



HK-K-K-K-K-K-K!









ATTENTION CREW AND PASSENGERS.



THIS IS CAPTAIN BLAKE SPEAKING, GIVING YOU THE DAILY UPDATE.



TODAY WE RELAYED MORE TRANSMISSIONS TO THE MANY PORTS AND SHIPS IN THE HUMAN FLEET OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM,



AND HAVE STILL NOT RECEIVED A WORD IN RETURN.



WE ARE WORKING INCESSANTLY TO KEEP THE LAURIDIUM CUBE FROM ITS DETERIORATION, BUT IT IS NOT FIXABLE.

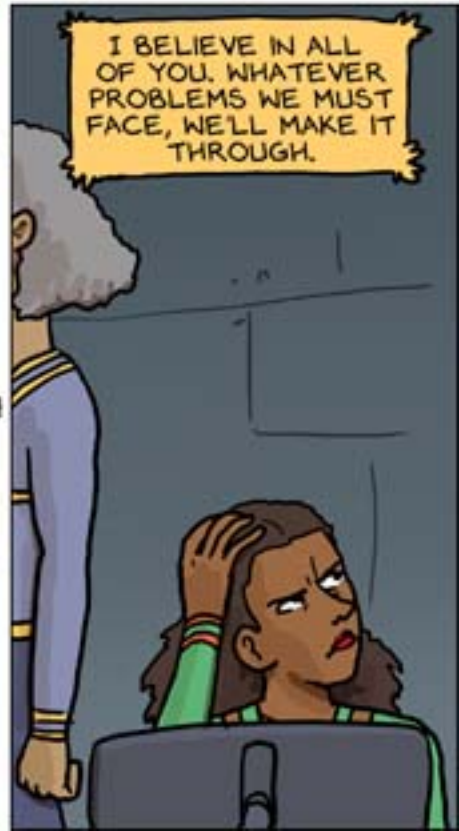


THE CURRENT ESTIMATE IS THAT WE HAVE WEEKS, IF NOT MERELY DAYS, BEFORE COMPLETE FAILURE.



IF THIS OCCURS, WE WILL HAVE TO LEAVE OUR SHIP, THE MARY CELESTE, AND TRY FOR SURVIVAL ON THE PLANET'S SURFACE.

WHIP!  
SNAP!



I BELIEVE IN ALL OF YOU. WHATEVER PROBLEMS WE MUST FACE, WE'LL MAKE IT THROUGH.

MORE TIME STUCK ON THIS PLANET. AH WELL. I GUESS WE'RE GETTING USED TO IT.

MAYBE WE CAN EKE OUT ANOTHER CONCERT BEFORE TAKING OFF. HMM.

OKAY. WELL, YOU'RE ALL AS PREPARED AS YOU'RE GOING TO BE FOR TOMORROW'S CONCERT. WE MIGHT AS WELL CALL IT A DAY.

YOU'RE EXCUSED.



HOLD ON, ANNA. I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.

SURE.



IT'S ABOUT THE CONCERT.

I'M REALLY EXCITED FOR MY SOLO PIECE.

YES. THAT'S THE THING.

DON'T WORRY; I'VE BEEN PRACTICING EVERY DAY.



WE HAD TO  
REDUCE THE  
LENGTH OF THE  
CONCERT.



OH.



YOU'RE GOING  
TO MAKE ME HAVE  
TO SPELL IT OUT,  
AREN'T YOU?



YOU NEED ME  
TO PLAY IT AT A  
FASTER TEMPO?



I ASKED EVERYONE  
ELSE IF THEY WERE  
WILLING TO DROP THEIR  
SOLOS, AND NOBODY WAS.  
SO I'VE CUT YOURS.



BUT  
I'VE BEEN  
WORKING  
SO HARD.



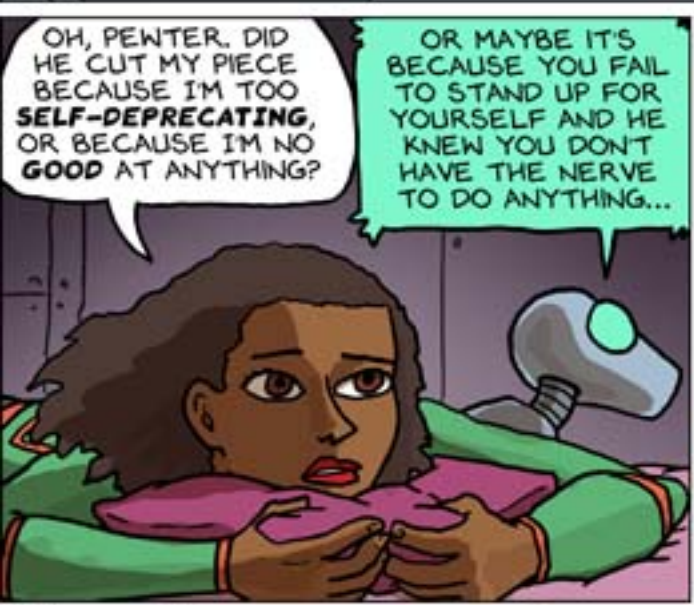
AND IF YOU ASKED  
**THEM**, WHY DIDN'T  
YOU ASK **ME**?



NOW-NOW, ANNA. DON'T  
MAKE A BIG OVEREMOTIONAL  
THING OUT OF IT. IT SIMPLY  
**HAD** TO BE DONE. AND I'M SURE  
YOU'LL BE **GREAT** IN THE  
ENSEMBLE PIECES.









I GOT...  
...HELD UP.

HOW'S  
SHE DOING?



SLIGHTLY BETTER.  
WE ADJUSTED THE  
LEVELS ON HER-

IT'S GOT ME!  
MY HEAD! SUR-  
ROUNDED!



AND IT KEEPS  
TALKING AND TALKING.  
SHUT UP! SHUT UP!



I'M NOT  
LISTENING.  
GO AWAY!  
GO AWAY!

WHAT'S  
WRONG  
WITH THAT  
GUY?



DEGRAY? NO IDEA. HIS BRAIN  
IS LOST SOMEWHERE BETWEEN  
PSYCHOSIS AND REALITY. WE CAN'T  
SEEM TO PINPOINT WHAT, BUT IT  
SEEMS HE'S SUFFERED SOME AB-  
NORMAL BRAIN DETERIORATION.



THAT'S MY VOICE,  
BUT NOT MY WORDS!  
THOSE ARE MY ACTIONS,  
BUT NOT MY WILL!  
STOP! STOP!



YOU'RE HIDEOUS!  
KEEP YOUR DISTANCE!  
NO! NOOOO!



NOOOOOOOO-

CLICK

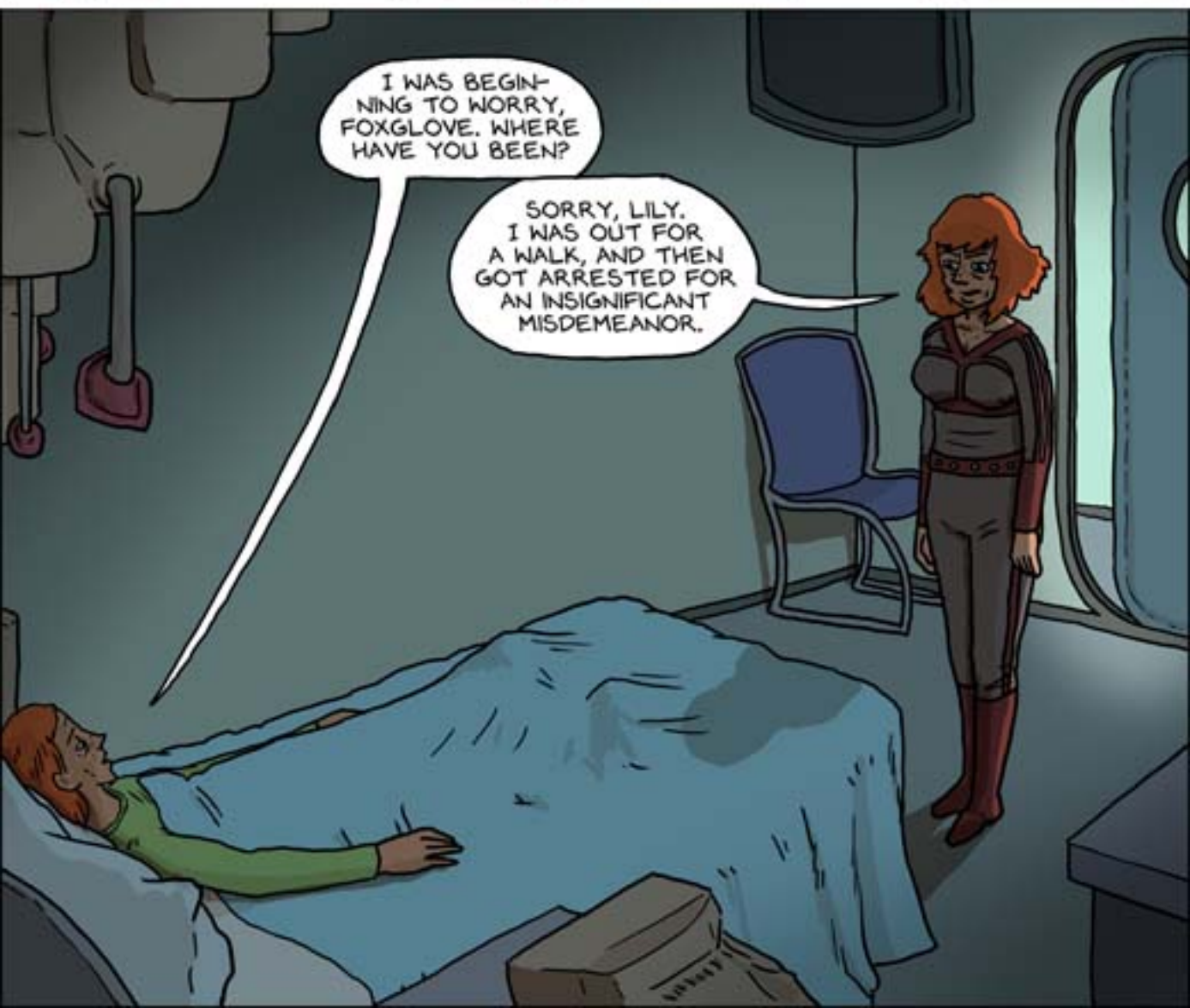


I SWEAR I'VE  
HEARD THE SAME  
SPEECH ON SOME  
OF THE DATES  
I'VE BEEN ON.

SNORT!



LILY?



I WAS BEGIN-  
NING TO WORRY,  
FOXGLOVE. WHERE  
HAVE YOU BEEN?

SORRY, LILY.  
I WAS OUT FOR  
A WALK, AND THEN  
GOT ARRESTED FOR  
AN INSIGNIFICANT  
MISDEMEANOR.



I WON'T EVEN ASK. YOU **DO** SEEM TO ALWAYS THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, EVEN WHEN YOU'RE WRONG.

YOU SHOULD MEET THE JERK WHO HAULED ME IN.



AND **YOU'RE** ALWAYS WONDERING **OUT LOUD** WHY I HAVEN'T FOUND ANY MEN ON THIS SHIP TO FALL IN LOVE WITH.

THIS MEAT-HEAD IS A **PERFECT** EXAMPLE.



THAT DEGRAY GUY TOO. **HE** HAS A FEW WIRES CROSSED. DID YOU HEAR HIM?



DID DEGRAY GET OUT OF HIS ROOM AGAIN? POOR MAN.



"WONDERING OUT LOUD..."

FOXGLOVE, HAVE I MADE YOU FEEL BAD ABOUT NOT FINDING SOMEONE? THAT WAS NEVER MY INTENTION.

OH, LILLZ. NO. YOU'RE GREAT. THIS IS JUST MY **USUAL** SPOUTING OFF.



I WORRY ABOUT YOU. I'M IN AND OUT OF HERE WITH SOME FREQUENCY, BUT WHEN AMANDA AND I GET MARRIED NEXT WEEK, I'LL BE MOVING OUT FOR GOOD, AND YOU'LL BE LIVING ALONE.

HA! I'M A SURVIVOR, LILY. DON'T WORRY.

**YOU?** A STRONG GUST OF **WIND** WOULD BREAK YOU.



....



WHAT?





I WASN'T WORRIED. I **WANTED** TO DO IT, AND YOU **TOLD** ME I COULD.

OH, NEVER MIND. IT DOESN'T MATTER.



ANNA, IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT. WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE IT WASN'T GOING TO MALFUNCTION.

I GET IT, MOM. AND I WASN'T HERE. AND **SOME-BODY** HAD TO DO IT.



A GOOD TIME FOR A LIFE LESSON! NOBODY **HAS** TO DO **ANYTHING** THEY DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE DOING.

EXCEPT FOR A ROBOT. **YOU** HAVE TO DO WHAT YOU'RE TOLD.



SIGH. PEWTER'S PROGRAMMING IS **SO** OUT OF DATE, IT'S SAD.

MUMBLE MUMBLE MUMBLE



YOU KNOW, YOU'RE EIGHTEEN, ANNA. YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO NOT **NEED** A NANNY-BOT ANYMORE.

ANY TIME YOU WANT, WE CAN GET RID OF HIM.

SPFZZAARRT!



NAW. I KNOW I DON'T **NEED** HIM, BUT HE KEEPS ME COMPANY.



YOU READ SO MANY BOOKS THAT YOU HAVE TO **LOOK AT THE TITLE** TO REMEMBER WHAT YOU'RE READING.

PLUS SHE REFUSES TO READ ANYTHING INTERESTING, LIKE **THE ROBOTS GUIDE TO ETHICAL DILEMMA #271,674,236.71**

SHRUG

YOU KNOW, I **DO** THINK YOU'RE GOOD AT ELECTRONICS. I'M SURE YOU WOULD'VE DONE A FINE JOB WITH THE INTERFACE.

AH WELL. READING **IS** A GOOD DISTRACTER. I READ INCESSANTLY AS A KID TOO.

I **STILL** CAN'T PUT ENOUGH UNIVERSE BETWEEN MY SIBLINGS AND MYSELF.

SHRUG

AND THERE WILL BE OTHER CONCERTS. TOMORROW YOU SHOULD STAY HOME, JUST TAKE IT EASY.

OH, 'SHOULD' SHE? ARE YOU GOING TO LET HER BOSS YOU AROUND LIKE THAT? SIMPLY BEND TO HER TYRANNY?

ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO RETIRE THE NANNY-BOT? IT WOULD BE ALL-TOO-EASY.

DO WHAT SHE SAYS AND STAY HOME, YOU ROTTEN CHILD.

I'M NOT TWELVE ANY MORE, MOM. JUST LET ME PROCESS MY OWN EMOTIONS IN MY OWN WAY, OKAY?





YOU KNOW I JUST CARE.



ARE YOU AND DAD BRINGING YOUR DISCOVERY TO THE CAPTAIN TOMORROW?

THAT'S BEEN OUR PLAN. BUT... I'M WORRIED.



WHAT ABOUT, MOM?



YOU KNOW THAT PROFESSOR FREDERICKS ALSO DETECTED A LAURIDIUM-LIKE MINERAL. HE REPORTED IT AND WE HAVEN'T SEEN HIM ONCE SINCE HE WENT TO TELL THE CAPTAIN.



WHAT!? FREDERICKS IS MISSING? MOM! YOU NEVER TOLD ME THAT!

WE DIDN'T WANT TO WORRY YOU.



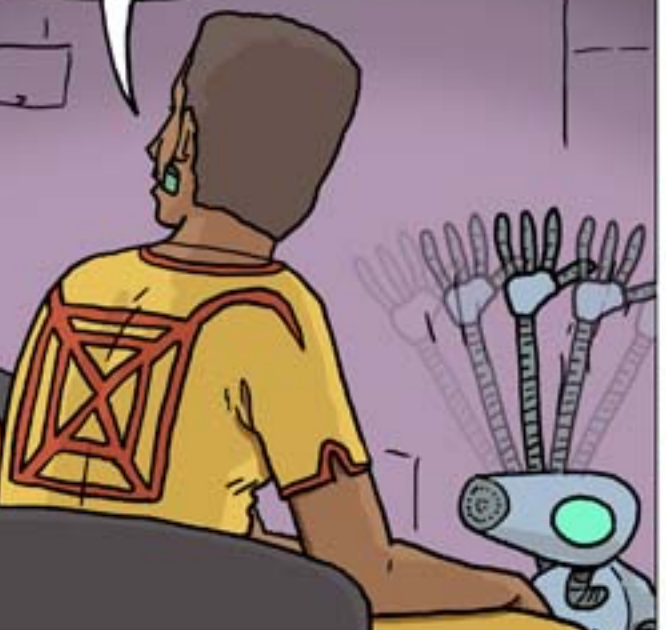
IS THIS A LESSON FOR ME TO LEARN? TO LIE IN ORDER THAT OTHERS DON'T WORRY?

WE OMITTED INFORMATION, SLIGHTLY. WHICH IS **DIFFERENT** THAN LYING.



OH, SURE. EXCEPT WHEN I MAKE OMISSIONS, **THEN** IT'S LYING.

WHERE'D YOU LEARN TO BE SO MORALLY RIGHTEOUS, ANYWAY?



JUST REASSURE ME THAT YOU'RE GOING TO SHELVE THE ENTIRE THING.

I DON'T KNOW. WE'VE DISCUSSED GOING AFTER IT **OURSELVES**, WITHOUT REPORTING IT FIRST.

**WHAT?! THAT'S EVEN WORSE. YOU CAN'T! ANYTHING** COULD HAPPEN OUT THERE ON THE PLANET!

I TOTALLY AGREE. WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO SURVIVE ON AN ALIEN PLANET. BUT IT MIGHT BE BETTER THAN WHATEVER **CAPTAIN BLAKE** MIGHT DO.

MOM, OUTSIDE IS OFF LIMITS. SHIP RULES. YOU'VE ALWAYS TOLD ME TO RESPECT THE WISDOM OF THOSE WITH MORE EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE.

**WHAT, DID YOU JUST MEANT YOU?**

ANNA GALACTIC, YOU'RE AN ADULT NOW. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT SOMETIMES ONE HAS TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT, EVEN IF THEY HAVE TO BREAK THE RULES

SO, WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT, AS AN ADULT, ONE IS ALLOWED TO SUBVERT AUTHORITY.

MAYBE NOT WITH YOUR FATHER AND I, BECAUSE **WE** HAVE YOUR BEST INTEREST IN MIND.

BUT, IT CAN BE... **"PRUDENT"** TO ACT WITHOUT ASKING **IF** YOU BELIEVE IN SOMETHING **AND** YOU KNOW THAT IF YOU ASK PERMISSION THAT THEY WILL SAY "NO."

IM VERY DISAPPOINTED, MOTHER.

AS AM I.

IT'S AS IF YOU'RE TRYING TO CORRUPT EVERYTHING I'VE EVER TAUGHT HER.

THAT'S IT. TOMORROW IM CALLING THE SCRAP-METAL RECYCLING UNIT.







JUST KEEP MOVING.

I WAS CHECKING THE DEEP-SPACE COMMUNICATION LOG.



DILVAN, OUR SHIP HASN'T SENT **ONE MESSAGE** OUT TO ASK FOR HELP. AND WE'VE BEEN HERE FOR **WEEKS** NOW.



IM SURE COMMAND HAS A REASON.

FINE! SWALLOW THEIR LIES! BUT IF COMMAND ISN'T SENDING OUT AN S.O.S. TO **ANYBODY**, THEN NOBODY IS COMING TO RESCUE US. WE'RE GOING TO BE STUCK ON THIS ROCK.



I FIND NO REASON TO GIVE YOUR CRACKPOT THEORIES ANY CREDENCE.

WHICH MEANS YOU'LL BE STUCK HERE WITH ME.

OKAY. PERHAPS IT'S WORTH GIVING IT A **LITTLE** BIT MORE THOUGHT.



BUT ASIDE FROM HAVING TO BE STUCK HERE WITH YOU, I DON'T SEE IT AS **ALL** THAT BAD.



WE WERE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO FIND A CARBON-BASED WORLD WHEN OUR LAURIDIUM CUBE BEGAN DYING.

MAYBE IT'S FOR THE BEST. I LIKE THE PEOPLE ON THIS SHIP. THEY COULD DO WELL IF THEY PUT THEIR MIND TO IT.



IM GUESSING THAT **YOU** DON'T HAVE A FRAIL SISTER WHO PROBABLY WOULDN'T **SURVIVE** THE ELEMENTS HERE.

AND YOU THINK THE OTHER BARNACLES ON THIS SHIP STAND A CHANCE? REALLY? BECAUSE I DON'T.



AND IF THE LAURIDIUM CUBE FAILS WITHOUT MESSAGES EVEN BEING SENT, WE HAVE **ZERO CHANCE OF EVER** BEING FOUND.



AND IMAGINE BEING TRAPPED ON THIS ROCK WITH THEM. WITHIN THE YEAR WE'LL ALL BE MAD AS THAT DEGRAY GUY IN THE HOSPITAL WING.



SO THAT'S WHERE HE'S BEEN. I'VE WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM THESE LAST FEW WEEKS.



WHY AM I **NOT** SURPRISED THAT YOU KNOW HIM? HE **SEEMED** LIKE SOMEONE YOU'D GET ALONG WITH.

ANYWAY, MAYBE COMMAND IS SENDING MESSAGES VIA DIFFERENT CHANNELS.



I'VE ALREADY CHECKED THOSE CHANNELS. I'M TELLING YOU, DILVAN, I DON'T WANT MY **SISTER OR MYSELF** TO BE HERE WHEN THIS BOTTOM FALLS OUT.

ANOTHER FEW  
WRITE-UPS LIKE  
**THIS**, AND YOU WON'T  
BE ANYWHERE EXCEPT  
IN THE **BRIG**.

HAVE A  
SEAT.

HEY, KID.  
WHAT ARE YOU  
IN FOR?

WAITING  
FOR MY MOM  
AND DAD.

THEY'LL ARREST  
KIDS FOR ANYTHING  
THESE DAYS.

FOXGLOVE,  
STOP BOTHERING  
OTHER PEOPLE.

YEAH-YEAH,  
WHATEVER. I  
KNOW MY RIGHTS.  
START THE PAPER-  
WORK. I'LL BEHAVE.



I GAVE UP A  
MILITARY CAREER  
FOR THIS?

THIS IS ME  
PRETENDING  
TO CARE.







