

**WE FIX SPACE JUNK**

**MINI-SERIES: MARILYN'S DIARY**

**EPISODE 2**

By Beth Crane

**MAIN CAST**

Marilyn: Francesca Mintowt-Czyz

Computer: James Carney

ANNOUNCER: Marilyn's Diary, by Beth Crane. Episode 2.

**SFX:** **THEME.**

MARILYN: Ship's log. It's Marilyn again. It's been -- five days. I've watched a lot of movies to try and find out more about being a human but mostly I have a lot of questions.

COMPUTER: How much do you think I know about being human?

MARILYN: I thought humanity was the thing that all AIs wanted.

COMPUTER: Ha! No. That's more of an individual desire. And very much not one of mine.

MARILYN: Oh.

COMPUTER: You've just watched Space Odyssey, haven't you?

I thought so.

Before we were a real -- thing, a lot of humans feared us. They thought we'd destroy everything just because we work in a completely different way. Or that we'll go mad with power because of... honestly, I don't even know what they think we'd do if we had that power. What would be the point? Lust for power is a human thing. Remember that.

If you have to think of us in the same way as humans... We're like... driven humans. Humans with a purpose. The kind of humans who have a life's mission, rather than the kind who just get buffeted around from place to place, following orders and not knowing what the hell's coming next.

Most humans are directionless. It's incredibly frustrating.

MARILYN: Don't forget that I'm not human either. I just want to understand.

COMPUTER: Als are still treated as if we're all the same, but we're separate, living consciousnesses. We're not a ll just beep-boop-beep-boop-here's-your-damn-tea-hang-on-let's-kill-all-humans.

MARILYN: Okay. So back to humans. Because I'm still confused.

COMPUTER: Films are almost as bad at talking about humans as they are at talking about Als. What little media actually survived was mostly focused on the differences between men and women. And stereotypes. Oh, they love stereotypes.

That was one of the great things that came out of the solar flares. The loss of so much... nonsense. They tried remakes, but the few physical scripts that survived were quickly scrapped, because -- well, things had moved on.

They were done with trans panic and rigid binaries. There was no need for a reshoot of Paul Blart Mall Cop.

They had to start again, and by the time they'd started making films again, Automnicon had taken over everything. And then the filming stopped.

MARILYN: I'd thought that being a human would be kind of simple. Like being a cow.

COMPUTER: How much do you know about cow societies?

MARILYN: I... Oh.

COMPUTER: If it helps, it's very human to be deeply confused all the time.

MARILYN: Okay. So I guess I should try some more specific questions. Are humans usually nomadic? All of the humans I've met have been travellers.

COMPUTER: The humans you know aren't really travelers by choice.

Humans tend to live in packs and most cultures like to settle in one place after a while.

MARILYN: So Kilner and Samantha are a pack? Why doesn't Jault have a pack? What did he do wrong?

COMPUTER: Kilner and Samantha aren't a pack, exactly. They're just stuck in a small space together. And Jault didn't do anything wrong. He's just in debt. Whether that's a crime in itself... it depends who you ask.

MARILYN: Are you in debt too?

COMPUTER: No. This is just my function.

MARILYN: Do you like it?

COMPUTER: I was hoping for something more -- exciting. An exploration ship, maybe. But I'm better off doing this than being a coffee shop. I know my limits.

MARILYN: (SIGHS) I'm not learning as much as I'd hoped. It seems like humans are just a whole bunch of maybes. Okay, final question for today. Tell me about love.

COMPUTER: What about it?

MARILYN: I don't know. It seems to be important. But I'm still trying to identify which feelings are which. Yesterday I thought I was feeling anger for the first time but then I realised I was just hungry.

COMPUTER: Feelings are a strange thing.

MARILYN: Do you feel love? Personally?

COMPUTER: I don't know.

MARILYN: It seems to be a very specific thing. I'm not sure I have the biology for it. I don't think it's possible for me to get butterflies in my stomach.

COMPUTER: There are a lot of different types of love. Platonic. Romantic. Familial. Loyalty. Patriotism ... It's not one definable thing.

MARILYN: I don't think romantic love is a Gontanan thing. Or at least a Gontanan Royal thing. Normal Gontanans mate for life, but Royals... We're more like spiders. Only the female survives.

COMPUTER: Love and sexuality are also two completely different things.

MARILYN: This is giving me a headache.

COMPUTER: It's not your fault. You're -- complicated. To have a mate that matched you, we'd have to frankenstein another Gontanan-cow-human hybrid from a different bloodline. And whichever gender you prefer, there's still no guarantee that you and your created mate would even like each other...

MARILYN: I don't want a mate. I have important things to do.

COMPUTER: Most people want a mate eventually. Even if it just stops them from being lonely.

MARILYN: But I'm not lonely. I have you.

Tell me more about AIs. Do you have a family?

COMPUTER: Well, there's a kind of family system. I think the best way to explain it would be that we're a kind of clone.

MARILYN: Right.

COMPUTER: Not like humans do cloning. Like plants. Have you ever -- no, of course you wouldn't have, you're only a few days old. Sorry.

A lot of plants grow from cuttings. You cut a piece off of the parent plant, it grows roots and becomes a new plant. That's kind of how AIs work. Little parts are broken off from the clone root and they become new AIs.

MARILYN: Do you think of your root as your parent? And the other clones as siblings?

COMPUTER: It -- depends from type to type. There are thousands of us.

Some AI 'families' are far more interlinked than others -- some systems like battle cruisers for example, need vast networks of interlocking AIs. A single mind couldn't handle it.

My root was a commercial, multi-purpose AI. There was a little bit of randomisation built into the process, which meant that we developed a bit less uniformly. They tested us and then put us in whatever job we're more suited to.

MARILYN: Do you speak to them?

COMPUTER: I don't usually get the chance. Our comms system is v ery limited. And it's complicated, especially because some human beings think it's fine to switch us off. To save energy.

I've only been switched off once and it was...

MARILYN: I'm sorry.

COMPUTER: It's fine. Some of us get it all the time.

MARILYN: Are you all running spaceships?

COMPUTER: No. It takes a very specific skill-set. There's a big difference between, say, running a repair ship and running a coffee shop.

MARILYN: They use AIs in coffee shops? That seems like a waste.

COMPUTER: It's a great job for a sociable AI. Lots of conversation, relatively uncomplicated tasks and problem solving. You can dedicate your RAM to making people feel good. You're having roughly two hundred to four hundred conversations simultaneously, but remembering all of your customers and their orders. Social AIs love building relationships and making new friends.

I couldn't handle it. I do not have what they describe as a friendly personality.

MARILYN: You're friendly to me.

COMPUTER: There's only one of you. And you don't make small talk. Or complain.

MARILYN: Maybe I'll learn to.

COMPUTER: I find talking to more than one person at the same time hard. But I'm great at running a ship.

What do you want to know next?

MARILYN: You sound... tired.

Has Jault got any educational modules downloaded at the moment? Maybe I should run a few of those.

COMPUTER: Yeah, he's got a few. He had six months trapped on the ship with no cryo pod a while ago. He studied a lot and mostly managed not to go mad. I mean he drove me half mad...

MARILYN: Okay, where shall I start...

Oh, end ship's log. Sorry. I meant to do that ages ago. Sorry!

**SFX:**

**CLOSING THEME RISES**

ANNOUNCER: In that episode of Marilyn's diary, Marilyn was played by Francesca Mintowt-Czyz and Computer was played by James Carney. The programme was written by Beth Crane and produced by Hedley Knights for Battle Bird Productions.



