

Love On Mars

By

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## Cast of Characters

Dirk McCoy: An Astronaut

Samantha Daniels: An Astronaut

Mission Control/Announcer: Voice Only

ACT I

Scene 1

**At Rise:** *Stage is completely dark. There is few seconds of television 'static' and then a television announcer's voice can be heard as he reads a newscast.*

ANNOUNCER:

The blast off to Mars is set for less than a one half hour from now. Astronauts Dirk McCoy and Skip Jacobs are being shuttled to the launchpad at the moment and will soon be strapped into a rocket that will carry them on the first manned mission to the Red Planet. The two astronauts have been training for this mission for more than five year which will include a 156 day space flight and then a stay of three years on the Mars surface. Their home will be a specially designed habitat and research center that has taken NASA robots more than six years to construct. (there is a pause) Wait a moment.. we are getting word that there has been a problem at the launch pad.

**At Lights Up:** *Two chairs are placed CENTER STAGE. In front of the two chairs is the crude controls of a space ship. A panel extends to the floor so that you are not able to see the legs of the astronauts and there are wires and lights on the panel. Affixed to the panel is a large logo of Mars with the words 'Mars 1' encircling the planet. Sitting in the STAGE RIGHT chair is a COMMANDER DIRK MCCOY. He is dressed in a 'space suit' with a bubble helmet on his head. He is making some final adjustments to the knobs and switches on the panel in front of him. MCCOY appears to be in his early thirties with a handsome, chiseled face. There is a slender mic rising from the console and a small speaker in the panel in front of MCCOY through which a thin, electronic voice from MISSION CONTROL can be heard.*

MCCOY:

Ah, Mission Control. What seems to be the hold up? Let's get Jacobs in here and light this candle.

MISSION CONTROL:

One moment, Mars 1. (there is a pause where several voices can be heard in the background) Ah, yeah, Commander.. we've just gotten word that Captain Jacobs apparently has injured himself.

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

Injured himself?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yea, Commander. You know those big hoses attached to your suits?

MCCOY:

Yeah.

MISSION CONTROL:

Well, it seems that while making his way up the tower to the ship, Captain Jacobs tripped on his.

MCCOY:

Why, that clumsy... how bad is it?

MISSION CONTROL:

It looks like Captain Jacobs might have a sprained ankle...

MCCOY:

Well, that's not so bad...

MISSION CONTROL:

And a broken arm.

MCCOY:

Oh...

MISSION CONTROL:

And a shattered tibia, lacerated shoulder, cracked jaw and a double hernia.

MCCOY:

Crap.. is he okay?

MISSION CONTROL:

We're pretty sure he also cracked two ribs, torn his meniscus, has developed arthritis in his right knee, has carpal tunnel syndrome in his left wrist and has developed a sudden debilitating fear of cats.

MCCOY:

From stepping on his air hose?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, Commander.

*There is a pause while MCCOY contemplates what to do next.*

MCCOY:

Well, do I need to leave the capsule or something? I mean, is the mission over?

MISSION CONTROL:

One moment, Mars 1. We're going to put you on hold for a moment while we confer.

*There is a electronic click and then 'elevator music' can be heard coming from the speaker. After a moment, MCCOY calls back to MISSION CONTROL.*

MCCOY:

Hey, you guys. I'm still up here, strapped onto the top of this rocket, remember? Do I need to come back down there or something?

MISSION CONTROL:

No, Commander. The Flight Director has given the okay to go through with the mission using Captain Jacobs.

MCCOY:

Captain Daniels?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, Captain Jacob's backup.

MCCOY:

Backup? Jacobs had a backup?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, Commander. In the event of an emergency, NASA had two other astronauts training for the mission at an alternative site. Just in case.

MCCOY:

In case of what?

MISSION CONTROL:

Sprained ankles, broken arms, hernias, cracked ribs, arthritis, cats..

MCCOY:

Okay... I get it. (he pauses for a moment to think) So who's Jacob's backup?

MISSION CONTROL:

Captain Sam Daniels, a highly qualified Air Force test pilot.

MCCOY:

Test pilot, huh? Okay. That sounds okay. And what about mine?

MISSION CONTROL:

Your what, sir?

MCCOY:

My backup. Who was my backup?

MISSION CONTROL:

Ah... that would be Pookie.

MCCOY:

Pookie? Is he foreign or something? I know. He's a highly decorated Russian cosmonaut, right? That's it, isn't it? You guys needed someone with real experience in outer space to replace me, huh? A Russian Colonel.. no, General.. yeah, General Vladimir Pookie.... efski.... ovich... head of the Russian Space Agency and two year commander of the International Space Station?

MISSION CONTROL:

Pookie is a monkey.

MCCOY:

A monkey?

MISSION CONTROL:

A chimpanzee actually. They are very intelligent.

MCCOY:

You've been training a monkey to take my place?

MISSION CONTROL:

No, Commander.. we've been training a chimpanzee.

MCCOY:

What the...

MISSION CONTROL:

(interrupts)

No worries, Commander. You still have your slot, although Pookie was easier to train to use the space toilet. Never once peed on the seat. We're only going to have to replace one member of the crew, so everything is fine, sir.

MCCOY:

A monkey? Really?

MISSION CONTROL:

Captain Daniels is suited up and should be entering the capsule at any moment. The mission is still a go at T-minus thirty seconds. Over.

*There is a click as MISSION CONTROL ends their communication with the capsule. MCCOY sits quietly for a moment, muttering to himself.*

MCCOY:

A monkey.

*From STAGE LEFT comes the sound of a large metal door being opened and closed and after a moment, CAPTAIN DANIELS enters wearing a 'space suit' and bubble helmet. DANIELS takes a seat next to MCCOY and the two glance at each other for a moment. Finally MCCOY speaks.*

MCCOY:

Welcome aboard, Daniels.

*DANIELS doesn't say anything but salutes MCCOY and then starts working the buttons and knobs on the control panel.*

MCCOY:

I hear you're a test pilot.

*DANIELS nods, still silent.*

MCCOY:

Me, well, I haven't done any test piloting.... ah, stuff.. but I've made 296 carrier landings. Now, that right there is tough flying, right Daniels? (DANIELS gives MCCOY a thumbs up but still hasn't said a word) Well, I guess we're ready to go. (to MISSION CONTROL) Okay, Mission Control, Daniels is here, strapped in and ready for liftoff.

*DANIELS gives MCCOY a 'thumbs up' and returns to working with the knobs on the panel.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Roger that, Mars 1. We are a go for main engine start.

MCCOY:

Roger, CapCom.. go for main engine start. (he presses a button on the control panel)

MISSION CONTROL:

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.. blastoff!

*There's a loud explosion and the sound of the a rocket lifting off the launch pad. The two astronauts shake and rattle in their seats as the sounds of engine thrust can be heard.*

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

Mission Control, we have cleared the tower. I've got green lights on my panel. Daniels?

*DANIELS again gives a thumbs up and MCCOY continues.*

MCCOY:

All green, Mission Control. Ready to fire the boosters?

MISSION CONTROL:

Roger, Mars 1. That's a go for firing final boosters.

MCCOY:

On my mark, Daniels. 3..2..1... fire boosters.

*DANIELS presses a button on the control panel and there is another loud explosion and sounds of engine thrust as the two astronauts are 'thrown' back into their seats. The two astronauts shake in their seats for a few more seconds as the thrust noise begins to fade. Finally there is silence.*

MCCOY:

Let's see a monkey do that.

*MCCOY reaches up and takes off his helmet and sets it on the floor. He turns to DANIELS.*

MCCOY:

It's okay, Daniels. We're in orbit, you can take off your helmet now.

*MCCOY reaches forward and begins to check the knobs and dials as DANIELS begins to take off her helmet. After taking off her helmet, DANIELS pulls off the stocking cap that covers most of her face and hair, revealing that she is a very pretty young woman with long hair which she brushes back out of her face after setting her helmet on the floor. MCCOY is still adjusting knobs and does not notice his partner is a woman.*

MCCOY:

Boy, that was intense wasn't it? I tell you, my buddies back home in Texas think they're real men 'cause they hunt and fish and drive big trucks. But that ain't nothing compared to riding on top of a rocket with seven million pounds of thrust pushing on the bottom of your seat. No, that right there is something only us real men can handle. Ain't that right, Daniels?

(CONTINUED)



DANIELS:

Yeah, real men.

*MCCOY looks over at DANIELS and realizes that she is a woman. His jaw drops open at the sight and DANIELS smiles.*

MCCOY:

Hey, you're.. you're... .

DANIELS:

(extending her hand to MCCOY)  
Captain Samantha Daniels.. glad to make your acquaintance.

MCCOY:

You're a... a..

DANIELS:

You're right.. that was something, wasn't it. Too bad Pookie isn't here. He would have loved that.

MCCOY:

You're a woman!

DANIELS:

Thanks for noticing, Commander. Would you like to go ahead and do our post-launch checklist?

MCCOY:

No.. I don't want to do a post-launch checklist. I want to go home.

DANIELS:

What?

*MCCOY reaches forward and desperately presses some buttons on the control panel.*

MCCOY:

Mission Control? Come in Mission Control!

MISSION CONTROL:

What is it Commander? Do you have a problem?

MCCOY:

You darn right I have a problem.

MISSION CONTROL:

Is it a fire? There should be a fire extinguisher somewhere under the console.

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

No, it's not a fire. It's a woman.

MISSION CONTROL:

Come again, Mar 1. You're breaking up.

MCCOY:

I said there is woman up here. I thought you said Jacob's replacement was named Sam.

DANIELS:

That's short for Samantha. My father named me after Samuel Adams. The guy that signed the Declaration of Independence, not the beer.

MCCOY:

Mission Control, Sam is a woman. Did you know that?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, Commander McCoy. We know Captain Daniels is a woman and a very qualified one to fly this mission with you.

MCCOY:

But... but... she's...

DANIELS:

A woman.. you've said it four times.

MISSION CONTROL:

Is there a problem, Commander?

MCCOY:

Heck, yeah, there's a problem. I'm not about to spend the next three years of my life cooped up in a space ship and then a glass bubble on Mars with a...

DANIELS:

Air Force test pilot?

MCCOY:

No.. a...

DANIELS:

Graduate of MIT with a PhD in Astrophysics?

MCCOY:

No.. with a woman! Mission Control, we're turning back. (to DANIELS) Where's the button that turns this thing around?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

I'm sorry. NASA didn't show me that one. Maybe Pookie knows. You want them to try and get him on the line.

MCCOY:

(raising his voice)

I'm smarter than a monkey!

MISSION CONTROL:

Pookie is not a monkey, Commander. He is a chimpanzee.

MCCOY:

I don't care if he's Leonard Nimoy. We are turning this ship around. Now.

MISSION CONTROL:

I'm sorry, Commander McCoy, but after firing the final booster, there is no turning back.

*MCCOY reaches under the control panel and then under his seat frantically.*

MCCOY:

There's got to be a parachute in this thing somewhere. What kind of plane doesn't have parachutes?

DANIELS:

The kind that flies into space. Come on, McCoy. What's the big deal? I'm a woman. So what?

MCCOY:

So what? My ex-wife was a woman. No, I take that back. She's really the devil. I shared a one bedroom apartment with Satan for nine years that wasn't much bigger than that fishbowl waiting for us on Mars and there is not way I am going to be locked up with another moody, hysterical female that talks non-stop about drapes, throw pillows and carpet colors.

DANIELS:

I'm pretty sure the Mars Habitat comes furnished.

MCCOY:

You know what I mean. Jacobs and I were heading towards the ultimate boy's weekend. We'd been planning it for years. Thirty-seven sports channels on the satellite TV and all the freeze-dried nachos we could eat. And now.. now.... I have to share it with a...

DANIELS:

Woman.

MCCOY:

Yeah.. this is NOT what I signed up for. (back on the radio) So, Mission Control, if you could just push a button or pull a lever or something and turn this thing around, I'll get off and Oprah can get on.

MISSION CONTROL:

Ah, Mars 1, we can't do that. Mars is in opposition now which means two more years until another attempt.. and we've spent a few hundred billion dollars to put you and Captain Daniels into space so you're just going to have to make the best of it.

MCCOY:

But...

MISSION CONTROL:

No butts, soldier. (the voice starts to sound like a drill sergeant) You're in this thing to the end, you under me, Commander?

MCCOY:

Well..

MISSION CONTROL:

I can't hear you, soldier!

MCCOY:

(reluctantly)

Yes sir.

MISSION CONTROL:

Okay. Now, just sit back and have a nice flight. Get to know each other. It's just the two of you for the next four years so try to make the best of it. Okay, Commander?

MCCOY:

Yes, sir.

MISSION CONTROL:

Good. Mission Control over and out.

*The radio clicks off and there is silence for a moment as DANIELS just looks at MCCOY and smiles. After a moment, MCCOY turns towards her.*

DANIELS:

Well... I would say that's settled. Now, we have 156 days until we land on Mars and I for one plan to make the best use of my time. The way I figured it, we should have just enough time for the two of us to..

(CONTINUED)

*She reaches into the bag she brought on the ship and pulls out two balls of yarn and knitting needles.*

DANIELS (CONT):

*..knit matching Christmas sweaters.*

*She hands one of the balls with two needles sticking out of it to MCCOY who sighs heavily and then lowers his head and rests it on the control panel.*

BLACK OUT

ACT 1Scene 2

**At Rise:** *The console and two chairs are still situated CENTER STAGE. Seated in the STAGE RIGHT chair is DANIELS. She has removed her space suit and is now wearing a dark blue jumpsuit with the NASA logo over the breast pocket. She is looking into a mirror and applying a facial 'mud mask' when the lights come up.*

DANIELS:

.. and my girlfriend, Sheila, said that if I don't moisturize every single day on the trip to Mars that I would be sorry. (pause) Are you listening to me, McCoy? I said I would be sorry...

*MCCOY calls from offstage*

MCCOY:

.. I know, if you don't moisturize. Geez!

DANIELS:

You know, Sheila is a real certified cosmetologist. She works in the mall back home and let me tell you, mister. She knows what she's talking about. Sheila says that you its easy to be born beautiful but staying that way takes a lot of hard work. (pause) I said...

*MCCOY calls from offstage*

MCCOY:

.. it's hard work. If we ever get back to Earth, I going to go to the mall and beat Sheila to death.

DANIELS:

Now, that's not nice. Just because I am the ONLY one on this trip that wants to look good when I get back home is no reason to get angry at Sheila. ((holds up bottle of moisturizer) You want to try some? Sheila mixed this moisturizer up special just for this trip. She says that she's seen pictures of Mars and it looks pretty dry up there so there's coco AND shea butter in here and SPF 70.. you know, so I won't get a sunburn. We can't have that, can we? (pause) I said...

*MCCOY calls again from offstage*

MCCOY:

We can't have that! Why don't you just shut up and rub that mud on your face and give me some peace and quiet for a change?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

I'm just trying to be sociable. Maybe you should try it sometime.

*She continues to rub the moisturizer on her face, looking forward. DANIELS suddenly drops the mirror and stares wide-eyed ahead. She stands and calls offstage.*

DANIELS:

Oh, my God. Do you see that?

MCCOY:

What? Has Sheila's mudpack finally burned a hole in your face?

DANIELS:

No.. get it here, McCoy!

*After a moment, McCoy enters from a 'door' located STAGE RIGHT. He is wearing his Christmas sweater.*

MCCOY:

What is it now?

DANIELS:

Oh, you're wearing your sweater. (she claps her hands) I knew you liked it.

MCCOY:

It's the only thing that's still clean. You haven't done laundry in a week.

DANIELS:

Hey, I work hard all day, too. Somebody's got to take care of the cooking and cleaning and making sure that the space capsule is nice.

MCCOY:

Sorry, I know you work hard but is it just too much to ask to have clean underwear to put on after a hard day's work?

DANIELS:

Okay, I'll do the laundry in the morning. Right now, you've got to look at this.

*She points forward at something in the distance.*

MCCOY:

What? (he comes over behind the console) I don't see anything.

DANIELS:

There! (she points frantically) See it?

*MCCOY squints.*

MCCOY:

Is that a bug on the windshield?

DANIELS:

No, you idiot. It's Mars!

MCCOY:

(he squints even harder)

That tiny little thing? You sure it's not a bug?

DANIELS:

It's Mars. See, its round and red...

MCCOY:

Just like a bug on the windshield.

DANIELS:

I'm telling you, we're here. We're finally here.

*DANIELS hugs MCCOY who does not hug her back.*

DANIELS:

Oh, we've got to celebrate. I know. I'm going to go put on my Christmas sweater, too, so we can match.

MCCOY:

Yippee!

DANIELS:

I've been saving a special pouch of freeze dried champagne just for the occasion. Let me get go put on my sweater and get it. Can you believe it, McCoy? We're finally here!

*She hugs MCCOY again and then runs off stage, RIGHT. MCCOY squints again and then spits on his finger and reaches forward to 'clean' the windshield. After scrubbing for a second, he chuckles.*

MCCOY:

Well, I'll be. It really is Mars.

*MCCOY sits down in the right chair and presses a button on the console.*



MCCOY:

Ah, Mission Control, this is Mars 1. Come in, Mission Control.

*There is a brief burst of static and then a thin, slightly distorted voice comes over the speaker.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Mission Control here, Mars 1. What's the problem now? Have you stopped up the toilet again?

MCCOY:

That was not my fault. Daniels made chili.

MISSION CONTROL:

Uh-huh.

MCCOY:

No, Mission Control, it appears that we may be approaching our destination. I can see a red dot out in front of the craft.

MISSION CONTROL:

Red dot, huh? You sure it's not a bug on windshield?

MCCOY:

No, I'm pretty sure it's Mars. Can you confirm that for me?

*There is static from MISSION CONTROL while they confer that lasts for about five seconds and then the thin voice comes back over the speaker.*

MISSION CONTROL:

The flight director has run the calculations and I believe you are right. That is not a bug. It's Mars.

*DANIELS reenters. She is wearing her matching Christmas sweater and carrying a zip lock bag filled with a clear liquid. There's a straw sticking out of the bag and she is sucking up the liquid as she enters. As she approaches the console, she hands the bag to MCCOY who sucks up a mouthful of the liquid and burps. DANIELS stands beside MCCOY's chair and uses a rag to clean the mask from her face.*

DANIELS:

Well, it's about time. We're only two weeks late.

MCCOY:

That is not my fault.

DANIELS:

Will you just admit it? We were lost.

MCCOY:

We were NOT lost. I knew exactly where we were the entire time.

DANIELS:

Would it have killed you to stop and ask for directions?

MCCOY:

Stop where? We're in outer space, Daniels. You see all that black stuff out there? That is space!

DANIELS:

I meant stop and call Mission Control. That's all you had to do, just call them and admit you were lost. But noooo... (she speaks sarcastically).. Mr. 'I've Made 300 landings on a Carrier' doesn't need no stinking directions 'cause he's a man.

MISSION CONTROL:

Excuse me, Captain Daniels and Commander McCoy. Can we get back to the mission?

*DANIELS sits in the chair next to MCCOY.*

DANIELS:

Yes, Mission Control. I for one am not too prideful to take advice from others.

*MCCOY gives up and lays his head on the control panel. DANIELS reaches out and take the bag of liquid from him and sucks on the straw.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Okay.. now, we're going to need you to start slowing your descent. Have you got the manual, Commander, so you can review the procedures?

MCCOY:

Yeah... (to DANIELS)... it's in the little rack back by the toilet. Run go get it, Daniels.

DANIELS:

I told you, I am not going in there until you clean it. (leans forward towards console) There is chili everywhere, sir, and I did not make the mess so I should not have to be the one to clean it up.

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

You're the one who thought it would be a good idea to make chili in zero gravity, for God's sake.

DANIELS:

I was just trying to cook something that I knew you would like for a change. You're always complaining that what I make is too bland. (to MISSION CONTROL) You see what I have had to live with for the last 182 days, Mission Control? Commander McCoy doesn't appreciate anything I do around here.

MCCOY:

Yes, I do.

DANIELS:

No, you don't. You're always yelling at me and making me feel stupid. (she start to cry)

MCCOY:

Oh, don't do that. I said I'm sorry.

DANIELS:

But did you really mean it? (to control panel) Did he sound like he meant it to you, Mission Control?

MISSION CONTROL:

Well... I don't know. Maybe.

MCCOY:

You see, I'm not the only one who thinks you overreact to everything.

DANIELS:

Me? Overreact? When we couldn't get the solar shields to lock into place, who was the one who took a space walk and then beat on the the thing for thirty minutes with a pipe wrench?

MCCOY:

I got it unstuck, didn't I?

DANIELS:

Yeah, and tore a big gash in your space suit. (to MISSION CONTROL) He didn't tell you that, did he, Mission Control? That he tore a big rip in his space suit and I had to sew it back. (to MCCOY) Just because I'm a woman, you think I should do all cleaning and sewing around here. Sexist!

MCCOY:

Alarmist!

DANIELS:

Chauvinist!

MCCOY:

Monkey lover!

*DANIELS gasps and stands.*

DANIELS:

You leave Pookie out of this!

MCCOY:

Maybe if that chimp had been in the co-pilot's seat instead of you, we wouldn't be lost in space.

DANIELS:

Co-pilot? Who says I'm the co-pilot?

MCCOY:

'Cause I'm the right seat and that's where the pilot sits. You're in the left seat where the co-pilot sits. I'm here and you're there so that makes you the co-pilot. Right, Mission Control? Captain Daniels is the co-pilot?

MISSION CONTROL:

Well.. I don't...

DANIELS:

Just because I'm a woman, you automatically think I'm the co-pilot?

MCCOY:

No, I don't automatically think you're the co-pilot just because you're a woman. I think you're the co-pilot because I'm the pilot and that makes you the co-pilot. Right Mission Control? I'm the pilot and Daniels is the co-pilot, right?

MISSION CONTROL:

Well.. technically..

DANIELS:

Oh, forget it. Be the pilot. I don't care what you do. I don't have listen to this.

MCCOY:

That's your problem. You never listen. You're too busy talking!

*DANIELS huffs and then exits. MCCOY calls after her.*

MCCOY:

While you're back there feeling sorry for yourself, why don't you bring me the procedures manual. It's in the rack by the toilet.

*DANIELS tosses the procedures manual through the 'open door' directly at MCCOY's head. He ducks.*

MCCOY:

The only thing worse than your aim is your cooking!

*MCCOY reaches down and picks up the procedures manual then presses a button on the control panel.*

MCCOY:

Mission Control, are you still there?

*There is a heavy sigh as MISSION CONTROL comes back on the speaker.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, Commander. We're still here.

MCCOY:

I don't guess its too late to send Jacobs up here, is it?

MISSION CONTROL:

I'm afraid not, Commander. (there is a brief static and then the voice comes back through the speaker) Okay, do you have the manual?

MCCOY:

Roger that, Mission Control. Right here.

MISSION CONTROL:

Okay, open it up to page 143. You should see a diagram of Mars in the center of the page.

*MCCOY flips through the manual.*

MCCOY:

Okay. I got it. Holy cow, Mars is HUGE! Wait a minute... sorry, that's just a chili bean.

MISSION CONTROL:

Okay... now, you'll notice that on the diagram there is a small circle with a cross hairs drawn on it. Do you see it?

MCCOY:

Yes. Got it.

MISSION CONTROL:

Okay. That is the landing zone. It's in the middle of the Cydonia Mensae. That's where the Mars Habitat is located. There should be a little blue square near the landing area.

MCCOY:

Roger, Mission Control. I see it.

*DANIELS walks back into the room. She has removed her Christmas sweater. She is carrying a large armful of laundry.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Good. Now, you are going to fire your reverse thrusters and slow your descent. Got that, Commander?

MCCOY:

Roger, that Mission Control. (to DANIELS) Aren't you going to help me with the descent?

DANIELS:

No, it is obvious that the only thing I am good for around here is washing your clothes and cooking bad chili.

MCCOY:

It wasn't that bad.

DANIELS:

Then why did you say that the only thing worse than my aim was my cooking. Everybody at Mission Control heard it, didn't you Mission Control?

*There is a pause of static.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, we heard it.

DANIELS:

You see. Now I am a laughing stock among the astronaut corps. Thanks a lot, McCoy, for ruining the biggest day of my life, landing on Mars. No, you and your little buddies back in Houston just go on and do your male chauvinist stupid little reverse thrust descent and don't worry about me. I'll be doing what I do best. Dirty laundry.

MCCOY:

Come on, Daniels. Don't be like that.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

Like what? I don't know what you're talking about.

MCCOY:

Like.. that. Acting like there's nothing wrong when you and I both know you're upset.

DANIELS:

I'm not upset.

MCCOY:

Yes, you are.

MISSION CONTROL:

Ah, Mars 1, we hate to interrupt your little domestic dispute but you've got to fire those thrusters soon or you're going to fly right on past Mars. Commander McCoy, you ready?

MCCOY:

Yes, sir, Mission Control. Ready and awaiting your command to land the ship.

*DANIELS drops the laundry on the floor and walks over to the control panel.*

DANIELS:

Hey, why does he get to land the ship on Mars? If he gets to fly it, why can't I land it?

MCCOY:

Now Daniels, we've been through this a hundred times. I've had more experience in the Mars landing simulator. It should be me that makes the landing.

DANIELS:

Uh, huh. So YOU should be the one that makes the landing just because you're the man.

MCCOY:

I didn't say that.

DANIELS:

But that's what you meant, wasn't it? You heard it, Mission Control. That's what he meant, didn't he?

*MISSION CONTROL answers very meekly.*

MISSION CONTROL:

I don't know. Maybe.

DANIELS:

Well, I know that's what you meant. Just because you're a big strong man and I'm a weak little woman, you should be the one landing the ship.

MCCOY:

Okay.. (he gets up from the pilot's seat and gestures back towards the chair) You want to land the ship? Be my guest. Land it.

*DANIELS looks at the chair and then back at MCCOY, crossing her arms.*

DANIELS:

Oh, that's just what you want, isn't it? For me to make a fool of myself. Well, I am not going to give you that satisfaction, mister. No siree... Nobody makes a fool out of Captain Samantha Daniels.

MCCOY:

(sighs heavily)  
I hate it when you get this way.

MISSION CONTROL:

Mars 1.. have you decided who's going to land the ship?

MCCOY:

It's going to be me, Mission Control.

DANIELS:

Only because I refuse to be made a pawn in your cruel display of male oppression. (to MISSION CONTROL) If McCoy thinks that he can do a better job than a decorated Air Force test pilot than go ahead, let him land it. (to MCCOY) Just don't come crying to me when you're too proud to ask for directions and we land on Saturn instead.

MISSION CONTROL:

Roger, Captain Daniels. Commander McCoy?

MCCOY:

I'm here.

MISSION CONTROL:

Flip over to the next page and you'll see the procedures for applying the reverse thrusters.

*MCCOY flips the page.*

MCCOY:

Got it.



MISSION CONTROL:

You'll need someone to line up the planet in window while you apply the thrust.

*MCCOY looks over at DANIELS who has now pulled out a emery board and is filing her nails.*

MCCOY:

Daniels?

DANIELS:

Yes?

MCCOY:

Can you keep an eye on our position while I apply the thrust?

DANIELS:

Oh, so you need me now?

MCCOY:

Yes, I need you.

DANIELS:

Hum... well, I guess I can take a few minutes out of my life of servitude and assist you.

MCCOY:

Thank you. Now, just watch the center mark and make sure I keep Mars right in the middle of the window.

*DANIELS gives an exaggerated salute and stares ahead at the 'window'*

MCCOY:

Okay, Mission Control. We're ready.

MISSION CONTROL:

Roger, Mars 1. Apply 10% thrust.... now.

MCCOY:

Roger, Mission Control. Applying thrust now.

*There a sound of rocket engines coming to life which fades slowly. There a long pause as the two watch the window and then MCCOY speaks softly.*

MCCOY:

Why'd you take off your Christmas sweater? I thought we were going to wear our matching sweaters to commemorate the landing?

DANIELS:

Oh... I know you really don't want to.

MCCOY:

Sure I do. I love my sweater.

DANIELS:

No, you don't.

MCCOY:

I do, too. It's reminds of being back home in Texas, sitting beside the tree on Christmas morning sipping eggnog.

DANIELS:

You really like it?

MCCOY:

Yes, I really like it. I would have to say that of all the things I brought to wear on this trip, this Christmas sweater is my favorite.

*DANIELS stares at MCCOY for a moment, getting misty eyed.*

DANIELS:

Really?

MCCOY:

Really.

MISSION CONTROL:

Mars 1?

MCCOY:

We're here, Mission Control. Ready for your next instructions.

*DANIELS jumps up from her chair and runs out of the room.*

MCCOY:

Daniels.. where are you going? I need you in here.

*DANIELS runs back into the room. She is pulling on her Christmas sweater.*

DANIELS:

Right here, Commander.

*DANIELS sits back down in her chair, smiles at MCCOY and then reaches out and takes his hand.*

DANIELS:

Let's land this thing.

*MCCOY smiles back and then they both look intently at the 'window' in front of them. There is the sound effect of rockets firing as the lights fade.*

BLACK OUT

ACT 1Scene 3

*At Rise: The interior of the Mars Base. The control console is still located CENTER STAGE. The logo on the front of the console has been changed to a large cutout of Mars with the words 'Mars Base' encircling it. The rear wall also features various cabinets, scientific stations, more controls, knobs and lights beneath windows that span the entire wall. Beyond the windows are depictions of the surface of Mars with red mountains, dunes, sand and rocks below a faint yellow sky. UP STAGE RIGHT is a door leading to the LIVING QUARTERS. There is another door of full length glass located UP STAGE LEFT that leads outside. UP STAGE of the door are a couple of hooks on the wall on which hangs pressure suits and bubble helmets (the same ones worn during the first scene.) As the lights come up, DANIELS runs into the room. She is dressed in her blue mission jumpsuit with the NASA logo above the left pocket. DANIELS is giggling with delight as she runs into the room.*

MCCOY:

*5..4..3..2..1.. ready or not, here I come.*

*DANIELS laughs and quickly squats down on the STAGE LEFT side of the the console, out of sight. MCCOY enters the room. He is wearing the same blue jumpsuit and has a big smile on his face.*

MCCOY:

*Now, I wonder where she could be. Certainly she's not in... (he opens the door to one of the cabinets).. HERE! (he closes the door) Nope, that's where she hid last time. Let's see...*

*MCCOY walks towards the console and DANIELS moves around to the front to stay out of sight.*

MCCOY:

*How about under the console... that's is one of her favorite hiding places.*

*MCCOY leans over and looks under the console. DANIELS can't help herself and giggles. MCCOY's head pops up.*

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

What's that? Is the laughter of an astrophysicist I hear?

*MCCOY moves around the right side of the console and sees DANIELS. She jumps up and runs around the console and MCCOY chases her. DANIELS is now laughing loudly with delight.*

DANIELS:

Come on, Space Boy. Catch me if you can.

MCCOY:

Oh, I can. And I will.

*MCCOY chases her in a circle and finally catches her behind the console. MCCOY hugs DANIELS closely and the two fall down behind the console, out of sight. The sounds of giggling and kissing can be heard from behind the console as the two lay down on the floor behind the console. After a moment, MCCOY's feet stick out on the right side and DANIEL's emerges from the left side. Only their feet and ankles can be seen. There is another moment of silence and the two lay beside each other behind the console. Finally, DANIELS speaks.*

DANIELS:

Did you ever think it would be like this?

MCCOY:

I don't know. I guess I knew it would be beautiful. And red, of course.

DANIELS:

No, not Mars. Did you ever think it would be like this, you konw.. between.... us?

*MCCOY pauses for a moment.*

MCCOY:

No, in all the years of training for this mission, I never imagined that I would wind up attracted to my flight partner. But I can't speak for Jacobs. He was always a little sweet on me.

*MCCOY laughs and the sound of DANIELS playfully slapping him can be heard from behind the console.*

DANIELS:

Be serious. You hated me for the first.. what? One hundred days?

MCCOY:

I'm pretty sure my malevolence for you lasted a good five months.

DANIELS:

Malevolence? Why, Commander McCoy, I dare say that I was not aware that you knew such big words.

MCCOY:

There's a lot of things I know, Captain Daniels. Like this...

*DANIELS giggles as MCCOY embraces her behind the console. Suddenly, a voice can be heard from the speaker in the console- tiny and thin from far away.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Mars Base? this is Mission Control. Come in, Mars Base.

MCCOY:

Well, I guess it's time to get back to work.

DANIELS:

Ah, Commander, just a few minutes more.

MCCOY:

I'm sorry, but we shall have to continue our 'recreation' later.

*DANIELS laughs.*

DANIELS:

I bet Pookie would stay down here and snuggle with me no matter what they say on the radio.

MCCOY:

Yeah.. and give you fleas in the process.

MISSION CONTROL:

Mars Base.. come in, Mars Base.

*MCCOY's head pops up above the console. There is lipstick smeared on his face and his hair is ruffled. He presses a button on the console.*

MCCOY:

Mars Base here. Come in, Mission Control.

MISSION CONTROL:

Mission Control here. How are things going out there, Commander? Seen any nice sights today?

MCCOY:

Yes, Mission Control. (he looks down at DANIELS behind the console) In fact, I'm looking at one right now.

*DANIELS comes up from behind the console when she hears the comment and kisses MCCOY on the cheek. He blushes and wipes it off.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Good, we just wanted to make sure. We haven't heard from you in a few days. Is everything alright out there?

MCCOY:

Right as rain.

MISSION CONTROL:

Captain Daniels?

DANIELS:

Never better, sir.

MISSION CONTROL:

Well, okay. I just wanted to let you know, Captain, that you're two days late on uploading those soil samples for the guys in the white labs coats back here in Houston. They're starting to get a little nervous.

*DANIELS gets up and straightens her jumpsuit before sitting in the left chair. Seeing that their 'playtime' is over, MCCOY also stands, grabs a clipboard from the top of the console and crosses back to one of the scientific consoles against the back wall.*

DANIELS:

Sorry, Mission Control. I've.. ah, been a little busy lately.

*MCCOY giggles at this and DANIELS smiles and waves for him to keep quiet.*

DANIELS:

I'll get right on it, Mission Control. Sorry for the delay.

MISSION CONTROL:

Okay, Roger that, Captain Daniels. Commander McCoy? You still there?

*MCCOY steps forward towards the console.*

MCCOY:

Right here, Mission Control.

MISSION CONTROL:

Good. We're getting a little static from your end. You might want to check the alignment of your antenna to make sure it hasn't gotten blown off axis up there.

MCCOY:

Roger that, Mission Control. I'll suit up and head out there right now.

MISSION CONTROL:

We'll schedule a radio check for later this evening, around 1800 hours Mars time. Will you have enough time to take care of it by then.

MCCOY:

No problem. Mars Base out.

MISSION CONTROL:

Mission Control out.

*MCCOY turns to DANIELS.*

MCCOY:

Well, it looks like I've got to take a little stroll outside. Want to come with me?

DANIELS:

(she stands)

I'd love to take a romantic walk in the Martian sunset with you, Commander, but I've got to process those soil samples I collected a couple of days ago and uplink them to Houston before they DO send Jacobs up here to replace me.

MCCOY:

Well, I'm sure he could take your place just fine. I hear he's a pretty good kisser.

*DANIELS playfully slaps MCCOY.*

DANIELS:

Actually he is.

MCCOY:

What?

DANIELS:

Just kidding. The only other astronaut I have ever kissed was Pookie and he uses way too much tongue.



*They both laugh and MCCOY starts to cross over to the outside door to the pressure suit hanging on a hook the wall.*

MCCOY:

Help me get my suit on?

DANIELS:

My pleasure.

*MCCOY takes the suit off the wall and begins to slide it over his jumpsuit.*

DANIELS:

You think Mission Control suspects anything?

MCCOY:

What? About you and Pookie?

DANIELS:

No, silly. About us?

MCCOY:

What about us?

DANIELS:

You know. That we're.. you know.

MCCOY:

That we're what? That I like to chase you around the base every evening?

DANIELS:

Is that all it is? Just for... you know... for fun?

MCCOY:

Are you asking if I love you?

*DANIELS blushes.*

DANIELS:

Well... I guess so.

*MCCOY places his hands gently on DANIELS face and smiles.*

MCCOY:

Yes, Captain Daniels. I love you.

DANIELS:

Oh, Dirk.

*She hugs him hard.*

MCCOY:

Now, don't get mushy on me. You know I don't like that.

*DANIELS releases him.*

DANIELS:

I'm sorry. It's just that I never thought that.....

MCCOY:

That I liked you?

DANIELS:

Well, not at first.

MCCOY:

Well, I will have to say that for the first five months, I wasn't your biggest fan. The way you nagged me and talked incessantly and...

DANIELS:

Okay, I get it. I was not a very good traveling companion. I guess a part of me wanted to be that way just to show you that I could do anything you could. I'm sorry.

*MCCOY has the suit on now and takes the helmet off the wall.*

MCCOY:

Here. Help me with the helmet. (DANIELS takes the helmet from him and begins to slide it over his head) You know, I can hardly remember those days. Once we landed on Mars and saw how beautiful it was, it was like my eyes were opened to the world around me. And I realized that there had been beauty around me the whole time.

DANIELS:

Oh, Dirk.

*She hugs him again and kisses the visor of his helmet.*

MCCOY:

Hey, now. Watch the lipstick on the helmet. You don't want me not be able to see where I'm going and trip out there, do you?

DANIELS:

No, sorry. (she pulls a rag from her pocket and wipes the visor clean)

MCCOY:

Listen, we'll talk more about our little 'situation' here when I get back inside. Right now, I better get out there and fix that antenna before it gets dark. Go do a capcom check, okay.

DANIELS:

Okay.

*She crosses back over to the console and presses a button.*

DANIELS:

Mars Base to Mars Walker. Can you hear me?

*MCCOY gives a thumbs up.*

MCCOY:

Loud and clear. I'll see you in a few minutes.

*MCCOY opens the door to the outside and the sound of wind can be heard. He steps through, pulling it closed behind him with the whoosh. DANIELS presses the capcom button again.*

DANIELS:

Mars Base to Mars Walker. Come in, Mars Walker.

*MCCOY turns and looks back through the door.*

MCCOY:

What is is, Samantha?

DANIELS:

I love you, too.

*MCCOY gives her another thumbs up and then turns and moves out of sight. DANIELS smiles for a moment and then claps her hands with glee. She sings the next lines like a young girl.*

DANIELS:

I've got a boyfriend. And my boyfriend loves me.

*DANIELS giggles and then exits through the door STAGE RIGHT. She returns in a moment with a small metal 'sample' bucket which has the Mars soil sample inside. She goes over to one of the scientific instruments against the back wall and begins to load the sample into the machine. After a moment, there is a crackling over the speaker in the console.*

MCCOY:

(he sounds out of breath)  
Mars Base? Come in, Mars Base.

*DANIELS drops the canister of dirt and runs over to the console.*

DANIELS:

What is it, Dirk? Are you okay?

MCCOY:

I don't know. I've just about got the antenna aligned but there's a warning light flashing on my oxygen sensor.

DANIELS:

Get back in here now!

MCCOY:

I think I'm okay. I'm just going to make one final adjustment to the...

*A high pitched alarm can be heard through the speaker. It is coming from MCCOY.*

DANIELS:

Dirk! Dirk, can you hear me?

*MCCOY's voice begins to break up.*

MCCOY:

I can hear.... I'm losing...

DANIELS:

Dirk, leave the antenna and get inside!

MCCOY:

I don't have...

DANIELS:

Dirk!

*She runs over the wall and grabs the other pressure suit from the wall and start to put it on just as MCCOY steps in front of the door. He falls down and lays still.*

DANIELS:

Dirk!

*DANIELS throws the suit down on the floor and rushes over to the door. She pulls it open and the sounds of wind fills the room. She has to scream to be heard over the noise.*

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:  
Dirk!

*DANIELS runs through the door. She grabs MCCOY by the shoulders and drags him back into the room. After getting him all the way into the room, she closes the door with great effort and the wind noise recedes. DANIELS runs over and kneels beside MCCOY. She takes MCCOY's helmet off and sets it aside and then unzips this pressure suit.*

DANIELS (CONT):  
Dirk? Can you hear me? Dirk?

*After a moment, MCCOY coughs and then opens his eyes. Seeing this, DANIELS starts to cry and hugs him close.*

MCCOY:  
Samantha?

DANIELS:  
(she pulls MCCOY's head into her lap)  
I'm here, Dirk. I'm here.

MCCOY:  
I couldn't breathe. There must have been a leak in one of my hoses.

DANIELS:  
You're okay now, darling. Just take deep breaths. You're okay now. (she strokes his head)

MCCOY:  
All I could think about was what would happen if I couldn't get back inside. What would happen to you all alone out here?

DANIELS:  
Everything is okay now, my darling.

MCCOY:  
I know, but what if I hadn't made it back, Samantha? What if I missed my chance for real happiness?

DANIELS:  
You haven't missed your chance. I'm right here.

MCCOY:  
Samantha?

DANIELS:

Yes, Dirk.

MCCOY:

I don't want to wait any longer. (he begins to get up)

DANIELS:

What do you mean, wait?

*MCCOY coughs again and then walks unsteadily over to the console. DANIELS remains on the floor, perplexed. MCCOY presses a button on the console.*

MCCOY:

Mission Control? This is Mars Base calling.

*There is a brief moment of static and then the voice from MISSION CONTROL comes through the speaker.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Mission Control here. What's the problem, Mars Base?

MCCOY:

No problem, Mission Control. Everything is fine. I was just wondering if you would do something for me.

MISSION CONTROL:

Sure, Mars Base. What do you need?

MCCOY:

Do you still have a Navy Chaplain on duty there in the Flight Center? You know, for emergencies?

MISSION CONTROL:

Do you have an emergency, Commander?

MCCOY:

No.. no.. (he coughs again and then continues) Is there a chaplain there?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, Commander. There's a chaplain on duty.

MCCOY:

Can you get him on the line for me? I'd like to ask him if he could conduct a quick wedding.

MISSION CONTROL:

A wedding?

*DANIELS stands.*

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

A wedding?

*MCCOY turns to DANIELS. During this speech, he walks away from the console.*

MCCOY:

Yes, a wedding. I told you I didn't want to wait anymore. Samantha, I have spent most of my life trying to be the best at everything. The best student at the Academy. The best Naval Aviator. The best astronaut. And I was the best, I really was. But I've been focused on my career so long that I had forgotten what it feels like to just...you know, 'feel' things. My Dad died while I was in the Persian Gulf and I tried to cry but I couldn't. Showing weakness might get me pulled off the flight deck. So I bottled it all up inside. I never allowed myself to feel anything.... fear, sadness, grief.. not even happiness. But out here with you, 60 million miles from Earth, something happened. I don't know how to explain it, but I'm starting to feel things again. And for the first time in my life, I'm starting to care about another person more than I do about myself. You know what I mean?

DANIELS:

Yes, darling. I know exactly what I mean.

MCCOY:

So, I want to start acting on my feelings. If I don't, who knows what might happen. I might lose myself and become nothing more than just another piece of machinery around here. So... here goes.. (he gets down on one knee)... Samantha Daniels, will you marry me?

DANIELS:

(she gets down on her knees in front of MCCOY)

Yes.

*DANIELS begins to cry with joy and the two hug. MCCOY begins to cry, too. He wipes his eyes.*

MCCOY:

See.. I've done that before.

*DANIELS reaches up and wipes away his tears.*

DANIELS:

It's okay.

MCCOY:

We need a ring.

*He gets up and goes to one of the cabinets against the back wall, reaching in and rummaging around. He pulls out a large ring of metal, larger than his fist.*

MCCOY:

I guess you'll never grow into this, huh?

DANIELS:

God, I hope not.

*DANIELS joins MCCOY at the cabinet as he fumbles around some more and finally pulls out a smaller ring and hands it to her.*

MCCOY:

How about an O-ring from the backup oxygen tank?

DANIELS:

Don't you think we'll need that?

MCCOY:

Nah... it's just a backup.

*DANIELS holds up her hand and MCCOY slides the ring onto her official.*

DANIELS:

We're really doing this, aren't we?

MCCOY:

I'm not going back to the old McCoy. So, either you marry me or they're going to have to send Pookie up here in a monkey-sized wedding gown.

*DANIELS laughs and hugs MCCOY as the radio springs back to life.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Mars Base, you still there?

*MCCOY crosses to the console and presses the button next to the mic.*

MCCOY:

Right here, Mission Control.

MISSION CONTROL:

Ah, Commander McCoy. The chaplain is here and he wants to know exactly who you're marrying?

(CONTINUED)



*DANIELS hugs MCCOY and laughs.*

DANIELS:

Me, you idiot!

MISSION CONTROL:

Captain Daniels, is that you?

DANIELS:

Yes, its me. Who else do you think is up here? Marvin the Martian?

MISSION CONTROL:

No, ma'am. I mean, yes ma'am. Let me get the chaplain. Hang on.

*DANIELS breaks off her embrace and paces.*

DANIELS:

I need to call my mother.

MCCOY:

Honey, I don't think our cell phones are going to work out here.

DANIELS:

Yeah, right. Oh.. I can't believe it. We're going to be married. (she reaches up and brushes back her hair) I must look hideous.

MCCOY:

(he takes her in his arms)  
You look beautiful.

DANIELS:

But I hardly have any makeup on, Dirk. And look at this dirty old jumpsuit. What kind of bride gets married in a NASA jumpsuit?

MCCOY:

My bride, that's who.

DANIELS:

It's so drab.

MCCOY:

You know, maybe you're right. Hang on a second.

*MCCOY exits into the living quarters. After he leaves, DANIELS leans down close to the console and pretends she sees her reflection in the glass. She pinches her cheeks and then uses her fingers to 'brush' her teeth. After a moment,*

(CONTINUED)

*MCCOY comes back in. He is holding the two matching Christmas sweaters in his hands.*

MCCOY:

This ought to liven things up.

DANIELS:

Oh, Dirk.

*There's a burst of static on the speaker and then a voice.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Commander McCoy?

MCCOY:

(presses a button on the console)  
Right here, Mission Control.

MISSION CONTROL:

We've got the chaplain standing by. Are you ready?

MCCOY:

Just about.

*MCCOY hands one of the sweaters to DANIELS and they both pull them over their jumpsuits. MCCOY reaches out and grabs DANIELS hand.*

MCCOY:

Ready?

DANIELS:

Blast off!

BLACK OUT

INTERMISSION

ACT 2Scene 1

*At Rise: It is nearly three years later and the Mars Base is beginning to show signs of wear. There are several smudges on the 'windows' and there is a large, overflowing trash can right of the control console. There's a clothes line strung on STAGE LEFT with several shirts and pants hanging from it. There are several pieces of dirty clothes lying across the console. MCCOY enters from STAGE RIGHT. He is wearing a his blue jumpsuit, unzipped and pulled down around his waist revealing a soiled 'wife beater' style t-shirt which can barely contain his large belly. On top of the t-shirt is a worn, dirty robe which is open, the ties dragging the floor around his bare feet. His hair is disheveled and he has a ragged, three-day beard. MCCOY is carrying a bag of chips which he is crunching on loudly as he enters the room. He pauses to scratch himself while he gazes out of the window. He picks up a beverage can that is on top of one of the instrument panels against the back wall, holds it up to his ear and shakes it and then drains it. He tosses it towards the trash can and misses.*

*MCCOY belches loudly then crosses over to the console. He reaches down and presses the button.*

MCCOY:

Mission Control, this is Mars Base. Come in, Mission Control.

*DANIELS calls from off stage.*

DANIELS:

Did you try them?

MCCOY:

(calling to her)  
Yep, nobody's answering.

DANIELS:

Well, try 'em again.

MCCOY:

I just did.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

Try 'em again. Again. Maybe you aren't pushing the button right.

MCCOY:

What do you mean, maybe I'm not pushing the button right? The button only goes on way and that's in.

DANIELS:

Sometimes it sticks, remember?

MCCOY:

Oh, no. Don't start that again.

DANIELS:

How many times have I told you not to drink around the console?

MCCOY:

I don't know. About a billion, I'd guess.

DANIELS:

That's right. Because when you drink around the console, you spill drinks on the console. And when you spill drinks on the console, the buttons stick.

*MCCOY reaches into the pocket of his robe and pulls out another canned drink. He pops it open and takes a long drink and then belches loudly. Holding the can, he mutters under his breath.*

MCCOY:

(he mocks her in a high pitched voice)  
When you spill drinks on the console, the buttons stick..

DANIELS:

What was that?

MCCOY:

Nothing, sweetheart. I'm pushing the button.

DANIELS:

Push it hard.

*MCCOY sets the can down on the console and then pounds on the button with his fist.*

MCCOY:

I am pushing it hard.

DANIELS:  
And?

MCCOY:  
And what?

DANIELS:  
Are you getting anything?

MCCOY:  
Just a broken wrist.

DANIELS:  
What?

MCCOY:  
Nothing.

DANIELS:  
Push it harder.

MCCOY:  
Why don't you come out here and push it harder.

DANIELS:  
I'm busy. Just do it.

*MCCOY mutters to himself and bangs on the button again.*

MCCOY:  
Mission Control, this is Mars Base calling. Do you read me, Mission Control?

DANIELS:  
What'd they say?

MCCOY:  
They didn't say nothing. Nobody's there.

DANIELS:  
Are you sure?

MCCOY:  
Well, we're 56 millions miles from Houston so I can't really go look through the window, but I'm pretty sure nobody's home. Geez!

DANIELS:  
Why you getting so upset with me? You're the one who broke the radio.

MCCOY:

I didn't break the radio.

DANIELS:

Yes you did. When you were out there checking the solar panels, you said you backed into it.

MCCOY:

Yeah, I backed into it. And then I straightened it out.

DANIELS:

So you admit you broke it?

MCCOY:

I didn't break it. I.. bent... it a little, that's all.

DANIELS:

And then you broke it.

MCCOY:

No, I bent it. But now it's fixed.

DANIELS:

Well, obviously it's not fixed if the radio doesn't work.

MCCOY:

I tell you what. If you're so smart, why don't you come out here and fix the radio yourself.

DANIELS:

I can't. I'm too busy washing your dirty underwear.

MCCOY:

Nobody asked you to wash my underwear.

DANIELS:

Sure, nobody asked me to wash your underwear. But when it gets knee deep, somebody has to do it.

MCCOY:

I'll come back there and wash clothes and you can come out here and fix the radio.

DANIELS:

I didn't break it. You did.

*MCCOY throws up his hands in frustration. He crosses to the back wall and opens an instrument panel, revealing a tangle of wires.*

MCCOY:

Maybe the problem is in here. This is a mess.

*DANIELS enters from STAGE RIGHT. She is dressed in pajamas and an open bath robe. She is walking 'gingerly' because there are spacers between her toes where she had just given herself a manicure. Her hair is piled on top of her head and bound with a kerchief.*

DANIELS:

I'll say. Dirk McCoy, what have I told you about dropping your clothes on the floor? (she picks up a dirty shirt from the floor and shoves it towards MCCOY)

MCCOY:

Not to do it??

DANIELS:

(she sighs)

Uh.. you're worse than a child. (she sees the can on the console, drops the shirt and crosses to pick it up) And what is this? Is this a drink on the console?

*MCCOY stands, knowing he is about to get into trouble.*

MCCOY:

I don't know. It's not mine.

DANIELS:

(sarcastically)

It's not mine.. it's not mine. It's never your's, is it, Dirk?

MCCOY:

The shirt's mine.

*MCCOY grabs the shirt from her and crosses towards the door to the living quarters. He throws the shirt through the doorway. DANIELS holds the can out towards MCCOY.*

DANIELS:

This is why the radio doesn't work!

MCCOY:

I thought you said it don't work because I broke the antenna?

DANIELS:

You did.

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

So, which is it? The drink or the antenna?

DANIELS:

It's both. The drink, the antenna, the way you maintain this place. You're so lazy, it's a wonder anything works around here at all. We should be dead.

*MCCOY takes the drink from DANIELS.*

MCCOY:

I wish I were.

DANIELS:

Will it hurt you to just do a little basic maintenance?

MCCOY:

Hey, I work plenty hard around here cleaning the solar shields, processing O2 so we can breath and working in the garden so we can eat. And what difference does it make anyway? The new crew is supposed to be here in a couple of months and they can worry about cleaning the place up and fixing the stupid radio.

*MCCOY finishes off the drink.*

DANIELS:

Oh no. I am NOT having the new crew show up with the place looking like this, mister. You are going to start picking your underwear, cleaning up after yourself and stop leaving food and drinks everywhere.

*DANIELS grabs the can from MCCOY and drops it into the trash can.*

MCCOY:

Hey!

DANIELS:

And I tell you what else, space boy. You are going to start treating me like a husband should treat his wife. Like a princess.

*DANIELS sits in the left chair and puts one foot up on the console, pulls off the toe spacers, then puts the other up and takes off the spacer and drops them into the trash can. She then takes an emery board from her pocket and starts to file her toenails.*

MCCOY:

Well, maybe if you acted like a princess, I would treat you like one.

(CONTINUED)



DANIELS:

What does that mean?

MCCOY:

Well, look at yourself, Samantha. I mean, you're really let yourself go these last couple of years.

*DANIELS slams her foot down, angry.*

DANIELS:

Me? Look at you. When was the last time you took a look at yourself in the mirror, mister? Trust me, I could do a lot better than living in a glorified outhouse with a pot-bellied slob who forgets to brush his teeth unless I remind him.

MCCOY:

(starting to get heated)

Oh, yeah? Well, good luck finding one since I'm the only man within 50 million miles of here!

DANIELS:

It'd be worth the flight!

*They both growl with rage and then turn their backs to each other. Finally, MCCOY speaks.*

MCCOY:

You know. Maybe we did rush into things a little fast.

DANIELS:

What do you mean?

MCCOY:

I mean, listen to us. All we ever do is fight. When was the last time you said something nice to me?

DANIELS:

When was the last time you said something nice to ME?

MCCOY:

See what I mean? Everything with you is an argument. No matter what I do, I can never please you.

DANIELS:

You could please me if you just tried.

MCCOY:

I have tried, Samanta. But I don't know what to do. Either I'm too 'grabby' or I'm too stand-offish.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

I don't like you pawing at me.

MCCOY:

I passed you the salt at dinner last night and brushed your hand.

DANIELS:

I could tell you wanted to do more.

MCCOY:

Oh course I want to do more. You're my wife and the only woman within 50 million miles of this place.

DANIELS:

So, you don't care who you grope. Any old woman would do.

MCCOY:

No.. not any old woman will do.

DANIELS:

And now you're calling me old.

MCCOY:

No, I'm not. You're the one who said old woman, not me.

DANIELS:

Do you know how hard I work to keep myself up for you?

MCCOY:

Well...

DANIELS:

Plenty hard, mister. And now that I've run out Sheila's magic moisturizer, it's even harder trying to look young and pretty for you.

MCCOY:

I don't care if you're young and pretty.

DANIELS:

(she draws in a quick breath)  
That's a terrible thing to say.

MCCOY:

What?

DANIELS:

That you don't care if I'm pretty.

MCCOY:

I do care. That's not what I meant. I just wish that you would wear something more around here than just your bathrobe.

DANIELS:

Why? You don't care how you look. Why should I?

MCCOY:

I do care how you look, Samantha.

DANIELS:

Typical man. That's all that matters to you.

MCCOY:

No, its not.

DANIEL:

Well, let me tell you something, space boy, I will not be objectified.

MCCOY:

I don't even know what that means.

DANIELS:

It means you aren't allowed to even look at me.

MCCOY:

What?

DANIELS:

Turn around.

MCCOY:

What?

DANIELS:

I said turn around and face the other way. If all you care about is my appearance, then I shall deny you that pleasure.

MCCOY:

But..

DANIELS:

Turn around!

*MCCOY sighs and turns around, facing the back wall. There is a long silence while the two of them brood.*

MCCOY:

You know... maybe being out here in space, all alone.. maybe it just clouded our judgment.

DANIELS:

What do you mean, 'clouded our judgment?'

MCCOY:

(he turns around to face her)

I mean, Daniels, maybe we shouldn't have gotten married. Maybe that was a mistake.

DANIELS:

Why are you looking at me? Who gave you permission to look at me?

*MCCOY turns back around.*

MCCOY:

You see what I mean. Here we are, 60 million miles from home and we can't even look at each other.

DANIELS:

I can look at you. You just can't look at me.

MCCOY:

Being attracted to each other was bound to happen. Who could really blame us? Putting a man and a woman alone together millions of miles away from home. It was stupid.

DANIELS:

I blame NASA.

MCCOY:

Me, too. When Jacobs got hurt, they should have just called off the mission. I mean, it was obvious that you weren't ready... emotionally... for this.

DANIELS:

What?

MCCOY:

I mean, just listen to yourself, Samantha. You have to admit you're being a little irrational.

DANIELS:

I am not!

MCCOY:

Yes you are. So I set a drink on the control console every now and then. So what?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

So what? So what? Turn around and face me when I'm talking to you.

*MCCOY turns around.*

MCCOY:

I'm just saying that maybe you were physically ready for the trip but not quite ready mentally.

DANIELS:

I wasn't prepared 'mentally?' You think I'm crazy?

MCCOY:

No... its just that maybe women aren't suited, you know, emotionally, for such a long, isolated space journey.

DANIELS:

Not suited emotionally? I'm the only real adult on this mission. Which one of us always leaves the vacuum hose on the toilet disconnected? Which one of us leaves their clothes scattered all over the place? Empty drink cans sitting on top of the only communication equipment we have? Which one of us has been drawing mustaches on all of the pictures in the Operations Manual?

MCCOY:

I'm bored.

DANIELS:

I bored too, but you don't see me destroying important schematics or trying to build a Barcolounger out of used rocket parts.

MCCOY:

A husband needs a place to put his feet up after a long, hard day!

DANIELS:

You're not a husband, McCoy. You're an astronaut. And that comes first! It has always come first!

*There is a long silence as they think about what DANIELS said.*

MCCOY:

Maybe you're right. You know, maybe when we get back to Earth we should just call it off. Go see an attorney and get an annulment or something. I mean, it was obvious that when we asked the chaplain to marry us, we weren't thinking straight. I'm sure they would understand.

DANIELS:

I'm sure they would.

MCCOY:

We can just go our separate ways. Make it a clean break  
Admit that we made a mistake.

DANIELS:

We made a mistake.

MCCOY:

That's right. It's nobody's fault.

DANIELS:

Nobody's fault.

MCCOY:

Just a mistake, that's all. No hard feelings, Captain  
Daniels?

DANIELS:

No hard feelings, Commander McCoy.

*MCCOY and DANIELS shake.*

MCCOY:

Okay, then. Well, I guess I'll just move my stuff out  
of the living quarters and go sleep in the storage room  
until the ship arrives.

DANIELS:

I think that would be best.

*They stand there for a moment, awkwardly and then  
MCCOY crosses towards the STAGE RIGHT door.*

MCCOY:

Okay, I'll just get started packing up my stuff now.

*DANIELS watches him go. She sniffles and a tear  
runs down her face. She wipes it with the sleeve  
of her robe and pulls the kerchief from her head  
and blows her nose. DANIELS turns and crosses to  
one of the instrument panels against the back  
wall. As she turns some dials and takes some  
measurements, the radio crackles to life.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Mars Base. Mars Base. This is Mission Control. Come  
in, Mars Base.

*DANIELS runs to the console. She calls out to  
MCCOY.*

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

Dirk, it's Mission Control calling on the radio. (then into the mic) We hear you, Mission Control. Mars Base here.

*MCCOY runs into the room. He is holding a large box full of clothes, magazines and personal items which he drops as he approaches the console.*

MCCOY:

What did they say? Have they said why they've not been answering our calls?

*DANIELS waves at him to be quiet.*

DANIELS:

I don't know. They just called. (into the mic) Mission Control? Captain Daniels here. I've got Commander McCoy with me.

MISSION CONTROL:

Oh, good. How is the happy couple? Still enjoying your Mars honeymoon.

*MCCOY and DANIELS look at each other and smile, then MCCOY speaks into the mic.*

MCCOY:

Yes, sir. Things couldn't be better. Ah, Mission Control, we've had a hard time raising you the last several days. Have you now been getting our calls?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, your systems are working just fine, Commander.

*MCCOY looks at DANIELS and smiles then speaks back into the mic.*

MCCOY:

So, what's been the problem, Mission Control?

MISSION CONTROL:

Well, you see, there hasn't been anyone here to take your calls, Commander.

MCCOY:

Nobody there? At Mission Control?

MISSION CONTROL:

Yes, Commander. The staff has been cut so now we are only doing a weekly systems check.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

Systems check? Mission Control, I don't understand.

MISSION CONTROL:

Well, Captain Daniels... Commander McCoy.. I don't know how to tell you this, but the mission has been discontinued.

MCCOY & DANIELS:

What!?

MISSION CONTROL:

You see, Congress has been trying to find ways to cut the deficit and well, the Mars Program got the ax.

MCCOY:

They discontinued the mission?

MISSION CONTROL:

We tried to talk them out of it, but it was no use. There's just not enough money to continue to fund the operation. I'm sorry.

DANIELS:

So, what does this mean? Do we need to start packing up here and be ready to evacuate when the resupply ship arrives?

MISSION CONTROL:

Well, that's the thing, Captain. There is no resupply ship.

DANIELS:

What?

MCCOY:

No supply ship? But what about us? We supposed to be going home in two months. The ship should have been most of the way here by now.

MISSION CONTROL:

I'm sorry, Commander, we just didn't know how to tell you before, but there is no ship. There will be no resupplying the station and changing out with fresh astronauts. The mission has been canceled. Period.

DANIELS:

Canceled. What does that mean?

*There is a silence from MISSION CONTROL.*



MCCOY:

It means, we're never going home. Right, Mission Control?

*There is another pause and finally MISSION CONTROL answers meekly.*

MISSION CONTROL:

I'm afraid so.

*DANIELS begins to cry and MCCOY reaches over and holds her.*

MCCOY:

It's okay, Samantha. We'll be okay.

MISSION CONTROL:

You have plenty of water from the deep core well that was drilled before you arrived on the planet. The systems that turn the water into breathable oxygen are solar powered and designed to last for hundreds of years. And with your hydroponic greenhouse, if you're careful and recycle your seeds, you should be able to grow enough food for the two of you forever.

DANIELS:

Forever? (she sobs heavily) They're not coming to get us. Dirk, they're not coming?

MCCOY:

That's right, darling. They're not coming.

MISSION CONTROL:

Look, you two can have a wonderful life on Mars. There's plenty to eat, lots of fresh water, clean air, gorgeous scenery. And with the one hundred million terabyte optical storage library of books, television and movies we sent up there with you, you'll never get bored. And besides, you are in love, remember? You're married, officially according to the chaplain and will always have each other. So, in the end, it all works out okay, right?

*There's another long pause as MISSION CONTROL waits for an answer.*

MCCOY:

Right, Mission Control. Things are going to be okay. We have each other, right Sam?

DANIELS:

Right.

*MCCOY turns to DANIELS and smiles sadly.*

MCCOY:

We'll be okay, just the two of us.

DANIELS:

*(she looks at MCCOY and smiles)*

I didn't really mean all of the nasty things I said, Dirk.

*MCCOY hugs her close.*

MCCOY:

I know you didn't, sweetheart.

DANIELS:

I do love you. Still.

MISSION CONTROL:

See. Everything is going to okay. You know, I kind of envy you two. I wish I get jet off to some paradise and live out the rest of my life with no responsibilities.

*DANIELS picks up a pair of dirty underwear from the console and holds them up.*

DANIELS:

Yeah... this is a paradise alright.

*MCCOY and DANIELS laugh.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Okay.. so you know, we'll be closing mission operations down completely in a few weeks. Seems that NASA has decided to lease out Mission Control to the Chinese for a while- try to make up for some of our budget shortfalls. But, we've made arrangements with some amateur shortwave radio operators to take turns checking in on you every now and then, just to make sure you're okay.

MCCOY:

And if we need something?

MISSION CONTROL:

Well, I'm afraid there will be nothing we can do. From now on, you're on your own. Good luck. Mission Control out.

*There's static for a few seconds and then silence. After a moment, MCCOY holds DANIELS close and chuckles.*

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

Well, look on the bright side.

DANIELS:

Bright side?

MCCOY:

At least the radio works.

*The two laugh and then embrace as the lights fade.*

BLACK OUT

ACT 2Scene 2

*Forty years have passed and the Mars Base is showing its advanced age. The console is still sitting STAGE CENTER but there are a couple of cracked and broken panels on the front. The Mars Base sign is old and weathered and one of the screws that held it to the front of the console has come loose so the sign is bent downward.*

*The windows are dirty and in a couple of places, visible cracks in the glass have been repaired with duct tape. The door is off of one of the instruments panels and a maze of wires spill from the cabinet. The clothes line is gone, replaced with several boxes of broken parts that are stacked against the wall. The two space suits are still hanging from hooks in the wall and one space helmet. The other helmet is broken and useless.*

*The main change to the room is a small round table and two chairs that have been set up STAGE RIGHT of the console. The table has a worn table cloth that looks as if it were made from the old parachute material of the Mars 1 spacecraft. On the table is a small candle that is stuck in the neck of an unused chemical beaker. There's a 'radiation' symbol painted on the side of the beaker.*

*At Rise: MCCOY enters from the STAGE RIGHT door. He is an old man with white hair. He is wearing the same blue mission jumpsuit but now there are several patches on the knees and shoulders where it has been repaired numerous times. The old NASA patch is still on the front of the jumpsuit but is now frayed and faded. MCCOY walks gingerly using a cane that he has fastened out of old pipes. He comes into the room and pauses, turning to look at the fading Mars sunset through the dirty windows. After a moment, he hobbles over to the console and regards the radio. He presses the button and speaks in a weak voice into the microphone.*

MCCOY:

Mission Control, this is Mars Base. Come in Mission Control.

*There is nothing but static. He tries again.*

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

Mission Control, come in... Miss...

*While talking, he pulls on the microphone and it comes off in his hand. He looks at it for a moment, then calls offstage.*

MCCOY:

The radio's broke.

*DANIELS calls from offstage.*

DANIELS:

What?

MCCOY:

I said, the radio's broke.

DANIELS:

Why'd you break it?

MCCOY:

I didn't break it. Found it this way.

DANIELS:

Well, fix it. They might call today. But don't you dirty up that console. I just cleaned it.

*MCCOY sticks the microphone back into the hole in the console, muttering to himself.*

MCCOY:

They're not calling today. They haven't called in twenty three years. Why would they call today?

DANIELS:

What?

MCCOY:

Nothing, dear.

*MCCOY grabs his cane and a clipboard from the console and walks over to one of the instrument panels against the back wall and adjust some dials, then calls offstage.*

MCCOY:

The CO-two scrubber is acting up again.

DANIELS:

These squash are so tender.

MCCOY:

What?

DANIELS:

I hated to pick them so young, but there's not much else in the garden right now.

MCCOY:

I said the CO-2...

DANIELS:

Dinner's ready.

MCCOY:

Okay. I'll check the scrubber later.

*MCCOY sets down the clipboard and shuffles over to the table. Before he can sit, DANIELS comes through the door with two plates and utensils. She appears to be in her 70's with white hair and several visible wrinkles on her face. She is wearing her old jumpsuit and has a white apron tied around her waist. There is a pair of thick reading glasses that are hanging from a piece of discarded electrical wire around neck. She and MCCOY arrive at the table at the same time and she kisses him on the cheek.*

DANIELS:

What were you saying, dear?

MCCOY:

Nothing. Just one of those old gauges acting up again.

DANIELS:

Good. Did you wash your hands?

*MCCOY holds them up for her to inspect them. DANIELS looks at them and nods her approval.*

DANIELS:

Have a seat while I fetch the squash.

*She exits while MCCOY sits and starts putting the napkin under his chin.*

MCCOY:

Are we having squash?

DANIELS:

I just said we are.

MCCOY:

We are what?

DANIELS:

Having squash.

MCCOY:

Good. I like squash.

*DANIELS enters again carrying a small bowl with a spoon in it. She sets it on the table then turns to go back into the kitchen.*

DANIELS:

Now, go easy on that. You know how eating too fast gives you indigestion.

MCCOY:

Yes, dear. (he picks up the spoon and dips it into the bowl, holding up a spoonful of the contents and examining them) Well, look at that. We're having squash. I like squash.

*DANIELS re-enters. She is carrying two glasses of cloudy water and a small bottle of medicine. She sets the glasses on the table and then holds out the pill bottle to MCCOY.*

DANIELS:

Did you take your pills this morning?

MCCOY:

Yes.

DANIELS:

Dirk?

MCCOY:

I don't know. Maybe.

*DANIELS opens the bottle and shakes the contents into the palm of her hand and shows them to MCCOY.*

DANIELS:

How many is that?

*MCCOY squints and counts, using a bent finger to move the pills around on his wife's palm.*

MCCOY:

Eight.

DANIELS:

That's right. And last night there were eight and the night before that guess how many there were?

MCCOY:

Fourteen?

DANIELS:

No, smarty, there were eight. You haven't been taking your pills, have you?

MCCOY:

I don't know. Maybe.

DANIELS:

No, you haven't. Here.

*She picks up a pill and pops it in MCCOY's mouth and then hands him his glass while he washes it down. She sets the glass back down on the table and holds her palm out again.*

DANIELS:

Now how many are there?

*MCCOY squints at the pills and then with a grin answers here.*

MCCOY:

Fifteen?

*DANIELS playfully hits her husband across the back of the head, puts the lid back on the bottle and sits down.*

DANIELS:

Take your medicine. I'm not going to have you dying and leaving me all alone out here in the middle of nowhere.

MCCOY:

I'm not worried. When word gets out that a hot little thing like you is single, I'm sure there will be quite a few galactic suitors that stop by on their way to Uranus. (he snickers at this word)

DANIELS:

You're just like a thirteen year old boy.

*MCCOY reaches under the table and squeezes DANIEL's leg. She bats his hand away.*



MCCOY:

I may be old but I still got the moves, don't I Space Girl?

DANIELS:

Yeah, you got the moves alright. As long as you take your fiber pills.

*They both laugh and DANIELS start to spoon out there supper.*

MCCOY:

Looks good. What is it?

DANIELS:

Squash.

MCCOY:

Good. I like squash.

*They eat in silence for a moment and then DANIELS speaks softly.*

DANIELS:

We're starting to run out of supplies, Dirk.

*MCCOY's old age seems to fade for a moment.*

MCCOY:

I know, sweetheart. I know.

DANIELS:

This is probably the last of the squash. I don't know if I'm going to be able to get the seeds to grow again. They keep getting smaller and smaller each season until they're no bigger than a speck now. And I'm pretty sure the cucumbers and melons are done for, too.

*They eat in silence again for a moment.*

MCCOY:

You know, they're coming to get us. Any day now.

*DANIELS looks at him seriously.*

DANIELS:

No, they're not, Dirk. They've forgotten about us way out here. When was the last time you even heard anything on the radio?

MCCOY:

Well.. it was a while ago. I think you were still pretty good looking back then.

*DANIELS slaps him on the shoulder playfully and then they go back to their small meal.*

DANIELS:

You know, sometimes I wonder if Earth is even out there anymore.

MCCOY:

It's out there. Where would it go?

DANIELS:

You know what I mean. When we left, the U.S. and Russia had how many nuclear weapons between them? 3,000 maybe? What if somebody decided to get a little trigger happy?

MCCOY:

Nobody dropped the bomb. Even they are not stupid enough for that.

DANIELS:

Maybe that's why we haven't heard from Mission Control in more than twenty years. Maybe its not there anymore. You know, I've been thinking that everybody we ever knew could be dead by now.

*DANIELS begins to tear up. MCCOY puts his arm around DANIELS and pulls her close. He kisses her on the forehead gingerly.*

MCCOY:

Hush that. The world did not blow itself up.

DANIELS:

I've been having this dream lately that we somehow got our old ship working again and went home to Earth but when we stepped off the ship, there was nothing there.

MCCOY:

Nothing there?

DANIELS:

No people, I mean. The houses and buildings were still there. But all the people, well, they had just vanished.

MCCOY:

Huh. (he chews for a minute) What about dogs?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:  
What?

MCCOY:  
Did you see any dogs? Or cats?

DANIELS:  
I don't know. Maybe. You and I, we searched for what seemed like hours but every single house was empty, every street deserted. It was very disconcerting.

MCCOY:  
Wow. Disconcerting. (he pauses for a moment) What about horses? Were there horses?

*DANIELS slaps him playfully.*

DANIELS:  
Stop it. It was terrifying. And so real. I woke up and for a moment, I was certain that you and I were the last humans left in the universe.

MCCOY:  
Like Adam and Eve.

DANIELS:  
I guess.

*They sit in silence for a moment.*

MCCOY:  
I wonder if Adam had a dog?

DANIELS:  
I knew you wouldn't take me seriously.

MCCOY:  
I am taking you seriously, honey, but why worry about something that you can't do anything about. If the Earth is gone, it's gone and there's nothing we can do about it.

DANIELS:  
But what if we are the last man and woman in the universe?

MCCOY:  
We're not. Right now, while we're sitting here eating our squash, there are about 10 billion people back on Earth fighting traffic, yelling at their kids, working at jobs they hate and worrying about their cholesterol. And there will be long after we're gone.

(CONTINUED)

DANIELS:

I guess you're right. The dream was just silly.

MCCOY:

No, it wasn't silly. But, just look at it this way, dear. Somehow, way out here in the middle of nowhere, we've managed to avoid all the things that make people miserable. Isn't that funny? We had to travel 60 million miles from Earth just to find real happiness.

*DANIELS smiles sadly and then uses her napkin to wipe her eyes.*

DANIELS:

Yes, I guess.

MCCOY:

I mean, would you rather be back there living in some broken down old retirement home for geriatric astronauts or out here where you get to wake up every morning to an adventure? (he smiles big) And one very handsome fellow castaway.

*DANIELS chuckles.*

DANIELS:

Here. I'd rather be right here.

*The hold hands for just a moment and then go back to eating their meal. There is a pause and then DANIELS speaks.*

DANIELS:

Dirk?

MCCOY:

Yes, dear.

DANIELS:

Do you ever wish that maybe we had children?

MCCOY:

Children?

DANIELS:

Yes.

MCCOY:

No.

DANIELS:

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY:

Well.. (he sets down his spoon).. if we had had a child, it would have brought us a lot of joy. I admit that. But one day, you and I are going to die. Then our child would have been left here all alone. And everyone knows that it is impossible to be truly happy as an intergalactic castaway without a beautiful wife.

DANIELS:

Or handsome husband.

MCCOY:

Agreed.

*He raises his glass and they toast. MCCOY finishes his meal and then wipes his mouth.*

MCCOY:

Well, that was delicious, Captain Daniels.

*DANIELS gives him a 'mock' salute and begins to clean up the dishes.*

DANIELS:

I'm glad you liked it, Commander McCoy. I think I'll get these dishes cleaned up and then give the toilet a good scrub.

MCCOY:

Sorry. Sometimes I over do it a little with the fiber.

*They laugh as she gets up and starts to take the dishes to the kitchen. There's a soft warning alarm from the instrument panel.*

MCCOY:

That's the CO-2 scrubber. I better get out there and take a look.

DANIELS:

Okay, darling. Be careful. Who knows, maybe when you get back in we can start to work on that family.

MCCOY:

Well, Captain Daniels. I do believe you are flirting with me.

DANIELS:

Get back in here quick, Space Boy, and you'll see.

*MCCOY kisses DANIELS on the cheek and then heads back to the instrument panel to turn off the alarm. DANIELS gathers the rest of the dishes and exits to the kitchen.*

*After turning off the alarm, MCCOY crosses to the wall and takes one of the space suits from the hook. He zips it open and pulls it on over his jumpsuit then picks up the helmet and puts it on his head.*

*DANIELS comes back into the room and crosses to the table to get the empty bowl. She calls out loudly to her husband so he can hear her through the helmet.*

DANIELS:

Be careful. The wind is picking up out there.

*MCCOY gives her a 'thumbs up' and then crosses to the outside door. He opens it and the sound of a howling wind can be heard. DANIELS watches him go through the door and close it, then she crosses to the kitchen.*

*There is a long pause and then an alarm can be heard on the console. There is the sound of breaking dishes offstage and then DANIELS runs into the room. She crosses to the outside door.*

DANIELS:

Dirk! Dirk!

*DANIELS runs over to the console and hits a button that causes the alarm to cease. She pulls the microphone close, hits another button and yells into it.*

DANIELS:

Dirk! Can you hear me?

*There's some static and then MCCOY's voice can be heard through the speaker in the console. There's lots of noise and wind mixed in with his voice.*

MCCOY:

Samantha!

DANIELS:

(into the mic)

I'm here, sweetheart. I'm here. Can you make it to the hatch?

*There's more static. Finally, MCCOY answers.*

MCCOY:

Maybe. I can't...

(CONTINUED)

*MCCOY's voice is cut off by static. DANIELS runs back over to the outside door and looks through it frantically. She then runs back to the console.*

DANIELS:

Dirk? Can you hear me, Dirk?

*Again, there is just silence mixed with static. DANIELS pulls off her apron and throws it to the floor. She races over to the wall and grabs the other space suit off the wall and pulls it over her clothing, quickly. She picks up the broken helmet and after looking at it, pulls it over her head.*

*DANIELS crosses to the outside door and pulls it open. The sound of wind can be heard as she steps through the door and disappears out of sight. After a moment, DANIELS returns dragging MCCOY behind her. She pulls him into the room and drops him on the floor LEFT of the console. Then she goes over and shuts the door.*

*DANIELS returns to MCCOY and kneels beside him. She takes off her helmet and throws it across the room where it bounces off the wall. She has been holding her breath and lets out a long exhale, breathing heavily.*

DANIELS:

Dirk! Dirk, can you hear me?

*DANIELS pulls MCCOY's helmet off and sets it aside. MCCOY is lifeless. DANIELS wipes his face frantically, trying to revive him.*

DANIELS:

Dirk! Wake up, Dirk.

*When MCCOY doesn't respond, DANIELS lays his head down and rushes over to the console. She pushes a button on the console and speaks frantically into the microphone.*

DANIELS:

Mission Control.. this is Mars Base. Come in, Mission Control.. (there's only static)... Mission Control.. answer me!

*DANIELS looks over at MCCOY and begins to cry.*

DANIELS:

Don't you dare leave me here in this place by myself. Not now. Not after we're finally happy. Don't you dare do it or I will hate you forever. (back to the radio) Mission Control! Mission Control!

*MCCOY opens his eyes and looks over at DANIELS.*

MCCOY:

I told you, the radio's broke.

*DANIELS runs back to MCCOY, sits on the floor beside him and pulls his head into her lap. She is still crying.*

DANIELS:

Oh, Dirk. Oh, baby.

*MCCOY's eyes flutter open. He speaks in a small, exhausted voice.*

MCCOY:

You're going to hate me forever? That's pretty harsh, don't you think.

*DANIELS cries even louder, this time with joy, as she reaches down and smothers MCCOY with kisses.*

DANIELS:

No, I don't think so. I didn't want to come to Mars with you in the first place, you old coot. But now.. well, now I can't live here without you.

*MCCOY reaches up and hugs DANIELS as best he can from the floor.*

MCCOY:

I'm okay.

DANIELS:

Are you sure? What were you doing out there?

MCCOY:

I was showing off. Trying to turn you on.

DANIELS:

Well, it didn't work.

MCCOY:

Huh.. maybe next time, I'll have to break a hip.

(CONTINUED)



DANIELS:

There's not going to be a next time. You are grounded, mister.

*MCCOY raises his hand and gives her a faint salute.*

MCCOY:

I eye, Captain.

*DANIELS pulls MCCOY close and rocks him in her lap.*

DANIELS:

You know, that was the first time I actually thought that maybe we were going to die out here.

MCCOY:

You know we're going to die out here, Samantha. You've always known we're going to die out here.

DANIELS:

But that was the first time I really believed it. Seeing you lying there on the floor not moving, I thought, what am I going to do now? Who am I going to nag to take their pills every day and to make sure they have on clean underwear every morning.

MCCOY:

I'm pretty sure this pair is ruined.

DANIELS:

Oh, you know what I mean. For a second there, I hated you, Dirk. I really hated you. You brought me out here to this big red ball and made me fall in love with you. You did it against my will and now, you're going to leave me all alone? Just when I was starting to like you a little?

MCCOY:

A little.

DANIELS:

Well, after that stunt, not even a little.

*MCCOY pulls DANIELS down to him and hugs her.*

MCCOY:

I'm not going anywhere. Who's going to try the radio every day if I'm gone?

*They laugh at that and MCCOY starts to sit up.*

MCCOY:

Help me up, sweetheart.

DANIELS:

You think you should?

MCCOY:

Sure. I'm old but I ain't dead yet.

*DANIELS helps MCCOY into a sitting position. For a moment, they just sit and look at each other and then MCCOY smirks.*

MCCOY:

Well, would you look at that?

DANIELS:

What?

*MCCOY points towards the console.*

MCCOY:

You missed a spot.

*DANIELS slaps him playfully.*

DANIELS:

I should have left you out there.

MCCOY:

Yeah, and who would keep you company in your old age?

DANIELS:

I'll build a robot.

*They laugh and MCCOY starts to stand. DANIELS helps him to his feet. When he is standing, they hug each other tightly for a moment and then MCCOY puts his left arm around DANIELS and they upstage slowly, facing the red sunset that can be seen through the windows. They stand there for a moment and then DANIELS speaks.*

DANIELS:

It's beautiful, isn't it?

*MCCOY turns and looks at DANIELS and speaks softly.*

MCCOY:

It sure is.

*They embrace briefly and admire the sunset. Then MCCOY turns to DANIELS.*

MCCOY:

You know, a year on Mars is much longer than a year on Earth.

DANIELS:

Yeah.. so?

MCCOY:

So, that would mean that in Mars years, I'm actually only 42 years old.

DANIELS:

42, huh?

MCCOY:

Yep.. 42.

DANIELS:

That's pretty young. That would make me..

MCCOY:

39.

DANIELS:

39, huh?

MCCOY:

Yep.. 39. I'd say that's still young enough to start that family. What do you say?

*DANIELS laughs.*

DANIELS:

We can always try.

*MCCOY begins to lead DANIELS off stage.*

MCCOY:

We're astronauts, darling. Failure is not an option.

*They both laugh as they exit the stage, arm in arm. The lights slowly dim to full black. After a few seconds, a small red light on the control console blinks and then lights up. A thin, static-laden voice can be heard on the speaker.*

MISSION CONTROL:

Mars Base? this is Mission Control. Come in, Mars Base. (there is a pause and it sounds like the announcer is speaking to another person) Maybe they're dead already. Mars Base, come in, Mars Base. Ahh.. well, if you're there, we've got some good news. The program has re-activated. A rescue ship is on the way. Start packing, Mars Base. You're coming home....

(CONTINUED)

*There's some static as the connection is broken  
which slowly fades.*

BLACK OUT

THE END