

FRED: (OPENS COLD) That's it Marge ... all packed ... do you want to read the list off?

MARGE: I've already double-checked ... just make sure about the emergency kit. Have you got everything in?

FRED: Yup ... space pills ... anti radiation unit ... light weight oxygen helmet .. gravity

FADE: nullifiers ...

NARRA OVER

NARRA: Marge and Fred are going on a vacation. The date for their trip is 1993 and they are leaving for the moon!

VOICE: OUT OF THIS WORLD

ECHO

SOUND: THE BIG EFFECT UP AND ESTABLISH AND OUT

ANNCR: WNEW offers another in its dramatic investigations of the world about us!

SOUND: PUNCTUATE

ANNCR: Jackson Beck is our narrator and as our voice of science we present the Chairman of the Hayden Planetarium, Mr. Robert Coles.

COLES: Good afternoon. This is Mr. Coles welcoming you to Operation Moon. Today we are off on a voyage that has intrigued mankind ever since he first looked up into the night sky and saw that ball of silver beckoning. Perhaps it is still too soon for us to leap; but in forty years our children will be traveling through space ... and our story today might well be the story of their trip to the moon!

VOICE: (ON CRACKED ECHO)

Flight 643 ... standby for flight 643. Leaving for moon station at 13 hours and 20 minutes. All personnel will leave the launching platform immediately. This is departure warning one. This is departure warning one!

SOUND: FADE IN WITH DEPARTURE WARNING ONE ... A WARNING THAT WILL GROW WITH INTENSITY FOR OTHER DEVELOPMENTS SHORTLY:

SOUND: BACKGROUND SOUNDS AS IN A LARGE TERMINAL UNDER WITH WARNING ONE:

CLERK: You and your wife will keep those physical examination certificates Mr. Safford; you'll hand them over on the ship ...

FRED: How about the psychological orientation?

CLERK: We've made arrangements for your visit tomorrow. Now about these reservations. Be sure to pick you tickets up twenty-four hours before flight time.

CLERK: You'll be leaving on the Taurus ...That's her taking off now ...

VOICE: (ON CRACKED ECHO IN BG) Flight 643 now departing. Flight 643 now departing. This is departure warning two. This is departure warning two.

FRED: Tell 'em to take good care of her ...

SOUND: BRING UP WARNING SIGNAL , THEN STRONGER NOW ...

FRED: This'll be our first trip to the moon!

SOUND: WARNING TWO UP TO HIGH PITCH AND THEN WE HEAR A SUCCESSIVE SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS OFF .. INTO THE ROAR AND FADE:

NARRA: Fred and Marge are now scheduled for their first flight to the moon. For the next week, he and his wife will dream of their voyage, awake and asleep. The dreams will not be full of peace and tranquillity. Fred will relive the fantasies of his boyhood crammed with science fiction and Marge will move in a dream coated with excitement but tinged with suspicion ... and sometimes, at the breakfast table ... little question marks will move from the dream and park between the toast and coffee ...

FADE

SOUND: CLINK OF BREAKFAST DISHES ... UNDER

MARGE: (CONCEALING HER ANXIETY UNDER AN APPARENT CASUALNESS)

Fred ...

FRED: Hm?

MARGE: Fred ... er ... do you suppose ... that anything could happen?

FRED: Huh? Happen where?

MARGE: Going to the moon?

FRED: Why should anything happen?

MARGE: Well ... you know ... sometimes ...

FRED: Look, Marge ... going to the moon isn't a sometimes thing. They're going every day and nothing happens ... sure there's bound to be an accident once in a while ... they happen even when you cross a street ...

MARGE: Er ... don't you think ... it's just an idea mind you ... wouldn't it be nice to take a trip to Africa instead? They have that special rocket express ... Mary went .. she said they were right in the jungle in three hours!

FRED: Mary can have her jungles, honey ... we're gonna have the moon ... I've been waiting for this ever since I've been knee-high to a helicopter and .. holy mack ... I'm late for the office again!

SOUND: A QUICK KISS ...

FRED: See you later dear and stop worrying!

NARRA: Fred leaves ... Marge remains and she doesn't stop worrying .. only she is wise ... and silent.

Fred bubbles with enthusiasm and new knowledge ... the geography of the moon are now intimate facts to be remembered carefully ... he remembers them ... quite them like a pitch man on 42nd Street ... and the time speeds on. Soon departure time sounds out ... the couple leave for the air station .. and their trip to the moon.

VOICE: (CRACKED ECHO)

Flight 839 now departing. Flight 839 now departing. All personnel clear the launching platform. This is departure warning one. This is departure warning one.

SOUND: WARNING ONE SIGNAL IN AND UNDER

NARRA: The warning signal sounds out in the night. The launching platform is suddenly bathed in fingers of bright light ... silhouetting the spaces ship against the dark sky ... man's new answer to the challenge of the universe ... Our space ship is not like the flying engines of today. It is a huge globe without wings, for wings are not needed in a space without atmosphere.

Here is the fulfillment of man's dream shaped in steel, polished with hope and ready to leap to the sky, propelled by man's creative genius.

SOUND: UP LOUNDER ... UNDER

NARRA: The moon rides high in the sky ... silver target in the ceiling of the universe. The heavens are bright with stars .. and within our space ship two people are holding excitement in their hearts .. secretly .. calmly .. almost normally ...

GIRL: (OUR HOSTES ... NORMAL ... EFFICIENT AND SO INTERESTED IN HELPING PEOPLE)

Are you comfortable, Mrs. Safford?

MARGE: Oh yes ... thank you ... this reclining seat is wonderful ...

GIRL: Let me adjust the light for you sir ... there! ... that's better ... is this your first trip?

FRED: The very first ... I'm as nervous as a kitten.

GIRL: You'll find it very exciting and don't be nervous about the takeoff ... you'll hardly feel it ...

FRED: I told you Marge ... it's just like ...

NAVIG: (ON FILTER)

Attention please. We are now preparing for our takeoff. Will all passengers adjust their seats and fasten their acceleration belts.

GIRL: That's right Mrs. Safford ... just put that belt through the loops on your pressure suit ... you'll find that you'll be completely eased when we begin our acceleration ...

FRED: What's the belt for?

GIRL: To keep you down on the floor .. once we're in space you become weightless .. wouldn't want to be floating up among those girders would you?

FRED: I guess not ...

NAVIG: Attention please. The first rocket will be released in a few moments. This will establish our initial acceleration which will be about twenty feet per second ... our speed will increase rapidly and when we reach an altitude of about 25 miles we we'll be traveling at the rate of six thousand miles per hour and steadily increasing until we achieve a maximum speed of 16 thousand miles per hour. Please relax and enjoy your trip to the moon.

GIRL: You'll excuse me now ... I've got to get weighted down myself .. see you both in a little while.

SOUND: BRING UP WARNING TWO BUT NOT TOO LOUDLY

MARGE: (SHE AND FRED BOTH WHISPER AND ARE SLIGHTLY AWED)

Fred ... are you very nervous?

FRED: Well .. it's more like I'm excited maybe ...

MARGE: Me too ... I guess ... but ... Fred?

FRED: What dear?

MARGE: Leave your hand over here ... near my seat .. just so I can ...

SOUND: THE BLAST OF THE ROCKETS IN TAKE OFF SUCCESSION ... ROAR .. AND INTO WHINE UNDER

NARRA: They're off! We on the outside see the burst of rockets lighting up the night with an almost incandescent glare .. and then .. as if in slow motion the huge body of the space ship rises from its launching platform. It moves easily .. for a moment it seems as though it is reluctant to depart from the earth ... and then with another blast it races skyward, and with a trail of fire that is like a huge hand waving good-bye, our space ship heads for the moon.

SOUND: BIG EFFECT

NARRA: Make no mistake about this voyage. This is not a portrait that owes its being solely to the creative mind of some science fiction writer. This is no page stolen from a fantasy. Mr. Coles can you tell how close we are, today, to the actual duplication of flight 839 ... express to the moon!

COLES: It's closer than you think is what I usually tell people when they start asking me about a flight to the moon .. and I don't say that just because man is daring, imaginative, and full of irrepressible curiosity.

NARRA: Then why do you believe that we are closer than we think?

COLES: The facts. The simple incontrovertible facts. We have now conceived of logical ways to penetrate and pierce the final barriers to the moon. We've been experimenting with rocket propulsion for quite some time and we've managed to send some of our larger rocket projectiles a goodly distance into the sky. Quite a few rocket experts believe that we are now capable of constructing a much larger projectile that would have space probing possibilities. There's also been thought paid to the idea of suspending special ships in space that might act as launching spots to the moon.

NARRA: That sounds a little puzzling, Mr. Coles. How could we establish air stations that would actually remain in space, neither rising nor falling.

COLES: The moon has been doing just that for some time now. Our idea would be to duplicate the moon; first we would get out into space ... reaching the theoretical point where our speed is equal to the gravitational tug of the earth. There we stop ... and simply become a true satellite of the earth .. a smaller moon if you will ... circling the earth in an established course.

NARRA: You mentioned the pull of gravitation just a moment ago ... that brings up a neat little problem in my mind ... about our space ship ... there she is rushing off to the moon at so many thousands of miles per hour ... and as she gets closer, gravitation reaches out with invisible hands and starts pulling her down even faster ... with no ground to use brakes on ... no atmosphere to hold you back ... how are you going to keep from nose diving into the moon?

COLES: Very simply ... we use the same power that started it all ... the rockets.

NARRA: That would only propel you ahead harder.

COLES: Not these rockets .. these would be a specially mounted bank of rockets in the nose of the space ships .. and their explosive thrust would counteract our forward speed and the pull of the moon ... don't worry ... our landing would be gentle ... And talking about landing haven't we forgotten about our two vacationers ... at this moment in 1993 they should be passing their first satellite station and heading closer to the moon ...

NARRA: Let's reestablish contact ... from theory to Operation Moon ...

SOUND: PAUSE ... DEAD AIR ... FOR A FEW MOMENTS

NARRA: You have heard nothing but silence ... listen again ...

SOUND: PAUSE

NARRA: This is the sound of space. An enveloping and profound silence. Here, there is no atmosphere to carry the vibrations of sound, to carry the waves of light that reflect from the moon and earth ... darkness covers everything ... It is deep and endless ... but within the space ship:

NAV: (FILTER)

We have just passed satellite thirty four a military observation post. Our speed is now 18,000 miles per hour and all conditions are normal.

SOUND: BUZZER OF A PHONE RINGING ... RECEIVER OFFHOOK ...

GIRL: Hello, this is Miss Nelson ... hostess of the Taurus express ... who ... just a moment please ... BRIEF PAUSE ... Mr. Safford ... there's a telephone call for you.

FRED: Huh?

GIRL: We've reestablished contact with the earth .. if you'll press that button on the arm of your chair you'll find a receiver opening in the side of the wall ...

FRED: Well whattya know .. oh ... hello ... This is Fred Safford talking.

NARRA: How do you do ... this is the earth calling some thousands of miles and some years away. We'd like to ask you and Mrs. Safford a few questions, do you mind?

FRED: Just a minute ... (aside) hey honey ... pick up your phone and get in on this ... it's for you too ... (back again ... ) hello ... no go right ahead ... ask away ...

NARRA: What do you find most exciting about your trip to the moon?

FRED: Most exciting? Why I guess ... well ... well just being here ... I mean up in space ... just being out of this world.

NARRA: And you Mrs. Safford?

MARGE: Well to tell you the truth ... being alive ... I guess I can say it now ... I was just plain frightened near to death ... but now ... It's so wonderful ...

FRED: And there's our telescope ... you can look out and spot the earth like you were on the street squinting up at the moon ... And that's what it looks like ... a big silver moon ...

MARGE: Tell him about the oceans Fred .. how they stand out ...

NARRA: I hear you Mrs. Safford ... thank you ... how about the space about you? Noticed anything different?

FRED: Well, it sure is dark out here ... darker than you could think of ... and the stars don't twinkle ... now that's something ... they just shine cold and sharp ... tired to see it from another place .. but well it doesn't really matter ...

MARGE: Tell him Fred ...

FRED: Forget it ... it's not important ...

MARGE: But ...

NARRA: Did something interesting happen?

FRED: Nah ... nothing interesting ... I guess I made a little mistake ... but there's no reason to be talking about it ...

MARGE: He's embarrassed ... you see ...

FRED: All right .. go on and tell it .. might as well get it done with .. she'll probably be using this over my head for another ten years ...

MARGE: Well, Fred thought he'd like to take a look at the control room ... he wanted to find out if there was another telescope .. and the hostess wasn't around ...

FRED: I rang for her but I guess she was busy and you know how it is ... you don't want to bother people with just notions ...

MARGE: So my independent husband decides to go exploring by himself ... I was sort of dozing off and not noticing very much ... you get sleepy just sitting around for hours ... It must have been a sound he made ... I woke up and I see Fred standing up and loosening his seat belt ... and just as I was going to ask him what he was doing ... he starts floating up ... slowly like a big funny balloon ...

SOUND: SHE BURSTS OUT LAUGHING

MARGE: I never saw anything as strange and funny in all my life.

FRED: Very funny ... there I go up like there's nothing to me .. and I keep going ... and I don't know how to get down ... every time I make a move it sends me scooting off in another direction ... and she sitting down there laughing fit to bust ...

MARGE: I really couldn't help it .. it was like a comedy .. and then he bounces through the air and over to the wall ... and begins to crawl down on the wall ...

FRED: All of a sudden I look down and there's the hostess standing below and looking up at me like I'm out of my mind. So she gets a rope and drags me down and soon she has me tucked back into my seat ... Now let's forget the whole thing ...

NARRA: Have you had any other problems due to the lack of weight out in space?

MARGE: Well ... eating and drinking are different. Water doesn't fall here ... it rises ... and do you know ... I drank a container of milk by letting it rise out of the container and up through a straw into my mouth ...

FRED: Same with eating ... out of a container and carefully .. you're liable to find yourself chewing one end of a steak, with the other end flipping toward the ceiling ...

NARRA: What one factor would you say is most unusual in space travel ... ?

FRED: Well ... I don't know about any one factor. There's no noise up here for instance ... no sound of motors or nothing ...

MARGE: It's like being in y our own living room hung somewhere in space

...

FRED: It's the feelings you get inside ... about not being earth bound ... about actually heading toward the sky ... sure its beautiful when you look out ... it's like when you were a kid and I guess you stood out in the country and looked up at the sky and saw everything shining up there ... and you wanted to take a run and leap right into it ... That's the way I feel now ... like I've taken the run and the leap and now ... well ... I'm waiting for the moon to be under my feet ...

NARRA: Thank you very much Mr. and Mrs. Safford ... enjoy the remainder of your trip ... and happy landing ... we'll disconnect now.

SOUND: DISCONNECT ...

NARRA: Well, Mr. Coles ... everything seems to be under control out in space ... could you give us a few notes on what we can expect on the moon ...

COLES: Well for one thing, we ought to know that the moon has a diameter of about two thousand one hundred and sixty miles ... and more important has a gravity about one sixth of the earth.

NARRA: What would that mean to Mrs. and Mrs. Safford when they get their feet on the moon.

COLES: Well if Safford weighed one eighty on earth he'd be thirty pounds up there .. and the Mrs. would probably weight about twenty pounds. They'd be kind of bouncy as a result if they weren't artificially weighted down. If Mrs. Safford normally did a standing broad jump of ten feet, his jump on the moon wood take him sixty feet. And because the moon lacks atmosphere, he'd have to wear a special space suit with an oxygen supply. Then too for daytime travel he would need air conditioning to protect him from the heat that would normally broil him at 212 degrees Fahrenheit ... and for night travel he would need heat insulation to protect him from the bitter cold of 200 degrees ...

NARRA: Sounds like space suits would be the required thing at all times on the moon.

COLES: Well, not if we constructed huge sealed shelters that would shut out the temperatures and allow us to establish our own necessary life conditions.

NARRA: Use those shelters as a home base and then go adventuring in our space suits ... is that what the Saffords are up to now?

COLES: Could well be. I imagine that by this time they've had their session in an air tight shelter ... probably deep below the surface of the moon to escape radiations and possible meteors ... they've probably also been exposed to a few minutes of surface movement to get used to the problems of maneuvering in the low gravity and possibly now they're heading for their first walking trip ... Why don't we tune in to their two way radio system .. they'd have to have two way radio in their suits for communications.

NARRA: Right you are ... we turn our dials to an intimate broadcast on



the face of the moon.

SOUND: A LITTLE STATIC INTERFERENCE UNDER ... BOTH VOICES ON FILETER  
BUT WITH ECHO QUALITY

MARGE: Oh dear ...

FRED: What is it Marge?

MARGE: My nylons ... they're ripping in this suit.

FRED: I've done something wrong with my temperature controls ... I've  
got hot and cold running drafts in here ..

MARGE: Not so loud darling ... you're splitting my ear drums ...

FRED: Huh?

MARGE: Can you cut your power down? You're talking too loud.

FRED: (HE BEGINS TO TALK LOUDER ... IRRITATED)

I'm talking normally

MARGE: Well it may feel normal to you but it's ...

SOUND: LONG PAUSE

FRED: Well?

MARGE: (A COMPLETE CHANGE INTO HER USUAL WARMTH)

Fred ...

FRED: Yeah ..

MARGE: Fred darling ...

FRED: Now what?

MARGE: Thanks.

FRED: Thanks? Say what gives with you? First you tear into me for  
shouting when I wasn't .. and now ...

MARGE: I'm sorry darling ... I forgot we were on the moon ... together.  
You just go ahead and talk the way you like ... as loud as you like ...  
and it's all right with me and darling ... I'm glad we didn't go to  
Africa .. I'm glad we didn't go anywhere but to the moon like you  
wanted .. I love you and I love the moon ... and ... and ... well ...  
thanks again.

SOUND: STATIC UP ... UNDER ... PAUSE

NARRA: Permission granted, but Fred doesn't talk either loud or soft ..  
both of them ... our two vacationers from the earth are suddenly  
stilled and a sense of awe and wonder stands beside them. A man and  
woman are on the moon their eyes sweeping the sky. Two figures like  
statues built in dedication to the oldest dream of man ... the conquest

of space. Deep in the outer stratas of the universe the light of the stars shine out steady and remote and yet beckoning ... and Fred and Marge ... your children and mine ... someday they will stand there ... their destination and the new wonders that lie ...

VOICE: (ECHO) Out of this world!

MUSIC: Theme