

Production No. 1F13

The Simpsons

"DEEP SPACE HOMER"

Written by

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NOTE: FOR TABLE READ ONLY

TABLE DRAFT

Date 7/22/93

NOTE: FOR TABLE READ ONLY**"Deep Space Homer"****Cast List**

HOMER.....DAN CASTELLANETA
MARGE.....JULIE KAVNER
BART.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT
LISA.....YEARDLEY SMITH
SMITHERS.....HARRY SHEARER
GUARD #1.....HARRY SHEARER
HOMER/SKELETON.....DAN CASTELLANETA
CARL.....HANK AZARIA
LENNY.....HARRY SHEARER
BURNS.....HARRY SHEARER
CROWD NOISE.....ALL
MOE.....HANK AZARIA
BARNEY.....DAN CASTELLANETA
ARMY ANNOUNCER (V.O.)...HARRY SHEARER
ANNOUNCER.....HANK AZARIA
NASA ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)HARRY SHEARER
NASA ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)DAN CASTELLANETA
DR. BABCOCK.....HARRY SHEARER
JACK STILLWATER.....DAN CASTELLANETA
TRAINEE.....DAN CASTELLANETA
TIM ALLEN TYPE.....HANK AZARIA
PEG.....MAGGIE ROSWELL
AL.....DAN CASTELLANETA

NERDY SCIENTIST.....DAN CASTELLANETA
 JIM WALLACE.....HARRY SHEARER
 KAREN HUNTER.....PAMELA HAYDEN
 REPORTER #1.....HANK AZARIA
 REPORTER #2.....MAGGIE ROSWELL
 ANNOUNCER (V.O.).....HARRY SHEARER
 BUZZ ALDRIN.....HANK AZARIA
 ASTRO WIFE #1.....PAMELA HAYDEN
 ASTRO WIFE #2.....MAGGIE ROSWELL
 ASTRO WIFE #3.....PAMELA HAYDEN
 KID SISTER.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT
 KID.....PAMELA HAYDEN
 FEMALE (V.O.).....MAGGIE ROSWELL
 MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)..HARRY SHEARER
 KENT BROCKMAN.....HARRY SHEARER
 GRAMPA.....DAN CASTELLANETA
 BARFLIES.....DAN/HARRY/HANK
 GUY.....DAN CASTELLANETA
 GUY #2.....HANK AZARIA
 GUY #3.....HARRY SHEARER
 EVERYBODY.....ALL
 RACE BANNON.....HANK AZARIA
 ANTS.....DAN/NANCY
 ANT #1.....DAN CASTELLANETA
 ANT #2.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT
 ANT #3.....DAN CASTELLANETA
 ANT #4.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT

JAMES TAYLOR.....DAN CASTELLANETA
REPORTERS.....DAN/HARRY/HANK
REPORTER.....HARRY SHEARER

"DEEP SPACE HOMER"

written by

David Mirkin

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. POWER PLANT - DAY

All the WORKERS at the plant are gathering under Mr. Burns' balcony.

SMITHERS (V.O.)

(THROUGH LOUDSPEAKER) Attention! All workers trudge immediately to the main yard for the mandatory Employee of the Week festivities.

We see the employees must file past a Total Recall type x-ray device to check for weapons. Two GUARDS watch the full length screen.

GUARD #1

(CHECKING OFF) Clean, clean, pistol, uzi, two kids posing as an adult...

As the people emerge, they are forced to throw their weapons into an overflowing bin. On the x-ray screen we see a skeleton of a Neanderthal.

GUARD #1 (CONT'D)

(RE: SKELETON, GREETING) Hey, Homer.

HOMER/SKELETON

Hey.

Homer emerges, scratching his armpit.

ANGLE ON

LENNY and CARL, who are wearing Employee of the Week medallions.

CARL

I hate these Employee of the Week award ceremonies.

LENNY

Who even cares anymore? Everyone that works here has already got one.

CARL

Except for...

Homer enters; he's the only one not wearing a medallion.

HOMER

Hello. Well, today's the day for Homer J. I know I'm gonna win this time because I've been working really hard, kissed a lot of executive butt, and here's my ace in the hole.

Homer holds up a book.

HOMER (CONT'D)

Union rule twenty-six says: (READING)
"Every worker must win at least once whether he deserves it or not."

LENNY

Way to go, Homer.

We see Smithers up on the balcony.

SMITHERS

Attention, everyone. Let's have an
awed hush for Mr. Burns.

Burns steps onto the balcony.

BURNS

Men, it is imperative that we push the
freedom fighters out of the lowlands
before the start of the rainy season...

Smithers whispers in Burns' ear.

BURNS

Huh? What? (COVERING TO CROWD) And
by that I mean, of course, it's time
for the Employee of the Week Award. I
can't believe we've overlooked this
week's winner for so long. We simply
could not function without his
tireless, selfless efforts. So a round
of applause for the new employee of the
week, this inanimate carbon rod.

Burns holds up a rod. Smithers drapes the award around it.

CROWD NOISE

(AD LIBBING) It's about time. / Way to
go, Rod! / We love you, Rod! / Long
overdue.

HOMER

(FURIOUS GROWLS) Inanimate? I'll show
him inanimate.

Homer clenches his fist in rage, but remains perfectly still for a long beat. Everyone exits the yard around him until he is all alone.

INT. SIMPSONS HOUSE - NIGHT

The Simpsons eat dinner.

HOMER

Stupid carbon rod. It's all just a popularity contest.

BART

(EXCITED) Wow! Did you actually get to see the rod?

MARGE

I'm sorry, Homer.

HOMER

Nobody respects me at work.

MARGE

Well, we respect you. (TURNS AWAY)
Lisa, today a bank offered to refinance our mortgage at 8 1/4 percent. Do you think we ought to do it?

LISA

Depends whether it's fixed or variable.
What do you think, Bart?

BART

Go for it, Mom. The Fed won't drop the prime this low again for 20 years.

HOMER

(WANTING TO JOIN IN) Yeah, Marge. The
Fed, again, years.

MARGE

(PATRONIZING) That's a good point,
Homer.

BART

It was?

MARGE

Bart, I've told you not to kick your
father when he's down.

BART

(WHINY) But he's always down.

CUT TO:

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

A dejected Homer sits on the couch, channel grazing.

ON TV

We see cool SHOTS of TANKS, HELICOPTERS, and ARMORED
VEHICLES racing along to INSPIRING MUSIC.

ARMY ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This is today's army.

HOMER

That's it! I'll join the army. I'll
be all that I can be.

We see the tanks, helicopters and armored vehicles arrive
at a huge parking lot. Tarps are thrown over the vehicles.
A SOLDIER dumps a sack marked "MOTH BALLS" into the top of
a tank and high-fives another soldier.

ARMY ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Today's army is rapidly downsizing.
There are no more jobs available.
Until the next war, you are all that
you can be.

HOMER

(MOANS, THEN) Peace is hell.

Homer changes the channel on TV.

ON TV

We see a good-looking MUSCULAR MAN.

ANNOUNCER

Win the respect and admiration of your
peers. Become a strike-breaker.

Another MAN with a board, runs over to him.

MAN

Scab!

The man hits him on the head with the board. A trickle of
blood runs down the strike-breaker's face. Despite this,
he smiles and gives a thumbs up.

HOMER

Nah. There must be a catch somewhere.

He flicks the remote. We see a NASA spacecraft sitting on
a launch pad.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

(A LA BROKAW) It's a lovely day for a
launch here in Cape Canaveral here in
Florida. And the purpose of this
mission is really, really fascinating.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

That's right, Jim. The lionshare of this flight will be devoted to the study of the effects of weightlessness on tiny screws.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

Wow! And of course this could have any number of commercial applications here on Earth... in everything from watch making to... watch repair.

HOMER

Boring.

He tries to flip the channel but the batteries fall out of the remote control.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(PANICKED) Nooo.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1

Let's talk about the crew for a minute.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2

They're a colorful bunch; they've been dubbed the "Three Musketeers."

NASA ANNOUNCER #1

And with good reason. There's a mathematician, a different kind of mathematician and a statistician.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2

Hey, is that a space crew or Delta house?

BACK TO HOMER

Writhing on the floor, fumbling with the remote.

HOMER

Make it stop! Make it stop!

Bart enters.

BART

Dad, what's wrong? Oh no, a space
launch! Change the channel!

HOMER

I can't! I can't!

Bart runs and pulls the plug out of the wall.

HOMER/BART

(RELIEVED SIGHS)

CUT TO:

INT. MISSION CONTROL - NEXT DAY

We open on the big map which is tracking the spacecraft. A senior scientist, DR. BABCOCK, comes up to a NASA executive, JACK STILLWATER.

DR. BABCOCK

Sir, we've run into a serious problem
with the mission. Take a look at this
data.

STILLWATER

Oh my God! These Nielsen ratings are
the lowest ever.

DR. BABCOCK

We were beaten by an infomercial for
aquarium gravel.

STILLWATER

Do the astronauts know?

DR. BABCOCK

Not yet.

STILLWATER

Better not tell them. They might vent
their frustrations on the space craft.

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM

Stillwater is addressing a conference table full of NASA
SCIENTISTS and PERSONNEL.

STILLWATER

Gentlemen, we're in danger of losing
our funding. America isn't interested
in space exploration anymore,
especially since the Viking Probe
failed to find any life on Mars.

CUT TO:

We see the Viking Probe sitting on the red Martian surface.
A TV camera mounted on top does a slow 360 degree PAN,
searching for life. Perched atop the camera is a CUDDLY
ALIEN.

BACK TO SCENE

STILLWATER

We need a fresh angle to get the public
interested.

Dr. Babcock takes the floor.

DR. BABCOCK

The public see our astronauts as clean-cut, athletic go-getters. They hate people like that.

ANGLE ON

A CLEAN-CUT ASTRONAUT TRAINEE squeezes a hand-grip exerciser. He slams down his glass of milk.

TRAINEE

Well who in the Sam Hill do they like?

DR. BABCOCK

Here are a few of America's most popular TV personalities.

He flicks on a TV with a remote.

A) We see a TIM ALLEN-TYPE wearing a tool belt, sitting on top of a **SUPER-CHARGED** riding mower.

TIM ALLEN TYPE

(TRADEMARK MACHO SHOUT)

He floors the mower and shoots backward through a fence. We hear a **SCREAM**.

TIM ALLEN TYPE (CONT'D)

I've killed Wilson. (TRADEMARK MACHO SOUND)

Dr. Babcock **FLICKS** the remote.

B) The **ROSEANNE THEME MUSIC** plays as the CAMERA CIRCLE DOLLIES around obese parents shoveling huge amounts of food into their mouths and **LAUGHING**, while the children sit in front of empty plates and watch in fear and horror. Roseanne notices the camera, eyes it hungrily, and apparently swallows it.

C) The scene changes to the "Married With Children" living room. AL and PEG are on the sofa. Peg sits next to Al who has his hand in his pants and is drinking beer.

PEG

Al, let's have sex.

AL

No.

SFX: HYSTERICAL CANNED LAUGHTER

PEG

Your feet smell.

Audience **LAUGHTER**. After a long pause Al reaches over to a toilet which we reveal is next to the couch and **FLUSHES** it. There is loud audience **APPLAUSE** and **WHOOPIING**.

BACK TO SCENE

NERDY SCIENTIST

They're all a bunch of blue collar
slobs.

STILLWATER

That's who we need for our next
astronaut.

NERDY SCIENTIST

But how will we find such a person?

DR. BABCOCK

I suggest an exhaustive, expensive
nationwide search.

STILLWATER

I wish there was an easier way.

The phone **RINGS**. Stillwater answers.

HOMER (V.O.)

Hello, is this NASA?

STILLWATER

Yes.

Homer is on a payphone at Moe's (WE INTERCUT).

HOMER

Good. (ANGRILY) Look, I'm just an ordinary working blue collar slob who likes to come home, plop down on the sofa, prop up my smelly feet, and watch TV.

STILLWATER

How did you get this number?

HOMER

Shut up. And I don't wanna see no clean-cut athletic go-getter-types making me feel bad about myself and robbing me of my dignity. Hold on a second.

SFX: TOILET FLUSH

The NASA scientists look at each other excitedly.

DR. BABCOCK

(SOTTO) Trace this call.

EXT. MOE'S BAR - NIGHT

A government car with a NASA logo pulls up in front.

INT. MOE'S BAR

Homer is on a pay phone.

HOMER

Hello, is this President Clinton?

(BEAT) Good. I bought a water softener
at Sears that's leaking and since it's
past ninety days, they won't take it
back. Now this is where you come in.

(BEAT) Shut up.

A hand taps his shoulder.

DR. BABCOCK (V.O.)

Excuse me.

Homer **SCREAMS** and hangs up the phone. WIDEN to see
Stillwater and Dr. Babcock.

DR. BABCOCK (CONT'D)

Are you the person that called NASA
yesterday.

HOMER

(GASP) No. It wasn't me, I swear. It
was... him.

Homer points at BARNEY. They walk over to Barney who's
chug-a-lugging beer.

STILLWATER

Sir, how would you like to get higher
than you've ever been in your life?

BARNEY

Be an astronaut? Sure.

STILLWATER

Welcome aboard. I think you will find
this will win you the respect of your
peers.

HOMER

Nooo! It was me! I made the crank
call. I do it all the time. Check
with the FBI, I have a file. I HAVE A
FIILE.

STILLWATER

(SHRUGGING) Better take both of them.

Dr. Babcock pulls out a blackjack and coldcocks Homer and
Barney.

STILLWATER (CONT'D)

I don't really think that was
necessary. They wanted to be
astronauts.

DR. BABCOCK

I know.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL BANQUET ROOM - DAY

Members of the PRESS have gathered. Stillwater is on the stage behind a podium.

STILLWATER

Ladies and gentlemen and members of the press, I'd like to present the new generation of NASA astronaut, the average American.

A curtain rises revealing Homer and Barney. Homer wears a brand new barbecue apron that says: "HAIL TO THE CHEF," and is holding a spatula. Barney wears loud golfing pants and a tam. He is leaning on a club.

JIM WALLACE

Jim Wallace, Associated Press. (BEAT)
Is this a joke?

STILLWATER

Far from it. One of these two men will prove that space travel is finally within the reach of the common man.

KAREN HUNTER

Karen Hunter, Minneapolis Star. No, really, is this a joke?

STILLWATER

(BECOMING ANNOYED) No, these two men will compete to see who has, to coin a phrase, "the correct stuff."

REPORTER #1

A question for the barbecue chef: don't
you think there is an inherent danger
in sending under-qualified civilians
into space?

HOMER

As I see it, the only danger is if we
get captured by alien bubble creatures
who put us on trial for our crimes
against the galaxy.

There is a stunned silence.

HOMER

As I understand it.

REPORTER #2

Excuse me, is the golfer okay?

We see Barney lies passed out on the stage in a puddle of
beer.

STILLWATER

Thank you, I'm afraid that's all we
have time for.

The curtain **SQUEAKILY** lowers.

INT. SIMPSONS' KITCHEN - EVENING

The family eats dinner.

BART

Wow! My father, an astronaut! I feel
so full of... what's the opposite of
shame?

MARGE

Pride?

BART

No, not that far from shame.

HOMER

(HOPEFUL) Less shame?

BART

(AFFECTIONATELY) Yeah.

HOMER

And look, I risked my life to get you
these moon rocks.

Homer hands Lisa and Bart moon rocks.

LISA

Dad, you haven't been to the moon yet.

HOMER

Of course not, I stole them from NASA.
They were just sitting there, under a
nearly unbreakable glass dome.

BART

Wow, an astronaut and a thief. I love
you, Dad.

HOMER

(TO HIMSELF) At last, the respect I've
been craving.

MARGE

You know, Homer, when I found out about this I went through a wide range of emotions. First I was nervous, then anxious, then wary, then apprehensive, then kinda sleepy, then worried, and then concerned. But now I realize that being a spaceman is something you have to do.

HOMER

A man's gotta do what a man's gotta...

Homer's watch alarm begins BEEPING.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(LOOKS AT WATCH) Ooh, time for cartoons.

He clicks on the TV. The Itchy and Scratchy Show is on.

ON TV

We see an art card that reads "ITCHY AND SCRATCHY - SCAR TREK: THE NEXT LACERATION."

EXT. SPACE - AFTERNOON

We see a small spaceship ZOOM by.

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

SCRATCHY takes a last bite of a sandwich. He suddenly grimaces in pain and clutches his convulsing stomach. ITCHY pops out of his stomach a la Alien, holding the last bite of the sandwich. Scratchy SCREAMS.

Itchy throws Scratchy into the airlock and prepares to blow him into space. Scratchy zips up his spacesuit and dons a helmet just as he is SUCKED OUT into space.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

The spaceship's robotic claws grab Scratchy and turn him directly toward Saturn, whose rings are spinning like a buzz saw. **SFX: BUZZ SAW.** They saw Scratchy neatly in half. He watches his pelvis and legs float away. He "swims" desperately after them, but they burn up in the atmosphere. One of the robotic claws rips off Scratchy's helmet. His head and eyeballs begin to puff up a la Total Recall. Scratchy's eyes dart back and forth, watching his head swell.

The other robotic claw takes a shiny hat pin and **POPS** his ballooning head, splattering on the pod's windshield spelling "THE END."

An art card reads "VIEWER ADVISORY."

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The preceding program contained scenes
of extreme violence and should not have
been viewed by young children.

BACK TO SCENE

Bart, Lisa, and Marge are **LAUGHING**.

BART

(LAUGHING) That was great.

We WIDEN TO SEE that Homer is drenched in sweat.

HOMER

(UNEASY LAUGH) It's funny 'cuz it's
not true... right?

EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL BASE - DAY

The Simpsons drive past a SENTRY at an entrance gate. A sign reads: "CAPE CANAVERAL, FORMERLY CAPE KENNEDY, FORMERLY CAPE ARBUCKLE."

INT. SIMPSONS CAR - CONTINUOUS

Homer picks up a road map.

HOMER

Our base housing is... grid 6, street
J, block 19, unit 4.

AERIAL VIEW

From above, the base is a huge grid of identical units.

MARGE (V.O.)

(PLEASED) Oooh. I hear grid 6 is one
of the better grids.

EXT. NASA - DAY

Dr. Babcock is showing Homer and Barney around the base.
He escorts them toward a hangar.

DR. BABCOCK

Now of course only one of you will be
chosen to go into space, so the next
few weeks will be a grueling series of
tests to determine which of you is most
qualified.

Barney raises his hand.

BARNEY

How will we know when we're in space?

HOMER

(TO DR. BABCOCK) That stupid question
he just asked is good for me, right?

DR. BABCOCK

Oh, and Barney - for the duration of
the training, there'll be no more beer.

He plucks a can of beer out of Barney's hand.

BARNEY

Three whole weeks with only wine? I'll
go crazy.

HOMER

And may the best man win. (TO BABCOCK)
You wrote that down about the wine,
didn't you?

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE QUARTERS - NIGHT

We start close on a foot KICKING a wall. PULL BACK to
reveal Homer LAUGHING.

MARGE

Homer, what are you doing?

HOMER

(HAPPILY) It's not our house; we can do
whatever we want. It's like a rental
car. Here, help me deface this
painting.

MARGE

No! Homer, I really think you should
watch your behavior if you want to win
this competition.

HOMER

Marge, there is no competition. We're
talking about Barney, here. He's a
sub-human juice pump.

LISA

Dad, he's your best friend.

HOMER

And he always will be. Unless I make
better friends once I'm an astronaut.
(BEAT, THEN) Let's go tear up the lawn.

BART

Let's do that.

MARGE

Homer, we have to live here!

INT. NASA TRAINING FACILITY

Homer, in a training jumpsuit, is eating a donut. He comes
up to Dr. Babcock.

HOMER

Well here I am, right on time. I don't
see Barney, that means he's late.
Write that down.

DR. BABCOCK

No, actually he's been here since
sunrise.

He points. We see Barney working out on a speed bag. He
is very coordinated.

BARNEY

Hey, Homer, since they made me stop
drinking I can see colors again. For
example: (POINTING) green, orange,
blue, yellow, blue again.

HOMER

(TO DR. BABCOCK, DESPERATELY) I can do
that too. (LOOKING AROUND) Awww, he
already did all the easy ones.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIMPSON TEMPORARY BASE HOUSE - DAY

Bart and Lisa are playing catch out front.

LISA

I love Florida. It's warm in the
winter.

BART

It's paradise.

Bart misses the ball. It rolls next to some bushes.

BART (CONT'D)

I'll get it.

Bart is just about to pick up the ball when an ALLIGATOR
lunges out of the bushes and swallows it.

BART

(SCREAMS)

LISA (O.S.)

(SCREAMS)

ANGLE ON LISA

She is covered with mosquitos.

LISA

Agh! Mosquitos!

There is an ominous **LOW RUMBLE** that builds. An angry
SNAPPING herd of **FLAMINGOS** comes running down the street a
la "Jurassic Park." Bart and Lisa run from it.

TRAINING MONTAGE

STIRRING RIGHT STUFF TYPE MUSIC

- 1) Barney on the centrifuge, his face becomes highly distorted as G forces increase.
- 2) Homer on the centrifuge as G forces increase, his face becomes incredibly good-looking.
- 3) A slimmer Barney high-steps through an obstacle course of old tires. Homer follows, only the tires collect on each leg like rings on a ring-toss.
- 4) INT. WEIGHTLESS ROOM - A still slim Barney floats happily.

BARNEY

Hey, this is fun.

WIDEN to show Homer flopping around on the floor. Dr. Babcock turns a dial marked "WEIGHTLESSNESS" to maximum. Homer slowly rises a few inches from the floor and flashes Dr. Babcock the "thumbs up" sign.

DR. BABCOCK

I don't understand it. We've never had
to use so much weightlessness before.

- 5) Homer and Barney, in their underwear, are being sprayed with high-pressure hoses by GRINNING SCIENTISTS.

HOMER

Hey, what's this for?

DR. BABCOCK

(LYING) It's for... Uh, science, Homer.

- 6) Barney is strapped in a gyro chair. It begins spinning Barney in all different directions.

BARNEY

Faster! Faster! Whee!

The chair stops spinning. Dr. Babcock comes up to him.

DR. BABCOCK

Any nausea?

BARNEY

Are you kidding? My bed used to spin
more than that.

Barney walks off. Homer crosses past him, walks over to the chair, takes one look at it, covers his mouth and runs off.

7) Homer and Barney, in space suits, are held from behind as NASA ENGINEERS pummel them in the stomach.

8) A red-faced Barney is blowing air through liquid holding a ping pong ball afloat. Dr. Babcock is timing him. PAN over to Homer, sitting at an identical device which he is just finishing sucking dry.

SFX: EMPTY SODA CUP

HOMER

Mmmmm. Mediciney.

9) In an arena, Babcock and other SCIENTISTS sit in bleachers watching Homer and Barney fighting each other with gladiator-type weapons. They wear glowing slave collars around their necks. "STAR TREK FIGHT MUSIC" rages.

Babcock leans over to another scientist.

DR. BABCOCK

I wager 400 quatloos on the newcomer.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

We see an invigorated, happy Barney changing into street clothes. PAN OVER to see a PANTING, flushed Homer in a sweat stained flight suit.

BARNEY

Homer, you really should shower and
clean up.

HOMER

I just did.

Stillwater comes up to Barney with two clean-cut astronauts.

STILLWATER

Barney, I'd like you to meet the two experienced astronauts who'll be accompanying you into space. (COYLY) Should you be chosen, heh-heh.

He **LAUGHS** and elbows Barney.

BARNEY

Hi, guys.

BUZZ

Barney, we hear you're kickin' ass. Looks like we'll be riding that big candle together.

HOMER

Ahem... I don't think this competition is over yet, Buzz. If that is your real name. For instance, my jaw's much stronger than Barney's. Here, hold this.

Homer hands Buzz one end of a towel. He puts the other in his mouth.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(THROUGH CLENCHED TEETH) Pull! Pull!

Homer begins **GROWLING** and pulling like a dog. Buzz puts up with it for a few moments, then takes his end and puts it in the mouth of a passing dog. Homer and the dog continue struggling and **GROWLING**. The astronauts, Stillwater and Barney quietly walk off.

INT. BASE HOUSING - KITCHEN - DAY

Marge sits around with some ASTRONAUT WIVES. They have beehive hairdos too.

ASTRO WIFE #1

Marge, this icebox cake is scrumptious.

I want to give you my recipe for
Mayonnaise Pie.

MARGE

Great. I love mayonnaise.

ASTRO WIFE #2

Me too! We have a lot in common.

ASTRO WIFE #3

Yeah, we're all married to genuine
American heroes.

At that moment, Homer appears at the window, still fighting the dog over the towel. Marge pulls down the shade.

MARGE

Sun's a little bright, isn't it?

EXT. NASA GYM - NEXT DAY

HOMER

Look, Barney, I know I got caught up in
this competition and I did a couple of
really sleazy, underhanded things. Now
that it's clear they didn't work, I'd
like to apologize.

BARNEY

Apology accepted.

HOMER

And if by some wild chance they do pick me, and I don't come back, take care of Marge for me. (BEAT) Financially.

BARNEY

Sure. And if it's me, I know I don't have a wife or kids, but there's a mushroom growing on my shower mat that I've become quite fond of.

HOMER

(SOLEMN) I'll take care of him. I swear it.

BARNEY

Thanks. His name is "Mushy."

Stillwater enters with Dr. Babcock.

STILLWATER

Homer, Barney, it's been a tough decision.

Dr. Babcock suppresses a **SARCASTIC LAUGH**.

STILLWATER (CONT'D)

But we've decided to go with Barney.

HOMER

(HEARTFELT) Congratulations, Barney.

STILLWATER

That's very gracious of you, Homer.

Please join us in a toast.

He pulls out a bottle of champagne.

STILLWATER / DR. BABCOCK

To the mission.

Barney takes one sip. He gets a crazed look in his eye.

BARNEY

(OMINOUSLY) It begins.

He grabs the bottle and starts to chug-a-lug.

STILLWATER / BABCOCK

(AD LIBBING) No! / Please! / For God
sake!

Stillwater and Babcock try to wrestle the bottle away from Barney who easily sweeps them aside. He straps on a nearby jet pack and **FLIES** off.

BARNEY

(BAD CHARGE) Ta da da dum da da!

DR. BABCOCK

I don't understand it. That was non-
alcoholic champagne.

STILLWATER

(SIGHS) Well, Homer. I guess you're
the winner by default.

HOMER

(JUBILANT) Default! Woo hoo! The
sweetest two words in the English
language. (CHANTING AND DANCING) De-
fault! De-fault! De-

Dr. Babcock **KNOCKS** him cold with the blackjack.

STILLWATER

(RE: BLACKJACK) Where'd you get that,
anyway?

DR. BABCOCK

Sent away.

EXT. NASA - DAY

We see the spacecraft on the launch pad.

INT. NASA CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Triumphant **MUSIC** plays as Homer and the two astronauts in full space suits walk toward us in heroic slow motion. They get closer and closer until finally just Homer's face fills the screen. He looks up at the impossibly tall spacecraft.

HOMER

(LOW SLO-MO VOICE) Nooooo!

Homer suddenly pops out of slow motion and runs quickly away. He jumps over a fence in the distance.

EXT. EVERGLADES

Homer runs through the underbrush. NASA men with flashlights fan out through the woods, looking for him. We do not see their leader's face, only that he has dangling keys hanging from his belt.

HOMER

(TERRIFIED OUT OF BREATH) Got to call

Marge. Got to phone home. Phone home.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

SHALLOW BREATHING comes from a shed in the yard. A kid walks slowly forward with a flashlight. We hear the **SMALL NOISES** of a terrified Homer.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KID'S ROOM - LATER

A 10-YEAR-OLD BOY, with his **LITTLE SISTER** and **BROTHER**, opens the door to his closet, revealing Homer cowering inside eating some food.

KID SISTER

Neat.

KID

(RE: HOMER) I'm keeping him.

INT. SIMPSON TEMPORARY BASE HOUSE

The phone is **RINGING**. Marge answers it.

MARGE

Hello, Simpsons' temporary base house.

INTERCUT BETWEEN KID'S CLOSET AND HOUSE

HOMER

Marge, don't tell the kids, but I kinda ran away.

MARGE

Oh is that what happened? We've been trying to watch the launch for the last four hours but they've just been playing patriotic music.

HOMER

Marge, I don't really want to go through with this... But being an astronaut is how I got you to respect me.

MARGE

(SINCERE) Homer, when I married you, you weren't an astronaut. You didn't even know how to use a Touchtone. But I still respected you, and I always will, no matter what you do.

SFX: TOUCHTONE PHONE KEYS

MARGE (CONT'D)

(MILDLY ANNOYED) Homer, you already dialed.

HOMER

Oh. (WHINY) But if I don't go I'll feel like a quitter, and then I won't respect me. Like that time when I was fourteen and they opened a new roller coaster, the "Splatterhorn." I was gonna be the first one to ride it. But when the moment came, I chickened out and ran away.

MARGE

Homer, that coaster derailed and everyone on it was severely injured.

HOMER

Yeah, and they all got big cash settlements... (REALIZING) You know what that money got them? The respect of their peers. That's it, Marge. I'm gonna do it.

MARGE

I'm very proud of you, Homer.

HOMER

Thanks Marge.

He hangs up.

HOMER

(HEROICALLY) For the first time in a long while, I feel like a man.

PULL BACK TO see Homer is fiddling with a toy in his lap.

KID

Can I have my toy back?

HOMER

(GRUFFLY) Soon.

He pulls the string.

FEMALE (V.O.)

The cow goes Mooooo.

HOMER

Hee, hee. It's fun and I'm learning.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL - DAY

We see the rocket sitting on the launch pad.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

T-minus three minutes till lift off and
counting.

INT. SPACE CRAFT - CONTINUOUS

We see Buzz Aldrin and Race Bannon going over a checklist.

BUZZ

Mission control, this is Corvair,
launch sequence initiated. All systems
go.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Roger, Corvair. Looking good. How's
your cargo?

Buzz looks behind him at Homer who is strapped in a dark
corner.

HOMER

Are we there yet? I'm thirsty.

BUZZ

Permission to sedate cargo ahead of
schedule.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Permission denied.

RACE

Experiment checklist. Top Secret:
Department of Defense experiment.
Check. Moderately Secret: Department
of Housing experiment. Check. Ant
farm. Check.

HOMER

You know the best thing about these
spacesuits is you can go to the
bathroom anytime anywhere.

Homer sits quietly for a few beats.

BUZZ

Homer, you're not wearing one of those
suits.

Homer continues to sit there silently.

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE HOUSING LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

We see Marge, the kids, Patty, Selma, and Grampa watching
the launch coverage.

ON TV

We see Kent Brockman.

KENT BROCKMAN

(FILLING TIME) And, the countdown continues, here at the space center... on this sunny day. The sun is shining brightly... Of course, the astronauts will not be going to the sun... For its surface is too hot. (PAUSE) I understand they will be using Arabic numbers in the countdown... six, two, nine, and so on; though not necessarily in that order.

GRAMPA

I want to watch "The Scarecrow and Mrs. King."

MARGE

Grampa, they're shooting your son up into space in three minutes.

GRAMPA

(SADLY) I may not have three minutes.

EXT. LAUNCHPAD - DAY

We see the rocket on the launchpad.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Three, two, one, make rocket go now.

The rocket begins to lift off.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

We see Buzz and Race bracing themselves against the G-forces. PAN OVER to Homer who holds a roll of stamps up to his face.

HOMER

These rare stamps are going to be worth
even more once they've been in space.

The G-forces slowly start to push Homer's hand toward his
mouth.

HOMER

Noooo! (GULP)

INT. MOE'S

Barney and the barflies are watching the launch on TV.
Barney lifts up his glass in a toast.

BARNEY

This one's for you, Homer.

MOE & BARFLIES

Here, here.

BARNEY

(LOOKING AROUND) Hey, where is Homer
anyway?

ON TV

The rocket climbs higher into the sky.

BROCKMAN (V.O.)

... And congratulations to
Springfield's own Homer Simpson, the
nation's first average man in space.

A picture of Homer appears with the name "HOMER SIMPSON"
flashing below it. We PULL BACK to see Smithers and Burns
watching TV.

BURNS

Who is that man, Smithers?

Smithers points to the name on the screen.

SMITHERS

(CURTLY) Homer Simpson, sir.

BURNS

What a coup it would be to have a man
like that working here at the plant.

SMITHERS

Excuse me, sir.

Smithers steps out of the room.

SMITHERS (O.S.)

(EXASPERATED SCREAM)

Smithers re-enters calmly.

SMITHERS

Yes it would, sir.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We see a normal looking GUY watching TV.

GUY

Wow, an average guy like me in space.

NASA is allright.

INT. ANOTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Another GUY is watching TV.

GUY #2

Wow, a regular guy in space. This
inspires me to change my life.

We PULL BACK to see he is in a jail cell with a sign that
reads "DEATH ROW." He runs to the bars.

GUY #2 (CONT'D)

Guard! Guard! For my last meal,
change that steak to a veggie burger.

INT. YET ANOTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Yet another GUY watches TV.

GUY #3

Finally, they send up an ordinary guy
like me.

With intense, telekinetic glances around the room, he closes all the shutters and windows a la Carrie. He then stares at some logs in his fireplace which **BURST** into flame.

INT. NASA MISSION CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Babcock walks over to Stillwater.

DR. BABCOCK

Sir, the TV ratings for the launch are
the highest in ten years.

EVERYBODY

(CHEERS)

STILLWATER

How's the spacecraft doing?

DR. BABCOCK

I don't know. All this equipment is
just used to measure TV ratings.

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

Homer is floating, looking out a window. Buzz and Race are eating out of foil tubes that say "CHICKEN SANDWICH."

HOMER

Hey, I can see my house from here.

BUZZ

Homer, that's Greece.

HOMER

Mmm, grease. Which reminds me...

He holds up a big bag of potato chips.

HOMER (CONT'D)

Look what I smuggled aboard.

BUZZ

Homer, no!

Homer rips open the bag. Chips and crumbs explode all over the cabin and float everywhere.

RACE

Dear God, they're ranch style!

Buzz puts his hands over his eyes.

BUZZ

(IN PAIN) Ahh! Paprika!

HOMER

(TAUNTING) Oooh, look at the big
strong astronauts, afraid of a
delicious snack food. I'll take care
of this.

Homer pushes off from a wall and floats through the air CHOMPING potato chips. The BLUE DANUBE begins to PLAY. Homer approaches a floating chip and begins to rotate with it in perfect sync. He eats it and moves onto another one. Homer continues to float along gracefully, but then looks forward.

HOMER POV

He is headed directly for a large glass panel marked "EXPERIMENTAL ANT COLONY."

HOMER

(SCREAM)

As he yells, he sprays chips. He tries futilely to back pedal. In unison, all of the ants look over toward Homer.

ANTS POV

Homer's face growing grotesquely huge.

ANTS

(UPSET SQUEAKING)

ANT #1

SUBTITLE: PROTECT THE QUEEN!

ANT #2

SUBTITLE: WHICH ONE'S THE QUEEN?

ANT #3

SUBTITLE: I'M THE QUEEN.

ANT #4

SUBTITLE: NO YOU'RE NOT.

Just as the **MUSIC** crescendos, Homer **CRASHES** into the ant farm. The spacecraft is now filled with potato chips, sand, and ants.

ANTS

(UPSET SQUEAKING)

SUBTITLE: FREEDOM! HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE FREEDOM!

BUZZ

Homer, you've ruined the most important experiment of the mission. Now we may never know if ants can be trained to sort tiny screws in space.

HOMER

We've gotta do something, they're eating my chips. Segmented bastards!

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Good news, gentlemen, we have quite a treat for you. We've been able to coax superstar James Taylor here to wish you well and play you a little of his own brand of laid back adult contemporary music.

HOMER

Wow! Former president James Taylor. This is a treat.

JAMES TAYLOR (V.O.)

How ya doin', fellas?

BUZZ

With all due respect, Mr. Taylor, this isn't the best time for your unique brand of bittersweet folk rock. We have a potentially critical situation here.

INT. MISSION CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

We see JAMES TAYLOR standing with Dr. Babcock.

DR. BABCOCK

It's true, I don't like these ant levels one bit.

Dr. Babcock looks at a meter labeled "ANTS IN AIR." The needle is well into the "unacceptable" zone.

BUZZ

(TO JAMES) I'm sure you understand. Could you give us a half hour?

JAMES TAYLOR

Listen, Aldrin, I'm not as laid back as
people think. Now here's the deal:
I'm gonna play and you're gonna float
there and like it.

James Taylor begins **PLAYING** "You Got a Friend."

JAMES TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(SINGING) When you're down and troubled
and you need a helping hand and nothing
is going right. Just close your eyes
and think of me and soon I will be
there... (etc)

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

We see Homer and the astronauts floating in a mess of chips
and ants, listening to the **MUSIC** coming out of a small
speaker.

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE HOUSING LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The family watches TV.

ON TV

We see Kent Brockman.

KENT BROCKMAN

We're just about to get our first
pictures from inside the spacecraft
with "Average-naut" Homer Simpson.

A TV shot from inside the spacecraft appears. Homer and
the astronauts float in the midst of ants and chips, while
James Taylor **PLAYS** in the background. An ant floats
directly in front of the lens, making it look gigantic.
Kent Brockman and the Simpsons **SCREAM**. The picture from
space is suddenly cut off.

KENT BROCKMAN

(CALMLY) Ladies and gentlemen, we've just lost the picture, but what we've seen speaks for itself. The Corvair spacecraft has apparently been taken over, conquered, if you will, by a master race of giant space ants. It is difficult to tell whether they will consume the captive Earthmen or merely enslave them. But one thing is for certain, there is no stopping them; the ants will soon be here. And I, for one, welcome our new insect overlords. And I would like to remind them that as a trusted TV personality, I can be helpful in rounding up others to toil in their underground sugar caves.

A mortise appears with a giant ant wearing pants and wielding a whip over cowering humans slaves.

BACK TO SCENE

LISA

Aw, he freaked out the same way when that cow wandered in front of the President's motorcade.

MARGE

Don't worry, I'm sure your father's all right. (CONCERNED MURMUR)

INT. SPACECRAFT - A LITTLE LATER

James Taylor is singing "Fire and Rain."

JAMES TAYLOR

Hours of time on the telephone line /
to talk about things to come. / Sweet
dreams, and flying machines, in pieces
on the ground... (REALIZES; STOPS
SINGING) Oops, sorry. How about
"Frozen Man?"

RACE

Oh my god! The ants are shorting out
our navigation system!

We see a panel smoking and **SPARKING**. The ship lurches from side to side, throwing the astronauts with it a la "Lost in Space." For some reason, Homer is flung in the opposite direction from the others.

CLOSE UP - MISSION CONTROL ANT METER

The needle is now bent. We **PULL BACK** to see a horrified Dr. Babcock and Stillwater.

DR. BABCOCK

How ironic, nature's smallest creature
endangers the lives of nature's largest
creature.

STILLWATER

Are you sure you're a scientist?

JAMES TAYLOR

Ants, huh? We had quite a severe ant problem at the Vineyard this year. What we did was create a total vacuum outside the house and blow the ants out the front door. But I'm sure our resort town ways are of no interest to you high-tech NASA people.

DR. BABCOCK

Quiet, you.

STILLWATER

Wait a minute, this lanky tunesmith just may be on to something.

INT. SPACECRAFT - LATER

Homer, Buzz and Race have donned spacesuits.

BUZZ

All right, brace yourselves. I'm going to blow the hatch in three, two, one.

The hatch flies open. All the ants and other debris are immediately sucked out. Homer is hanging on to the control panel. He raises his hands in victory.

HOMER

Eat space, ants! (THEN REALIZES) Uh-oh.

Homer is sucked out the hatch. He grabs the door handle which starts to bend.

INT. NASA MISSION CONTROL

Stillwater and Babcock are watching on the monitor.

STILLWATER

Oh my god! This is a disaster.

Stillwater and Babcock turn and glare at James Taylor.

JAMES TAYLOR

Gotta go!

He drops his guitar with a **FLANG** and sprints out.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Homer is holding onto the door handle which is beginning to bend. The Astronauts grab him just as the handle **SNAPS** off.

BUZZ

Homer, you broke the handle. With that hatch open, we can't reenter the atmosphere to get back to Earth.

A red light on Race's spacesuit begins to blink.

RACE

And we're running out of air.

HOMER

Sure. Blame me for everything. Who smashed the ant farm? Wait. Bad example.

Buzz and Race advance on him menacingly.

DR. BABCOCK

Buzz, Race, I implore you. Don't resort to violence. (BEAT) Although you are outside the jurisdiction of earth law.

Homer backs away from them, groping desperately for a weapon and pulls a pipe from the wall.

HOMER

Ah-ha!

He brandishes the bar, raising it over his head for a crashing blow. It gets lodged in the broken door handle socket. Tugging on the bar to try to free it, he pulls the door shut.

HOMER

(STRUGGLING) Stupid bar. Stuck in door. Must pull loose.

BUZZ

No Homer. If that bar holds, we might just make it back to earth.

HOMER

I'll bash you good.

Homer continues trying to pull the bar free. The astronauts must wrestle him away from the door.

CUT TO:

ON TV

KENT BROCKMAN

Well, this reporter was possibly a little hasty earlier and would like to reaffirm his allegiance to this country and its human president. It may not be perfect, but it's still the best government we have. (BEAT--EYES DARTING) For now. (TO OFF CAMERA) What? Oh.

We WIDEN to see a hastily made cardboard sign that reads "HAIL ANTS." He tears it down.

KENT BROCKMAN (CONT'D)

(OFF-HANDEDLY SKIMMING NOTES) By the way, the spacecraft is still in extreme danger. ...May not make it back. Attempting risky reentry... Etcetera.

EXT. SPACE

The spacecraft is hurtling into the upper ionosphere and is **SPARKING** and glowing bright red.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

We see the hatch and bar vibrating wildly. We PAN over to see Buzz and Race bravely **HUMMING** "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." We PAN from them over to Homer.

HOMER

(SINGING) Oh, those Golden Grahams/ Oh, those Golden Grahams/ Crispy Crunchy Graham cereal brand new breakfast treat.

CUT TO:

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Marge is watching a NASA simulation of the spacecraft's reentry.

MARGE

Come on, Homie, you can make it.

GRAMPA

Of course he'll make it. It's TV.

INT. SPACECRAFT - LATER

They are on the ground. Buzz opens the hatch. They are immediately besieged by reporters.

REPORTERS

(AD-LIBBING) Are you okay? How did you do it? Did you see me waving to you up there? Is Madonna pregnant?

REPORTER

How did you solve the door problem?

BUZZ

(GENEROUSLY) Homer Simpson was the real hero here. He jury-rigged the door closed using this.

REPORTER

What is that?

HOMER

Just an inanimate carbon rod.

Homer holds up the rod for all to see. Flashbulbs pop. We ZOOM IN on just the hand holding the rod.

MATCH DISSOLVE
TO:

The cover of TIME MAGAZINE. Only the rod, not Homer, has made the cover of the magazine. The headline reads: "In Rod We Trust."

ON TV

We see the rod is being given a huge ticker-tape parade. PULL BACK to see Homer watching the parade. He FLICKS off the TV, disgusted.

BART

(DISAPPOINTED) Aww, they were just about to show some closeups of the rod.

HOMER

What a gyp. I risked my life getting shot up into space and I still don't get any respect. I mean, how many guys get to go eighteen thousand miles an hour... How many people have seen the ice caps and the deserts all at once... How many people have seen the beauty of the northern lights from one hundred miles above?

LISA

(ENTHRALLED) What did it look like, Dad?

BART

Yeah.

HOMER

I can't begin to describe it.

BART/LISA

(IMPRESSED) Wow.

HOMER

But I'll try. It's like when you bang your head real hard... say, when you fall off of a stool... or when you walk into a door... or when you use a bicycle as a ladder...

During the above speech WE PAN UP from Homer through the roof of the house, high into space where we see the Fox Satellite orbiting the earth. A sign reads: "DANGER - RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS."

We get closer and see the satellite is covered with ants who are eating it. Each time they bite, an electric bolt **SHOOTs** through them making them grow larger and larger. Soon the picture flickers, then goes to fuzz.

END OF ACT THREE