

"THE FIRST PSYCHONAUT"

A short parody script  
by  
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FADE IN:

NEWS SPECIAL

With a fatherly old newscaster, WALTER CHRONIC:

WALTER

Men have walked on the moon, robots have sent us pictures of the planets, and now there's the space shuttle. Science fiction has become science fact. The exploration of outer space is no longer the unknown frontier that it was only two decades ago. Today, in these times of economic trimming, Mankind is turning to a new frontier-- the exploration of inner space. In a few moments, if all goes well, the world will be witness to the ingenuity of the American pioneering spirit, and to the courage of one American psychonaut. We're switching now to Mission Control.

CUT TO:

INT. A YOUNG MAN IN ACCELERATION CHAIR

He's strapped in, eyes closed, ready for "takeoff", with electrodes all over him and wires leading to complex monitoring devices and busy technicians in the dim light around him. We HEAR bits of garbled JARGON and a loud, periodic PING!

WALTER (VOICE OVER)

This is Syd Barrett, a psychonaut. He and five other handpicked men and women have been in rigorous training for over two years, learning to maintain their equilibrium while under the influence of powerful hallucinogenic drugs; learning to transmit detailed, rational, and objective reports to us back here in "reality".

Syd is making the first, historic journey into the uncharted worlds of inner space. Just ten minutes ago he was injected with a massive dose of an unknown psychotomimetic drug. No man has gone so far before and returned. Will he be able to maintain the constant and precise communication that is so crucial to this mission?

(MORE)

WALTER(CONT'D)

And more importantly for Syd--  
will he make it back?

Syd is starting to grin. He shakes it off and looks serious again. Giggles. Serious again, then:

SYD

Oh, wow...

The Mission Control people tense with anticipation. They signal to one another. Thumbs up.

WALTER(V.O.)

It's been confirmed that Syd is now well into his journey. I think those first words were "Oh, wow."

SYD

That's one small teddy bear for a man, one Giant Panda for mankind.

WALTER(V.O.)

I think that was Syd's quote, but I couldn't make it out. We seem to be having transmission difficulties.  
(pause)

BACK TO WALTER

WALTER

They tell me, incidentally, that his EEG pattern right now is similar to that found in Zen priests during-- Oh, he's transmitting again.

BACK TO SYD

SYD

-- colors I've never seen before. I think I'm seeing the ultraviolet spectrum...

ARTIST'S SIMULATION

Psychadelic stuff all over. A crude cuttout of Syd in his chair floats by.

SYD(V.O.)

Oh, wow...

The loud PINGS continue.

MISSION CONTROL(V.O.)  
(distorted)  
More precise, Syd. We need details.

SYD(V.O.)  
Right, um-- I'm, uh, I'm being  
propelled into, into, the Void.

Artist's Simulation goes blank.

SYD(V.O.)  
I see a spot...

Spot appears on screen.

SYD(V.O.)  
It's... it's becoming a crack--

The spot turns into a crack.

SYD(V.O.)  
It's the crack between the  
Nothing. And, and, out of  
this Nothing is coming-- yes,  
it's my unborn soul!

BACK TO SYD

SYD  
Um. Oh boy. Uh, gee, this is  
really hard to explain, fellas,  
um...

A long pause. Several PINGS.

MISSION CONTROL(V.O.)  
Are you still there, Syd?

BACK TO WALTER

And with him an old South American Indian.

WALTER  
While we're waiting for Mission  
Control, I have with me an expert  
on the hallucinogenic properties  
of this--

SYD(V.O.)  
Whoa! Holy Jesus!

## BACK TO SYD

SYD  
 It's... it's...!  
 (Pulls himself together;  
 pauses.)  
 Okay. You're not going to believe  
 this, but I am seeing God.

MISSION CONTROL(V.O.)  
 Was that "God", Syd?

SYD  
 Yeah. Yeah, it's God alright.  
 No doubt about it.  
 (Losing control again.)  
 Oh, wow...

MISSION CONTROL(V.O.)  
 Description, Syd, description.

SYD  
 Right. Um... He's... well, He's  
 just like you'd expect...

## ARTIST'S SIMULATION

The face of a wise old man with a long white beard.  
 Syd floats by.

WALTER(V.O.)  
 I certainly hope everyone who's  
 watching right now is as exhilarated  
 as I am. This is truly an historic  
 moment. I mean I've covered some  
 historic moments in my time but--  
 one moment-- we have a message from  
 the President.

## CLOSEUP - THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT  
 I am deeply honored, to be the  
 spokesman, for all the nations  
 of the world, to congratulate,  
 my fellow countrymen, at the  
 very moment of this, most historic,  
 event.

## SPLITSCREEN - THE PRESIDENT AND SYD

PRESIDENT  
 Congratulations to you particularly,  
 Syd.

SYD  
 Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT

I leave you now, Syd Barrett, to continue your mission as a messenger of peace for all mankind.

The image of the President is replaced by the one of the Simulated God.

Syd looks radiant. Then perturbed. Then sour.

SYD

Damn! God turned into this sort of cosmic lizard! And I'm eating the lizard-- no wait a minute-- I'm the lizard!

The Simulated God is replaced by a Simulated Lizard.

SYD

And now I've become-- the whole universe! And the whole universe is a ... a doily! That's it! A doily going backwards in time! Oh, wow! Hey! Do not ruffle her majesty's notorious scallup! There's greengrocers behind you! Uhnggg...

He blacks out.

Long pause. PINGS.

BACK TO WALTER CHRONIC

WALTER

They're having transmission difficulties right now. They tell me it could well be hours before communication will be restored. In the meantime, the President, and the Vatican, have set up direct hot lines to Mission Control, and we will return as soon as Syd sees God again. For now, back to regular programming.

FADE OUT.