

MOON BOY

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FADE IN:

The face of an Apollo astronaut, his gold-plated visor reflects the desolate, cratered surface of the moon with Earth hanging high above.

TRIP (V.O.)
One small step for man . . .

A gigantic HAND reaches in and wraps around the astronaut, removing the ACTION FIGURE from its place on a window sill.

INT. TRIP'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

YOUTHFUL HANDS maneuver the astronaut across his bedsheets to a toy Lunar Transportation Rover, bending the spaceman into the driver's seat. MOVING UP the arms we find the sweet, enchanted face of TRIP GAINES.

TRIP
One giant leap for mankind . . .

Trip flashes a mischievous grin---

and sends the moon buggy off his bed into the darkness.

Trip listens as it CRASHES to the floor then flicks on a FLASHLIGHT. He spotlights the upside down LTR and slides off his bed. He flips over the rover then gives it another big push across the room.

The buggy hits the wall with a THUD. Coming to rest next to a space shuttle with its name etched on the side: LIBERTY.

Trip removes the astronaut from the LTR, secures him inside the shuttle. He flips a switch -- LIBERTY LIGHTS UP.

Trip lays the flashlight on its side, illuminating a makeshift runway of bedroom floor.

He rolls the shuttle along, increasing speed as he rises to his feet. Liftoff. Liberty takes flight. Trip flies the shuttle around his room. Several glorious circles.

Trip sweeps over to a large bubbled window. He soars the shuttle upwards, holding it high above his head.

Outside, a majestic revelation. A brilliant blue and white jewel floats in an ocean of infinite stars:

EARTH. Like we've never seen before. A thin ring of satellite debris encircles the planet. The faint dust does little, though, to diminish its tranquil beauty.

Trip gazes out, entranced. Wide eyes reflect a longing in his heart. A dream unfulfilled.

Within the room, TWO BLUE LIGHTS FLUTTER. Small stroboscopes rapidly fire then lock solid. THE EYES OF A ROBOT.

iLU COMES TO LIFE. An adult-sized, peculiar robot of human form. Shell and body parts a colorful mishmash of salvaged high tech. An ever-evolving work in progress.

iLU's face has received the most attention. Lifelike. Taut skin with a HOLOGRAPHIC GLINT. A deep crease encircles the cranium, easy access to his positronic brain. Hairless.

One more thing, emotion percolates inside iLU at all times.

iLU
(aghast)
Trip! Get back in bed!

Trip lowers the shuttle, his mind still miles away.

iLU rushes to him, but gets yanked off his feet as the charge chord out his back loses its slack. He hits the floor hard.

iLU, red with embarrassment, follows the chord back to the wall. Unplugs it. He releases the end and it coils into his spine.

iLU
Your mother will have my head if she catches you out of bed.

TRIP
Like she cares.

iLU
Nonsense. She most certainly does.

TRIP
I adjusted your idle. It's better that you sleep while recharging.

iLU
Better for you as well, Trip.

Trip turns from the window, tosses his toy on the floor.

TRIP
It's time to get up anyway.

iLU makes Trip's bed. Trip switches on the bedroom LIGHTS.

iLU
Good heavens! What a disaster!

iLU scurries about the messy room, picking up toys. Posters of Earth and nature dot the walls: the Grand Canyon, Mount Everest, Yosemite, Old Faithful, trees, lakes, sunsets, etc.

iLU
Before I plugged in, I clearly recall a tidy room.

TRIP
Put a sock in it.

Trip pulls off his pajamas as he disappears into his closet.

iLU
(puzzled)
Put a sock in what exactly?

INT. TRIP'S WORKSHOP

Half playroom, half repair shop. Electronic clutter. Computers. High tech toys. Wires. Robot appendages.

Trip gathers news discs as they drop from an internet press.

iLU prepares Trip's bike. The futuristic cycle HOVERS beside him as he oils and lubes its thrusters and gravity pads.

iLU
Promise me you will get some sleep tonight. Tomorrow is a big day.

TRIP
Promise me you'll not speak for a week and I'll think about it.

iLU
Smarty Arty had a party and no one came but Smarty Arty.

Trip shakes his head, annoyed.

iLU
(doleful)
Oh, you are right, Trip. I am a chatterbox. I know. A smart mouth, know-it-all, chatterbox.

TRIP
iLU, don't. Don't do it. Don't cry.

iLU bursts into tears. Weeps heavy, overly dramatic sobs.

TRIP
I replenished your fluids yesterday!

iLU
I'm sorry, Trip. I don't know what's gotten into me lately.

Trip opens and searches through drawers.

TRIP
I need to recalibrate your emotional stimulator. It's gotten worse.

iLU freaks, runs to the far side of the room.

iLU
No more surgery! No more surgery!

Trip locates a small tool, conceals it in his hand. He walks over to iLU.

TRIP

iLU, look at you. You're a mood swing away from serious meltdown. Relax.

iLU

Please, Trip. No more surgery. My heart simply can't take it.

TRIP

You don't have a heart. Your sensory palette lacks any association for pain. You're completely anesthetized. You can't feel a thing. It's impossible.

iLU

(insulted)

Well, whatever feelings I have they are deeply hurt by that "no heart" comment.

TRIP

Quit being so dramatic.

iLU

Software gets mishandled. Wires get crossed. Memory erased. Memory is the closest thing I have to a heart. Without it, I lose my only friend.

Accustomed to iLU's displays of melodrama, Trip reacts with a kind of cool bemusement and shrugs off the moment.

TRIP

I would never let that happen. Get the bike, iLU. We have to get going.

iLU unhooks the anchor to the bike.

iLU

Trip, please pilot within the explicit limits today.

TRIP

Hold it steady. Be still.

iLU steadies the bike with both hands. Trip pulls a fast one, pops open iLU's head. Blue eyes fade as Trip tinkers with the gooey electronics in iLU's skull.

INT. SPACECORPS BASE - TRIP'S PAPER ROUTE

Trip flies his bike through a corridor. iLU rides in the back, hanging on for dear life. Trip steers like a pro, occasionally pushing the limits to get a shriek out of iLU.

They bank high and fast around a corner. iLU squeals.

They sail through a cavernous annex of labs, offices, food and beverage units. Electronic debris and large piles of machinery lie scattered about. Lights flicker and strobe. Grim and sobering, the base has become a lunar junk yard.

Some RESIDENTS, not many. More laborers than scientists. More robots than humans. Tough to tell who's who.

A grease-stained WORKER calls out:

WORKER
Happy birthday, Trip!

TRIP
Birthday's tomorrow, Bob.

WORKER
Oh. What are you getting this year?

TRIP
Me and my mother are going to Earth.

iLU wobbles forward.

iLU
My mother and I.

Trip makes a sharp turn to avoid a scrap pile. iLU almost falls off. Trip laughs.

Large video monitors, placed like street lights, flash Earth reports and base announcements. STATIC interrupts images of masked terrorists and desolation in a nuked city.

Random messages and information fill the air like Muzak.

PA SYSTEM (V.O.)
Spacecorps happily announces its 418th day of injury-free operation. Spacecorps is currently accepting applications for Mars Station 5. Distance pay, profit sharing, and retirement assistance are available, see your section supervisor today.

iLU has a greenish glow about him. Woozy.

iLU
Slow down, Trip. I'm getting sick to my stomach.

TRIP
You don't have a stomach.

Trip hangs ten, up and over a parked vehicle. iLU leans to his side, vomits green oily gunk.