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Robinson Crusoe On Mars

By Ib Melchior

[Rocket Engines Boom]

?? [Speakers:

[Monkey Chattering]

[Squawking]

[Squawking Continues]

Listen, Mona. This banana paste
is meant for your survival only.

Besides, I just gave you some.

Mac, gonna break your heart when you have to
eject that little buddy of yours in a capsule.

I'm not. We'll make our
remaining orbits and start back.

- Mona stays with us.

- You're the skipper, Colonel.

We've got enough animal data,
haven't we, Mona?

[Squawks]

[Squawks]

?? [Continues]

- ## [Ends]

- [Woman] Steve and Diane sent that one to you.

[Machine Clicking]

- What do you think?

- I'm thinkin'. Look at that.

Whoo. Mars is burning up.

Boy, I'm glad Mona doesn't have to
go down into that fire swamp.

Yeah. Hey, what'll I fix for dinner?

How about some turkey

with mashed potatoes, gravy added?

I like mine in paste form.

You know, in a tube.

[Laughs]

I think the diner can fix it that way.

There's also beefsteak and french fried
onions, also in a squeeze tube.

- We had that for breakfast, you know.

- [Alarm Buzzing]

[Beeping]

Unidentified flying mass.

Dead ahead.

Meteor.

Massive. Collision course.

[Buzzing

Continues]

Distance interval:

28 seconds.

- [Buzzing Continues]

- [Beeping Continues]

- Fire main retros.

- Firing main retros.

Which way?

- Fire upper retros.

- Firing upper retros.

- [Buzzing Stops]

- [Beeping Continues]

[Beeping Continues]

- We're in a descending orbit.

- Decaying fast, my friend.

Mars's gravity's taking over,
pulling us down.

Calling NASA. Calling NASA.

Colonel Dan McReady,

commanding Mars Gravity Probe 1.

Forced out of orbital velocity
to avoid collision with planetoid...

and into tighter orbit of Mars.

The gravity of the planet's
pulling us toward it.

We've gotta blast back
into orbital velocity.

- Use all our fuel.

- That problem we can lick later.

Gravity pull has risen to 9.30.

[McReady]

I see. Well, blast again, delta velocity.

Delta "V" okay.

[Alarm Beeping]

That's our fuel.

[Static]

[Man] NASA Earth Satellite

to Mars Gravity Probe 1.

Do not disassemble space vehicle until
all other procedures have been tried.

Prepare to eject.

Emergency procedure.

Ready, Mac.

So long, and good luck.

Okay, Kit.

I'll see you, when we join up.

- Blast off when you're ready.

- I'm ready.

So long. Be seeing you.

[Air Hissing]

[Hissing Stops]

[Panting]

[Coughing]

[Air Hissing]

[Sighs]

Hello, Mac.

How do you read me? Over.

[Static]

Come on, old buddy. This is Kit.

How do you read me? Over.

[Static]

[Roar]

[Roar]

[Roar]

[Roar]

[Roar]

[Roar]

[Wind Howling]

Hey!

[Wind Whistling]

Hey!

[Groans]

[Air Hissing]

This is Commander Christopher Draper...

the Navy of the United States

of America, planet Earth...

former copilot

Mars Gravity Probe 1.

On our third orbit of this planet...

we took evasive action

to avoid collision with a meteor...

and were forced into dangerous

gravitational pull of Mars.

We were forced to abandon ship.

As of now, the vehicle frame

is still orbiting Mars.

Seems to have established

gravitational balance.

[Air Hissing]

[Hissing Stops]

We ejected capsule without incident...

Colonel Dan McReady ejecting after I did.

I'll set out to look for him tomorrow.

From all indications, he should be on the other side of a high range of rocky peaks to the west.

Now, my two most difficult problems are air and water.

I have, with what's left in my tank and one reserve cylinder, enough oxygen for...

oh, about 60 hours...

depending, of course,

on how much I exert myself.

My first discovery was that the air on Mars is far too thin to support human life.

As to water, by severe rationing,

I can get by for about 15 days.

Course, once my air gives out, water won't matter.

First positive survival point:

I found a yellow rock.

It's as burnable

as some of our poorer grades of coal.

Heat's uneven, but it should make the Martian nights endurable.

[Air Hissing]

I feel a little bit like Columbus...

set down in a strange new land...

full of new wonders...

new discoveries.

It's a challenge, all right -

a challenge to my training.

Sometimes challenges

can get mighty big.

But I'm gonna stay alive,

believe me.

That's for the morale officer.

[Air Hissing]

[Murmuring]

[Panting]

[Breathing Erratically]

[Gasping]

[Groans]

[Gasping]

[Grunts]

[Air Hissing]

Well, I've licked the heat
and shelter problem.

Breathing - that's a different story.

Moving about, exerting myself,
I've found that I can...

breathe the air of Mars for about,
oh, 12 to 15 minutes...

before I need to take air
from my tank for a booster.

Lying down, asleep...

inactive, I can get by for an hour
before taking a booster.

In this way, with some discomfort,
I can conserve my oxygen supply.

At the most optimistic appraisal...

I have 50 or so hours of life left...

God willing.

The problem is sleeping.

If I don't wake up in time to renew
my air supply, it's hearts and flowers.

I've got to make some kind of
alarm device, safeguard myself.

[Clangs]

Tomorrow - and morning's only
a couple of hours away-

I'm gonna rejoin Mac.

Good old Mac.

I'll bet he's got
these problems licked.

[Breathing Heavily]

[Coughing]

[Panting]

Mac! Mac!

Mac! Hey, Mac!

Mac! Hey, Mac!

Hey, Mac! Mac!

Mac?

[Woman]

Now our song. To Dan, from Elinor, with lo -

[Wind Howling]

[Loud Boom]
[Screeching]
Mona!
[Screeching]
[Screeching Continues]
Come on now.
Let's not start a war.
[Whimpering]
Well, obviously you don't need that.
Boy...
do I need these.
Here. Let's open up
those sleeves, huh?
That a little more comfortable, huh?
[Mona Chattering Softly]
[Air Hisses]
[Whimpering]
[Blowing]
[Mona Chattering Softly]
[Soft Chattering Continues]
[Sighs]
[Breathing Heavily]
That's all there is, baby.
[Mona Whimpers]
[Squawking]
[Squawks]
[Grunting]
[Chattering]
[Chattering, Whimpering]
[Whimpers]
Here. Here.
Take the rest of it.
Take the rest of it. Yeah.
That's it.
Mine too.
No more rationing.
You'll have a full belly.
Won't be for long.
- Huh? Huh?
- [Squeaks]
- Huh?
- [Squawks]
[Panting]
This is signature...

Mars Gravity Probe 1.

[Panting]

Colonel Dan McReady dead.

M-Me too soon.

[Panting]

No more oxygen.

Over and out.

[Faint Hissing]

- [Hissing Continues]

- [Panting Softly]

[Air Hissing]

[Hissing Continues]

[Breathing Heavily]

[Chatters]

Thank you.

[Tube Thuds]

[Screeches]

[Squawking]

[Microphone Unreels]

- [Click]

- Well, you can scratch signature.

I've found an answer

that's saved my life temporarily.

These yellow stones

that burn like coal.

I've been wondering about this a lot.

Where do they get the oxygen to burn?

It must be similar to solid rocket fuel
with its own built-in oxygen.

Heat and flame release it.

And it's breathable.

I've gotta find some way to store it.

As far as life on this planet...

I've seen no sign of any other
living thing anywhere...

yet.

[Loud Clanging]

- [Clanging Stops]

- [Mona Screeching]

[Screeching]

[Air Hissing]

[Hissing Stops]

[Air Hissing]

[Hissing Stops]

[Air Hissing]

[Sighs]

Hi, baby.

Oh, yeah.

What have you got there? Huh?

Come here.

[Blowing]

That's it. Are you thirsty?

There you go.

There you go.

What's the matter?

You wouldn't drink last night either.

[Instrument Beeping]

[Beeping Continues]

[Tone]

[Tones Alternating]

[Beeping]

[Beeping Continues]

[Wind Howling]

Program "A." Descend.

Veer left!

Veer right!

[Beeping Continues]

[Wind Howling]

[Mona Squeaking]

[Draper On Recording] Mona the monkey
spends most of her days off somewhere.

Where she goes I have no idea.

Thank God she doesn't seem
to need or want water.

I've offered it to her every day.

I'm on strict rationing myself, and even then
I'll be out of water in a few days.

Well, I've now been
on Mars for two weeks.

I've tried on several occasions to talk down
the wreck of our space vehicle, the Elinor M.
I can't break it out of Mars's gravity grip.

It answers electronically,
but the jets don't fire.

No fuel left.

So there it is.

- ## [Whistling:

- A supermarket that flies through my sky...
and it might as well be
in East Overshoe.
You can say that again, brother.
[Whistling Continues]
[Beeping]
[Wind Howling]
[Beeping Speeds Up]
[Spaceship Passes Overhead]
[Beeping Slows]
- [Mona Grumbles]
- What's your pleasure?
[Whining]
I think we'll make the early show.
Just keep your elbows off the table.
There you are.
Have some of that.
Are you hungry?
Good? You like that?
That's right.
[Laughing]
That's right.
All right. Once more.
Huh?
Don't eat too much. You know
we're on iron rations. Want some?
- Ouch!
- [Chirps]
You're almost human at that.
Bitin' the hand that feeds you.
[Man]
Instructional videotape number six.
Good old Woodward.
You used to be about as interesting
as a common brick.
Now, Professor,
I'm glad to have you aboard.
This second phase of survival,
finding water...
will deal with locating
water on another planet.
Since no one has landed
on another planet yet -
- Oh, is that so?

- We will have to proceed...
with hypothetical knowledge
from our studies here on Earth.

- I can give you a tip from here on Mars.
- Water is where you find it.
Like gold.
The thing is to know where to find it.
And you must make sure it's potable.
- Don't drink seawater.
- No seas here.
Seawater's too salty.
So's urine.
- [Squawks]
- Rain and snow...
become groundwater
and sink in under the ground.
- No rain. No snow.
- On some dry, desert planets...
it may be possible to crush rocks...
and extract latent water from them.
Good night, Professor.
Thanks for the heart-to-heart.
[Wind Whistling]
[Chattering]
No.
- [Chatters]
- No!
Mona, get away from that water can.
[Sipping]
[Sucking]
Mmm.
Ahhh.
[Squeaks Softly]
Well, I've found out one thing.
You're not like a camel.
You get thirsty too. Huh?
How about a nice, salty biscuit?
Would you like that?
No, that's - No. Too blah. Too blah.
Let's put a little turkey paste on it.
That's right.
Oh, and some salt. Yeah.
Some salt. There.
I'm not trying to be cruel,

you understand...
but you know something
very important to our survival.
Mona.
Mona.
Mona.
Aaah!
[Water Trickling]
Thank you, Mona.
[Splash]
[Chirps]
What are you eating?
Not bad.
Mmm.
Could use a little paprika.
Mmm. Not bad at all.
[Sand Pouring]
If you just had four words -
just four that you understood.
"Yes." "No."
"Come." "Go."
That's all.
Then we could talk to each other.
[Mona Chirps]
[Whimpering]
Four months and three days.
Not bad, eh, Mona?
Baby, this is manna from heaven.
You can eat it,
you weave it and you wear it.
Man's best friend, except for his monkey.
Let's spend a day at the beach.
[Water Trickling]
[Chittering]
Ahhh.
Ahhh. You know what
we're gonna do, baby?
We're gonna explore
this new world of ours.
Scientists tell us
there are canals up here.
Like to see those, huh?
And those green areas they spotted
from Earth. How about that?

Then there's the polar ice cap.
What's the matter?
No scientific curiosity?
[Sighs]
How about a little music #
?? [Bagpipe]
[Hums Tone]
- ## ["I Wish I Was In Dixie"]
- [Squawks]
[Continues]
Oh, oh. Oh, oh.
How about that?
[Echoes]
How about that?
- Hey, Mona!
- [Echoes] Hey, Monal
Okay. Talk to me.
[Echoes]
Okay. Talk to me.
- Say something!
- [Echoes] Say something!
I mean say something back!
[Echoes]
I mean say something back!
[Mona Chattering Softly]
Mr. Echo, go to hell!
[Echoing]
Mr. Echo, go to hell!
Let's go all out tonight, Mona.
Poi sausage cooked for a change.
Maybe it'll taste better than it looks.
[Mona Chirps]
Mmm.
Ahhh.
- [Squawks]
- Tonight we eat.
Baby, you never ate
like this in the jungle.
Mmm. Get some of those
good sausages in there.
[Chatters]
[Mona Chirping]
Mona, I hope I haven't
given myself ptomaine.

It's eight months
to the nearest hospital.
- [Chatters]
- [Metal Clangs]
[Sand Pouring]
[Footsteps Approaching]
[Banging]
Who's there?
[Banging]
Who is it? Who's there?
Mac!
You've come to see me!
Well, come on in.
Oh, this is great!
Really great!
Oh, boy, have I got
a lot to tell you.
Listen, Mac, I have just been
aching for someone to talk to.
Buddy, you're gonna be
pretty proud of me.
Listen, Mac, I found
how to breathe here.
With rocks, Mac! Heated rocks!
Would you believe it?
Wait till the guys in Survival
hear that one, huh?
And I've got water and a place to live!
And heat to keep warm with, Mac.
Oh, and I've got food.
Martian food, Mac!
I'll bet I've almost done
as well as you have, you old pro.
Well, come on, Mac.
What about it?
Listen, aren't you even gonna talk to me?
Mac, what's bugging you?
For God's sake, say hello to me.
What are you sore about?
Oh, Mac, you can't act this way.
Mac, I haven't heard a human voice
in four months. Four, Mac.
I haven't heard your voice.
Mac, say anything to me, please!

For God's sake, talk to me! Say anything!

Oh, God, please!

Talk to me! Say anything!

- [Alarm Clanging]

- Please! God, say anything, Mac!

- By God -

- [Clanging Continues]

- [Mona Squawking]

- Mac?

- [Clanging Continues]

- [Mona Continues Squawking]

[Clanging Stops]

[Chittering]

All right, here's another note

for you boys in Survival...

for you geniuses in Human Factors.

A guy can lick the problems of heat,
water, shelter, food. I know. I've done it.

And here's the hairiest problem of all -
isolation, being alone.

Boy, here's where he'll crack.

Here's where he'll go under.

I know, I know. I had great training,
including two months in the isolation chamber.

But when I was in that chamber,

I knew I was coming out.

I knew I'd be with people again.

But up here on Mars...

you've gotta face the reality
of being alone forever.

?? ["I Wish I Was In Dixie"]

[Continues]

[Mona Chittering]

[Continues]

[Stops]

[Beeping]

[Beeping Speeds Up]

[Beeping Continues]

[Explosion]

[Draper's Voice] It is now three weeks since

I found the skeleton out by the black mesas.

I had to conclude it was murder...

because there was a large, neat hole

in the forehead of the skull.

The back of the skull
was fused and charred.
Because of this, I have concealed
or destroyed any outward sign...

- that anyone is living -

- [Beeping]

[Beeping Continues]

[Beeping Speeds Up]

[Pulsating Screeching]

[Beeping Slows]

Ho! Mona!

That's an interplanetary vehicle!

- Oh, Mona, they've come to get us!

- [Chittering]

[Pulsating Tones]

[Laser Shots Fire]

[Laser Shots Fire]

[Motors Revving, Faint]

[Revving Continues]

- [Revving Continues]

- [Motors Idling]

[Panting]

Well, come on.

If they're after you, let's get out of here.

[Laser Shots Fire]

Have a chair, stranger.

Come on. Sit.

Sit down. Come on.

[Squawking]

Mona, shut up! First visitor we've ever had,
and you act like a gorilla.

Don't let my furry little monster bother you.

Come on, sit down.

Well, sit.

What do I say to a guy like you?

How do you communicate?

Thought transfer?

Electronic signals?

Maybe you've even got
a spoken language.

Where do you come from?

And how are you like us?

And how are you different?

How do you breathe

without a booster?

Well, I prayed for a companion,
and I finally got one...
and he can't even make a sound.

- [Motors Revving]

- [Pulsating Tones]

- [Revving Continues]

- [Motors Idling]

[Laser Shots Firing]

[Laser Shots Continue Firing]

[Man Ranting]

You're an escaped slave.

Come here.

Come here.

Come on.

No, no. Not this.

Me. I'm the boss.

And remember that.

You get out of line just one iota...

and I'll bring your enemies

right back into this cave.

Here.

Have a little of this.

Last night occurred the most important event
since I landed on Mars 147 days ago.

An interplanetary space vehicle
made a landing...

like no space vehicle

I've ever seen on Earth.

From what I see from my videotape...

it was manned by some animated beings,

obviously from some planet other than Mars.

They're here, apparently,

on an ore-gathering expedition.

They mine electronically

by remote control.

They also use slaves,

and they handle them electronically.

One of them escaped.

He's with me.

And I'm trying to establish

communication with him.

He's pretty much like an Earth being...

except he's completely mute.

And, for all I know, deaf.
[Switch Clicks]
As a companion, Cosmos,
Mona's better.
A-okay, baby?
Time to turn in.
I'll give you the guest room.
Come on.
Come on.
[Air Hissing]
[Sand Pouring]
Good night.
[Mona Chitters]
Listen, mister.
You're gonna be welcome around here
only as long as you leave things alone.
I don't know whether you were fooling around
or whether you've got any ideas.
Either way, it can be dangerous.
Don't touch.
Understand? Hands off.
[Air Hissing]
No, thanks.
I'll stick to air.
[Pulsating Tones]
[Man Gasping]
[Tones Continue Pulsating]
- [Beeping]
- [Explosions]
- [Pulsating Tones Fade]
- [Beeping Slows]
Oh. I got rid of 'em, huh?
I got the power.
Is that it?
Okay, okay, that's enough.
Come on.
I'm not supernatural.
Come on, Joe,
or whatever your name is.
Um, Friday. That's it.
With apologies to Robinson Crusoe.
On your feet, Friday.
[Speaks Native Language]
My God!

I thought you were a mute!
[Native Language]
Uh-huh. If you can make sounds like that,
you can make English sounds.
Friday, you're gonna learn English
if I have to sit on your chest for two months.
Friday, say "stone."
"Stone," Friday.
Stone.
- [Native Language]
- No, no, no, no.
Stone!
[Native Language]
Listen, retarded, I don't know
what you're trying to tell me...
but we're not budging from this spot
till you learn some words, A-okay?
A-okay?
No, idiot! Stone!
A-okay. Stone.
- [Rumbling]
- A-okay. [Native Language]
[Rumbling Continues]
[Rumbling Fades]
Friday, will you take that -
Friday?
Friday!
[Echoing]
Friday!
[Grunting]
[Laughing]
[Native Language]
[Native Language]
What are you after here?
They've gone.
They took off, huh?
And your friends were expendable.
Nice guys.
They had no air pills? It wouldn't have
mattered much, the way they blasted them.
Ahmateklat. Ahmateklat.
That's okay, Friday.
Welcome aboard.
[Rumbling]

Look out!

[Coughing]

[Coughing Continues]

Thank you.

Um -

A- Ahmateklat.

Ahmateklat.

[Draper's Voice]

"The Lord is my shepherd, : I shall not want.

"He maketh me to lie down
in green pastures.

"He leadeth me
beside the still waters.

"He restoreth my soul.

"He leadeth me in the paths
of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil-"

Friday talk.

Huh.

Friday talk. A-okay?

Yeah. A-okay.

But don't just copy me.

Not copy you.

No. You tell me something.

Tell me what's inside you.

Tell me, uh, for instance,
where do you live? What planet?

Where's your home?

Home?

- Home.

- No, no, no.

Home.

Weetawin.

We call that group of stars Orion.

Osatanango.

You come from the center star
in the belt of Orion.

We call that Alnilam,
which I'm sure is very interesting to you.

I come from over there...

just around the corner from you.

Come on.

Keep the conversation going.

- Enemy.

- Yeah?

Come back.

When?

- Soon.

- How soon?

Sixty suns.

Sixty suns. That's two months.

They're overdue.

They can find you with these?

- Enemy find Friday?

- Enemy come.

We've gotta figure out some way
of getting these things off.

[Draper On Recording] For the survival record,
I've been taking Friday's oxygen pills.

Chemically, of course,

I have no way of analyzing them.

As to how they work, I've noticed
that I inhale and exhale...

and use the thin Martian atmosphere.

- [Beeping]

- But I don't need it.

- [Beeping Speeds Up]

- [Pulsating Tones]

Somehow, these pills bypass the lungs
and produce oxygen right in the blood.

[Beeping Continues]

- [Pulsating Screeching]

- [Gasps]

Enemy! Enemy!

[Mona Screeching]

[Pulsating Screeching Continues]

Get the gear together!

[Mona Squawking]

[Laser Shot Fires]

[Squawking Continues]

[Laser Shot Fires]

[Laser Shot Fires]

This way good. A-okay.

[Chirping]

Yes, Friday? What is it?

[Native Language]

This Quiquay Tanango.

You call Mars.

Yes, Mars.

Those look like the canals of Mars.

You mean these are part of
the canals of Mars?

[Native Language]

I get it. Some kind of earthquake
or volcano opened up these fissures?
And the crust above sagged?

- And those are the canals above us?

- Canals.

They must go on
for hundreds of miles.

They'll be our underground highway...
our bomb shelter.

And somewhere we'll come out again
and make a new home.

What's been done before
can be done again.

[Beeping]

[Pulsating Tones, Screeching]

[Beeping Continues]

- [Pulsating Screeching]

- [Shouts]

[Squawking]

- [Screeching Stops]

- Well, they know where we are.

But they can't get at us.

I'll get this damn thing off
as soon as I can.

[Squawking, Chirping]

[Squawking]

[Friday]

Water gone.

[Draper]

We'll have to go up to the surface.

[Draper]

The polar ice cap.

Water. Much water.

[Pulsating Tones, Screeching]

You go. Friday stay.

- Why?

- Enemy.

We're sticking together, buddy.

- Buddy?
- Yeah. Slang for "brother." Come on.
[Squawks]
Water. Water.
Gotta find water.
If we don't find water pretty soon -
Rut Mona down.
She can walk to the ice cap
as well as we can.
- [Chittering]
- [Draper] Come on, Mona.
[Friday]
Rest here.
Not long... reach ice cap.
[Draper]
Not too far to the snow now, baby.
Rest - Rest here.
When's the last time
you took an oxygen pill?
Give me those.
I thought you said we had 12 left.
You've been holding out on yourself,
haven't you, hmm? Saving them for me.
No wonder you're weak.
Here. Here!
I'll take charge of these.
Bring Mona.
Water! Friday, water!
[Gasping, Laughing]
[Friday]
Not too much. Cold.
[Laughs]
Yeah, you're right.
I tell you, Mona, she know.
Yeah, you bet she does.
Oh, thank God for water.
God?
God.
Yeah.
Supreme Being.
Uh, Father of the universe.
Big Father. Big Father!
Kaihechipek.
We say Kaihechipek.

Order.

Kaihechipek.

Order. God.

Good.

Yeah. That's right.

Divine order. Good.

- Mona keep warm.

- [Chittering]

Looks like the only way
out of here is up.

Friday!

[Mona Squawking]

[Chittering, Whimpering]

Dig, Friday. Dig!

Mona sick. Need fire.

- She cold.

- We'll all freeze if we don't get a shelter built.

Our bodies'll keep us warm,
just like the Eskimos.

Come on! Keep digging!

How long have you had that thing on?

- Sixty-two years.

- What?

- How old are you, anyway?

- Seventy-eight.

[Rumbling]

Look out!

[Rumbling]

- Forget it.

- Friday, no.

God not forget.

- [Rumbling Continues]

- [Explosion In Distance]

[Rumbling Continues]

[Explosions Continue]

Quick.

Get that equipment out of the water.

Mona. Where Mona?

[Beeping]

[Beeping Speeds Up]

Here they come again.

Not enemy.

- Different.

- [Static, Frequency Tuning]

[Man] Space Rescue Group 3 to
Earth Satellite. One more fact to report.
The meteor that struck Mars
is melting the polar ice cap.
Not enemy.
Talk like you!
Like me! Like me, Friday!
- [Static, Frequency Tuning]
- [Beeping Continues]
Uh, this is
Commander Christopher Draper...
of the United States Navy.
[Man On Radio]
My God! A voice from Mars!
[Squawking]
Hey! Hey! Hey, yahoo! Whoo!
[Squawking]