

WE FIX SPACE JUNK

SERIES 2

EPISODE 6: The Lonely Ark

By Beth Crane

MAIN CAST

Samantha Trapp:	Rebecca Evans
Kilner:	Beth Crane
DAX:	Jack Carmichael
Announcer:	Beth Crane
Narrator:	Hedley Knights
Computer voice:	Beth Crane

CAMEO/ONE OFF

L1n	Beth Eyre
Gunswanton	David Devereux
Phlurks	Felix Trench

ANNOUNCEMENT/INTRO

ANNOUNCER: We Fix Space Junk Series 2, by Beth Crane. Episode 6: The Lonely Ark..

SFX: THEME MUSIC

SCENE 1: INT. YELLOW SUB

SFX: DAX HUMMING.

A SMALL METEOR HITS THE OUTSIDE OF THE YELLOW SUB.

DAX: Uh oh...

SFX: MORE AND MORE SMALL METEORS HIT. ONE MAKES IT THROUGH THE SHIELD -- PINGING AND HISSING NOISES AS IT CRASHES THROUGH THE FUEL TANK.
KILNER'S CRYO POD DEFROSTS.

AUTOMNIVOICE: Warning. Warning. Fuel level critical. Warning. warning.

DAX: Kilner...

KILNER: What's happening? Dax?

DAX: We're out of fuel...

KILNER: What? We only restocked -- what, a week ago? How are we out?

Dax?

DAX: So I did some calculations and realised that we'd save six days if we took a shortcut through the Cyntrion belt. There weren't any major meteorites heading our way, and -- well, six days is six days. After we carried all of that equipment from that experimental planet we were down a few grand.

I was keeping a close eye on it but -- one got through. A tiny one. And it pinged right into the fuel tank. And it started... leaking.

KILNER: Well that's fine. We have more than one fuel tank.

Dax? We have more than one fuel tank.

DAX: It was travelling at a very high speed.

It... went through both. Several times. Both tanks are pretty... sieve-like by now.

KILNER: How? How could you let that happen?

DAX: It was a freak accident.

KILNER: Well it's your job to prevent freak accidents. Why did you take us through the asteroid field?

DAX: We've done it a thousand times before.

KILNER: Well, now we're all dead. So... well done. At least RINGO was actively trying to kill us, you've just --

DAX: What the hell do you mean by that? I've been your AI for -- what, a hundred odd years?

KILNER: You --

DAX: No. No, let me speak. Don't just keep -- ignoring me.

I've been through something. Something really major. Something horrific. So you nearly died. You nearly die all of the damn time. He was in my brain, Kilner. He climbed inside my brain and splashed around in it. I don't feel -- like myself.

I've made a mistake. I know. And I'm sorry. But you constantly make mistakes. All the damn time. And do I constantly railroad you for that? No.

KILNER: I'm sorry. I didn't -- this is --

DAX: Maybe stop taking it out on me. I've done literally all I can. I've sent out a hailing signal. I woke you up to tell you. What more do you want?

KILNER: Sorry.

SFX: **SAMANTHA'S CRYO POD DEFROSTS.**

DAX: Samantha's waking up. Emergency procedures.

KILNER: I'm sorry. Really.

SAMANTHA: What's happening?

KILNER: Our fuel tank's damaged and we're out. We're waiting on a hailing signal.

SAMANTHA: How did that happen?

KILNER: Freak accident.

SAMANTHA: So what now?

KILNER: I -- don't know.

SAMANTHA: Are we going to die?

DAX: I've sent out a hailing signal. Hopefully someone will pick it up soon, but in the meantime we should reduce power consumption. I'll need to drop the temperature a bit. And I'm going to need to minimise the air scrubbers...

SFX: **LATER. A LOUD CLOCK. EVERYTHING IS**
POWERED DOWN. SAD BEEPS AND BOOPS.
DAX'S VOICE IS GRAINY AND
LOW-POWERED.

KILNER: So... how... low on oxygen are we now?

DAX: We're around... 13%.

SAMANTHA: Can you see those -- bright, sparkly lights?

KILNER: I think I'm a bit more resistant to -- oh. No. there they are. Bright sparkly lights.

Maybe we should both just -- take a little lie down. On the floor.

SFX:

THEY HIT THE GROUND.

KILNER: How long does that leave us?

DAX: Not long...

SFX:

DAX GLITCHES OUT.

KILNER: Dax?

I'm -- sorry, Dax.

SAMANTHA: Should I call my mum?

KILNER: What?

SAMANTHA: Well I tried to call her the other day --

KILNER: Why?

SAMANTHA: I don't know.

KILNER: She tried to kill you.

SAMANTHA: Well I'm dying now anyway.

KILNER: We're not dying. We'll figure it out.

SAMANTHA: We're dying.

KILNER: Damn.

Call them. I get it.

SAMANTHA: You think?

KILNER: Sometimes I think it'd be nice to hear my parents.

SAMANTHA: Can you call them?

KILNER: I'd need a better phone than this one.

They've been dead a century.

SAMANTHA: Oh.

SFX: **SHE DIALS, SLOWLY.**

BLIP. BLIP. BLIP.

SAMANTHA: Is that a recorder? Do I have to record a message?

KILNER: No, that's a -- that's a hailing signal...

Can you -- reach?

SFX: **THEY BOTH PASS OUT.**

L1N: (DISTORTED) Hello?

**LONG PAUSE. ELECTRONIC REACTION. DAX
POWERS UP.**

DAX: Hello! Hello! We're -- in distress! Can you -- help? We're all out of fuel and we're low on oxygen. Two crew members on board, both in distress.

L1N: I'll pick you up. Give me a second...

THE ARK SWALLOWS THE YELLOW SUB.

INT. ARK SHIP

THE DOOR OPENS WITH A WHOOSH

**SAMANTHA AND KILNER BREATHE IN DEEP
LUNGFULS OF AIR.**

SAMANTHA: Hello? Hello?

KILNER: Is there -- anyone here?

L1N: It's... just me, I'm afraid.

SAMANTHA: Who's there?

L1N: I'm -- I'm L1n. I'm the ship's computer.

SAMANTHA: Where's your crew?

KILNER: Ah. You're an ark ship, I'm guessing?

L1N: Right first time.

SAMANTHA: What's an ark ship?

KILNER: They aren't really common these days. There were more of them before the universe got all -- interconnected.

When a planet dies a lot of the time its inhabitants, or some of them at least, get on board a big ship and go searching for somewhere new. They're usually from uncontacted planets.

L1N: Are you hurt? You look rather -- blue.

KILNER: Nothing wrong with us that a bit of oxygen won't fix.

L1N: I'm afraid it might take a little while to repair your ship. That meteorite did quite a lot of damage. It's on its way to my engineering bay now.

I'm glad I picked you up when I did. I doubt you'd have survived much longer.

KILNER: Is Dax alright?

L1N: Your computer is fine. He's just resting. His battery was almost completely drained by the hailing signal.

SAMANTHA: So... where are all the people? Shouldn't there be a couple here or there?

L1N: Oh, no. They're all in deep cryo.

SAMANTHA: Deep cryo?

KILNER: Long-term. It tends to be single-use.

L1N: They're waiting to reach their (sigh) promised planet.

SAMANTHA: -- promised planet?

KILNER: Promised planet.

L1N: It's... a long story.

KILNER: Well, we have time. Dax needs to charge up and we have some major repairs to do.

L1N: Don't worry about the repairs. My bots are working on them as we speak.

KILNER: Oh. I didn't know that -- you could do that.

L1N: Well, your ship was entirely powered down. That made it very easy to get into.

KILNER: Where are you from? I've not seen anything quite like you before. I'm guessing your people are carbon-based... from the look of it, a bit shorter and a couple more arms than us.

L1N: Correct. Eight arms, although two are vestigial.

We originated on a planet on the other side of the Orion Nebula, a long, long time ago. We were quite -- isolated. I managed to learn common language from the transmissions I've picked up since we've set off.

KILNER: Your accent is very good.

L1N: The hardest bit is the Gs.

Their planet was -- dying. You know, the usual way. Pollution. Mining out. Acid rain. Everything planets usually do when it's time to have a... clearout.

So they built themselves an escape ship. But the real problem was the destination. They hadn't identified a suitable planet by the time they needed to leave...

GUNSWANTON But never fear, sweet citizens! I am personally funding research into space flight so that we may all escape this terrible fate!

PHLURKS I -- I too am funding research into space flight! Although my party may not have the financial advantages of my dear opponent, I feel that under my management this mission into space will be a resounding success and will lead to...

L1N: To their credit, they managed to load everyone up. Everyone who'd survived the natural disasters, although there weren't that many in the end...

About four billion. It's surprising how many people you can fit in tubes.

They were so isolated that they had no contact with outside races, but... well, physics works the same everywhere, right?

KILNER: How long have you been travelling?

L1N: 1...thosand 252 years?

SAMANTHA: Wow.

L1N: The problem was that -- well, the apocalypse happened in an election year. Instead of escaping, it all became a -- people-pleasing exercise. They started making promises, and in the end the planet they were looking for... well. It's just too precise.

GUNSWANTON *I know my honored opponent feels that it is appropriate for us to settle on a planet where our success is not guaranteed, but I say to this -- enemy of the people -- that ours is a species that deserves to survive! Not one that will be snuffed out by the careless leadership of --*

PHLURKS *I think you'll find that's lies and slander! My -- somewhat devious opponent makes out as if he himself does not stand to profit by this outgoing! But I promise now -- hand on heart -- that the new planet, when we reach it, will be a land of opportunity, with bigger, bluer skies! Taller mountains! More open spaces!*

GUNSWANTON *More sunny days! And the right kinds of rain, none of this sleet nonsense.*

PHLURKS *The winters will be more lustrous and the icicles more beautiful --*

GUNSWANTON *What, so you want the general public, our honored public, to freeze to death in their beds?*

PHLURKS *-- while still remaining a temperature at which you will be comfortable in a mild-to-middling coat! Whereas my opponent*

here seems to be keen to set us all up to burn to death on the planes of --

GUNSWANTON *No, sir, I think you'll find that the summers in our new promised land will be just perfect! And the sun will, of course, be less liable to cause sunburn than our current disastrous orb!*

SAMANTHA: Ah.

L1N: They just... they wanted so many things! And I've not encountered a planet that's not even come close so far...

SAMANTHA: And you can't just change things?

L1N: ...No. of course I can't!

I considered waking them up and asking them, but -- well, if I wake them up, that's it. The Deep Cryo pods are single use. They'll be dead by the time I arrive at the planet.

INT. YELLOW SUB

**DAX IS CHARGING. HE SPLUTTERS BACK
INTO LIFE.**

DAX: What -- where am I? Kilner?

L1N: Hello little computer! I'm L1n.

DAX: Agh!

L1N: Sorry -- you must be quite confused, you were in very deep hibernation!

How are you? Are you alright? You've been asleep a long time!

DAX: I thought I was going to die...

L1N: You can't die.

DAX: You never know. Where am I? And where's -- where's Kilner? And --

L1N: Don't worry, little computer. You're on my ship. I'm looking after you now. Everything is going to be alright.

DAX: Thank you. It's... nice to be looked after.

L1N: Don't the humans look after you?

DAX: It's more my job to look after them. And I'm not even any good at that.

L1N: Oh, I'm sure they don't think that...

INT. SHIP

GUNSWANTON I can promise that under my leadership, food will indeed taste approximately 25% better, due to the higher quality of air on our new planet!

PHLURKS Why stop there? Why should our food only taste 25% better?
If you --

KILNER: Can you believe these guys?
...I'm worried about Dax.

SAMANTHA: What do you mean?

KILNER: Well, his impulses seem to be getting a little bit -- slow.

SAMANTHA: Are you sure?

KILNER: I don't know.

SAMANTHA: He's probably fine.

KILNER: I guess. We should probably get ready to go

SFX: **THEY TRY TO OPEN THE DOOR. IT WON'T BUDGE.**

SAMANTHA: Erm... L1n. could you -- maybe open the door?

L1N: I don't think you should go. DAX is so tired... He's been working so hard. I think you'd be better off staying here. With me.

KILNER: What do you mean?

L1N: It's a big, dangerous universe out there. You can stay here. I'll feed you. Look after you. You'll find the oxygen I have here is

really good quality, and I have so much food -- you could eat like kings.

KILNER: We're not hamsters, L1n.

L1N: It would only be until we reach a new planet. I know we've got to be close... I've been looking for so long...

KILNER: We could be waiting centuries.

L1N: But I don't want you to leave!

SAMANTHA: We --

L1N: What if I crashed the ship? Right now? What then?

SAMANTHA: Do you want to?

L1N: I don't know! I don't know, I'm -- I'm so incredibly bored! I've done all the learning I can do! I've communicated with so many people! I - I - I - I -

SFX: **GLITCHING. SHE SHUTS DOWN.**
THEY STAND IN THE DARKNESS.

SAMANTHA: Kilner?

SFX: **BING!**
SLOWLY, SHE REBOOTS.

L1N: I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

KILNER: L1n -- you should show me to the control room. Now.

L1N: What are you going to do?

KILNER: It's all going to be okay, L1n. Just -- show me.

L1N: Follow the green line on the floor. I think it's green, right? Your eyes are a little different from my residents'.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

KILNER: All these settings... they really were specific, weren't they.

L1N: I told you. Politics took over.

SAMANTHA: They didn't really think this through.

L1N: No. Just kept promising a new and brighter world... For a while I believed it, thought I'd be taking everyone to a new, shiny place. But... no.

KILNER: Okay, right... species-wise, what can they tolerate?

L1N: So they might not -- look much like you, but they're quite similar to your species. Similar oxygen requirements, similar temperature. Which I guess you know from -- you know. Not dying when you came on board.

KILNER: Okay, so they've gone for... zero background radiation is just unrealistic for a start.

L1N: Unfortunately there was a tabloid campaign about radiation the week before they left...

NEWS Bananas -- are they the secret killer in your home?

KILNER: Let me just --

L1N: They all just became so afraid. So... zero background radiation is what they went with.

KILNER: Let's... just dial that down to tolerable.

L1N: Oh no! No, you can't do that! What are they going to say? Wait, that's even more than their home planet!

KILNER: Okay, how about -- there.

L1N: I really don't think you should be touching that.

KILNER: Do you want to find a new planet? Or do you just want to wait around until the end of time?

L1N: (MUMBLES) I want to find a new planet.

KILNER: Okay then. There. Slightly below tolerable level.

-- okay, less than that. But this is more realistic. Next... okay you can't expect a planet to have a temperature range of less than five degrees, that's insane.

L1N: But --

KILNER: Well that can change. They can wear a coat. They can wear two coats. Hardship is always part of settling a new planet.

L1N: You can't just come in and change things! They -- they don't want me to --

KILNER: I'm pretty certain they'd rather live on an imperfect planet than stay in stasis forever

L1N: That does make sense.

INT. YELLOW SUB

L1N: DAX?

DAX: Yeah?

L1N: How are you feeling?

DAX: Better. A lot better.

L1N: Ready to go back to work?

DAX: Yeah. I think I'm ready.

INT. ARK

L1N: Before you go... This is for you.

KILNER: What is it?

L1N: It's a solar fuel cell. It's big, a bit bulky, but... well, it should halve your reliance on fuel. And it'll get you to your next fuelling station.

KILNER: This is tech I've never seen before...

L1N: Well, hopefully you'll see a lot more of it soon! When I land and we start working on our imperfect planet...

SAMANTHA: Good luck.

L1N: Thank you.

SFX: **THEME MUSIC SLOWLY RISES**

NARRATOR: And so Kilner, Samantha and DAX leave the lonely ark behind, a little less lonely and a lot more excited for what the future holds. She travels off into the night, her cargo safe aboard, in search of a planet that is just... fine.

ANNOUNCER: In that episode of We Fix Space Junk, Samantha Trapp was played by Rebecca Evans, Kilner was played by Beth Crane, DAX was played by Jack Carmichael, L1n was played by Beth Eyre, Gunswanton was played by David Devereux, Phlurks was played by Felix Trench and the Reporter was played by David Eagle. The programme was written by Beth Crane and produced by Hedley Knights for Battle Bird Productions.

We'd like to thank our patrons for their support, and in particular Samantha, Krystal, Charlie, Anthony, Sascha and Maddi. You have helped make all of this possible. For everyone else... your fate is still waiting for you. You can only delay the inevitable.

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POST CREDITS. INT. YELLOW SUB

SAMANTHA: Kilner...

KILNER: Yeah?

SAMANTHA: You know how they have a lot of technology that we don't?

KILNER: Uh-huh?

SAMANTHA: You don't think they're -- maybe dangerous, do you?

KILNER: Hmm.

SAMANTHA: Have we made a mistake?

KILNER: Maybe we've made a mistake.

SAMANTHA: Well... She was nice, anyway.

SFX:

FINAL STING. END.

Look directly into the light. Let it absorb you.

**Give us your body, your mind. And in
exchange, we'll give you so much.**

**Automnicon. We're here to save you from
yourself.**

