

CAPSULE

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WINGLESS FILMS

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INT. CAPSULE - SPACE

SAM wakes up, yawns -- not in pain.

POD (OS)
Good afternoon, Sam.

SAM
(scoffs)
Afternoon! Let's get some lights on. Was I asleep?

POD (OS)
You were unconscious.

SAM
Unconscious? How?

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

Sam checks his head -- no blood.

POD (OS)
I administered medicine, Sam.

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

POD (OS)
We ejected, Sam.

SAM
Ejected...? Let me see.

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

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

POD doesn't answer.

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

POD (OS)
There was an incident.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Where's the ship? Show me.

(no answer)

Remember our talk, Pod: Show me the ship.

POD (OS)

Playback of external feed.

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

SAM

...What happened?

POD (OS)

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

SAM

...So, there are other capsules?

POD (OS)

Negative.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

The capsules do not appear on any frequency.

SAM

Well have you tried them all?

POD (OS)

The capsules do not appear on any frequency.

SAM

Try them all!

Pause. Silence.

POD (OS)

I'm sorry, Sam.

SAM

Sorry. Yeah, you're sorry -- the speaking clock.

(pause; gathers himself)

Okay. What do we have? No ship.

(CONTINUED)

POD (OS)
The capsule is secure.

SAM
Food? Water? Stims?

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

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

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

Sam whistles.

SAM
Pretty far, then.

POD (OS)
Affirmative.

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

Pod doesn't answer.

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

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

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

Silence.

SAM
Pod?

POD (OS)

Yes, Sam?

SAM

The life-support. How long does it have?

POD (OS)

Are you sure you wish to know, Sam?

SAM

Pod! Yes.

POD (OS)

Three days--

SAM

Three days?!

POD (OS)

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

SAM

Three days?!

POD (OS)

And two-and-three-quarter hours--

SAM

Pod, that's not enough!

POD (OS)

Affirmative.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

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

SAM

I know!

Silence. Sam closes his eyes, breathes.

SAM

Can we send a message?

POD (OS)

Negative. There is too much interference from orbiting satellites.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

We have no approach vector.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

We have no approach vector.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

We have no--

SAM

Please. Just fire it anyway.

POD (OS)

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

SAM

Sure. Why not?

POD (OS)

Activating record mode.

Sam faces the screen, looks lost.

SAM

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

(shrugs)

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

(pause)

I don't know what to say, Pod.

POD (OS)

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

SAM

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

(pause)

I had to go. Space. The final frontier. Look at me; how could I turn it down?

(beat)

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

(beat)

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

He turns away.

SAM

I can't, Pod. Switch it off.

POD (OS)

Are you sure, Sam?

SAM

Just switch it off.

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

2 EXT. CAPSULE - SPACE

The CAPSULE drifts.

3 INT. CAPSULE - SPACE

SAM pressing buttons, trying to hack the system.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

The auxiliaries are supposed to have power, Sam.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

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

POD (OS)

The system won't allow it, Sam.

SAM

Well what else can I do?

POD (OS)

You could finish your message.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

You should get some rest, Sam.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

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

SAM

Yeah, me too.

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

SAM

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

POD (OS)

Affirmative.

SAM

What did you do?

POD (OS)

You should get some rest, Sam.

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

SAM

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

Flash to black.

4 INT. CAPSULE - SPACE

SAM wakes up.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

You needed rest, Sam.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

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

SAM

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

POD (OS)

I have been doing many things.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

I am only trying to look after you, Sam.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

I am glad to hear it.

SAM

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

He rolls up his sleeve -- no cut.

SAM

How long have I been sleeping?

(CONTINUED)

POD (OS)

Seven hours and twenty-three minutes.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

I am looking after you, Sam.

SAM

You're drugging me!

POD (OS)

I am administering medicine.

SAM

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

POD (OS)

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

SAM

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

POD (OS)

Why, Sam?

SAM

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

POD (OS)

That cannot be prevented, Sam.

SAM

God damn it, show a bit of compassion!

POD (OS)

I'm afraid I cannot do that, Sam.

Silence.

SAM

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

POD (OS)
Affirmative.

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

POD (OS)
Affirmative. Resuming record
mode.

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

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

SAM
Sure.

POD (OS)
Initiating eject sequence.
Ejecting.

Sam watches the BLACK BOX drift off into space.

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

SAM
Go for it.

POD (OS)
How do you feel?

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

(CONTINUED)

POD (OS)
Affirmative. Sam, what is your
favourite colour--?

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

POD (OS)
If not you, Sam, then who else?

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

POD (OS)
I don't think I understand, Sam.

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

5 EXT. CAPSULE - SPACE

The CAPSULE drifts on, into the darkness.

FADE OUT