

Breathing Space, Fading Frontier  
includes mature content such as  
adult language, sexual situations,  
violence, and substance abuse

This episode contains major  
character death, illness, aging,  
lethal accidents, grief, parental  
abandonment and mortality

Additional sensory contact  
warnings can be found in the show  
notes.

Intro plays

I ain't got no home to go to  
I ain't got nothing to sell  
But my stars will never leave me  
Even when I'm sold to hell  
I was born under a blue sky  
And I'll die out in the black  
When I'm gone don't no one mourn  
me  
'cause my debts will drag me back

Intro fades out

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Echoing sound of quiet ambient music and the  
occasional shifting of a stool or clink of a  
glass

Footsteps approach

MURASH

This seat taken?

BRIGHTER

By all means.

(Murash sits)

MURASH

Thanks. I'm having a rough go at it.

BRIGHTER

Oh. How rough?

MURASH

Came in here with someone. They left. Told me to find my own way home.

BRIGHTER

..Yeah. Love and war. All bets are off.

MURASH

Yeah. Well, I'm not exactly around the corner.

BRIGHTER

Where you from?

MURASH

Edge of the Belt. Farther than far. Desolate, really. You know, since I left, I haven't met anyone who even knows it exists.

BRIGHTER

What's it called?

MURASH

Miladon.(pronounced Mill-uh-dawn)

SPACE JUNK YARD, EXTERIOR  
Over exo-suit comms

LESPIE  
Brighter! Over here!

BRIGHTER (Younger)  
I'm comin'.

LESPIE  
Take a look at this. Whole front  
third of a small craft, almost  
completely intact. Now why would  
anyone throw this out?

BRIGHTER  
Well, they might've been inspired  
to do so on account of the fact  
that the other two thirds got  
blown to dust.

Metal creaking

BRIGHTER  
Lespie!

LESPIE  
What?

BRIGHTER  
Don't climb on it, you're gonna  
get yourself killed.

LESPIE  
Brighter, it's perfectly stable.  
Look at this.

(Lespie hops up and down)

BRIGHTER

Don't jump on it!

LESPIE

It's safe! That's what I'm tryin'  
to show you!

BRIGHTER

Lespie, you're not a kid, and this  
ain't a playground.

LESPIE

How would you know? You've never  
been to a playground.

BRIGHTER

Neither have you.

LESPIE

Oh, this is my playground.

BRIGHTER

Would you get down from there?

LESPIE

Hang on, I gotta check something.

(Lespie Searches the craft)

Aha!

BRIGHTER

What? What is it?

LESPIE

Oh, Brighter, it's beautiful.

BRIGHTER

What is it?

LESPIE

This comms system - there's barely  
a scratch on it.

BRIGHTER

You serious?

LESPIE

Dead serious.

BRIGHTER

Well, we've been looking for comms  
parts for weeks.

LESPIE

Well, they're right here, and they  
are...Oh, we. Are. In. Business!

BRIGHTER

Well, hurry up and grab it.

LESPIE

The whole comms system? I'll throw  
my back out.

BRIGHTER

Do you need me to help?

LESPIE

No, no, I only need a few pieces  
anyways. Should be easy to take  
apart.

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Bar music fades in. Background conversation resumes

MURASH

You ever heard of it?

BRIGHTER

Huh?

MURASH

I said, "you ever heard of it"?

BRIGHTER

Why don't you tell me more about it?

MURASH

Okay, so, it's this big asteroid. Like, a lot bigger than a BRONCO. Not quite a moon. But it used to be rich for mining. I'm talking rich. So, they terraformed enough for a little workers' colony. You know, miners and their families. Then, once they hollowed the ground out, all the money left. And everything else went with it. Couple straggler families hung around.

BRIGHTER

Hm. Including yours?

MURASH

Including mine.

Short Pause

Been a long time since I've seen them.

BRIGHTER

You're homesick?

MURASH

Nothing does it to you quite like a bad breakup. Suddenly, you're...reflecting. You start off missing one person, and you remember all the other things you miss.

Short Pause

Sorry. You don't wanna hear this.

BRIGHTER

I don't mind. I could use the company.

MURASH

Yeah. So could I.

Intimately Tense Pause

I'm Murash.

BRIGHTER

Brighter.

MURASH

Brighter?

BRIGHTER

Not my idea.

MURASH

Your folks called you that?

BRIGHTER

They did. Apparently, the day I  
was born, they said all the light  
felt a little..

MURASH

Brighter?

BRIGHTER

Right on the money.

MURASH

It's a real sweet story.

BRIGHTER

Yeah. I guess it is.

Bar Music Disappears

HOME, FRONT PORCH

Nighttime crickets

A rocking chair creaking back and forth on  
wooden planks

PA

That's my chair 'n you know it.

BRIGHTER (younger)

Just keepin' it warm for ya.

PA

Uh-huh.

BRIGHTER

What you been doin' out this late?

PA

I went to pay 'er a visit. Guess I  
lost track of time.

Short Pause

Is, uh... Lespie on the roof?

BRIGHTER

Sky's clear, ain't it?

PA

Yeah. Safe bet, I s'pose.

Calls up to the roof

Ain't that right?

LESPIE

Calls down from the roof

What?

PA

Yeah. Safe bet.

Short Pause

Alright, I'm takin' the rocker  
back. C'mon. Get up. Shoot. Since  
when are you so tall?

BRIGHTER

My clothes fit the same as they  
did last year. I reckon you might  
be shrinking.

PA

That so? Mm...

BRIGHTER

...Something on my face? You're,  
uh...starin' real hard there.

PA

Y'know, she always used to say  
that she couldn't imagine anyone  
looking at your face and deciding  
to leave you.

Short Pause

You, uh... you remember them?

BRIGHTER

Not much, no.

PA

Well, time softens all things, I  
suppose.

Crickets Vanish

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Bar music fades in. Background conversation  
resumes

BRIGHTER

They left when I was young.

MURASH

Your folks?

Brighter

Yeah

MURASH

Ugh. Sorry to hear that.

BRIGHTER

Said they had business on Terra.  
Never heard anything from them  
after that.

MURASH

Where's home for you Brighter?

HOUSE, FRONT PORCH

Crickets are almost imperceptibly quiet

Lespie  
Can't Sleep

Brighter  
Hm..

Lespie  
Me neither

BRIGHTER  
You spend a lot of time up here.

LESPIE  
You're always welcome to join me.

BRIGHTER  
Alright. So, what are we looking  
at?

LESPIE  
Sky.

BRIGHTER

I can see that much.

LESPIE

Well, then, what kind of a question was that?

BRIGHTER

I mean...I mean, what are you looking for? What happens up there?

LESPIE

Nothing...happens - it's just about...being. Knowing your place.

BRIGHTER

So, you just sit out here and...

LESPIE

"And" nothing.

BRIGHTER

Right.

LESPIE

...When you see a star, you're seeing -

BRIGHTER

Old light. Travels a long distance over a long amount of time. I know.

LESPIE

Any one of these stars coulda burned out hundreds of years ago, but we can still stare up long

after and not even know the  
difference.

BRIGHTER

...So, what're you gonna find out  
there, anyway?

LESPIE

Well, what are we gonna find here?

Short Pause

Recites Poetry

"the witnessed falter flicker of a  
torch / the coldest fabric frayed  
by pinprick scorch / the tranquil  
smile that lights my time-trenched  
face / to know my soul shall be  
affixed to space".

BRIGHTER

's that one of hers?

LESPIE

Mm-hmm. That little red book she  
carried around.

Short Pause

The last thing he'd ever write,  
and he knew it. He was gettin'  
old. Figured he had one last pass,  
'n he was right.

Short Pause

She read that one quite a bit in  
the last year. Comfort, I s'pose.

BRIGHTER

So, what's it mean?

LESPIE

I always took it to mean...each  
star was a person, once. And when  
you go, a new one lights up,  
somewhere in the world.

BRIGHTER

Are...are you looking for her?

LESPIE

No. I don't have to. I know she's  
there.

BRIGHTER

Which one is she?

LESPIE

I can't tell you. I don't pick  
one, anyway. What if I can't find  
it later? Or what if it burns out?

BRIGHTER

Yeah. Yeah, I guess that makes  
sense.

Short Pause

LESPIE

Just think about seein' 'em up  
close and personal.

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Bar music fades in. Background conversation resumes

BRIGHTER

I ain't from nowhere.

MURASH

Nowhere? Hmm. That's too bad.

Short Pause

Well, where are you headed?

BRIGHTER

Terra.

MURASH

Damn.

BRIGHTER

What's the matter?

MURASH

Well, I was hopin' to catch a ride home. But I'm in the other direction.

BRIGHTER

Well...you could always come with.

MURASH

And what kind of business do you have in Terra? Family reunion?

BRIGHTER

No. No interest in that sorta thing. Just a...sightseeing trip.

MURASH

Sightseeing?

BRIGHTER

Mm-hmm.

MURASH

Big money for a vacation like that. Y'know, wherever you're coming from, you're stopping on an outpost station like this one? Means you're traveling far enough that you need to refuel.

BRIGHTER

I have my reasons.

MURASH

I'm sure you do.

Short Pause

I would come with you. I'd love to, it's just...I don't think I can wait that long to get back home.

BRIGHTER

Yeah, I understand.

MURASH

Of course, not that it matters. I don't have a way back as is. Not much difference between me going with you to Terra and staying stuck on this spaceport.

BRIGHTER

Mm. I'm sorry to hear that.

MURASH

I just...Don't know what to do, you know? If I could, I'd pay my way, but...I could probably only make it halfway on what little I've got. I should be grateful my ex left me the shirt on my back.

Short Pause

I know we just met and all, but you seem like a good person. I don't usually like asking folks for help, but...Well, I've never been screwed quite this hard before. Would you mind -

Bar Music Stops

LESPIE'S WORKSHOP

LESPIE

- pressing that switch?

BRIGHTER (Younger)

Which one?

LESPIE

The green one.

Click. Comms static

LESPIE

Okay. I'm gonna go out, hop into the cockpit and see if it works.

BRIGHTER

You sure it's safe to turn it on  
while it's still inside the dome?

LESPIE

Well, I'm not takin' off yet. I'm  
just runnin' a systems check.

BRIGHTER

How you intend on gettin' that  
thing outside anyway?

LESPIE

One thing at a time, alright?

BRIGHTER

Alright.

(She leaves. The door hangs open, and we  
hear the far-off rumble of a spaceship  
engine. After a few moments, we hear the  
distant hydraulic opening and closing of a  
hatch.)

BRIGHTER

Testing, testing, 1, 2, 3...Can  
you hear me?

Short Pause

This is Brighter to Lespie.  
Lespie, do you copy?

Short Pause

I don't think it's working. If  
you're saying anything, I can't  
hear you.

Hatch opens and closes

LESPIE

From a Distance

Can't even get the damn comms  
thing working right!

BRIGHTER

Calling to Lespie

You just gonna leave it running  
like that?

LESPIE

Uh, no.

Engine powers down

BRIGHTER

Calling to Lespie

Look, Lespie, it's not that big a  
deal, really.

LESPIE

What?

BRIGHTER

I said, "it's not that--"

LESPIE

Just - hold on a sec, will ya?

(She sprints back to the workshop.  
Breathless, she shuts the door behind her.  
She pants for a few moments, then kicks the  
door.)

LESPIE

Damn it!

Short Pause

What were you saying?

BRIGHTER

It's not that big a deal.

LESPIE

It is a big deal.

BRIGHTER

We can fix it.

LESPIE

Yeah, and by the time we do,  
something else'll fall apart or  
spring a leak or wear down or  
rust, and then -

BRIGHTER

Lespie, you're building a  
spaceship. Did you think this was  
gonna be simple?

LESPIE

Would you just shut your mouth and  
let me be pissed off?

BRIGHTER

Oh, okay, and what's that gonna  
help?

LESPIE

Oh, it's easy for you, isn't it?  
This whole thing, for you, it - it

doesn't...It's not in your blood. You don't want it that bad. You don't want it like I do. You get to not care, but I don't. And that doesn't make me any less smart than you. Do you understand? You are not better than me just because it doesn't get under your skin. This is our ship. And if I have to build it myself, fine, but don't act like you know what it takes. Don't act like you understand it.

Over Ship's Comms

LESPIE

Yes, Brighter, I can hear you.

Short Pause

Yes, Brighter, I copy. Do you copy?

Short Pause

Well, it says here that it's transmitting. I'm pushing the button, I don't-. Ugh. Friggin' thing.

Short Pause

BRIGHTER

What was that?

LESPIE

That...Would be our comms issue.

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Bar music fades in. Background conversation resumes

MURASH

I know it's in bad taste to ask like this, but every little bit helps.

BRIGHTER

Mm-hmm. Yeah, of course.

Short Pause

It's a nice invention.

MURASH

I'm sorry?

BRIGHTER

I don't know what map you spotted that rock on, but, uh... lemme give you a little tip: we say "Mile-uh-dawn", not "Mill-uh-dawn".

SPACE JUNK YARD, EXTERIOR

Over Suit Comms

LESPIE

You think this'll work?

BRIGHTER

Well, I think it's worth a try. Even with the comms delay, we should still be able to get in contact with them while they're in

blueline range. Before, we didn't have the right equipment, but busted comms are better than no comms.

LESPIE

Alright. So we're hitchhiking.

BRIGHTER

It's safer than trying to get that thing to fly.

LESPIE

Watch it. We got her to the junkyard just fine, didn't we?

BRIGHTER

At the very least, we oughta run through all our options.

LESPIE

Yeah, I hear you.

Distant rumble of an engine, growing steadily closer

BRIGHTER

Did you hear that?

LESPIE

Lucky us.

BRIGHTER

Quick, get on the comms.

LESPIE

Right!

(She climbs into the cockpit.)

BRIGHTER

You, need a hand?

LESPIE

No, I got it, I got it.

Over Ship's Comms

To the ship currently passing over  
Miladon airspace, this is the  
captain of the *Spitfire* requesting  
assistance. Please respond.

Engine is getting closer - the noise starts  
to grow intense and the wind whips around

I repeat, this is the captain of  
the *Spitfire*. We are requesting  
assistance. Please, say something.  
Say anything if you can hear me.

(The ship is directly overhead - the sound  
is nearly deafening)

LESPIE

Practically shouting

To the ship currently hovering  
overhead, this is the captain of  
the *Spitfire*. We request immediate  
assistance - if you can hear me, I  
demand a response. Please. Please.  
Requesting a response. Anything at  
all.

(The ship drops its load. Loud clattering as  
trash rains down on the mounds of scrap  
metal. It sounds like the end of the world.)

BRIGHTER

Lespie!

LESPIE

Please...If you can hear  
me...Please.

(The ship starts to leave. The engine grows  
distant.)

LESPIE

No. No, no, turn around, you  
goddamn - listen to me! Do you  
hear me? You can't leave! Turn  
back! I'm ordering you right now,  
turn back!

Engine fades

LESPIE

Please...please...

Engine Sound Disappears

BRIGHTER

...It's the delay. Maybe they'll  
hear us and turn around. We just  
have to wait.

LESPIE

They're not coming back. If they  
can hear us, they don't care.

BRIGHTER

Lespie-

LESPIE

Let's just go home.

BRIGHTER

...Right.

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Bar music fades in. Background conversation resumes

MURASH

Damn. That cover usually works.

BRIGHTER

I'm sure it does.

MURASH

What are the odds?

BRIGHTER

Pretty slim, I'd say. Sorry for your luck.

MURASH

Stars are on your side tonight, I guess.

Short Pause

"Mile-uh-dawn?"

BRIGHTER

Yep.

MURASH

You're sure?

BRIGHTER

I know where I'm from.

MURASH

Well, you're a long way, friend.

BRIGHTER

You're telling me.

MURASH

Like I said, it can't be cheap.

BRIGHTER

Well, luckily, I hitched a ride  
with someone.

MURASH

Is that so?

BRIGHTER

Sure is. She's refueling our ship,  
making some minor tune-ups.

MURASH

And you're just killing time,  
drinking alone in a bar?

BRIGHTER

Pretty much. 'Course, I could say  
the same about you.

MURASH

Hardly. I'm not killing time -  
this is my job.

BRIGHTER

Who pays you to talk people into  
giving you money?

MURASH

I'm self-employed.

BRIGHTER

Right.

Short Pause

You go up to just anyone?

MURASH

Not just anyone. I can tell when someone's sitting on more than they know what to do with.

BRIGHTER

Do I look like I've got a lot of expendable income?

MURASH

Hardly. You look like you got dragged out of Hell by the collar. But I've got a sense for these things. And I'm very rarely wrong. You have money, don't you?

BRIGHTER

I don't see how that's any of your business.

MURASH

Hm-hmm. I knew it.

MILADON, HOME, KITCHEN

Flames Crackling

PA

I said I'm fine.

Brighter coughs

PA

Open up a window.

(They crack one open. PA swats at the fire with a towel, tamping it down.)

BRIGHTER (Younger)

Pa. Pa, hand me a towel.

PA

I'll put it out myself.

BRIGHTER

You look like you're about to keel over, y'know that?

PA

Well, I ain't keelin' over yet, so why don't you mind your business?

(One last swat extinguishes the fire. PA breathes heavily, then breaks into a full coughing fit.)

BRIGHTER

Pa-

PA

It's just the smoke. I'm fine.

BRIGHTER

How long were you out?

PA

Brighter, I'm fine.

BRIGHTER

How long were you out?

PA

I don't know, alright? I don't know.

Clanging Pans

BRIGHTER

She really is your daughter.

PA

Sorry, I'll just fix something else up, and we'll have dinner a little bit later.

BRIGHTER

It's not about the dinner, it's about finding you on the floor, passed out, and the house could've

-

Short Pause

Swallowing Frustration

I'm...I'm just worried about you.

PA

Well, I don't want your worry. You can keep it.

Short Pause

BRIGHTER

You need to talk to Lespie.

PA

About what?

BRIGHTER

About anything. About her trying to build a rocket out of spare parts. About your health. About

the fact that her Ma's been passed  
for years now, and the two of you  
still ain't figured out how to  
have a full conversation. You -  
you just need to talk to her.

PA

And tell her what?

BRIGHTER

I...I don't know. But this ain't  
working anymore.

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Bar music fades in. Background conversation  
resumes

BRIGHTER

Hey, what's that on the shelf  
right there?

MURASH

Looks like Redshift Rye.

BRIGHTER

You're kidding.

MURASH

They keep this place stocked. This  
isn't some two-tap operation. It's  
a proper bar.

BRIGHTER

I've never actually seen a bottle  
of it before.

MURASH

You'll find more of the stuff on  
Terra. Honestly, if you ask me,  
it's a little overpriced.

BRIGHTER

Recites Poetry

"my lover's mouth is redshift rye  
/ my lover's grip a vice / i found  
within the worldly din / a place  
called paradise".

MURASH

You a poet?

BRIGHTER

Not even a little. Hey, barkeep.  
I'll buy that bottle of Redshift  
Rye off your hands.

MURASH

That's not really how these things  
work. If you want it, why not just  
order a glass?

BRIGHTER

It's for a friend.

To the barkeep

Trust me, I'm good for it. Name a  
price.

MILADON, LESPIE'S WORKSHOP

LESPIE

What do you think it sounds like?  
The ocean?

BRIGHTER (Younger)  
We get Redline out here. Ain't you  
heard it on there?

LESPIE  
I mean up close.

BRIGHTER  
I don't know.

Short Pause

LESPIE  
Brighter.

BRIGHTER  
What?

LESPIE  
Spit it out.

BRIGHTER  
Spit what out?

LESPIE  
Brighter, I known you my whole  
life, nearly -

BRIGHTER  
Lespie.

LESPIE  
Fine, fine.

Short Pause

BRIGHTER  
You talked to your Pa?

LESPIE

No one else on this rock for me to  
talk to besides you and myself.

BRIGHTER

He's not well.

LESPIE

He ain't old yet.

BRIGHTER

Neither was she.

Short Pause

LESPIE

It's not like that. It's like  
weather. It'll pass. People get  
sick.

BRIGHTER

Lespie-

LESPIE

We get sick all the time.

BRIGHTER

And don't you think that takes a  
toll? Year after year, don't you  
think it...I don't know...adds up?

LESPIE

All the more reason for us to go,  
right?

BRIGHTER

And what about him?

LESPIE

What about him?

BRIGHTER

He's not well.

LESPIE

Look, by my math, we're three months from launch day. He'll be better by then. Take my word for it.

BRIGHTER

He's gonna be all by himself.

LESPIE

Look, when we started building this thing, he said he was fine with -

BRIGHTER

And when was the last time you asked him?

LESPIE

If he doesn't want us to go, he can just say it.

BRIGHTER

You know he won't.

LESPIE

Brighter, I'm not putting this on hold.

BRIGHTER

But you gotta think about the situation you're puttin' him in.

LESPIE

What situation?

BRIGHTER

Lespie, he doesn't wanna be the one to ground you, but that doesn't mean he wants you to leave him.

LESPIE

He said he doesn't wanna leave.

BRIGHTER

That means we're all he got.

LESPIE

Look, when we get out there, hell, we'll find someone to keep an eye on him when he gets old. Sure plenty of folks out there would love the work. It ain't exactly a picnic out there.

BRIGHTER

Then why get yourself tangled up in it?

LESPIE

Because it's somethin'.

Short Pause

BRIGHTER

He's not well.

LESPIE

Brighter -

BRIGHTER

Lespie, I'm stayin' here.

LESPIE

...What?

BRIGHTER

Lespie, things are only gonna get worse before they get better.

LESPIE

Brighter, I'm not going without you.

BRIGHTER

I don't want you to.

LESPIE

So...So, what? We're just gonna stay put until...until what?

BRIGHTER

I don't know.

LESPIE

What, til he dies? And then what?

BRIGHTER

Lespie, he's your family.

LESPIE

And what about your family?  
They're out there! Don't you want a chance to go and find them?

BRIGHTER

Lespie, you don't wanna look for my parents, you're doing this to

try and find your Ma. And you're  
not gonna.

Short Pause

I know it hurt you to lose her. It  
hurt me, too. And I think you  
gotta - you gotta think about...

LESPIE

Okay.

BRIGHTER

Hm?

LESPIE

Okay.

BRIGHTER

What?

LESPIE

Okay.

BRIGHTER

I - I don't - I don't understand.

LESPIE

I won't make you leave.

BRIGHTER

I know you're disappointed, but we  
can still make it work. Just give  
it a little time.

LESPIE

No, I don't think you understand.  
I'm still going.

Short Pause

You wanna stay, that's fine. You  
can stay. I ain't mad at you.

BRIGHTER

Lespie -

LESPIE

I just need some time to myself. I  
think that's for the best.

BRIGHTER

...Right.

LESPIE

If you wouldn't mind getting out  
of my shop.

BRIGHTER

Right.

Sound of crickets

BRIGHTER

Now, Lespie -

LESPIE

Good night, Brighter.

BRIGHTER

...Yeah. Good night.

(They step outside.)

Well, shit.

MURASH

Aw. Leaving so soon?

STATION, BAR INTERIOR

Bar music fades in. Background conversation resumes

BRIGHTER

Yeah. She should be done fueling up. I don't wanna keep her waiting.

MURASH

I'm sure your friend'll appreciate that bottle.

BRIGHTER

Mm.

Short Pause

It's been nice talking to you.

MURASH

Likewise. If you ever come back this way, you'll know where to find me.

BRIGHTER

Don't be a stranger.

MURASH

So long, Brighter.

BRIGHTER

So long.

The bar music fades

SPACE JUNK YARD EXTERIOR

Over exo-suit Comms

LESPIE

Alright. That's the last round of inspections. Everything should be fine.

Yawning

BRIGHTER (Younger)

We couldn't have done this any later in the day?

LESPIE

You can sleep when I'm gone. Conditions are best right now for launch. Let's not waste the good weather.

BRIGHTER

Alright, alright.

LESPIE

Pa took it well, I think.

BRIGHTER

Yeah?

LESPIE

Yeah. We were up late last night. After you fell asleep. Talking.

BRIGHTER

I'm glad to hear it.

Short Pause

He - he didn't-...You said he took  
it well?

LESPIE

We made our peace. Said what we  
needed to say.

BRIGHTER

That's good.

LESPIE

...Have we? You and me?

BRIGHTER

Have we what?

LESPIE

Said what we needed to say?

Short Pause

BRIGHTER

...I'm gonna miss you.

LESPIE

Yeah. I'm gonna miss you, too.

BRIGHTER

Shoot. This is really happening,  
ain't it?

LESPIE

It is.

Short Pause

C'mere.

(They embrace.)

Brighter...I'm glad we're friends.

BRIGHTER

We're family.

LESPIE

We are. I couldn't've asked for better.

BRIGHTER

You could've asked for braver.

LESPIE

You could've asked for smarter.

BRIGHTER

Strong words from a rocket scientist.

LESPIE

Heh. I suppose so.

Short Pause

Alright. Let's get this show on the road.

BRIGHTER

Right.

LESPIE

Radio me when you're in the safe zone.

BRIGHTER

On it.

LESPIE

And Brighter?

BRIGHTER

Yeah?

Long, long pause

LESPIE

Take care.

(The hatch shuts.)

(Brighter runs to the dome's exterior airlock. They input a 6-digit passcode on a keypad. An alarm sounds, and the doors slowly open. The pressure shifts. The doors close. Hum of generators. Footsteps on the metal floor. Brighter inputs another 6-digit code on another keypad. Another alarm, another set of doors. This time, birdsong. Brighter removes their helmet and takes a deep breath.)

(Brighter sprints to the workshop. Opens and closes the door. Walks over to the comms unit and turns it on.)

BRIGHTER

Spitfire, this is home base.  
You're cleared for liftoff. I  
repeat, you are cleared for  
liftoff.

Comms static

Engines in the distance, starting up.  
Liftoff, rumbling like thunder

(Brighter runs back to the door. They swing it open. They step outside to take in the view of the launch.)

BRIGHTER

Well, I'll be damned...Would you  
look at that?

(The rocket climbs and climbs)

The sound disappears.

(BRIGHTER takes in a sharp, shuddering  
breath. Something is wrong. We hear them  
breathing in and out, shaky, and then run  
back into the workshop. They slam the door  
behind them. They click on the comms unit in  
a frantic rush.)

BRIGHTER

Spitfire. Spitfire, come in. What  
was that just now? Lespie? Can you  
hear me?

Short Pause

Lespie, this is Brighter. Do you  
read me?

LESPIE

Copy that, home base. Initiating  
launch sequence now.

Short Pause

Engines heating up. Looks like we  
should reach full thruster  
capacity in just a sec.

Short Pause

We should have liftoff in  
three...two...one..

Short Pause

Liftoff.

Short Pause

Okay. We're moving. I repeat, we  
are moving.

Short Pause

Altimeter says we're beginning a  
steady ascent. All systems  
nominal.

Short Pause

It's happening. Brighter, can you  
believe it?

Crying Starts

It's actually happening. Ha ha!  
Look at that! It's happening!

Short Pause

This is Spitfire to home base.  
I...I don't know what to say.  
Gosh.

Short Pause

"To know my soul shall be affixed  
to space."

Short Pause

A sudden loud screeching over the comms, and then the signal dies

Crying Intensives and then goes silent

TERRA, BEACH

Waves crashing against the shore  
A stopper being pulled out of a bottle

(Brighter takes a gulp of Redshift Rye, then sighs.)

BRIGHTER

Yeah. Overpriced. 'Course, so was the pilot I had to hitch a ride with. She's nice enough. Just wish I was making the trip with you instead.

Short Pause

Listen to that. Do you hear it?

Short Pause

We all crawled out of that mess.

Short Pause

I told you I wouldn't look for my folks. I stand by that. I've already buried two parents.

Short Pause

Yeah. He was asleep. He seemed peaceful. Much as you can expect, at least.

Short Pause

I'll pour the rest out for you. In case you want it. Return to sender.

(They pour the bottle out.)

BRIGHTER

Can't see the stars here. Air's too thick.

Short Pause

Keep a light on for me, Lespie. I need the guidance.

ShortPause

Now more than ever.

Waves crash and water splashes against the shore.

Fade out.

Thank you for joining us for this episode of Breathing Space, Fading Frontier.

This episode, Flicker of a Torch, was written and directed by Corvyn Appleby and edited by Scott Paladin

Cast members read their character's name and then their own

Murash was voiced by Kris Allison  
Brighter was voiced by Kale Brown  
Lespie was voiced by Ally Amador  
Pa was voiced by Richard  
Kreutz-Landry

Our theme, Blues for the Black,  
was composed by Michael Freitag  
with vocals by Jeremiah and lyrics  
by Scott Paladin.

You can find links to learn more  
about our cast and crew in the  
show notes and more information  
about our show at our website,  
[breathingspace.lawofnames.com](http://breathingspace.lawofnames.com).

Breathing Space, Fading Frontier  
is a Law of Names Production