

# Entropy

by Jake Lane

*Darkness.*

**DIGITAL VOICE.** Good morning. Today is Thursday. The Earth has entered day 1,082 of the Great Drought. We are approximately 89 million miles from Mars. Our servers are live. You may now engage in your 30 minutes of daily virtual communication.

~ ~ ~

*Darkness. Then one person appears. Then another.  
We only see their faces in the darkness.*

**ONE.** hey

**TWO.** hey woah

**ONE.** how'd you sleep?

**TWO.** i just woke up.

**ONE.** my night was kinda restless.

**TWO.** the announcement wakes me up every day.

**ONE.** yeah.

**TWO.** it's like, if I didn't hear that voice telling me that it's morning, I would have no idea.

**ONE.** well yeah, I don't know how—I wish we could have, like, clocks or something at least

**TWO.** yeah

**ONE.** something at least so we could know like, I don't know, when I fall asleep is it night time? Or am I, if I was on Earth, would I be like eating breakfast or something, or lunch even. I don't know.  
I sleep a lot.

**TWO.** yeah

*Another face appears.*

**THREE.** morning

**TWO.** hey

**THREE.** this is so boring.

**TWO.** the announcements are the best parts of my day.

**ONE.** sometimes I miss them 'cus I'm sleeping

**THREE.** Why do they only give us 30 minutes of social time?

**ONE.** it's all about mind control

**TWO.** no I think it's, like, maybe we only have that much battery every or else the ship  
will not have enough to get us there or something

**ONE.** that sounds like a lie  
That sounds like mind control

**THREE.** kinda yeah

**TWO.** I trust them

**THREE.** who's "them"?

**TWO.** the people, the, I don't know, the world leaders

**THREE.** they're sending us to mars

**TWO.** they're sending us away from a burning planet

**THREE.** they only let us talk to people for 30 minutes a day

**TWO.** you think it's better on earth?

**ONE.** I'm really tired

**THREE.** it's the middle of the day

**ONE.** is it?

**TWO.** i'm gonna go to one of those random rooms they have  
the ones where you can meet someone new  
Ok?

**THREE.** okay

**TWO.** bye, guys. see you tomorrow.

*A face disappears.*

*A beat.*

**ONE.** I'm gonna go back to sleep

**THREE.** but—

*Another face disappears.*

*There is only one face in the darkness.*

~ ~ ~

*A face in the darkness.*

*A new face. Just sitting there.*

*Then a second face joins.*

**FOUR.** Hi!

**TWO.** hey how / are you—

**FOUR.** How Are You?

**TWO.** um i'm good i guess, i don't know  
that question feels irrelevant now

**FOUR.** What Brings You Here? Just Trying to Meet Someone New?

**TWO.** uh yeah I guess. kinda bored of talking to the same people every day

**FOUR.** I Totally Understand. I Meet Someone New Every Day!

**TWO.** wow that's, uh, that's a lot

**FOUR.** I Love It!  
I Get To Hear New Stories Every Day.

**TWO.** you're very—

**FOUR.** What?

**TWO.** ... expressive

**FOUR.** You Mean Aggressive. I Speak Aggressively. I've Been Told.

**TWO.** no, I just...  
I meant...

**FOUR.** What?

**TWO.** . . .

**FOUR.** I'll Try To Talk... softer. i don't know if that's better

**TWO.** you don't have to be "better." there's nothing wrong with it  
it's just how you talk

**FOUR.** Yesterday, This Guy Told Me a Story. Back On Earth, When He Was A Kid,  
He Used To Always Chew On Lollipops Right When He Got Them  
(this was obviously before they... yanno, before they banned all the... yeah, but)  
So He Would Always Bite Them As Soon As He Unwrapped Them, and One  
Day He Said "I'm Gonna Bite This And My Teeth Will Fall Out. That's What  
You Always Say." His Mom Said, "Don't Bite It." He Said, "I Can't Resist." She  
Said, "If You Never Learn How To Resist Things, You'll Grow Up To Be  
Flimsy and Easily-Manipulated, a Spineless Pansy." He Said, "Fine."  
she got the, yanno, the vaccine that  
the one that wiped everyone out so  
she didn't die but they had to leave her on Earth  
and he remembered this story from when he was a kid, his most vivid memory of  
her, and told me yesterday.

**TWO.** they say we're going to mars, but really I think we're all hellbound  
maybe we're all evil and we kinda deserved it

**FOUR.** All These Stories People Tell Me, They're Like Mosquitoes. Or Like Fleas.  
Like I Can't Get Them Off of Me. But I Feel Like I'm Taking From Them. Not  
The Other Way Around. I Feel Like I'm the Parasite. I'm the Leech.

**TWO.** can I tell you something?

**FOUR.** Tell Me Something You've Never Told Anyone.

**TWO.** i think earth was just too full. full of too many useless people.  
so, they got mad and they're sending all of us worthless ones away.

**FOUR.** this thought—that people are worthless—it doesn't even trouble you  
does it?

**TWO.** you're speaking so softly

**FOUR.** where were you from?

**TWO.** bethlehem, pa. i'm still from there

**FOUR.** people don't ask questions like that anymore, do they?

**TWO.** people don't want to know about you. they want you to know about them.

**FOUR.** as if i care.

**TWO.** you do.

**FOUR.** i want to kiss someone

The action is in my body. It started in my belly and now it's at the very top of my  
being and I need to get it out.

**TWO.** they've got us stuck in these—

**FOUR.** i know.

**TWO.** fourteen months.

**FOUR.** did you ever break the rules? when they started putting us in these pods, did  
you?

**TWO.** i had to touch someone.

**FOUR.** yeah.

**TWO.** i miss hating people, too. physically. I miss loving them and hurting them.  
sometimes i want to draw blood.

i kissed someone. as they were forcing us into isolation, i pushed away and kissed  
the first person i saw.

and then i punched someone, to even it out

~ ~ ~

*A face appears in the darkness.*

**THREE.** my aunt was like my best friend. and the day i turned 18, she took me to a bunch of things. like, I bought cigarettes and got a tattoo and walked into a club for the first time and also she took me to get a tarot card reading, which like i don't know  
it was my birthday but it was a big day for her to just show me things, to take me into another side of the world than i was living in, so  
anyways, i don't really remember anything about the reading except that there was this one card called the page of cups that basically was just like this guy holding a cup. and there's a drink in the cup, maybe wine or just water or something else, but there's also a fish swimming in the cup. like a real fish just flopping around. and I always kinda thought that was the only thing that made sense about that night, I mean really it was the only thing I remembered, but I realized, like, I'm always drinking out of this massive cup, like my whole life I've just been taking and consuming  
and inhaling  
and biting  
and chewing  
and swallowing  
and half the time I don't even know what's gonna happen.  
like, what are my actions doing? And what's just sitting in the cup? when am I gonna swallow the wrong thing and just totally screw up? and why are there so many things wrong with the world just hiding under the surface and why is the future a mess?  
because now I'm sitting here staring into this  
this great yawning abyss  
and that's all I can see  
and it's our fault. we didn't check what was in the cup. we had no idea.  
OR we did. and we ignored it.  
which is just . . .  
which is worse.  
  
is anyone there?

~ ~ ~

*Darkness.*

**DIGITAL VOICE.** Earth has entered day 1,087 of the Great Drought. Our servers are live. You may now engage in your 30 minutes of daily virtual communication.

~ ~ ~

*Two faces appear in the darkness.  
They are in the middle of talking.*

**ONE.** it's like... there is maybe one, or two  
no! don't look  
that's the only rule: don't turn around  
i'll describe it to you  
there are maybe one or two little flickers of light, but other than that, yeah  
darkness

**THREE.** so i guessed right

**ONE.** no, you said three. you guessed there were three visible points of light behind you

**THREE.** no, I said two or three

**ONE.** yeah, and there's only one or two, so. . .

**THREE.** so . . . two! two is the common denominator. we both said / two so i'm—

*Another face appears.*

**TWO.** hey guys

**ONE.** hey can you settle this for us?

**THREE.** yeah it's really simple: is the number two the same as the number two?

**ONE.** that's so not fair

**TWO.** can I introduce you guys to my new friend

**THREE.** um

**ONE.** i don't know if

*Another face appears.*

**TWO.** here she is

**FOUR.** Hi!

**THREE.** you're—

**FOUR.** Loud, I Know.



**THREE.** energetic.

~ ~ ~

*Darkness.*

**DIGITAL VOICE.** Our servers are live. You may now engage in your 30 minutes of daily virtual communication.

~ ~ ~

*A face emerges out of the darkness.  
It's ONE's face.  
It looks like it wants to retreat.  
It looks very tired.  
This face wonders why it no longer wants to move  
Why it no longer feels alive.  
The face feels a despair that is all-consuming  
And entirely valid.  
The face mourns itself  
And retreats in the darkness.*

~ ~ ~

*Darkness.*

**DIGITAL VOICE.** You may now engage in your 30 minutes of daily virtual communication.

~ ~ ~

*Three faces in the darkness.*

**TWO.** it's not my fault you didn't like her

**THREE.** do you guys feel like they're giving us less fluids?  
like maybe they're lowering our vitals?

**ONE.** i don't think i'll ever like anyone new again.

**TWO.** if you guys got to know her, you'd really like her. she'd vibe with both of you  
it'd just take awhile

**THREE.** at least there are less physical problems here, you know?

my legs are never sore from squats anymore.

**ONE.** i asked them to lower my fluids. i won't have energy either way.

**TWO.** i think that love is more powerful now. it can't be wiggle out of people through their hands and through their bodies anymore. we have to find it in stories. that's how I found mine for her. and how she found hers

**THREE.** i miss cookies, though. i want real food.

**ONE.** me, too.

**THREE.** huh?

**ONE.** i miss real food. the texture. having to chew it.

**THREE.** oh.

**ONE.** and just getting to pick things, yanno? control

**THREE.** mhm. Yeah.

~ ~ ~

*Darkness.*

**DIGITAL VOICE.** virtual communication.

~ ~ ~

*Two faces in the darkness.*

*The two faces stare at each other.*

*We know them. It's ONE and THREE.*

*They stare at each other.*

*A song fades in. It's "Black Screen" by LCD Soundsystem.*

*They stare at each other.*

*They stare at each other.*

*This is human connection.*