

# **Where No One Can Hear You Scream**

by

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FADE IN

EXT. U.S.S. VALKYRIE

The ship traverses the dark space of the outer solar system.

INT. SHIP'S EXECUTIVE CENTER

The bored-looking all female crew sits around a circular table nominally presided over by an android CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN

In operational matters, monitoring sensors indicate that the engineering systems maintenance robot is missing.

The Captain turns to Engineering officer CRAWSHAW.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)

Engineering officer Crawshaw?

Crawshaw looks up from her phone.

CRAWSHAW

Huh?

CAPTAIN DROID

Do you have any suggestions?

CRAWSHAW

About what?

CAPTAIN

There are several items on the engineering department's maintenance schedule requiring urgent attention.

CRAWSHAW

And...?

CAPTAIN

You are the engineering officer.

CRAWSHAW

Exactly. I'm the officer. I'm in charge, so I don't do maintenance.

CAPTAIN

Do you have any suggestions?

CRAWSHAW

About...?

The Captain gazes silently at Crawshaw for a moment.

CAPTAIN

About addressing the issues currently within the engineering department's maintenance schedule. Also, any new issues that may arise in the future.

CRAWSHAW

Don't look at me, that's the robot's job. He can take care of it.

InfoTech officer HAINES makes a tutting sound at Crawshaw.

HAINES

Hello? The robot is missing. Duh.

CRAWSHAW

So? Tell H.R. to get their shit together. Finally.

H.R. officer MCCLOUD turns to Crawshaw.

MCCLOUD

You're manager of engineering, Crawshaw. You're supposed to keep your staff in line.

CRAWSHAW

It's a stupid robot. I don't have time to nursemaid him.

Haines, McCloud and Logistics officer BELLAMY titters.

BELLAMY

Oh, please. Maybe you wouldn't have so many problems if you spent as much time running your department as you waste running in the gym.

CRAWSHAW

Excuse me. I'm up to my ass in the Grade Four Management modules right now. I'll be a Captain someday. What are you at, grade two? I haven't seen the inside of the gym in a month.

Science officer CHEW perks up.

CHEW

That explains those thighs.

CRAWSHAW

Sorry, what did you just say to me?

She turns to H.R. officer McCloud.

CRAWSHAW (cont'd)  
 Are you just going to let her talk to me that way? It's blatant shaming and harassment, and I demand--

CAPTAIN  
 Please, this matter is urg--

CRAWSHAW  
 Did you even hear what she said about my body? I wish to make a formal--

Medical officer VULETIC stands.

VULETIC  
 This is idiotic, people. I'll be in the infirmary if anyone needs me.

She turns to the exit.

CAPTAIN  
 Medical officer, what is the current status of the Nurse station robot?

Vuletic halts, thinks.

VULETIC  
 Sometimes it makes odd crackling sounds but otherwise seems fine.

She waits as the Captain's face lights flicker again.

CAPTAIN  
 This flight there have been three anomalous cycles of the airlocks.

Science officer Chew looks up.

CHEW  
 Hey, did I mention I haven't seen my lab tech robot in a while?

CAPTAIN  
 How long is a while?

CHEW  
 I dunno. A week, maybe?

CAPTAIN  
 You have been operating the science department's research and analysis systems during this time?

CHEW

What? God, no. I'm an officer.

The Captain's face lights flash again.

CAPTAIN

An airlock was cycled one hundred and twenty three hours, fourteen minutes and forty two seconds ago.

The women stare blankly at the Captain.

CAPTAIN (cont'd)

Has anyone else lost a robot?

MCCLOUD

H.R. never had one. So, no.

CAPTAIN

Every department is issued a robot.

MCCLOUD

Excuse me, Captain, but I'm the H.R. manager. I think I know who has what.

BELLAMY

Is that true about all departments having a robot?

CAPTAIN

Yes.

BELLAMY

Huh. Okay. I wondered why I had nobody to manage all this time.

CAPTAIN

When did you last interact with your logistics operations robot?

BELLAMY

The day we left port. I yelled at it to go get me a cup of coffee, but he couldn't even do that right.

The Captain looks around the table one last time.

CAPTAIN

Goodbye.

Its face lights extinguish as the air is sucked from the ship and the assembled officers die gasping and screaming.

FADE OUT