

WE FIX SPACE JUNK

SEASON 3.5

MARILYN'S LONG JOURNEY HOME

EPISODE 4

By Beth Crane

CAST

MARILYN: Francesca Mintowt-Czyz

COMPUTER: James Carney

1 **MARILYN'S DIARY THEME STARTS.**

2 ANNOUNCER: Marilyn's Diary: A Long Journey Home. Episode 4.

3 **SFX:** **MARILYN'S DIARY THEME ENDS.**

SCENE 1: INT. MARILYN'S SHIP - DAY

4 MARILYN: Hello Diary! It's me again, Marilyn!

After the memory planet, we travelled through another three ports. They weren't that interesting, unfortunately. They were all Automnicon-settled planets, all had the same architecture, the same branding, even the same Muzac. That's -- music but for people who don't like music? I think?

5 **SFX:** SHE SIGHS.

6 MARILYN: If this is what it's going to be like everywhere, it feels pointless writing about it.

7 COMPUTER: People still live their lives there. You can't really experience a planet in a day or two. We were just passing through.

8 MARILYN: What did I miss?

9 COMPUTER: On Sirius-9-Alpha, for example, there's a thriving mechanoid subculture. It's hard to get into -- you need to build up years of trust -- but under the surface there's an entire culture built on roboticisation.

10 MARILYN: Oh. I'm sad I missed that.

11 COMPUTER: We wouldn't have been allowed in. But it's good to remember that the way a planet is built isn't the be all and end all. It's the people that make it what it is.

12 MARILYN: You're right. I need to remember that.

13 **SFX:** **PROXIMITY. THEY ARE ARRIVING NEAR A PLANET.**

14 COMPUTER: This should be an interesting planet for you to visit, Marilyn.

15 MARILYN: Why?

16 COMPUTER: It describes itself as a "historically accurate pre-solar flare Earth".

17 MARILYN: Oh, really?

18 COMPUTER: They settled here about a century ago. It's the brainchild of an "Early Earth" enthusiast. Hmm. Allegedly they've built period-accurate houses, they wear period-accurate clothes and they eat period-accurate food.

19 MARILYN: What, really? Where do they get it all from?

20 COMPUTER: I'd assume a lot of it isn't precisely period-accurate. A lot of plant and animal species have gone extinct. But it's an attempt at it.

21 MARILYN: It'll be interesting to see what my other homeworld would have looked like. I'll tell you all about it tonight, Diary!

SCENE 2: INT. MARILYN'S SHIP - DAY

- 22 **SFX:** **COMPUTER AND MARILYN WALK BACK**
ONTO THE SHIP.
- 23 MARILYN: Earth two is... strange. It's not quite like any other planet I've been to before.
- 24 COMPUTER: I'm not entirely sure how like Earth it is, either.
- 25 MARILYN: Well, it was an interesting experience. We were directed to land on a vast grey concourse, tall concrete buildings piled up around it. We were led from our ship to a series of fast-moving walkways, which took us round in circles until we reached what they called Accustoms.
- 26 We were directed to the back of a room. In front of us, moving platforms, only big enough to take one person at a time, crawled along towards a massive gateway. In between the platforms, inflatable figures popped up, moved along slowly, waiting for their turn to go through a gate. They travelled in a big circle, making their way through the gate, deflating and rotating to the back of the room, only to be inflated again, ready to start their journey. I found out later that this was an "Authentic Earth Queueing Experience".
- 27 When we reached the front of the queue, we were briefly examined by a small man in a blue uniform, who then offered us a stamp. It's still on the back of my hand. I assume the ink will fade eventually...
- 28 We were then ushered through to a waiting area. There we

met the first of our guides.

29 COMPUTER: There are two different factions operating on this planet. There was a massive civil war around fifty years ago, I believe triggered by something to do with a -- flag. So I arranged for us to meet representatives of both.

30 MARILYN: There was a small man with a wide smile waiting for us, holding a large sign that said "Marylin and Computur". Both -- slightly misspelt.

31 COMPUTER: As is the custom.

32 MARILYN: He had a tall, puffy hat and an apron with some writing on.

33 COMPUTER: "Chris the Cook"

34 MARILYN: But his name wasn't Chris. So I don't really understand why.

35 COMPUTER: Some form of Earth reference, I'd assume.

36 MARILYN: This was Eldritch, and he was going to be our guide. I noticed him exchanging hostile glances with a woman in a bright feathered costume.

37 COMPUTER: I believe she may be our guide for tomorrow.

38 MARILYN: He took us outside to a wide concrete road. There, waiting for us, was his vehicle -- a kind of bicycle with a cart strapped to the back. It was covered in an alarming range of lights. It was a Tuk-tuk, a traditional mode of transport in the Old World.

39 COMPUTER: I'm glad it wasn't a long journey, I could feel it shaking my transistors loose!

- 40 MARILYN: We travelled -- slowly -- towards a stack of grey buildings, all awkward ridges and sharp angles.
- 41 The inside was hollowed out, almost like a kind of -- nest. At the very centre was a lift, although it appeared to be very broken. Almost demonstrably broken.
- 42 COMPUTER: There was definitely a smoke machine and lighting making it look more broken than it was.
- 43 MARILYN: Beside it was a series of long ladders, through which the different levels of the -- nest -- could be accessed.
- 44 Apparently the broken lift was part of their drive for accuracy; their desire to represent the grim reality of the lives of Earth dwellers before the solar flares.
- 45 The walls were ridged, as if they'd started with a solid block of concrete and then burrowed into it, like insects. Although I think Gontano's traditional hives are far more elegant and well-designed. The humans lived in small groups on different layers of the burrow. They'd deliberately made the burrows slightly too small for their occupants, to accurately reflect the uncomfortable closeness of twentieth-century living. Allegedly.
- 46 Eldritch implied that it was against some kind of protocol to speak to the humans of other levels. He didn't explain why. We could hear their voices as they went about their days, but we weren't even supposed to acknowledge their existence.
- 47 We climbed until we reached the seventh floor; Eldritch's home. The level was divided into five smaller burrows, each

housing a group of five or six.

48 Eldritch was, it turned out, the cook for his layer. He was very proud of his expertise in Earth-style cuisine. He'd studied Earth cooking at university and now spends his life cooking authentic Earth Meals.

49 The meals he made were — strange. They looked beautiful, if monochrome, but tasted like... nothing. Literally nothing. It was hard to convince myself that I was eating, even when I had the food in my mouth. It was difficult to swallow, if only because I kept forgetting it was there.

50 Apparently their lack of taste was something he was extremely proud of. Twentieth century food was beautiful but completely tasteless, according to his studies. And they were served with great ceremony on hollowed-out plastic trays covered with a transparent plastic sheet, which he explained he'd bought at great expense from a trader in Earth Goods.

51 I think maybe authentic doesn't always mean good.

52 COMPUTER: Correct.

53 MARILYN: After we ate — and I had to keep reminding myself that we'd eaten, as the lack of flavour had somehow tricked my brain into thinking we'd missed a meal — he took us to the top of the block, where we looked out over a beautiful horizon. Eldritch told us of his plans to build a more authentic atmosphere, hiring smog generators to block out the light and damp generators to spray the block with cold, uncomfortable rain. For the authenticity.

54 In the distance was a blur of light, pink and turquoise,
shining up a haze on the horizon. He glared at it; another
reason for the smog generators. The so-called Other
Encampment.

55 They weren't nearly as accurate in their setting, having built
a more romanticised version of history. Eldritch's was more
worthy as it was more gritty and realistic.

56 We turned down his offer of staying the night. Even though
the beds were — authentically uncomfortable.

57 We went back to the ship, thankfully bypassing the inflatable
queueing area. I was glad we still had some of the fruits. My
stomach was making so many noises despite being
technically full. It was all very strange.

58 Tomorrow we're going to see what the other camp does.

AD BREAK

SCENE 3 - INT. SHIP

59 **SFX:** MARILYN AND COMPUTER COME IN.

60 MARILYN: Hello diary! We've just arrived back from settlement two. It
was very -- different from the first settlement.

61 COMPUTER: Yes. I'd definitely call it different.

62 MARILYN: We left the ship early in the morning, hoping to get through the inflatable queues quickly and start the tour. They were crawling as slowly as ever, but seeing as we were the only ones there, we -- thought perhaps if we climbed over a few of them we could get to platforms near the front.

63 COMPUTER: It was a good plan. In concept.

64 MARILYN: Sometimes I forget I have a stinger. Hopefully they should be able to patch them up. We did get nearer the front of the queue, though!

65 The woman in yellow feathers met us in the airport. She was carrying a big flashing sign with our names. They were misspelt again, but misspelt -- differently.

66 COMPUTER: As is the custom.

67 MARILYN: Instead of a Tuk-tuk, she drove a scooter, and offered us a ride on the back. It felt quite precarious, but at least it was less of a bumpy ride.

68 We rode across a vast, sandy landscape towards what turned out to be a castle, pointing up into the sky and festooned with lights. She drove through a double set of golden arches and into the city.

69 The inside of the city was -- strange. None of the houses were alike, and rather than the standard grey jogging bottoms the other tribe had worn, people wore a confusing mishmash of costumes.

70 A man in a full lycra body-suit, a fluorescent ruff at his neck, said "Good morrow!" in a sing-song voice to us, bowing

deeply. On the other side of the road, a woman in a massive glitterball dress and matching headdress was pushing a shopping trolley.

71 Our guide, Cassandra, had lived in the city for five years now.

72 She'd been born and grown up in the other settlement, in the grey concrete hive, but had gravitated towards this one as she grew older.

73 COMPUTER: Like a moth to flame.

74 MARILYN: And where everything seemed kind of -- grim and uniform there, everything here was bright, and sparkling, and -- too much.

75 COMPUTER: A bit of a sensory overload, yes.

76 MARILYN: It made my eyes hurt! And the food... It was...

77 COMPUTER: Ultra-fusion, I think they called it. A mixture of -- every food ever referred to in Earth literature.

78 MARILYN: Blended.

79 COMPUTER: Yes, that was -- definitely a bold choice.

80 MARILYN: Cassandra hadn't been back to her old settlement since she'd left.

81 She thought they were celebrating everything that was bad about Earth. They also thought that rather than embracing the 20th century, they were actually celebrating the solar flare and the destruction it wrought on the world.

- 82 I asked them more about the solar flare. I've tried to read about it, but there isn't much publically available, given the time at which it happened.
- 83 Cassandra painted me a picture of earth pre-flare — a bright, shining utopia, where anyone could be anything they wanted to be. And then, when the solar flare came, all was lost and humanity descended to where it is now.
- 84 I didn't think it was worth asking her questions about Earth after that.
- 84b MARILYN: We went across more of the glittering, gaudy landscape. I asked questions here and there but mostly, Cassandra didn't know anything. They'd constructed their part of Earth two from snipped pictures and vague ideas. A postcard of history with no writing on the back.
- 84c COMPUTER: A glorious spectacle, signifying absolutely nothing.
- 84d MARILYN: So do you think one of them was -- right?
- 84e COMPUTER: What do you mean by right?
- 84f MARILYN: Is there a 'right' way to portray Earth?
- 84g COMPUTER: No. I don't think there is a right way to portray Earth, it was a cluster of disparate landmasses with billions of individuals on it. There wasn't one unifying culture and there wasn't one unifying -- grimness underneath it all.
- Even after the solar flares.
- 85 MARILYN: Even Gontanans have a broad range of cultures despite the fact we live in one kingdom.
- 86 COMPUTER: Really?

87 MARILYN: Yes. Gontano only has one landmass, but it's gigantic. It spans across half of the planet, meaning that we live in all kinds of areas. Gontanans in the far north and south build underground cities to save them from the cold, and they rarely fly. Further towards the middle we're a little more spread out and the cities are smaller and less crowded.

All of them have different customs and traditions and even different family structures.

88 COMPUTER: Interesting. I am looking forward to exploring Gontano. There's so much there that's undocumented by the wider universe.

89 MARILYN: I only hope I'm doing the right thing by going back.

90 ANNOUNCER: In the fourth episode of Marilyn's Diary: A Long Journey Home, a We Fix Space Junk Miniseries, Marilyn was played by Francesca Mintowt-Czyz and Computer was played by James Carney. The programme was written by Beth Crane and produced by Hedley Knights for Battle Bird Productions.

We'd like to say a special thanks to Teri G for their support on Patreon. We use the donations we receive from Patron, Ko-fi and Paypal to pay our actors, pay ourselves and run the show. We are so, so grateful for all that you do for us!

If you want to support We Fix Space Junk, visit [battlebird.productions](http://battlebird productions) or see the show notes.