

VOLUNTEERS

Written by

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FADE IN.

EXT. SPACE

Stars.

The curve of a gas giant slowly descends. We tilt, drifting freely, glimpsing the rings of Saturn.

We then see something else, something slowly approaching.

It's large, silver, and perfectly spherical.

The mysterious object passes us, silent, and continues on into the Solar System.

CUT TO.

EXT. DESERT - SOUTH AMERICA - MORNING

"Atacama Desert, Northern Chile, 2022"

Fifty radio telescopes slowly come to life and adjust their position.

CUT TO.

EXT. EARTH ORBIT

The Hubble also adjusts its position.

Its lens focusing.

CUT TO.

INT. OFFICE - DIMLY LIT - NIGHT

"Washington DC"

A phone rings. A hand picks it up. We don't see a face.

MAN

(beat, American)
How long?

CALLER

(also American)
"Just under 13 days."

The man squeezes his forehead.

MAN
(beat)
What do they want to do?

CUT TO.

EXT. OBSERVATORY - HAWAII - EVENING

"Keck Observatory, Hawaii"

Choppers land. US Special Forces surround the building as others move in.

A man in a black suit holds back in one of the choppers, covering his ear from the rotor noise.

Observatory staff are quickly led out.

SOLDIER
Sir you need to come this way.

Observatory STAFF

"Terrorist threat"? This is crazy!

The suited man watches, quiet.

CUT TO.

EXT. Mount Graham - Arizona - NIGHT

"Mount Graham International Observatory"

Another observatory is locked down by Special Forces. Again we see suited men and women coordinating the operation.

SUITED WOMAN
(into phone)
We're secure.

CUT TO.

EXT. JUPITER

The silver sphere now passes the moon of Europa.

An ESA probe slowly turns and focuses its primary lens.

CUT TO.

INT. CAR - BACKSEAT - DAY

A mobile phone rings. A woman answers, we don't see her face.

"Paris, France"

CALLER
 (French, subtitled)
 "They've identified 9. Nigeria,
 Thailand, North America, Eastern
 Europe, they're all over the
 place."

WOMAN
 (French, subtitled)
 What about the remaining three?

CALLER
 "Somalia, Iran. We have people on
 the ground but there's no guarantee
 we can find them in time."

WOMAN
 What are they being told?

CALLER
 "Nothing yet."

The woman checks her watch.

WOMAN
 Our local's being brought in. Keep
 me updated.

She hangs up and sighs, rubbing her forehead.

CUT TO.

INT. HALLWAY - CHEAP MOTEL - MORNING

Gunfire! A tattooed man runs, firing an automatic at
 Colombian Special Forces pursuing after him.

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL - STREET

More Special Forces and regular police are positioned
 outside.

"Southern Bogota, Colombia"

LOUD SPEAKER (O.S)
 (Spanish, subtitled)
 "Diego Fernando, you are NOT under
 arrest."

INT. MOTEL ROOM

Fernando, the tattooed man, locks the door and ducks by the
 window, his eyes frantic. He looks out and sees what looks
 like a small army.

LOUD SPEAKER (O.S)
"You will not be harmed."

EXT. CHEAP MOTEL - STREET

Two government agents hold behind a car. They look at each other, stuck.

COLOMBIAN AGENT
(Spanish, subtitled)
We're not going to get him alive.
We need to gas him out.

-More gunfire! Fernando fires out the window, screaming and cursing at the top of his lungs.

The police drop behind their cars and vans. One of the agents turns his head and sees several of the police shooting back.

COLOMBIAN AGENT (CONT'D)
-Cease fire! Cease fire you
asshole!

The gunfire from the window stops.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

The door is kicked down. Colombian Special Forces move in, shields ready.

They stop.

Fernando is dead on the floor.

CUT TO.

EXT. HIGH STREET - GRAY AFTERNOON

Eunice, a tall beautiful mixed-race 20 year old, is busking outside a large clothing store. A coin is dropped for her.

Eunice finishes playing and smiles, grateful.

EUNICE
Merci beaucoup.

"Lille, France"

A store security guard steps out.

STORE SECURITY
(French, subtitled)
Miss, you can't play here. You have
to go further down.

Eunice tunes her guitar.

EUNICE
(French, subtitled)
I'm not doing anything illegal.

STORE SECURITY
If you don't move we will have to
call the police.

EUNICE
(snaps)
Call the police, this is a public
street.

The guard reaches for her guitar.

STORE SECURITY
You're blocking the entrance.

Eunice snatches it back.

EUNICE
I'm nowhere near the entrance!

Two police officers arrive.

The guard turns to them.

STORE SECURITY
Gentlemen, can you please tell this
young lady that she-

A government agent steps forward, ignoring the guard.

FRENCH GOVERNMENT AGENT
(French, subtitled)
Eunice Michel?

Eunice looks at the man, hostile.

EUNICE
Who wants to know?

FRENCH GOVERNMENT AGENT
Born on April 2nd 2001?

EUNICE
-Yeah so?

The agent smiles.

FRENCH GOVERNMENT AGENT
We've been looking for you.

CUT TO.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - MORNING

Dirty clothes and empty beer bottles litter the floor. Movie posters line the walls (Blade Runner, Inception, Reservoir Dogs).

The radio kicks on.

JOCKEY (RADIO)

"-a blast from the past, requested
by Bobby G of Baldwin Hills, an
oldie from Jefferson Airplane."

"Volunteers" starts to play.

"Venice Beach, California"

We rise to the bed and see a bra hanging from the corner. Caleb Colton, 20s, is sprawled face down, his hair long, face unshaven.

He slowly opens his eyes and sees a 17 year old floozy passed out beside him. Her hair covers half her face as she snores.

Caleb sees an unlit joint between her lips.

He picks it out and feels for a lighter, clearly hung over.

There's a "knock" on the front door. Caleb groans, rolling over.

CALEB

Johnny! Get the Goddamn door!

The floozy rolls aside, dropping off the bed with "thud".

CALEB (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ.

He leans over and sees she's still asleep.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Hey... you all right?

JOHNNY (O.S)

Woah woah, what you doing?

There's commotion from the hallway. The bedroom door opens.

Two cops enter.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

You can't just come in here man!
You need a warrant or some shit!

Caleb drops the joint out of sight and smiles.

CALEB
Morning officers, what can I do for
you?

The cops step aside. A government agent steps forward and
removes his sunglasses.

GOVERNMENT AGENT
Caleb Andrew Colton?

CALEB
... Yeah?

GOVERNMENT AGENT
We need to talk with you.

CUT TO.

EXT. SPACE

Jupiter shrinks away in the distance. The silver ball
continues on.

CUT TO.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM (PARIS)

Eunice sits by a table with a cup of coffee. She looks
around, uneasy.

The door opens. A woman in her 40s, Mariella, enters.

She smiles at Eunice and sits opposite. We recognize her
voice.

MARIELLA
(French, subtitled)
I understand you have a lot of
questions Miss Michel. I assure you
you have nothing to worry about.

She opens a file in front of her.

Eunice notices that it's a profile on her.

CALEB (O.S)
Do I need or lawyer or something?

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM (LOS ANGELES)

Hollis, 50s, the man who was on the phone earlier, is seated
opposite, looking at Caleb's file.

HOLLIS
Mr Colton, you're currently
unemployed is that right?

Caleb knocks back an aspirin.

CALEB
(chewing)
I'm in between jobs.

HOLLIS
(studying file)
Studied film at UCLA, dropped out a
year ago.

CALEB
Yeah, I was gonna get into movies
but Hollywood's been going downhill
ever since the internet.

HOLLIS
Your father passed away around the
same time, mother already deceased,
I'm sorry to hear that.

CALEB
(indifferent)
Yeah that was a bummer.

HOLLIS
No brothers, sisters or close
family. You were left a property
valued at close to \$200,000 which
you sold for less than half.

CALEB
Gotta live off something.

Hollis sets down the file.

HOLLIS
What do you intend to do after the
your inheritance dries up? Any
goals, aspirations?

CALEB
I don't know become a sailor. Look
Agent Smith, or whoever you are,
what's the deal here, you find a
Koran in that place or something?
If so the guy you need to talk to
ain't exactly a phone call away.

HOLLIS
-Mr Colton, the US government like
to offer you fifty million dollars.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM (PARIS)

Eunice stops, stunned.

EUNICE
(French, subtitled)
What?

Mariella nods, serious.

MARIELLA
(French, subtitled)
Fifty million.

EUNICE
I don't understand, why? What do
you want from me?

MARIELLA
I'm afraid I can't say.

EUNICE
You're going to give me fifty
million euros? For something you
can't say?

MARIELLA
No, you will not receive the money.
But you may do with it what you
wish.

Eunice is even more confused.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM (LOS ANGELES)

A contract is pushed forward.

Caleb looks down at it.

CALEB
What's this?

HOLLIS
Insurance. You sign this, we'll
tell you everything.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM (PARIS)

A pen is set down.

Eunice looks at it, hesitant.

MARIELLA
(beat)
There's no commitments, not at this
stage.

(MORE)

MARIELLA (CONT'D)
But the penalty for breaching this
disclosure will be severe.

Eunice looks from the pan to Mariella.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM (LOS ANGELES)

Caleb signs the agreement, laughing to himself.

CALEB
This ought to be interesting.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM (PARIS)

Mariella watches as Eunice finishes signing.

EUNICE
(beat)
All right.

She sets down the pen.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
So what's going on?

CUT TO.

EXT. SPACE

The sphere presses on into the Solar System, the sun growing
larger.

"Hiss"

CUT TO.

INT. CABIN - PRIVATE JET - DAY

Caleb opens a bottle of beer as he peers out the window.

Hollis sits opposite, the two alone.

CALEB
You know it wouldn't have taken me
long to pack a few things.

HOLLIS
We'll take you to a room when we
land. You can shower and freshen up
before the briefing. We'll have
clothes ready for you.

CALEB
 (turns)
 Where exactly are we going?
 Shouldn't I have my passport or
 something?

HOLLIS
 Passports won't necessary.

Hollis checks his phone.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
 Not for this trip.

Caleb smiles, still chuckled by this whole situation.

CALEB
 You're the boss.

Hollis opens an email on his phone.

"2 CONFIRMED DEAD, LUSAKA AND BOGOTA"

He pauses, then puts away the phone, concern forming.

CUT TO.

EXT. ENTRANCE - BUILDING - PARIS - DAY

Three black cars roll to a stop. Non-uniformed security personnel are positioned nearby.

Eunice slowly climbs out, Mariella and two French representatives with her.

She looks up at the building and sees a number of flags beside three words,

" E S A "

Another car door opens.

Eunice turns her head and sees a short slender Thai girl (19) with Thai government officials and a translator.

The girl appears awkward in her brand new clothes and shoes. Eunice makes eye contact with her before she's ferried into building by her entourage.

MARIELLA (O.S)
 (French, to Eunice)
 This way.

CUT TO.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - ESA HEADQUARTERS

A set of doors open.

Eunice follows Mariella into the briefing room, a long table taking up the main floor.

The Thai girl, Suchin, is sat by table with a government representative on either side of her. Around the table are similar groups; a bald Nigerian man in his late 30s (Christopher), a pale bearded man in his early 40s (Vincent), and a large Estonian woman in her early 20s (Marika).

Marika drops her bottle of water, nervously looking around.

Mariella kneels down and returns the bottle with a smile.

Marika smiles back, still uncomfortable.

MARIKA
(Estonian)
Thank you.

Mariella nods and turns to Eunice.

MARIELLA
(French, subtitled)
You can sit here.

She pulls out and chair and sits beside her.

MARIELLA (CONT'D)
We'll be starting shortly.

Eunice looks around the table. On the far side we see Caleb with a US official.

Another American, Joshua, a bespectacled man in his 30s, is led forward and sat with them.

Caleb looks at him as he fumbles to open a bottle of water. Caleb pauses then turns to the US official.

CALEB
(smiles)
Hey could I get a Coke or something?

The official looks at Caleb, already annoyed, but then gets up.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Chilled please!

He waits until he's gone then leans over to Joshua.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Hey you don't look like you're with
the MIB.

Joshua looks back at him and stops.

JOSHUA
(beat)
They brought you in too?

CALEB
First class all the way. Caleb
(offers his hand)
Caleb Colton.

Joshua shakes.

JOSHUA
Joshua Campbell.

CALEB
Where you from Joshua Campbell?

JOSHUA
Stillwater, Oklahoma. I work in
real estate. I don't understand
what all this is about. They just
came to my apartment this morning
and the next thing I know I'm
flying out of the country.

Caleb looks across the table.

CALEB
Same here.

He glimpses Eunice, half blocked by Mariella. He leans
forward and sees her sip some water.

CALEB (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Nice.

JOSHUA
They're talking about giving
outmillions, millions! But we can't
keep any of it for ourselves. I
don't get it. What's so special
about us?

Caleb draws back.

CALEB
I don't know pal. Maybe we got some
disease?

JOSHUA
(stops)
What??

The lights dim down.

Mariella hands Eunice a headset.

MARIELLA
(French, subtitled)
You'll need to put this on.

Eunice puts on the headphones.

Translators on the other side of the room check their mikes.

Hollis steps forward and stops at the end of the table, a large screen behind him.

HOLLIS
(beat)
Good afternoon. My name is Derek
Hollis, US director of operations.

Translators (French, Nigerian, Thai, Czech, Estonian) repeat into their mikes.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
(beat)
Over the past 6 days agencies from
around the world have been working
around the clock to bring you here.

-Caleb raises his hand.

Hollis stops.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
(beat)
Yes Mr Colton?

CALEB
Excuse me Sir but director of
operations for what exactly?

Eunice turns her head, noticing Caleb for the first time.

JOSHUA
-What have we got? Some disease??

HOLLIS
If you'll give me a few minutes
everything will be explained.

Caleb pats Joshua's back.

CALEB

Easy there, we'd be in quarantine
if we had anything.

Eunice turns back to Hollis as the screen behind him comes to life.

A CG animation shows a probe drifting through space.

HOLLIS

Thirteen months ago the Eos-1, an
ESA funded survey probe, was sent
to Jupiter, specifically its moon
Europa.

The animation shows the probe approaching the orange gas
giant.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

Ten days ago the probe made a
scheduled realignment to Saturn
when an anomaly was detected.

The animation cuts to still images taken by the probe.

Saturn engulfs the entire screen but we can make out a tiny
black speck, hidden in the planet's glare.

Eunice sits up.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

At first it was thought to be a
small moon, undiscovered until now,
but it seemed the object is not in
orbit around Saturn but moving past
it.

The next image is a little clearer, we see a distinctly
circular shape, still silhouetted by the planet.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

It was then speculated to be a
meteor or asteroid, moving at
tremendous speeds. That was however
until these images came through.

Another image appears.

Eunice quietly gasps, hand over her mouth.

Caleb stops and leans forward.

The object is now shown passing Saturn, the side facing the
planet reflecting its light.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

The object has a perfect circumference of just under a mile, giving off no radiation of any kind. Which means whatever this thing is it's artificial.

We now see a crisp clear image of what looks like an enormous silver marble.

Suchin stares, quiet.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

At this moment in time it is two hundred million miles away but it is approaching the Earth at just under eight million miles an hour, its speed steadily falling.

By our calculations it will reach the Earth in 51 hours and 17 minutes.

Eunice, Vincent and Marika turns to their representatives and start asking the same question in their native language.

Suchin remains quiet.

EUNICE

(French, subtitled, to Mariella)

-What does this have to do with me?

Hollis raises his hands.

HOLLIS

Please allow me to continue.

Everyone settles.

Mariella squeezes Eunice's arm, assuring.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

(beat)

When the anomaly crossed paths with the Eos-1 a transmission was sent to the probe and subsequently relayed back us.

What you're about to see may alarm you.

He steps aside as twelve circular images appear on screen, all taken high and from afar.

Eunice stops, stunned.

Of the twelve faces shown seven are in this very room (Eunice, Christopher, Suchin, Caleb, Joshua, Vincent and Marika).

Marika covers her mouth, frozen.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

The transmission included the coordinates to the exact location these images were taken, which was how we were able to find you. Also included were the coordinates to an isolated region in Antarctica, which we believe is where the object is directed.

Suchin lowers her head, her face blank.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

In addition to all this, a message was also sent.

On the screen a single sentence appears, repeated in every known language on Earth.

As the sentences scroll down those in English, French, Czech, Thai and Estonian expand.

THE CHOSEN MUST COME OF THEIR OWN ACCORD

The room falls deathly quiet.

- Someone starts to clap.

Everyone turn and see Caleb on his feet, unable to contain himself.

CALEB

Brilliant! Absolutely brilliant!
"The Chosen must come of their own accord"? This is a joke right?!
ET's calling and asking for us?
Where's the cameras? This is some
God damn MTV set-up!

HOLLIS

-Mr Colton SIT down!

Caleb stops.

He sees everyone's eyes on him.

He raises his hands, still chuckling, and sits back down.

CALEB

(to Hollis)

As you were Doctor Sagan.

Hollis returns to the others.

HOLLIS

These images were taken
approximately a month ago,
seemingly at the exact same time.

Marika looks away, her face going white.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

Two of the individuals are
confirmed dead.

The screen zooms in on two faces, a Zambian man and a
Colombian man.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

Mkilifi Mwenzi, southern Lusaka,
died of AIDS 3 weeks ago. Diego
Fernando was gunned down by Bogota
police only yesterday.

This means whoever or whatever took these images did not stay
to monitor you.

A world map appears, pinpoints flashing in the Amazon,
Eastern Somalia and Iran.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

Of the remaining ten we have not
been able to identify or locate
three. It is unlikely they will be
found before this object arrives.

Eunice turns to Mariella and whispers something. Mariella
listens then raises his hand.

Hollis nods.

MARIELLA

(English, accented)

Miss Michel would like o know why
they were selected.

HOLLIS

We don't know. There's no
connection between any of you. The
random nature was probably
intentional.

Caleb looks away, still smiling to himself.

The Estonian Rep raises her hand.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

Yes.

Marika looks away, trembling.

ESTONIAN REP
 (English, accented)
 Miss Petrov would like to know what
 will happen to them and... whether
 they have a choice in this matter.

Eunice hears the translation and pauses.

All of their eyes are on Hollis. Caleb glances, quiet.

HOLLIS
 (beat)
 We don't know what will happen. If
 they wanted to communicate with us
 there are far more efficient ways
 such as radio. This object is
 clearly a transport of some kind.
 They want to take you somewhere,
 perhaps the place of its origin.

Caleb shakes his head, smiling again.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
 We have no reason to believe any
 harm will come to you. If that was
 the intention they could have taken
 you when these images were taken
 but they didn't. They want you to
 go freely, which must mean
 something.

He turns to Marika.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
 And to answer your second question.
 Yes. You all have a choice. No one
 will force you to go.

As the message requests you must go of your own accord.

Marika closes her eyes, relieved.

CALEB
 (to himself)
 This is insane.

Eunice tries to process everything.

Another hand is raised.

It's a Thai Rep.

THAI TRANSLATOR
 (English, accented)
 If they go what guarantees are
 there that they will be brought
 back alive?

Eunice looks at Suchin. Her face is blank.

HOLLIS

(beat)

There are no guarantees. We don't know where this object came from or where it will go. There is nothing to indicate that you will be returned. We cannot promise that any of you will come home. That is the truth.

The room falls silent again.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

(beat)

If no one comes forward when this "thing" arrives we don't know what will happen. If the public learn of this contact your lives will be changed, and perhaps not for the better. You will be analyzed and scrutinized for the rest of your life.

You will never have a normal life again.

If you do choose to go no one can know the truth. Legally you will be dead with the money offered by your respective nations passed on to your family, loved ones, or anyone else you choose fit.

Joshua stares at his bottle of water, almost catatonic.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)

(beat)

I know this is a difficult choice but we don't have much time. We must have your decision in the next 36 hours.

CUT TO.

EXT. SPACE

The silver sphere closes in on Earth, now visible in the distance.

CUT TO.

INT. PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Caleb and Joshua sit alone, both staring out the window.

Neither say a word.

CUT TO.

INT. GOVERNMENT CAR - FRANCE - NIGHT

Eunice sits in the back, alone. She too stares out the window.

Over the fields we see the moon, full and strong.

CUT TO.

INT. BAR - HOTEL - NIGHT

A glass of Jack Daniels is poured. The clock on the wall reads 2am.

HOLLIS
 (raising his glass)
 Here's hoping none of them go
 running to the press.

Mariella smiles, tired. Both looking exhausted.

MARIELLA
 I don't see that happening.

HOLLIS
 The guys at the Pentagon are
 expecting it to be all over the
 internet in less than 24 hours.

MARIELLA
 It probably already is somewhere.
 We're just lucky this thing isn't
 the size of a city. That would be a
 little more difficult to explain.

Hollis smiles.

Mariella sips her white wine and pauses.

MARIELLA (CONT'D)
 What do you think would happen if
 it did get out?

HOLLIS
 Just what they say. Religious nuts
 will be singing and dancing in
 street, celebrating the end of the
 world and doing all they can to
 make it happen.

MARIELLA
 What happened to American optimism?

HOLLIS
I can give you a list.

Mariella smiles.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
Lets not forget the millions of
others who'll be thinking these
twelve idiots are God's messiahs.

He draws back and sighs.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
Seven billion people Mariella.
Seven BILLION people on the planet
and its these twelve they come for.
What do they want with them?

Mariella shakes her head, completely lost.

HOLLIS (CONT'D)
I tell you there's a lot of men and
women out there that could go.
People that would want to go, and
they wouldn't have to be bribed
like these guys.

MARIELLA
It's not compensation they'll be
enjoying. Some of them don't even
have anyone to leave it for.

HOLLIS
It's still the deciding factor. We
should be sending our best, not
these... people.

Mariella looks at him.

MARIELLA
(beat)
Would you go?

HOLLIS
The money wouldn't make a
difference.

MARIELLA
So you'd go? Just like that.

Hollis stops and looks back at her, seriously considering.

Mariella can see it's not easy.

MARIELLA (CONT'D)
You know I never thought about it
much before but it's true.
(MORE)

MARIELLA (CONT'D)

No matter where we're from, no matter how wealthy or educated, none of us are really that different. We could have our twelve smartest, our twelve best trained, but in the end, at this moment in time, they'd be just like them.

HOLLIS

What?

She finishes her drink.

MARIELLA

Fucking scared.

(gets up)

Get some sleep, we still have a lot of work to do.

Hollis nods, returning to his drink.

HOLLIS

Right.

He takes out his credit card, nodding for the bartender, when he notices a photograph in his wallet.

He pauses, looking at his children, and again considers.

CUT TO.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - EVENING

The sun sets.

Caleb sits alone, jet-lagged and smoking a joint. With his unkempt and beard hair he looks like a bum.

A young mother passes by with her 7 year old daughter, walking their dog.

Caleb notices them and pauses.

He whistles the mother's attention.

CALEB

(smiling)

Howdy.

The mother notices him.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(beat)

I were to give you fifty million bucks could you do something worthwhile with it?

The mother turns away.

YOUNG MOTHER
Come on Kimberley.

Caleb smiles to himself as they go.

He hears a rattle.

Coins in a tin can.

HOMELESS MAN (O.S)
No problem, God bless you anyway
Sir.

A homeless man plods along, resting by a bin.

A shadow falls over him.

He looks up and sees Caleb.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)
Spare a little change Sir?

CALEB
What's your name?

HOMELESS MAN
My name? John.

CALEB
John, if I gave you fifty million
dollars what would you do with it?

The homeless man looks away and smiles politely.

HOMELESS MAN
Come on man, you don't have to talk
to me like that, I ain't hurting
nobody.

CALEB
Seriously, what would you do?

The homeless man stops and looks up at him.

HOMELESS MAN
(beat, sighs)
Buddy if I got fifty million I'd
get me a lot of booze, a lot of
drugs and a lot of women.

He laughs, opening a flask of water.

Caleb watches him drink.

CALEB

(beat)

You're honest.

HOMELESS MAN

(wiping his mouth)

The only thing I got in this world
are my word and my balls. Gotta
respect both.

Caleb pauses, considering, then reaches into his pockets and feels around.

The homeless man watches him take out two tens and twenty and hold them up.

CALEB

Forty dollars, everything on me.
You can have this now or if you're
still here tomorrow you'll get
more.

The homeless man looks at the notes.

HOMELESS MAN

(beat)

This some game?

CALEB

No games John. You can take this
now or take my word.

The homeless man looks at the money again, tempted...

HOMELESS MAN

(beat)

All right, I'll be right here
tomorrow.

Caleb smiles, putting away the money.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Hope your word means something.

Caleb lights another joint.

CALEB

Go easy on the booze.

He winks and leaves.

The homeless man watches him go.

CUT TO.

INT. WORKING CLASS PUB - LATE AFTERNOON (HEAVY RAIN)

We see four cigarette butts in an ashtray. Loose change is counted.

"Ostrava, Czech Republic"

Vincent, plainly dressed, hands the coins to the bartender and lights another cigarette.

He looks up at the clock and coughs.

The door opens.

He turns around and sees his brother, Frederic, 40s, enter. He smiles and gets up.

VINCENT
(Czech, subtitled)
Frederic! Glad you can make it,
what would you like to drink?

Frederic pats down his umbrella and looks at him, angry.

FREDERIC
(Czech, subtitled)
What's all this about Vincent? You
said it was urgent.

VINCENT
How is Katerina? Has she started
high school?

FREDERIC
Vincent what is this about?

VINCENT
Nothing, I just thought we could
have a drink.

FREDERIC
A "drink"?

Frederic sees two empty pint glasses on the bar. He shakes his head and looks at Vincent, cold.

FREDERIC (CONT'D)
Is this all you do now? Drink all
day while others work?

VINCENT
No, I just thought it would be nice
to catch up with my brother.

Frederic lifts his umbrella and returns to the door.

FREDERIC
Vincent, pull yourself together.
Get a real job and pull yourself
together.

He pushes the door open and disappears into the rain.

Vincent sees a black car parked opposite. Two men in suits
sitting inside.

CUT TO.

INT. DINING ROOM - COUNTRY HOUSE - SUNNY DAY

Legal documents are stacked on the table. Marika signs.

"Tallinn, Estonia"

A lawyer is beside her.

MARIKA
(Estonian, subtitled)
What's next?

The lawyer slides over another sheet.

ESTONIAN LAWYER
(Estonian, subtitled)
This as well please, with your
initial.

Marika signs, the pen's ink running out.

ESTONIAN LAWYER (CONT'D)
And this is the last one.

Marika picks another pen.

MARIKA
You promise he'll be well cared
for?

ESTONIAN LAWYER
He will receive the most loving
upbringing possible and the best
education available. The remaining
twenty will be accessible when he
turns 21 or if any medical or
financial emergency arises, both of
which are highly unlikely.

Marika finishes signing the last paper.

ESTONIAN LAWYER (CONT'D)
(taking the sheet)
And there we are.

Marika sets down the pen, hand shaking.

The lawyer gathers the documents and quickly checks them over.

Marika looks out the window.

We see a pudgy 3 year old boy playing with a puppy by a fountain. A woman in her 40s watches over with him a warm smile.

ESTONIAN LAWYER (O.S) (CONT'D)
Are there any other matters you
wish to address Miss Petrov?

Marika stares at her son.

MARIKA
Yes. If he ever asks I want him to
be told I died during childbirth.

The lawyer looks back at a government agent standing by the door. The agent nods. The lawyer notes the request.

Marika looks away from the window and gets up.

MARIKA (CONT'D)
I'd like to go now.

ESTONIAN LAWYER
Don't you wish to say goodbye?

Marika looks out the window again.

Her son laughs as the puppy splashes water.

MARIKA
No.

CUT TO.

EXT. WOODEN HOUSE - SLUM VILLAGE - NIGHT

A lamp flickers in the window.

"Northern Thailand"

A stray dog wanders past.

INT. CRAMPED KITCHEN / LIVING ROOM

Suchin serves a rice and vegetables to her three brothers sat on the floor. Her head is low, her face blank.

Her mother, a proud traditional woman in her 60s, and two younger sisters help.

SUCHIN

(Thai, subtitled, quiet)
A doctor will come for papa
tomorrow. They will send a lawyer
from the city maybe the next day.
He will help with the money.

Suchin's eldest brother, Daw, glances at her.

DAW

(Thai, subtitled)
Not many people around here are
offered jobs in the city.

Suchin senses the sarcasm in his voice.

SUCHIN

(beat)
No.

DAW

How much will you be making?

SUCHIN

I'm not sure. The lawyer will tell
you more.

SUCHIN'S MOTHER

(Thai, subtitled)
If it's enough to make papa well
and pay the debts then it is
enough.

Suchin notices her brother's cold eye.

DAW

(beat)
Remind us what you will be doing in
the city dear sister?

Suchin prepares another plate of rice, her back to him.

SUCHIN

Cleaning, washing up, things like
that.

DAW

And they don't have people to do
that in the city?

Suchin's mother lowers her head, quiet. She doesn't want to
think what he's thinking.

SUCHIN

(beat)
Papa may get hungry later.

She takes the plate into the next room.

Daw watches her go.

INT. SMALL BEDROOM (DARK)

Suchin kneels down by a mattress on the floor. Her father, sick and frail, is asleep.

She touches his shoulder.

SUCHIN

Papa, I have brought you some food.

Her father doesn't respond, breathing slowly.

Suchin lights a candle with a match and moves to the window.

She's about to close the drape when she sees a van parked in the distance.

Two men are inside, smoking.

CUT TO.

INT. CHURCH - LATE NIGHT

Christopher sits in a small empty chapel, praying quietly.

"Lagos, Nigeria"

He hears someone scuffle by and looks up.

It's an old blind cleaner with a broom.

The cleaner senses someone in the room and smiles.

BLIND CLEANER

(accented)

Good thing the Lord doesn't sleep.

CHRISTOPHER

If He did where would we be?

The cleaner laughs, starting to sweep.

BLIND CLEANER

(beat)

Something troubling you my son?

Christopher pauses, then slowly shakes his head.

CHRISTOPHER

(beat)

No. Not anymore.

The cleaner laughs again, continuing to sweep.

BLIND CLEANER

Very good son, very good. The Lord
will see you through, He always
does.

EXT. CHURCH - STREET - NIGHT

A government car sits parked outside the church, two men
keeping watch.

CUT TO.

EXT. CEMETERY - GRAY AFTERNOON

Eunice stands alone, trying to play her guitar but keeps
fumbling on the strings.

She finally gives up and stops.

We see tears forming.

She lowers the guitar, almost dropping it, and looks down at
the grave.

Her face trembles, struggling to hold together.

EUNICE

(French, subtitled)

Mama... I really need you...

She closes her eyes and drops to her knees.

We hear a thunderclap in the distance.

CUT TO.

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - DAY

Joshua stares at his reflection in the mirror. His face pale,
eyes heavy.

We hear a "click".

He raises a gun to his head.

EXT. APARTMENT - RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

"BANG!"

Two agents turn around.

CUT TO.

INT. GOVERNMENT CAR - BACKSEAT - DAY

Hollis closes his eyes, phone to his ear.

HOLLIS
 (into phone)
 I guess one of them was going to
 crack.
 (beat)
 What about the others?

CALLER (O.S)
 (American)
 "They're all ready to go."

HOLLIS
 I suppose that's as good a news as
 we could ask. We're on our way to
 Take Off. Spread the word.

CALLER (O.S)
 "Yes Sir... -Oh and Sir?"

HOLLIS
 Yes?

CALLER (O.S)
 "About Mr Colton's request."

HOLLIS
 You know the location, just check
 his name's John.

CALLER (O.S)
 "Yes Sir."

Hollis hangs up.

He looks out the window as the car rolls to a stop.

He sees Caleb sitting on the curb, looking the same except
 for a rucksack over one shoulder.

Caleb looks up and smiles, getting to his feet.

HOLLIS
 (to himself)
 God help us.

CUT TO.

EXT. ANTARCTICA - DAY

A blanket of white passes beneath us. Two twin-engine
 helicopters fly south.

INT. PASSENGER CABIN - HELICOPTER

Eunice stares out a small window. No roads, towns or cities can be seen, just endless snow and ice.

Several of the volunteers are in the small cabin with her, all coated, all quiet.

Caleb rolls a joint. Christopher glances at him but says nothing. Caleb notices and grins.

CALEB

What they gonna do? Arrest me?

Christopher doesn't respond, a Bible clutched on his lap.

Caleb lights up, taking a hit, then glances Eunice, still staring out the window.

In the white glow she looks even more beautiful.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(beat)

Eunice right?

Eunice comes about.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(smiles)

You're name, it's Eunice, right.

EUNICE

(accented)

Yes. Eunice.

He offers the joint.

CALEB

It'll calm the nerves.

EUNICE

No. Thank you.

Caleb takes another toke, looking at her.

CALEB

(smiles)

Ever been in one of these things before?

Eunice looks at him again, not following.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(changing subject)

So what did you do with your winnings? Leave it with your family?

EUNICE
 Sorry, my English no good.

She returns to the window.

Caleb flashes his eye brows.

CALEB
 (to himself)
 I guess Martian would be
 preferable.

Eunice leans closer to the window.

She sees a giant X taped out in black. A short distance away
 four large tents are erected, beside them three more heavy-
 lift choppers.

CUT TO.

EXT. CAMP - ANTARCTICA - DAY

The two helicopters land. Swarms scientists and government
 personnel are racing around, busily preparing, soldiers
 carrying sophisticated recording and monitoring instruments.

The ramp lowers. The volunteers emerge.

CALEB
 (hit by the cold)
 Jesus!

Eunice hugs herself. Two soldiers quickly approach and escort
 them to a nearby tent.

CUT TO.

INT. CAMP TENT

Survival packs are lined up on the table, the six volunteers
 being briefed by a NASA consultant (translators beside them).

Hollis stands in the corner of the room, quietly observing.

NASA CONSULTANT
 This is the same food our
 astronauts take up on shuttle
 missions. It's simple, light,
 durable, and covers all the
 essentials. You'll have enough to
 keep you going for several weeks.

Caleb lifts a packet of colored vitamins and looks at them,
 curious.

NASA CONSULTANT (CONT'D)
 We've only included three flasks of water which isn't much but since these beings have been here before they should have a detailed knowledge of our physiology and be well aware of what keeps us alive.

Vincent notices six tablet computers.

NASA CONSULTANT (CONT'D)
 Your personal computers here are preloaded with a full encyclopedia of Earth's history, our science and our arts. It may not be thorough as we'd like but it's the best we could do in such short notice. Each of your computers is set to your native language and to help you communicate with one another a translation program has also been included.

(holds up one of the computer)

Some of you will more experienced than others so please assist each other.

Caleb looks aside and sees a soldier carrying an automatic.

NASA CONSULTANT (CONT'D)
 Are there any questions?

CHRISTOPHER
 (English, accented)
 Yes. May we take any personal items?

NASA CONSULTANT
 You may each take one personal item if you choose.

Caleb raises his hand.

NASA CONSULTANT (CONT'D)
 Yes?

He points to the soldier's automatic.

CALEB
 Can we take one of those?

Mariella enters, out of breath.

MARIELLA
 (to Hollis, low)
 It's coming.

Eunice hears them.

CUT TO.

EXT. TAKE OFF POINT - CAMP

The six volunteers, gloved, coated, and carrying their backpacks are led to the perimeter of the camp.

Suchin watches several scientists working away, showing no interest in them.

Cameras and scanning instruments are already pointed to the sky over the X.

Mariella touches Eunice's arm and forces a smile, unsure what to say.

MARIELLA
(French, subtitled)
You will not be forgotten.

Eunice looks ahead and trembles, unable to move.

Soldiers and scientists hold back behind the line.

Eunice feels someone take her hand. It's Suchin. Her eyes forward.

She takes the first steps towards the X.

Eunice follows. The others reluctantly doing the same.

Caleb looks back at Hollis.

Hollis nods once.

CALEB
(beat)
See you in the next life.

Hollis doesn't respond.

Caleb turns away and starts walking.

SCIENTIST (O.S)
It'll be in visual range in two minutes.

Mariella looks up at the sky.

MARIELLA
(English, low)
God be with them.

Hollis glances at her, pausing.

The volunteers reach the X and look back.

The camp seems far away.

Hollis squints, eyes on the sky.

HOLLIS

(beat)

I think we got it.

Mariella also squints, struggling against the sun.

SCIENTIST (O.S)

Woah woah, what's going on?

Hollis turns. The soldiers raise their weapons.

The scientists check the power cables.

The monitors are starting to disrupt, the recording equipment failing.

HOLLIS

What's happened??

SCIENTIST

We don't know, some sort of power surge!

The volunteers look up. The silver sphere is visible, a blurry dot still several miles up.

Marika shakes her head and backs away, terrified. Eunice grabs her hand, stopping her.

MARIKA

(Estonian)

-I want to go, I want to go back, I can't do this!

EUNICE

(French)

-It won't hurt us! It won't hurt us!

Vincent sees the people on the camp perimeter racing around.

VINCENT

(Czech)

-Something's not right.

Caleb looks between them all, completely lost.

CALEB

-What the Hell are you guys saying??

Suchin watches as the sphere slowly descends.

Christopher makes the cross sign and closes his eyes, holding his Bible close.

Mariella takes out her mobile and looks at the screen.

It's dead.

The object is now in clear sight, an enormous silver ball, settling over the volunteers.

SCIENTIST #1

We need a camera! We need a camera!

SCIENTIST #2

Nothing's working, we need something that isn't electrical!

The soldiers are now in complete awe. The scientists give up on the equipment and one by one stare at the enormous silver sphere.

The volunteers are silent. The object has stopped and is now hovering meters above.

They see their reflection on its curved surface.

The only sound heard is the light arctic breeze and their own breathing.

Caleb focuses his eyes.

CALEB

(beat)

Something's happening...

They start to see swirls of light, faint at first but then getting stronger.

Eunice begins to squint.

The light, white, is getting stronger, the swirls coalescing into one.

All six now struggle to look straight at it. Caleb shields his eyes and turns away just as the light blinds us.

FADE TO WHITE.

FADE IN.

EXT. TAKE OFF POINT - ANTARCTICA - NIGHT

Caleb slowly opens his eyes. His blurred vision settling.

Suchin slowly looks up.

The sphere is gone, replaced by a clear starry night sky.

Caleb spins around.

The camp is gone. In all directions there's nothing but the Arctic plains.

CALEB

(beat)

Where'd they go?

Everyone stops and looks at him.

Caleb notices.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(beat)

What? What's wrong with you guys?

EUNICE

(English, American accent)

You're... you're speaking French?

Caleb looks at her, the others now do the same.

MARIKA

(English, American accent)

No, you're both speaking Estonian.

Vincent looks between Marika, Eunice and Caleb.

VINCENT

Czech.

Caleb backs away, raising his hands.

CALEB

All right, this is freaking me out.

How long were we out?

Christopher checks her watch. The hands aren't moving.

Eunice turns to Suchin. She's staring at the horizon.

She slowly raises her hand and points.

SUCHIN

(English, American accent)

Look.

Eunice stops beside her and sees it.

A band of light, gently rising over the horizon.

The light climbs to their face until they're all in silhouette.

The curve of the Earth is glimpsed.

CALEB

(low)

I'll be God damned.

The curve lowers, dropping out of view, the moon and stars rolling away.

Everyone looks around disorientated.

Caleb looks down at his feet, balancing himself, but then realizes he's perfectly level.

Light rises behind them.

The volunteers spin around and see the curve of the Earth again, coming up from the opposite horizon now.

EUNICE

(to herself)

We're inside it.

The Earth's curve rises higher.

Everyone stands frozen.

Within seconds the entire planet is in view, and getting smaller.

-The moon, close-up, brushes by on the right, startling everyone.

The group draw closer, unsure where to look.

The Earth continues to get smaller, gently rotating at the same time, as though the sphere they're in is falling away in slow motion.

The speed then picks up.

The stars roll.

We see a red dot in the distance. It gets larger and larger until Mars is revealed.

We skim past the planet, the red plains momentarily filling the entire sky.

The stars roll again, the sun rising and setting over and over.

Everyone's eyes are now locked on Jupiter as it approaches.

Again we brush by, pushing in close.

Marika screams as the fierce clouds get dangerously close.

The sphere turns on its side, shooting around the planet.

The Great Red Spot passes, then falls.

We glimpse Europa and other Jovian moons.

Everyone again jumps, startled, as the sphere dives through a volcanic eruption spewing out of the moon of Io.

More speed picks up.

We pass Saturn, cutting through the rings.

The sun, even smaller now, continues to rise and fall.

Another planet approaches, Uranus. We glimpse its faint rings but then shoot by, swiftly coming to the blues of Neptune.

As with Jupiter we sling shot around the planet and are flung out of the Solar System.

The group now stands even closer, all looking across the sky.

The sun settles, now so small it's indistinguishable from the other stars.

It holds a moment then falls away for the last time.

We now see patch of stars ahead.

The stars are gradually blocked out by a black shape.

We draw closer and see that it's a black circle, an enormous black circle.

The group struggle to breath, completely terrified.

The black circle seems to get larger and larger.

Darkness spreading.

The light from the stars finally disappears completely, leaving us in pitch black.

...

We hear breathing...

The volunteers are still in the same spot.

Their faces are slowly illuminated by a red glow.

The glow gets stronger.

Above them is a single red star - the ONLY star - the rest of space totally empty.

It's a red dwarf.

Caleb sees something in its orbit.

A round, silver object, identical to the sphere, only this one is a million times larger.

CALEB
(beat, low)
Is that... a planet?

Eunice, still looking up, shakes her head.

EUNICE
I think it was planet.

Half the silver planet reflects the light of the red dwarf, the other half is in darkness.

The volunteers stare, unable to do anything.

Swirls of white light begin to form on its dark side... coalescing and getting brighter...

CALEB
Oh Hell, not agai-

-They look away just as the light shoots out and blinds them.

FADE TO WHITE.

FADE IN.

INT. BEDROOM

Eunice opens her eyes. She sees a chandelier above. Candles lit.

She's on a wide bed, naked under a silk sheet.

She slowly looks around.

The room is large and luxurious, it's style and decor almost Renaissance. The curtains and rugs however appear to have an East Asian and African influence.

She slowly climbs out of the bed, covering herself with the silk sheet.

The room is silent.

She approaches a mirror fixed into the wall and looks at her reflection.

Her hair is straight, longer than it was before, her eyes and face fresh and awake.

She slowly turns around and sees a large closet.

She opens the closet and sees dozens of formal dresses.

She studies the clothes.

They're all beautiful but very unusual, a combination of styles and fabrics (African, Asian, Eastern European, French and contemporary American).

CUT TO.

INT. HALLWAY

The bedroom door opens. Eunice steps out, dressed in a simple garment. The hallway is just as luxurious as the bedroom, the same hybrid style and decor.

She makes her way down and hears something around the corner.

CALEB (O.S)

Hello??

She hurries over and sees Caleb backing away from his own room.

EUNICE

Caleb!

Caleb spins around.

He's also formally dressed, his face clean shaven, hair trimmed.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S)

Anybody else here?

The two hear Christopher around the next corner. They hurry over and find him with Suchin.

Vincent and Marika emerge from the next corner. All dressed alike.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

Where are we? What happened to all of our things?

EUNICE

Let's just stay calm. Whatever's happening there's a reason.

Caleb turns his head and stops.

CALEB

Wait.

He raises his hand.

CALEB (CONT'D)

You smell that?

The others look at each other, confused.

Vincent turns and looks down the hallway to a flight of stairs.

VINCENT

(beat)

It's bread. Fresh bread.

CUT TO.

INT. STAIRS - GROUND FLOOR HALLWAY

The group slowly make their way down the stairs and follow another hallway.

They turn by a pillar and stop.

INT. GRAND DINING HALL

Sunlight cuts down from windows above. Rows of long tables stretch out, filled with food and drink of all varieties.

CALEB

What is this, our reception party?

The group enter and approach the first table.

Caleb looks down at a glazed roast turkey, still hot.

He smiles and picks up a carving knife.

EUNICE

Wait a second.

CALEB

-Come on.

He cuts a slice off the top.

CALEB (CONT'D)

They didn't bring us hundreds of light years just to poison us.

He takes a bite and chews.

Everyone looks at him.

MARIKA

Well?

Caleb grimaces then starts to choke.

EUNICE

Caleb!

He trips back, squeezing his throat and falls to the ground.
The others try to help him but don't know what to do.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
Get him some water!

Caleb goes limp and starts to laugh.
Everyone stops. Eunice draws back.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
You asshole!

Caleb gets up, chuckling.

CALEB
(chewing)
It's fine, nothing special but
nothing bad, it's just normal.

WOMAN (O.S)
(English, accented)
It will improve with time.

The volunteers spins around.

A woman stands at the far side of the hall. She's dressed
like them, formal, traditional.

EUNICE
(beat)
I don't believe it.

It's Mariella.

WOMAN
Do not be alarmed, and please do
not be afraid.

She makes her way over.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
(smiles)
I am Alleiram.

The group stare at her, Marika backing a step.

ALLEIRAM
Esidarap has provided this form.
Someone you have all recently met
and are comfortable with.

CALEB
Who's Esidarap?

Alleiram smiles, spreading her arms.

ALLEIRAM

This is all Esidarap.

EUNICE

You mean this planet, or whatever it is.

ALLEIRAM

Esidarap has constructed this reality for you. A reality that will appeal to you all as a collective.

CALEB

I don't believe it, we're in the God damn Matrix! They're probably using our brains as batteries!

EUNICE

-Shut up.

(to Alleiram)

I don't understand, did you read our minds?

Alleiram laughs, picking up an apple.

ALLEIRAM

Esidarap read your minds. We are forbidden.

EUNICE

Forbidden? By who?

Alleiram looks at the apple then sets it back down.

ALLEIRAM

I know this all seems very strange to you but we must have your trust.

EUNICE

All right, you want us to trust you show us what you really look like.

ALLEIRAM

I'm afraid that's not possible. In time it may be, but not now.

MARIKA

What do you want with us?

ALLEIRAM

(smiles)

"Want"? We don't want anything. We want to give.

You are each about to be rewarded for your courage. You have been given a rare opportunity.

EUNICE
What kind of opportunity.

ALLEIRAM
To understand the cosmos.

She draws back.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)
(beat)
Come, let me give you a glimpse of
the wonders that lie ahead of you.

The volunteers look at each other, then cautiously follow.

CUT TO.

EXT. PALACE - FRONT - BRIGHT SUNNY DAY

Two large doors open.

The group step out into the sunlight.

Marika gasps, Vincent's jaw almost drops.

Alleiram smiles, pleased by their reactions.

The golden palace sits on a hilltop, to their right is a lush green meadow stretching off towards a forest and mountains, to their left is an enormous waterfall flowing clear water into an ocean that becomes perfectly still.

Suchin slowly looks up.

The sky is a clear soft blue, the stars still visible along with a rainbow and three moons.

VINCENT
(stunned)
We're in heaven.

ALLEIRAM
(smiles)
No, you are in Esidarap.

CUT TO.

INT. BALCONY - VINCENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vincent looks out over the mountains. Esidarap's night sky is just as beautiful as its day.

He sips his pint of beer and smiles.

CALEB (O.S)
 We should have stayed downstairs,
 she said we're free to go anywhere
 we want.

Caleb knocks back some bottled beer and bites into a thick
 burger.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 Mmm, I swear to God this is
 starting to taste just like
 Hinano's.

Everyone is sat on the bed or on the floor, picking from
 plates of food taken from the dining hall.

EUNICE
 We've got plenty of time to
 explore.

Marika pours herself some more wine and looks at the glass,
 quiet.

MARIKA
 (beat)
 We can never go back, can we?

CALEB
 (laughs)
 Who wants to go back?

EUNICE
 (to Marika)
 What makes you think that? We can
 always ask.

CHRISTOPHER
 "The Chosen must come of their own
 accord"

There's no turning back.

Eunice sees the pain and anguish on Marika's face.

She smiles, pouring more wine for herself.

EUNICE
 (to Marika)
 What did you do with your money?

Marika glances at her.

MARIKA
 (beat)
 I have a son, he's three. I left
 him everything.
 (sips wine)
 He'll have a wonderful life.

Eunice nods and smiles, trying to lift morale.

EUNICE
I'm sure he will.

She turns to the others.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
What about everyone else? Vincent?

VINCENT
I have a niece and a brother. My
brother's always wanted his own
business, now he'll get one.

CALEB
Something tells me won't need one.

CHRISTOPHER
I gave everything to the church in
my home town, the money will help
many people.

Eunice turns to Suchin.

EUNICE
How about you?

Suchin looks up from her bowl of noodles, still quiet.

SUCHIN
My family.

MARIKA
(to Eunice)
And you?

EUNICE
(smiles)
Charity.

Caleb opens another bottle.

CALEB
No kidding, me too.

Eunice looks at him with sarcasm.

EUNICE
Really?

CALEB
Yeah.
(sips some more beer)
What? You think I don't have a
conscience?

He winks.

Eunice smiles, pleasantly surprised.

EUNICE
Sorry, shouldn't have judged.

Caleb glances at her, pleased.

CUT TO.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Suchin checks the doors on the right.

SUCHIN
(to Eunice)
This one is mine.

Eunice follows behind.

EUNICE
OK, I'm two corners around, at the
far end, I think it's the last
door.

Suchin nods, opening the door.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
Hey.

Suchin looks back.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
If you need anything or just don't
want to be alone come over OK.

Suchin nods.

SUCHIN
Goodnight.

EUNICE
Night.

She goes in.

Eunice turns her head and sees Caleb approaching with two bottles of beer in one hand and a bottle of wine in the other.

CALEB
What?

He holds up the wine.

CALEB (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Wanna join me?

CUT TO.

INT. SUCHIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Suchin closes the door and turns around.

The candles are already lit, the room quiet.

She sees her reflection in the mirror and pauses.

She looks completely different to normal self back in the village.

She removes her head-pin and lets her hair fall loose.

Her hands slowly settle on her belly. She then notices something different in the reflection. Daylight is coming in through the balcony's opening.

She slowly turns her head.

The sun is strong.

She approaches the opening and comes out onto the balcony. It's level with the ground.

EXT. RICE FIELD - THAILAND - DAY

Suchin looks up, the sky is clear.

She hears laughter and looks ahead.

She sees men and women are working. Amongst them her father, strong and healthy.

He's teaching a young girl of 7 how to pick.

SUCHIN'S MOTHER (O.S)
(Thai, subtitled)
Suchin! Suchin!

SUCHIN'S FATHER
(Thai, subtitled)
She is with me, leave her alone.

Suchin backs away.

The vision disappears, the balcony again overlooking the ocean and night sky.

Suchin stands still, the wind swaying her hair.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. CALEB'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Caleb's eyes are closed, sunlight cutting across his face.

He slowly wakes and looks down.

Eunice looks up at him.

CALEB
(smiles)
Morning.

EUNICE
(smiling back)
Morning.

She leans up and slowly kisses him.

CALEB
Sleep all right?

EUNICE
(still smiling)
Absolutely.

Caleb grins, stroking her shoulder.

"KNOCK KNOCK"

Caleb wakes, alone in the bed.

He looks around, confused.

"KNOCK KNOCK"

CALEB
Hold on!

He climbs out of bed and quickly puts on some clothes.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Damn it.

He opens the door and stops.

CALEB (CONT'D)
You've got to be kidding me.

Standing outside is the actor Steve Buscemi (*or another established actor*).

BELAC
(smiles)
Hi there.

CALEB
Mr Pink?

BELAC
No, Belac actually, you're just seeing me as someone you met and liked.

CALEB
I've never met Steve Buscemi.

BELAC
Oh, well, someone you saw and liked then. I'll be your guide. Are you ready to come down?

Caleb stares at him, still adjusting.

CALEB
Yeah... Just... give me a sec.

He returns to the bed and looks for his shoes.

BELAC
Did you sleep well?

CALEB
What?

He leans down and notices a bra on the floor.

BELAC (O.S)
Did you sleep all right?

He stops and looks again.

The bra is gone.

CALEB
(beat, to himself)
I think I did.

CUT TO.

INT. GROUND FLOOR HALLWAY - GRAND DINING HALL

Caleb follows Belac to the dining hall.

BELAC
First night is Esidarap always takes some adjusting to, or so I'm told.

Caleb sees the others standing with unfamiliar individuals beside them.

BELAC (CONT'D)
Ah looks like you're the last one.

Belac heads in. The six walk into each other and merge into one (still in Buscemi form).

Everyone stops stunned.

BELAC (CONT'D)
(to group)
Will this appearance be acceptable for everyone?

CALEB
You can look like anyone you want?

BELAC
Not really, Esidarap will allow you to see me in the form you want. For consistency it's preferable I have the same appearance for you all.

EUNICE
This one's fine.

CALEB
-Wait wait. How about someone a little more exciting.

EUNICE
Like who?

Caleb approaches and focuses on Belac.

Belac changes into Rosie Huntington-Whitely (*or another model/actress*).

BELAC
Is this satisfactory?

CALEB
(laughs)
Wait wait, I got another.

He focuses again. Belac now changes to Rihanna (*or another celebrity*)

EUNICE
You do know you're getting turned on by an extraterrestrial who's probably not even female.

Belac returns to Buscemi form.

CALEB
Just screwing around.

BELAC
Happy?

EUNICE
Yes, we're happy.

CUT TO.

EXT. GARDENS - PALACE - MORNING

The group follow Belac down a footpath, flowers and fountains around them.

BELAC
As Alleiram said you're free to go
anywhere you want, inside and
outside the palace.

EUNICE
"But"?

BELAC
"But" what? This whole reality is
yours.

A woman passes by carrying a basket of fruit.

VINCENT
(to Belac)
Who was that?

BELAC
Part of the scenery, if you don't
want them around they'll disappear.
From my understanding you're a very
social species so expect to see
others like yourself wandering
around. -Oh and feel free to talk
with them, they're personalities
will have echoes of people you've
seen or encountered, it's pretty
neat.

MARIKA
But they're not real.

BELAC
(laughs)
Nothing here is real.

Eunice looks aside and sees an old gardener trimming a plant.
The gardener looks at her and smiles.

CUT TO.

EXT. PROMENADE - WATERFALL - MORNING

The group follow Belac down a wide promenade by the waterfall.

BELAC
(continuing)
Remember in reality those waters
over there would be so loud you
wouldn't hear me speak, but since
you all want to hear me speak, or
at least I hope you do, you hear me
and not the water.

Eunice stops in front of him.

EUNICE
Why are you telling us all this?
Alleiram, or whoever she is, said
you people wanted to teach us about
the universe. So far it feels like
you're just giving us a personal
tour of a prison.

BELAC
"Prison"? Esidarap isn't a prison.
Look around you. You can recreate
your entire planet if you wanted
to, granted you'll need to have
total knowledge of your entire
planet, but-

EUNICE
-Fine, it's a very big and very
nice prison but it still feels like
one nonetheless.

Belac looks at them all.

They all have the same skeptical expression.

BELAC
Guys, none of this is permanent.
And this isn't someplace you're
forced to stay forever. It's a
necessary phase of your transition.

CHRISTOPHER
"Transition"?

BELAC
Yes. From the life you knew to the
life you'll have.

EUNICE
What if we don't want new lives?

Marika glances at Eunice.

Belac laughs, but then stops, realizing she's serious.

BELAC
Wait you're not joking. You want to go back?

EUNICE
We just want to know if we have a choice?

Belac looks between them all, surprised.

BELA
Wasn't this explained to you?

MARIKA
What?

Belac steps back, embarrassed.

BELAC
I'm sorry, I hate to be the bringer of bad news but I'm afraid there won't be anything for you to go back to.

EUNICE
What do you mean?

BELAC
Your species is to be terminated.

CUT TO.

INT. GRAND DINING HALL - NIGHT

Marika paces back and forth, shaking her head. The others are seated and look equally shaken.

ALLEIRAM (O.S)
I had hoped to wait until you had settled into Esidarap.

Alleiram sits opposite, Belac beside her.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)
It was the Council's decision.

CALEB
The "Council"?

ALLEIRAM
Delegates from a hundred thousand class 7 civilizations.

MARIKA

This is why you brought us here, to put us in some cosmic zoo.

ALLEIRAM

Of course not.

(sighs)

Your planet had been neglected for a long time. As you can imagine there are many worlds in the galaxy that require the Council's attention.

Alleiram waves her hand, a video image appears in front of them.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

Initially we watched your kind from afar.

We see clips from television sit-coms, a BBC nature documentary, then violent video nasties.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

But it was difficult to assess your civilization based on these fabricated realities you created for your amusement.

News footage shows genocide in Rwanda.

Eunice draws back.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

Several probes were then sent. The reports they returned were not thorough but it was enough to convince the Council that your species were not progressing.

Alleiram sighs.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

When any civilization becomes technologically aware a crucial turning point presents itself. All evidence has shown that Man is reaching what we term Final Stagnation.

Caleb smiles to himself, amused by the absurdity of the situation.

EUNICE

How can they be so certain we won't "progress"? They can't know that for sure.

ALLEIRAM

For any advanced civilization to grow the species must be unified. This is the case with all the member races of the Great Council. When a species achieves First Unity they develop rapidly, expanding beyond their system and ultimately join the Great Council. This is the way it has been done since before your star was even formed.

EUNICE

You can't do this. We won't let you do this!

ALLEIRAM

No harm will come to any of you. You are not specimens and this is no laboratory. This is a school for the chosen. It is a great honor.

EUNICE

-To Hell with your honor! You're talking about wiping our billions of human beings!

Marika's face goes white.

CHRISTOPHER

(to Alleiram)

How long before it happens? Or has it happened already?

ALLEIRAM

Preparations are being made.

EUNICE

You have to let us speak to this council of yours.

ALLEIRAM

It will make little difference.

EUNICE

You have to give us a chance. They have to know that we can change.

Alleiram draws back.

BELAC

(to Alleiram)

It can be arranged.

Alleiram pauses, seeing the determination in Eunice's eyes.

ALLEIRAM

(to all)

It is a shame you cannot see with
more mature eyes.

CUT TO.

INT. EUNICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The volunteers are gathered. Eunice paces, trying to think.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S)

She's reasonable woman, or
creature. If she can be
understanding these others must be
the same.

Vincent is quiet, sat on the floor but looking out the
balcony.

CALEB

We don't know that. For all we know
they could be using their Death
Stars and blowing up planets on a
regular basis.

CHRISTOPHER

They gave us a choice to come here,
they give us all this, they can't
be devoid of all conscience.

CALEB

Hey, we're in some alien VR world
remember, they could be dicing up
our brains and feeding a Rancor.

EUNICE

(to Caleb)

Cut it out.

SUCHIN

We must have faith.

Suchin looks up.

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

That is all we can show them.

CALEB

Faith? Faith in what?

Eunice nods.

EUNICE

In the human race. Suchin's right, we're all from different parts of the world and we all want the same thing, to protect the Earth and its people. If they can see that it has to convince them we can be... unified.

Marika slowly nods, as does Christopher.

CALEB

We don't exactly have any other options.

EUNICE

Vincent?

Vincent looks away from the balcony and nods.

VINCENT

Yes.

CUT TO.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - MORNING

A hand grabs an outcropping.

Vincent is climbing, unharnessed and alone.

He clenches his teeth, going for another outcropping and pulls himself further up.

The sun is strong, a rainbow cutting across the blue sky.

He finally reaches the top and rolls onto his back, out of breath.

We hear his heart beating, loud and strong. He's sweating, exhausted, but is also smiling.

He opens his eyes and looks up at the rainbow, still gasping for air.

He laughs aloud, spreading out his arms.

CUT TO.

INT. VINCENT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Vincent's arms are spread apart, still lying in bed. He turns his head and rubs his fingers.

There's grit between them.

There's a "knock" on the door, Caleb pops his head in.

CALEB

Rise and shine old man, we got a
date with the intergalactic UN.

Vincent looks down at his hands, the grit fading away.

CUT TO.

INT. GRAND HALLWAY

Eunice and the others follow Alleiram and Belac down a thick red carpeted hallway. Painting frames line the walls, within them just mirrors.

ALLEIRAM (O.S)

Silloh is the only council member
that will address you directly.

Caleb glances at the one of the mirrors. He only sees his own reflection.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

The others will be present but will
only observe. They are still the
ones that will ultimately decide.

The volunteers look up as they approach two enormous golden doors.

Alleiram stops and turns to them.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

You must be cautious with your
words. The fate of your species may
not change but yours might.

Eunice takes a deep breath and nods.

EUNICE

We're ready.

Alleiram looks at them one last time.

ALLEIRAM

(beat)
Very well.

She turns to the doors and waits.

The doors slowly part, white light spilling out.

The volunteers shield their eyes.

ALLEIRAM (O.S) (CONT'D)

Come.

Alleiram and Belac walk into the light. The group look at each other then follow in.

CUT TO.

INT. COUNCIL ARENA

The volunteers stand at the end of a wide isle, no doors behind them.

They look around them and see thousands of men and women, all uniquely but formally dressed.

CALEB

Woah.

The council members, all human, fill not only the ground floor but also the seemingly endless levels of balconies overlooking the main floor.

All their eyes are on the volunteers.

Caleb forces a smile and waves.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Morning.

ALLEIRAM

(to group, low)

Come forward.

The volunteers follow Alleiram and Belac down the isle to the main floor.

Caleb studies the passing faces, their eyes following him.

CALEB

(amazed)

I know some of these people.

Belac glances back.

BELAC

Know them or saw them?

Caleb looks at him.

BELAC (CONT'D)

(smiles)

That was a joke.

We see famous faces in the crowd, actors, musicians, politicians (*lookalikes can be used as seen briefly and from afar*), all mixed with faces we don't know.

Suchin looks up and sees a man on the balcony.

It's her brother, Daw.

Vincent also recognizes a face, Frederic.

The group reach the main floor and see a long table and eight chairs prepared for them.

Standing in the middle of the main floor with his back to us is a tall man. His posture is straight, his hands behind his back.

Caleb looks away from the crowd as he reaches the main floor and sees the man as he turns to face them.

CALEB

Wonderful.

It's Silloh / Hollis.

BELAC

(to Caleb)

Sit.

Caleb sits down with the others.

The arena falls quiet.

Alleiram moves forward and stops between Silloh and the volunteers. She bows once then turns to the council.

ALLEIRAM

Great Council, I bring before you
the Chosen of Earth, of the species
Man.

(to volunteers)

Rise before the Great Council.

The volunteers get up, Caleb still distracted by the faces around him.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

The Chosen of Earth seek an
audience with the Great Council, to
pardon the species Man from the
judgment passed.

Are there any who refuse their voice?

The arena remains silent.

Alleiram bows and rejoins the volunteers.

Silloh holds a moment, then steps forward.

SILLOH

(beat)

The Planet Earth. Third body of the
star Ralos-1.

(MORE)

SILLOH (CONT'D)

A world rich with potential. A vast and diverse biology that countless would envy. And yet dominated by a species that remain curiously unified.

He pauses then turns to the council.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

Of all the civilizations encountered since the formation of the Great Council name one that has risen without the First Unification?

There's no response.

Silloh looks down at the volunteers again.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

Man has not unified. Man refuses to unify. They fear all, including each other.

Suchin sees her brother still staring at her.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

At this very moment they see us as they wish to see us, as other human beings. Does that alone not prove their primitive nature?

EUNICE

(gets up)

-Wait a minute, we didn't ask for this charade. If you want to show yourself then show yourself.

Silloh smiles.

SILLOH

In Esidarap one only sees what they are capable for seeing.

(to council)

And Man is incapable of seeing.

Eunice's face tightens, angry.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

The time has come for the Planet Earth to be blessed with new custodians. Worthy custodians who will rise to their potential and join the Great Council.

He steps back.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

This is not the first time we have
intervened with this world.

The Earth materializes over the main floor.

Everyone looks up.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

This was long before Man but is
relevant none the less.

We zoom in, glimpsing unfamiliar continents, and settle in a
jungle.

We see an Edmontosaurus foraging for food. The mouth of a
Tyrannosaurs drops down and crushes the smaller dinosaur
between its teeth.

SILLOH (O.S) (CONT'D)

They too reached Final Stagnation
and the Council rightly acted.

We pull back and see the Earth again just as an asteroid
crashes into it.

The volunteers watch as a fierce blanket of fire sweeps over
the planet.

Eunice shakes her head and pushes forward.

EUNICE

This isn't fair. We're not like
them. We have minds, we can think
for ourselves, we have art,
language, science. Doesn't that
counts for anything??

SILLOH

"Language" you say? Is this the
same language you speak to each
other with?

Eunice stops.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

Or do you communicate through the
aid of Esidarap?

Eunice is unable to respond.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

Great Council, it should be noted
that there is a pattern common on
many worlds like Earth. For the
first two species to fall to
stagnation and for third to truly
free itself from its animal past.

(MORE)

SILLOH (CONT'D)

It is this third great race that
will cross borders of their
habitable world and begin their
journey to the stars.

CALEB (O.S)

Hold up, hold up.

Caleb stands.

CALEB (CONT'D)

We've got you there. We've been to
the Moon AND Mars. We HAVE been to
the stars.

Silloh look at Alleiram.

Alleiram nods.

ALLEIRAM

This is true. Man has left the
Earth before our arrival. No
species has ever achieved this
before First Unity.

Silloh turns to Caleb.

SILLOH

(beat)

Tell us more.

CALEB

More?

SILLOH

Of your journey to the stars.

CALEB

Me or humans?

BELAC

(leans in, low)

He means humans.

Caleb looks around and smiles, feeling all eyes on him.

Eunice waits, nervous.

CALEB

All right, well, from what I
remember we first went up because
of the Cold War.

SILLOH

A "war"?

Council members mutter amongst each other.

Eunice closes her eyes and shakes her head.

CALEB

Yeah.

SILLOH

And this war continues?

CALEB

(laughs)

No no that finished a long time ago.

(smiles, proud)

We won.

SILLOH

And now you sustain colonies beyond your planet?

CALEB

Not really no. I mean I think they talked about sending people to Mars but it would have costs billions.

SILLOH

So war is the sole reason for Man to part from its world?

CALEB

No I'm not saying that, that war just encouraged us back then that's all.

SILLOH

(to council)

Consider a moment, Man's progression if allowed to continue, a technological civilization driven by the passions of war, spreading beyond their system. What if they were to cross paths with any of civilizations? Their arrival could tear apart the very fabric of our unity. Man would threaten the Final Unity!

The council members mutter again, disturbed by this thought.

EUNICE

-Stop it! We're not like that!

CHRISTOPHER

(gets up)

-We're good people!

MARIKA

-You're all monsters! How can you do this to us?!

Alleiram quickly raises her hands and turns to the council.

ALLEIRAM

-Great Council I request the Chosen
of Earth be granted time to
reflect.

Silloh smiles and turns away.

Caleb looks at Eunice, embarrassed.

CUT TO.

EXT. GARDENS - PALACE - SUNSET

A stone is kicked. Eunice is furious. The others sit by a
fountain, quiet.

Alleiram and Belac approaches. Everyone looks up.

ALLEIRAM

The Council will see you again.

MARIKA

(sarcastic)
Wonderful.

ALLEIRAM

Fortunately as there are six of you
you are granted six audiences. You
may still convince them.

The old gardener brushes past Eunice.

GARDENER

Excuse me my lady.

Eunice moves aside.

EUNICE

They're not being fair, they're not
giving us a chance, he's twisting
our words!

ALLEIRAM

And he will continue to do so. What
you're trying to accomplish will
not be easy. The Council has never
changed a judgment once it has been
made.

EUNICE

Well there's a first time for
everything.

Alleiram looks at them and nods.

ALLEIRAM

(beat)

You are all tired. You should rest,
tomorrow may prove more fruitful.

Vincent gets up, quiet, and moves off. Suchin glances at him.

CUT TO.

EXT. PROMENADE - WATERFALL - NIGHT

Eunice picks the strings on a guitar, tuning it.

She sits alone on a short wall.

CALEB (O.S)

Where'd you find that?

Eunice looks up. Caleb stands a short distance away.

EUNICE

I was thinking about my guitar
earlier, when I got back to my room
it was just there.

CALEB

(smiles)

Convenient.

Eunice smiles back.

Caleb approaches and sits beside her.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(beat)

I'm... sorry. I really messed up.

Eunice looks at him and sees he means it.

EUNICE

It's all right.

She returns to her guitar, playing a melody.

CALEB

(beat)

You're good, I guess if you sang
anything I'll hear it in English
and it'll ruin it completely.

Eunice lightly laughs.

EUNICE

Well, I don't sing all that good.

She re-tunes and plays again.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
My mother used to.

CALEB
You didn't leave her anything?

EUNICE
She died, when I was 12.

CALEB
Sorry to hear that.

Eunice continues to play, now feeling awkward.

CALEB (CONT'D)
(beat)
My old man dropped, I mean passed
away, recently. Never knew my mom.

Eunice looks at him.

EUNICE
That's sad.

CALEB
Yeah well, life goes on, until it
doesn't.

Eunice nods, quiet.

EUNICE
Yeah, I suppose so.

She puts aside the guitar.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
We should get some sleep.

She gets up and looks down at him.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
Don't worry about today. You tried,
that's what matters.

Caleb nods.

CALEB
(beat)
We'll get through this. We won't
give up. You've got my word.

Eunice smiles, grateful. She leans down and kisses his cheek.

EUNICE
Goodnight Caleb.

She turns and walks away.

Caleb watches her go, smiling.

CUT TO.

INT. MARIKA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Marika combs her hair, dressed for bed.

She notices her reflection in the mirror and pauses.

She sets down the comb and walks over, stopping in front of her reflection.

She adjusts her nightdress, uncomfortable, then closes her eyes, taking a deep breath.

When her eyes reopen she stops.

She's the same but her reflection is different. She's tall, slim, her figure perfect. Her face is also tanned with no freckles, her long hair styled with precision.

She starts to hear music, faint, contemporary. "Under Your Spell".

She slowly turns around. It's coming from the balcony.

She makes her way over and stops at the opening.

Strobe lights pass over her face. The music gets louder.

CUT TO.

INT. TRENDY NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Marika looks down. She's wearing a red dress. People pass by, beautiful people, all mingling with each other.

She makes her way forward, passing more people on the dance floor.

Her eye crosses another mirror. The reflection is again different, she sees her perfect self.

YOUNG MAN (O.S)
(Estonian, subtitled)
There you are.

Someone takes her hand. Marika sees a handsome young man smiling at her.

MARIKA
(Estonian, subtitled)
Who are you?

YOUNG MAN
 (laughs)
 Who am I? It's me.

She draws back, even though she doesn't want to.

YOUNG WOMAN (O.S)
 (Estonian, subtitled)
 Akiram! Where have you been?!

An attractive young woman approaches with two of her friends.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Come on, dance with us!

Marika looks at them, feeling inferior.

AKIRAM
 Later, this is my special girl.

The women look at Marika and smile, impressed.

YOUNG WOMAN
 You lucky lucky guy!

Marika starts to smile.

AKIRAM
 (to Marika)
 Wait here, I'll get you a drink.

He kisses her slowly.

AKIRAM (CONT'D)
 (smiling)
 Don't go anywhere.

He strokes her chin.

Marika watches him go to the bar.

YOUNG WOMAN (O.S)
 (to Marika)
 I love that dress, Prada?

MARIKA
 (still taken back)
 Um yes, I think so.

CUT TO.

INT. MARIKA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is still.

Marika stands by the mirror, her reflection back to normal.

She slowly looks away, tears forming.

CUT TO.

INT. COUNCIL ARENA - DAY

Marika taps her glass of water, distracted.

SILLOH (O.S)
I am curious.

The volunteers are all sat by the table again.

Silloh turns to them.

SILLOH (CONT'D)
You have all been given a place in
Esidarap yet you still feel so
strongly towards your kind.

EUNICE
That's because we care about other
human beings.

Silloh looks at Suchin.

SILLOH
And they care for you?

Suchin nods, quiet.

He slowly looks over their faces.

SILLOH (CONT'D)
In a world without First Unity what
IS the value of each human being
amongst your kind?

He looks to Vincent.

VINCENT
(beat)
We are all valued equally.

SILLOH
So there is peace amongst Man? You
are all given and treated equally?

Vincent looks away, uncomfortable.

VINCENT
We have systems in place.

SILLOH
Yes, a system of trade. This system
must have been perfected for you
all to be equal.

EUNICE

Things are improving. Anyway we have equal rights, all humans have the same basic rights.

SILLOH

Is food, water, your very sustenance, also subject to your systems of trade?

Eunice resists answering, sensing a trap.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

Be truthful.

CHRISTOPHER

We help those that struggle. We all work together to help them.

Marika looks down at her glass of water. The reflected face is her fantasy self.

SILLOH

So there are those "with" and those "without".

Marika looks again. The reflection is back to normal.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

Were each of you content with your life amongst Man? Of your place in your... civilization?

Silloh looks to Vincent again.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

If you had a choice between all Esidarap has to offer and the life you knew would you gladly exchange?

EUNICE

Of course we-

VINCENT

-No.

Eunice stop and looks at Vincent.

EUNICE

-Vincent, what are you doing??

Vincent slowly stands, head low.

Silloh smiles and watches him walk to the isle. Eunice chases after him.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

-Vincent no, don't do this, don't
let this place get to you, none of
it is real!

The others join her. Marika remains seated, looking up at the balcony.

Akiram stands behind a row of council members, smiling at her.

CHRISTOPHER

-They're going to kill them all!
Are you mad??

CALEB

-Don't be selfish!

VINCENT

-"Selfish"??

Vincent stops and looks at them.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I am 42 years old. I have never had
a wife, never had any children.
I've spent more than half of my
life cleaning windows and sweeping
streets. No one gave me anything,
not even my own family. So don't
stand there and accuse me of being
selfish. If this is my chance at
happiness I'm taking it.

I'm not wasting any more time.

He looks up at the council members.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Let them do what they want.

He shoves past Christopher.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Get out of my way.

SILLOH

(to council)
The Chosen are granted more time to
reflect.

Silloh notices Alleiram looking at him coldly.

He smiles and bows.

CUT TO.

EXT. BALCONY - EUNICE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Eunice stands alone, looking out over the ocean.

Suchin steps forward and stands beside her.

SUCHIN

We cannot find him. Alleiram says
we wont.

EUNICE

How could he do that? How could he
just turn his back on them?

SUCHIN

Life is short. When a person finds
happiness, in any form, it is hard
to push away.

Suchin holds a moment then turns and leaves.

Eunice continues to stare out, angry.

CUT TO.

INT. EUNICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eunice lies in bed, unable to sleep.

She hears a "flap" and turns her head.

A green budgerigar sits on the chandelier.

She slowly sits up, staring at the bird.

It jumps off and flies out the balcony.

She quickly climbs out of bed and follows after it.

CUT TO.

INT. SMALL KITCHEN - APARTMENT - MORNING

Eunice stops.

She looks down. She's standing on white tiles.

A woman softly hums off-screen.

She slowly looks up, it's the melody she played on her
guitar.

The humming stops.

EUNICE'S MOTHER (O.S)
 (French, subtitled)
 -Neechie, don't let him fly around
 when the windows are open.

Eunice's mother, late 30s, beautiful, enters and puts down a basket of clothes.

She reaches above the fridge and offers her finger. The budgie climbs on.

EUNICE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
 If you lose another one you'll be
 crying for days.

She puts the bird back into its cage and closes the gate.

Eunice backs away, shaking her head.

EUNICE
 No.

Her mother smiles, putting the clothes into the washing machine.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 None of this is real.

EUNICE'S MOTHER
 What are you talking about
 sweetheart?

Eunice turns around grabs the door handle.

It won't budge.

EUNICE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
 (concerned)
 Neechie what's wrong?

Tears fill Eunice's eyes.

EUNICE
 Let me out of here! Let me out!

The door finally opens.

CUT TO.

INT. SMALL LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eunice slams the door shut behind her. She closes her eyes, pushing at the door, trying not to cry.

She slaps the door, angry, and sees a crowbar leaning against the wall.

She slowly picks it up.

EUNICE'S STEPFATHER (O.S)
(French, subtitled)
You lying bitch!

She spins around and screams.

A man in his 40s is kicking her mother on the floor.

Her mother cries, desperately trying to crawl away. She makes eye contact with Eunice and reaches out to her.

EUNICE'S MOTHER
Stop him! Stop him!

Eunice runs over and swings the crowbar, batting her stepfather away.

The large man falls, hitting his head.

Eunice screams, pounding him down over and over.

Her mother finally gets to her feet and pulls her back.

The crowbar drops.

EUNICE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
It's all right.

She holds her close.

EUNICE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
It's all right, we'll move away, I
promise this time we'll move away.
This will won't happen again.

Eunice draws back, tears streaming down her cheeks. She sees her reflection in a mirror opposite.

She's 12 years old.

CUT TO.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM (DIMLY LIT) - NIGHT

A pillow is knocked aside. A futuristic handgun is picked up.

Caleb, dressed in a long black coat, checks its loaded and looks to the door.

CUT TO.

INT. HALLWAY - HOTEL

He cautiously moves out the room, gun ready, and sees man in a black suit at the far end. The man sees him and draws his own gun.

A purple laser bolt is fired at Caleb.

Caleb cuts behind a pillar, dodging the blast, and fires back.

The man is hit in the chest and falls with sparks of red electricity.

Caleb checks the other end of the hall then hurries over.

He looks down and sees that the man, or robot, looks exactly like him.

CALEB
(to himself)
Duplicants.

Caleb reloads his gun with a fresh battery when another suited man dives at him from the side. The two smash through a window.

EXT. HOTEL - FUTURISTIC CITY - NIGHT

Glass shatters! The two land on the wing of a hover-ship, other flying cars and attack vehicles buzzing around.

Caleb punches the duplicant across the face.

The duplicant kicks him away and takes out his gun. Caleb quickly taps his palm twice, opening up blue laser shield attached to his hand.

He deflects the laser bolts, balancing against the fierce winds, then lowers the shield and fires.

"BHAM!"
The duplicant's head explodes with more red electricity, his body dropping off.

Caleb looks aside, closing the shield. He sees another hotel. Through one of the windows a young woman is seen tied to a chair.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Glass shatters! Caleb dives in, rolling to a stop. He raises his gun and shoots down two more duplicants.

He hurries over to the young woman and unties her feet and hands.

CALEB
It's all right baby, I got you.

He frees her mouth and reveals Eunice.

EUNICE
Caleb! I knew you'd come for me!

CALEB
(smiles)
I always keep my word.

Eunice leaps into his arms and passionately kisses him.

Caleb drops onto the bed, kissing her back.

As the two make out a hand picks one of the guns off the floor.

Caleb smiles as Eunice starts to unbutton her top.

"BHAM!" , Caleb jumps.

The real Eunice stands looking over them, gun aimed at the ceiling.

CUT TO.

INT. CALEB'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Caleb is still lying on the bed.

CALEB
-Eunice!

The gun in Eunice's hand fades away.

Caleb tries to smile.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Hey.

Eunice looks at him, cold.

CALEB (CONT'D)
(laughs)
This was... this was just a bit of fun.

Eunice doesn't respond.

EUNICE
(beat)
Get ready and come down.

Caleb watches her go then closes his eyes and drops back on the bed.

CUT TO.

INT. GRAND DINING HALL - MORNING

Eunice stands in front of the others, all seated and looking demoralized.

EUNICE

They're using this place against us, playing us for fools. We can't let it get to us. No matter how tempting.

Her eye crosses Caleb. Caleb notices.

CHRISTOPHER

So what is our plan? They can't see our point of view and they don't see what they're doing is wrong.

Eunice looks away, trying to think.

EUNICE

Our species is young, we need more time to prove ourselves, to develop, that's the only card we have to play.

Caleb taps the table.

CALEB

What if we ask them to take us back? We can tell everyone to pull their shit together.

Eunice looks at him and reluctantly considers.

SUCHIN

(beat)

If the human race unite out of fear it will just prove that we are what they think we are.

Weak.

Eunice nods, she's right.

Alleiram enters.

ALLEIRAM

(beat)

It is time.

CUT TO.

INT. COUNCIL ARENA

Silloh stops in front of Marika.

SILLOH
(to council)
None of us believe humans are just animals. They are conscious beings, like all of us. Able to think, feel and reason. This is not a fact that has been overlooked.

To terminate Man in the manner that was taken before would be... unethical.

Eunice watches Silloh, suspicious.

SILLOH (CONT'D)
The Great Council cherish consciousness as much as you cherish your own off-spring.

EUNICE
So you've changed your mind? You'll spare them?

Silloh smiles.

SILLOH
(turns away)
We never intended to cause any pain to your species. The creatures that came before you were of the lowest order. The action taken against them was acceptable. It was also at a time when your star was young.

Eunice's suspicion grows.

SILLOH (CONT'D)
We don't seek to damage the Earth as we did before, we only seek to free it of Man.

CALEB
(to Belac, low)
What they gonna do, teleport us off?

SILLOH
Mankind will remain on the planet but they will be the last of their generation.

EUNICE
What?

SILLOH

It is a method that has been taken on other worlds. Focused and - as you say - humane. Your species will be sterilized, the planet remaining untouched by our hand.

Marika draws back, quiet.

EUNICE

What kind of life is that gonna be??

SILLOH

Within a hundred of your years the Earth will be cleansed.

Eunice turns to Alleiram, desperate.

EUNICE

They can't be serious?

Alleiram looks back at her, sadly.

Marika pauses.

MARIKA

You guarantee you won't hurt any of them.

Eunice turns to Marika.

SILLOH

(to Marika)

Seven billion lives will continue as they are. Death will come through time and age, as it always has.

Eunice shoves past Christopher and grabs Marika's shoulder.

EUNICE

-We have to talk. Now!

Caleb sees Silloh smile.

CUT TO.

INT. EUNICE'S BEDROOM - SUNSET

Marika sits at the end of the bed, head low, Eunice is knelt in front of her.

EUNICE

You're being manipulated. You have to be strong

MARIKA

Am I? Or are the rest of you just being stubborn?

EUNICE

-Your son, think about your son.

MARIKA

Who else do I ever think about??
Ever since was I was 17 all I've thought about is my son!

EUNICE

That's because you love him and you want him to be happy. Think about what will happen to him if they do this.

MARIKA

-Nothing! Nothing will happen to him. He'll have a life of luxury, he'll have everything he'll ever want.

EUNICE

You're kidding yourself. He won't have everything.

MARIKA

-He will! He will have everything! I'm the one who was left with nothing!

You have no idea how much I lost because of him, how much I had to sacrifice. I didn't want to be a mother, I wanted to have my own life! He robbed me of my own life!

Eunice takes her hands.

EUNICE

You don't mean that.

Marika snatches her hands back and looks away, trembling.

MARIKA

(beat)
He's going to have a full life.
They all will.

She looks at Eunice and tries to smile, tears running down her cheeks.

MARIKA (CONT'D)

And so will we.

She stands and walks to the balcony.

EUNICE
Marika wait!

Marika looks back at her. She now appears as her perfect fantasy self.

FANTASY MARIKA
Don't waste your time here. Start enjoying it.

She turns and disappears as she walks onto the balcony.

Eunice looks away.

In the mirror's reflection she sees her mother sitting on the bed with her 12 year old self, teaching her how to play the guitar.

Eunice grabs her guitar off the bed and swings it at the mirror.

The guitar disappears before it makes contact.

CUT TO.

INT. HALLWAY - MARIKA'S BEDROOM

The door opens. Eunice steps out. Caleb, Christopher and Suchin stand waiting.

EUNICE
(beat)
She's gone.

Caleb looks away, shaking his head.

CALEB
Perfect.

Suchin turns and heads off to her room.

CALEB (CONT'D)
(turns)
-Hey hey where'd you think going?

Suchin stops and looks back

SUCHIN
(beat)
Nowhere.

Eunice nods at her, assuring.

CALEB
(beat, points)
I tell you she'll be the next to bail on us.

Eunice looks at Caleb, ready to punch him down.

EUNICE
Fuck you.

She shoves past him and leaves.

CUT TO.

INT. GRAND DINING HALL - NIGHT

A glass of red wine is poured. Eunice sets down the bottle, sitting alone.

CHRISTOPHER (O.S)
We drink we stumble.

Eunice looks up. Christopher sits down opposite.

EUNICE
Join me, it's Chateau Margaux.

Christopher smiles.

He pulls over a glass and pours orange juice from the same bottle.

CHRISTOPHER
Orange and mango. My favorite.

EUNICE
Not a drinker?

CHRISTOPHER
I was once.
(smiles)
In a previous life.

EUNICE
I don't think you have to worry
about getting drunk here.

She finishes her glass and pours some more.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
How'd you do it?

CHRISTOPHER
Do what?

EUNICE
Stay so strong.

CHRISTOPHER
We all find a way.

Eunice looks at him.

EUNICE
You don't see things?

CHRISTOPHER
I see a lot of things. I see you
now.

EUNICE
That's not what I meant.

Christopher sighs.

CHRISTOPHER
I see them. And I see them for what
they are.

Lies.

All the things we want, or believe
we want.

He sees the torment in her eyes.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
This storm will pass. Have faith.

EUNICE
How can you be so sure?

CHRISTOPHER
Because God will see us through.

Eunice looks down at her glass.

EUNICE
(smiles)
Right.
(raising her glass)
Here's hoping He still cares.

She finishes the drink.

CHRISTOPHER
If He didn't care we would not be
here.

EUNICE
What about the billions of others?
Don't they matter to Him? Why spare
us? Why are we so special?

CHRISTOPHER
I suppose the day will come when we
will find out.

Eunice looks down at her glass, quiet.

CUT TO.

INT. SUCHIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The wind gently blows. Suchin's hair and nightdress sway as she approaches the balcony.

CUT TO.

EXT. RICE FIELD - THAILAND - SUNSET

Her bare feet touch damp soil.

She shields her eyes from the fading sun and makes out figures in the distance.

Silhouetted men and women in straw hats, still working away.

Suchin pauses.

A child approaches one of the women.

Suchin steps forward. The child can be made out a little girl. The woman holding her smiles.

It's Suchin herself.

She stares at the two, quiet.

SUCHIN
(Thai, subtitled, to
herself)
She lives...

SUCHIN'S MOTHER (O.S.)
(Thai, subtitled)
Of course she lives.

Suchin turns and sees her mother heading home with a full basket.

SUCHIN'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
We took her to the new hospital,
remember.

She continues off.

Suchin turns back to the field, tears forming She stares at the little girl and finds herself smiling with her.

CUT TO.

INT. COUNCIL ARENA - DAY

Two chairs are empty.

SILLOH
This is all? A pity.

He turns to the council.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

(beat)

I wish to ask the Chosen of Earth
for their thoughts.

CALEB

Sure, I think you're an asshole.

Alleiram looks at him.

CALEB (CONT'D)

What?

Silloh ignores him and turns back to the others.

SILLOH

What will happen to Man?

EUNICE

You trying to be funny?

SILLOH

I mean I am curious what you
foresee in the immediate future.

Christopher looks at Silloh and nods to himself.

CHRISTOPHER

"With the judgment you pronounce
you will be judged. And with the
measure you use it will be measured
to you."

Silloh looks at him, confused.

SILLOH

I don't understand.

CHRISTOPHER

(smiles, confident)
And you never will.

Silloh smile, letting it go, and turns to Eunice.

SILLOH

(beat)

When it is discovered that no child
will be born from another human
being will your people unify? Will
they strive to better themselves
with the time they have left?

His eye passes Suchin.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

Or in the face of extinction will
the true face of the human race
show itself once more.

He pauses, holding on Suchin a moment longer.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

One question would surely be
answered in this twilight hour.

Is Man's "civilization" genuine or
merely an illusion? When the last
man disappears into the night will
he be standing, or crawling?

(beat)

The first thought to cross the mind
often contains much of the truth.

He looks up at the council, hands behind his back, and turns
away.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

The Chosen may reflect.

EUNICE

-Hold on, we don't want to
"reflect".

Silloh ignores her and walks away.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

(to Alleiram)

He can't do that.

Suchin remains quiet, staring forward.

CUT TO.

INT. GRAND HALLWAY

Caleb and Christopher walk away, Caleb looks back as the
golden doors close.

CALEB

That snake's playing at something.
I mean what the Hell was all that
about? Stand or crawl.

Two maids pass by and smile.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(low)

Eunice says to meet in the gardens
but think it's better we go to one
of our-

He looks aside and stops.

Christopher is gone.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Christopher?

He turns around.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Hello?

CUT TO.

INT. CHURCH - LAGOS - MORNING

Christopher stops. He's standing in the chapel.

He slowly turns around.

No one is there. Warm sunlight shafts down from the old windows.

He sees something on one of the benches and slowly makes his way over.

It's an open book.

He picks it up.

It's a Bible.

BLIND CLEANER (O.S)
(beat)
"If we judged ourselves truly, we
would not be judged."

Christopher slowly turns around.

The blind cleaner stands by the entrance, people coming and going outside.

CUT TO.

INT. HALLWAY

Caleb runs, almost tripping on the rug.

CALEB
(panicking)
Shit shit.

BLIND CLEANER (O.S)

(beat)

"People will come from east and west and north and south and will take their places."

CUT TO.

INT. CHURCH - LAGOS - MORNING

Christopher looks down at the Bible.

CHRISTOPHER

(to himself)

This isn't real.

The cleaner's old hand touches Christopher's. He's now standing in front of him.

BLIND CLEANER

"Now is the judgment of this world."

Christopher turns away and closes his eyes.

BLIND CLEANER (CONT'D)

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes."

CHRISTOPHER

-Stop it.

BLIND CLEANER

"There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain"

CHRISTOPHER

(shaking his head)

-Please.

BLIND CLEANER

"For the old order of things has passed away"

Christopher stops, trembling.

BLIND CLEANER (CONT'D)

(beat)

"Now will the ruler of this world be cast out."

Christopher nods, slowly.

Tears rolling down his cheeks.

He shakes his head, angry.

CHRISTOPHER
(softly)
How... how could I have been so
blind?

The cleaner squeezes his shoulder.

BLIND CLEANER
You are only human.

CUT TO.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S BEDROOM - DAY

The door bursts open. Caleb looks in.

CALEB
Christopher!

The room is empty.

The bed, cabinets, everything, all gone.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Shit!

INT. HALLWAY

He backs out, running his fingers through his hair.

CALEB
This ain't happening.

SILLOH (O.S)
It already has.

He turns around and sees Silloh leaning against the wall.

SILLOH (CONT'D)
(smiles)
It's ironic. His belief so close to
the truth.

CALEB
What did you do you do to him??

SILLOH
I have done nothing.

CALEB
Look me in the eye and say that you
lying sack of shit.

Silloh approaches, taller.

SILLOH

(beat)

Why don't you look into my eyes.

Silloh's smile disappears, his eyes turn black, skin going pale.

Caleb freezes.

Silloh's hair falls out, replaced by two black horns. He finally growls, teeth rotted.

Caleb trips back, falling onto the floor.

Silloh laughs, back in his normal form.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

You really are just children. Is there anything you don't fear?

Caleb's fists clench. He leaps forward and pins Silloh to the wall.

CALEB

Where IS he?!

Silloh's laughter stops. He's gone.

Caleb backs away, trying to calm himself.

CUT TO.

EXT. GARDENS - PALACE - SUNSET

Eunice looks to one of the openings, growing impatient.

EUNICE

Damn it, what's taking them?

Suchin sits by the fountain, looking down at her rippled reflection.

SUCHIN

(beat)

Two years ago my mother took me to the city.

Eunice turns and sees Suchin smiling to herself.

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

It was the first time I had left the village.

Eunice listens.

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

They were giving medicine, doctors would see anyone. My mother took us all. It was not long after my youngest sister had died.

Eunice sits down beside her.

EUNICE

I'm sorry.

SUCHIN

I had gotten lost and a man found me, a foreign man. He was kind, sincere. He talked on his phone to others. A very small phone. I'd never seen one before.

I didn't understand what he was saying. I thought he would take me back to my mother.

Eunice closes her eyes, sensing where this is going.

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

All I remember was that he turned off his phone.

She slowly looks at Eunice.

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

That's all I remember, he switched it off.

EUNICE

Suchin I'm so sorry.

SUCHIN

Afterward he turned it back on and he was a kind sincere man again. He talked to other like him and continued helping those waiting to see the doctors.

EUNICE

There are monsters in the world. We all know that.

Suchin nods, quiet.

SUCHIN

(beat)

When my family discovered I was to have a child they were ashamed, especially my brother. They couldn't afford to cast me out. They needed us all to work the land.

(MORE)

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

So I waited while my child grew
inside me.

(smiles)

And with each passing day I became
happier than I had ever been.

She looks at her reflection again.

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

(beat)

She came early and was sick. We
couldn't afford to take her to the
city to see the doctors but somehow
my family managed.

But when we got there all the
doctors were gone. The few that
remained wanted payment we didn't
have.

And so my daughter died.

Eunice looks away.

EUNICE

... Suchin, I...

SUCHIN

(assures)

No no, I don't say this for your
pity. I simply say all this because
I want you to understand.

Eunice stops and looks at her.

EUNICE

Suchin they do this you're family
WILL suffer. The world won't go
away quietly, they will tear each
other apart, everything will fall
apart.

Suchin nods, slowly.

SUCHIN

Yes. The switch will be turned and
they will all be animals again. But
this will be the last time. The
last time any will suffer.

She looks at her and smiles, tears in her eyes.

SUCHIN (CONT'D)

And for that I am grateful.

Eunice sees her fading.

EUNICE
-Suchin wait, don't!

She reaches out but her hand passes through her. Suchin disappears.

Eunice's hand trembles, still held out.

CUT TO.

INT. GRAND DINING HALL - EVENING

Caleb runs, passing tables of food, again he trips on a rug and scrambles back up.

CUT TO.

EXT. GARDENS - NIGHT

He bursts out. No one is there.

He frantically looks around.

CALEB
No no no. Eunice!

He runs forward.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Eunice, damn it where are you?!

EUNICE (O.S)
I'm here.

Caleb spins around and sees her sitting on a bench.

CALEB
Christopher, I can't find him anywhere.

EUNICE
Then they got him too.

Caleb stops.

CALEB
(beat)
Suchin?

EUNICE
She made the right choice.

She slowly gets up.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
The right choice for her.

She walks away.

CALEB
So it's just us?

Eunice laughs to herself.

EUNICE
For now.

CUT TO.

INT. CALEB'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Caleb sits alone on the bed, quietly drinking a bottle of beer.

Eunice stands by the far wall, smiling seductively in lingerie.

Caleb looks down, trying to ignore her. Her hand brushes his cheek. She's now beside him, still smiling.

Caleb continues to ignore her.

EUNICE
(softly)
I am here you know.

Caleb focuses on the bottle.

CALEB
(beat)
I know.

Eunice lifts a joint and takes a slow drag.

EUNICE
Hmmm. That's good.

The smoke drifts over his face.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
(beat)
She'll never look at you like I will.

Caleb nods to himself.

CALEB
I know.

EUNICE
Why torment yourself?

Caleb sips some more beer.

CALEB
Because I'm an idiot.

Eunice smiles, leaning in.

The smoke vanishes.

Caleb is again alone.

CUT TO.

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

Eunice slowly walks, the golden palace behind her, the moons and stars above.

She looks ahead and sees a figure by the edge of the forest.

He lifts a bucket and disappears behind the trees.

CUT TO.

INT. FOREST - NIGHT

Branches are pulled aside, Eunice makes her way forward.

She comes to a clearing and stops. The moonlight cuts down from above, illuminating an open patch of soil.

She sees the old gardener pulling out dead weeds, his back to her.

GARDENER
(beat)
You're wondering, am I real or not.

EUNICE
The thought crossed my mind.

The gardener smiles and turns.

GARDENER
Well don't just stand there, come over and make yourself useful.

Eunice approaches.

The gardener hands her a weeding knife.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
We need to clear all this.

Eunice kneels down beside him.

EUNICE
Wouldn't it be better to do this in
the day?

GARDENER
(laughs)
Day, night, makes no different.

Eunice starts cutting weeds.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Good good, you know what you're
doing.

EUNICE
I've worked a lot of jobs.

GARDENER
Means you're experienced, a person
capable of more than one task is
always of a greater value than a
person capable of just one.

EUNICE
(teasing)
Like a gardener.

GARDENER
Gardening is far from one job. It
requires knowledge, strength,
patience, foresight.

EUNICE
-Right right, didn't mean to
offend.

The two continue working. The gardener glances at her and
smiles.

GARDENER
(beat)
You know there was a planet I once
visited long ago. It reminds me
much of this "Earth" you're from.

Eunice looks at him. The gardener glances at her again and
chuckles.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
Yes, I'm real.

He continues weeding.

EUNICE
(beat)
What was it like?

GARDENER
I can show you if you like?

EUNICE
Is that allowed?

The gardener leans forward and puts a finger to his lips.

GARDENER
I won't tell if you won't.

Eunice pauses, then nods.

EUNICE
All right.

The moonlight gets brighter, turning yellow.

Eunice looks up and sees a sun in a blue purple sky.

She looks around. They're still on the patch of soil but the forest is now replaced by a country town.

Eunice studies the simple wooden huts and houses. None are familiar, the design and structures all alien.

GARDENER (O.S)
The Nesohc.

Figures materialize, going about their everyday business.

Eunice slowly stands and stares at them.

They're tall and bald, humanoid, their skin creamy white.

EUNICE
These are aliens, real aliens?

GARDENER
(glancing aside)
They were.

EUNICE
What do you mean? What happened to them?

GARDENER
They were a class 3, like you. When they became technologically aware their progression was the same as all the others.

Eunice sees time sped forward. Trees rise and fall, strange animals towing carriages are replaced by car-like vehicles.

Buildings are constructed, becoming wider and taller as planes zip by the sky.

GARDENER (O.S) (CONT'D)
At least it was the same initially.

More Nesohc are seen, a population expanding.

GARDENER (O.S) (CONT'D)
Unfortunately they were unable to
accomplish First Unity.

A fierce flash of white light momentarily blinds Eunice.

She looks away, eyes stung, then sees a desolate rocky
wasteland, no hint of towns or cities.

GARDENER (O.S) (CONT'D)
They rose and fell so many times.

Eunice sees a skinny Nesohc emerge from behind a rock. He
growls then throws a spear straight at her. She's about to
jump aside when the spear passes through her.

She spins around and sees it cut through what looks like a
Nesohc child. Three adults then leap forward and tear off
the child's limbs, hungrily consuming his flesh.

GARDENER (O.S) (CONT'D)
Tragic when they fall.

Eunice looks down at the gardener.

EUNICE
What happened to them? Did the
Council wipe them out?

The gardener continues weeding.

GARDENER
No. They were observed from afar
but nothing more. Their star was
already old, there was little
potential for the planet. When
their sun finally died it took the
Nesohc with it.
(chuckles to himself)
Not even one of the twelve chosen
were willing to leave. After so
many wars the Nesohc feared the sky
itself, let alone any beyond it.
They thought we were demons.

The forest and night return.

EUNICE
(beat)
This is what will happen on Earth?

The gardener sits up and sighs.

GARDENER

This is one example, but one
example of many.

Eunice sits and goes quiet.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

(beat)

Consider the loss. Billions of
years of life and potential,
wasted. When a species is unable to
rise beyond their limitations it is
not only their loss it is a loss to
all of us.

He looks down, pausing, then runs his fingers through the
soil.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

Life is such a beautiful thing.

A sprout appears, growing into a healthy green plant.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

It is even more beautiful when it
flourishes.

A red tomato appears.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

The rewarded is always unique.

He picks the tomato and smiles, handing it to Eunice.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

And it keeps on giving.

Eunice sees more plants growing beside the first, bringing
forth more tomatoes of varying size.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

But if the root fails life can
never truly flourish.

The first plant begins rot from the bottom up, the same then
happens to all the others.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

And it's poison will always spread.

Eunice looks at the gardener, quiet. The tomato in her hand
disappears.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. PROMENADE - DAWN

Water crashes against rocks.

Eunice stands alone, staring out into the ocean.

CUT TO.

INT. COUNCIL ARENA - MORNING

Caleb nervously waits. The other five chairs are empty.

Belac turns his head.

BELAC

She's here.

Caleb gets up and sees Eunice walking down the isle, formally dressed.

Silloh stands on the main floor, hands behind his back.

Eunice moves behind the table, ignoring Caleb.

SILLOH

(smiles)

Please be seated Chosen of Earth.

Caleb sits, Eunice however remains standing.

EUNICE

(to Silloh)

I wish to speak.

Silloh looks at her, curious.

SILLOH

(beat)

Very well.

Eunice turns to the council.

Caleb watches, not sure what this is about.

EUNICE

(beat)

I understand what it is you want
from us. Why you keep allowing us
to come here and grovel before you.

You want us to denounce our kind
and embrace this... fantasy.

Caleb looks around. The faces of the council members are blank.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

You want convince yourselves that we are not as great as you. That you can control us like insects. And you may have succeeded with the others.

But I will NEVER betray my kind.

She turns to Silloh.

EUNICE (CONT'D)

I believe in Man. I do not believe in any of you.

Caleb gets up and tries to lean over.

CALEB

(low)

-Eunice, what's are you-?

Alleiram pulls him back.

ALLEIRAM

Let her speak.

EUNICE

(beat)

I will however make things easier for you.

(to council)

I will stand aside and let you do what you intend to do regardless of what any of us say. But in return I want to be taken back to Earth, so I can be with my people when do commit your genocide.

Silloh looks at her, cold. The council members mutter amongst each other.

Caleb grabs Eunice's arm.

CALEB

Are you out of your mind?

Eunice shoves her arm free.

EUNICE

Don't touch me.

Silloh raises his hands, bringing order.

The arena falls quiet.

SILLOH

(beat)

Despite your offense Earth child
what you request cannot be granted.
Those outside the Great Council who
freely choose to come to us can
never return to their home world.

Alleiram stands.

ALLEIRAM

I believe the request can be
granted.

Silloh looks at her, annoyed.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

One is only forbidden to return to
the people of their birth should
they continue on their great
journey. If the time of Man is to
end the Chosen may be with them.

Silloh turns to Eunice.

SILLOH

(beat)

You are aware that your fate will
be no different to the others of
your kind.

Eunice nods.

EUNICE

Yes, I am aware.

Caleb hides his face in his hands.

SILLOH

Very well then. Your request is
granted.

Caleb watches as Eunice walks away from the table and leaves.

CUT TO.

EXT. BALCONY - EUNICE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Eunice stands with her back to us. We hear a door open.

Caleb stops by the opening.

CALEB

(beat)

Why are you doing this?

Eunice doesn't move.

EUNICE
What do you want?

Caleb moves beside her and leans in.

CALEB
You can't do this, you can't go
back there.

EUNICE
What difference does it make?

CALEB
The difference is it's gonna be a
post-apocalyptic war zone back
there. At least here you're safe.

Eunice looks at him, her face blank.

EUNICE
(beat)
Turn around.

Caleb looks and sees his fantasy Eunice bent against the
rail, smiling at him. Caleb shakes his head, angry.

CALEB
-Damn it!

Fantasy Eunice disappears.

EUNICE
I'll ask you again, what difference
does it make to you?

Fantasy Eunice appears again behind Caleb, her arms wrapped
around him, kissing his neck.

CALEB
(struggling)
-No.

Eunice smiles to herself.

EUNICE
Why fight it? It's what you want.

Fantasy Eunice turns his face and kisses him.

Eunice backs away.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
Enjoy her.

CALEB
(turns)
No, this isn't-

Caleb frees himself but it's too late, Eunice is gone.

CUT TO.

INT. CALEB'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mirror's reflection. Caleb's lies awake, staring at the ceiling.

He turns his head and looks to the balcony.

CUT TO.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - DAY

Bare feet on sand. Caleb walks alone, people coming and going, laughing and playing.

He sits down and hides his face in his hands.

HOMELESS MAN (O.S)

(beat)

This some game?

He slowly turns around.

CALEB (O.S)

No games. You can take this now or take my word.

He sees himself standing before the homeless man.

HOMELESS MAN

(beat)

All right, I'll be here tomorrow.

He sees his other self smile and put away the money.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Hope your word means something.

Caleb looks down at the sand.

BELAC (O.S)

Caleb.

CUT TO.

INT. CALEB'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Belac stands looking over Caleb.

BELAC

Alleiram asks if you wish to speak with the Council.

Caleb slowly sits up.

BELAC (CONT'D)

(beat)

It's your sixth and last chance.

Caleb nods.

CUT TO.

INT. COUNCIL ARENA - DAY

Silloh smiles, watching Caleb being led by Alleiram and Belac.

Caleb sits by the table, five empty chairs be side him.

SILLOH

(beat, to Caleb)

After all that has been said I'm
afraid the Great Council's judgment
remains unchanged. Is there
anything you wish to add?

Caleb holds a moment, then slowly stands.

He looks straight at Silloh.

CALEB

(beat)

No.

Alleiram closes her eyes and lowers her head.

CALEB (CONT'D)

There's nothing I can say that will
change your minds. There's nothing
anyone can say that will change my
mind.

We're a selfish species. We're
weak, we're childish, we lie and we
deceive, both to each other and
ourselves. We want to believe we
are better than we are but we're
not.

We're a footstep away from the
animals and that ain't gonna
change.

His eyes crosses fantasy Eunice in the crowd, smiling at him.

CALEB (CONT'D)

If you offered Esidarap to ninety-nine percent of the people on Earth they'd make the same decision we have. They'd turn their backs on all the others and just suck every ounce of joy out of this place they could.

The gardener watches from the balcony.

CALEB (CONT'D)

They'd convince themselves, rightly or wrongly, that what happens to the others is out of their hands or for the best.

(beat, angry)

I know all this about Man because I am a man. We don't believe in ourselves or our potential. We just pretend we do. We don't have faith in ourselves or our future and so... we should not have one.

The council applauds. Silloh slowly nods, pleased.

Caleb stops and looks at him.

CALEB (CONT'D)

But I want you to remember one thing after all this is finished. After there isn't a single man or woman left alive on the Earth. There was always that one percent that were not like the rest of us, that were not like me. Because when you finish with the human race you finish with them too. And all they could have offered.

The gardener lowers his head.

Caleb sits back down.

SILLOH (O.S)

It is decided then.

Caleb looks away.

SILLOH (CONT'D)

(beat, smiles)

The human race will end.

He closes his eyes.

CUT TO.

EXT. ENTRANCE - PALACE - SUNSET

A rainbow fills the sky. Caleb sits alone on the entrance steps, plucking strings on Eunice's guitar.

He focuses a moment then starts playing the melody she played on the promenade.

Alleiram steps out and stops by the doors, listening to him play.

ALLEIRAM

(beat)

Is that you or is that Esidarap?

Caleb sets down the guitar.

CALEB

It's definitely not me.

He looks at the guitar.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(beat)

Has she left?

Alleiram pauses then shakes her head.

ALLEIRAM

No.

CALEB

But she will soon.

ALLEIRAM

Yes.

Caleb sighs.

CALEB

I guess she won't see me, and Esidarap only shows what you want to see.

ALLEIRAM

That is true.

She sits down beside him.

ALLEIRAM (CONT'D)

But she has made it clear she wants no part of Esidarap.

Caleb stops and looks at her. Alleiram smiles.

CUT TO.

EXT. WOODEN PIER - LAKE - GRAY AFTERNOON

An empty canoe floats on calm water, the horizon hidden behind a blanket of gray fog.

Eunice stands at the end of the pier, untying rope tethering the raft.

CALEB (O.S)
This is how you'll go?

Eunice looks back.

EUNICE
(beat)
I guess so.

Caleb approaches, hands in his pockets.

CALEB
Will you tell them? When you go back.

Eunice shakes her head.

EUNICE
Even if anyone believed me it wouldn't matter.

CALEB
It might, it might make things easier, for everyone.

Eunice stops, hesitant, then slowly turns to face him.

EUNICE
(beat)
I'm not mad at you.

CALEB
You're not?

Eunice looks away and shakes her head.

EUNICE
No. I'm... disappointed. That you weren't patient. That you felt I wasn't worth waiting for.

Caleb lowers his head and nods.

Eunice looks at him, sadly.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
I hope you're happy here. I really do.

Caleb watches as she climbs into the canoe.

She turns her head and forces a smile.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
 (beat)
 Au revoir Caleb Colton.

Caleb manages a light wave.

CALEB
 Goodbye, Eunice

Eunice turns away, tears forming.

She closes her eyes, grabbing the oars, and starts rowing.

The canoe starts to pull away but then stops and reverses back.

Eunice turns and sees Caleb pulling the rope.

EUNICE
 -Caleb?

CALEB
 This isn't how its going to end.

He throws aside the rope and jumps down into the canoe.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 I'm coming with you.

EUNICE
 You don't have to do this.

CALEB
 I know I don't.

He turns to her and smiles.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 I'm choosing to.

Eunice starts to smile back, half in disbelief, half with overwhelming joy.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 And I'm not expecting anything from you. When we get back you never have to see me again but I'm not letting you go back alone.

Eunice nods, holding back her tears.

EUNICE
 All right.

CALEB
 Come on move aside.

Eunice makes room but then stops. The sky is darkening, the gray clouds dispersing.

Night is falling.

Caleb looks up as Eunice stops, staring beyond the pier.

On the grassy hill figures are approaching.

Thousands of them!

EUNICE

Caleb.

Caleb turns and almost falls out the boat.

CALEB

Jesus Christ!

The figures get closer but become fewer in number.

We recognize some of their clothes, they're all members of the council, and they're all merging together.

Eunice draws closer to Caleb.

Amongst the people we sees Silloh, Belac, even Alleiram, all blending together.

Caleb holds Eunice's hand.

A single individual finally approaches the pier.

It's the gardener.

He stops and smiles, looking at them in utter astonishment.

GARDENER

You truly are a curious species.

CUT TO.

EXT. HILL - WHEAT FIELD - NIGHT

Caleb and Eunice look around, disorientated.

The three are now standing on a hilltop.

A blue/white glow radiates from above. The gardener is already looking up at the Earth, filling half the sky.

He shakes his head and looks at Caleb, still smiling.

GARDENER

This is marvelous.

CALEB

(beat)
It is?

GARDENER

No individual has ever denounced
their kind and still chosen to
return to them. And all for the
sake of another.

CALEB

(confused)
They haven't?

Eunice pulls her eyes away from the Earth.

EUNICE

I-I don't understand, are we back
home?

The gardener smiles, spreading his hands.

GARDENER

None of this is real.

Mars, Jupiter and Saturn rise over the horizons.

Caleb and Eunice look around, completely lost.

CALEB

What is this?

GARDENER

An illusion.

EUNICE

Wait a minute, Belac, Alleiram, the
whole council? It was all fake?

The gardener just smiles.

GARDENER

Everything you have experienced
since you left your world I have
created for you.

EUNICE

Why? Why play all these games?

GARDENER

I needed to assess you. This was
the most efficient way.

CALEB

So you were never going to wipe out
the human race?

The gardener laughs, looking up at the Earth again.

GARDENER

Oh I was. And exactly how the Council described.

CALEB

But there is no Council?

The gardener looks at them and pauses.

GARDENER

There is no Great Council but there are however countless civilizations across this galaxy.

The light above changes.

Caleb and Eunice see the Earth shrink away, replaced by the entire Milky Way galaxy.

GARDENER (CONT'D)

There are so many that the heart aches when knowing all end in Final Stagnation.

EUNICE

(stunned)
All of them?

The gardener looks at her and nods, sadly.

GARDENER

(beat)
I am what remains here of the First Ones, the only species that has ever achieved unification of any kind.

Caleb and Eunice look up again as we push into the galaxy, passing system after system.

GARDENER (O.S) (CONT'D)

For a long time the First Ones searched for others like them but none were ever found.

We see stars exploding, their matter reforming to create new suns.

GARDENER (O.S) (CONT'D)

Even after the second and third generation all that was discovered was the most basic of life.

We reach the center of the galaxy.

GARDENER (O.S) (CONT'D)
 Finally the day came when the First
 Ones exhausted their knowledge of
 this place and chose to move on.

We dive into the center of the Milky Way, disappearing into a
 super black hole.

The gardener smiles to himself.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
 I however believed a civilization
 such as ours would arise again, and
 so remained to tend this great
 garden.

The red dwarf star slowly appears in the sky. We glide around
 and reveal the silver sphere planet.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
 Whenever a species becomes
 technologically aware, which is
 rarer than you may think, I call
 for them. And on every occasion
 they have denounced their kind and
 embraced Esidarap. They thought
 only of themselves. Their fears,
 their pains, their desires.

The First Ones achieved unification
 because they saw beyond the
 individual. To them all pains, all
 fears, all desires, if felt by one
 was felt by all.

The red star falls away, the sky settling into a tranquil
 sunset.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
 For eight billion I've waited to
 witness the miracle of the First
 Ones again. And perhaps now finally
 I will.

Eunice and Caleb look at each other.

EUNICE
 So what happened now? Will you
 still send us back?

GARDENER
 I'm afraid that was never possible.
 Your physical bodies could never
 have survived the journey here,
 only your consciousness.

CALEB
 So... we're dead?

GARDENER
 (smiles)
 In a manner of speaking.

EUNICE
 We're trapped here, forever.

GARDENER
 Far from it. The First Ones shed
 their mortal forms long ago.
 Mankind may even do the same should
 time permit.

The gardener takes Eunice's hand and smiles.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
 You are both the spark I've longed
 for. Evidence that life can truly
 be selfless.

CALEB
 What about Christopher, Marika, the
 others?

GARDENER
 They have made their decision. They
 have chosen the realities they have
 created for themselves. You may do
 the same. Your species will be
 spared. At least for a little while
 longer.

EUNICE
 What's the other option?

The gardener steps back and smiles, looking up.

GARDENER
 The other road I offer you is to go
 forth to the First Ones. They are
 curious to learn more about you.

CALEB
 Where are they? In another galaxy?

The gardener laughs, genuinely amused.

GARDENER
 There is so much you still don't
 understand.

He looks down and sees they're still holding hands.

GARDENER (CONT'D)
 If you choose to go it must be by
 your own accord. Each of you.

The wonders seen amongst the First Ones can never be unseen.

Caleb turns to Eunice. She smiles and nods.

EUNICE
I want to go.

CALEB
I've dived blind into the unknown
once already, might as well do it
again.

They turn to the gardener.

EUNICE
What do we have to do?

The gardener nods over their shoulder.

GARDENER
Go until you can go no further.

CUT TO.

EXT. WOODEN PIER - OCEAN - SUNSET

The two are on the pier again, the canoe waiting. Caleb and Eunice look out.

The flat still ocean disappears into infinity.

CALEB
And then what?

GARDENER (O.S)
A selfless act should suffice.

EUNICE
(turns)
How do we-?

The gardener is gone.

Eunice pauses, the wind lightly blowing her hair.

EUNICE (CONT'D)
(beat)
I supposed we better get started.

CUT TO.

EXT. STILL OCEAN - NIGHT

The canoe pushes on, the stars reflected on water's surface.

Caleb stops rowing, exhausted. The two look around.

Nothing but water can be seen in all directions.

CALEB
Now what?

EUNICE
I'm not sure.

CALEB
We just wait?

Caleb looks up at the stars.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Hello! We're ready!

EUNICE
(to herself)
"A selfless act"...

Caleb exhales.

CALEB
Well I'm out of ideas. Maybe if you
pretend to drown and I save you?

Eunice looks at him and pauses.

EUNICE
I think I got it.

CALEB
What?

Eunice smiles.

Caleb looks back at her, now following.

CALEB (CONT'D)
What?

Eunice grabs his collar and kisses him.

Caleb stops, surprised, but then kisses her back.

A white light grows on the horizon, slowly spreading.

The two continue to kiss, oblivious, the white light wrapping
around them just as their arms wrap around each other, their
eyes already closed.

FADE TO WHITE.

FADE IN.

EXT. CEMETERY - GRAY AFTERNOON

A US flag sways in the breeze. Hollis, wearing a long coat
and looking older, steps forward and stops.

He pauses then sets something down.

HOLLIS

(beat)

See you in the next life.

We hear a thunderclap, rain starting to drizzle.

Hollis puts up his collar, holding a moment, then turns and walks away.

We see a joint laid down by the grave stone.

CALEB ANDREW COLTON

1999- 2022

"VOLUNTEER"

FADE OUT.