

## CHAPTER TWO - Into the Beyond!

NARRATOR. VIT-O-PEP presents the Spaceship Zero Adventure Hour!

Intro music

NARRATOR. Episode Two: Into the Beyond! In our last episode, chief engineer Stu Spanner came to a mysterious end while working alone aboard Spaceship Zero. Now, SpaceCorp executive Heidi Mensa enters the Orbital Science Station's Briefing Room to address the crew.

Murmuring in the background as the crew talks amongst themselves.

MENSA (matter of factly, bordering on coldly) Can I have your attention please. As you may have heard, ship's engineer Stu Spanner was killed in an industrial accident involving the O2 scrubbers. Every drop of blood in his body entered the filtration system, was aerosolised and circulated throughout the ship's life support systems, painting the ship's interior. It was of course quite tragic and horrible.

CREW (MURMURS DISGUST)

MENSA Thankfully the collateral damage caused by the engineer's pulpy remains have not caused the project to exceed projected costs. The onboard robot is scrubbing down the ship as we speak and the mission will proceed on schedule. With the removal of Engineer Spanner from the crew, The SpaceCorp board of directors has decided to promote Gearbox to the position of ship's engineer.

ASHTON Gearbox? Ship's engineer? You can't be serious. This is an outrage! You can't in all earnestness expect me to entrust my life's work to someone of Gearbox's... limited calibre

MENSA Professor Ashton, while it is undeniable that

Gearbox is less educated, less qualified and less amicable than Spanner...

GEARBOX (INTERRUPTING) Great Jumpin' space catfish! I'm standing right here

MENSA ...due to limited capital, time and regrettable labour laws, bringing Gearbox on board was the only legal option. So why don't we all give Gearbox a round of applause and welcome him aboard!

Tentative single clapping

STACKHOUSE well if that's all, then the men are dismissed.

MENSA Not so fast Captain Stackhouse. Due to the rapidly increasing investment that SpaceCorp is making in this mission, the board has also decided it prudent that the mission undergo an ongoing onboard 'cost benefit analysis'.

GEARBOX Lady, why don't you say that in English?

MENSA What that means Gearbox, is that I will be joining the mission to ensure the crew's actions remain fiscally responsible.

ALL (outraged) WHAT?!?!/I beg your pardon?/You? Great Jumpin Space Catfish!

STACKHOUSE But you don't know anything about flying a star hopper!?!

GEARBOX Or the difference between a 5 and 3/4 gauge reciprocating spanner and a Phillip's laser torque router...

ASHTON Or how to compute the radius of quasi-dimensional magnetic emissions from a blue pulsar!

The crew is silent.

MENSA MENSA: That is true. I may not know how much xenon the thrusters use per second or what a 5 and 3/4

gag reciprocity spaniel is, but I know where are the requisition forms for them. AND nobody fills things out in triplicate better than I...

*//More silence.//*

MENSA                    I'm going. Dismissed.

Out music

Announcer: Attention all Space Corp cadets! Exploring the galaxy is hard work. Isn't it time for a VIT-O-PEP break? VIT-O-PEP gets you going at the start of every day or when you're just feeling run down at the end of the week! VIT-O-PEP is scientifically formulated to give you that rocket boost into orbit! Filled with more sugars, nutrients, and chemical molecules, VIT-O-PEP comes in three fantastic flavours; Chocolate, Vanilla, and Red! Kids, ask your mom to look for it at your favorite grocer! And Moms, ask your local pharmacist about VIT-O-PEP PLUS behind the counter, for that little something extra. Blast off with VIT-O-PEP!

## **ACT TWO**

### **Music**

NARRATOR                HIGH ABOVE EARTH'S ORBIT, SPACE MOORINGS ARE CLEARED AS SPACESHIP ZERO PREPARES TO ACTIVATE. THE CREW MAKES THEIR FINAL CHECKS.

STACKHOUSE             Robot, ship status?

ROBOT                    All systems read nominal, Cap-cap-captain Sir. Sensor Antenna extended and receiving.

ASHTON                   I think there may be something wrong with my seat.

MENSA                    I have confirmation from Ice Station Pluto that they are ready to receive us. We have a green light for BTL activation.

ASHTON                   Oh my, is this a tooth? Was I sitting on a piece of Engineer Spanner?

Sound of hatch opening

GEARBOX           The Bendall Field is hot and xenon tubes are on standby, Skipper. The BTL is primed and ready to go.

STACKHOUSE       Good, strap in. Waiting for your signal Professor.

ASHTON            uh, ah...Just one moment please, I can't seem to get this damnable seat belt...oh for heaven's sakes

Sfx seat belt clumsiness

MENSA             Let me help you with that, Professor

SFX: click!

ASHTON            Ah, thank you my dear. Robot, prepare to initiate BTL activation sequence

ROBOT             Ready, Suh-suh-sir.

ASHTON            Activate!

SFX hums and throbbing and whatnots building

ROBOT             BTL Drive at 40% power

SFX hums and throbbing and whatnots building

ROBOT             BTL Drive at seven zero percent power

MENSA             Should the ship be vibrating so much?

ASHTON            Readings are within tolerance

ROBOT             BTL Drive at nine five percent power

Klaxxons and alarms go off

ROBOT             Warning! Warning!

STACKHOUSE       What's happening? Report!

ROBOT: BTL Drive at ERROR percent power.

STACKHOUSE What?!

Hullabaloo: I can't see/it's radiation/it's gonna blow!

SFX explosion

NARRATOR            WILL THE CREW SURVIVE PROFESSOR ASHTON'S MIRACLE  
ENGINE? TUNE IN TO THE NEXT EXCITING EPISODE OF  
THE SPACESHIP ZERO ADVENTURE HOUR, brought to you  
by VIT-O-PEP