

The Tale of the Knock at the Airlock

written by

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Breathing Space, Fading Frontier
Season 2

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

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

TERRARIA STATION SHUTTLE DEPARTURE BAY

GARY

Ok, everyone! Have you
double-checked your packing list?
Do you have your sleeping bags?
G-hammocks? Flashlights?
Terminals?

KEEKEE

(audibly rolling her
eyes)

Of course. We're not *Comets*
anymore! We know how to pack for a
survey trip, Gary.

GARY

You haven't done a *surface* survey
yet. And you should call me Troop
Leader. I'm in charge of this trip
and you can't--

KEEKEE
(cutting him off,
continuing eye roll)
Yes, Troop Leader.
(to Frank)
I swear, someday I'm going to push
him out an airlock.

FRANK
He's your brother!

KEEKEE
He's the worst.

GARY
I heard that!

Keekee groans.

Running feet as Kris runs up.

GARY
Kris! There you are! We almost
left without you. Ok, hurry up,
everyone. The shuttle's boarding.

Various sounds of kids jostling each other, lining up.

GARY
Here we go. Solar Scouts troop
921, sound off! Frank.

FRANK
Here!

GARY
Ayrik?

AYRIK
Here!

GARY
Kris?

KRIS
Right here.

GARY
Keekee?

Silence.

GARY

Keekee?

Silence. A quiet giggle is heard.

Sound of whap on the head. More giggles heard.

KEEKEE

Ow! What'd you do that for?

GARY

Keekee?

KEEKEE

I'm here, *okay*?

GARY

You gotta pay attention, or I'm going to leave you behind.

KEEKEE

You can't do that! Mom said--

GARY

Mom *also* said you have to listen to me. Plus, I'm a Star and you're just a Cadet.

KEEKEE

Fine.

More sounds of getting kids together.

ANNOUNCER

(over loudspeaker)

This is a boarding announcement.
All passengers of the shuttle 2144
to Venusian Surface Stations
Denmark, Gallipoli, Havana,
Jerusalem, and Liverpool, please
proceed to gate J3 for imminent
departure.

Message repeats in the background.

GARY

That's us! Ok. Packs? Got it.
Good. Anyone need to go to the
bathroom? There won't be another
chance till we get to the surface.
Any one? Keekee?

KEEKEE
(whining)
Garryyyyyyyyyy.

GARY
(ignoring her)
Alright. Everyone. Transit time is
a little over an hour. Stay in
your seats, and don't *throw*
anything! We're going to have
plenty of time to move around when
we're on the surface. We're here
to have fun, and work on our
survival merit badge! Ok everyone,
remember!

ALL SCOUTS TOGETHER
Solar Scouts never give up!

Scene Break

INT. SURFACE SURVEY STATION HAVANA, OBSERVATION AND SURVEY DOME.

Everyone piles noisily into the room, packs being dropped.

FRANK
Wooowwwwww.

KRIS
It's so *big*! I didn't, I didn't, I
didn't think it would be this *big*.

AYRIK
It's not *that* big. The rec center
at home is bigger. And I don't
know why you're surprised, all the
measurements are online. You
should have done your research.

KRIS
Well it *feels* bigger.

FRANK

I *did* do my research. I know how to use the telespectrometer and--

AYRIK

Obviously not *enough* research.

KRIS

And I just said it *feels* bigger. Not that it *is*.

AYRIK

But objectively--

FRANK

(to Gary)

Why's the roof like that?

GARY

Like what?

FRANK

All...swirly. Is it a holoprojection?

AYRIK

That's the *outside*, stupid.

GARY

Ayrik!

AYRIK

What? She's being *stupid*. Everyone knows that the surface of Venus is covered in gas storms all the time. And everyone knows the survey dome is clear plasper.

FRANK

Shut up! I'm not stupid. I know about gas storms! And the dome!

AYRIK

I didn't say you were stupid, I said you were *being* stupid. And if you knew, why did you *ask*??

FRANK

I was...just testing Gary. 'cause
he's supposed to be teaching us.
About the surface. And
observations. And surveying!

AYRIK

Uh-huh. I told you. You should
have done more research.

GARY

Knock it off, both of you.
(pause, then in Teacher
Mode)

That's actually a really good
question. And a good place to
start working on this badge!

(pause)

Everyone stow your packs--we're
going to pitch them over there by
the airlock-- and come out here by
the surveying equipment. We'll set
up our camp in a few, but first we
need to go over a few rules...

(interrupted by more
groans)

...and then we'll get to start
looking at the surface of Venus!

Everyone piling stuff, echo-y footsteps.

GARY

I know it's not fun, but these
rules are from the Venusian Survey
Authority, not me, and they're
here to *keep us safe*. So we're
going to all follow them, right?

Silence.

GARY

Right?

Grudging sounds of agreement.

GARY

(reading)

The Surface Survey Bubble
Designation "Havana" is a 29 meter

diameter modular station,
engineered to withstand the harsh
conditions on the Venusian
surface. The central observation
dome is 16 meters, and equipped
with a vacuum-insulation blanket
that--blah blah blah...climate
control...blah...designed for
short-term habitation...fully
secured against the threats
of...blah, blah...
precisely balanced, self-contained
habitat, blah. Ok. Here we go.
Rules.

(pause)

1. Do not remove any materials or
equipment. Do not leave behind any
materials or equipment including
non-recyclable waste products.
2. All recyclable and biological
waste should be divided by type
and placed in the correct
receptacle.
3. All *human* biological waste-
(interrupted by kids
giggling)

Guys. Come on, grow up. All *human*
biological waste should be
disposed of in the reclamation
chamber.

(slight pause)

Do not fire or throw any
projectiles at the observation
bubble or windows. I'm looking at
you, Keekee.

(Keekee sarcastically
imitates Gary.)

Do not access personal-

(pause as kids giggle again)

5. Do not access personal sites or
commdresses on the facility
terminal.
6. Do not--

KEEKEE

How many rules are there???

GARY

Just a few more. Be quiet.
(pause to get back on
track)

6. Do not write, scratch, or
otherwise mark on the walls,
bubble, or windows.

7. Familiarize yourself with fire
suppression tools and their
locations.

8. Do not open the airlock to the
station for any reason, unless a
transport has successfully docked,
and equalized pressure. Remember-
the Venusian atmosphere is
unbreathable, and the pressure on
the surface is over 80 times what
the human body can survive.
Specialized exo suits are
required.

9. In case of an emergency, first
activate greenline beacon. Then
contact Surface Station Support
at--

(cuts himself off, very
sure and excited)

Well, we're not going to need
that. We're prepared for anything,
aren't we Scouts?

(doesn't pause for an
answer)

You all understand the rules?

FRANK

Uh-huh.

KEEKEE

Yep!

KRIS

Totally!

AYRIK

I looked them up already.

GARY

(ignoring Ayrik's
comment)

The fire suppression system
controls are...

(pauses to look around)

There. There. And there. That door
is the bathroom. That's the
kitchen. And, obviously, that's
the airlock. I do not want any of
you to mess with it! In fact, I
don't want you to even go near it.

(slight pause)

Now. Why don't you four go set up
the tents, and I'll make us some
lunch. Come back to the center
terminal here in an hour.

(pause)

Alright, Troop 921! Let's get
working on that badge!

Scene break.

KRIS

(coming in in the middle,
taking readings off
equipment)

--got a surface temperature of
451.8°, with a wind of 1.8 km per
hour.

GARY

Very good, Kris! You've got those
instruments down! Ayrik, you're
next.

AYRIK

(under her breath)

Finally.

FRANK

What's happening?

GARY

Hm?

FRANK

Up there. What's happening in the
sky? It looks all weird. The
light's all gray and... wobbly.

KEEKEE

And it's really, *really* dark in here.

KRIS

(dismissive)

The sun's probably setting! You don't gotta be a *baby* about it, Frank.

AYRIK

The sun's not setting.

KRIS

(argumentative)

How do you know?

AYRIK

(cuts him off)

I know the sun's not setting because I know how long a Venus day is.

KEEKEE

Shouldn't the dome have lights, though?

AYRIK

It *does* have lights. Specially calibrated ones that are supposed to replicate Sol--

KRIS

What does- what does that have to do with a *Venus* day?

AYRIK

A Venusian day is like- 250 Terran days.

KRIS

So???

AYRIK

Ugh. So it's getting dark too fast. Obviously.

FRANK

It's...I don't like this... That
gray stuff is over almost all of
the dome. ...I really don't...
Gary...do something...

AYRIK
Don't be such a baby!

FRANK
I'm not a baby!

AYRIK
You're acting like a baby!

FRANK
Am not!

AYRIK
Are too!

FRANK
Am not!

GARY
Cut it out! Both of you! It's
fine, Frank. It's just Venusian
fog. It's totally normal. We're
lucky we had as much clear sky as
we did.

KRIS
Venusian fog?

AYRIK
Don't you know anything? The
surface of the planet is covered
up almost all the time in fog made
up of carbon dioxide, nitrogen,
argon, sulfuric acid, and water
vapor.

KRIS
I know a lot! I'm just not a show
off know-it-all like you!

AYRIK
I'm not a show off.

KRIS

Are too!

AYRIK

Am not!

GARY

Hey! I said cut it out.

(pause)

It looks like we aren't going to
get any more observation done
right now, though.

FRANK

Are you *sure* it's ok? It looks
really weird. An' *really* dark.

AYRIK

(under her breath)

Baby.

GARY

Yeah. I'm sure it's...

(trails off)

Um. It *is* really dark. The
internal dome lights should have
turned on by now. And the fog is
moving in really fast...

KEEKEE

I told you!

GARY

It'll be fine. They probably just
have a manual switch. To save
power. And if anything *does* go
wrong, I can handle it. I got a
corona on my survival badge,
remember? We're prepared for any--

Lights buzz and fade out. Sudden gasps of shock and
surprise. Next lines overlap each other, sounds of running
around.

FRANK

(yelling)

Gary!

KEEKEE

...I don't like this.

AYRIK
Why did the lights *all* go out?

KRIS
(whining)
It's darkkkkkk.

FRANK
Turn the lights back on!

KEEKKEE
Gary, do something!

AYRIK
I'm getting my flashlight.

FRANK
No, I'll get mine.

KRIS
Uh, me too!

GARY
(mixed in between
previous lines)
No, hey, everyone. Chill! Hold it!
I'll get the lantern everyone
just---hang on-- Give me a minute,
we can't all--

Sound of tripping.

KRIS
Ow! You stepped on me!

GARY
Sorry! Sorry! Ok. Troop 921!
Freeze!

Silence.

GARY
(very calm and
reassuring)
I know it's dark. I'm going to get
the lantern set up. Just everyone
stay put, ok?

Footsteps.

FRANK

Ow.

GARY

Sorry.

More footsteps. Click of a lantern turning on.

GARY

There. We've got light.

KEEKEE

It's not very *much* light.

GARY

Everyone ok?

Various sounds of assent. Pause.

KRIS

What happened?

GARY

The fog's just very solid. And it looks like the station doesn't have automatic lights.

(laugh)

But remember! A Solar Scout never gives up! I've got absolutely everything under control. Look at it this way, this is your chance to start working on your survival corona.

FRANK

I still don't like it. Can we turn on the real lights?

AYRIK

You are *such* a baby.

GARY

Ayrik, I don't want to have to tell you again to leave her alone.

(pause, then reassuring)

Everyone, let's head back to the tents. We're not getting any more surveying done today, but we can talk about our results, and what

they say about how people might
someday be able to live on the
surface of Venus.

AYRIK
(under her breath)
They won't.

GARY
Stay close to me and the lantern.
I don't want us to walk into
anything.

Echoing footsteps.

FRANK
Can you *please* turn the lights
on....

AYRIK
Baby.

GARY
Knock it off.
(to Frank)
We don't really need the lights,
do we? This is an *adventure*.

FRANK
I'd really like them back on.

KRIS
So would I.

GARY
What about you, Ayrik? Keekee?

AYRIK
I'm *fine*. I'm not afraid of the
dark.

KEEKEE
I'm not either--

AYRIK
(under her breath)
Right.

KEEKEE

--but I still want light.

GARY

Ok, *fine*. Then you stay here, and I'll go find the controls. I think they were on the equipment hub in the center.

KEEKEE

Don't take the lantern!

GARY

Fine.

(sounds of handing it
over)

Leave it in the middle there.
Keekee, hand me a flashlight.

Flashlight handed over and turned on. Footsteps.

FRANK

...I want to come with you.

AYRIK

(groans)

GARY

Ayrik! What did I say?

(to Frank)

I'm not going far. Just right back to where we were. Less than 20 meters. You're going to be able to see my light the whole time.

KRIS

Are you *sure* this is ok? Maybe we should call someone?

GARY

We're *fine*. I'll be right back.
Just- sit tight.

Footsteps recede. Silence.

KRIS

What if this isn't *just* Venus fog.

AYRIK

Venusian fog.

KRIS

Whatever. What if it *isn't*.

FRANK

What *else* would it be?

KRIS

Maybe they started terraforming.

KEEKEE

You can't terraform Venus. It's too hot. My dad told me.

KRIS

Maybe they figured out how.

FRANK

We'd know. They'd've have had to get permission.

Pause to think.

AYRIK

They *obviously* aren't terraforming. Not only is it too hot, there's too much pressure. And the atmosphere doesn't work. But that doesn't mean it *has* to be normal fog.

(pause for effect)

What if the observation dome is *breaking*.

KRIS

That couldn't happen! ...could it?

AYRIK

Oh yeah. Do you even know what's out there? Corrosive air hot enough to melt lead! *Billions* of kilograms of pressure. There are clouds of *sulfuric acid* just floating around.

FRANK

But the dome's engineered! It's got vacuum insulation! I read about it! It's built to withstand--

AYRIK

Everyone makes mistakes.

KEEKEE

Gary says it's an engineer's job
not to make mistakes.

AYRIK

Ok, but they still do.

KEEKEE

Do not.

AYRIK

Do too. What about all those
Terran scientists and the solar
storm?

KRIS

...what about them?

AYRIC

They said it wasn't going to
happen. Or if it did it wasn't
going to be bad. *That* was sure a
mistake.

KEEKEE

They were *Terran*.

AYRIK

You're right.

(pause)

What if there's another solar
storm? Right now. What if it's
happening out there and we just
don't know it.

FRANK

Solar storms are *bright*.

KEEKEE

A dust cloud after one wouldn't
be.

AYRIK

Yeah. The dust cloud would happen
after. Maybe it is. Maybe everyone
out there is already dead.

KRIS

I don't, I don't, I don't think--

AYRIK

What if they're all *dead* and no one's going to come to let us out, and we're just going to have to sit here forever, until we run out of food and have to eat each other.

KRIS

Ew!

KEEKEE

That's disgusting. I wouldn't eat *any* of you.

AYRIK

You would if you were hungry enough. Everyone would, it just depends on how long you go without food.

KEEKEE

I wouldn't!

AYRIK

You would! There's *research*.

KRIS

There's research?

KEEKEE

I would *not*!

AYRIK

You would. It's *scientifically proven*.

KEEKEE

Wouldn't!

Footsteps coming back over.

KEEKEE

Garyyyyy. Ayrik says that I could be a cannibal!

GARY

...what?

(pause)

Nevermind. I don't want to know.

KRIS

Why aren't the lights on?

GARY

They wouldn't turn on.

KIDS

(Overlapping questions)

GARY

It's fine! Really! It's fine. The station's probably just in power conservation mode.

FRANK

Does that mean we're going to have to sit here in the dark?????

GARY

Sure!

(pause)

There is absolutely no reason to be worried! We'll go to bed, and the lights should be back on tomorrow. And even if they aren't, the survey equipment doesn't need solar light to function! We can still get all your badge requirements finished.

KRIS

Nope. Nope. Nope. Don't like that. I don't like that. I don't want to work in the dark.

KEEKEE

Yeah. It sounds horrible.

FRANK

We really should call someone. They said there's a greenline, we could--

GARY

We are *not* using the greenline.
We're *fine*. I am absolutely in
control of the situation, ok? It's
just the lights. Not actually a
problem.

AYRIK
It's kind of a problem.

GARY
Don't you start too, Ayrik. I
thought you would want the chance
to prove you can do just fine in
unexpected situations.

KEEKEE
Gary? Could we at least just comm
Mom? Just so she knows what's
going on?

GARY
(snapping)
We *especially* are not going to
comm Mom! Everyone just drop it.
We're fine. And the shuttle will
be back tomorrow afternoon,
anyway. We can all just deal with
it till then.

Silence.

KRIS
Ok...but when are the lights going
to come *back* on?

GARY
It doesn't matter. Because we are
Solar Scouts and we can survive
anything! Right?

No answer.

GARY
(more forcefully)
Right??

No answer.

KEEKEE

Um. Yeah. Right. We can do it.
(pause, then with more
confidence)
I know we can! Because we're Troop
921. The best troop on Terraria!

AYRIK
(under her breath)
The *only* troop.
(pause)
It's just *dark*. There's nothing to
worry about!

GARY
Ayrik and KeeKee are right. So
let's all settle down and--

Loud, hollow banging from far away.

FRANK
What was that!?

GARY
(angry)
Who did that??

More banging.

KRIS
Is that...it...it sounds
like...someone...banging on the
top of the dome.

KEEKEE
I don't like this.

Banging continues, then fades.

KRIS
It is! It is! Someone banging! D-
Right over our heads!

KEEKEE
(scared)
Garyyyy?

GARY
Which one of you is doing that?

Another bang.

GARY

You need to knock it off *right*
now.

FRANK

Someone's up above us!

KEEKEE

They can't be. That's like 15
meters up!

KRIS

They could have jumpjets.

AYRIK

That's not possible. The
atmosphere would crush--

Banging resumes.

KIDS

(yelp)

Banging fades into echoes.

GARY

(firm and angry, but fear
behind it)

Look. That's a great trick, ok?
I'm really impressed. You've had
your fun. Now you need to stop it.

KRIS

It's not us!!

Another bang.

AYRIK

It's not *me*.

GARY

If it's not any of you, what is it
then?

FRANK

(hesitant)

Maybe it's rocks?

Another bang.

AYRIK

(trying to hide fear in
disgust)

That's stupid. How could a rock
make that much noise?

FRANK

The...the wind. It could pick up
rocks and...drop them. On the top
of the dome.

KRIS

It wouldn't sound like *that*.

AYRIK

How do you know what *Venusian*
rocks dropped on a plasper dome
would sound like??

KRIS

I j- I just know that it wouldn't
sound like *that*.

(pause as banging
continues, then fades.)

That sounds like someone banging
on it to get in.

AYRIK

...could it really be--

GARY

No. No one's out there.

Pause.

KEEKEE

It can't be rocks on the dome. I
mean. Wouldn't the vacuum
insulation stop them from hitting
like--

Further banging.

KRIS

We need to call someone.

FRANK

Yeah! Turn on the greenline.
Something is really, really wrong.

GARY

No!

(pause, then trying to
sound more reasonable.)

We're *fine*. It's just some noise
outside, ok? There's nothing-
nothing's actually *wrong*. It
sounds scary, but we're not in any
danger.

KEEKEE

How do you know? I mean...I read
about the surface...before the
trip. It's really, *really scary*
out there.

GARY

Well, we're not out there. We're
in here.

AYRIK

...what if the dome is breaking...

GARY

It is *not*. I'd know if it were,
ok? We're *fine*. It's just
some...rocks. Or wind. Or
something. We don't need help. We
don't need to call *anyone*. What we
need to do is calm down, go to
sleep, and then tomorrow finish
our surveys and go home. Got it?

No one answers. a long moment of silence.

GARY

(sigh of relief)

See? I told you. Whatever it was,
it's over now. So like I said, we
are going to go to bed and--

More bangs, closer this time.

KIDS

(yell)

Next three lines overlap.

KRIS

It's right next to us!

FRANK

That's for sure outside.

KEEKEE

That is not rocks!

GARY

Look, I am not going to ask again.
Which one of you is doing this?
What'd you do, set up some kind of
parabolic speaker? Great prank.
Really funny.

KIDS

(exclamations of denial.)

KRIS

It's not me this time, I'd do
something w--

GARY

If you are doing it, you don't
have to say anything. You aren't
going to get in trouble. Just
stop.

Long silence.

GARY

Ok! Good. I'm willing to let this
go, and not talk about it anymore.
Hopefully you learned your lesson.
Why don't we make some cocoa
before--

More banging, this time extremely close.

FRANK

...it's right outside the airlock.

KEEKEE

Gary...We're not doing it.
There's... is there... could....

someone be... maybe someone is
trying... to get in?

AYRIK
(trying to be
condescending but even
more scared)
No one's out there. If there were,
they'd be squished.

FRANK
We should call for help!

KRIS
There are- there are special exo
suits. The rules said.

AYRIK
Even in a special suit, they
wouldn't be able to knock, I
think.

KRIS
That's not- that's not true! ...is
it, Gary? Is it, Gary? Gary, is
it?

FRANK
Come on...that's what the
greenline's *for*. What if...what if
it's something *really* bad?

KEEKEE
Gary...maybe we *should* call for
help??

GARY
No. It's just the wind. Or some
other meteorological event.
Ayrik's right. Anyone out there
wouldn't be able to knock. And *no*
one is out there. And even if we
did call for help, it wouldn't
actually be very helpful. Our
nearest neighbors are in Denmark,
remember? And that's over 180
kilometers away.
(pause)

We can handle this on our own.

Banging again, sounds like pounding to get let in.

KEEKEE

(shrill)

That's a person! I know it's a person!

GARY

It's not. We should all go to bed. Whatever's causing that will be gone by morning.

FRANK

What if... it's not a person?

GARY

That's what I've been saying. It's just some weird surface-of-Venus thing.

FRANK

What if it's... not a *person*. What if it's a... *thing*.

AYRIK

What kind of a thing?

FRANK

A...an alien.

AYRIK

(scared)

There's no such thing as aliens!

KRIS

Says who?

AYRIK

Says *everybody*. Right, Gary?

GARY

(scoffs)

You guys play too much Meteors and Moonmen. If there are aliens, they don't live in the system.

AYRIK

I told you.

More pounding.

FRANK

Well, then some kind of monster.

KRIS

A lead monster!

FRANK

Yeah. A lead monster. What if they live in those lakes?

AYRIK

How come no one has ever seen one then?

FRANK

They have been *hiding*.

KEEKEE

Remember how the guide book said there are all these place on Venus people have never even *seen*? There could be stuff all over the place. And no one would know it.

FRANK

Yeah. Maybe they just never came out before.

KRIS

Maybe they're *angry*.

AYRIK

(clearly losing her
composure)

This is so stupid! You all are babies! Scared of made up stories! Gary, tell them to stop being stupid babies!

FRANK

You're *scared*.

AYRIK

(scared)
I'm not. Because that's made up.
Monsters aren't *real*!

KRIS
Okay, but are you *sure*??

FRANK
Maybe they got sick of us putting
domes up all over their planet,
sticking instruments in the ground
and in the sky. Maybe they are
ready to get back at us.

AYRIK
You're making this up!

KRIS
You *are* scared.

AYRIK
I am *not*!

FRANK
Maybe they're mad and don't want
us here.

KRIS
Yeah. Maybe they're mad.

FRANK
Maybe they've decided it's time to
do something.

KRIS
Maybe they're coming to get... *us*.

Aggressive banging.

EVERYONE
(Screams)

Banging goes on for quite a while, getting harder, then
softer, slower, finally trailing off. One last bang, and
then it stops.

Long silence.

GARY

Is...is everyone alright?

Silence.

GARY

Ok. I think... ok. It's over.
Whatever it was.

Pause, as if waiting.

GARY

Yeah. It's over. And we're fine.
See? I *told* you we didn't need
help. Because we're solar scouts.
And solar scouts...

KIDS

(without much enthusiasm)
Never give up.

Very long pause.

GARY

(very deliberately)
We have all had a very long day,
and it is now time for us to go to
sleep. Everyone get in your tents.
I don't want to see or *hear*
anything until 0800, unless the
8VAC catches fire or the dome
starts to decompress.

AYRIK

(scared)
Leave the lantern on!!!

GARY

Ok. I'll leave it out here. Into
your tents.

KEEKEE

But what if--

GARY

No.

KEEKEE

But what--

GARY
Fire. Decompression.

KEEKEE
(grumbling)
Fine.

Tents opening and closing, zipping up of sleeping bags.

KRIS
(quietly, into the
silence)
It was a monster.

FRANK
A *lead* monster.

GARY
Sleep. Now.

A few more zipping sounds.

GARY
Good night, Scouts.

Scene Break

INT. SURFACE SURVEY STATION HAVANA, OBSERVATION AND SURVEY DOME.

Sound of ship being connected to airlock, airlock cycling,
opening.

TRANSPORT PILOT
How'd you all do out here? Control
says you had a rough night cycle.
Said the wind got real bad. And
the fog. You get the lay of the
land anyway?

GARY
Yeah, we did. The wind was bad,
but we're Solar Scouts.

KRIS
We never give up!

FRANK
Even when the lights go out!

TRANSPORT PILOT

What about the lights, now?

GARY

Oh, we just had a bit of a glitch
or something. Lost dome lights for
a while. It was no big deal.
Right, Scouts?

KIDS

Right!

TRANSPORT PILOT

(jovial)

You're lucky, only about half the
troops make it through the night.
Surface of Venus is a lot more
dangerous than people think. I had
to come down once as a Nova, and
twice as a Cadet to finish *my*
badge.

KEEKEE

You were a scout?

FRANK

And now you're a for real pilot?!

TRANSPORT PILOT

Sure was. Real long time ago. But
I still got the yellow kerchief.

FRANK & KEEKEE

Cooooool!!

Pause.

KRIS

(to Gary)

So where are we going on our next
trip?

FRANK

Yeah! And when!? Can we go next
week? I want to go next week!

AYRIK

We could do another over-night!

KEEKEE

Or maybe something longer?

GARY

(amused)

We'll see.

TRANSPORT PILOT

Let's get you loaded up.

Footsteps as scouts load onto transport. Sounds continue through the scene.

TRANSPORT PILOT

(serious)

Hey, kid. Do you know anything about this?

GARY

Huh?

TRANSPORT PILOT

The outside of the airlock here.
And up on the side of the dome.

GARY

What?

TRANSPORT PILOT

It's all scratched up. Wasn't like that when we dropped you off.

GARY

(suddenly nervous)

I...um...no, I don't know anything about it.

TRANSPORT PILOT

Looks real bad. Those dents go almost all the way through. Sure you didn't hear anything?

GARY

No! I mean, I don't think we did.

TRANSPORT PILOT

Good. 'cause that coulda been a real problem--if you'd been

hearing things and didn't ping
greenline.

GARY
What do you mean?

TRANSPORT PILOT
(surprisingly serious)
Thought you were the one in
charge.

GARY
Sure I am. But I still don't
follow.

TRANSPORT PILOT
Shouldn't be hearing anything
inside a dome. Got a nice blanket
of vacuum between you and the
weather. Can't hear nothing 'cause
nothing gets close enough to make
a noise.

GARY
(concerned)
...O-oh.

TRANSPORT PILOT
If you are hearing things...well,
that blanket's got a hole in it,
an' it's time to get the hell out
of there, because the whole thing,
and anything inside it, gets
crushed.

(pause)
But you must not of heard
anything, because you didn't
greenline. Because you sure as
hell knew that before you came out
here.

GARY
Uh. Yes. Of course.

TRANSPORT PILOT
Good. Because you're a Solar Scout
Star, and troop leader. And that
means you understand that never

giving up doesn't mean you gotta
take stupid risks, right?

GARY
(a little ashamed)
Right.

TRANSPORT PILOT
And that *also* means you know that
it's the mature choice to call for
help when you need it, rather than
try to prove you're "brave." Got
it?

GARY
(seriously)
Yeah.
(pause)
Yeah, I got it.

TRANSPORT PILOT
Good. Now get on board, and we'll
get you kids back to Terraria.

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

This episode, Tale of the
Knock at the Airlock, was
written by Lee Seguinte, and
edited by Erik Seguinte.

Gary is played by Thomas
Flemming

Ayrik is played by Christine
Tardiff

Frank is played by Arielle
Click

Keekee is played by Rebecca
Kraus

The Shuttle Pilot is played
by Charlie Caruso-Neal

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.

This episode was transcribed by Rebecca Miller.