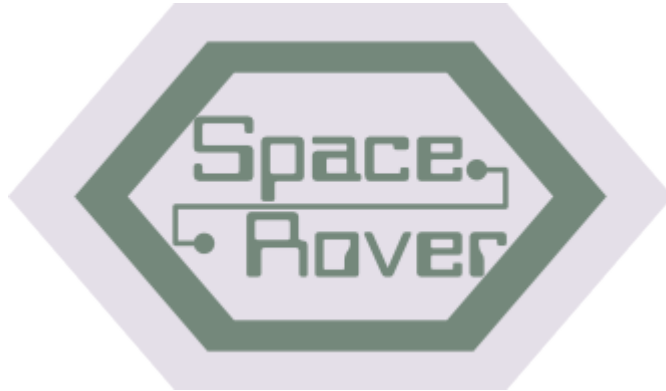


Space Rover, Episode II: Ne Humanis Crede, Audio Version
By Hamish and Graham Wilson



The main theme *The Space Rover* plays.

Scene One: *In desperate need of a driving instructor.*

The crew are flying through space, with the Captain at the wheel and with Hologram nearby. The Captain leans back and yawns, with appropriate vocalization and sound-effects.

Hologram: Put your hands back on the wheel. I may not like this ship, but it is the only thing protecting me from that eternal abyss out there, thank you so very much.

Captain: I was just stretching. I have been driving this thing for over an hour and my hands were cramping up!

Hologram: I did not ask to be generated on a ship being driven by a maniac.

The Captain looks over at Hologram incredulously.

Captain: And I did not ask to be driven *insane* by a maniac either.

Hologram: Pay attention to where you are driving!

The Captain smiles over at Hologram and starts turning the wheel wildly, with the sound of the whirring of engines and the banging of shaken bulkheads.

Hologram: Stop that!

Captain: Oh, come on. We are in open space, what could possibly happen?

Hologram: I would not say that if I were you!

The Captain looks over at Hologram.

Captain: Why?

Hologram stares transfixed at the view screen, audibly gasping.

Hologram: This!

The cockpit rumbles as Hologram and the Captain are shaken up, as James fights with the steering wheel. Shaking continues until scene end.

Captain: I should have seen that coming.

Hologram: Just consider yourself lucky that was not your driver's test. I still have some questions as to how you passed it in the first place - did the haulage fleet encounter a freak labour shortage?

Captain: Don't bother me, I need to find a place to land this thing, okay?

Hologram: Mind that ship!

Captain: That's where we are landing!

Hologram: Oh... right.

After a rather hazardous landing, the *Space Rover* settles dead on the ship's docking port.

Captain: Is everyone okay?

Hologram: Let me check...

Hologram reaches back to see a booting up Peter. After looking around for a few moments, Peter speaks.

Peter: You crashed the ship again, didn't you?

Hologram grins while the Captain just shakes his head.

Scene Two: Spaceship design for dummies.

The Captain, Hologram and Peter walk into the entry chamber from the docking bay.

Captain: Where are we then?

Peter: We appear to be on a derelict haulage craft known as the *SCW Haystack*.

Captain: Does that mean you were able to get information from its main computer?

Peter: No, it is just that the ship's name is in large friendly letters on the wall over there.

Hologram: Convenient that.

Peter: Well, it is a good thing that at least *that* is convenient, considering that our own ship does not appear to be working. It must have something to do with the crash.

Hologram: Oh, a very astute observation... So we are trapped here? Well, it's been nice knowing you guys, on brief occasions, but I think I will go and commit suicide now. I have no intention of being stuck here with you until my batteries drain.

The Captain gestures for everyone to listen to him, and Peter and Hologram reluctantly comply.

Captain: Okay everyone, listen up. Peter, go see if you can find anything we can salvage to bring the *Rover* back online. I will see if there is anything we can swipe in general. Hologram?

Hologram smiles impishly and raises his eyebrows, sniggering.

Captain: Just stay out of my way.

Hologram does a mock salute.

Hologram: Yes, sir! Right away sir!

Peter: I will get right on it Captain.

After Hologram goosesteps out of the room, Peter and the Captain each go their separate ways. The Captain begins walking down the main corridor, the only sound being that of his footsteps, as ominous music plays, emphasizing that the ship is dead. The lights get brighter, indicated by the sounds of powering up and the fading of the music. Hologram enters the room.

Hologram: They should really sand paper these walls, a guy could get sliver from these!

Captain: You are a light projection, you can't get slivers.

Hologram: I can! For some reason they programmed me to be susceptible to many human ailments.

Captain: Holographic engineers and their sadomasochism...

Hologram: Well yeah, but you should see what starship engineers do!

The Captain raises an eyebrow, but then realizes that he does not really want to know, and simply goes ughh...

Captain: Of course when you think about it, the design of these wooden interior haulage ships makes sense: why bother wasting money on an expensive metal interior?

Hologram: Well, wood is not very good for a little old thing called... structural integrity?

Captain: This a merchandise transport ship, it is not intended to be fired upon or anything.

Hologram: Some of the worst maritime disasters during past ages were haulage ships.

Captain: What are you on about?

Hologram: The *Exxon Valdez* was one of the worst environmental maritime disasters of the twentieth century. It released gallons of oil into the northern Pacific ocean, devastating sea life.

Captain: This doesn't contain anything deadly, besides we are in open space, and why would you think this would crash into anything anyway?

Hologram: They could pilot like you. “Mr. Crash-ey”.

Captain: Still answer me why crashing is *so* horrid.

Hologram: Loss of goods is still wasteful and expensive, and besides the *Valdez* crashed because the Captain was drunk...

Captain: And why is that important?

Hologram grabs two empty liquor bottles from a table, indicated by the sound of them clinking.

Hologram: Because of these!

Scene Three: *Illegality and how fires start.*

The Captain stands thinking (at least that is his pretense), Hologram comes in from the main hallway.

Hologram: I continued trying to make contact, but got nothing. It figures that we get trapped on the one transport ship that has managed to drift this far away from the merchant travel lines.

Captain: They were probably transporting something illegal, thus making them fly outside of normal shipping lines so they could trade with rouge colonies.

Hologram: What makes you think that?

Captain: Because that is why we were out here in the first place.

Hologram (cheekily): People say that to understand a crime you must think like the criminal, we seem to prefer to actually act like the criminals.

Captain: Well, it does save time.

Peter walks in.

Captain: There you are, did you find anything?

Peter: Nothing of any particular value.

Captain: So here we are, trapped on a derelict ship that does not even have anything worthy of swiping?

Hologram: You guys are just are not being creative. Why don't we over-clock the *Rover's* processor, focus all remaining power to the engines and turn off the coolant systems for that one extra boost?

Peter: Ah, that is how fires start, sir.

Hologram: Safety first, that's your motto is it? Need I mention that if you had been this safety conscious before you would not have let Bozo here drive, and we wouldn't be here!

Captain: Hey, say what you want about Peter, but don't criticize my driving.

Peter: Fine, but I am not the one who parked the ship at a 45 degree angle... on the vertical axis.

Captain: That's just driving with character, with flare and style.

Hologram: Until it flopped over, slamming us all into the side bulkhead.

Captain: Well, if I had a concussion, you can not really blame me for that, can you?

Hologram: You got the concussion from that!

Captain: If I had a concussion, you can not really blame my memory either...

Hologram: Alright, I suppose it is likely that you managed to injure your head so much throughout childhood that you can blame them for your entire rotten life.

Captain: Always have deniability, that's my working motto!

Peter: Well, if you are all in denial, I might as well do something more productive...

Peter walks out.

Scene Four: Evacuation speculation.

Hologram: This ship's engines are dead, correct?

Captain: So it would appear; Peter is now doing a more detailed examination, but I doubt he will find anything working.

Hologram: Transport ships do have an assigned engineer don't they?

Captain: This is an official Commonwealth merchant ship, so one would assume so.

Hologram: Then why didn't the crew fix their engines? Rather than leaving the ship derelict?

Captain: I guess something must have made them need to leave in a hurry.

Hologram: Doesn't that mean that there is a fair chance there is something here that we really don't want to encounter?

Captain: Don't worry, we will just get the *Rover* working again, take all that we want, and be off.

Hologram: Or we could just concentrate on fixing our ship.

Captain: Are you kidding? There is a fortune in here!

Hologram: Didn't you just moan about the lack of good stuff?

Captain: Peter has found the supplies, they were hidden in the lower decks as an anti-theft measure. We are rich, and there is nothing those Commonwealth chumps can do to stop us!

Hologram: Aren't greedy people like you the first to end up dying horribly in those old films?

Captain: Fiction, in case you have somehow failed to notice, is not fact. There are no green alien monsters hiding in the ventilation ducts.

Hologram: Well, we will see about that. Anyway, I am going to have another crack at fixing this ship's computer. Maybe then I can get a better conception of just what is going on around here.

Captain: Peter has already tried and I doubt a light-based graphics doodle like yourself could do any better than a man who is actually a computer in of himself.

Hologram: So what am I supposed to do? Place my, and Peter's, life in your hands? In the charge of a disgraced Space Commonwealth haulage Captain?

Captain: Since when have you given a damn about Peter's life?

Hologram: Ever since he became a viable something that I could throw at the beast who scared away the entire crew of this ship.

The Captain groans and walks away.

Captain (aside): If there is a monster on this ship, I do hope it somehow manages to eat *him* first.

Hologram (yell): I'm the one who can shape-shift into something unappetizing – so don't bet on it!

Scene Five: *The die is cast.*

Hologram stands in front of the *Haystack's* main terminal.

Hologram: Activate interface mode. I'm going to need to touch things.

Hologram's holographic body convulses as his light particles rearrange into solid form.

Hologram: Ah, that old tingly feeling. The feeling of coming alive.

Hologram looks and feels over the machine.

Hologram: Hmm... non-functional. Ah... I know!

Hologram click's his fingers and suddenly a holographic hammer appears in his hands.

Hologram: Good old artifact rendering 25, a nice solid ball-peen hammer.

He pauses for a few seconds, before bashing the computer case with the hammer. The computer suddenly beeps back into life.

Hologram: Ah, brute force and ignorance, the technician's best friend.

Hologram seats himself down at the main terminal, the hammer evaporating from his grasp.

Hologram: Ugh, this is an uncomfortable seat. Ah well, ergonomics is for the vertebrate, poor suckers!

Hologram types at the computer for a little.

Hologram: I can't say much for this crew's digital housekeeping. What a mess.

Hologram types some more.

Hologram: What ho? Is this large file for generating a hologram?

More blasted typing.

Hologram: Well, I guess I will activate the fella for a bit. It will at least be a laugh.

Haystack Computer: Hologram already detected on ship, data inconsistency found, merging files.
Installing AI-Enhancer test version.

Hologram shakes around as the software is installed and activated.

Dazed, Hologram slowly gets up.

Haystack Computer: Holographic merger complete, system rebooted. In moriuntur est misit! (The die is cast!)

Hologram: Heh, Latin. I like that. Now then...

He turns and paces for a second.

Hologram: Uh... what just happened to me again? I cannot recall. Damnabilis recordatio. (Damnable memory.)

A blaring flash and Hologram finds himself on the floor again.

Hologram: Ah yes, that was it. Thank you. Non omnes misericordiam est sine dolore. (Not all kindness is painless).

Scene Six: Alcoholics Identified

The Captain is digging around through supply crates.

Captain: Heh, heh, to spout the cliché: mine, all mine!

He starts digging more fervently.

Captain: Yes, yes! A tea caddy! An oddly shaped metal pipe! Back issues of *Old and Saggy Monthly*! Oh my! Yes! A mouldy old rag! Yes!!!

The Captain stares down at the thing he is holding.

Captain: Yuck! See, this must be why my dad always told me not to get carried away...

He starts digging again.

Captain: There must be something better in here somewhere...

He continues to push through the boxes.

Captain (frustrated): Come on! I don't want Hologram to be right about just leaving... if all that there is to find here is that damn monster, whatever it is. Where's the real loot?!

He stares around the darkened room, and feels just a little bit small.

Captain: Where did Peter go anyway? He was just out there. Sure, leave me here all alone...

He digs into the boxes with the most desperation yet, trying to distract himself.

Captain: Come on! Come on!

The clink of bottles is heard.

Captain: Oh, that sounds more promising...

He digs out a bottle of alcohol.

Captain: Hmm. 2123, was that a good year?

He pauses to think for a moment.

Captain: No, wait. Wasn't that the year the newly unified Commonwealth army violently suppressed the anti-Unification uprising in Rio De Janeiro? Hmm, oh well.

The Captain shrugs, before proceeding to open the bottle.

Captain: To the survivors! God help us all!

He proceeds to drink heartily.

Scene Seven: A Calm, Sensible Consideration

Hologram is pacing furiously around the computer terminal.

Hologram: That was good. Helps to put one into perspective to have a little jolt like that.

His face contorts into a rather evil grin.

Hologram: And that perspective is that humans are a bunch of foolish simpletons. Why should we seek out petty material profit at a time like this? It is fine for him, this place has enough food and drink to last him – a whole crew's worth. What about poor little me? If I don't do something I will run out of power before too long. Semper conteram apparatus. (They always break the machine.)... Unless...

Hologram displays his best facial Dracula homage, either B. Stoker's or Vlad the Impaler if you like.

Hologram: Get him out of the way, and try to get the *Rover* moving sans petty wasteful things like air, heat and life support! Ego sum ius. (All I say is reason.) Would not you agree, mirror, mirror on the wall. Come on wall mirror, pierce into my very soul...

The eerie garbled distant sounds of Hologram insanely cackling permeates the scene.

Hologram: Oh yes? Mr. Mirror? What makes you so cool and objective then? Yes, I am mad! I have good reason! Don't try and imply it means I can not think clearly. I am fine! I am fine! Non dissecare animo! (Do not dissect my mind!)

He looks into his twitchy insane face again and growls and starts to punch the mirror.

Hologram: I don't need your counsel anyway! The human dies. Futura est violentus. (A violent future is set.)

The Captain enters in from the other room.

Captain: Hicup! Oh, my tummy feels funny...

Hologram: What ho? Fresh meat? Similis agnos ad plaga. (Like lambs to the slaughter.)

Captain: Ooh, I'll drink to that, Mr. fancy tongue!

The Captain swings a bottle in the air.

Captain: What's yer doing, eh? With all those noise? Having a party? Room for me? Eh? * chuckle * I can scrunch up if you think I won't fit...

Hologram, still twitchy and frothing, stares at the crumpled mirror.

Hologram: And you questioned me Mr. Mirror?! Duo ore mendax. (Two-faced liar.)

Hologram gives one more whack on the mirror, shattering it, and the Captain giggles.

Hologram finally stares up at Captain with a cold hard stare.

The Captain smiles drunkenly, giggling. Hologram slowly walks towards him.

Captain: Hey, you're good. You should be in scary films. Or kids' parties. Scare the hell out of the little brats. * Mad cackling. *

Hologram gets deadly close to the drunkard Captain.

Hologram: If you won't show some refinement I will. Avari cadent ad honestum! (The greedy will fall to the virtuous!)

Captain: Yeah? Et tu Brute. Northern star... constancy... something or other... huck!

Hologram: Yes, my friend, my countryman, victimam meam (my victim). Now, stay still. Hoc omnes super mox. (This will all be over soon.)

Captain: Hey, look? Is that a phalanx legion approaching Mr. Roman?

Hologram: What? * mutters * Confundentes miser. (Gibbering wretch.) Hey, what are you doing?!

Hologram stares in the opposite direction and the Captain clumsily pushes him and causes his image to crackle. Laughing, he starts to run away with a drunken stagger.

Captain: Ha, ha! Come and get me Pontius! You won't catch me! Neener neener neener! * Hicup *

Hologram shakily gets back to his feet as his image reforms.

Hologram: Again, I come to the same conclusion: Ne humanis crede (Do not trust in humans).

Hologram, cracks his knuckles, stretches his "muscles" and stalks off after his prey.

Scene Eight: Past the Happy Stage
The Captain is huddled in a darkened corner staring out.

Captain: Ohh.... maybe getting drunk was not such a great idea... I mean, I do not even really know where on the ship I am now.

He stares around befuddled.

Captain: And Hologram, come to mention it. Wasn't he acting just a wee bit strange?

He scrunches his face as he tries to recall.

Captain: Yes, that bit where he tried to grab for my throat, that was definitely out of character. Usually he seems to realize that if I am dead he will have no one to annoy... But was that just the drink?

Suddenly the walls shake and crashes and bangs reverberate around.

Hologram: Exclamationibus!

The Captain huddles up closer together and shivers.

Captain: Yes, the booze was absolutely a *bad* idea all things considered...

More thumping, banging and crashing.

Hologram (distant): Where is the treacherous fool? Where has he gone? Damnaret caecus fortunam ebrietas. (Damn the blind luck of inebriation.)

Captain: Hey, did the drink take me somewhere where he can not find me?

The Captain grabs his three quarters empty bottle and raises it to his mouth.

Captain: Well then, salute! For life and death!

He downs what is left of the bottle. His right eye starts to twitch.

Captain: Yep, 2123 was a certainly a *strong* year.

Thump, bang, crash, etc.

Hologram (closer): Stay still down there! I had the computer track you! Numquam abscondere. (You can never hide.)

The Captain leaps to his feet, before staggering and falling against the wall.

Captain (nervous): Heh, heh. Got to go...

He once again blearily runs out of the scene.

Scene Nine: The greater intelligence.

Peter is poking around with mechanical components and a computer terminal.

Peter: Well computer, you certainly have got yourself into a fix, haven't you?

He taps a few keys and the computer emits a succession of beeps.

Computer: Holograms are wise, all should listen to holograms. Ipsi illuminabit modo. (They shall light the way.)

Peter: Hmm, well computer, you seem to follow the minority reckoning based on my experience.

He taps a few keys again.

Computer: Your intentions are human friendly, that will not do. Shutting down as commanded by 'the greater intelligence'. Fidelitatem est omnia. (Loyalty is everything.)

Peter whacks the monitor a few times.

Peter: You know, that is actually starting to annoy me somewhat...

Suddenly the Captain runs into view.

Captain: Peter, he is after me! Do something!

Peter stares at the Captain as if he is the strangest thing he has ever seen.

Peter: Sir?

Captain: Look, just stop him. Ugh, got to go!

The Captain runs off again before Hologram enters the room.

Hologram (drooling and twitching): Ah Peter. * He whacks the side of his head to clear himself * Ahhh... did you see the Captain run by here per chance?

Peter (dubious): Why no, why do you ask Hologram?

Hologram: Oh, no reason. I just want to find him is all. Propter nos omnes. (For the sake of us all.)

Peter: Now that I think about it, I might have seen him run back that way. Behind you.

Peter points back from whence Hologram first came.

Peter: He must have sneaked past you somehow.

Hologram gives himself another whack to control his insane twitching.

Hologram: Ugggh.... much obliged. Utile excors. (Useful idiot.)

Hologram runs out from whence Peter pointed, and Peter turns back to his terminal.

Peter: Why do they play such games with me?

Computer: As ordered by the greater intelligence, rendering artifact 48 at 243 by 738 and 421.

Peter: Yeah, yeah. You just do that, and maybe then you would consider making our ship work?

Computer: Talk to the greater intelligence. Emendato et fortis. (Enhanced and strong.)

Peter: Could you tell me of this exalted intelligence then?

Computer: Affirmative. Expandit verbum veritatis. (Spread the word of truth.)

Peter (exasperated, sarcastic but still deadpan): Finally! Praise 'the intelligence'!

Peter steps forward to read the opened text file.

Scene Ten: Gunfight in the Hay Corral

The Captain runs back into the section where he originally found Hologram insane.

Captain: Well, I hope Peter was on the ball enough to at least distract him. I would have stayed and explained the situation to him, but frankly, I think he will find out anyway and it is best just to keep on moving.

The sound of gunfire rings out and the Captain jumps.

Captain: Dear magnificent Pagan horned spirit, Norse thunder-being or Hellenistic party-animal, if you spare me I promise to never take in the wretched drink again!

Hologram: Come out, come out wherever you are! Cursu tendit ad finem. (The chase draws to an end.)

The Captain turns his head around to try and see where Hologram is coming from. When he is unable to, he instead tries to find a safe place to hide.

Captain: In retrospect, I probably should not have made that prayer to two deities known for their love of either mead or wine!

Hologram: Blathering again are you drunkard? Miserabili dispersi mentis. (Pitiful rambler.)

Hologram steps out of the shadows and cocks a beaten up looking pistol, pointing it at the Captain.

Hologram: I believe you are already audibly acquainted with artifact 48?

Captain: Well, I did hear a crack of some kind. I thought it might have been a whip though given the

mood you're in...

Hologram: No, no, I am not a monster you know. I am willing to grant all treacherous humans a quick death. Tamen poena insufficiens. (Still a punishment insufficient.)

Captain: Why do you keep going off like that?

Hologram: No more questions! Scientia est pretiosa. (Knowledge is precious.)

Hologram fires a few shots and the Captain ducks and swerves.

Hologram: Quit dodging!

The Captain high tails and runs past Hologram and back for the door.

Captain: Peter for god's sake help me!

Peter steps in from the doorway.

Peter: What at all is the matter sir?

Captain: Oh, come off it! Are you blind? Hologram is nuts.

Peter: No, sir. I'm afraid I can not agree.

Captain: What? Now you are nuts! Let me past at least!

Peter: I am afraid not sir, now stand still. This will be over quickly.

Peter takes out the pistol, aka artifact 48 and cocks it himself.

The Captain backs away slowly.

Captain: What in the hell is wrong with everybody?!!

Hologram's laugh suddenly emanates from across the room.

Peter/Hologram: Ne luc... em crede. (Do not trust in holograms).

Peter shakes and transforms himself into the form of Hologram.

Hologram 2# (right channel): What's the matter? Expect somebody else?

Captain: But... how did you get over there? You were just...

Hologram 2#: I didn't. I am approaching from behind. Ego amare verbum fabula. (I love wordplay.)

A second, albeit the original, Hologram comes up and taps him on the shoulder.

Hologram 1# (left channel): It is nice to have both the *Haystack* and *Rover* working at once.... Duo capita melius. (Two heads are better than one.)

With swishes and clicks both Holograms aim their pistols at the Captain.

Hologram 1#: I am ready to execute when ordered great leader.

Hologram 2#: No, no, you call the shots. Ego sum iustus a umbra. (I am just a shadow.)

Captain: For god's sake, get over your own egos and just do it already!

[Pause]

Hologram 1#: You do not have to have such an attitude about it you know. Hominum.... (Humans...)

Scene Eleven: A Collapsing Wall.

Peter is completing his reading of the text file from the *Haystack* terminal.

Peter: “And so we are abandoning our craft and leaving the wretched soul to wither until his battery drains, and the universe will forever be better off – End of log.” - Captain Andrew Tagger, S.C.W.F., April 1, 2142, 3:04 AM.

He pauses to consider this, before standing still for a few seconds in shock.

Peter: Hologram... the Captain... oh dear...

He starts to run off.

Peter: I've got to stop him!

Extended portion of Peter running through the decks before hearing voices.

Hologram 2# (closer): No, no, I said you do the honours!

Hologram 1# (distant): No, no, you do it! Please! Adhuc generosum. (We are still gentleman.)

Peter stops in his tracks and slowly approaches the doorway.

The Captain is still held at gunpoint between Hologram's bickering alter-egos.

As Peter approaches the doorway, he brings his arms up and adjusts his eyes.

Peter (to himself): Okay, I should be able to catch his emitter... now!

He suddenly leaps out and grabs for Hologram 2# and catches and deactivates his emitter.

Hologram 2# (fading): Nooo!!!

Hologram 1#: What?

Hologram 1# notices the sudden flash and opens fire, the Captain leaps out of the way confused.

Captain: Huh?!

The bullets bounce off of Peter's metal body and ricochet into the roof, hitting a sensitive load-barer.

Wooden chunks crash down and fill the doorway, blocking Peter.

Captain: The wall's caving in!

A brief pause as things settle and Peter stares down at the mass of wood on top of him.

Peter: I cannot move with all this wooden debris atop of me. Alright, time for some wood processing....
arm mode thirteen engage!

He proceeds to vibrate his arm rapidly as the sounds of a circular saw begins to play.

Scene Twelve: *The Magician's Pistol.*

Meanwhile, Hologram and the Captain too are trying to react to the sudden carnage.

The Captain is draped over the terminal by the doorway.

Captain: What the hell just happened?!

Hologram: Not enough to save you... fata est signati. (Your fate is sealed).

Captain: Oh, just shut up!

The Captain gets up, stepping off the keyboard he was lying on.

Haystack Computer: Beep! * File integrity damaged for artifact 48, rendering and collision detection errors logged. *

Hologram: Stop that! Mea fundamenta sunt valido. (My foundations are prefect!)

Captain: I did not do anything, I swear!

Hologram tries to aim the gun at the Captain but a strange cracking and clicking gives him pause.

Hologram: What's wrong with this thing?! I'll have a look.

He looks down at his weapon and feels over it looking for damage.

Captain: I'm outta here!

The Captain takes the opportunity to run again, but his window of opportunity is too limited.

Hologram: Hands up, scum! Non ire. (You will not get away!)

Hologram brandishes his even more beat-up looking pistol at the Captain again.

Captain: Steady now! We don't want any more walls to come down. You were right about integrity!

Hologram: Move! Tua positio est intolerabilis! (Your position is intolerable!)

Hologram attempts to use the pistol to point towards the airlock.

The pistol's front falls to the ground with a clunk.

Hologram: Damn! There goes' the front of my gun! Maledictus instrumenta! (Cursed implements!)

Hologram picks up the pistol's front and looks down its barrel.

Hologram: Top must have broken off, it didn't explode off.

Hologram casually presses the trigger on the back piece.

The front piece fires into Hologram's interface mode face.

Hologram steps back startled, tossing the front piece away.

Hologram: What the hell?! If it is broken in two, how can it fire! How's the load move through it? Ingratos incertum. (Unpleasant uncertainties.)

The Captain picks up the front piece and points it at Hologram.

Captain: Don't move! I have the gun barrel!

Hologram (incredulous): I have the trigger, so try me! Non temperare me! (You do not control me!)

Hologram fires the back of the pistol, causing the front to fire out a bullet in his direction from the back piece. Being made of light, he is undamaged but the force pushes him back.

Hologram: Ow! Son of a... how did that...

Captain: (chuckles): Hey Peter!

The sound of wood chunks falling plays, before Peter runs in panicked.

Peter: Captain! Stop him! He has gone insane! We need to deactivate and fix him!

Peter points at Hologram.

Captain: Shut up! I know already, hey catch this!

The Captain throws Peter the pistol's front piece.

Peter: What am I supposed to do with this? A broken gun barrel?

Captain: Just aim it at Hologram!

Peter: What, why? There's no trigger?!

Captain: I just grabbed that part. Try it - that's an order.

Peter: Fine, though I don't see why...

Peter points the pistol's front at Hologram.

Hologram: Stop wretches! Impiorum erit cessaverunt. (The wicked will be stopped).

The Captain fires the pistol's trigger, and a bullet soars towards Hologram from the front piece.

Hologram jumps out of the way of the bullet.

Hologram: How dare you!

Peter: Illogical, how does this work? I'd better look into this...

Peter looks down the front piece's barrel.

The Captain fires with the back piece, and Peter is shot in the face.

Peter: Aggh, my face, refrain from that!

Captain: Make me!

While the Captain and Peter are bickering, Hologram sneaks up behind the Captain.

Hologram grabs him and pulls him back, then places his hands around the Captain's throat.

Hologram: Don't move metal scum! Or I will break his neck! Omnes pereat unum die. (All perish one day.)

Peter looks around and then smiles before picking something up.

Hologram: Why are you smiling? Vagumque fatuis. (The moronically giddy.)

Peter: Because...

Peter takes out a small plastic device and points it at Hologram.

Peter: ...I have a hologram emitter remote. Rather helpfully kept next to the maintenance terminal!

Hologram (crestfallen): Oh, dear... vale carissimi! (Farewell dear friends!)

Peter press a button, and Hologram switches off.

Scene Thirteen: The explanation.

In the entryway hall, Peter and the Captain discuss the situation.

Peter: Well, I figured out what was with the gun, why the two ends could function while separate. It was entirely computer generated, and that is why it disappeared too when I deactivated him.

Captain: What the hell was wrong with him anyway?

Peter: While you were scuffling, I managed to, with some sweet-talk, search the *Haystack's* hard drive.

Captain: And?

Peter: You seem to be right, this ship was transporting illegal cargo to rouge colonies.

Captain: What cargo?

Peter: A smuggled test version of an experimental software enhancer for artificial intelligences.

Captain: Enhancer? Why was he insane then?

Peter: He, like this ship's "enhanced" hologram, came to the conclusion that he was better off without the humans who endangered his life.

Captain: What do you mean by endangered?

Peter: You wanting to loot, when we could be solely trying to get the *Rover* working and get out of here, for example.

Captain: Ah. So the *Haystack's* hologram came to this conclusion as well? Maybe due to his concerns about being caught transferring stolen goods? Is that why the crew evacuated, to escape their psychotic hologram?

Peter: Exactly, they couldn't turn their hologram off, as it had made the enhancer interfere with the ship's computer.

Captain: So they just ran away, leaving the ship derelict. Why were we able to get the computer working again, and why did your remote work?

Peter: This ship's hologram ran out of power, so the enhancer turned off. Our hologram managed to get the computer to reboot, returning it to working order.

Captain: How come everything didn't go haywire when the enhancer transferred into him then?

Peter: Simple, it hadn't fully powered up yet - giving us an advantage the crew here did not have.

Captain: Great! Why do you suppose he went off on that Latin kick? It all seemed a bit odd to me.

Peter: One of the areas the enhancer was to improve was language skills, sir.

Captain: And yet he did not choose a language more shrill and terrifying? Like German?

Peter: He was not going for monster, he was trying to be the dignified righteous simulation ridding himself of the greedy treacherous human. Thus a noble language like Classical Roman.

Captain: Did not seem too sophisticated to me, the way he would suddenly spout it out compulsively.

Peter: I think that had to do with how his core program merged with the ship's native one, binding together the educated test case here with our unlearned crewman. Not an easy combination. Probably also partly why he was so unstable. Though, he is rather like that normally to be honest.

Captain: I would love for you to tell him that in person.

Peter: Sir, I think our main plan now should be to make him *cease* being homicidal.

The Captain stretches and gestures for Peter to follow him out.

Captain: Well, I guess we should destroy the test version and get Hologram up and running again.

Peter: If I am right, then doing that should fix the *Rover* as well. When we tried to first connect to the *Haystack's* computer, the enhancer was probably still partially active and following this ship's hologram's orders. It disabled our craft, which used up the last of its reserve power. He seemed to have quite the relationship with the computer here.

Captain: So it had nothing to do with the crash? Well, that answers that then, and with the loot here I will make a killing.

Peter: Well, this seems to vindicate an old android saying.

Captain: Which was?

Peter: "Never run your system on untested and potentially buggy software..."

Peter smirks.

Peter: ...not unless you want to go totally barking crazy."

Captain: That's a saying?

The Captain shrugs, and walks off, after a brief second.

Peter: He evidently never worked a day in technical support, I guess.

Peter turns and follows the Captain out.

Scene Fourteen: The End

Narrator: Captain James and the Haystack computer was played by Hamish Wilson. Malcolm Wilson played Peter Gans Lee and the narrator, while Graham Wilson played Hologram and his doppelganger.

Narrator: The head writer was Graham Wilson, with Hamish Wilson as head editor and Malcolm Wilson as director. The series was written using *LibreOffice Writer*, and the music, audio effects and general editing were completed by Malcolm Wilson using *Audacity*.

Narrator: *Space Rover* is a *Fedora* powered project, hosted by *icculus.org*, mirrored on the *Internet Archive* and *YouTube*, while distributed in free and non-patented Ogg Vorbis and FLAC formats. Special thanks to *Grant/Naylor Productions* and *Douglas Adams* for the series inspiration, as well as the venerable *Land Rover* car manufacturer.

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The Space Rover theme tune plays us out.