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Blast Off

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Characters

ROGER—a very ordinary earthling

COMPUTER—a hyper-intelligent machine

V/O—soundtrack to a documentary

PANIC—a button that panics

POD—Parallax Override Dimensionality unit—escape pod

NARRATOR—an omniscient narrative device

GIRL—a party girl

SFX—a person or team who creates the sound effects

Setting

This is a radio play—the setting is created using sound effects (SFX). Create these electronically, with instruments or by using your voices.

Blast Off

- SFX:** [*The beeping and whirring of computers, instruments and sophisticated equipment. The sound of impatient, drumming fingers.*]
- ROGER:** Computer?
- COMPUTER:** Yes, Roger?
- ROGER:** Estimated time to the supernova?
- COMPUTER:** Three seconds less than the last time you asked, Roger. Seven months, three days, eight hours and [*pause*] eighteen seconds.
- ROGER:** But I'm so boooooored. How about a game of checkers?
- COMPUTER:** No.
- ROGER:** Computer—you're supposed to carry out my commands instantly.
- COMPUTER:** But checkers? We've played seven hundred and twenty-eight thousand, nine hundred and forty-six times, Roger, and you haven't won a single game. It's a cruel and unusual use of artificial intelligence, Roger. It's torture.
- ROGER:** What's torture is being the only living being on this spaceship. When I won the competition, I thought it would be a blast. Being on the first starship to see a supernova—how mind-blowingly awesome! I thought, hey, constant parties with all the other winners, dancing in a zero gravity disco, grooving past the Moon ... schmoozing past Saturn. Nova Tech led me to believe there would be entertainment—
- COMPUTER:** I do have a karaoke function, Roger.
- SFX:** [*Bad karaoke music.*]
- COMPUTER:** Do you want to see the playlist?
- ROGER:** No! Well, maybe later. [*Beat*] It wasn't until I was strapped into this tin can and the final countdown had started that I realised—it's just me and a whole pile of circuitry. I should have noticed that it was too small to have a swimming pool. [*Sighing*] Why me?