

[INTRODUCTION:] Announcer

[SFX: One or two opening tones, followed by cool sci-fi exciting theme, which decresc. throughout the following:]

ANNOUNCER: There are worlds out there, worlds you or I could never imagine. Whole universes with histories spanning millions upon millions of years share time and space with the microscopic atoms residing under your fingernails. Alien species with strange language and dress, sights unseen save only in your nightmares, miracles beyond measure...these are the things you are about to see, if you are brave enough to follow us Into The Unknown.

[SFX: Music shifts]

The Tin Roof Radio Players, in cooperation with the Frank DeLacy Company, and brought to you by [sponsor], is proud to give you, for your listening pleasure, *The Last Flight of Victor Zoran*.

[SCENE 1:] Ship's Command Center. Captain Victor Zoran, Lieutenant Elyse Schroeder, Sam Gillespie, Frank Sullivan, Private Zip O'Connor, Intercom Voice

[SFX: Eerie mixed chorus tremolo and crescendo, crossfade into non-intrusive music]

ZORAN: “Lord, what fools these mortals be.” Shakespeare said that, I think. Or something like that. I’ve never been much for poetry. But some of the things I’ve seen...out there...by God, they could make a man weep. Deep Space, the edge of the known universe, No Man’s Land, whatever you want to call it. It can have its way with your mind if you let it. It has a talent for showing you what kind of a man you really are...

[SFX: Music decrescendos, replaced by one or two steps of walking feet, then:]

ZORAN: All hands. Calling all hands for roll. Lieutenant Schroeder.

SCHROEDER: Aye.

ZORAN: Mr. Gillespie.

GILLESPIE: A-aye?

ZORAN: Mr. Sullivan.

SULLIVAN: Aww come on, Cap! You know we're all here!
Where else are we gonna go?

ZORAN: Mr. Sullivan.

SULLIVAN: I'm just sayin'. There's only so many places
we could be. This roll call thing is getting kind of old.

ZORAN: Mr. Sullivan.

SULLIVAN: Aye.

ZORAN: Private O'Connor.

O'CONNOR: Aye, Sir. Zip here, Captain Zoran, Sir.
Private O'Connor at your service, Sir.

SULLIVAN: You gotta be kidding me with that.

SCHROEDER: Your Captain is speaking.

ZORAN: Thank you. Attention crew and guests of the
Stella Navis, United States starship class NE5. The date
on Earth is August 29th, 2056. Day 283 Earth Time of our
expedition has commenced. The duties of the crew will
remain as they have been described until further notice.

That is all. Good day.

O'CONNOR: Aye, Captain.

SULLIVAN: You brought me down here just for that? You say the same [stupid] thing every day! I've just about had enough of all this...repetitive nonsense. Hey, I'm going back to bed. Why don't you wake me when something interesting happens.

GILLESPIE: Frank, what on Earth is your problem? Don't you know who you're talking to? You've never spoken out of turn like this before. What's gotten into you?

ZORAN: I knew we shouldn't have brought the laymen. This always happens. We ask for a crew, We get the best and the brightest. We ask for respectable, educated guests to help with the expedition? They hand us a couple of bored, indignant children. You want interesting? You want excitement every minute of every day? Don't come to space, Son, because it ain't for you.

SCHROEDER: Victor.

ZORAN: I know, I know. I'll keep it to myself. It's just...you'd think that after all these years, people would

have figured out that space travel is not as glamorous as they think it is. It's not like we forced them to come along. We've got a job to do. Don't like it? There's the door.

SULLIVAN: I--I don't know, Sammy. I don't usually get like this. Must be the cabin fever getting to me. I just want to do what we came here for and then go home!

GILLESPIE: I feel ya there, buddy, I do. But we can't go about studying an alien culture if we haven't found one yet. As much as I want to get out of this flying tuna can and stretch my legs, we've still got -- who knows how much longer left to go.

INTERCOM: [SFX: resonant] Stella Navis, come in. Stella Navis, do you copy? Repeat, do you copy? Urgent message, repeat, urgent!

SCHROEDER: [SFX: Click] Copy that, HQ. Stella Navis online. What's the problem?

INTERCOM: [SFX: resonant] There seem to be some technical difficulties down here!

SULLIVAN: Some urgent message.

GILLESPIE: Shh!

INTERCOM: [SFX: resonant] We don't have much time. It won't be long now before we lose you.

GILLESPIE: What do you mean "lose us"?

INTERCOM: [SFX: resonant] This is just a precaution, but just in case...[SFX: breakup]...according to the manual...[SFX: breakup]...perfectly competent captain and crew...[SFX: breakup]....-lose remote control of the ship. In the event that...[SFX: breakup] God be with you.

GILLESPIE: Wait, I don't understand. Are we in danger?

SULLIVAN: No. No. Hell no.

GILLESPIE: Can someone please tell me what is going on?

O'CONNOR: Captain? What are your orders?

SULLIVAN: This can't be happening.

SCHROEDER: Victor.

ZORAN: [SFX: Click] HQ. HQ, do you copy? [SFX: static]
Headquarters. What are your orders?

INTERCOM: [SFX: resonant] Brace for impact.

[SFX: sounds of crash and then pointed near-silence (dial
tone, or similar)]

[COMMERCIAL goes here]

[Scene 2:] Ship's Command Center. Captain Victor Zoran,
Lieutenant Elyse Schroeder, Sam Gillespie, Frank

Sullivan, Private Zip O'Connor.

[SFX: Exciting music, fades under:]

ZORAN: What they say about a man's life flashing before his eyes isn't necessarily true. At least not for everyone. I can't speak for the others, but for me...it's hard to explain. What went through my head as the ship shook and sparked around us didn't seem to focus, as you might expect, on all those little mistakes I had made leading up to this point, or to dwell on how I might have changed it. No. Instead, it was as if every second after the impact had slowed down to the point of eternity. My crew, my guests, my lieutenant...they needed me. And I was forced to watch, in exquisite detail. Every sight and sound was pristine, every scream and cry for help, every moment of darkness when the electric lamp failed us. I could have lived a thousand lifetimes in that one moment. Sometimes, when I think about it, I could swear I did.

[SFX: Mysterious music]

[SFX: The sounds of people climbing out of rubble]

ZORAN: Is everyone alright? Can you all hear me?

[SFX: Walking footsteps]

O'CONNOR: Sir! Sir, follow the sound of my voice! I think--I think Lieutenant Schroeder is...

[SFX: Running footsteps]

ZORAN: Get out of my way! Schroeder! Lieutenant Schroeder! Elyse?

SCHROEDER: I'm alright, I'm alright.

ZORAN: Oh, thank God!

SULLIVAN: [SFX: muffled] Hello? Hello?

GILLESPIE: Ugh. [cough] My God. Have I gone blind?

O'CONNOR: The lamp has gone out. When I find it, we'll be ok.

SULLIVAN: What happened? [SFX: walking footsteps]

ZORAN: Everyone, keep calm! That might not be the worst of it. O'Connor, engage the starboard side force field! Schroeder, monitor the bow. Try to get a visual on

them! [SFX: bloop of a radar screen] We can't take too many more hits like that.

SULLIVAN: Did they just shoot at us? Was it the Germans?

SCHROEDER: [SFX: click] HQ, hello. Hello? [Click] Headquarters, do you copy? Is anyone there? [Click] Hello.

SULLIVAN: Here, give me. [Click] Hallo? Ist da jemand? Kann mir jemand mich hören?

GILLESPIE: What are you doing?

SULLIVAN: Trying to communicate with those Nazi bastards!

O'CONNOR: Are you crazy? Have you lost your mind?

SULLIVAN: [click] U-S-A! U-S-A!

O'CONNOR: Knock it off, you moron! That wasn't the Nazis.

SULLIVAN: How do you know?

SCHROEDER: It wasn't anyone at all. It was an asteroid.

GILLESPIE: What? That doesn't make any sense.
Shouldn't we have seen it before it hit us?

ZORAN: The enemy must be using it for cover. Maybe we can reposition and--

SCHROEDER: No. Look here on screen. There are only two substantial bodies in this area: us and it. But we'll still need to make some repairs or--

ZORAN: Lieutenant Schroeder is still a little dazed from the impact. She'll be back in control of her faculties after a short rest.

GILLESPIE: Well that's great for her, but that doesn't mean a darn thing to me! Did you say we were hit by an asteroid? As in, "big space rock that destroys planets" asteroid?

O'CONNOR: Mr. Gillespie, please. Remain calm. We will take it from here.

SULLIVAN: Don't you talk to him that way.

O'CONNOR: I am going to have to ask you to please vacate the bridge.

SULLIVAN: Hey, you can't just lock us in our quarters! What if something hits us again?

GILLESPIE: There would be nothing left of us! Listen, Captain. I know I don't know much about space and the way it works, but I know that if we ran headfirst into a giant rock, we should be dead! Broken up into little pieces and floating through space choking on our own rapidly-swelling tongues, dead! And as you can see, we are not. So can someone please, please tell me what is happening? Am I going to die up here?

ZORAN: No. You are not. We have suffered minor structural damage, but Private O'Connor will have it fixed up to working order in no time. In the meantime, for your own safety, you will need to be confined to your quarters and out of the way. Everything is completely under control.

[SFX: Silence. Sound of two or three walking pairs of feet, sliding door opening, then closing]

SCHROEDER: [SFX: click] HQ? Test 1, 2. Test. [SFX:

bloop] Captain. The comprop is badly damaged. HQ is receiving less and less of our output. We could repair it if we had a spare

ZORAN: Whatever you do, do not tell another soul what you just told me.

SCHROEDER: Why? We need to go over safety protocol. There may not be time later.

ZORAN: We've already lost too much time. If we have lost our communication propulsion system, that means we have lost our remote directional capabilities.

SCHROEDER: Do you know that for sure?

ZORAN: Dead sure. As of right now, we are cruising at top speed through space...without a steering wheel.

[SFX: dramatic music]

[COMMERCIAL goes here]

[Scene 3:] Captain's Quarters. Captain Victor Zoran, Lieutenant Elyse Schroeder.

[SFX: music]

ZORAN: I have never had children. I had a wife once, but I lost her to the flu back in '31. As far as survival goes, I have only ever needed to worry about myself. Even all those times we sailed into the vacuous recesses of Deep Space, my crew was never too far from safety. This...this was not one of those times. [SFX: music shift] According to all available data, our craft had been struck by a Class E dwarf asteroid. Normally, that sort of impact wouldn't be alarming, at least not to Lieutenant Schroeder and I. Some small routine repairs here and there, we'd be good to go. Evidently, someone up there decided to cash in our checks early. The asteroid hit us in the one place we couldn't repair fully: our communication propulsion system,

or comprop. Without that, Headquarters had no way to remotely steer us. We were careening through the known universe with no way to stop, slow down, or change direction. We were, in a word, doomed. Or, at least, they were. [SFX: punctuation]

[SFX:Transition]

ZORAN: Close the hatch, will you? [SFX: slide shut]
Thank you.

SCHROEDER: Is something wrong? You haven't come out of your DS for hours. It's not like you.

ZORAN: I've been thinking. That's all.

SCHROEDER: Victor.

ZORAN: What?

SCHROEDER: What has gotten into you? We've wasted enough time already.

ZORAN: I know that!

SCHROEDER: Then what are you waiting for? The crew

is awaiting your orders. I need to know what you're planning.

ZORAN: Have you seen the schematics for the ship?

SCHROEDER: ...what?

ZORAN: You heard me. Have you seen the ship's plans?

SCHROEDER: You mean, do I know where they are?

ZORAN: No, I mean, have you seen them. With your eyes.

SCHROEDER: No, I--

ZORAN: [SFX: click] All hands to the bridge in 5. Repeat, all hands to the brigde in 5. This is your captain speaking.

SCHROEDER: Victor.

ZORAN: What? What do you want? We've wasted enough time already, remember?

SCHROEDER: Fine. [SFX: walking feet, sliding door open, sliding door shut]

ZORAN: [sigh] God help us all.

[SFX: music shift]

ZORAN: Gentlemen. I have gathered you all here to address our current situation. As you all know, our craft was struck at 0200 starhours by an identified solid mass. Our communication propulsion system was damaged. We are currently unable to get that system back online, and until we do, neither we nor Headquarters will have control over our speed or direction. Signals sent to HQ have so far only been received with 15% probability, and slipping. In due time, they will not receive our transmissions at all. It is a nasty reality, but it does not serve us to keep you in the dark any longer.

SULLIVAN: Yeah, and?

GILLESPIE: Frank.

SULLIVAN: What, I'm just sayin'. We got plenty of food and water. We have to run out of fuel sometime, right? We'll do that, coast to a stop, and HQ will send someone up here to patch us up. It'll take, what? A month? I mean, the worst that'll happen is that I'll get sick of you people up here.

O'CONNOR: I'm afraid that's not how it works, Mr. Sullivan.

SULLIVAN: Ok, so what? Two months? They'll come get us one at a time? What?

SCHROEDER: No. She means, we won't just coast to a stop.

GILLESPIE: Why not?

O'CONNOR: There's no friction in space.

SULLIVAN: Tell me about it. [disapproving noise]

O'CONNOR: So there's nothing to stop us from drifting farther and farther into space for the rest of eternity. You know how when you roll a ball on Earth, it eventually slows and stops? That doesn't just happen. It's the result of rubbing against the ground and the air, which slows it down. Out here, there's no ground. There's no air. There's nothing.

GILLESPIE: My God.

ZORAN: It is important that we realize in this time of hardship that we are in this together, as a team. I realize the confusion and the fear you must be experiencing. That is completely normal in circumstances such as these.

SULLIVAN: "Circumstances such as these"? Don't you give me that garbage! You have never been in a circumstance such as this!

ZORAN: Calm down, son.

GILLESPIE: Have you, Sir?

ZORAN: I'm sorry?

GILLESPIE: Have you ever been in a circumstance such as this?

SCHROEDER: Of course he has. Many times.

ZORAN: Of course.

O'CONNOR: That's a lie.

ZORAN: Excuse me?

O'CONNOR: You heard what I said, and I say that's a lie! I followed your career for years before I became part of this expedition, Captain Zoran. I know about your wife. I know about the Mercury 27 mission. I know how you got promoted with honors. I know every move you ever made. And you have never, ever led a crew into or out of "circumstances such as these."

ZORAN: That is correct.

GILLESPIE: Wait a second, wait a second. Slow down. I need to think.

SULLIVAN: We've already wasted all the time we had! Every second we spend waiting, we shoot thousands more miles into space.

GILLESPIE: Stop it!

SULLIVAN: No! I won't stop it! You heard what the man said. There's no point in glossing over it anymore. We're all going to die up here. Period. The end. Das ist alles.

O'CONNOR: That's not necessarily true. According to the manual--

ZORAN: You read the manual?

O'CONNOR: Of course. I know this ship like the back of my hand.

ZORAN: Oh. Good.

O'CONNOR: According to the manual, if something were to happen to the ship, we would have about 6 months of usable oxygen and about 10 months worth of food rations, but it's unclear how much water we would have. Could be anywhere from 3 months worth to...well, actually, we were sort of counting on finding a life-sustaining planet by now where we could restock.

GILLESPIE: But we didn't.

SCHROEDER: But we didn't. But if anything, that means we should have hope.

GILLESPIE: Hope? Why hope? We're flying into a literal eternity of question marks. What on Earth could we find so hopeful out here?

ZORAN: Water. That's "what on Earth" we could find out here.

SULLIVAN: I will kill you with my own hands, I swear before God.

SCHROEDER: [SFX: sound of a super-cool sci-fi gadget firing up] One more comment like that, Mr. Sullivan, and I will make you regret it.

SULLIVAN: Oh yeah? What are you going to do? Lock me in the hold? Send me to bed without my supper? Oh, or maybe you'll call me a bad boy and spank me. At least then I'd have some fun before I kicked it.

O'CONNOR: Don't you talk to her that way.

SULLIVAN: You gonna do something about it, Junior?

O'CONNOR: [SFX: sound of a super-cool sci-fi gadget firing up] I will if I have to!

SULLIVAN: [SFX: some weapon or something] Don't make me do you any favors up here!

GILLESPIE: Frank!

SCHROEDER: Do something!

ZORAN: Enough! [a few seconds of silence] Enough. I've made my decision.

GILLESPIE: What do you mean?

ZORAN: I haven't been entirely truthful with you all until now. Actually, I have been acting in a very self-serving manner.

SULLIVAN: You wanna run that by me real slow, cowboy?

ZORAN: I know how I can save us all.

[SFX: Dramatic music]

[COMMERCIAL goes here]

[Scene 4:] Ship's command center, Captain Victor Zoran, Lieutenant Elyse Schroeder, Sam Gillespie, Frank Sullivan, Private Zip O'Connor

[SFX: dramatic exciting music, fades under]

ZORAN: It was at this point that I had condemned myself to my decision. I wasn't thinking anymore about what my crew, or what Elyse, would think of me. I wasn't thinking anymore about the risk. I wasn't thinking anymore about taking that dangerous next step. Because the next step had already been taken. I had no choice but to execute it.

[SFX: Music]

ZORAN: I know how I can save us all.

SCHROEDER: What?

GILLESPIE: And you didn't say anything? What on Earth is wrong with you?! We've been drifting for hours! You could have stopped all this?!

ZORAN: No.

SULLIVAN: I can't take much more of this. Be straight or keep your mouth shut!

O'CONNOR: Captain.

ZORAN: No, I couldn't have stopped this from happening, but I might be able to make it right.

O'CONNOR: What do you mean?

SCHROEDER: Does this have to do with the ship's plans?

ZORAN: Gentlemen. Our time is running out. My time. I had been hoping to reserve these measures until the very last moment, and it appears that moment is upon us.

GILLESPIE: Captain Zoran, please cut the cryptic hero speech, because I personally don't want to hear it. You lied to us, at best. You let us think we were all doomed, and now you're telling us we only *might* be doomed. Make up your mind. If you can do something about this, do it. Otherwise, settle in for eternity like the rest of us.

SULLIVAN: No. No, I want to hear what he has to say.

GILLESPIE: Why? Why in God's name would you want to hear any more?

SULLIVAN: Don't use the Lord's name in vain, Sam. Now is not the time to be making enemies.

O'CONNOR: I want to hear, too.

SCHROEDER: So do I.

GILLESPIE: Fine. Speak.

ZORAN: Thank you all. I think you should know that I don't deserve a crew like you.

SCHROEDER: Don't.

ZORAN: I lied to you. I cheated you out of precious hours of safety and peace of mind. I don't deserve you anymore. Which is why I have decided that your lives are more valuable than mine.

O'CONNOR: What are you saying?

[SFX: flipping of pages]

ZORAN: These are the ship's schematics and maintenance manual. Here toward the end, it mentions a small mobile pod that was initially designed as a landing aid in the early models of this starship, but has fallen into disuse since then. If everything goes the way I planned, I can use it to attempt to steer the ship back toward Earth. I will board it and pilot it independently as best I can. By my calculations, I simply have to pull the pod back 11.758 meters, then strike the ship in the port side up by the nose but due to the speed at which we are currently travelling, our window of time will be very small. This impact will provide a counter-influence on the ship, changing your direction according to Newton's First and Third Laws. When that happens, you all should be making a very slow but certain arc back toward Earth.

SULLIVAN: "You all"?

GILLESPIE: But...that would mean...

ZORAN: Yes. I'm afraid I will not be coming with you. No matter what happens, I will not be coming back aboard this ship.

SCHROEDER: Absolutely not.

GILLESPIE: It's insane!

SULLIVAN: But it might work.

SCHROEDER: It's out of the question.

SULLIVAN: But it might work.

SCHROEDER: No. I said no.

ZORAN: Elyse. Please. Don't make this any harder than it already is.

SCHROEDER: I have let you get away with a lot of stupid things over the years, Victor. But you're going too far this time. I will not let you commit suicide.

O'CONNOR: Captain Zoran...I have worked so hard for so long to have the chance to be a part of your crew. I was wrong to doubt you. You really are a hero.

SULLIVAN: Would you do it? Would you really do it, for us?

ZORAN: I am doing it, Mr. Sullivan. But I'm doing it for myself. The responsibility for my actions lies with me, and me alone.

[SFX: walking footsteps, followed by the pressing of buttons and beeping]

GILLESPIE: Captain--

ZORAN: Mr. Gillespie, my decision is made.

GILLESPIE: Look, I want to get back to Earth the same as all of you. But as far as I'm concerned, it's all or nothing. We can't just leave you here. What kind of people would we be?

SULLIVAN: Sam--

GILLESPIE: No, I mean it! What kind of a life is that, knowing you've left a friend for dead?

SULLIVAN: What will God think?

ZORAN: I...hadn't thought about that.

O'CONNOR: Please, stop. I can't handle much more indecision.

SCHROEDER: Good, because he's not going. End of story.

SULLIVAN: I'm sorry, I don't remember you being his mother.

SCHROEDER: No, but I am his lieutenant. And his friend. And I've decided I am going with him.

ZORAN: You can't. There's barely enough room for one in there.

SCHROEDER: Fine. I'll take your place, then.

ZORAN: I can't let you do that.

SCHROEDER: Try and stop me.

[SFX: super-cool sci-fi gadget firing up]

ZORAN: I can't let you do that, my friend. Now everyone just calm down. Just calm down now. Private O'Connor.

O'CONNOR: At your service, Sir.

ZORAN: Open the hatch.

SCHROEDER: Victor.

ZORAN: Open. The hatch.

[SFX: sci-fi slidey door, followed by walking footsteps]

ZORAN: Now, I need someone to deploy the pod manually from inside this craft. Once that happens, I will be able to function independently and...and I won't need anything else from you after that. Private O'Connor? Zip? Would you release me?

O'CONNOR: Of course, Sir.

SULLIVAN: You are truly an inspiration, Captain. Thank

you for this.

GILLESPIE: No one on Earth will ever forget what you've done for us. I promise you that.

ZORAN: No, Son. I don't suppose they will. [SFX: sci-fi slidey door]

SCHROEDER: [SFX: resonant] Let me do it.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Do what?

SCHROEDER: [SFX: resonant] Let me deploy the pod. I want to let my partner go.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Alright.

ZORAN: Wait, no. No, I don't want you to.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Why not, Sir?

ZORAN: Because I can't look at you. I can still see you through the porthole. Please don't make me look at you.

SCHROEDER: [SFX: resonant] Why are you doing this?

ZORAN: I don't know. I don't know.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Crew, all hands. Pod LA6 to deploy in 3...

SULLIVAN: [SFX: resonant] God bless you, Captain.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] 2...

GILLESPIE: [SFX: resonant] I can't believe it. We're going home.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] 1...

SCHROEDER: [SFX: resonant] Goodbye, old friend. And thank you.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Systems engage. [SFX: click, buzz, alarm]

[SFX: sound of pod being deployed]

SULLIVAN: [SFX: resonant] Wait, what's going on?

GILLESPIE: [SFX: resonant] Is...is something--?

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Something's wrong. Something has to be wrong. Captain? Can you hear me? Captain!

GILLESPIE: [SFX: resonant] The intercom light is still on. He must be able to hear us. Captain!

SULLIVAN: [SFX: resonant] Captain!

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Sir, are your propulsion units online? You seem to be drifting.

SULLIVAN: [SFX: resonant] Ah! What was that? Is he on fire?!

GILLESPIE: [SFX: resonant] No, I think his propulsion works! He's moving!

SULLIVAN: [SFX: resonant] He's moving! Wait.

GILLESPIE: [SFX: resonant] Wait a second, the nose of the ship is back the other way.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Captain! This is Private O'Connor. Be advised, your target is at 45-45-180. I repeat, your target it at 45-45-180. Captain, you're going

the wrong way!

Do you copy? I know you can hear me, the intercom light is on! Hello?

GILLESPIE: [SFX: resonant] He looks so small from up here. Like one little grain of sand.

SULLIVAN: [SFX: resonant] [laughs] I might have known this would happen. I hope you're listening, Captain Zoran. I hope you can hear us real good.

O'CONNOR: [SFX: resonant] Captain, do you copy? We're losing you! Lieutenant Schroeder, do something! Elyse? Sir! Sir, please come in! Sir! [SFX: breakup] --too far away now-- [SFX: breakup] --just stand there, say something! [SFX: breakup] Captain!

[SFX: static]

[Scene 5:] Earth. Captain Victor Zoran, Group of reporters

[SFX: sound of a horrible crash, followed by labored breathing (and possibly heart monitor)]

[SFX: flashbulbs, etc]

AMERICAN REPORTER: Captain Zoran, how does it feel to have made the most miraculous recovery in aeronautic history?

BRITISH REPORTER: Will you be publishing your memoirs, Captain?

FRENCH REPORTER: Vous êtes un véritable héros pour les enfants de toutes les nations, Capitaine. Vous projetez de faire des allocutions? (You are truly a hero for the children of all nations, Captain. Do you plan to make speaking engagements?)

AMERICAN REPORTER 2: Victor, darling. don't be a tease. We want the whole story. Tell us all exactly what happened up there. The people want to know!

NEWSIE: Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Captain Zoran, international legend and space pioneer, sole survivor of tragic asteroid collision! Read all about his heroic escape from the wreck in the Gazette! 5 cents here!

BRITISH REPORTER: On Tonight's Evening News, we have some of the friends and family of the Fallen Four, the moniker given to those brave souls who perished in the Stella Navis collision, having posthumously won the Brightest Star Awards for bravery...

AMERICAN TV HOST: ...the new biography of famed

deep-space pioneer Captain Victor Zoran. It tells the tale of that fateful asteroid collision of the United States Starship, *Stella Navis* in vivid detail, including for the first time ever Captain Zoran's personal account of the crew's final moments. He recounts how he did everything he could to save Private Katherine "Zip" O'Connor, his lieutenant and long-time friend Elyse Schroeder, his guests archaeologist Sam Gillespie and linguist Frank Sullivan, but to no avail...

SPANISH REPORTER: Nuestros corazones y nuestras oraciones están con las familias y seres queridos de los Cuatro Caídos. Están con Dios ahora. (Our hearts and our prayers are with the families and loved ones of the Fallen Four. They are with God now.)

[SFX: Allow a second of silence before continuing with non-intrusive music under:]

ZORAN: I'm not...proud of what I've done. I can't imagine there is anyone alive who would be. I have kept myself from going insane by telling myself over and over again that it was just primitive instinct, the instinct to live, to carry on, left over from our ancient ancestors. I was just doing what it was in my nature to do. But I could never really fool myself into believing that.

I still think about them, you know. On those nights when I toss and turn in my bunk, and I can't sleep to save me, I still see them. Up there. I remember the last thing I saw before I had gained too much distance was Lieutenant Schroeder watching me through the porthole. She must have known what I was doing, but for some reason, she just...kept watching. Elyse...I have known her for most of my life, and I know what that means. I broke her heart that day. One way or another.

I've never flown again. It has been years, of course, so there is no getting around the fact that they are all long dead now. Nevertheless, I keep myself up most nights wondering what really happened to them after I left. I bled and froze and almost suffocated trying to escape from them, but I know I never will. I suppose I will have to answer for what I've done someday, and to someone. If not God, I'm sure there's someone out there who'd like to have a word with me some day. But that day hasn't come yet.

[SFX: music]

[Conclusion:] Announcer

[SFX: theme music]

ANNOUNCER: You've just heard a live studio broadcast of *The Last Flight of Victor Zoran*, brought to you by [sponsor]. In tonight's broadcast, courtesy of the Tin Roof Players in cooperation with the Frank DeLacy company, you were just treated to a performance by [name] as Private Zip O'Connor, [name] as Sam Gillespie, [name] as Frank Sullivan, [name] as Lieutenant Elyse Schroeder, and last but not least, [name] as Captain Victor Zoran. And of course, this production couldn't have run by itself! In our live sound department, you have had the privilege of hearing [name], [name], and [name], under the sound direction of [name]. This production was run under the direction of [name] with assistance from [name].

As always, thank you for tuning in! Be sure to keep your dial right where it's at, and we'll be back on the air after a fantastic performance by the Frank DeLacy Orchestra! And don't forget, anything can happen when you let yourself journey Into The Unknown.

[SFX: transition into big band music, may fade out.]

