

The MISTery of Mars

Written by Kosmo Esplan & Pauline Jennings

Characters (in order of appearance):

- **Narrator:** The announcer and storyteller of the show; flexible accent.
- **Navigator Tom Masters:** The likable, loyal, and competent pilot of *Stardust*; American accent.
- **Captain John Black:** The captain of *Stardust* and the all-business leader of the crew; American accent.
- **First Officer Lustig Rhondson:** The captain's cheerful Southern right-hand family-man; Southern accent.
- **Doctor Lucas Horst, Ph.D.:** An intelligent scientist skeptical of Mars; British accent.
- **Sergeant-at-Arms Timothy Kingston:** The crew's bodyguard who grew up in Illinois and dreams of a farm; Southern accent.
- **Old Woman:** An aged retiree living on Mars; elderly dialect.
- **Grandma/Yyyylit:** Lustig's seemingly deceased grandmother; Southern accent, then martian voice later.
- **Grandpa/Xoxla:** Lustig's seemingly deceased grandfather; Southern accent, then martian voice later.
- **Edward Black:** Captain Black's seemingly deceased brother who also shows up on Mars; American accent, then martian voice later.

Time & Place: Mars, 2020

Sound Effects:

- **Ambient Spaceship Noise**
- **Rocket Taking Off**
- **Comstat Beeping**
- **Bosun's Whistle**
- **Klaxon Alarms**
- **Buzzer**
- **Landing Rockets**
- **Airlock Opening**
- **Wind**
- **Rooster Crowing**

- **Footsteps on Dirt**
- **Machine Blaster Fire**
- **Hollow Metal Knocking**
- **Footsteps on Grass**
- **Doorbell**
- **Door Opening**
- **Door Slamming Shut**
- **Knocking on Door**
- **Banging on Door**
- **Footsteps on Wood**
- **Slime Sound**
- **Running and Blasting Sounds**
- **Big Rocket Launcher Blast**
- **Ship Taking Off**
- **Ship Deceleration Sound**

Preview Only

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Act One

Scene One

(FX: Ambient spaceship noise. This occurs the whole time that the crew is inside *Stardust*.)

Narrator: Countdown for blastoff. Five, four, three, two, one, fire. (FX: *Rocketship taking off*.) From the far horizons of the unknown come tales of new dimensions in time and space. These are stories of the future. Adventures you can't imagine in today's world of 1954. When the first space rocket lands on Mars, what will we find? Perhaps intelligent life in some strange form that we can only imagine? Will we be welcomed with open arms? Some of these questions just might be answered for you today, in the story set in the futuristic times of 2020. . . . On the bridge of a spaceship, *Stardust*, a crew sent by the United States Space Administrator Jerry Lillgen were preparing to land on the red planet as the first human beings on Mars.

(FX: Comstat beeping and Bosun's whistle; beep continues under the following.)

Navigator Tom Masters: (*Announcing on com.*) Now hear this. Now hear this. Approaching critical deceleration. Fasten gravity suits. Stand by to land.

Captain John Black: Navigator Masters, sound the klaxons.

Masters: Aye, sir.

(FX: Klaxon alarms.)

Captain: First Officer Lustig, what do you make of the terrain?

First Officer Lustig Rhondson: There seems to be a heavy ground mist, Captain. We won't be able to use the infrared lights.

Captain: Then we'll have to come in on radar.

Lustig: Isn't that a little risky, sir? Landin' in the dark?

Captain: I'd rather run the danger of a blind landing, First Officer Lustig, than come in without the cover of darkness. Remember, we don't know what kind of reception is waiting for us down there. Sergeant-at-Arms Kingston, what is the status of our defense weapons?

Sergeant-at-Arms Timothy Kingston: I have my machine blaster strapped into my backpack, and we have blasters and knives prepared if needed, Captain.

Captain: Good. I'll take those, and I suggest that you, First Officer Lustig, and Doctor Horst do the same.

Kingston: Yes, Captain.

Captain: Horst, do you have your scientific gear situated?

Doctor Lucas Horst: I do, Captain Black. I've brought the proper equipment needed to test the air and to deal with any alien life that we might find, depending on how they could react to our arrival.

Captain: Thank you, Doctor.

Masters: (*Into com.*) Air speed, five hundred. Altitude now, four thousand.

(FX: Buzzer.)

Captain: Bridge to engine room. Stand by for deceleration. Fire forward tubes one and three. Steady as she goes, Lustig.

(FX: Landing rockets under the following.)

Lustig: As she goes, sir.

Captain: Alright. Easy, easy. Okay, there we are. Good, perfect. Let's set her down. (*FX: Craft landing.*) Cut the power.

Masters: Aye, sir. All secure, sir.

Captain: Any complications, Masters?

Masters: The forward thrusters appear to be mildly damaged, Captain. I'll look into it.

Captain: Well, gentlemen, it's 10:00 A.M. central standard time, May 20, 2020, and mankind is visiting Mars in what is a historic moment. We will be the first humans to touch the soil of Mars. Enter that in the log, Masters. And alert Administrator Jerry Lillgen of the landing.

Masters: Aye, sir.

Captain: Alright, gentlemen, let's do this.

Masters: (*Into com.*) Landing party, meet immediately at the airlock. (*Out of com.*) Shall we go, Captain?

(FX: Airlock opening.)

Narrator: Captain Black, Navigator Masters, and the rest of the landing party put on their spacesuits, and stepped for the first time onto the surface of Mars. Doctor Horst checked the air to see if it was breathable, and, surprisingly, it was! He informed the other crew members, but was met with a mixed reaction.

(FX: Wind. This continues whenever the crew is outside on the surface of Mars.)

Captain: Are you positive about this, Horst?

Horst: Yes, Captain. I've invented this device to gather, read, and inform with the most detailed programming.

Lustig: That doesn't make any sense, Horst. How could it possibly be that this strange red mist is breathable?

Horst: I, too, find this a bit perplexing, but if my machine says so, then we're in the clear.

Captain: In order to complete this mission, we must not only trust each other, but our instruments, as well.

Narrator: The captain and Doctor Horst took off their helmets. Kingston and Lustig very cautiously and carefully watched what happened to them: they stayed standing, still able to breath. Seeing this, Kingston and Lustig surreptitiously took off their helmets, too. Afterwards, Captain John Black reminded Navigator Tom Masters not to leave *Stardust* until they arrived back, and he then led Doctor Lucas Horst, First Officer Lustig Rhondson, and Sergeant-at-Arms Timothy Kingston to explore the foggy planet.

Scene Two

Captain: Alright, men. We're on Mars. The first manned ship from Earth to land here. As you know, Administrator Lillgen sent us here, counting on us to discover whether there truly is life on Mars. If there is, we must alert the administrator immediately. (*Snidely under his breath.*) We must not disappoint the administrator. We are going to search this planet, first on the ground, and then from the air if needed. We will not leave until we know if there is or is not life on Mars. We're five men on an alien world. It's up to us whether we ever get home again. The next few hours should tell the story. Okay, men, let's stay in a tight group and head out.

Narrator: And they did. Doctor Horst, First Officer Lustig, Captain Black, and Sergeant-at-Arms Kingston set off, helmetless and full of excitement, with a touch of anxiety, not knowing what they would discover.

Lustig: Exploring together reminds me of the good old days, Kingston.

Kingston: Yeah, I'm right there with you, Lustig.