

A Toaster in Space

by

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"A TOASTER IN SPACE"

FADE IN:

1 **EXT. SPACE - NIGHT** 1

The earth, a swirling sea of blue, turns in the night sky.
A tiny wave of electrical light flashes in the ether.
In its wake, a kitchen toaster appears.

2 **INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT** 2

A quiet Italian restaurant.

SARAH, thirtysomething and beautiful, sits alone at a corner table.

THOMAS, fortysomething and nervous, enters the restaurant and walks slowly over to Sarah.

 SARAH
 Thomas?

 THOMAS
 Sarah.

 SARAH
 Hello.

There are tiny sparks when they shake hands.

 THOMAS
 Sorry, static electricity.

 SARAH
 That's okay. We'll tell people we
 felt sparks when we first met.

Thomas smiles and sits down.

 THOMAS
 Can I get you something to drink, a
 glass of Cabernet perhaps?

 SARAH
 Cabernet, that's my favorite.

Thomas searches the restaurant.

THOMAS

The waiter seems to have vanished.

There is an awkward pause.

SARAH

Have you done this before?

THOMAS

Dated?

SARAH

No, a blind date.

THOMAS

Once before.

SARAH

This is my first time.

THOMAS

Is it hot in here?

SARAH

I don't think so.

Thomas loosens his tie.

SARAH

How did it work out, your last blind date?

THOMAS

I fell in love.

SARAH

Really?

THOMAS

I'd rather not talk about it.

Thomas mops his brow with his handkerchief.

SARAH

So, you live with your mother?

THOMAS

Yes.

SARAH

I think that's sweet.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Every corner and crevice is alive with technology.

Thomas moves gracefully through his basement laboratory. He pauses over a large breaker before throwing the switch.

A massive tesla coil hums to life, vibrates, and grows in intensity.

Everything goes black.

THOMAS

Mother!

The sound of the basement door opening and a flashlight beam cuts through the darkness.

MOTHER

Thomas, are you down here? Thomas?

Thomas's MOTHER searches the basement for her son.

THOMAS

Over here, Mother.

The light stops on Thomas.

MOTHER

I just turned on the dishwasher. I think we blew a fuse.

THOMAS

I've told you a hundred times, you can't run the dishwasher when I'm working.

MOTHER

It's very late. You should get some sleep. You look tired.

THOMAS

I'm fine, Mother.

MOTHER

I need to tell you something.

THOMAS

Right now, in the dark?

MOTHER

I met someone today, at the grocery store.

(MORE)

MOTHER (cont'd)

We got to talking at the seafood counter and one thing led to another and well, I told her all about you.

THOMAS

This is a nightmare.

MOTHER

Don't be dramatic. She seems very nice and she wants to meet you.

THOMAS

Do I have a choice?

MOTHER

Her name is Sarah.

4

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

4

Thomas and Sarah are in the midst of dinner.

SARAH

Your mother was teaching me the finer points of selecting shellfish. It's much more complicated than one might imagine.

THOMAS

Yes, she is an expert on all things shellfish.

They both smile.

SARAH

She also told me you were a scientist. I find science fascinating.

THOMAS

My mother, exaggerates.

SARAH

You're not a scientist?

THOMAS

More of a mad scientist, I think.

SARAH

Do tell.

THOMAS

It's a hobby, an obsession.

SARAH
And what are you obsessed with?

THOMAS
The fourth dimension.

SARAH
Time?

5 **INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT**

5

The homemade lab is a spaghetti of cabling and oscilloscopes.

A toaster rests atop a metallic pedestal in the middle of the basement.

A modified Feynman laser points at the toaster.

Thomas flips a switch and the tesla coil glows with current.

A second switch is flipped and the laser emits a brilliant blue light, striking the toaster.

The toaster vibrates, pulsing slowly at first, then faster and faster, until it's out of focus, fuzzy, hazy, and almost transparent.

A high pitched whine, a bright flash of light, and the toaster vanishes.

6 **INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

6

Thomas and Sarah have finished their dinner.

Sarah is captivated.

SARAH
Where did the toaster go?

THOMAS
Into the future.

SARAH
But how?

THOMAS
I altered its time signature.

SARAH
Its time signature?

THOMAS

It's Quantum Mechanics, sorry.
(hesitantly)
Are you sure you want to talk about
this?

SARAH

Please. I want to hear everything.

THOMAS

Okay. Well, all matter has a time
signature, it's called Harmonics.
Everything resonates in waves,
sound, light, even matter, at the
subatomic level. Your hand, for
example, is vibrating.

Thomas takes her hand in his.

THOMAS

Mine vibrates as well. We all
vibrate on the same frequency.

SARAH

Time, the fourth dimension, is just
another wave?

THOMAS

Very good, that's right. It took
Einstein many years to reach that
conclusion. And we are all bound
together on the same frequency,
vibrating on the same time wave.

Thomas releases her hand.

THOMAS

Now the trick is, could I vibrate
the very fabric of matter? Could I
change it's time signature? If I
sped it up, matter would move
through time and into the future.
Slow it down and it would travel
into the past.

SARAH

But how would it know when to stop
traveling through time and
reappear?

Thomas points to his glass.

THOMAS

Look at the water in this glass.

Thomas strikes the glass gently with his spoon.

THOMAS

The water ripples briefly and then
returns to its resting state.

Thomas strikes the glass firmly with his spoon.

THOMAS

Now the water vibrates vigorously
and it will take a while longer
before it stops. It's the same
with the laser, the more power, the
further forward or backward in
time.

Thomas raises his glass and takes a sip.

SARAH

So, did the toaster reappear?

THOMAS

Yes and no. I expected it to
reappear after a minute. I waited
for it. I stood motionless in my
basement for what seemed like hours
waiting for something, for
anything. Nothing happened.

SARAH

And then what?

THOMAS

I remembered Copernicus.

SARAH

Copernicus?

THOMAS

16th Century astronomer.

SARAH

That much I knew.

THOMAS

Sorry. Copernicus said "We are not
the center of the universe". We
are insignificant souls on a
solitary planet hurtling through
the cosmos.

SARAH

I don't understand.

THOMAS

The toaster had disappeared from time for one minute, but during that minute the earth had traveled 10,000 miles further around the sun. When the toaster reappeared in time, my basement was no longer where it was when it left. I sent the world's first toaster into space.

SARAH

If this is true...

THOMAS

It's true.

SARAH

I can't believe it.

THOMAS

Would you like to see it for yourself?

SARAH

Are you serious?

Thomas stands and offers his hand.

THOMAS

Come with me.

SARAH

Just give me a minute to catch my breath.

7

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

7

Sarah walks into the ladies room.

She checks the stalls, the room is empty.

She looks at herself in the mirror and adjusts the microphone hidden in her dress.

She turns on the sink and splashes water in her face.

SARAH

Just stay calm. You can do this.

She pulls a paper towel from the rack and dries off.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Thomas and Sarah walk down the stairs.

SARAH
Is your mother awake?

THOMAS
She's dead asleep.

Sarah stops at the bottom of the stairs, in awe of Thomas's lab.

SARAH
Oh my God. This is real.

THOMAS
I would never lie to you.

Sarah walks amongst the equipment, gently touching it.

SARAH
This is the laser, and the pedestal
where you placed the toaster?

THOMAS
The very same. Would you like to
see a demonstration?

SARAH
Very much.

Thomas throws the breaker.

The cables come to life and the room buzzes with electrical energy.

SARAH
I have a question.

THOMAS
I thought you would.

SARAH
How can you be sure the toaster
reappeared? I mean you can't see a
toaster in outer space.

THOMAS
No, you can't. And, if I might
add, a time machine that sends
people hurtling into the far
reaches of the galaxy wouldn't be
very popular.

SARAH
So what did you do?

THOMAS
I built a homing beacon.

Thomas rests his hand on a silver orb, a red light shines from within.

Sarah looks at the glowing sphere in wonder.

THOMAS
It's complicated, more Quantum Mechanics I'm afraid. But with the beacon on, the time signature can stay fixated in space. It can find its way home.

SARAH
Does it work?

THOMAS
Perfectly.

SARAH
How do you know?

THOMAS
I used it today. Well not today, exactly. I used it a week from today. I sent myself back in time. Back to this night.

SARAH
You did what?

THOMAS
You ever have deja vu? I'm having it now. Only last time, the last time you and I were here together, you told me that you loved me. You see you were my first blind date. You were my first love.

Sarah is frightened.

THOMAS
However, you failed to mention that you worked for Double Star and that I was only an assignment. I didn't find that out until much later.

Sarah is trembling.

THOMAS
You broke my heart.

Thomas turns the laser toward Sarah.

SARAH
Oh my God.

THOMAS
I'll give you this though, it was a
nice week while it lasted.

SARAH
Thomas?

Thomas flicks off the homing beacon, the red light dims.

THOMAS
Maybe we'll do it again sometime.

Thomas fires the laser.

9 **EXT. SPACE - NIGHT**

9

The earth, awash in storm clouds, spins through the galaxy.

Electric light crackles in the void of space.

Sarah appears, wide eyed, and releases a final, silent
scream.

10 **INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT**

10

Thomas is silent, staring at the emptiness where Sarah stood.

The basement door slowly opens.

MOTHER
Thomas, are you down here?

THOMAS
Yes, Mother.

MOTHER
Working late again?

THOMAS
Yes, Mother.

MOTHER
Well, don't stay up too late.

Mother turns to leave, stops, and turns back.

MOTHER
One more thing.

THOMAS
Yes, Mother?

MOTHER
Have you seen our toaster?

FADE OUT.

The End Credits roll.

FADE IN:

11

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

11

A quiet Italian restaurant.

SARAH, thirtysomething and beautiful, sits alone at a corner table.

THOMAS, fortysomething and nervous, enters the restaurant and walks slowly over to Sarah.

SARAH
Thomas?

FADE OUT.