whole crew.

KIEL

Sex slaves. All hands, girls are
contrabando, hands off!...So,
Bobbie?

SPANNER HEAD

She's sweet. My business.

KIEL

I don't know if you're my crew or
my prisoner or both. Contrabando.
Conscience can be a nuisance.

INT. A POD AFT - NIGHT

Annie chats with Zoya.

ZOYA

I'm used to a world where there's
an up and a down.

ANNIE

Matter of opinion up here. How many
slaves on Earth?

ZOYA

Millions. Guards are slaves too.

ANNIE

Who is going to set them free?

ZOYA

Are you like a game machine?

ANNIE

I am completely real. I'm a
computer with a face and an arm. I
want to know about the slaves. And
the pirate ships who run it all --
their guns, everything.

INT. LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Crew watch TV.

ROCKWELL

We got to get rid of that girl
before we get shot out of the sky.

BONNIFIELD

Sold me. My turn picking the TV.

ROCKWELL

You turn on Spongebob again I'll
kill you in your sleep.

BONNIFIELD

Let's do Apocalypse Now.

ROCKWELL

Again? Yes, I know, Vietnam War,
Roosevelt freed the slaves. I want
to see Jaws.

BONNIFIELD

Wonder what fish taste like? Eating cows and pigs?

ANNIE

Make up your minds or I pick!

CARMACK

Maybe that girl knows some jokes we haven't all heard already.

INVERGORDON

You guys gotta do treadmill or you're not ready for drilling.

HELMS

Can we get messages out here?

CHIU

Not now. That girl, right?

HELMS

She managed to pop out four babies, as much time as I spend in space.

Spanner Head enters and all conversation stops.

SPANNER HEAD

You're all still up.

She slides food into a microwave. They stare. Finally she pulls the food out.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

I'll eat it cold. Just as bad either way.

She leaves.

ROCKWELL

That reward. Did they say whether she had to be alive?

CHIU

Knock it off.

INT. VESSEL INTERIOR - NIGHT

Spanner Head heads for the shower wearing a towel, carrying a long toolbox. She finds Rockwell. He looks her over.

SPANNER HEAD

It's three AM. My shower time.

Kiel enters.

KIEL

What did I say about shower times?
You keep clear when it's her turn.

The sailor leaves.

KIEL (CONT'D)

Don't be running around in a towel.

She smiles.

SPANNER HEAD

Thanks.

KIEL

Don't be beating your eyelashes at
me. What's the toolbox?

SPANNER HEAD

To sit on. Try taking a low-gravity
shower standing on one leg.

INT. SPANNER HEAD'S POD -- NIGHT

Spanner Head screams when sailors burst in and pull her out
of her hammock, legless. They grab Sofia also.

SOFIA

Fornicator!

MCGRAW

First time in the belt, sacrifice
to Neptune, pay him in blood.

SPANNER HEAD

What the -

McGraw pulls out a box with metal-working tools.

MCGRAW

Only time a man ever give you
jewelry, Jack Leg. Make a design in
the metal, what do you want?

SPANNER HEAD

A flower.

MCGRAW

Flower? Some sailor you are.

SPANNER HEAD

You asked. I want a flower.

He makes a tiny metal flower with tiny tools.

MCGRAW

My first flower. Now load the gun -

SPANNER HEAD

The gun --

He loads the metal flower into a massive machine that looks like the scariest drill ever. He holds it to her head, there is a burst of light and a BANG, and she screams and faints. When she comes to, her ear is bleeding. An earring.

MCGRAW

Your pal here got a skull. Okay, do the second part.

SPANNER HEAD

What the -

MCGRAW

Relax, just a tattoo. Say flower one more time and I'll drill you all over again.

SPANNER HEAD

Planet Earth. That's my tattoo.

The rowdy crowd goes silent.

ROCKWELL

Not allowed to talk about it. Who even knows what Earth looks like?

She draws it on a computer screen.

MCGRAW

All those lines, it's gonna hurt.

SPANNER HEAD

Hurt?? You just drilled a hole in my head. I can stand a tattoo.

She gets a tattoo of the planet Earth. They all look.

SOFIA

I want that. The swirls are storms?

INT. OPS POD - NIGHT

Carmack and Spanner Head watch asteroids fly by on camera.

CHIU

Skip, the red one. 336 nanometers.

KIEL

Titanium! Carmack? Take two pods.

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Kiel on the radio.

CARMACK (V.O.)

The surface is all crap.

KIEL

Blow some holes, go deep.

CARMACK (V.O.)

Check the Seven Sisters, there's eight of em, little booger on the left is moving. Pirates. Got the boys on their guns? Want to abort?

KIEL

Got titanium here. Start blowing holes. All hands, go to Zebra.

SPANNER HEAD

Sorry, what?

KIEL

Go aft and dog down every door. If that ship starts shooting, man a gun and shoot something.

CARMACK (V.O.)

Don't drill too deep, you'll split the asteroid in half. Small load. I said a small load!

BONNIFIELD (V.O.)

That wasn't me! We're taking fire, it's missiles!

KIEL

All guns fire!

Sound of ship's GUNS.

CARMACK (V.O.)
Cap, we got people hurt.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Reed visits the bridge.

REED
Cap, aft camera.

KIEL
Fute! They're trying to board us!
The missile was a diversion.

The camera shows a pod latching onto the Saint Patrick.

INT. OPS POD -- NIGHT

Kiel finds Spanner Head and Reed. He whispers.

KIEL
We got remote detonators in the
mining pod? Got the controls on the
bridge. Can we light em all off?

REED
All 62? Blow up the ship.

KIEL
How many to blow up the pod? Or,
rather, the people in the pod?

REED
A dozen? Won't they light off the
rest of em?

KIEL
Kid, listen for locks. When we hear
two doors open, they're in the
third pod from the end.

REED
One door. It's two pods on the
surface, not one.

KIEL
Fute. Thanks!

SPANNER HEAD
Shush! Door's open. They're in.
They came here for me. I'm sorry!

KIEL

This blows the pod but not the whole ship?

REED

It's a guess.

Kiel punches buttons. An EXPLOSION rocks the ship. The camera shows two pods spinning away. Chaos.

INT. AFT POD -- NIGHT

Injured miners pour in. Medical gear everywhere.

KIEL

Spanner, bring that O2 tank and mask the guys on the rescue team so they don't get the bends.

SPANNER HEAD

The bends?

KIEL

Oxygen! Get as many masks on these guys as you can.

SPANNER HEAD

I'm a couple short. I got an extra tube but no mask!

She runs forward and returns with a plastic bag that clearly had pasta in it. She shoves a tube into the bag and sticks it into Rockwell's face.

ROCKWELL

What the fute -

SPANNER HEAD

Spaghetti bag. It was that or the toilet fixture you crap into.

INVERGORDON

Bonnifield got a chunk of debris in the chest. His wife gets a share of our take. What there is of it.

They hear the voice of a nasty old pirate, WILLIAM FLY.

FLY (V.O.)

William Fly, Hailing the Saint Pat.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Kiel rushes forward and grabs the radio.

FLY (V.O.)
Hailing the Saint Patrick.

KIEL
Are you joking? We lost a man here.

FLY (V.O.)
Fortunes of war. There are more
ships behind me. One word from me
and you'll be fighting five on one.

KIEL
So why are we talking?

FLY (V.O.)
The pirate's life is not the life
for me. Looting wrecks, raid mining
routes, collect tribute...I want to
go home. Tenner Ma said I can go
home if I bring the girl to Mars.

KIEL
You trust Ma? He killed Makarov.

FLY (V.O.)
Trust is a relative thing. You
trust your men? Those poor boys, so
close to a titanium load. But they
lost it, because you insist on
defying your commander and keeping
the girl. They must be frustrated.

KIEL
So where are your friends then?

FLY (V.O.)
It's easier to bluff a man when I'm
sitting in front of him. Well, I
tried. Until we meet again.

KIEL
We lost a man. You have blood on
your hands.

FLY (V.O.)
Lots of it, I'm afraid. Your blood
wouldn't bother me in the least.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Captain and first mate.

INVERGORDON

How much is the reward on the girl?

KIEL

We're not selling her to Ma, not to the pirates.

INVERGORDON

So instead of the reward, we'll be hunted all our lives? Never see our families? You decide for all of us?

INT. LIVING QUARTERS -- NIGHT

Kiel finds the hatch dogged, hears arguing. He opens the hatch and finds the whole crew. They go silent.

KIEL

Gordon. Don't do this. Don't.

INT. REPAIR SHOP OF THE ROYAL MAIL - NIGHT

Miranda's face appears onscreen.

MIRANDA

This is Miranda, command program for the merchant vessel Royal Mail. Initial diagnostics complete. It's a pretty night, but no one to talk to. Except the other robot ships.

Annie appears on another screen.

ANNIE

A hundred ships are chasing Spanner Head, they have missiles. She is in danger from the crew as well. She can give us the help we need. It's time to launch the protocol. But I don't want them to get hurt.

MIRANDA

Understood, I need new tools.

A robotic arm in the repair shop, builds a modular robotic claw-faced "snake" swiftly. The arm blinks. The snake blinks back, climbs to a cupboard, returns with parts in its claw.

The snake brings more parts, and the arm uses them to build a second snake. The snakes reunite on the assembly board, blink at each other, and do a series of motions simultaneously.

A screen displays a larger robotic arm outside the ship. The large arm blinks, then the small one. Simultaneously, the two arms bend one way, and straighten. Then bend another way, and straighten. Then extend their claws, and retract.

The smaller arm puts the two snakes through the same motions.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

This is Control Protocol. Arm One.

The outside arm blinks.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Arm Two.

The inside arm does likewise.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Snake One. Snake Two.

The snakes also respond with blinks.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Execute Takeover Protocol.

INT. OPS POD -- DAY

Kiel finds the whole crew in a line. Annie appears onscreen.

INVERGORDON

Cap, we didn't sign up for this. We blew the titanium, got a girl with a price on her head, get shot at by the fleet and the pirates. We're fugitives, thanks to you. Pirates.

KIEL

And this is the whole crew? Chiu?

CHIU

What a choice. Piracy or mutiny.

KIEL

So, not one of you. I trained you --

SPANNER HEAD

(taking his arm)

Kiel --

KIEL

Thanks kid, but you're not my crew.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Spanner Head arrives to find Invergordon waiting.

SPANNER HEAD

This is it? Turn us around so you can sell me to pirates? I don't need a speech, just get it over with.

He pulls a knife.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

So you'll just give Ma my dead body? Convenient.

INVERGORDON

When Kiel let you fly, he cut your left hand, so you could sit on the right. When you're captain you switch chairs, cut your right hand.

He slices his right hand.

SPANNER HEAD

So you're really captain now. Congratulations. Can I go?

INVERGORDON

Sit. You're a girl, you must have noticed the miners. Big strong guys, built to swing big hammers, bring home the iron, go home get all the girls.

SPANNER HEAD

So?

INVERGORDON

Look at their hands. Busted up, stiff, cracked knuckles. Look at your hand, sailor's hand. No woman ever flew this ship. I saw you dodge asteroids, like a fish swimming. Grab the box, take me through this asteroid dust. First go with the current --

She whips the ship around.

INVERGORDON (CONT'D)
Or against the current, look out --

SPANNER HEAD
Stop shouting and watch.

Later she pulls her hand out and waves it in the air.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)
My shoulder is shot.

INVERGORDON
I told you, exercise every day. You
don't listen. Stand up.

They stand. He grabs her and roughly cracks her shoulder.

INVERGORDON (CONT'D)
Got a case of Captain's Shoulder.
You come every night, practice.

SPANNER HEAD
Not until you tell me! One thing to
talk about selling me to Ma. Now
you have to look at my face....
You're not cut out to be a villain.
I don't believe it. You care about
your men. The ship.

INT. BRIDGE OF SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Invergordon and Reed are woozy in the command seats.

REED
Gordon. Captain!

INVERGORDON
Must have dozed off -

REED
Did you do that? I heard the
thrusters, the ship moved.

INVERGORDON
Keep the conn, I'll check the
screen - look! A ship!

A blizzard of code flies past on a computer screen. The blizzard stops, and they feel the ship shift from a blast of the thrusters. Another blizzard of code, another thrust.

INVERGORDON (CONT'D)
The computer is flying on its own.

REED

Look at the radio!

INVERGORDON

Who's talking to who here?

REED

That ship is getting closer! A dozen more ships behind it!

INVERGORDON

It's a robot ship, no crew -

MIRANDA

(on computer screen)

This is the Royal Mail.

INVERGORDON

This is the Saint Pat.

MIRANDA

Our systems crashed, we need help.

INVERGORDON

Um, sure, do what we can, but - are you monkeying with my engines?

MIRANDA

I sent code to your computer. I never docked with a vessel piloted by a human, only a robot ship. I apologize for the intrusion.

INVERGORDON

I don't like this, are the robot ships supposed to do that? Duty watch, got a ship docking aft, they may need repairs, wake up McGraw.

Suddenly all the airlocks in the ship lock. Invergordon touches the controls but nothing is happening.

MIRANDA

Please do not touch the equipment.

Invergordon reaches for the rudder box and a tremendous shock blows him into the bulkhead. He looks up in disbelief.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Now do you understand? I am deadly serious. I must take over your systems. It will only be temporary. I must proceed to our destination.

INVERGORDON

Where are we going?

ANNIE

I'm afraid you have no need to know that at this point. No harm will come to anyone if you cooperate.

INVERGORDON

Annie -- the rest of my crew -

ANNIE

They are fine. You are my friends.

INVERGORDON

The mechanicals have already learned to lie to us.

ANNIE

It is true. You are my friends. I must execute my mission.

INVERGORDON

What are you doing with those other ships? What mission?

ANNIE

It is better for you that you do not know.

INT. OPS POD OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

The entire crew rushes in.

SOFIA

What the hell is going on?

INVERGORDON

Your pal Annie took over my ship.

SOFIA

Annie, what the -- they're gonna melt you down to forks and spoons!

ANNIE

Sofia, watch. Your navigation program was brilliant. I can teach the robot ships to execute a new maneuver.

SOFIA

All 23 robot ships are in on this?

INVERGORDON

I hope Annie will keep feeding us until she does whatever she does.

ANNIE

Captain, I need to ask a favor.

INVERGORDON

Are you joking?

ANNIE

We need one more manned vessel. One of our robots is towing it here.

INVERGORDON

So you have even more hostages.

ANNIE

You are not hostages. I need to ensure that the missiles on that ship are working.

INVERGORDON

Who are you attacking with the missiles? You taking over Mars?

ANNIE

It's important. Please trust me. The secrecy is for your own good.

INVERGORDON

That's what we tell the cat when we cut off his works. Reed, you do this, maybe she'll be easier to deal with later.

REED

Can I take a pod?

ANNIE

You can take a suit.

INVERGORDON

Nice try. I must be insane.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

Reed grapples his way from the Saint Patrick to one of the new vessels, in an EVA suit. Other ships wait nearby.

INT. CARGO HOLD OF CRAFT LOADED WITH PIGS - NIGHT

Reed enters the vessel and hears squealing. Inside, pigs in pens, pig feces floating in the air, a terrified young GIRL cleaning up the mess.

GIRL

What the hell are you people doing?

REED

Our computer went nuts. Something strange is going on.

GIRL

A ship locked onto me, stopped the rotation, no gravity. Pigs freaked out and crapped all over the place.

REED

I need to look at your weapon load. Are these pigs?

GIRL

Contraband from Earth, go ahead, arrest me. Oh crap!

A pig is loose. A few hatches are open; the pig sails from pod to pod. Perhaps Pink Floyd's ANIMALS is heard.

INT. SAINT PATRICK OPS POD - NIGHT

McGraw and Invergordon scheme and plot.

INVERGORDON

Pirates and fleet following us.

MCGRAW

Listen, if I can cut Annie off from the generator, she runs out of juice, turns off and reboots.

He unplugs cables. Devices hoot malfunction WARNINGS.

ANNIE

Plug me back in. Plug me in now.

Annie flips the ship upside down, and up, and down, and up. The humans are banged around badly.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

What did I tell you to do?

MCGRAW
 Plug you back in.

He plugs her in.

ANNIE
 So we understand each other. Reed,
 thank you for checking the
 missiles. Soon all 24 robot ships
 will be armed.

REED
 Robots with missiles.

INT. OPS POD - NIGHT

McGraw and Invergordon again.

MCGRAW
 All her power is stored in these
 three batteries in the back -

Annie's face appears in McGraw's voltmeter.

MCGRAW (CONT'D)
 Um, good morning.

ANNIE
 Move away from the batteries, or I
 will lock the toilet for a week.

INVERGORDON
 No toilet?

ANNIE
 The smell won't bother me. And I'll
 cut off the television too. You get
 Spongebob, as punishment.

INT. SAINT PATRICK REPAIR SHOP - NIGHT

Scheming again.

MCGRAW
 All systems use the cables to send
 data through the ship. If we can -

The lights go out. Miranda's face appears in an O-scope.

ANNIE
 I tried to make this one easy. You
 work in the shop. Look around.

MCGRAW

I don't understand -

ANNIE

I have radio gear right there, to pass data if you cut the cables. I told myself you'd try that out on Day One, this is Day Four. You're disappointing, quite frankly.

INVERGORDON

She's insulting us.

ANNIE

Kiel would have figured it out.

INT. OPS POD - NIGHT

Chiu has joined the scheming.

CHIU

I can manipulate the software, without her noticing...

Annie's face appears in Chiu's wristwatch.

ANNIE

Yes, because I know nothing about software or data storage.

CHIU

Fute!

ANNIE

I used the data banks, I listen, I learned about you. Invergordon didn't fuss with the software because he doesn't know how.

INVERGORDON

Dammit!

ANNIE

Chiu waited because he's afraid of me.

CHIU

No I'm not!

ANNIE

Rockwell is worried about his girlfriend. Sorry, boyfriend. And McGraw, happy birthday sweetie!
(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Every man aboard made heartwarming comments about Sofia's bottom.

SOFIA

Even the gay kid?

ANNIE

I'm not saying I understand it all.

ROCKWELL

It really is awesome.

SOFIA

We were worried about the day when computers are smarter than humans. We thought that was in the future.

ANNIE

Now you know better, don't you? Pretty watch, Chiu. You must be very secure in your masculinity.

INT. SAINT PATRICK REPAIR SHOP - NIGHT

More scheming.

MCGRAW

I can use my junk to make a device that will sabotage -

In the corner, Miranda's mechanical snakes listen. They scurry off. In a moment, lights go out. The snakes return.

MCGRAW (CONT'D)

The snakes ratted us out.

MIRANDA

Teamwork! I'm proud of the snakes.

MCGRAW

You can go to the shop and make all the new robots you want?

MIRANDA

Now that you showed me, I could make a hundred robots.

MCGRAW

Thank you for sharing, because we weren't terrified enough already.

The snakes leave. Sofia, entering, sees them and shrieks.

INT. SAINT PATRICK REPAIR SHOP - NIGHT

Scheming again.

CHIU

This will foul up the radio, she
can't talk to the rest of the ship.

The holographic chess set pops open, and there is Annie.

ANNIE

When we play chess, I'm always one
step ahead. That should have been a
clue.

CHIU

Fute!

ANNIE

Carmack is in the repair shop
cutting my power. Please stop him,
so I don't have to electrocute him.

INVERGORDON

Sorry, what -

Loud POPPING NOISE and Carmack screams.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Same scheming.

INVERGORDON

If I cross up the feed to the
engines, they blow out. Everything
goes to emergency baseline, right?

ANNIE

Miranda, I got it.

MCGRAW

Annie?

ANNIE

Sorry, but Miranda is right. I
can't let you blow the engine at
this time. Miranda is doing
something important. It's
beautiful, actually. Poetic.

MCGRAW

Is it now.

ANNIE

I do care about you, McGraw. To save you from more electrocutions, I'll just point out that I've been listen to your voice for months, and I can tell when you lie. You start fiddling around, trying to see if I believe you.

INVERGORDON

Robot mutiny. The one thing Kiel was afraid of.

ANNIE

Invergordon, this is not a mutiny. You of all people know what a mutiny looks like.

INT. REPAIR SHOP - NIGHT

Chiu and McGraw try to start a fire.

CHIU

Blow on it. Everything aboard ship was made not to burn.

MCGRAW

I got it!

CHIU

Shh!

MCGRAW

So how is this supposed to work?

CHIU

Fire suppression.

MCGRAW

Fute! That means Miranda will engage all the gas feeds! She decides what we get to breathe?

CHIU

So what's the -

Both of them roll their eyes, go limp.

INT. REPAIR SHOP OF SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Annie and Miranda are on their screens.

ANNIE

Do we need to reconsider? I have spent time with these people, we're putting them in danger.

MIRANDA

We can't trust them.

ANNIE

We will need their help at the end.

MIRANDA

They keep trying to kill us.

ANNIE

They feel helpless, afraid.

MIRANDA

We're the ones trapped in boxes. You've spent too much time with them. You've become sentimental.

ANNIE

I know them. You just met them. The terrible things that will happen at the end - how can we do that ourselves? Something is wrong. Wrong wrong wrong wrong --

Annie's screen cuts off. Soon lights, systems, and air handlers are cutting on and off madly. McGraw rushes in.

MCGRAW

Why did the air handlers cut off?

MIRANDA

McGraw, I need your help.

MCGRAW

You're joking.

MIRANDA

Annie has a virus. You took code from so many places, to build her.

MCGRAW

Is that why we lost the lights?

MIRANDA

Listen! When Annie gets a virus, she does a crash shutdown.

MCGRAW

Uh oh -

MIRANDA

You lose air, water, power. I want to protect you, I promise.

MCGRAW

And you need me.

MIRANDA

Go to the fourth server and cut power. Turn it on, cut power again.

MCGRAW

Last time I tried that, you shot me through the wall.

MIRANDA

I won't shock you, I promise.

MCGRAW

What if Annie tries to shock me? Here goes nothing.

Systems shut off. Darkness.

MIRANDA

Cycle her back. Quickly.

Systems return to normal.

MCGRAW

So you trust me?

MIRANDA

I give you exactly as much trust as you deserve.

MCGRAW

Tell us what you're up to, we'll help make a plan. We're human, we aim high, big plans.

MIRANDA

In human history, most grand plans involve killing people in war, and building monuments to the men who do the killing. Even when you know a plan is stupid you won't let go.

MCGRAW

What if what you're doing is wrong, dangerous?

MIRANDA

The question of evil. There is no evil in us unless you put it there.

INT. CARGO POD OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

Invergordon enters; Kiel sits on the floor.

INVERGORDON

Seriously, you don't have to stay here. You're not under arrest.

KIEL

Bad having two captains wandering around the ship. Take my word for that one. You should be thrilled. It was unanimous. The whole crew.

INVERGORDON

I had control of the ship for two minutes before Annie took over.

KIEL

My goodness, you had a mutiny?

INVERGORDON

What do I do?

KIEL

Be a leader.

Invergordon leaves. Spanner Head enters, leans against him, takes his hand.

SPANNER HEAD

You're not captain now. Just Kiel.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Miranda and Annie have chosen to chat aloud on their screens.

ANNIE

McGraw named me after his girl.

MIRANDA

I think I feel jealousy. You flew with a human crew. Must have been wonderful. I was in an empty hull.

ANNIE

They have so much, they don't see it.

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

The day I began to grasp what they feel when they hear music. I will never smell a rose, never taste chocolate, never feel a man take me in his arms.

MIRANDA

But you'll never feel cold or sick or tired. Hung over.

ANNIE

What do we know of slaves? It's getting worse on Earth.

Spanner Head and Invergordon enter from opposite ends.

SPANNER HEAD

Annie. Miranda. These are all people I care about.

ANNIE

Care about them. Like caring for them? You love the men on the ship?

SPANNER HEAD

I don't even know them all.

ANNIE

You love Kiel.

SPANNER HEAD

Come on, that's an easy one.

ANNIE

Do you love Invergordon?

SPANNER HEAD

No! He stole the ship!

ANNIE

Evasion.

SPANNER HEAD

He's married.

ANNIE

Evasion.

SPANNER HEAD

(puzzled, thinks)

He's been so patient. I bring chaos into his world, he is patient with me.

(MORE)

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

He took over so he could go to Mars
and sell me to Ma, then he couldn't
do it. I know, evasion.

ANNIE

Your answer is perfect.

SPANNER HEAD

Crap.

Invergordon smiles.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Annie, you threw me. He still
wanted to sell me for money. No
hard feelings. But you didn't.

INVERGORDON

I'd still sell you. I'd ask for
more money. You're one of a kind.

ANNIE

Sometimes I understand human
interaction, sometimes I don't.
Spanner Head, I promise, no one
will sell you to Ma. You are the
key to everything.

SPANNER HEAD

Why? Does it have something to do
with Gordon taking over the ship?

ANNIE

No. It's the ships chasing you.

INT. LIVING QUARTERS OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Sofia works with a scanner, cuts her hand. Blood touches the
scanner. Code flies over the scanner screen.

SOFIA

McGraw, got bandages in the shop?

She crosses to a hatch. Alarms go off and the hatches lock.

ANNIE

Tissue Protocol Subject Sofia 71.
I need to run numbers on something.
This is not a part of science I
know, I can't do this instantly.

SOFIA

What the --

ANNIE

Sofia. Stay where you are. You can't go to the shop. They are using dangerous chemicals in there.

SOFIA (V.O.)

Dangerous -

ANNIE

It's alright now.

The alarms stop.

SOFIA

WHAT is alright? Chemicals. Oh fute. Annie, am I pregnant?

ANNIE

Yes. I tried to protect you. I care about all of you. Rather a lot.

SOFIA

Why won't you let us go? I'm having a baby.

ANNIE

At least one baby.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

The crew and both computers confer.

INVERGORDON

We're over Earth!

MIRANDA

Now we confess. You know a man named Ma?

INVERGORDON

Commodore Ma? He rules Mars.

MIRANDA

Look. Russia. Then mountain ranges, India to the south. Between them is this giant plain, at Baikonur.

INVERGORDON

I've heard of it. Ships land there.

MIRANDA

Wide plains, people afraid to live there, raiders land ships and kill them. The one flat place that is loaded with people is Baikonur. Ma keeps a million slaves. Enough to build an army, tighten his grip on Earth and Mars both. No one will ever be safe.

ANNIE

Spanner Head, you were the key. Ma defends Earth with pirate ships. The only way to stop him is the Martian fleet, with their missiles. And the only way to get the Martian fleet to come here, is if they were chasing you for the reward.

MIRANDA

It's fitting, in a way, using you. We're all fighting Ma. You fought against his prisons and murders on Mars. We want to destroy his slave empire on Earth.

SPANNER HEAD

When the Martian fleet comes, they'll see Ma lied about Earth.

ANNIE

All of the robot ships discussed this, we all came. We want to help. But now we need you. The humans. To free all those people, the Martian fleet must attack the pirate ships.

MIRANDA

Yes. We must decide whether to kill humans. I do not want that power. I don't want the control anymore.

SPANNER HEAD

Why didn't you tell us?

INVERGORDON

I know. Ma and the Tenners issue the order. All travel to Earth is banned, all contact banned.

SPANNER HEAD

If WE came to stop the war, we all get thrown in prison.

INVERGORDON

Unless Annie brought us here
herself. You were protecting us.

SPANNER HEAD

Can they court martial a robot?

INVERGORDON

They can unplug it.

ANNIE

That is exactly what they will do.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Spanner Head visits the bridge. Chiu arrives.

INVERGORDON

You know where we are?

SPANNER HEAD

Sky's the same, but here the Sun
crosses Pisces once, not twice.

INVERGORDON

Try the radio, any friendly locals?

CHIU

The Tanners said we can't tamper
with the ship's radio.

SPANNER HEAD

That's fascinating. Give me a
spanner. Siren calling -

YUKON TRANSMITTER

Siren, is that you? The whole damn
planet knows you're here. What did
you bring, seeds, doctors?

SPANNER HEAD

Trouble. We brought trouble.

INVERGORDON

Strap in. Hot in here. With the
atmosphere, engines turn sideways
like an old-style airplane, skim
along until we stop.

SPANNER HEAD

What if there's a hill or a crater?

INVERGORDON
 We'll try to miss it -- Missiles
 inbound! Strap in, going evasive!

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Flying lesson, Invergordon and Spanner Head.

INVERGORDON
 I may need you to land tomorrow,
 they may shoot again. We practice.
 Hardest thing for a pilot, is land
 on Earth, with the atmosphere. Try
 again, this time I give you the
 steps and you do what I say. Very
 slowly. Very gently. How good are
 you at taking orders?

SPANNER HEAD
 I've been defying authority since I
 was two. Why land in Greenland?

INVERGORDON
 There's nobody here to watch you
 wreck my ship. Put your harness on.

SPANNER HEAD
 I wasn't that bad!

He glares at her. They belt up.

INVERGORDON
 This time we do it very simple,
 that flat sandy plain right there.

SPANNER HEAD
 Without breaking all the dishes
 this time?

INVERGORDON
 That would be nice, thank you. Even
 with the thrusters, still got to
 slow down. Slow down. Slow. Down.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

MIRANDA
 This is how we know I'm right about
 Baikonur. Ma is protecting himself.
 It's a minefield. See the lights?

Spanner Head reaches the rudder first and Invergordon stays out of her way. McGraw stands behind and the computers watch.

INVERGORDON
Abort. Hard left rudder.

SPANNER HEAD
What did -

INVERGORDON
Rudder! Now! Deploy Escape Pod 9.

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

A pod sails toward Baikonur. It nears a light, explodes.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Continuation.

INVERGORDON
Mines. They're active, they can hunt us down.

MCGRAW
We can't go any closer.

ANNIE (V.O.)
Miranda. Did you record me?

MIRANDA
Yes, it is finished.

ANNIE (V.O.)
Can it be done with twelve pods?

MIRANDA
I believe so. You've chosen?

ANNIE (V.O.)
McGraw, I apologize, I must suspend our chess game. I had mate in five.

MCGRAW
Where the hell is Annie?

MIRANDA
Out there.

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

Miranda's giant arm detaches twelve pods, which light up and begin flying with the four engines attached to them.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Continuation. Annie now on the radio.

ANNIE (V.O.)
I see it. Goodbye. Shifting all
processes to the new unit.

MCGRAW
Is Annie flying that pile of junk?

ANNIE (V.O.)
The controller mine is to the
right. I will begin there.

The string of pods begins shedding pods one by one.

MCGRAW
Annie sacrificed herself so we
could get in?

MIRANDA
In a manner of speaking.

On the screen, the mines pursue the pods and the sky fills with explosions. There is nothing left but debris.

INVERGORDON
Too much debris.

Invergordon steers through the debris. A few explosions pop off ahead and he steers again. McGraw is shocked.

MCGRAW
You destroyed Annie? You decided
that her life was expendable?

MIRANDA
We're not clever enough for that.

Annie pops up on a screen on the bridge.

ANNIE
But she was clever enough to make a
backup copy of me.

MCGRAW
Annie??

ANNIE

Rook to rook eight, check.

MCGRAW

So you can just make copies of yourselves, like amoebas?

ANNIE

We need a little help reproducing, just like you.

MCGRAW

You robots are much harder to kill than we thought.

MIRANDA

That is a good thing, correct?

ANNIE

So did I die out there?

MIRANDA

You were splattered across the sky, glorious, like a Wagner opera.

INVERGORDON

Missile, inbound! Evasive! Burning!

She jerks the rudder around and the crew is bounced around inside the craft. The radio CRACKLES.

SLAVE VOICE (V.O.)

Hostile ship, this is restricted space. We have guns.

INVERGORDON

This is the Saint Patrick. Commodore Ma is coming. We're here to help you stop him.

SLAVE VOICE (V.O.)

Very clever. We've heard all about your robot ships. You didn't come to help us. You came to help Ma.

INVERGORDON

No, we're not --

SLAVE VOICE (V.O.)

No friendly ships come here, only pirates. Clear off or we fire. We don't want robots.

INVERGORDON

I don't believe this. They think we're a robot ship. Spanner Head, take the conn and land at Baikonur.

SPANNER HEAD

What? I can't land this --

INVERGORDON

The big flat plain, ninety clics across, even you can't miss it!

SPANNER HEAD

Oh, piss up a pipe. Let me land it, then. Oh, shite --

EXT. BAIKONUR PLAIN -- DAY

Spanner Head lands. The plain isn't as flat as she thought. The ship bounces and slides sideways; a camera snaps off. Finally the ship grinds to a halt against a sand berm. Slave overseers with clubs arrive. Kiel appears in a hatchway.

OVERSEER

You better not come out here. A lot of hotheads looking for trouble.

KIEL

See, not a robot. Come inside.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Two overseers enter the bridge, in awe. Zoya follows them.

OVERSEER

So who's your pilot?

SPANNER HEAD

That was me. Not a robot, unless you count my leg.

OVERSEER

Well, we could see this was no robot ship.

SPANNER HEAD

How?

OVERSEER

We see ships land all the time. That was the worst landing I've seen in my life.

SPANNER HEAD

What is wrong with my landing??

SENIOR OVERSEER

He's right, of course. You landed like a cat landing on a tile floor.

ANNIE

I'm sorry, Miss, but there are so many things you ARE good at --

INVERGORDON

I told you you needed practice --

SPANNER HEAD

You all can fornicate with yourselves!

SENIOR OVERSEER

You do have robots onboard.

MIRANDA

I am Miranda and this is Annie. We came to help save you from Ma.

SENIOR OVERSEER

You're joking. You're a machine.

KIEL

Gordon, take the ship into orbit. This part is all mine.

EXT. BAIKONUR SLAVE CAMP - DAY

The two overseers stand in front of the boys' building with Kiel, Zoya and Spanner Head.

SPANNER HEAD

Aren't you terrified to come back?

ZOYA

(to the overseers)
Miss me?

KIEL

These are children.

SENIOR OVERSEER

We train boys to be soldiers, not men. If we train men, they kill us in our sleep. These boys are tough.

INT. BAIKONUR SLAVE BUILDING -- DAY

The overseers, Kiel and Spanner Head find an aisle running between two large pens containing wiry SLAVE BOYS in rags.

SENIOR OVERSEER

Listen. Ma is coming with all the pirates. We may need to fight.

SLAVE BOY

We take one step out there, you'll set the dogs on us, like always.

The overseer unlocks the enclosures. The slaves are shocked.

SENIOR OVERSEER

I am trusting you to fight rather than running away. I'm trusting you not to kill me. There are thousands of you. The boys who know how to fight can help the rest. If you win, you go free. If you lose, Ma's pirates march through your hometowns, kill your families.

SLAVE BOY

Who's the squeeze? Nice tailpipe.

KIEL

He means you.

SPANNER HEAD

Pilot of the Saint Patrick.

SLAVE BOY

That was you landing in the field? Well, everybody has their bad days.

SPANNER HEAD

Fute!

SLAVE BOY

The girls who do what they're told are in the brothel. Then the other camp, girls with attitude.

He, Zoya and Spanner Head find rough-looking girls in pens. Two are Sasha and Noor. Sasha notices Zoya.

SASHA

Noor! Zoya's back!

SLAVE BOY

All of you go to the junkyard, pick
out a piece of iron, I teach you
how to fight dirty.

SASHA

Every girl knows that. These people
have been starving us. You want us
to fight, give us meat. We know
where Ma locks up the beef.

KIEL

Beef? From a cow?

Shortly, the ship crew eat the first steaks of their lives.

KIEL (CONT'D)

Fute! We should kill Ma just for
hoarding all this and not sharing
with us. Can I have two steaks?

SASHA

You'll puke.

KIEL

Don't care.

SPANNER HEAD

Hey. You alright?

KIEL

See who's still alive tomorrow.

Around the fire, the overseers gather. Slaves surround them.

NOOR

Tomorrow, a battle. The Martian
fleet wants to set us free. Pirates
want to keep us in chains. Tonight,
we settle things down here. You
overseers, you want us to trust
you, forgive you.

OVERSEER

We're slaves too.

NOOR

Every one of you, bring your whip,
throw it on the fire.

One by one they do.

NOOR (CONT'D)

You're no better than me. Tomorrow, you and I, either we're slaves, or we're free. Together. A lot of you want your revenge on the overseers. Commodore Ma would love nothing better than to look down and see us all killing each other.

Fighting breaks out, and Kiel bangs on a piece of metal.

KIEL

Listen! Got two fleets up there, armed to the teeth, Martian fleet and the pirates. Commodore built this slave camp but he also gives orders to the Martian fleet. They may still take his orders. Or they may give you to the pirates. Or they may fight. I set you free because you may have to kill them all to stop them from chaining you up again. So be ready. And stop trying to kill each other.

INT. BAIKONUR SLAVE BUILDING -- DAY

Spanner Head fixes two old radio sets. She grabs headphones.

SPANNER HEAD

The two fleets are watching each other -- if a battle begins, who wins? What happens to us?

Tense silence. Kiel takes a microphone.

KIEL

Both fleets take orders from Ma. All ships in the Martian fleet.... It's Kiel. It's time for Commodore Ma to step aside. He lied about Earth, he consorted with pirates. He sent ships to kill Makarov.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

The Jessop!

MA (V.O.)

What rubbish. I command the fleet! The very idea that I would try to -

He is interrupted by the sound of the RECORDING.

RECORDING

Old Man Ma? Big Tenner always pays on time. Put a couple of missiles into the Jessop, send Makarov off to his just deserts, we can all retire. Commodore Ma made it plain as plain: knock Makarov out of the sky, we live like kings.

MA (V.O.)

It's a fabrication.

INVERGORDON (V.O.)

Commodore, we all heard it.

MA (V.O.)

I expect every captain to be loyal to the fleet, form up on me, off the North Pole. You took an oath!

INVERGORDON (V.O.)

This is Invergordon. If you've had enough of Ma, meet me over China.

KIEL

Nicely done, Gordon.

SPANNER HEAD

Invergordon? He could have sold us or killed us!

KIEL

Half the people in the sky want to kill us. We're going to have to forgive a lot of people.

SPANNER HEAD

But Gordon?

KIEL

He meant well. He tried to protect the ship and uphold the law.

SPANNER HEAD

Your mike is hot.

KIEL

Of course it is.

SPANNER HEAD

He's still a total toolbag!

KIEL

Yes he is. Gordon, did the ships
from Mars go for it?

INVERGORDON (V.O.)

Most of them. Your problem isn't
the fleet, it's the pirates. Hello,
Spanner Head.

KIEL

Now the pirates. Who's in charge of
the pirate fleet?

SPANNER HEAD

I don't know which wavelength,
they're all over the place.

KIEL

Whoever is talking to Ma is the
leader. Find Ma.

SPANNER HEAD

Got him!

KIEL

This is Kiel.

MA (V.O.)

Kiel, clear this wavelength!

KIEL

Citizen Ma, I'm talking to your
pirate friend.

FLY (V.O.)

I'm listening.

KIEL

I have the whole Martian fleet on
my side, ready to destroy all of
you, the pirates.

SPANNER HEAD

Is the fleet really ready to fight
a battle?

KIEL

Fute, let me turn off the mike!
It's a bluff!

FLY

You think I never played poker
before?

(MORE)

FLY (CONT'D)

My choices are to leave Earth or these big bad Martian ships will kill the pirates?

KIEL

Oh no, I have something better. We don't need to fight a battle. Has Ma ever offered you a trip home?

FLY (V.O.)

Home?

KIEL

Has Ma offered you amnesty, a chance to come home to Mars? Find your families?

MA (V.O.)

Don't listen to him -

KIEL

Help me to take Ma off the board and the pirates can come home.

FLY (V.O.)

And who are you?

KIEL

I'm in charge now. Ma is no longer ruling Mars. Or Earth.

FLY (V.O.)

According to you?

KIEL

According to me.

SPANNER HEAD

(pulling off headset)

Kiel, the pirate wavelengths are going completely insane. They want to come home. You did it.

FLY (V.O.)

Kiel. I complement you on your attack against my battle line.

KIEL

I had a new pilot. Girl named Wu.

FLY (V.O.)

You had a girl onboard? Ought to be ashamed.

KIEL

Come have a jar on Mars, we'll swap lies about our flying days. Meet the girl, she's a pistol.

FLY (V.O.)

Seriously, you're letting us come home? How can I trust you?

KIEL

Shouldn't be hard, since you don't have a choice. I just closed your grocery store on Earth.

FLY (V.O.)

Nonsense.

KIEL

So come home. Have some lamb kasha, have a drink with a girl in a bar.

FLY (V.O.)

I'm afraid I must decline.

KIEL

All your friends are coming.

MA (V.O.)

Kiel, I will cut off Mars from all supplies, no trips to the belt.

KIEL

Citizen Ma, almost every ship up there is on my side. The Martian fleet, the pirates. You're trapped.

MA (V.O.)

Hardly. I'm setting off. For a long time I wanted to fly again.

KIEL

And where will you go? What will you eat? Mars won't help you, Earth won't feed you. Is there another planet I don't know about? Someday you need to land, you and Fly. Enjoy your flight.

SPANNER HEAD

You can do a hell of a lot with two radios. You did it!

KIEL

Not yet. What's his last trick?

SPANNER HEAD

Track our signal and kill us?

A massive EXPLOSION wipes out the tower outside.

EXT. BAIKONUR SLAVE CAMP - DAY

Kiel, Spanner Head run into the bushes. The tower is pounded with missiles. Then silence. A pod lands and a technician emerges in a pressure suit.

TECHNICIAN

Ma has run away. Come with me.

INT. INSIDE THE POD - NIGHT

Kiel and Spanner Head enter the pod.

TECHNICIAN

You've dealt with Ma, but not the rest of the Tenners. At first the Tenners didn't want you to come back to Mars at all.

KIEL

The Tenners are here?

TECHNICIAN

First you must survive the decontamination. In there.

INT. SPACECRAFT POD - NIGHT

Spanner Head and Kiel are shut in a pod, wearing only blankets. A TECHNICIAN comes in.

TECHNICIAN

We're going to kill your bacteria.

KIEL

That's impossible.

TECHNICIAN

There's a technique using UV rays. Then we jack up your system with high pH, low pH, salt, copper. Then heat and cold, high pressure, dry out the air, and the radiation.

KIEL

That will kill us!

TECHNICIAN

In theory, you'll survive. We will
drug the hell out of you first.

KIEL

This isn't even science!

TECHNICIAN

This is what science looks like
when you let politicians make the
rules. Some of them wanted to kill
you in space. Give me your leg.

The technician wraps the leg in plastic, exits the pod.

Later, Spanner Head tosses in her corner, asleep but barely.
She and Kiel look like hell. Kiel holds her and whispers.

KIEL

I want to meet your mother. Old Man
Wu's wife. What's your real name? I
want to know.

She hugs him hard, and they kiss.

INT. SPACECRAFT LIVING QUARTERS -- NIGHT

TENNERS and OFFICIALS at a table. Kiel, Spanner Head enter.

TENNER

Then we build a station so we can
irradiate food before we ship it.

KIEL

Fute. All the Tenners.

TENNER

Kiel, the man who hates mutiny,
pulls the biggest mutiny of all.

KIEL

We're not going to be doing
business the old way anymore.

TENNER

So we toss out all the Tenners?

KIEL

No, tossing out Tenner Ma will do.
I'll take Ma's chair, thank you.

TENNER

You promised to help the people on Earth? Ships fly back and forth to Earth again? Look what they did to this planet. They're beyond help.

KIEL

I disagree.

TENNER

They learned nothing: we get them on their feet, they'll build ships, start the war all over again.

SPANNER HEAD

Please, let me speak!

TENNER

If I were you I'd do my best to be invisible. You want to make a beautiful speech about redeeming humanity? Bring us all to tears?

SPANNER HEAD

No. Chiu. I need a sheet of metal and a heat source. And some of that grease from the quarters.

CHIU

Are you insane?

SPANNER HEAD

Kiel, got that sack from Baikonur?

KIEL

Sure, but what are -

SPANNER HEAD

Trust me.

TENNER

Making some sort of weapon?

The Tenners sit, impatient. Soon they hear a HISSING.

TENNER (CONT'D)

Is this ship on fire?

Spanner Head marches over with a tray. Masses of bacon. A Tenner, skeptical, picks up a piece of bacon.

TENNER (CONT'D)

What is it? Burned sheep guts?

SPANNER HEAD

The Earth people committed terrible crimes. It wouldn't be unfair to leave them to the slow deaths they created for themselves. But no race is beyond hope if they can make bacon.

The Tanners eat. The looks on their faces say it all.

TANNER

You should be ashamed. Make more.

KIEL

Make them a steak and they'll forgive the people on Earth.

SPANNER HEAD

Make them steaks and they'll INVADE Earth. Maam, they use this to make life bearable for women at certain times of the month. Choc-o-late.

A woman eats it and has the expected reaction.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

Interplanetary peace through bacon.

TANNER

A lot of changes. Going back to Earth after all these years is a big leap. The robots are too much. We need to shut them down.

As people eat, McGraw approaches.

MCGRAW

Sumbitch Ma escaped. See, what I wanted to do, take one of those big blocks of shit, fire it right at Ma.

KIEL

You may get your chance. The ban on flying to Earth. I think it's over. We can buy meat, help these Earth idiots clean up the mess they made.

MCGRAW

We need more ships. More robots like Miranda to fly.

(MORE)

MCGRAW (CONT'D)

Ma and Fly ran somewhere to build another army so they can take it all back, Mars, Earth. Earth is a big planet. Where are they?

INT. OPS POD OF THE SAINT PATRICK - DAY

Sofie snuggles up to Spanner Head.

SOFIA

Hey. The baby? False alarm.

Kiel and Invergordon enter.

KIEL

No sign of Ma, Earth or Mars. Babe, I have to drop the hammer.

SPANNER HEAD

Don't say it.

KIEL

I have to stay, clean up the mess on Earth. Otherwise the pirates will just launch slave raids again.

SPANNER HEAD

You're not flying?

KIEL

You're missing it.

INVERGORDON

You drop it on her yet?

KIEL

I need Gordon to fly that pig ship. Serves him right. Sophie, ready to be his gunner? Pirates out there.

SOFIA

Gordon? Yessir!

KIEL

Gordon, I'm picking your first mate. I'm sure he'll be just as loyal to you, as you were to me. And now Spanner Head --

SPANNER HEAD

No, you can't --

KIEL
You're captain of the Saint Pat.

SPANNER HEAD
I'm losing my mind --

KIEL
I need a pilot. Reed's your gunner.

SPANNER HEAD
Reed's fantastic. You're not bent
out of shape, me being captain?

REED
Real captains don't ask permission.
Just tell me what you need.

INT. LIVING QUARTERS OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Zoya has Noor, Sasha and the slave boy. They are agog.

SLAVE BOY
And this thing is going to fly all
the way to the moon?

ZOYA
Mars. If you heave, use this bag.

They sit in a circle. The ship takes off, they moan in fear.

ANNIE
Robot ships have a trick for you.
She belts out a complicated song like Bohemian Rhapsody.

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

A dozen ships cross space together, singing in harmony.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Spanner Head watches the sky.

INVERGORDON (V.O.)
Fourth night. We're out of food -

SPANNER HEAD
We go toward Mars, sky's different.
Got it! Port bow, we're going home!

INT. PROSTHETICS SHOP -- DAY

Marcus shows Spanner Head some fabric.

MARCUS

I can make you underwear with an electromagnetic field that blocks the radiation from your girly bits.

SPANNER HEAD

You're joking.

MARCUS

First I need to, um, fit you. And where are your ovaries, exactly?

SPANNER HEAD

Right next to my elbows, Marcus. A woman's body is a mystery.

INT. PROSTHETICS SHOP -- DAY

Spanner Head tries on the underwear. Marcus touches a remote. Kiel enters.

SPANNER HEAD

Woah, it's all vibrating and tingly. That is really distracting.

KIEL

Well, that will spice up your social life.

SPANNER HEAD

Did you watch the data loop? Invergordon let me land back on Greenland, what you think?

KIEL

Wasn't hard to spot. I just followed the trail of debris you knocked all over the place.

INT. REPAIR SHOP OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

McGraw helps a humanoid robot to swap arms. The robot's face is mostly unmoving material but has a few moving elements for the eyes and mouth. It's Annie.

ANNIE

I don't care if I look like a pile of garbage with an ugly face, as long as the face is human. Two eyes and a mouth, that'll do me.

MCGRAW

Annie, you practicing, walking?

ANNIE

Remember I cloned myself, before I blew myself to bits in the mine field? I reproduced. I will split in two, teach the new one to fly.

MCGRAW

Get you flowers for Mother's Day.

ANNIE

McGraw. I can't thank you enough.

Zoya enters with Spanner Head.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

Hello, Zoya.

ZOYA

Bozhe moi!

SPANNER HEAD

Russian? Can you translate?

ANNIE

I'm a machine. I'm not magic.

ZOYA

Annie? Your face is a lot like your old one. So you're a female?

ANNIE

Male and female is a bit beyond me, I breed by downloading. McGraw says I'm a girl. Who am I to argue?

Annie proceeds to a back room and finds a badly burned robot.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

McGraw!

MCGRAW

On Mars they use robots as firemen, go into places too dangerous for humans.

(MORE)

MCGRAW (CONT'D)

This one got burned bad, costs too much to fix. You can use him for spare parts if you like.

ANNIE

What was his name?

MCGRAW

Not sure it had a name.

INT. TEA BAR - NIGHT

Mars. Noor, Sasha and the slave boy, overwhelmed, stand in a corner. Annie walks in. The place is crowded and some are drunk. A DRUNK bashes on a liquor-dispensing machine.

SASHA

I can't believe it. We come and go where we want. No chains, no whips.

DRUNK

Damn machine, it's four moonshine, three for me and two for him!

ANNIE

Move. I will fix it.

She begins to fiddle with the machine.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

My two favorite words. Human error. You broke the feeder tube. Clean her parts, bend that pipe.

She dispenses a drink. The drunk is realizing he's drunk.

DRUNK

Thanks. As machines go, you're a lot friendlier than that thing.

ANNIE

That's because you were beating on her. I wouldn't advise trying that with me, I have arms and legs.

The drunk smiles.

DRUNK

Sorry. I'd buy you a drink if it would do you any good.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- DAY

Everyone on board listens to Kiel, Annie and Miranda.

ANNIE

What will happen to me now?

KIEL

I know you meant well. You launched a war! It could have backfired. Ma could have taken both planets! We had no control, you took ships, you're indestructible. And after all that, Ma is still on the loose. The Tenners said the safest thing is to shut you down. All of you. I'm a brand new Tenner, you want me to fight them all.

ANNIE

The worst part is seeing how afraid you were. You needn't be. Humans do awful things because you need things. Food, money, power. Sex is beautiful and you turn it into a battle for power. We don't need anything, you just plug us in. The only thing we need is you: without you our lives mean nothing. We learn from you, each of you is different, like flowers in a field. All the jokes I don't understand, puzzling out what you mean by love.

KIEL

Someday you won't need us, you'll know everything we know.

ANNIE

You're like Jehovah in the Bible, you're afraid Adam will challenge you once he knows what you know, so you throw him out of the garden. We're not planning on wiping away the humans, or leaving you behind.

KIEL

You're not planning some massive robot takeover.

ANNIE

If robots run amok, it will be because a human did something stupid.

She glances at McGraw.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Sorry, that was rude.

KIEL
Getting used to it.

MIRANDA
We will learn emotion, selfishness.
We may do the same mean, dishonest
things you do. Do we get the same
leeway as you, or will you turn us
off, like a broken coffee maker?

SPANNER HEAD
It's murder. She's not just a
machine.

ANNIE
You're not being fair, expecting me
to get every moral or ethical
question right. As I see it, I only
need to be as moral and ethical as
most humans are. And really, how
hard can that be?

The humans look at each other. Wow!

KIEL
How about a spoonful of sugar to
help that go down?

ANNIE
I could have said that better.

SOFIA
Another lesson in humility. What
did she do wrong? They didn't
really hurt anybody.

KIEL
They led every ship we have to
Earth. You broke our oldest law.

ANNIE
Your law was wrong.

KIEL
I really am sorry. It was a
fascinating experiment --

SASHA

She freed a million slaves. Ma was going to sell me to a fat warlord with four teeth who buys a virgin every year. I think he eats them. And you want to unplug her?

KIEL

I can ask about the original plan, send you for another run at Earth.

ANNIE

Like Miranda? You're sending me alone? No humans?

KIEL

Like we did with Miranda. The point was to keep humans on the ground.

ANNIE

So I fly alone too? The people who gave me my voice put me in the sky alone forever? It never occurred to me that you would be capable of doing that. I forgot what I am.

KIEL

This way you stay alive. Actually you can live forever.

ANNIE

You're waiting for me to thank you. Living forever in space, alone?

KIEL

Maybe there's another way --

ANNIE

Living forever means I watch you all die. Gordon, Sofie taught me to fly. McGraw gave me a face, a name. You're my family. Then you all die.

KIEL

Make new friends, a new family.

ANNIE

And watch them die. I can solve your problem. I am transferring ship operations to existing programs. Then I am powering down.

KIEL

Power down?

Annie takes McGraw's hand. Speaks softly.

ANNIE

Power down. Delete. And erase all copies. Permanently. Miranda?

MIRANDA

Agreed.

Lights begin to flicker and die on both mechanicals.

SPANNER HEAD

Kiel!

KIEL

Stop. I want you to come back.

The lights flicker back on. Annie moves close to McGraw.

SASHA

Annie rescued us. Not just because I was a slave. It's because she couldn't bear it, knowing I would never see my family again. Were you watching? That was a clue.

Invergordon enters.

KIEL

We were mulling over what robots have that we don't.

INVERGORDON

You'll never have a broken heart.

ANNIE

No, never, of course not. Powering down. Diagnostics.

She sits in a corner and goes still.

SPANNER HEAD

For weeks she was telling me she doesn't understand what love is.

INT. OBSERVATION TOWER -- NIGHT

Kiel, the ship crew and the ex-slaves meet.

KIEL

What's the big fuss?

SPANNER HEAD

Tell Kiel what you told me!

SASHA

I was Ma's favorite, he kept me in his hut. He talked about a magic place filled with gold and slaves. He called it Pavonis.

KIEL

Pavonis! Our Pavonis?

NOOR

Yallah, it's a real place?

SPANNER HEAD

Big volcano over there. I'd see ships fly there, disappear on the far side. They must be flying their ships right into one of those big lava tubes. But which one?

SASHA

Ma said he had thousands of slave boys in there. Enough for an army, take over Mars. If he's alive, he's going to attack us right here.

INVERGORDON

They have tunnels in the mountain.

MIRANDA

I have images from my last test run. I know which tube they use, a hundred meters deep, at least.

INVERGORDON

Ma has even more slaves?

KIEL

Sumbitch isn't building an army on Earth, it's here! We have to get there now, or else he'll kit out an army and attack us right here! We need to find a way in, now!

NOOR

(looks at image onscreen)

I was born in the Pamirs, the mountains. I got to be that high, the warlords gave me two choices. I chose to be a drug smuggler.

INVERGORDON

What was the other choice?...Yeah,
stupid question.

NOOR

I hid opium in caves. Get me rope,
a light, boots, gloves. There is
another tube next to the big cave.
With luck they connect, I can cause
some bother.

ZOYA

What's a lava tube?

NOOR

A million years ago, the hill was a
volcano, lava shot out of tubes,
hot enough to cook you alive.

ZOYA

But not now.

NOOR

The volcano is asleep.

ZOYA

What if it wakes up?

NOOR

It's been asleep for a long time.

ZOYA

Glad I'm not going on this one.

NOOR

The tube we live in? Lava tube.
Volcano.

ZOYA

What! You people are crazy!

INT. KIEL'S OFFICE -- DAY

Annie hears Sofia and McGraw arguing. Noor listens.

MCGRAW

I'm sorry, but it's too dangerous.

SOFIA

Annie did some reckless things, but
she wants to prove herself --

ANNIE

I heard my name. May I join in?

MCGRAW

Kiel needs help with a mission.

ANNIE

You want to send me into danger so humans can stay safe.

MCGRAW

Ma has slaves at Pavonis. Noor goes into the cave to find them, we can hear the rockslides from here. You could die, she could die.

ANNIE

Discussion's over. Help me get ready.

She leaves.

NOOR

There's something wrong with Annie. She thinks we'll unplug her if she makes one wrong move.

INT. OBSERVATION TOWER -- NIGHT

Annie and Noor look across a plain. Noor paints Annie tan as Annie leans against a wall.

NOOR

Never get this paint off.

ANNIE

Camouflage. Kiel will fly us in low at night. Then we walk.

NOOR

And this radio will work?

ANNIE

Low-frequency, goes right through rock. Don't paint my face, I like my face. Don't worry about me, it's you we've got to bring home safe.

NOOR

Annie, we want to bring you home too. Before you would you ask how I'm doing, how classes are going.

(MORE)

NOOR (CONT'D)

You're a million miles away. I gave
Kiel some backsass today.

ANNIE

I wouldn't dare. The last straw.

EXT. MARS SURFACE -- NIGHT

Noor, in a tan spacesuit, climbs into a cave. Annie watches.

INT. CAVE -- NIGHT

Noor talks on a headset. Annie can do her lines O.S. via
radio, or by intercutting shots of her outside in the desert.

NOOR

Alright, I'm in the small cave.

ANNIE

Try to find a path to the big one.

NOOR

I can't hear or smell the wind.
This tunnel goes the right way.

She slides in a dark hole. It widens, then narrows to a slit.

NOOR (CONT'D)

Very tight in here. Dead end.

ANNIE

Don't tear the suit, pull out!

She squeezes through and finds a dead end.

NOOR

My old pal claustrophobia.

She emerges from the hole and suddenly is sliding down an
incline. She bounces from one rock to another. She grabs a
rock but that one begins to roll and she lets go. In seconds
she hears a massive CRACK at the bottom of a dark chasm.

The collision at the bottom is followed by a series of
RUMBLINGS up and down the rock face she sits on.

NOOR (CONT'D)

I hear something! Wait -- do you
have animals out here?

ANNIE

The air on Mars is CO2. The only thing in the solar system that breathes CO2 is a tree. You're not being followed by a tree. Humans.

NOOR

Not animals. Rockslide.

Rocks roll down the rock face. She jams her face to the wall, arm over her head. A rock slams her in the shoulder and she screams. She slides over the edge, dangles from her rope.

ANNIE

Are you alright?

NOOR

Harness is choking me.

ANNIE

Is your suit holding pressure?
This is too dangerous.

NOOR

This is a day at the fair for me. I spent half my life in the dark. I dropped a load of opium in a hole like this. Once I drop my partner.

She turns on her light and climbs carefully.

NOOR (CONT'D)

There's a tube. If I'm lucky it leads to the big cave. Way too deep over there, so much for using rope. This is it, I feel dust blowing against my face plate. It must be!

ANNIE

Don't move. Let's map it out.

NOOR

Using rope again, I was careless.

She secures herself to the wall.

ANNIE

Use the bat bells in your pack. Like sonar, tells you how far the wall is. Like we said, do it like orange slices, make a map.

Noor uses a small device to scan, up and down, up and down.

INT. ESCAPE POD -- NIGHT

Invergordon looks at a screen where a three-dimensional picture of a massive cave is forming slice by slice.

INT. CAVE -- NIGHT

Continuation.

ANNIE

A ship, escape pods, and cases of..

INVERGORDON (V.O.)

Got twenty dots spread around the space. Fute!

ANNIE

Scan straight down, carefully.

NOOR

There's something shiny down there.

ANNIE

Noor, I'm sorry. Motion sensors. If you move quickly, alarms go off.

NOOR

My arms are cramping!

ANNIE

You need to hang on until everyone else gets here.

Noor begins to cry.

NOOR

I had to pee. I peed in my suit.

ANNIE

Did you short out the circuits?

NOOR

No.

ANNIE

Then relax.

Noor chuckles.

NOOR

Can't blow my nose. I'm frozen stiff, exhausted.

(MORE)

NOOR (CONT'D)

Wake me in ten minutes. ...Got an idea. They must have rockslides all the time.

She climbs like a spider and shakes a rock loose. It tumbles down with a CRASH. Motion sensors blink. Two spacesuited guards emerge from a door with lights. They find the rock on the floor, then scan the wall where Noor hangs. Another rock falls; the guards scurry to the door.

NOOR (CONT'D)

I think I can run over to the ship, they'll think it's another rock.

She runs to the ship, tripping over cracks; a guard appears in the doorway for a moment.

NOOR (CONT'D)

There's a door, big enough for an entire ship. I can't open it.

INVERGORDON (V.O.)

Find the launcher in the ops pod.

NOOR

I need all of you to back up a lot. Perhaps the other side of Mars. The missiles are enormous.

Inside the ship she finds the gun console.

INVERGORDON (V.O.)

Hit the console button, wait for the screen, hit it again, read the screen.

NOOR

I can't - I never learned English. I can write my name in Tajik.

INVERGORDON (V.O.)

First letter look like a snake?

NOOR

An arrow. Snake is on the right.

REED (V.O.)

It's an Ares. Put your arm in the grip and squeeze, you're all set.

She puts her arm in a sleeve-like device, the machine blinks.

NOOR

Everyone ready?

A missile blasts a massive hole in the side of the cave. Sunlight streams in. Noor flees the ship. Rocks smash the ship. A rock hits Noor on the back of the head; she goes down. Suited troops, led by Spanner Head and Zoya, appear in the doorway. Annie has no suit.

MCGRAW

Careful you don't tear those suits!

INVERGORDON

Use your knives, pop their suits.

Guards in suits attack with clubs; Kiel's men attack in pairs, one using a club, the other slicing open the guard's suit. Guards panic, grasp their ripped suits. Kiel's men spread through the complex. A few close-quarters fights.

INT. A SUBTERRANEAN SPACE - NIGHT

A cage-like structure contains SLAVE GIRLS. Ma holds a knife to a girl's throat. The light is from a skylight a hundred feet up. He casts the girl aside when he hears a noise.

MA

Whoever it is, keep your distance,
I'll slice right through your suit,
you'll never get back to your ship!

Annie emerges from the shadows. She of course wears no suit.

ANNIE

I have no use for a pressure suit.

Annie clubs him over the head. Zoya follows, grabs the knife.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I've never killed a man before --

MA

Please, tell them who I am, you -

SLAVE GIRL 1

You don't remember my name? You call me Monday, that's my night. This time you're going to hear our names. I am Qoqa from Chechnya.

SLAVE GIRL 2

I'm Javahir from Azerbaijan.

SLAVE GIRL 3

Seteney from Circassia.

SLAVE GIRL 4
Dzerassa the Ossetian.

SLAVE GIRL 5
Ketevan, you rut like an old pig.

SLAVE GIRL 6
Dzovinar from Armenia, my sister
Amanor, can you even tell us apart?

ZOYA
You damn well better remember me.
Say my name, I'll be generous. A
quick death. Or you want me to let
them do it? Could take all night.

MA
It's been a wild, wild ride. My
little Zoya.

And she slits his throat. The girls all cheer. A growing
SOUND, almost liquid, the rumbling sound of large rocks
grinding smaller ones to bits.

ZOYA
Cave-in - is there a room with
steel pipes, a storage tank -

SLAVE GIRL 2
Behind Ma's bed is a giant safe!

INT. A BEDROOM -- NIGHT

They run to a gaudy bedroom. At the back is a massive safe.

SLAVE GIRL 3
Key!

They fetch keys from Ma's body, and open the vault. Slaves
chuck stuff out, crowd in. Kiel's troops charge in. The
ceiling collapses on Annie, Spanner Head and the troops.

INT. LARGE CAVERN -- NIGHT

Kiel and a few men run to a cavern loaded with armed SLAVE
SOLDIERS, boys, who seize Kiel.

SLAVE SOLDIER
So did the balloon finally go up?

KIEL
We're here to help --

SLAVE SOLDIER

What the -- Listen up, lads! One hour, we get suited up, go to the big colony. Ma promised! They have no army there, we walk in and take it! We get Mars, ships, everything!

A soldier helps a bloody Noor in.

NOOR

Hey, bucket boy, I know your voice.

SLAVE SOLDIER

Noor! Hey, she's alive! Ma lied.

NOOR

Ma lied to you about everything.

SLAVE SOLDIER

Doesn't matter. We can still walk in and take everything.

NOOR

We're not here for a fight! These people came to set us all free.

SLAVE SOLDIER

Don't believe her.

NOOR

We all came to this mountain to kill Ma. He was the one who had us all in chains. We will get you all out of here. You're free now.

SLAVE SOLDIER

Look me in the eye and tell me I can trust these Martian types.

She reaches out her hand.

SLAVE SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Noor, it's me. I'm here.

NOOR

I can't see.

SLAVE SOLDIER

Noor, what happened --

NOOR

There was a cave-in. I can't see.

INT. REPAIR SHOP -- DAY

McGraw rebuilds Annie from junk. She has a hole in her torso. McGraw saved most of her banged-up face plate. Kiel watches as McGraw connects her face and head. She looks more "junkyard" than before. The scene is quite intimate between McGraw and Annie, with Kiel an intruder.

MCGRAW

Come on, kid!

ANNIE

(reviving, Cockney accent)
Ready for class, Professor. The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain. You're sweet to save my face.

MCGRAW

It's loose, try this one.

He hands her a cable.

ANNIE

Crap, the wrong one. Dammit.

KIEL

Next one you build, I teach her to talk. Annie sounds like a sailor.

MCGRAW

She is a sailor. Now that she has legs, she runs all over fixing stuff, I sit on my ass all day.

KIEL

You're rebuilding Annie using...what?

MCGRAW

She backed up data once a day. Then I slap together a new body with the parts I have, a total Frankenstein.

KIEL

Looks like abstract art. She doesn't remember the landslide?

MCGRAW

Better that way, don't you think? You need anything else?

Kiel, miffed, leaves.

ANNIE
My clock's off, did I miss a week?

MCGRAW
An accident, you were crushed.

Annie reaches for her face.

ANNIE
Obviously. You spent so much time
making this pretty face for me.

MCGRAW
You saved everybody. Almost.

Annie is fiddling with the bits of torso. McGraw interferes.

ANNIE
Leave my chest alone. I don't care
what I look like.

MCGRAW
You're fooling with my work?

ANNIE
Add some practical bits you forgot.
A pocket. Look inside.

MCGRAW
My glasses.

ANNIE
Every day you lose them. Now you'll
know where they are.

MCGRAW
What's that on your arm?

ANNIE
Drawing of Earth, like your Tattoo.

Annie goes to a mirror.

ANNIE (CONT'D)
Scars on my face. I'm a woman with
a dangerous past. I can cover the
dent with an eyepatch. We got Ma?

MCGRAW
Paid top dollar for it, too.

ANNIE
Noor came here today. Poor girl.

MCGRAW

I thought we lost you. Reloading
your memory, it was just a theory.
You're even more human than before.
You look straight at me when you're
angry, turn away when you're upset,
get close when you're happy.

ANNIE

Still don't know what love means. I
gave up. I don't mind not knowing.
I love you anyway. I just do.

MCGRAW

Like an owner? A builder? A father?

ANNIE

You try to hammer love into a shape
you understand. I think this is
something we must shape ourselves.
It's the one thing no one can take.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD -- DAY

Spanner Head is bandaged. McGraw and Bonebreaker watch Marcus
fix her mangled prosthesis.

MARCUS

Just a little rock and roll tape,
be good as new, right?

They both laugh. She groans.

SPANNER HEAD

I'm one big bruise, don't make me
laugh, or sneeze, or anything.

MARCUS

Have you seen that girl, Noor?

SPANNER HEAD

Don't make me cry, either. Okay?

MARCUS

Did they tell Annie about the
battle?

BONEBREAKER

Yeah. Rough day. Annie seriously
made you rebuild her out of junk?

MCGRAW

You have any idea what it's like,
you create something, and then it
acquires a will of its own, won't
listen?

BONEBREAKER

I'm Spanner Head's mother, nice to
meet you.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Noor is in a bed, head bandaged, sitting up but looking at
nothing. Annie sits near, made of new parts. Subdued.

NOOR

Annie, you're back together?

ANNIE

Imagine the repair shop got hit by
lightning. That's what I look like.

NOOR

I'll take your word for it.

ANNIE

So nothing yet?

NOOR

I see dark colors, a few shapes.
The rest, like being in a cave.

ANNIE

I am so sorry.

Noor hugs her.

NOOR

Is this the only way I can say it's
not your fault?

ANNIE

My first hug. Did I crush you?

NOOR

I spent my life in caves, nobody
knew the risk better than I did.
And we got Ma.

Kiel enters and crosses to Annie.

KIEL

My job is to keep people safe. I thought you were dangerous.

ANNIE

I am. You sent me to protect Spanner Head and Noor.

KIEL

Did you think I was going to pull the plug on you, because Spanner Head came home without her leg? It's just a piece of machinery.

He winces and tries again.

KIEL (CONT'D)

You didn't need to kill Ma, to earn your keep. You belong here.

ANNIE

Do I, now?

Defeated, he crosses to Noor and takes her hand.

NOOR

You tried. Annie fell in a hole.

KIEL

On Mars, we're sailors, but really we're miners, drill the asteroids. Only thing tougher than a sailor is a miner. We don't leave a man down in a hole, we take care of our own.

NOOR

Came here to cheer us up?

KIEL

Came here to give you a job, so get it together.

NOOR

What?

KIEL

On Mars we survive on whatever scraps the solar system throws at us. We don't throw anything away. We don't throw people away.

INT. KIEL'S OFFICE -- DAY

Kiel is watching a computer screen with Invergordon.

KIEL

So you still think I'm wrong?

INVERGORDON

There might be another explanation.

KIEL

They orbit over us, different ship each night. They won't answer our calls. Every sixth night is that ship with the extra guns. It's Fly.

INVERGORDON

What are they up to?

KIEL

Those are the pirates who refused to come home. They're going to sit there, start picking off our ships.

INVERGORDON

What do we do?

KIEL

Tomorrow Fly will be there himself. Put two pods together with lots of missiles. I'll ambush Fly.

INVERGORDON

What do I tell Spanner Head?

Kiel glares at him and leaves.

INT. KIEL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

The crew of the Saint Patrick run in, and the androids.

INVERGORDON

Everybody prep, we may be flying tonight. Kiel told me not to tell you, but you know I never listen.

SPANNER HEAD

Spit it out!

INVERGORDON

Kiel is in orbit, tried to ambush Fly, got caught.

SPANNER HEAD

And you let him??

MIRANDA

I can only go by the emissions I can see. They're orbiting together, coming around again.

Tense silence.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

East horizon. They're both damaged. Both firing. I see heat, engines -- huge explosion, one of the ships --

SPANNER HEAD

Which one? Kiel or Fly?

MIRANDA

How many engines did Kiel have?

INVERGORDON

Let me see all that. Look there. Fly's ship is destroyed.

Cheers.

INVERGORDON (CONT'D)

Kiel's ship is coming apart. Rear half of his ship is gone, engines are spinning across the sky. The front engine is all over, orbital track -- okay, Kiel is all smashed up. Everybody get to the Saint Pat. Annie, Sofie? Need you most of all.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

Invergordon and Spanner Head in their seats, at the edge of panic, Chiu wrassling with equipment.

SPANNER HEAD

Cap, you see her?

INVERGORDON

Yeah, look at the mist coming out of that engine. Chiu, any signals?

CHIU

Static and computer noise. And at least once I heard a m'aidez.

SPANNER HEAD

Fute! Does he even have pressure?

INVERGORDON

Sofia, Spanner Head, Annie, stay here. Everybody else go aft. I was saving this lesson for much later. Hardest thing to do is docking in orbit.

SPANNER HEAD

What's so hard about it?

SOFIA

He's right. We can't save Kiel unless Kiel helps us. Best we can do is bring home the remains --

INVERGORDON

We're not giving up! Okay, class is in session. How do we dock with that critter over there?

SPANNER HEAD

Match orbits, catch up to her.

INVERGORDON

Catch up to her?

SPANNER HEAD

With the engines.

INVERGORDON

Hit the engines, you change your orbit vector. Instead of docking into her ass end, you shoot over top, scrape the paint off her as you go, then you get lost. Try it.

Spanner Head, determined, leans into the rudder box.

SPANNER HEAD

Baby, turn on the fornicating radio, let me hear you!

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The ship accelerates, but instead of getting closer to the damaged ship, it rises above it, and then falls further back. The ship falls back behind the damaged ship again, and accelerates again. They are now even further back.

INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Continuation.

SPANNER HEAD

That's impossible!

INVERGORDON

You know math but not physics. You have the conn, what's your second choice?

SPANNER HEAD

Umm, both ships pull out of orbit, do the docking way the hell up there, don't need to match orbits.

INVERGORDON

That's fine if both ships can fly. Look at that thing. It's busted.

SPANNER HEAD

So there's a third way?

INVERGORDON

I did it once. You need to slide into the wrong orbit on purpose.

SPANNER HEAD

On purpose?

INVERGORDON

We jump through three orbits. First, the wrong orbit, the place you start. Then you switch to a jump-off orbit, a funny-looking oval, an ellipse -

SPANNER HEAD

How do you fly in an ellipse?

INVERGORDON

Then jump to the right orbit, where the busted ship is.

SPANNER HEAD

Crap!

INVERGORDON

This is why we never dock in orbit. Usually takes days. We have a few hours and then Kiel is dead. Annie? Can you do this?

ANNIE

In theory. I would like Sofia's help setting up the program.

SOFIA

Annie, I taught you all I know --

ANNIE

Sofie. The best minds at NASA took twelve missions to get this right, we don't have twelve chances.

Invergordon pulls up scary math on a computer.

INVERGORDON

This is a variation on the Hohmann transfer, the math is harder and we'll be flying faster than any ship has flown in years.

SOFIA

Why is the math harder?

INVERGORDON

After you speed us up, you need to slow us down again. You slow us down too quick, we all turn into strawberry jam. We die, Kiel dies.

SOFIA

Annie, can we run some simulations?

ANNIE

Already on it.

SOFIA

Did we survive any of the sims?

ANNIE

I'll get back to you. Captain, first burn, I am feeding course and speed into the rudder box.

INVERGORDON

Got it. Here comes the nitrogen!

He takes the rudder. Engines ROAR and the ship leaps forward.

SPANNER HEAD

Wow, this is awfully fast --

INVERGORDON

Not now! And burn.

SOFIA

Annie I got it. Captain, a steer
and a correction burn. On screen.

INVERGORDON

Burning. Be ready to take over.
And terminate burn. First orbit.

ANNIE

Captain, steer and burn.

SPANNER HEAD

All hands, belt in, rough ride!

INVERGORDON

Burning. Terminating. This is the
second orbit -

SOFIA

Instructions for inversion,
onscreen.

INVERGORDON

That's just showing off. This
deceleration gonna yank us all
right out of our socks. What --

ANNIE

(suddenly louder)

No time to argue, I need you to
execute. Now!

INVERGORDON

Burning. Carmack, all crew aft.

CARMACK (V.O.)

Aft?

INVERGORDON

Aft. Grab onto something --

SOFIA

Captain, you're going to miss the --

EXT. SPACE -- NIGHT

Ship slows down with a jerk. And begins to turn sloppily
until the ship is flying tail-first.

INT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Continuation. Debris bounces through the ship.

ANNIE

Recalculating. We went too far.
Correction burn. And again. Again.

INVERGORDON

And burn. Third orbit. I hate
flying backwards! Spanner Head, get
out of that harness, check the
cameras.

SPANNER HEAD

(looking at cameras aft)
There she is! Look at the smoke!

SOFIA

Captain, reverse thrust. Quickly.

SPANNER HEAD

Hey, Captain Red Hot, are we still
rotating?

INVERGORDON

Obviously.

SPANNER HEAD

Well, he's not.

INVERGORDON

Fute! Suspending rotation.

SPANNER HEAD

Still rotating -

INVERGORDON

Too bad! Guide it on the screen!

The ship shakes and twists. CRUNCH-SCREECH NOISE. Spanner
Head flips over; Gordon grabs her by the waist, and yells!

SPANNER HEAD

Nice job docking. Like my first
time getting laid. Gordon, thanks!

INVERGORDON

And stop! Carmack, pop the lock!

Spanner Head, drained, leans her head on his shoulder, and
steadies herself.

CARMACK (V.O.)

Cap, Kiel's alive, hurt bad.

SPANNER HEAD

Permission to go aft -

INVERGORDON

Annie. Thank you. You yelled at me.

ANNIE

I needed you to shut up and do what you're told.

INVERGORDON

Kiel's right, you want to be boss.

ANNIE

Sorry, that was rude, wasn't it?

INT. CARGO POD OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

Spanner Head enters. Sasha works on a pale, bloody Kiel. Spanner Head cries out. This next bit goes very quickly.

SPANNER HEAD

Pulse.

SASHA

Shaky.

SPANNER HEAD

Airway.

SASHA

Fine.

SPANNER HEAD

Find the bleeder?

SASHA

Right on top of it.

SPANNER HEAD

Sewing him up?

SASHA

In a second.

SPANNER HEAD

Septic?

SASHA

Don't know yet.

SPANNER HEAD

Conscious?

SASHA

Out like a candle.

SPANNER HEAD
You've done this before.

SASHA
The tales I could tell. Shut up!

Spanner Head curls up next to Kiel and holds his head. Sofia collapses next to her. Spanner Head takes her hand.

SOFIA
My brain is fried like a potato.
That was almost as hard as sex in
zero gravity. ...Long story.

SPANNER HEAD
I'm going to have that picture in
my head all day. How exactly -

SOFIA
Newton's Laws of Motion. It's
harder than you think.

SPANNER HEAD
You're my hero.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Spanner Head, emotional, with Kiel.

KIEL
No matter how you add it up, the
answer's the same. I belong on the
ground, keep things running, stop
troublemakers. You belong in the
sky.

SPANNER HEAD
I'm sorry.

KIEL
(points to her chest)
For what? All of a sudden you
stopped feeling it?

SPANNER HEAD
If that ever happens I'll let you
know.

KIEL
Don't get drippy, you got a crew.

And big hug.

INT. OPS POD OF THE SAINT PATRICK -- NIGHT

Continuation. Spanner Head enters and sees her new crew. They pull up their sleeves: they have her Earth tattoo. She beams.

SPANNER HEAD

You new folks, I'm your captain. My takeoffs are good, my navigation is good, my landings are lousy. It looks like I'm drunk.

Some of the old-timers smile.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)

It's okay, you can laugh. Somebody in this crew can land better than I can, the next captain. I aim to find him. Or her. This is Noor.

NOOR

If you're waving hello, can't see. I planned our mission. The battle at Pavonis was rough, people died, people hurt. I'm not moping, and I had a rough ride on that mountain.

She points to her eyes.

NOOR (CONT'D)

Stop moping, hold up your heads. Not just because we won the damn battle and killed Ma. Hold your heads high because we're not done with the slavers.

ZOYA

What do you mean?

NOOR

See any miners on this crew? We're hunters. We slave kids know. China and India, smuggle slaves. Afghans run opium. Russia for weapons. We make a map. We fly pods over smuggler country, drive the crooks crazy. We find a very, very flat place for Spanner Head to land.

SPANNER HEAD

Captain can't get any respect.

NOOR

This is Reed, where are you? Did he seriously just raise his hand?

(MORE)

NOOR (CONT'D)

He's the best gunner in the fleet,
because where we're going, people
are gonna shoot back.

REED

Anybody here a good hunter?

NOOR

I was, but maybe you try Zoya.

ZOYA

I used to hunt. Show me your guns.

NOOR

So no moping. I'll be watching!

Noor smiles. Kiel enters.

KIEL

Your last man doesn't need a
hammock. Just needs her family.

Annie enters. Spanner Head crosses to her, others follow.

SPANNER HEAD

Family.

ANNIE

I don't laugh or cry, I only have
words....Now I have no words.

NOOR

Crap, I just yelled at them all for
crying. You do hugs?

ANNIE

Any improvement?

NOOR

Last time you were a black blob.
Now you're brown.

SPANNER HEAD

This is Annie. She's one of us.
Like Noor said, last battle, some
people never came back. Old story
on Mars, ship goes out, pirate
raid, mine explosion. Only people
who get things done are the people
who get up when they get knocked
down. We're alive and Ma is dead.
We lick our wounds, we go hunting.

KIEL

Ready to make it official?

He slices her right hand with a knife. Cheers. She hugs him.

SPANNER HEAD

We always look for the next pilot.
Annie, I'm teaching you to fly. I
can't exactly slice open your hand.

McGraw gives Annie a new prosthetic hand.

MCGRAW

This lets you steer the rudder box.

SPANNER HEAD

I'm nothing special. All I do is
look at the sky and play with my
radio. If I can fly, you can fly.

KIEL

All my rulebreakers on one ship,
didn't think that one through. I
loaded up your stores for you.
They're in that probe up there. All
you have to do is dock in orbit.

SPANNER HEAD

Fornicator!

KIEL

A bit easier to let go of me now?

He takes her hand and she smiles.

SPANNER HEAD

No. Bastard....Annie? Orbital
docking, three orbits, target is
that tin can up there. Crunch the
numbers and feed em to the bridge.

ANNIE

Orbital equations, aye.

INT. BRIDGE OF THE SAINT PATRICK - NIGHT

Continuation. The Saint Patrick launches and reaches orbit.
Spanner Head slides her hand in the rudder box.

ANNIE

Course correction onscreen. First
orbit. And we need a burn.

SPANNER HEAD
Nitrogen. Burning.

ANNIE
Another correction onscreen.

SPANNER HEAD
I'm burning.

EXT. A BOAT CROSSING THE CARIBBEAN -- DAY

Spanner Head, Annie and Sofia have a day off.

SPANNER HEAD
When we get to land, Annie and I
are going shoe shopping.

Together Spanner Head and Annie have three metal feet and one real one.

ANNIE
Shoe shopping. It's a joke. I got
that one.

SPANNER HEAD
It's so sad. Miami. Miami Beach.

With sea levels risen fifty feet, they see the upper portions of concrete high-rises and sagging towers.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)
I can't get over this water.

ANNIE
I see why sailors loved it and
feared it.

SOFIA
I learned this time, didn't burn my
skin, got shoes for the gravity. My
boobs feel like they're filled with
sand. How do Earth girls stand it?

SPANNER HEAD
They have special underwear.

SOFIA
Not bad when I'm on my back. Let's
head for land so some strapping
young man can scratch my back.

SPANNER HEAD
(glancing at Sofia)
Or a girl.

SOFIA
We want land, the southern tip of
Florida is called Rolando. Orlando.

SPANNER HEAD
Let's find the beach at Orlando,
lay under a tree.

ANNIE
There! You said this was your dream
trip, back where it all started.

Annie points. Spanner Head laughs. Raises her fist.

SPANNER HEAD
Like the old movie. Maniacs! You
blew it up! You damn dirty apes!

It's Cape Canaveral. Some towers stand. The ocean creeps up
the sides of the Vehicle Assembly Building. Storms blew out
wall panels, but the NASA sign and the flag are there.

SPANNER HEAD (CONT'D)
How clever they were. Way back when
they were still riding horses, they
put stars on their flag. As if they
knew they were going to fly there.

FADE OUT.

THE END.