

WOLF 359

"MAYDAY"

by

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(Writer's Note: the following takes place between Day 666 and Day 859 of the Hephaestus Mission.)

We begin with our delightful opening music and top of the show announcement. And just as we're getting to the point where someone should speak, the MUSIC FREEZES -

And then, suddenly, violently, it begins to REWIND.

We go back, and back, through all of the music, past all of the music, and we just keep going. We go back a day, a week, a month, and rewind all the way back to:

INT. LOVELACE'S SHUTTLE - FLIGHT DECK - DAY 666

We come in on Eiffel, sitting at the controls of Lovelace's shuttle. Various bits of equipment BEEP SOFTLY.

EIFFEL

All right...

He TYPES a few commands into the system. A moment later the shuttle's engine WHIRRS faintly, then SPUTTERS.

There's an ERROR BUZZ from the console. Eiffel frowns.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

C'mon, Space Fiat, tell me you've got one more trip in you...

He tries again, followed by the same SPUTTER and ERROR BUZZ.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Hmm... maybe not. Still, beats the big blue wrecking ball over there.

Slowly it should become clear where, and when, we are: the last scene of Who's There?

And right on cue, there's a COMMS BUZZER, followed by:

MINKOWSKI

(over comms)

Eiffel? You there?

Eiffel turns towards a different part of the console.

EIFFEL

Yeah, Commander. How's Lovelace?

MINKOWSKI

Still touch and go, but she's hanging on. And things on your side?

EIFFEL

Well, I can't get the main engine to turn on. The VX3's not responding at all.

HERA

(over comms)

It was an older model... We may have pushed it too far, used up all the charge that was left.

EIFFEL

Well, that's encouraging.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel just hang tight. You're drifting, but pretty slowly. We'll steer the Hephaestus within range, and then you can use the propulsion maneuvering system to get back here.

EIFFEL

Nah, hang on. I think I might be able to get the booster to come back online. I should be able to use those to -

Over the comms: BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP. Lovelace's EKG let's out the low, warning tone of a flatline.

HILBERT

(over comms)

CLEAR!

Over the comms: PHUMP! A BLIP from the EKG -

HILBERT (CONT'D)

CLEAR!

Over the comms: PHUMP! A BLIP from the EKG, and this time it goes back to steady BEEPS.

BEAT.

EIFFEL

Did... was that...?

MINKOWSKI

It's... It's okay, Eiffel. I think... I don't think that was enough for the sensor to -

BOOM! There's a HORRIFIC EXPLOSION in the back of the ship, at the engines.

At once a lot of things happen:

- Metal GROANS and CRACKS all over the shuttle.
- Eiffel is SLAMMED BACKWARDS as the ship lurches forward. He HITS the back of the shuttle with a SHARP, PAINED YELL.
- Various vents and passageways begin to HISS LOUDLY as air begins to seep out of the shuttle.
- And every ALARM and WARNING in the console GOES BALLISTIC.

Eiffel struggles to pull himself up -

EIFFEL
Goddammit.

- and makes his way to the console.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
Okay. Okay. Stay calm. What's the biggest problem? What's going the most wrong?

He begins frantically pressing buttons, going back and forth between the various screens.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
(fast)
Engine fire? Uh... no, fire containment's green. But that's in spite of the fact that we just had a big ass explosion, which means... air! Losing air, we're losing air.
(snaps fingers)
Okay!

He grabs an ENORMOUS, RUSTY CRANK towards the back of the controls.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
(straining)
Number one... emergency... pressure hatch... closed!

KA-THUNK! AN ENORMOUSLY HEAVY METAL HATCH SLIDES DOWN in the back of the cabin. It SLAMS SHUT.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
(straining from the effort)
(MORE)

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Number two... emergency pressure
 hatch... closed!

KA-THUNK! Another METAL HATCH SLAMS DOWN.

Almost instantly all of the AIR HISSING STOPS.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Okay, okay! Engine section sealed
 off! Survey says...

He turns to the controls, where TWO ALARMS have SHUT OFF. A
 moment later, there's a SOFT DING.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Yes! Stable pressure! Top answer on
 the board, that's what I'm talking
 about! Okay, okay - next!

He's back at the console, inputting commands.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Rerouting power... back to the
 radio system...

Two more ALARMS SWITCH OFF. And finally - a BURST OF STATIC
 as the receiver engages!

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Mayday, mayday, mayday!
 (beat)
 Hephaestus, do you copy? Mayday,
 mayday.

 MINKOWSKI
 (patchy, through comms)
 Yes! We -- get me his position.
 Eiffel, did -

 EIFFEL
 Yes, it went off! I don't know if
 the VX3's core went nuclear, but
 the engine got torn apart! I've got
 no boosters, and the cabin's
 spinning, going real fast!

 MINKOWSKI
 Hera tell -- -ack to the star?

 HERA
 No, he's mov -- -owards deep space.
 And --

HILBERT

Eiffel! You need to slow down, or
find -- Hephaestus. Can you comply?

EIFFEL

I cannot! I have no controls,
there's no way for me to change
course. What I need is a way to get
off this ship!

MINKOWSKI

Hera, we --

HERA

(static)
- too fast.

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel, we're not -- figure out --

HERA

He's about to leave shortwave comms
range!

EIFFEL

Commander, I need something here!
Anything. Just tell me what to -

And the radio connection collapses into STATIC. Line's dead.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

- do...

For a moment he just stares at the receiver in horror. Then
he CLICKS to another channel. Static - nothing.

He CLICKS to another channel. Same.

CLICK. Nothing.

He SHUTS OFF the RECEIVER. For the first time since the
explosion things are silent.

BEAT.

And then EIFFEL SCREAMS.

It's pure, unadulterated, rage. Bitterness. Indignation.
After everything - *everything* - that he's been through, this
is where he ends up?!?

Finally, slowly, the scream stops. And, aside from Eiffel
hyperventilating, everything is silent again.

And then:

MINKOWSKI

Okay. You needed that. But now you have to concentrate.

Her voice isn't coming through the comms, but it isn't quite there either. There's a certain other-worldly quality to it.

EIFFEL

(low)

No, no, you're not here.

MINKOWSKI

Of course I'm not, but who gives a crap? You're almost certainly going to die, so we need to focus. The next few minutes are very important. Panic is unacceptable.

Eiffel takes a few DEEP BREATH, steadies himself.

MINKOWSKI (CONT'D)

Do you know what is happening right now?

EIFFEL

Yeah. Yeah, I'm... moving. Fast. I'm not in orbit anymore, and I'm headed towards deep space.

MINKOWSKI

Which is bad.

EIFFEL

Well, if you have any helpful advice about how to *not* head towards the part of the kingdom the light doesn't touch, I am now taking suggestions from the floor.

MINKOWSKI

Slow down.

EIFFEL

Very funny.

MINKOWSKI

Turn around. Change course. Don't go into deep space.

EIFFEL

How?

MINKOWSKI

Any way you can.

EIFFEL

Listen, Commander Harvey, I don't know if you were paying attention, but I can't exactly steer this thing! Our main engine's gone because of bomb. Our aft booster's - let's take a look -

He hits a SWITCH. There's an ANGRY GRINDING NOISE.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Yeah, not happening! And our starboard booster's not going to - FWOAH!

He hits another SWITCH, but this one, unexpectedly actually ENGAGES the BOOSTER. It ROARS TO LIFE, SHAKING THE SHUTTLE.

And a second later, it SHUTS OFF!

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Whoa, what was that? Is that actually...

He hits the SWITCH again, but now he just gets an ERROR BUZZ. Tries again: SWITCH, BUZZ. He looks at the computer.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Outta power... Must be running off the aux power system, so I'll need to let it recharge. Still...

MINKOWSKI

Better than nothing.

EIFFEL

Sure, sure... Okay, what now?

MINKOWSKI

Now you figure out how to stay alive.

EIFFEL

Gee, when you put it like that... Any suggestions?

MINKOWSKI

Oh I don't know, if only we had some sort of *reference guide* for what to do in these sorts of extreme situations...

EIFFEL

What?

MINKOWSKI

Eiffel... I worked on this shuttle.
Reprogramming that console.

EIFFEL

So? How does that help -

MINKOWSKI

Think about it.

BEAT. And then he gets it.

EIFFEL

Oh goddammit.

He rushes towards the console, starts TYPING.

MINKOWSKI

What's the first thing that I would
do when programming a flight
computer? The first thing I'd make
damn sure was hard wired into
anything that *might* end up in a
situation like this one?

BEEP-BEEP-BEEP. The computer CHIMES as a file pulls up on a
screen.

EIFFEL

Pyrce and Carter's -

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

- Deep Space Survival Procedure
and Protocol Manual.

MINKOWSKI

- Deep Space Survival Procedure
and Protocol Manual.

EIFFEL

Right. Okay. Well... let's take a
look...

And as Eiffel starts reading the file, we -

CUT TO:

INT. LOVELACE'S SHUTTLE - FLIGHT DECK - 75 HOURS LATER

Eiffel sits at the controls waiting. For a moment he stares
at the console. Then -

DING!

Eiffel nods to himself, thinking.

EIFFEL

Okay... Okay. It takes seventy-four hours. Seventy-four hours for the aux system to recharge to power the booster for... one point five seconds. Which is just great.

MINKOWSKI

Under the circumstances. Now do your job.

He taps a few controls. There's a BURST OF STATIC.

EIFFEL

Mayday, mayday, mayday. All ships at sea, this is the... U.S.S. Reliant Robin. We have complete operational breakdown, and require immediate assistance. Please respond. Is anyone out there?

He waits. No answer.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Yeah, didn't think so.

He shuts off the radio. TAKES A DEEP BREATH.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay, okay, okay. One thousand and one deep space survival tips. Which, putting it in technicals terms, is A LOT. So you'd think -

MINKOWSKI

Don't dwell on it.

EIFFEL

You'd *think* that once I whittled it down to the parts that are relevant to my current situation, there would be more than a grand total of... three.

MINKOWSKI

Give me the list. Top three Deep Space Survival Tips.

EIFFEL

Deep Space Survival Tip #199:
"Confront reality head-on.

(MORE)

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

You cannot succeed if you don't know what the obstacles are. Hope can bring strength, but ignorance makes death inevitable." So, here's reality:

We hear him SLIDE OPEN A CUPBOARD.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Lovelace stocked the ship with freeze-dried rations and protein packs. Full meals for about seventy days, more or less what it'd take to get to Earth if you have a nice VX3 on a sublight arc. I can probably stretch that to about a hundred days.

He SHUTS the CUPBOARD.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

The good captain was also kind enough to put a high efficiency oxygen recycling system in here, so... it's actually making air faster than I can breathe it.

BEAT.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Water's a problem.
(taps a screen)
Reclamation was tied into the main engine so... that's gone. There's 1,143 liters in the shuttle systems, and after that... Yeah.

He CLEARS HIS THROAT.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Next! Deep Space Survival Tip #754: "In an emergency, take stock of the tools at your disposal. Then take stock again. Restock. Repurpose. Reuse. Recycle." Sounds nice. So here's what I've stocked:

As he speaks he CLICKS SWITCHES and PRESSES BUTTONS on the controls. His lines are punctuated with various digital noises.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Any kind of propulsion went away when the VX3 blew up, so I've only got whatever runs off liquid fuel or electrical. Life support? Check. Cryogenic stasis pod? Check. Temperature? Check. Most other things? Not so much a check.

I've got navigation, so I can keep track of how every hour I'm 17,000 miles further away from the Hephaestus. Hooray. The only working item that's even close to propulsion controls is the starboard booster. So... I can't go faster, I can't go slower, but every three days I can very slightly nudge myself to the left.

He lets out a single, bitter CHORTLE.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

And last but certainly not least: Deep Space Survival Tip #1001: "In times of trouble, an idle mind is your worst enemy. Keep yourself occupied at all times. Don't stop. Good luck."

So... what are we doing? Eiffel's Action Plan #1: turn this boat around, get back to the Hephaestus. With my current flight capabilities, that should only take... way more time than I got.

Eiffel's Action Plan #2: Keep going forward and... do something awesome. Eiffel's Action Plan #3: Use Minkowski's jet pack and do something baller! You might be noticing that Eiffel's Action Plans all suck and involve dying in space!

Frustration is starting to creep into his gallows humor bravado. BEAT.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

(slow, rueful)

Time. Time's the problem. Everything takes too much time. Which means I'm going to -

And that's when he's cut off by a sudden, VIOLENT SLAP.

LOVELACE
Cut that out! That's dead-boy talk!

EIFFEL
Ow! What is wrong with you?!

LOVELACE
Your whining. It's boring. Do something useful!

EIFFEL
I can't.

LOVELACE
Yes, you can. You're a communications officer. Get on that radio. Communicate.

EIFFEL
With who? Space. Is. Big! If you look out the rear hatch of the plane, you will see the Hephaestus like a million miles behind us. If you look out the front window, you'll see Earth eight light years away. What do you want me to do?

LOVELACE
Find someone else!

EIFFEL
There's no one el-

But the word dies in his mouth. As he remembers.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
Yes. Yes there is. The, uh, the... the dispatch station! It's the, uh -

MINKOWSKI
(faint, almost an echo)
U.S.S. Hermes.

EIFFEL
The Hermes! Yes!

He's at the controls, inputting coordinates.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
(low, as he works)
Don't even need an exact bullseye...
(MORE)

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 just close enough for them to pick
 up a shortwave distress signal...

A number comes up on the screen. Eiffel lets out a low,
 ANNOYED GROWL.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 The Hermes is a little over a light
 year away. But given our current
 trajectory, we're going to miss it
 by...

We hear a sound like a DIGITAL COUNTER GOING UP.

BEAT.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (flat)
 Two million, fourteen thousand,
 five hundred and twenty-two miles.
 (beat)
 Although...

 LOVELACE
 Although?

 EIFFEL
 That's two million miles... to the
 left. I wonder if...

He hits the BOOSTER SWITCH, and, once again, it ROARS TO
 LIFE. And, once again, it switches off after about a second.

Eiffel waits for a moment and then -

The DIGITAL COUNTER ADJUSTS.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Two million... seven thousand,
 three-hundred and seven miles off
 course.
 (beat)
 Okay. Okay. We can do this.
 (typing commands)
 I get one course adjustment of
 about seven thousand miles every
 three days, which means getting on
 course is going to take me...

BEAT.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Three hundred and two days. Dammit.

LOVELACE

Don't give up.

EIFFEL

It's not going to work. I'm going to have starved before I even get on track!

LOVELACE

Then make the food last longer!

EIFFEL

(voice rising)

How? Should I go on a diet?

LOVELACE

Go on a diet, break bread, freeze yourself in the cryo pod, I don't care, just do it!

EIFFEL

Oh, yeah, sure! If all else fails, I can always freeze myself!

(beat)

Holy crap, I can freeze myself.

He moves to the back of the cabin, and tinkers with controls to the cryo-stasis pod. After a moment, the pod WHIRRS TO LIFE. The compartment OPENS, letting out a HISS OF AIR.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Is this going to work?

LOVELACE

I don't know. I only know what you know.

EIFFEL

Shut up. Not the time to go meta on me.

(beat)

If I'm in cryo, my body functions are frozen in place. I don't need to eat, so I don't starve. Right?

LOVELACE

Works in theory.

EIFFEL

Well, let's take it on a test drive. Seventy-four hours?

LOVELACE

Seventy-four hours. Good luck.

We hear him setting a DIAL on the machine. GEARS TURN. It sounds like a dentist's chair adjusting.

EIFFEL

All right... well, here goes nothing.

He gets into the pod, and immediately we hear the machine engage. We hear WHIRRING, COGS TURNING. The COMPARTMENT SNAPS SHUT over him.

The POD CHARGES UP. We hear a SHARP DISCHARGE OF AIR, and a SOFT WHIMPER as Eiffel is hit with the blast of cold and -

And then he's in stasis.

CUT TO:

INT. LOVELACE'S SHUTTLE - FLIGHT DECK - 74 HOURS LATER

For a moment everything is still.

Then we hear a DING from the console.

A moment later, there's a SOFT BEEPING. The GEARS on the stasis pod start to turn, there's a WHIRRING and the unmistakable sound of CRACKING ICE. Finally -

The COMPARTMENT OPENS. Eiffel doesn't so much fall as *spills* out. He collapses, convulses, clutching his side, CHOKING, and SPUTTERING, and COUGHING FURIOUSLY.

The effect - and the experience - is not unlike that of a drowning victim being resuscitated.

As Eiffel continues HACKING and GASPING for air, the console starts BEEPING.

EIFFEL

(pained)

Son of a bitch... there... *has* to be a better way to fly...

(at console)

Yeah, yeah, hang on for just a second. Hold up...

He weakly pulls himself up to the console, and FLIPS the SWITCH. Once again, the BOOSTER TURNS ON, THRUMS CLEANLY for a second, and then SPATTERS and GOES OFF.

Eiffel turns his head towards the digital counter, and after a second it ADJUSTS.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 One million... nine-hundred and
 ninety-nine thousand miles of
 course.

He slumps down, still very weak.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Okay... so that worked. Now what?

 LOVELACE
 Now you do it again.

 EIFFEL
 Again... how many times?

 LOVELACE
 As many as it takes.

BEAT.

 EIFFEL
 Oh God...

As he takes on the enormity of what's ahead of him, we -

CUT TO:

AUDIO MONTAGE SEQUENCE

We get quick snippets of Eiffel as he goes through the torturous process over and over again.

We begin with a BURST OF STATIC, followed by -

 EIFFEL
 Mayday, mayday, mayday, all ships
 at sea. This is Officer Eiffel,
 onboard the U.S.S. Pontiac Aztek. I
 have been stranded on board a non-
 operational vessel for fifteen
 days. I require immediate emergency
 assistance. Please respond.

Overlapping with those last few words, we hear the console DING as the booster system recharges.

A moment later, Eiffel HITS the SWITCH, and BOOSTER ENGAGES.

DIGITAL NUMBER FLICKERS as the NAV COUNTER ADJUSTS.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 One million, nine-hundred and
 eighty thousand miles off course...

The STASIS POD ENGAGES as he presses a digital switch.

GEARS TURNS, METAL WHIRRS, the COMPARTMENT OPENS, and there's
 the SHARP BLAST OF AIR.

ICE CONDENSES - and a moment later begins to crack.

The COMPARTMENT REOPENS, Eiffel spills out, CONVULSING and
 HACKING.

And overlapping with the last of the above - we do it again.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Mayday, mayday, mayday, all ships
 at sea. This is Officer Eiffel, on
 board the U.S.S. Ford Excursion. I
 have been stranded on board a non-
 operational vessel for thirty-nine
 days.

There's the DING, followed by the SWITCH and the THRUM of the
 thruster.

The DIGITAL COUNTER FLICKERS.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 One million, six-hundred and twenty
 thousand miles off course...

GEARS TURN. METAL WHIRRS.

There's the SHARP BLAST OF AIR, and the CRACK OF FORMING ICE.

AIR HISSES as the compartment SNAPS OPEN.

Eiffel CONVULSES, BACKS, CHOKES.

And away we go, going slightly faster -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Mayday, mayday, mayday, all ships
 at sea...

And as he continues, overlapping, we hear -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 ... non-operational vessel for
 fifty-six days. I require immediate
 emergency assistance. Please
 respond.

Once again, the console DINGS, and a moment later he HITS the SWITCH.

The BOOSTER ROARS, THRUMS, SPUTTERS -

The digital counter flickers down to -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 One million, five-hundred and
 nineteen thousand miles off
 course...

The stasis pod WHIRRS to life, opening the compartment to admit its patient.

There's another SHARP BLAST OF AIR, ANOTHER WHIMPER -

The layer of ICE CRACKS, and Eiffel spills out of the MACHINE, COUGHING, and HACKING, and -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 My... my toes are starting to
 bleed. I... guess you're not
 supposed to put yourself under so
 many times.

But nothing to it. And already underneath that we start to hear **another round, faster and sharper.**

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Mayday, mayday, mayday...

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
 ... non-operational vessel for sixty-
 three days.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
 ... please respond.

And over that, we hear the DING, followed by the SWITCH, and followed by the fleeting HUM of the BOOSTER.

And starting to overlap with that, the digital COUNTER ADJUSTS, falling down to -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 One million, three-hundred and
 ninety-eight thousand miles off
 course...

The GEARS of the STASIS POD TURN, it OPENS, it gives the BLAST of AIR -

Eiffel collapses out of the machine, convulsing -

And again. Even faster.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
Mayday, mayday, mayday...

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
... stranded on a non-operational
vessel for ...

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
... my nails are starting to fall
off and I can't feel below my
shins...

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
... please respond.

We flicker through the routine, going faster and faster -

DING, followed by SWITCH, followed the THRUM of the booster,
and down goes the digital COUNTER to -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
One million, four-thousand miles...

GEARS TURN, followed by a BLAST OF ICY AIR, in he goes -

And out he comes, COUGHING, and SHAKING and -

Again. Even faster.

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
Mayday, mayday, mayday...

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
... One hundred and twenty one
days...

DING!

SWITCH!

BOOSTER!

COUNTER!

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
 ... last of my hair fell out
 today...

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping)
 Five hundred and sixty thousand
 miles off course...

GEARS!

WHIRR!

AIR!

ICE!

And again -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Mayday...

DING!

SWITCH!

COUNTER!

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 Miles off course...

GEARS!

WHIRR!

ICE!

And again, lighting fast -

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 (overlapping with the
 following:)
 Mayday, mayday, mayday...

DING!

SWITCH!

COUNTER!

GEARS!

WHIRR!

ICE!

Until - **everything stops.**

And we hear clearly:

 EIFFEL (CONT'D)
 I require immediate emergency
 assistance. Please respond.
 (beat - then soft, tired:)
 Please respond.

And then there is silence.

CUT TO:

INT. LOVELACE'S SHUTTLE - FLIGHT DECK - DAY 878

We hear WHISTLING.

Eiffel rests in a corner of the cabin. He stares into the distance, and whistles the main theme from The Great Escape.

As he gets to the end of the melody -

 HILBERT
 Well? Are you finished?

 EIFFEL
 Nope. I've got my entire mental
 John Williams discography to get
 through.

 HILBERT
 Eiffel, we need to talk.

 EIFFEL
 Go away, Doc.

 HILBERT
 There is a mathematical reality
 that you are not taking into
 consideration. And if I am here, it
 is because some part of you think
 you have to confront it!

 EIFFEL
 Mathema - Are you crazy? Look at
 me, Zoidberg: I've lost half my
 body weight. I don't have hair. I
 don't have nails. Does it look like
 I'm up for calculus right now?

HILBERT

Fine. Go back to drowning yourself
in carbonite. See if I care.

EIFFEL

You wouldn't know that word.
Hilbert's never even heard of
Empire.

HILBERT

Time! The problem is time.

BEAT. Eiffel turns to him.

EIFFEL

Say your piece.

HILBERT

Being on course is not the same
thing as being on time. It will be
another eighty days before this
craft is on an *approximate*
intercept course with the last
known trajectory of U.S.S. Hermes.
Then you still need to cover the
distance. About one light year's
worth of distance.

EIFFEL

So? I'll just put myself under the
ice for the duration.

HILBERT

And how long do you think that will
be?

EIFFEL

I don't know. We're doing... what?
Seventeen thousand miles per hour?
That should get us there in
something like -

Eiffel does a bit of mathematics in his head, mumbling
softly. Gradually he slows down, realizing -

HILBERT

Six thousand years.

There's a BEAT as that sinks in.

HILBERT (CONT'D)

Time is the problem.

EIFFEL

Six *thousand*... so even if I *do* make it out of this... Everyone I know will be gone. I'm still going to be... Well that's just great.

HILBERT

How do you know there will even be anything there by the time you -

EIFFEL

(temper rising)

Doc, really appreciate this whole, "Horrrifying Reality" check-in, but I'm late for a frostbite nap and you really need to go.

He hits the controls of the cryo-stasis chamber, and it starts WHIRRING to life.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

You can show yourself out.

HILBERT

Fine. But before, I go, allow me to offer one more thought.

EIFFEL

(snapping)

What?

HILBERT

How have you been regulating the hydraulic flow into the cryogenic-stasis device?

EIFFEL

How have I been whatting the huh?

And that moment the WHIRRING SNAPS, and something goes horribly wrong with the cryo-stasis pod. There's a SPARK, and an ARCING, and then various pieces of MACHINERY POWER DOWN.

HILBERT

Never mind.

And off of that comforting note, we -

CUT TO:

INT. LOVELACE'S SHUTTLE - FLIGHT DECK - DAY 859

Eiffel at the controls. He HITS a BUTTON, and there's a BURST OF STATIC.

EIFFEL

Mayday, mayday, mayday, all ships at sea. This is Doug Eiffel on board the... U.S.S. Horrible Unending Nightmare. I am in need of immediate emergency assistance. Please respond.

BEAT. Nothing.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

(flat)

Surprise, surprise.

(sighs)

Well, long as no one's there, no one's going to mind if I go out speaking, right dear listeners?

Fun fact: hydro-cryogenic stasis pods use up water. They use up a lot of water. They use up all one thousand liters of water you had. And when you try to turn them on and there's no agua, they short circuit. And knock out half the goddam electric grid on your shuttle.

I've got no navigation, no - well, nothing. I've got nothing. Pretty much the only thing that's turning on now is this lovely radio receiver. Which means... Game over.

He SIGHS. Slowly. Deeply. Then lets out a small HALF-LAUGH.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

After all that crap, I never made it back. I guess I'm never going to talk to... Well, there's a lot I'll never get to do.

(clears his throat)

All right folks, this is it. Good night, and good luck, and take care of yourselves. Oh! Unless this is getting picked up by one of those aliens things that jacked my voice and made Wolf 359 go all Doctor Manhattan Project on us.

(MORE)

EIFFEL (CONT'D)
If you're listening... kiss my ass.

 This is Doug Eiffel, transmitting
 from the U.S.S. Horrible Unending
 Nightmare, signing off.

And with that he pulls away from the controls.

BEAT.

BEAT.

BEAT.

BEAT.

 HERA
Eiffel. Listen to me.

 EIFFEL
 (soft)
Go away, Hera.

 HERA
It's important. There's something
you -

 EIFFEL
Please stop talking.

 HERA
You're not going to die here.
There's too much you still have to
do. You don't get to go away just
yet.

 EIFFEL
That is exactly what I get to do.
Just... float away.

 HERA
It's going to be hard.

 EIFFEL
Hera...

 HERA
And it's going to be scary, but...
you're going to get through this.
Everything is going to be okay.

EIFFEL

(snaps)

Go away! I don't want to talk to anyone right now!

KEPLER

(over comms)

Uhh, say again, U.S.S. Horrible Unending Nightmare?

It's a new voice, one we've never heard before. We'll get to know it very well.

EIFFEL

I said go away! I don't want to talk to anyone right now!

BEAT.

KEPLER

Well, all right, but we have received your mayday and thought you might like a hand. Do you copy?

EIFFEL

Oh my God, why is it so hard for you people to -

And that's when he realizes what's happening.

EIFFEL (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

(rushing towards the control)

Yes! Yes, yes, yes! Umm, yes! Hello, I copy! This is the U.S.S. Horrible... Whatever I Said Earlier! I copy loud and clear! Who is this? Do you have a lock on my position?

KEPLER

Affirmative. Stand by for coupling process.

And at that moment various pieces of MACHINERY WHIRR TO LIFE, as the shuttle begins interlocking with another, much larger spacecraft.

For a few moments the machinery just runs its course. Then, with an ECHOING THUD, the shuttle's AIRLOCK ENGAGES. A few moments later, the shuttle's exterior HATCH slowly CRANKS AND CREAKS OPEN.

And that's when Eiffel first lays eyes on COLONEL WARREN KEPLER.

KEPLER (CONT'D)

Well, well, well... Communications Officer Doug Eiffel. You're a long way from Wolf 359, aren't you?

EIFFEL

What? Who are... How do you know...?

KEPLER

Easy, easy... I know you've been through a lot, but don't worry. Everything is going to okay.

We're here to take you home.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE 30.