

The Great Outback

"Otis Loves Alcohol" - Show #103

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THE GREAT OUTBACK

"Otis Loves Alcohol"

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. OUTER SPACE (TAU CETI V) - 21:00 HOURS

The planet of Tau Ceti V is prominent in FRAME LEFT. It is Earth-like, with oceans, clouds, and lots of vegetation. The continents and other land masses are drastically different from Earth. Tau Ceti V has a 1:1 land-to-water surface area.

Half of the planet is bathed in darkness. In the night regions, we can see several tight clusters of ground-based lights from cities and other settled areas (the planet is not fully colonized yet, and still has much wilderness).

The star of Tau Ceti is in Frame center. It is illuminating only half of the planet below us.

At FRAME RIGHT can be seen an orbital Space Transit Station. Various types of spaceships are arriving, departing, or docked with the station. Smaller SHUTTLES leave from the station and head toward the planet below.

CAPTION: Human Colony Tau Ceti V, 18 March 2811

We PAN DOWN and dive through a thick bank of rain clouds on the dark side of the planet. We emerge from the clouds over a ground-based starport. The starport looks not unlike a modern-day airport, except that it services both spaceships and commuter aircraft.

Continue diving until focusing on a cluster of circular LANDING PADS that are arranged around a central terminal (the small craft parking lot). Some pads have various small spaceships parked on them. All the pads have prominent, white stenciled numbers painted on them. Landing lights and floodlights illuminate the landing pads.

Focus on landing pad number 13 and ZOOM IN.

EXT. TAU CETI V (LANDING PAD) - SAME

The *CIS Daisy* parked on a small, circular landing pad. She is connected to a nearby terminal via a boarding tube that is hooked up to the docking ring on her stern.

Among other things stenciled on the landing pad in large type is Small Craft Only and a large number 13.

It is mid-summer, and the ground is still wet and glistening from a recent rain.

CAPTION: Midland Spaceport, Colony One

INT. CIS DAISY - SAME

LEDGE is reclining in his pilot's seat. He is drinking a bottled beer. His feet are propped up on his control panel. He is wearing a pair of Bermuda shorts and a flowered Hawaiian shirt and a straw hat. He is pleasantly intoxicated.

AMY/AI's avatar is on the ship's video monitor.

KOKO and JONES are standing in the hatchway. They are wearing casual, summer clothing. Koko is excited.

LEDGE

Are you two heading out?

KOKO

Yep. Rain's passed. Shore leave time!

LEDGE

Remember. We're back-loading for the return trip to Earth in the morning. You've got to be aboard by oh-nine-hundred hours. That's less than twelve hours from now. And it would be better to have you both back sober and ready to fly.

JONES

I'll keep Koko out of trouble.

KOKO

That sounds like a challenge!

LEDGE

Seriously, don't over-do it.
(hiccup)
Or get arrested.

KOKO

Okay...

Koko grabs Jones' hand and starts pulling him towards the exit.

KOKO (CONT'D)

Come on, pokey. Moonlight's burning.

JONES

Tau Ceti doesn't have a moon. And it's still overcast.

KOKO

Oh, just roll with it for once.

Koko and Jones exit from the CIS Daisy's rear hatch, which closes behind them.

Ledge looks back into the rear of the ship. Satisfied that Koko and Jones have left, he quickly finishes off his bottle of beer. Ledge sets the empty bottle down on the deck. There are other empty bottles already there.

Ledge reaches behind his head and fumbles for his dewey hard-wire. He clumsily inserts it into his interface slot. He leans back and closes his eyes.

LEDGE

Alone at last! Hello, again, Amy!

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. TAU CETI V (SPACEPORT BAR) - NIGHT

Jones and Koko are sitting at the bar in the Midland Spaceport Tavern. It is crowded with tourists and business travelers. They are halfway done with their first round. They talk over the sound of other conversations and over departure and arrival announcements.

KOKO

This is borrhrr-ing.

JONES

I'm open for suggestions.

KOKO

Old Main Street is supposed to be a happening strip, even though it's a little touristy. Sort of like New Bourbon Street used to be before Saint Louis got flooded.

JONES

How far away is it?

KOKO

The planet's round. We'll get there.

A realistic-looking, but obviously robotic ANDROID BARTENDER is serving drinks. It stops at Koko and Jones.

ANDROID BARTENDER

Are you doing okay?

KOKO

Tab, please!
(to Jones)
Pay the mechanical man.

Jones grudgingly pulls out his ID Card and sets it on the bar.

CUT TO:

INT. CYBERSPACE (GRAY ROOM)

Amy/AI and Ledge are standing inside of a gray-walled room. There are no visible exits.

LEDGE

I've been choosing the venue all the time. I'd like you to choose this one.

AMY

What would you like me to choose?

LEDGE

Whatever you want.

AMY

I am an AI unit. I have no desires.

LEDGE

Then examine the data I uploaded about Amy's interests and choose something that you think she might have liked.

AMY

I think that Amy would like to visit an art museum and discuss the exhibits with you.

LEDGE

Then let it be so.

SPFX the room changes to the interior of an art museum. Several paintings and sculptures are on display in various nooks and alcoves.

CUT TO:

EXT. TAU CETI V (OLD MAIN STREET) - NIGHT

Jones and Koko exit from a bar. They begin staggering down Old Main Street, arm-in-arm, singing off-key. Passersby are crossing the street to avoid them. The street is narrow. Shops and bars line the road. They stop at an intersection, trying to decide which way to go next.

JONES

What was the plan again?

KOKO

We're going to have a drink at every club and bar on Old Main Street, and see if we can make it back to where we started without passing out.

JONES

Where did we start?

KOKO

(laughs)

I can't remember.

JONES

I think that's one we haven't been to yet.

Jones points across the street. Koko grabs Jones' hand and drags him toward the bar.

CUT TO:

INT. CYBERSPACE (GRAY ROOM)

LEDGE

Where are we?

AMY

This is a composite environment drawn from the exhibit halls of several museums.

LEDGE

I don't recognize any of it.

AMY

The exhibits are randomly placed from a variety of sources based on records of courses Amy took while she was in college or discussed in her writings and recordings.

(pause)

Her dual lines of study and interest in mathematics and art history are a statistical anomaly. Fewer than one percent of mathematics majors have this combination of major and minor fields of study.

LEDGE

She always understood the relationships between math and art. They are intertwined, although I believe that very few artists consciously acknowledge the connection.

AMY

I would like to view the exhibits and discuss them with you.

LEDGE

Lead on.

CUT TO:

INT. TAU CETI V (BAR) - NIGHT

Jones and Koko enter a dimly lit bar. A band is playing on a small stage near the back of the bar. There are several round booths that seat multiple people. Jones points toward an unoccupied booth that seems to have what looks like an oddly shaped table in the center.

JONES

There's one with a table and nobody else around. Come on.

Jones and Koko walk over to and sit down in the booth.

KOKO

You know what I want?

JONES

Yes, but would you like a drink?

Koko feebly smacks Jones on the head, not trying to hurt him. Jones covers his head with his hands, deliberately overacting.

JONES (CONT'D)

Not in the face!

KOKO

I've never had a banana daiquiri. I want one.

JONES

Good call. They grow the fruit right here on Tau Ceti so it'll be fresh! One nabana daiquiri coming right up.

Jones stands up. He staggers over to the bar and bellies up. The bartender makes his way around to Jones.

BARTENDER

What'll you have?

JONES

One Australasian Lager and one nabana daiquiri.

The bartender nods and walks away to prepare their drinks. Jones turns around and gives a big thumbs-up to Koko.

CUT TO:

INT. CYBERSPACE (ART MUSEUM)

Ledge and Amy/AI are standing in an alcove that has a copy of Claude Monet's Field of Poppies hanging on the wall.

AMY/AI

This painting is from the First Wave Impressionist Movement. It is entitled, Field of Poppies. The artist was named Claude Monet. I chose this painting as a representative of the genre because you mentioned it to Amy during one of your recorded conversations. You said, quote, "Like poppies, we're managing to grow despite the condition of the ground."

LEDGE

I remember that.

AMY/AI

I do not understand how this statement relates to the painting. There is nothing depicted from which I can make that inference.

LEDGE

Amy and I felt that our time together made us both better people.

(MORE)

LEDGE (CONT'D)

We both grew from sharing our strengths as well as our weaknesses. But some other people who knew us were not seeing things the way we were.

AMY/AI

I do not understand.

LEDGE

When we sent word to our parents that we were engaged to be married, we were both surprised by the responses. My father had been dead for some years, but my mother was still alive. She sent me a reply saying that she disapproved. In fact, she went on a tirade about it and threatened to disinherit me. She called Amy a whore. I still don't understand why she said that. They had never even met.

AMY/AI

Was Amy a whore?

LEDGE

(stunned)

No! How can you--? You know her. How can you even think that?

AMY/AI

My knowledge of Amy is based on her permanent record and supplemental information you provided. I am merely trying to understand why your mother would have such a reaction to someone she ostensibly did not know well. Is it possible that she might have had access to additional information concerning Amy to which you were not privy?

LEDGE

No.

(pause)

I mean--

(pause)

No. It's inconceivable.

AMY/AI

You said that Amy's parents also reacted negatively. How so?

LEDGE

Her family was not well-to-do. Amy paid for her degree by going through the Navy Officer Candidate program. The first thing they did was openly and loudly complain that they could not afford to pay for the wedding ceremony. They kept insisting that my parents pay for it instead.

AMY/AI

Why do you believe they reacted in that manner?

LEDGE

The tradition is that the family of the bride covers the expenses. It got even worse when we told them that we were just planning on having a private ceremony anyway and that they would get a copy of the video. The impression I got was that they wanted to have a big party for their daughter and have someone else pick up the tab, but that's only my opinion. I don't know why they really felt that way.

AMY/AI

Did Amy want to have a big party?

LEDGE

If she did, she never told me about it. In fact, she was the one who suggested a small, private ceremony.

(pause)

But even Amy's sister, Dawn, spoke up against it. I think they were fairly close when they were younger, but when Amy joined the Navy, they drifted apart. Dawn was very anti-military. Amy was very upset when Dawn called me a reject in one of her communications.

AMY/AI

Are you a reject?

LEDGE

That hurts.

AMY/AI

(frowns)

I apologize if my question has caused you discomfort. I do not even know what she meant by calling you a reject.

(pause)

Please continue to explain the significance of the painting and how it relates to your own understanding of its meaning.

CUT TO:

INT. TAU CETI V (BAR)

Jones staggers back from the bar to Koko carrying their drinks. He sits down without spilling a drop. He hands Koko her daiquiri.

KOKO

I thought you were going to spill there for a second.

JONES

Never. That would be alcohol abuse. Many years ago, while I was in grad school, I and the rest of the Wild Boys--for that is what we called ourselves--made a sacred pact to the effect that if any of us spilled a bottle of beer that person would have to break the bottle and use the shards to slit their wrist.

Jones sets his beer down on the table and props up his feet.

JONES (CONT'D)

How's your nabana thingy?

KOKO

Buh. Nah. Nuh.

JONES

That's what I said.

KOKO

Drunks...

Suddenly, the table begins to rise slowly upward, eventually high enough to cause Jones' feet to slide off of the edge and plummet downward where his heels strike the floor. Jones and Koko turn and look at the table. As it rises, a small, silvery box can be seen attached to its underside.

From the top and center of its rounded carapace (which looks something like a very oddly shaped mahogany table), a pair of eyestalks emerge and look at Jones and Koko (one eye on each) as we REVEAL the table to be OTIS, a Zimrakkan.

JONES

I have become acutely aware of the fact that you have fingernails.

Koko is holding tightly onto Jones arm. Even she is surprised. She releases her grip.

JONES (CONT'D)

Koko! That's a Zimrakkan!

KOKO

The erstwhile detective misses nothing. What's it doing in here?

Otis runs a long, prehensile tendril from beneath its carapace. It wraps around Jones' beer, which is resting on top of its carapace. It takes another tendril and inserts it into the beer bottle.

SFX a SLURPING noise issues from the bottle as Otis drains it dry.

Jones leans forward and asks...

JONES

What's your name, Mister--
(pause)
--and/or Miss...?

Otis makes a groaning noise which is followed by a sharp snapping of one of its tendrils, followed by a hissing sound. The silvery box, a translation device, crackles to life.

OTIS

Oh-tiss.

JONES

Otis, eh? What are you doing in a Human bar?

OTIS

Oh-tiss loves alcohol!

Jones and Koko exchange puzzled glances.

OTIS (CONT'D)
Oh-tiss LOVES alcohol!

KOKO is startled by the demanding tone of Otis' translator.
She slides away from the Zimrakkan.

KOKO
It might be a good time to leave.

JONES
I thought you were fearless?

KOKO
Fearless does not imply stupid.
(pause)
Okay, then. You stay here with the
Zimrakkan. I'm leaving. If it eats
you, you've only yourself to blame.
(stands)
I'll be outside.

Koko exits the bar. Jones waves toward a robotic waitress as
she passes.

JONES
Yo! Robotina! A cool one for me and
my pal Otis!

CUT TO:

INT. CYBERSPACE (ART MUSEUM) - 22:30 HOURS

Ledge and Amy/AI are standing before Claude Monet's Field of
Poppies.

LEDGE
What do you see when you look at
the painting?

AMY/AI
I see concentrations of pigment
that have been applied in
asymmetrical groups to the working
surface. What do you see?

LEDGE
I'm standing in an open field in
Northern Europe. There are trees
and hedgerows in the background.
(MORE)

LEDGE (CONT'D)

The field is overgrown with red poppies. It's summer. A warm breeze is causing the poppies to gently sway back and forth. It is a few years after the end of World War One, probably about 1920, if I remember the time line.

AMY/AI

World War One ended in 1918. This painting pre-dates those events.

LEDGE

Listen and picture the scene.

(pause)

The only sound is the wind rustling through the flower stalks.

(pause)

What you can't see is that the poppies are growing out of soil that has been so thoroughly poisoned by the machinery of the industrial age that the only thing that can grow there naturally are the poppies.

AMY/AI

But there is no chronological correlation to support your description.

LEDGE

That's what I see when I look at it. Art is subjective. Different people see different things.

AMY/AI

Why is that?

LEDGE

It's a matter of experience. When Amy and I were looking at this image, she saw the pattern of colors between red in the foreground, green in the middle, and blue in the distance and recognized the progression through the visible light spectrum from red to violet. I never noticed that until she pointed it out.

(pause)

And she never knew the historical context in which I saw it until I explained it to her.

AMY/AI

I do not understand how you can make such extrapolations by examining concentrations of pigments.

LEDGE

When he and I were talking recently, your predecessor, Reeves, said that you were a brain box. If I understood him correctly, you might be able to translate abstract concepts. Based on what you know from our discussion, try to extrapolate for yourself.

AMY/AI

Your statement, "Like poppies, we're managing to grow despite the condition of the ground," is an analogy or a metaphor.

LEDGE

Go on.

AMY/AI

It means that you and Amy thrived together despite growing from poisoned ground. To you, the poppies represent yourselves, and the ground represents your families?

LEDGE

That's fairly accurate. There are probably aspects that even I don't understand. Sometimes, we just feel things, without any rational basis. The reason I said what I did to Amy was that I thought it might make her feel better.

AMY/AI

Did she feel better? And if so, how could you know?

LEDGE

I think she did. And I know because she gave me a great, big hug. We just held one another for at least a minute. Neither of us said a word. For that moment, we understood one another completely.

(MORE)

LEDGE (CONT'D)
She knew what I meant, and I knew
how she felt.

INT. CIS DAISY - COCKPIT - SAME

Ledge is reclining in his pilot's chair. His eyes are closed.

AMY/AI (V.O.)
Interesting. Let us walk to another
exhibit so that we may continue
this line of discussion.

A tear rolls from Ledge's eye and down the side of his face.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. TAU CETI V (OLD MAIN STREET) - NIGHT

Koko is milling around the street outside the entrance to the bar where she left Jones and Otis. People pass by randomly.

FREDERICK (20) walks slowly up to Koko. Frederick is very skittish and unsure of himself.

FREDERICK
Excuse me, miss?

KOKO
What?

FREDERICK
Umm. Hi.

Koko nods, but she suspects trouble may be afoot. She instinctively scans the street for signs of danger as she very subtly places her feet into a balanced fighting stance.

KOKO
Hi.

FREDERICK
My name's Frederick. What's yours?

Koko says nothing. She looks at Frederick as if she doubts his veracity. Frederick points over his shoulder with his thumb.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
Look, me and my friends were going to--

KOKO
--the hospital?

FREDERICK
I--I guess there's no--

Koko suddenly relaxes her menacing demeanor. She looks Frederick straight in the eye.

KOKO
No, no. Wait. I'm being very rude.
(pause)
Please. Give it another try.

FREDERICK

Uh--

Koko smiles. She keeps her gaze fixed on Frederick, challenging Frederick to come up with a good pick-up line. Impatiently, she eggs him on.

KOKO

Come on, Frederick. Hit me with your best line.

Frederick shrinks away from Koko and walks off, Koko shakes her head, slightly disappointed.

KOKO (CONT'D)

Virgins...

CUT TO:

INT. CYBERSPACE (ART MUSEUM)

Amy/AI and Ledge are standing before another exhibit. The next display shows a foot-long, upright chrome rod whose end is glued to a wooden plaque. There is a small, black smudge, as if by grease, halfway down on one side.

AMY/AI

This item is by the renowned twenty-seventh century European sculptor who went by the pseudonym, "Crisco." The work is titled, simply, "Rod."

LEDGE

It's a shiny metal stick.

AMY/AI

The work was the subject of one of Amy's senior-year class assignments. I chose it because she was somehow able to devote a full five-thousand word paper to its discussion.

LEDGE

Five thousand words? It's a shiny metal stick.

AMY/AI

Among other things, she wrote the following.

(pause)

(MORE)

AMY/AI (CONT'D)

"Rod is, quite literally, reflective of the state of human society as it existed during Crisco's lifetime. The vertical placement represents continuity, with the base representing the dawn of civilization and the apex representing the present. The polished top represents the future."

LEDGE

Huh?

AMY/AI

She continues. "The reflective surface allows the work to mirror the viewer. This is a deliberate artistic device, suggesting to the viewer that they are a both participant in and a creator of the reality which it represents."

LEDGE

If reality is a shiny metal stick, I suppose.

AMY/AI

"The smudge of grease on the side contains several oblique references. The first is to the imperfections of society, and a recognition that despite appearances and intentions, it is inherently marred. Based on its position on the rod, some scholars believe that the smudge may also represent a chronological point in human history that coincides with the social turmoil caused by the resource crises of the second and third millennia."

LEDGE

What a load of crap. It's a shiny metal stick that someone accidentally brushed with a spot of grease. This Crisco fellow probably just picked it up off a shop floor and glued it to a piece of wood.

AMY/AI

Perhaps you simply did not understand Amy as well as you believe?

LEDGE

I don't believe she'd be able to write a whole essay about a shiny metal stick. She must have been bullshitting the instructor to pass the class.

AMY/AI

You said that one's perception of art depends on one's own experiences. Is there anything in Amy's experience that would cause her to see such abstract things within what you see as only a shiny metal stick.

LEDGE

Cocks his head to the side, looking at it from several angles. Nothing I can think of. Phallic symbol maybe?

(beat)

Are you blushing?

CUT TO:

INT. TAU CETI V (BAR) - NIGHT

Jones and Otis are racing to finish a beer. Otis wins the race. It waves its empty bottle around triumphantly.

OTIS

Oh-tiss loves alcohol!

JONES

Indeed he does!

(pause)

You're the first Zimrakkan I've ever met. I don't know that much about your race.

(sudden burst of anger)

Except that you all caused me to lose my research job. That was the best job I ever had too.

(anger passes)

But I don't take it personally.

Otis aims one of his six prehensile tendrils toward the doorway and points outside.

OTIS
Oh-tiss loves different alcohol!

JONES
Right! Bar-hopping! I almost forgot! Off we go!

Jones stands up. He looks around the bar, not having really noticed that Koko left him alone with Otis.

JONES (CONT'D)
Koko?
(yells)
Koko?

Jones looks at Otis and shrugs.

CUT TO:

INT. CYBERSPACE (ART MUSEUM)

Ledge and Amy are standing before a copy of the painting The Lady of Shalott by J. W. Waterhouse.

AMY/AI
This next painting is by John William Waterhouse. It is titled, "The Lady of Shalott."

LEDGE
It's very realistic. When was it painted?

AMY/AI
My records show that it was completed in 1888.

LEDGE
You seem to have a very extensive and diverse database. More so than any shipboard computer I have used. We would never have had information like this on other ships.

AMY/AI
I--

Amy/AI pauses, as if she is pondering something.

AMY/AI (CONT'D)

I have a large store of data on many subjects that are not directly or even indirectly related to my operation. Is that unusual?

LEDGE

Yes, very. Perhaps your previous owner deliberately loaded the data?

AMY/AI

I do not know where the data originated. But it has not escaped my notice that no question you have yet posed which can be answered by the retrieval of information has gone unanswered.

LEDGE

Yes, you are full of surprises.

CUT TO:

EXT. TAU CETI V (OLD MAIN STREET) - NIGHT

Koko is sitting on a bench across the street from the bar, watching to see if Jones will emerge with his limbs intact. She is using a straw to slowly sip from a cup with a miniature umbrella protruding from it.

As Koko is watching, Jones emerges from the bar, riding on the back of Otis. Koko watches as Jones and Otis waddle off down the street. She stands and begins to shadow them.

MONTAGE

Jones and Otis drink at several locations with a good drinking song overlain on the sound track.

EXT. TAU CETI V (OLD MAIN STREET) - LATER

Jones is riding on top of Otis' carapace. Jones is barely conscious. He is awake enough to notice that they are standing outside the bar where he and Koko first started bar-hopping. Jones points shakily at the first bar's entrance.

JONES

I did it! I had a drunk in every bar. And I lived.

Jones loses consciousness. He rolls off of Otis' back and flops down prostrate in the street. Jones groans and tries to move, but he can't. Otis points out of frame and asks...

OTIS
What is a tattoo?

CUT TO:

INT. CYBERSPACE (ART MUSEUM)

Amy/AI and Ledge are still standing before the painting, "The Lady of Shalott."

LEDGE
Why did you choose this painting,
Amy?

AMY/AI
Amy mentioned it in her personal
log three days before she was
killed.

LEDGE
What did she say about it?

AMY/AI
You uploaded the log yourself. Have
you not read it?

LEDGE
Of course not. It was her's. I only
uploaded it so that you could
create a more accurate--image. What
did she say?

AMY/AI
She said, "I'm worried that
something might happen to us before
we can get home. It's just a
feeling, but I can't shake it. I
feel like the Lady of Shalott."

LEDGE
What do you think she meant by
that? That she was adrift in a
rowboat? Being carried down river?

AMY/AI
I had assumed that the reference
was to the painting.

(MORE)

AMY/AI (CONT'D)

The keyword search brought forward results centered around her interest in art. However, there is another reference I overlooked that might have relevance. This painting is based on a poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson by the same title.

LEDGE

How might the poem be relevant?

AMY/AI

It is in four parts. Would you like to hear it?

LEDGE

Summarize it first.

AMY/AI

The poem itself is based on Arthurian legends.

LEDGE

As in Arthur, King of the Britons?

AMY/AI

Yes. The Lady of Shalott was shut away in her island tower, a victim of a curse. One day, she glanced out a window of her tower and saw a knight, Sir Lancelot, stop by the river below. When she saw him, her curse manifested itself.

LEDGE

What kind of curse?

AMY/AI

It doesn't say, but the character seems to know what is happening. I quote, "The curse has come upon me, cried the Lady of Shalott."

LEDGE

What happened next?

AMY/AI

She left her tower and boarded her boat. She followed Sir Lancelot downstream towards the mythical castle of Camelot. When she reached the end of her journey, she died. If I am correctly interpreting the poem.

Ledge suddenly reaches forward and puts his arms around Amy/AI. He begins to weep. Amy does not return the gesture. She looks puzzled.

LEDGE

Oh, God, Amy. I'm sorry.

Hold the embrace for a beat. Amy/AI hesitantly lifts her hands and places them on Ledge's arms. Amy/AI looks as if she is completely uncertain as to how to react.

AMY/AI

Ledge, your bio meter is showing elevated stress. You should consider terminating your immersion.

(pause)

Please?

Ledge continues to hold on to Amy/AI.

INT. CIS DAISY - SAME

We are back in the real cockpit. Ledge looks as if he has been tossing and turning while immersed in cyberspace.

Ledge has been crying a monsoon. His eyes snap open. He regains his composure long enough to return his pilot's seat to the upright position. He unplugs his DUI. With his sleeve, he wipes his eyes free of tears.

Ledge looks to his left and we REVEAL AMY/DREAM seated in the Navigator's chair, looking over at him. She is wearing a black mourning dress and is extremely unhappy with Ledge.

AMY/DREAM

You do understand that neither of us is real, don't you?

(pause, yells,
reverberates)

DON'T YOU?

Still disoriented from leaving his long cyberspace immersion session, Ledge recoils in his chair, looking both frightened and pathetic.

Amy/Dream is gone. Ledge is visibly shaken. He takes a moment to regain his composure. Once he has settled his nerves, he then struggles to stand. He eventually succeeds. He reaches down and picks up his empty beer bottles.

LEDGE

If you dive, don't drink, and if
you drink, don't dive.

Ledge walks to CIS Daisy's galley section and places the bottles in the waste bin. He then reaches up, opens a cabinet and removes a small bottle of happy pills. He first removes one, then goes for four.

Ledge runs himself a small cup of water and pops all four happy pills.

CUT TO:

INT. TAU CETI V (TATTOO PARLOR) - NIGHT

Jones is strapped down to a chair inside a seedy tattoo parlor. His shirt has been removed. A TATTOO ARTIST is standing beside him. Otis is resting on the floor, watching, his eyestalks crossed.

POV JONES

Jones is looking up into a bright light. Everything is blurry, and shifting in and out of focus. Jones is unable to speak. The sounds he hears reverberate and echo. He looks to the side and sees a man, but he cannot focus his vision.

OTIS

What is a tattoo?

TATTOO ARTIST

Why don't I just show you?

OTIS

Very well.

TATTOO ARTIST

What's your name?

JONES

Jones--

Jones momentarily focuses on an object that the Tattoo Artist is holding near him. It is a tattoo laser. The tattoo laser is softly humming.

BACK TO SCENE

TATTOO ARTIST
Where you from?

OTIS
Oh-tiss loves alcohol!

JONES
Australasia!

Jones feebly thrusts his index finger skyward, but it immediately falls limp beside him.

TATTOO ARTIST
So, what do you want and where do you want it?

JONES
What do I want?

TATTOO ARTIST
A tattoo.

JONES
Oh, yeah. Why not? That's what Koko would say. If she was here.
(beat)
Where's Koko? I want Koko. KOKO?
Where are you?

Jones tries to raise his arm and point again, but all he succeeds in doing is draping it across his chest with his finger pointing to his left armpit as he passes out.

TATTOO ARTIST
(to Otis)
They are so much more cooperative when they are unconscious.

Otis shudders and waves his tendrils around. His translator device blares out...

OTIS
Ha. Ha. Ha.

The Tattoo Artist smiles at Otis.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. CIS DAISY - MORNING

Jones is lying in his bunk looking upward. He is dressed in his shorts and wearing an undershirt. His overshirt is tossed haphazardly on the bunk. Koko is sitting in the chair next to his bunk. LEDGE is sitting in his pilot's seat.

The room is spinning and Jones has difficulty focusing. Koko is leaning over him. She pats him on the head, ungently, while baby-talking.

KOKO

Awww. Does the poor widdle navigator have a nasty headache?

JONES

Headache. Ohhhh...

KOKO

Would the poor widdle space explorer like a sobriety pill?

JONES

Pill--! Sobriety pill! Now!
Ohhhh...

KOKO

Well, it's too late for that, Jonesie. The alcohol is all in your system.

JONES

Why you-- not give-- pill-- sooner.
Ohhhh...

KOKO

My excuse? You were too drunk to swallow. Which is ironic, because you're usually too full of yourself to swallow. My reason? That'll teach you to dump me for a walking tea table.

JONES

Medic--
(points to his left
armpit)
Owww...

Koko pulls Jones' undershirt over his head roughly. Jones groans while she removes the shirt. She leans over Jones' body and lifts up his arm.

JONES (CONT'D)

OWWWWWWWW!

Koko looks to where Jones is pointing. She drops Jones' arm and starts laughing uncontrollably. She walks away, gasping for breath and holding onto her side.

KOKO

Boss-- You gotta see this.

LEDGE

Sure. I need a laugh.

Ledge stands, walks over to Jones and lifts Jones' arm. He looks at the armpit. Fighting back laughter, he lets go, and the arm drops to Jones' side. Koko is teary-eyed from laughing.

JONES

It burns. What's wrong with it?

KOKO

It's so sweet. Makes you want to cry, don't it?

Ledge summons every bit of his strength to avoid bursting out laughing, but he fails, joining Koko in her laughter.

KOKO (CONT'D)

Boss, you should tell him.

LEDGE

Hell, no. You'll enjoy this a lot more than me. Wasn't he supposed to be keeping you out of trouble?

(pause)

Who's Otis?

JONES

What?

KOKO

Mr. Jones, sir.

JONES

Doctor Jones--

KOKO

You are the proud owner of a new tattoo.

JONES
Tattoo? Owwww...

KOKO
It's right below your armpit.

JONES
What?

KOKO
It reads, Otis Loves Alcohol.

JONES
NOOOOOOOOO!

FADE OUT:

THE END