

MINDSPACE

Written by

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FADE IN.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

A small square room with chairs around the side. It's clean and sterile with white walls and tiled flooring.

The tall and slim LANFORD (30) sits with a cup of water in his hand. He stares at his reflection in a mirror opposite, taking a sip of his water.

A moment passes and a side door opens. Similar in build, RANDOLF (30) walks into the room with an air of confidence. He sits down a few chairs down from Lanford, looking over to him.

RANDOLF
(smiling)
Morning.

Lanford turns to Randolph and smiles.

LANFORD
Morning.

RANDOLF
Are you here for the caretaker job?

Lanford nods.

RANDOLF (CONT'D)
Good luck.

Randolf reaches over to shake Lanford's hand. Lanford reciprocates.

LANFORD
Thank you. You too.

Randolf smiles.

We pull back until we're behind the mirror, revealing it to be a two way mirror. Two silhouetted MEN stand staring at Lanford and Randolph. One of them turns to the other and nods.

INT. SPACE STATION, SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

An alarm beeps.

Lanford wakes in his bed. He sits up and switches off the beeping watch on his wrist. He throws his legs over the side of the bed and wipes his eyes.

He takes a small pot labelled 'Supplements' from the bedside table and pops out a small red tablet. He places it in his mouth and then takes a swig of water from the glass at his bedside.

He stands and stretches. The room is small with several bunkbeds stacked and a small table a chair beneath a large window.

Lanford approaches the window and stares out into the black abyss of space. A nebula is outside and Lanford's eyes light up.

He rushes over to the beside table and pulls open a drawer reaching in and taking out a polaroid camera. He gets back to the window and snaps a photo. The polaroid ejects and Lanford looks in admiration at the developing photo.

He approaches a wall where other photos are tacked up. He sticks this new addition in amongst the others. He returns to the window and stares out.

EXT. SPACE STATION - DAY

As Lanford continues to analyse the magnificence before him, we pull back to reveal the whole space station and the large planet of Jupiter behind it.

TITLE:

RESEARCH STATION - CELESTIAL 4

LOCATION: JUPITER'S ORBIT

STATUS: 3 MONTH DOWNTIME

INT. SPACE STATION, SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford pulls on a set of overalls, a name badge on his chest. He zips it up and exits the room.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

A large room with seating area, dining table and chairs and a kitchenette. Lanford enters to find Randolph standing by the microwave waiting for it to finish cooking. Randolph glances over his shoulder at Lanford.

RANDOLF
Morning, sleep well?

Lanford approaches a coffee pot by Randolph and pours himself a cup. He takes a swig.

LANFORD

As well as I ever do. How long have we been here now?

RANDOLF

I'd say about 2 months, give or take a day.

LANFORD

One month to go.

RANDOLF

Eager to get back?

LANFORD

Aren't you?

Randolf thinks a moment and then shakes his head.

RANDOLF

Not really.

LANFORD

You're not getting bored of this? The same routine every day? The constant monotony of tasks?

RANDOLF

That's the job. Monitor this place until the next research expedition. Nothing more, nothing less. I quite like it.

LANFORD

I guess I was hoping for more excitement.

RANDOLF

It's a damn site better than my last job.

LANFORD

Which was?

RANDOLF

Unemployment.

Lanford laughs.

LANFORD

Fair point.

RANDOLF

Come on. A good breakfast will cheer you up.

Randolf removes a couple of covered dishes from the microwave and carries them over to the dining table. Lanford takes a seat and removes the cover of his dish to reveal a plain dull grey looking substance. He sighs, before picking up a knife and fork and starts eating.

Randolf joins him shovelling the food into his mouth with joy.

RANDOLF (CONT'D)

Mmm, delicious.

INT. SPACE STATION, ENGINE ROOM - DAY

The large room is filled with computer servers, and many dials and gauges. Various coloured lights flash and a low humming in the background.

Lanford holds a tablet computer and walks along the servers monitoring everything. He makes notes in the tablet with a stylus.

LANFORD

Everything looks normal this side.
How about yours?

Randolf appears from behind a rack of servers also holding a tablet computer.

RANDOLF

All good here.

Lanford nods.

LANFORD

(sarcastically)
What a surprise.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford and Randolf are playing table tennis. They have a rapid rally going and neither looks as though they're going to make a mistake.

Suddenly Randolf misses the ball and it bounces across the room behind him. Randolf tosses his paddle on the table in frustration as Lanford raises his arms in victory.

LANFORD
Yes, he does it again.

Lanford walks over to a nearby white board on the wall. Both their names written at the top. A tally of 60 lines beneath Lanford's name. None beneath Randolph's.

LANFORD (CONT'D)
It's now 61 to nothing.

RANDOLF
I'm going to beat you one day.

LANFORD
I don't think so. I'm aiming to finish this trip undefeated.

A deafening alarm cuts their conversation short. Red lights flash around the room. Lanford and Randolph look at each other in confusion.

RANDOLF
What's going on?

Lanford rushes to another room, Randolph follows after.

INT. SPACE STATION, CONTROL ROOM - DAY

A small room with a computer control panel. Lanford sits down at the monitor and starts typing. Randolph stands behind him.

RANDOLF
What is it?

On the monitor the words 'Collision Imminent' start flashing.

LANFORD
Oh shit.

Lanford types away at the keyboard and brings up a scanner. On the screen several large dots are closing in on the centre point from one direction.

RANDOLF
What are those things?

LANFORD
Asteroids and they're heading straight for us.

RANDOLF
Can we avoid them?

LANFORD

We can avoid the larger pieces, but we don't know how much debris is around it. We could still suffer minor damage.

RANDOLF

How minor?

LANFORD

It's hard to say.

Lanford types on the keyboard. A message flashes on screen. 'Station Repositioning'.

They watch the scanner as the approaching dots shift their direction away from the station. They pass without colliding.

Randolf pats Lanford on the shoulder and smiles.

RANDOLF

I think you did it.

Suddenly they hear collisions on the side of the station echoing around the room. They look at each other nervously. The ship is knocked heavily and tilts. Lanford and Randolf are thrown across the room and knocked unconscious.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. SPACE STATION, CONTROL ROOM - DAY

An alarm beeping.

Lanford opens his eyes to find himself lying on the floor. He raises his hand to his head and turns off his beeping watch.

He sits up and winces in pain holding his head. He reaches up to feel he has a small cut on his head, dripping blood. He looks around the room, but there is no Randolf.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford enters the quiet room holding a cloth to his bleeding head.

LANFORD

Randolf? Randolf?

INT. SPACE STATION, SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford peers in, but there is nobody inside.

LANFORD

Randolf? Where are you?

INT. SPACE STATION, ENGINE ROOM - DAY

Lanford walks through, many lights on the servers are flashing red. Lanford looks around, but still no sign of Randolph.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford sits on the sofa. He applies a gauze pad to his cut and tapes it on. He then looks around with confusion.

LANFORD

Randolf, if this is a joke...

INT. SPACE STATION, CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Lanford sits at the monitor. He types away at the keyboard. An alert flashes on screen. 'Emergency signal Damaged'.

LANFORD

Shit.

Lanford types away and brings up a camera feed of himself. He hits record.

LANFORD (CONT'D)

This is a distress call from Celestial 4. We have suffered a collision with asteroid debris and it has damaged some of our systems including our emergency aerial, hence why I'm sending this video via satellite relay. By the time you receive this several days will have passed, so I'm hoping you can send help immediately. Most issues I can fix, but the station will need a complete analysis both internal and external. Also Randolph is missing. I don't know how, but he's nowhere to be found. I can't understand what has happened to him. Please send help as soon as you receive this.

Lanford stops recording and sends the video.

INT. SPACE STATION, ENGINE ROOM - DAY

Lanford has a circuit board pulled from one of the stacks. He is soldering new components. He finishes and returns the circuit board. A flashing red light turns a solid green.

He looks around at several other lights flashing red.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford sits at the dining table eating. It's quiet. He stares into the distance, forcing the unappetising grey food down.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - LATER

Lanford has pushed the table tennis table up against the wall. He is rallying with the wall. He misses the ball and it bounces across the room. He throws the paddle against the wall and leans on the table in frustration.

INT. SPACE STATION, ENGINE ROOM - DAY

Lanford is checking everything making notes in the tablet computer. All lights are now green.

INT. SPACE STATION, SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford stands at the window staring out. Something catches his attention and his eyes widen with excitement. He grabs the nearby polaroid camera and snaps a picture of a supernova in the distance.

The photo ejects and he adds it to the collection.

INT. SPACE STATION, BATHROOM - DAY

Lanford stands at the mirror looking at his reflection. He pulls the gauze pad from his head to see the cut is healing nicely.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford is waiting for food to cook in the microwave. His eyes look dark and tired.

He removes the covered dish from the over and sits down at the dining table. He lifts off the lid and stares at the food.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - LATER

Lanford sits on the sofa playing solitaire on the coffee table. He is trying to place a card, but he can't. He gets frustrated and with both hands slides the cards off of the table and throws them cards onto the floor. He breaks down in tears.

INT. SPACE STATION, CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Lanford sits in front of the camera feed a blanket around his shoulders. His face is drooping with glazed over eyes.

LANFORD

It's been 14 days since Randolph went missing. I'm so alone out here. I can't stand it much longer. I need help. Why haven't you replied. Please contact me.

Lanford sends the video.

INT. SPACE STATION, SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford sits on the bed staring into the distance. He talks to himself, completely delusional.

LANFORD

No, I understand, but that's what I'm saying. I know it's hard to believe, but sometimes we've got to just say, it's okay. It's okay to want that, and have that, but to give it is hard.

Lanford jumps up to his feet.

LANFORD (CONT'D)

No. I won't take it anymore. You've gone too far. Just back off will you.

Lanford starts throwing objects around the room.

LANFORD (CONT'D)

Who do you think you are? This is unacceptable. Just get out, go will you.

Lanford tips the bedside table over casting its contents across the room. Lanford looks down at the supplement pot on the floor having been hidden behind the table. He picks it up and stares at it.

LANFORD (CONT'D)

Take one a day to maintain health.

Lanford looks at his watch before opening the pot with haste and swallowing a tablet. He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath to calm himself. He looks around at the mess he's made. He picks up the bedside table putting it back and places the contents back on it.

He tidies up and sits down on the bed, yawning.

Lanford lies down on the bed and closes his eyes.

INT. SPACE STATION, SLEEPING QUARTERS - LATER

Lanford opens his eyes and hears noise coming from the other room. He bolts upright and listens. He hears another noise and jumps off the bed rushing out of the room.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford enters to find Randolph in the kitchenette standing by the microwave waiting for it to cook. Randolph looks over at him.

RANDOLF

Here he is. It's about time you got up. You can't sleep all day.

Lanford approaches him slowly, frowning with confusion. He stares at Randolph.

RANDOLF (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

LANFORD

You're really here?

RANDOLF

Of course, I'm here. Where else would I be?

LANFORD
Where did you go?

RANDOLF
What do you mean?

LANFORD
You disappeared. For days, you were gone. Where did you go?

RANDOLF
I didn't go anywhere. I've been here the whole time.

LANFORD
What? No.

RANDOLF
You've been unconscious for a while. That collision really knocked us off our feet.

LANFORD
It was a dream?

RANDOLF
Whatever you think happened, must have been a dream. I haven't gone anywhere, where could I go?

LANFORD
You're right. Where could you go? Thank God for that. Did you get help?

RANDOLF
Yeah, I used the emergency signal. They're sending someone over as soon as.

Lanford smiles.

LANFORD
Okay.

The microwave finishes and dings. Randolph opens it and takes out a covered dish. He passes it to Lanford.

RANDOLF
Here. Eat up. It's been a while since you've eaten.

LANFORD
I am starving.

Lanford takes the plate and sits down at the dining table. He eats with enthusiasm. Randolph joins him.

RANDOLF

Slow down. You'll give yourself indigestion.

INT. SPACE STATION, SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford enters and disappears into the bathroom. We hear the sound of a shower turn on. Lanford reappears and unzips his overalls. As he takes them off something before him catches his eye.

He tosses the overalls to one side and with a furrowed brow slowly walks over to the photo display on the wall. He finds the polaroid of the supernova and pulls it off the wall studying it.

INT. SPACE STATION, CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Lanford sits down at the monitor and types away at the keyboard. A message flashes on screen 'Emergency Signal Damaged'. Lanford looks out the door at Randolph sitting on the sofa reading.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford approaches Randolph and frowns at him. Randolph looks over his book.

RANDOLF

Something wrong?

LANFORD

What happened?

RANDOLF

Excuse me?

LANFORD

Tell me what happened. Where did you go?

RANDOLF

This again? I already told you. I didn't go anywhere. I can't.

LANFORD

You said you contacted help via the emergency signal.

RANDOLF

I did.

LANFORD

I just checked, the emergency signal is damaged. Just like it was days ago.

Randolf puts down his book and stands.

RANDOLF

Lanford, I don't know what you're talking about. If the emergency signal is damaged it must have happened recently, but it was fine when I used it. I think you're still suffering from a concussion. Maybe you should lie down.

Lanford pushes the polaroid photo into Randolph's chest. Randolph takes it from him and looks at it.

RANDOLF (CONT'D)

What's this?

LANFORD

I took that photo while you were gone. If it was a dream, how do you explain that.

RANDOLF

As far as I'm concerned all these things look the same. Perhaps it's an old photo and you're just confused.

LANFORD

Tell me where you went.

RANDOLF

I can't tell you something that didn't happen.

LANFORD

You're lying.

RANDOLF

I'm not. You're acting crazy.

LANFORD

Tell me.

RANDOLF

Calm down.

LANFORD

Who are you? What's going on?

Randolf raises his hands in defence.

RANDOLF

Lanford, you're starting to scare me.

LANFORD

I don't trust you anymore. Tell me who you are. What is this? What are you planning?

RANDOLF

I'm not planning anything. You're losing your mind. Take a seat and relax.

Randolf reaches out to comfort Lanford, but he steps back.

LANFORD

Get away from me. You're trying to hurt me. I can't allow you to hurt me. I must protect myself.

Lanford heads into the kitchenette.

RANDOLF

Lanford, you need to take it easy, you're going to make yourself ill.

Lanford grabs a knife. He rushes over to Randolf.

RANDOLF (CONT'D)

Whoa, put that down.

Before Randolf has a chance to act, Lanford plunges the knife into Randolf's stomach. His eyes open wide in shock. Lanford pulls the knife out. Randolf clutches his stomach and then looks at his hands covered in blood. He collapses to the floor. Lanford stares down at the body.

An alert sound comes from the control room. Lanford looks around in confusion. He drops the knife on the floor and heads over to the control room.

INT. SPACE STATION, CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Lanford sits down at the monitor. A message on the screen reads 'Message received'. Lanford hits play. A middle aged man, DR. OSMAN (50) appears on the screen with half moon glasses.

DR OSMAN

Lanford, this is Dr Osman. I'm head physician with the program. You need to listen to me very carefully. Randolph isn't real. He is a figment of your imagination. The supplements you've been taking contain a drug that causes dissociative identity disorder. He is another personality created by your mind. The company didn't want to pay two men to do one man's job, but a single man in space for months is detrimental to his health. Human interaction is a must and so they developed the drug to get around that problem. If Randolph disappeared it must mean you've stopped taking the supplement. If that is the case, do not take anymore. Help is on its way, you just need to hold on and keep your mind occupied.

Lanford stares at the screen confused. He slowly stands and exits the room.

INT. SPACE STATION, LIVING QUARTERS - DAY

Lanford approaches where Randolph's body fell to find nothing there. Lanford looks down at his stomach, his T-shirt covered in blood. He lifts the shirt to reveal a knife wound oozing blood.

Lanford collapses onto the sofa and passes out.

TITLE: SEVERAL MONTHS LATER

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

A MAN (30) sits patiently tapping his fingers on his knee. A cup of water in the other hand.

He takes a sip of the water.

A moment passes and another MAN (30) enters the room and sits down. They acknowledge each other and begin talking. We pull back through the two-way mirror to find two men standing in shadow watching. One is Dr Osman, the other is just a SILHOUETTED MAN.

Dr Osman turns to the silhouetted man.

DR OSMAN

I think we have our next candidate.

SILHOUETTED MAN

Just make sure we don't have any
problems like last time.

The silhouetted man turns and walks off.

FADE OUT.