

These pages are dedicated to my father. The smartest person I've ever met, the only one who can handle everything on his own. I know you didn't like the movie when we went to the theater, so I created this. I hope to be like you someday.



FANTASTIC FOUR – FIRST STEPS FROM BEYOND

Alternative Screenplay

By

Silas Crowley

S.CROWWWLEY@GMAIL.COM—AUGUST FOURTH - TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE
FIRST DRAFT

A SHOT FROM SPACE

We see planet Earth.

SUPER:
EARTH 828

INT. PENTAGON, CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT (1961)

A sober, windowless room with gray walls. Two American flags in the background. A long oak table. Space maps and photographs of Soviet satellites hang on the wall.

REED RICHARDS, wearing a wrinkled jacket, notebook in hand, and dark circles under his eyes, sits alone in front of three powerful figures:

GENERAL CORWIN, square-jawed military veteran.

SENATOR HALSTEAD, cold, elegant politician with a cynical smile.

DOCTOR MARION BLACKWELL, head of aerospace research, the only one with a genuine scientific interest.

A clock on the wall reads 9:17 p.m.

GENERAL CORWIN
Dr. Richards, thank you for coming. We know you hate Washington.

REED
It's not hate, General. It's... an allergy to identical suits.

SENATOR HALSTEAD
And yet you came in one. There is hope for civilization.

BLACKWELL
Reed... let's be frank. We know you built a viable model of a suborbital craft in '59.

A BLACK-AND-WHITE FILM OF REED PILOTING THE CRAFT IS PROJECTED ON THE WALL.

BLACKWELL (CONT'D)
Who designed his own heat shield system. Who managed to stabilize an antigravity field using a thorium capacitor...

REED
(with a smile)
And you denied me all the patents.

CORWIN
Because they were dangerous. And now... that's exactly what we need.

A blurry image of a Soviet satellite orbiting the Moon is projected on the wall.

HALSTEAD

The Russians are coming. Not through NASA. Through their black program. And we... we have no way to stop them.

REED

So why are you calling me? I'm not a soldier.

BLACKWELL

Because no one in this country can build what you've already built.

(pause)

We want you to lead the mission.

Silence.

REED

I'm not an astronaut.

CORWIN

But you're brilliant. And we trust you more than half of NASA.

HALSTEAD

And let's be clear, Reed... this isn't about the Moon. It's about who plants the flag first.

Reed stands and paces the room. He looks at the plans. He's uncomfortable.

HALSTEAD

Imagine your name on the front page.

REED

What about the financing? The equipment?

BLACKWELL

We provide the funds. You choose your crew.

(seriously)

But there's one condition.

Reed stops. He senses it.

HALSTEAD

You know who has to be part of the project.

Silence. Reed turns away, his face cold.

REED

No.

HALSTEAD

Reed...

REED

I said NO.

CORWIN

He's one of the world's most influential scientists. He's invested in propulsion technology, composite materials, and orbital control.

REED

He also has an ego the size of Saturn. And a zero ethical record.

BLACKWELL

We know that. But his orbital laser technology could stabilize the ship's external shield during reentry. And his company controls the only module with enough shielding for a crewed mission.

REED

And what does he control next? The mission? My team?

HALSTEAD

(gravely)

Reed... without him, there's no mission.

Silence. Reed looks at the model of the ship. He looks at the flag.

REED

If he steps one inch off the core module, I'm out.

CORWIN

And would you let the Soviets win?

REED

I'm not interested in your war.

BLACKWELL

(calmly)

What if we keep him out of the module? Just as an outside provider? You still have complete control. And you can... keep an eye on him.

(pause)

Would you do it for your own?

Reed takes a deep breath. He hates it. But he knows he can't do it alone.

CUT TO:

INT. PRIVATE FACILITIES, LAUNCH CENTER - DAY

A gigantic hangar, bustling with activity. Engineers with slicked hair, white shirts, and skinny ties rush between terminals filled with lights and coils. CRT monitors flicker with hand-drawn orbital trajectory charts.

In the background, an imposing rocket with curved lines and polished metal plates bears the name: " EXCELSIOR I."

MONTAGE - PREPARATIONS BEFORE TAKEOFF

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O)

As the United States competes with the Soviet Union for lunar supremacy, a brilliant independent scientist leads an unprecedented mission: Reed Richards of Empire State University vows to reach the Moon with his own spacecraft before NASA.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

BEN GRIMM, muscular and square-jawed, adjusts his pressure suit. He has a scar on his eyebrow and a chain with a medal dangling from it. Beside him, JOHNNY STORM, relaxed and confident, stares in the mirror, blowing his bangs upward.

JOHNNY

(whistling)

Hey Ben, do you think there are girls on the moon?

BEN

(without looking at him)

If there were girls on the moon, believe me, they'd still run away from you.

Both laugh.

JOHNNY

Nah... I don't think so. I bet you've never seen a guy like me.

INT. REED AND SUE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - MORNING

The blue light of dawn streams through the curtains. A retro-futuristic radio on the nightstand murmurs news about the launch.

SUE STORM, her hair loose, lies on her side, wrapped in a white sheet. She looks at REED RICHARDS, asleep beside her, his mouth half-open and his brow furrowed, even in repose.

She strokes his face. He slowly opens his eyes.

REED

(mumbling)

Is it time yet?

SUE

No. I just... couldn't sleep.

Silence. They both lie still, listening to the ticking of the analog clock and the low hum of a distant generator.

SUE
(whispering)
I can't believe we're leaving the planet today.

REED
Yes.

SUE
That should be impossible.

REED
(yawns)
It is. But so were X-rays. Vaccines. The transistor.

SUE
And yet...
(pause)
...I still can't get pregnant.

Reed sits up a little. Surprised, but not uncomfortable. He knows this isn't the first time she's mentioned it, but today it sounds different.

REED
Sue...

SUE
I don't mean that as a reproach. It's just... curious, isn't it?

She turns and leans on her elbow, looking at him.

SUE (CONT'D)
We can leave the atmosphere, orbit the Earth, measure the vacuum... But I can't make anything grow inside me.

REED
You know it's not your fault.

SUE
Nor yours, I guess.
(silence)
Maybe the universe gave us another mission. A bigger one.

Reed reaches for his hand under the sheets. He squeezes it carefully.

REED

Or maybe... it's just not time yet.
Maybe our first step is to conquer
space.

SUE
And then... the blood, the DNA, the
wombs?

REED
(laughs softly)
Hopefully, not in that order.

They're both smiling, but Sue's smile is bittersweet. She
looks up at the ceiling.

SUE
Remember when I first met you? You had
ink on your fingers and your hair all
messed up. You said you could bend the
light.

REED
And you said that was stupid... but
sexy.

SUE
Still is.
(long pause)
But if something goes wrong up there...
I want you to know that this, this bed,
these mornings, were all I ever wanted.

He leans in close and kisses her forehead.

EXT. LAUNCH PAD - DAY

The four astronauts slowly ascend the metal walkway. The wind
stirs up dust. American flags wave, and news cameras film
from afar.

A crowd watches.

INT. EXCELSIOR I COCKPIT - T-MINUS 60 SECONDS

The engines roar softly in standby. A slight vibration in the
structure. Inside the ship, the four are secured in their
seats. Johnny adjusts his gloves. Ben grits his teeth. Sue
closes her eyes for a second. Reed takes the intercom.

REED
If you're hearing this... it means
everything's working.

Silence, only the technical hum of the ship.

REED (V.O)
*When I was a child, I used to look up at
the sky from the ledge of the orphanage.
I believed the stars were holes in the*

universe... through which one could escape.

MONTAGE - FLASHBACKS OF THE 4 CHARACTERS

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Sue and Reed, younger, sit on a blanket. He tries to float a metal cube using a makeshift coil. She looks at him with a mixture of skepticism and tenderness.

SUE
Is this... science or magic?

REED
Sometimes they're the same.

They laugh. They kiss in the sun.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Johnny, wearing a leather jacket and dark glasses, plays electric guitar in front of a bored producer. He yells into the microphone.

JOHNNY
I wasn't born to be normal, I was born to fly!

The producer reluctantly turns off his microphone.

EXT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Ben, sweating, repairs the engine of a prototype lunar rover. Beside him, an elegant and self-confident young man: VICTOR VON DOOM, with thin gloves and a cold gaze.

THEY ARE ARGUING.

Ben throws a wrench on the table. The tension is real.

REED (V.O)
We're all looking for a way out. A second chance. A meaning.

EXT. COAST - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

Reed walks alone along the beach, notebook in hand. He draws the ship that's about to take off today. He looks at the horizon. The wind ruffles his hair.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - CONTINUOUS

Reed looks at his companions. Johnny winks at him. Ben nods. Sue smiles at him, soft, confident.

REED
We didn't come to heaven to escape Earth... We came to understand it better.

EXT. LAUNCH PAD - SAME

The engines begin to roar louder. Steam is released. Everything vibrates.

INT. CONTROL CENTER - SAME

Engineers watch, sweat, cross their fingers. A green light flashes: CLEAR FOR LIFTOFF.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - SAME

REED

Thank you. Thanks for coming with me.

EXT. EXCELSIOR I - LIFTOFF

An explosion of fire and smoke launches the rocket into the sky. A deafening roar. The camera zooms out, showing it like a comet leaving Earth behind.

A SHOT OF DEEP SPACE.

Total silence.

The ship floats, tiny against the blackness of the cosmos...

INT. CBS NEW YORK, NEWSROOM - DAY

Black and white. A sober studio with wooden desks, maps of the solar system behind it, and a large American flag gently waving. The camera focuses on the main anchor:

WALTER CHAMBERS, about 50 years old, with impeccable hair, a dark suit, and a solemn but excited expression.

In front of him, a rotating model of the Galactica I spacecraft floats on a mechanical base.

WALTER

(to camera)

Good morning, America. It's 11:46 a.m. on the East Coast, and we're live with continuous coverage of the first private mission to the Moon: Project Galactica, led by the young scientist Reed Richards.

Background music: soft strings and patriotic trumpets.

WALTER (CONT'D)

After nearly four hours of travel, the EXCELSIOR I capsule is only 230 kilometers from its final destination.

MONTAGE - REACTIONS AROUND THE WORLD**EXT. SCHOOL - DAY**

Children sitting at desks watching a television on a rolling cart. A girl raises her hand.

GIRL

Are they going to see aliens?

The teacher smiles.

INT. BRONX BARBERSHOP - DAY

Three older men watching the news on a small TV, mouths agape, stopped in the middle of a haircut.

MAN 1

That's not NASA, that's that long-haired crazy guy. Richards. The Einstein of Brooklyn.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A woman nervously smokes. In front of the television, holding a handkerchief.

LADY

(quietly)

Please, God... bring them back.

INT. CBS NEW YORK, NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walter points to a projected image of the astronauts:

WALTER (V.O)

The heroes on board are: Dr. Reed Richards, the ship's inventor and mission leader; Susan Storm, biophysicist and pilot; Ben Grimm, former military officer and technical commander; and Johnny Storm, the youngest member of the team, known for his charisma and... risk-taking.

Shot of Johnny winking in his flight suit.

WALTER (V.O)(CONT'D)

They're about to make history...

INT. COMMAND ROOM IN THE BASE

Screens display the trajectory. An engineer looks worriedly at a monitor showing cosmic radiation fluctuations.

ENGINEER

Uh... sir. I'm seeing something strange.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - CONTINUOUS

Sue looks at the sensors. Reed begins to notice the light beginning to flicker. Johnny takes off his gloves to scratch his face.

REED
Does anyone else feel... like the air is getting thicker?

BEN
I feel like something's not right.

INT. CBS NEW YORK, NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS

WALTER
Excelsior I is expected to enter lunar orbit in the next nine minutes...

An image of the rocket crosses the screen, frozen for a second.

WALTER
...wait. We seem to be losing the capsule's signal.

Technology of the time: blank screens, static.

WALTER
(tensely)
We're hearing from Cape Canaveral that there's a... small electromagnetic anomaly in the L5 sector of lunar space. But there's no cause for alarm, I repeat, no cause for alarm.

CUT TO:

EXT. SURFACE OF THE MOON - SEA OF TRANQUILITY

Absolute silence.

The lunar surface shines silvery-gray in the atmosphereless sun. The horizon is curved and empty. The EXCELSIOR I spacecraft has landed intact, but something isn't right.

An electronic buzz vibrates in the suits.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - SAME

REED
Richards Base, this is EXCELSIOR I. Confirming moon landing. Can you read us?
(base static)
...Richards Base... Base?

SUE
Do we have a signal?

REED
Negative. It's like something's
jamming... the entire communications
band.

JOHNNY
What now? We put up a flag and call a
taxi?

BEN
Don't be so dramatic. We're alive,
aren't we?

EXT. MOON - MOMENTS LATER

The four astronauts slowly descend the ramp. Their boots
crunch into the lunar dust. The footprints are clearly
visible.

For a moment... everyone stands still.

SUE
God... look at that.

A wide shot shows the four of them lined up, tiny, facing the
vastness of space. Behind them: Earth, hanging blue and
bright in the black sky.

REED
I never imagined it like this... so...
pure.

BEN
I've never seen anything so peaceful. No
war, no horns, no people yelling in your
face.

JOHNNY
No girls... no bathrooms.
(pause)
Okay, guys, I'm starting to appreciate
Earth again.

Everyone laughs over the radio.

EXT. MOONWALKING - CONTINUOUS

The walking is clumsy, but exciting. They jump, float
smoothly. Johnny tries a backflip and lands on his back.

JOHNNY
New York, we've got style!

SUE
(sarcastic)
Style isn't the first thing that comes
to mind.

JOHNNY
Come on, admit it. I'm the first Storm
to literally fly through the air.

BEN
And the first one who's going to eat
moon dust for a clown.

JOHNNY TAKES OUT A SMALL PLASTIC FLAG WITH HIS FACE ON IT AND
STICKS IT IN THE GROUND.

JOHNNY
I officially declare this land...
property of Johnny Storm, aka the
hottest man in both hemispheres.

REED
Please tell me we're not recording this.

EXT. SMALL HILL - LATER

They climb a hill and are mesmerized by the scenery. There's
a semi-buried alien metallic structure, subtle, covered by
centuries of dust. Barely a silhouette. Like an ancient
satellite... or an artifact.

SUE
Reed....? That's not ours, is it?

REED
(quietly)
No. And it's not Soviet either.

Total silence.

The solar wind whistles very softly. Something is there,
waiting. Dormant.

JOHNNY
Say what you will... This is still the
best day of my life.

IN SLOW MOTION:

A slight vibration in the ground... An invisible wave passing
through their suits... A particle of energy slowly enters
their visors...

EXT. LUNAR SURFACE, NEAR ARTIFACT - CONTINUOUS

The four approach slowly. Reed scans the structure with a
portable meter the size of a cigar box. Green lights flash,
accelerating.

REED
It's metallic... but the elements don't
match anything known. It looks like a
transmitter... or a cell.

SUE
Cell, like... for storing energy?

BEN
Or for enclosing something?

JOHNNY
(raising his voice)
Can we open the alien tomb, please?

REED
(ignoring Johnny)
It's like someone left it here. Hidden
on purpose.

Johnny gives a little jump, landing with his arms spread like a starfish.

JOHNNY
Great. We're walking on an alien pod in
the middle of the Moon with no signal,
no backup, and a curious nerd as our
leader. What could possibly go wrong?

INT. ARTIFACT - INTERNAL VIBRATION

WHILE THEY TALK. INSIDE THE ARTIFACT, SOMETHING REACTS. A
DARK CRYSTAL WITH SYMBOLS SLOWLY GLOWS WITH PURPLE LIGHT. A
SMALL CORE BEGINS TO SPIN.

EXT. LUNAR SURFACE - SAME

The vibration intensifies. The ground trembles slightly. Reed
steps back.

REED
Something triggered it...

SUDDENLY, A WAVE OF TRANSLUCENT ENERGY IS RELEASED FROM THE
ARTIFACT, LIKE A SOUNDLESS EXPLOSION. IT PASSES THROUGH THEM
LIKE A SPECTRAL WIND. THEIR SUITS FLICKER. THEY ALL FALL TO
THE GROUND.

SUE
Reed! Johnny!

JOHNNY
(shaking)
What... the hell was that!

BEN
I'm... I'm burning up inside.

REED
The radiation... it's like it's gone
right through us!

SUE
The core is still glowing!

The artifact emits a final, more violent pulse and disintegrates into thousands of fragments that float in slow motion... like space ash.

INT. HELMETS - SENSORY EFFECTS

Each begins to experience different symptoms.

REED'S POV: His vision distorts. He sees Johnny's molecules vibrating. Objects seem to stretch, deform.

SUE'S POV: Her hand begins to disappear momentarily. She sees through his own arm.

BEN'S POV: His fingers tremble. The skin hardens and begins to crack like rock.

JOHNNY'S POV: His body temperature shoots up. His helmet's HUD shows an internal temperature of 180°C.

JOHNNY

(panting)

I'm boiling, Reed! I'm burning hot—!

A secondary solar flare hits the sky in a streak of violet light. The four are thrown backward. The screen burns white.

The four are lying in the lunar dust. All is still. Fragments of the device slowly disintegrate in the air, floating like glowing ash.

A high-pitched beep sounds in their helmets.

REED

(gasping)

We... have to get back to the ship.

BEN

(holding his helmet)

I can't feel my hands. Or I feel them... too much.

BEN'S SUIT BEGINS TO BREAK DOWN AS HIS BODY IS CRUMBLING AWAY FROM THE ROCKS INSIDE HIM.

Everyone freaks out when they see Ben.

SUE

(her voice trembles)

Reed, something is wrong with us...

JOHNNY

I... I saw fire. Inside.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - SAME

The door closes with a metallic screech. Inside, the systems flicker unsteadily. Reed hurls himself at the controls,

breathing heavily. His fingers tremble as he tries to restart the engines.

SUE
Can we take off?

REED
I have no confirmation... but if we stay here, we might not survive.

BEN
Then let's go to hell.

Johnny slumps in his seat, sweating profusely inside his suit.

EXT. MOON - LIFTOFF

EXCELSIOR I's thrusters fire with difficulty. A plume of white fire propels it skyward, leaving a cloud of dust on the lunar surface.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - LUNAR ORBIT

The interior vibrates. The ship wobbles slightly, but stabilizes. The four of them are in their seats, breathing heavily.

REED
We're leaving lunar orbit... soon we'll enter reentry trajectory.

Everyone is silent. They're alive, but something feels... changed.

Reed turns to the side window, staring out into endless space.

And then...

EXT. SPACE - SAME

Among the stars... a figure hides behind the very blackness of the universe. It has no definite shape, but something peeks out between the voids of the cosmos.

TWO EYES IMMENSE. DEEP VIOLET. AS BIG AS PLANETS.

Fixed on Reed.

IS GALACTUS.

But not a body. Just its eyes. As if it were observing him through the universe itself.

Hungry.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - CONTINUOUS

REED
(frozen)
...it can't be.

The eyes disappear like a mirage.

SUE
Reed? What did you see?

He takes a while to answer. He swallows. The ship begins to shake harder. Alarms sound.

BEN
Atmospheric reentry in progress!

JOHNNY
Does that always feel like this, or is
it just today?

The lights fail. The metal creaks. Gravity pulls them down with brutal force.

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE - DAY

The ship enters engulfed in flames. It streaks across the sky like a bright red meteor.

INT. EXCELSIOR I - MOMENTS BEFORE IMPACT

Everything shakes. Faces distort. One by one, they faint from the pressure, the heat, the trauma...

EXT. COLORADO FOREST - DAY

EXCELSIOR I impacts in a clearing, leaving a smoking crater.
Total silence.

CUT TO:

INT. REED'S LAB - NIGHT (1965)

Reed with longer hair, serious, surrounded by screens, stretches to reach a valve from across the room... his arm extends almost two meters as if made of rubber.

SUE (V.O)
*Four years. That's how long it took for
the world to split in two... since we
touched the Moon. Since we came back...
different.*

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

Johnny jumps out of a sports car. A group of fans shout his name. He soars into the air and bursts into flames, drawing a heart in the sky with fire.

SUE (V.O)
*At first, we thought it was radiation.
Reed called it 'accelerated cellular
alteration.' But whatever we touched out
there... it wasn't human.*

EXT. NIGHT SKY - REED'S TELESCOPE

Reed stares into space as if searching for something.

SUE (V.O)
*Reed doesn't say anything. But I can
feel it. There's something beyond...
watching us.*

INT. BAXTER BUILDING ELEVATOR - DAY

The four of them go up together. Silence. Each in their own world.

SUE (V.O)
We became a family

INT. REED'S LAB - NIGHT

Cold lights. Screens and monitors illuminate Reed's focused face, disheveled and with several days' growth of beard. Sue is lying on a futuristic table, connected to sensors. She's wearing a white coat. Her face is pale but calm.

SUE
(whispering, tired)
Is it much longer, Dr. Richards?

REED
(focusing, without looking at her)
Just one more second. I want to isolate
the frequencies of your bioenergetic
field.

SUE
That sounds sexy.

Reed smiles slightly without taking his eyes off the monitor. Suddenly, something flickers on the screen. A high-pitched sound cuts through the silence. Reed frowns.

A HEARTBEAT IS HEARD.

REED
What?

He leans over. Types. He brings the scanner closer to Sue's abdomen, who now sits up, fidgeting.

SUE
What's wrong?

THE SCANNER PROJECTS A HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE ONTO SUE'S BELLY. A SMALL SILHOUETTE, FLOATING. A FETUS. BUT ITS ENERGY STRUCTURE GLOWS WITH A BLUE AURA. REED TAKES A STEP BACK.

SUE
Is that...?

REED
Yes.

Silence.

Sue blinks. She brings a hand to her mouth. Her eyes fill with tears, but she doesn't smile.

SUE
How...? But... didn't you say my molecular structure couldn't...?

REED
I said it was unlikely. Impossible according to our data. But I didn't take into account that...
(stares at the image)
...this isn't a normal gestation.

SUE
What are you saying?

REED
The invisibility field your body generates is... enveloping the fetus.
(looks at the screen in amazement)
It's camouflaged even inside you.

Sue stands, trembling.

Silence. The hum of the equipment fills the room.

Sue stares at the floating image. The silhouette is barely visible, pulsing with blue light.

Reed watches her. Something inside him gently snaps. He takes a step and embraces her. They kiss passionately.

EXT. STREET PROTESTS - DAY

Crowds with signs: "Go back to space!" "You're not human!"
"Earth is for Earthlings!"

Police hold back the crowd in front of the team's offices.

SUE (V.O)
Some saw us as protectors... others, as anomalies. To protect us from those who didn't want to see us, we were sent to Baxter Tower.

EXT. BAXTER BUILDING - PANORAMIC VIEW - NIGHT

An aerial shot of New York. The top of the building is illuminated. The silhouette of the Fantastic Four is silhouetted against the starry sky. The camera pans up... and in the background, barely visible among the stars:

A PURPLE LIGHT FLASHES IN THE SKY

SUE (V.O)

And the worst part is, we still don't know... if we came back alone.

CUT TO:

DEEP SPACE - REED'S DREAM

Absolute silence. No sound. Only a distant hum like the heartbeat of the universe.

Reed floats suitless, weightless, alone in nothingness. Around him: the interior of a black hole. Liquid darkness thrumming with purple energy. Everything curves. Reality twists.

In the distance, a colossal silhouette begins to appear.

First the eyes: two purple orbs floating in the immensity.

Then the shape: the helmet of a massive creature, barely visible in the cosmic gloom.

GALACTUS.

Reed tries to speak, but can't make a sound.

Then, a VOICE echoes directly into his mind.

GALACTUS (V.O)

(deep, cosmic)

Small mind. Fragile body. You've already seen me. You already belong to me.

Reed begins to float toward him, slowly. The space around him begins to crumble like splintered glass.

REED

What... are you?

GALACTUS (V.O)

I am not a "what." I am the hunger of existence. I am the last heartbeat when all creation stops. And you, you opened the door for me.

A purple wave of energy surrounds him. Reed tries to move away, but space sucks him in like an endless gullet. His entire body begins to stretch, distort.

Reed screams.

GALACTUS (V.O)
*You will not save this world. You can
only watch it burn.*

INT. BAXTER BUILDING, SUE AND REED BEDROOM - NIGHT

REED WAKES UP WITH A STUD!

Drenched in sweat, panting. The room is dark. Only the moonlight streaming through the window.

Beside him, Suen sits up, drowsy.

SUE
Again?

Reed doesn't answer. He stares at the window, as if expecting to see those purple eyes out there.

SUE
It was just a dream.

REED
(still shaking)
No. It wasn't a dream...

She hugs him. Reed finally collapses onto the pillow. They both remain embraced.

SUE
(whispering)
I'm here. Everything is okay.

The camera pans up as they both lie there. The wind gently moves the curtains.

INT. BAR - SAME NIGHT

Purple and blue neon lights. Lounge music with soft synthesizers. The place vibrates with retro-futuristic glamour: floating tables, robot waiters, girls in silver dresses and high hairdos, guys in tight suits with shiny shoulder pads.

Johnny, wearing an open shirt, glasses, and a magazine-worthy smile, sits at a table surrounded by two girls. He flirts, juggling a small fireball in his hand, as if it were a magic trick.

GIRL 1
You're a real human torch!

JOHNNY
And they haven't even seen me when I get romantic...

GIRL 2
(laughs)
Do you believe in love or just
spontaneous ignition?

JOHNNY
(smiling)
Both. But love is harder to put out.

The girls laugh. But Johnny isn't laughing as much anymore. He looks at the glass in front of him. Then at his reflection in the glass: the same man... with empty eyes.

EXT. BAR ROOF - MINUTES LATER

Johnny walks out alone, making his way through steam and lights.

He sits on the edge. Holographic advertisements for "WayneTech," "Stark Airlines," and "Storm Cola" (with his face on a can).

JOHNNY
(whispering to himself)
This whole city... and yet you feel alone,
Johnny.

Look at the sky.

The stars shine brighter than ever, thanks to a transparent dome installed by Reed to keep the atmosphere clean. The moon appears larger. On the horizon, an artificial aurora can be seen, caused by the Earth's magnetic defense shields.

Johnny lies back on the roof, hands behind his head.

Suddenly, a shooting star descends at an odd angle, slower, as if dancing.

Johnny sits up. He frowns. The "star" curves. It's not a star.

IT'S A SILVER FEMALE FIGURE, RIDING A BOARD AS SHINY AS LIQUID MERCURY.

JOHNNY
(mutters)
What the hell...?

The figure briefly descends over the city, leaving a blue-green trail of light that cuts the sky like a paintbrush.

Johnny stands up. Fire envelops his body.

He launches himself into the sky in a powerful blaze, with the roar of a live torch.

EXT. NEW YORK SKIES - NIGHT

Johnny flies at top speed after the figure.

SHALLA-BAL goes ahead, without looking back. She has a serene face, silver eyes, and an ethereal glow that seems out of time.

They pass by:

-The Empire State Building with floating advertising holograms.

-Magnetic bridges where cars stop when they see them cross.

-A public square with people shouting and recording with retro-futuristic cameras.

JOHNNY

(shouting)

Hey, brilliant! I don't usually chase a girl without introducing myself!

She turns to look at him. She doesn't answer.

JOHNNY

Come on, just one word!

She accelerates. Johnny smiles.

EXT. EDGE OF THE ATMOSPHERE - MINUTES LATER

The city shrinks beneath them. The blue turns to starry black. Johnny follows her... but his fire begins to fade.

JOHNNY

(gasping)

Too high... no... no...

He begins to fall.

But she turns her board and flies toward him. She catches his arm and pulls him onto her board. She balances him.

Johnny stares at her. The two crouch down and approach.

They are inches from each other's faces.

JOHNNY

(coughing, weakly)

Who are you?

SHALLA-BAL

(soft voice)

You are a young fire, but you are not ready to burn in eternal darkness.

JOHNNY

I don't understand... who are you?

SHALLA-BAL

A herald. I am an echo of a civilization that knelt... before seeing the shadow.

JOHNNY
Herald?

SHALLA-BAL
(looks him straight in the eyes)
The approaching Hunger. He's already
seen them. He's already decided.

She drops the board. Johnny barely manages to hold on,
staggering into the void.

And with a white flash, she disappears.

EXT. ATMOSPHERE - SAME

Johnny falls on the board. He controls it poorly, spirals,
and his fire slowly returns. He screams as atmospheric
reentry ignites the air around him.

CUT TO:

INT. REED'S LAB - DAY

Natural light streams in through the curved windows. Reed's
lab is filled with holographic screens, scientific
instruments, and toys scattered across the floor.

FRANKLIN RICHARDS, a 4-year-old boy with light, curly hair,
lies on a floating metal bed, playing with an action figure
of his uncle (The Human Torch). He's wearing silver pajamas
with the Fantastic Four logo.

Reed sits next to him. He has dark circles under his eyes,
but a gentle smile. He adjusts a small scanner to his arm.

FRANKLIN
(looking at the scanner on his arm)
Does this hurt?

REED
No more than a quantum tickle. And that
only happens to rogue protons.

FRANKLIN
(laughs)
Do protons misbehave?

REED
Some do... but the best ones learn to
find their place.

FRANKLIN
And I'm a good proton?

REED
You're more than that. You're... a
beautiful singularity.

Franklin looks at him seriously.

FRANKLIN
Is that weird?

Reed stops what he's doing. He looks at him directly.

REED
Why do you ask, Frankie?

FRANKLIN
Mom cries sometimes when I fall asleep... and yesterday, when I was sleep, the sky turned red. The whole sky. Is that normal?

REED
(takes his hand)
No... it's not what you'd call "normal."
But that doesn't mean it's wrong.

Franklin thinks about it, seriously. Then...

FRANKLIN
Am I going to hurt people?

REED
No.

FRANKLIN
Do you think he has powers like yours?

REED
I don't know. That's what I'm trying to find out.

Franklin nods. He plays with the Reed figure again.

INT. BAXTER BUILDING, JHONNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny's room looks like a race car driver's room mixed with a pop idol's: hanging guitars, posters of flying cars, experimental suits, and an unmade bed. A bookshelf holds some physics books, some astronomy books, and several open comics.

Johnny, wearing a tank top and sweatpants, is lying face down, flipping through a black-covered book with gold lettering: "Cosmic Myths and Entities from Outer Space."

JOHNNY
(mumbles)
Herald...

Suddenly, the door opens without knocking.

SUE STORM
Johnny.

JOHNNY
(surprised)
Can you knock first?! I could have been
with a girl!

SUE
(entering with her arms crossed)
There were no girls. Not this time.
You're alone.

Johnny closes the book and sits on the bed.

JOHNNY
(sighs)
Are you coming to give me that speech
again?

SUE
Franklin saw you last night. From his
window. Flying all over the city at
midnight. On fire. Is that not enough?

JOHNNY
And what do you want me to do, Sue? Stay
locked up here like a freak while the
world falls apart out there?

SUE
I want you to be responsible. To
understand that you're now part of
something bigger than yourself!

JOHNNY
(stands up)
That's what everyone says! Reed, the
government, the press... "Johnny, do
this, don't do that." But nobody asks me
what I want.

SUE
And what do you want?

Johnny looks at her. Not sarcastically. But with honest
doubt.

JOHNNY
I don't know. But I know this isn't it.
I... want to fly. I want to find out who
I am when no one's looking.

Sue looks at him sadly. She knows her brother isn't the
impulsive boy he was years ago.

SUE
Sometimes I think we're all trying to
find that... who we are, without the
suit. Without the powers.

Johnny sits back, calmer.

JOHNNY
Do you think there's something out
there... waiting for us? Something
that's already chosen us.

SUE
I don't know. But if so... I'd rather
face it with you by my side.

Silence.

Johnny smiles, then:

JOHNNY
I still think you should knock.

SUE
(laughs)
And I still think you should make your
bed.

They both laugh.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - DAY

The sky is clear. The futuristic smog of 1965 floats between
the retro-futuristic skyscrapers. State propaganda holograms
project headlines:

"ARE THE FANTASTIC 4 A DANGER TO HUMANITY?"
"REED RICHARDS AND HIS FLYING CARS"
"EXPERTS SAY THE HEROES' RADIATION ALTER THE CLIMATE"

The camera descends to street level.

Ben walks through the crowd, wearing a long overcoat, hat,
and dark glasses trying to hide his imposing, rocky figure.
Still, it's impossible to go unnoticed.

LITTLE BOY
(pointing)
Mommy, it's him! The orange monster!

WOMAN
(taking the boy by the arm)
Don't look at him. Come on.

A couple watches him walk by and whispers.

MAN
They say his skin emits radiation.

WOMAN
They say he killed three soldiers in a
test...

YOUNG MAN IN TIGHT PANTS
(shouting mockingly)
Hey, Thing! Where did you leave your
humanity?

People start booing. Some take pictures. Others shout.

CITIZEN 1
Get back to space, you freaks!

CITIZEN 2
We don't need you!

Ben quickens his pace. Breathing heavily. Each step feels like a hammer blow on the concrete.

Finally, he turns into a dark alley, filled with graffiti and steam rising from the vents in the floor. He stops, panting, and leans against the wall.

He takes out his glasses. His eyes are glassy. He looks at his rock-like hands. Some kids at the end of the alley see him. They run away.

Ben sits on the ground, leaning his head against the wall.
Silence.

A stray cat approaches him. It rubs against his leg.

Ben takes a crumpled photo out of his pocket: it's of him and Reed, young, in pilot suits, smiling at Cape Canaveral. On the back, handwritten:

He puts the photo away. He puts his glasses back on. He looks toward the end of the alley, where the bustle of the city awaits him like a cruel sea.

He stands up, with difficulty, but firm.

CUT TO:

INT. BAXTER BUILDING, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A long, dark wood table. Everything is elegant but with sixties-style technological touches: floating cutlery, self-heating plates, a plasma lamp suspended above the table. In the center is a rotating, floating barbecue grill designed by Reed.

Sue, wearing an apron, finishes serving the dishes with the help of a small robot.

Franklin sits in his seat, playing with an anti-gravity cube.

Johnny twirls his fork in boredom. Ben stares at his plate in silence, not touching the food. Reed checks a data table, then turns it off and smiles at everyone.

REED
So... how was everyone's day?

Silence.

REED
(trying to break the ice)
Franklin, did you do your drawing for today?

FRANKLIN
Yes. I drew Mommy with lightning bolts coming out of her eyes.

SUE
(laughs tenderly)
Ah, the usual.

JOHNNY
How exciting! Someone came out of the house?

SUE
Johnny...

JOHNNY
No, seriously. I was locked up all day. Again. Like a VIP prisoner. Thanks for asking!

SUE
You're here because you flew without authorization last night. Franklin saw you. Do you want to traumatize him?

JOHNNY
(shrugs)
He saw me, wow. So? Maybe he'll be inspired. At least one in this family still dreams of flying.

REED
(firmly, ignoring the comment)
I was waiting for the right moment to say it... The government just approved the plan to make flying cars public. It will be the first step toward a clean, quiet, efficient transportation network. A step for humanity...

JOHNNY
(ironic)
And another giant leap for Reed. "It's All About Mr. Fantastic!"

Reed freezes.

REED
What?

JOHNNY
It's all about your accomplishments, your projects, your brilliant ideas. And us? What are we? Your army? Your personal brand?

BEN
(through gritted teeth)
Johnny...

JOHNNY
What? Am I lying?

SUE
(raising her voice)
Enough! This isn't a competition! Reed
has dedicated his life to this team.

JOHNNY
Team? Are we a team or are we their
space mascots?

BEN
(growling)
ENOUGH!

Ben slams his rock fist down on the table. The impact splits the table in half. Plates fly. Franklin screams and hides behind Sue.

Total silence.

BEN
(whispering, barely audible)
I'm sorry...

SUE
(eyes filled with suppressed rage)
Frankie... come on. You don't have to
see this.

Sue scoops the boy up and leaves. Her heels clatter on the floor.

The door slams shut. Johnny pushes his chair in and leaves as well. Ben sits back down in the middle of the mess. Reed is left alone, staring at his trembling hand on the broken table.

REED
(to himself)
This wasn't what I imagined...

INT. BAXTER BUILDING, FRANKLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A warm room decorated with Franklin's floating drawings. Crayon spaceships spin slowly in the air thanks to Reed's technology. A soft blue light illuminates the boy's face as he lies in his futuristic bed with Fantastic Four sheets.

FRANKLIN
Why do you all fight so much, Mommy?

SUE
(whispering, gently tucking him in)
Sometimes... the people who love each other the most hurt each other without meaning to. But that doesn't mean they stop loving each other.

She strokes his soft blond hair. Franklin yawns and snuggles up.

FRANKLIN
Do you love me even if it's weird?

SUE
(smiles, tears in her eyes)
You're the most perfect thing that's ever happened to me, Frankie.
(strokes your cheek)
I waited so long for you... I fought for you. I prayed every night, even when I thought I'd never have you. And now you're here. Breathing. Dreaming. Drawing pictures with laser beams...

Franklin laughs softly. Sue does too, but she can't hold back her tears.

SUE (CONT'D)
You're my miracle, my love. No matter what happens out there. As long as I breathe, I'll protect you.

She kisses him on the forehead, hugs him, and whispers an invisible lullaby in his ear. Franklin closes his eyes.

Sue sits for a moment next to his bed, silent. She stares at the ceiling. Breathes deeply.

MOMENTS LATER.

Franklin is already asleep. Sue is lying with him. A strange sound is heard. Sue stands up and walks to the window to close the blinds. The New York night sky glitters with thousands of aerial lights: advertising blimps, artificial satellites. But a different light crosses the firmament. It goes alone. Silent. Purple and gold. Alive.

Sue squints. The light slowly approaches the window, as if searching for her.

IT'S SHALLA-BAL. Suspended in the air, riding her gleaming silver board, her slender silhouette, her long hair floating in zero gravity. Her eyes shine like ancient suns. She doesn't seem threatening... just sad.

Sue can't move. She just watches.

SUE
Who are you?

SHALLA-BAL
(through the glass)
He's coming.

And then, he's off with the board in a second, as if he'd never been there.

Sue remains paralyzed in front of the window.

BOOM!

An explosion in a building is caused by Shalla-Bal.

INT. BAXTER BUILDING, DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The table is still broken. Half-eaten plates. The atmosphere is tense and silent. Reed is standing, sorting papers. Ben and Johnny are picking up what's left on the floor.

Suddenly, Sue runs in, barefoot, her face pale.

SUE
Reed!

RAPID CUT:

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NEW YORK - NIGHT

A bright and noisy night in the heart of the city. Giant screens project retro-futuristic propaganda: WayneTech products and an image of President Johnson giving a speech from space.

A star streaks across the night sky and slowly descends over Times Square. The crowd screams and retreats. Police officers draw their guns.

The figure of SHALLA-BAL hovers on her silver board. Her body hovers inches above the ground. Absolute silence.

At that moment, the FANTASTIC FOUR appear, descending from THE FANTASTIC-CAR, their iconic blue suits with black "4" letters, redesigned in a sleek retro-futuristic style.

JOHNNY
(whispers to Ben as they walk)
If this ends in a fight, I'll ask for
the board first.

BEN
Shut up.

Shalla-Bal looks at the four, but especially at Johnny. Her expression is solemn. The city is silent.

SHALLA-BAL
Are you the protectors of this world?

REED
(stepping forward)
We are the Fantastic Four. You speak to
Reed Richards.

SHALLA-BAL
(without blinking)
My name is Shalla-Bal. I am the herald
of a being your tongues cannot name
without trembling.

The Four's faces change immediately.

SHALLA-BAL
He is approaching. An entity that
devours worlds. Entire planets... life
energy. Earth... is in its path.

A chilling silence. Camera flashes attempt to capture Shalla-Bal's image, but fail. Her energy distorts the technology.

SUE
Why are you warning us?

SHALLA-BAL
I won't harm them, but I'm announcing
the end of their world.
(pause)
I ANNOUNCE GALACTUS.

She disappears in a second, flying away on her board.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, STRATEGY ROOM - NIGHT

The Fantastic Four are gathered in a tense circle. Reed is frowning, Sue has her arms crossed, Ben is holding a glass of juice, and Johnny is sitting with his back to the group, staring out the window.

REED
(lowering his voice)
What he said... matches what I've been
experiencing.

SUE
(turning to him)
What do you mean?

REED
(sighs, runs a hand through his hair)
I've been dreaming... ever since we got
back from space. I don't know if I
should call them dreams. They're
visions. An entity. Colossal. I don't
see its face, just... a silhouette. And
its eyes. Violet. Immense. And I saw it.
When we were returning to Earth, before
the crash. In the ship's window.

BEN
Why the hell didn't you say anything?

REED
Because I didn't know if I was losing my
mind or seeing the future.

Silence. The hum of an antenna spinning outside.

JOHNNY
(turning slowly)
I knew it too.

Everyone turns to him.

SUE
What?

JOHNNY
Last night... when I followed her. The
shooting star. It was her. Shalla-Bal.
We flew all over the city. Even into
space. She was testing me.

Before she left, she told me she was a Harbinger... that a
threat was coming. That we're on the list.

REED
She told you that and you didn't say
anything?

JOHNNY
(raising his voice)
I didn't know if it was real! I almost
died without oxygen up there! I thought
it was a delusion!

SUE
(taking a step forward)
And you thought it was better to keep
quiet?! Johnny, Franklin admires you! He
saw you flying last night and now this!

JOHNNY
I'm not the perfect model like you or
Reed!

SUE
(shouting)
This isn't a contest! It's the survival
of the planet!

BEN
Hey! Stop it! Now's not the time for a
family fight!

Reed stands up, walking slowly to the window. He looks at the
sky.

REED
She came to warn us. That wasn't a threat. It was a last chance.

SUE
What if it's too late?

Johnny sits back down, his head down.

JOHNNY
What do we do now?

Reed doesn't answer immediately. He looks up at the sky.

REED
The one thing we always do when the universe turns against us...

Pause. Look at the others.

REED
Protect the planet.

CUT TO:

INT. BAXTER TOWER, MAIN LABORATORY - MORNING

The sun softly streams through the Tower's large windows. Reed in his laboratory, filled with analog machines, graphic displays, tube projections, and tape recordings.

Shalla-Bal appears projected as a hologram in the air. Images of various planets slowly rotate around her.

Sue, Johnny and Ben are sitting and watching Reed.

REED
(recording on a reel-to-reel tape)
Observation file: Shalla-Bal. Subject 001. Spectral analysis indicates that her body is composed of pure cosmic energy. She withstands vacuum, temperature, radiation. She requires no oxygen. And most alarming...

Reed presses a button, and the screen displays five planets in different galaxies. One after the other, they appear: Zenn-La, Tarsis-9, Jundakar, Beta-Karim, Elyxion. All with beautiful landscapes.

Each one has the same date of contact... and a second date: "TOTAL DESTRUCTION."

REED
(low voice, disturbed)
Five planets visited by her... all wiped off the map.

An image is projected with the word: HERALD.

REED
(continuing, pacing in circles, aloud)
A Herald is not a simple messenger. He
doesn't negotiate. A Herald of Galactus
locates worlds with sufficient life
energy. Then... he consumes them.

SUE
What's that?

REED
(darkly, turning toward them)
A warning.

Reed presses a button. Shalla-Bal's image appears again,
floating above the five annihilated worlds.

REED
She's here to mark Earth. To prepare it.
For Galactus to come... and devour it.

Silence.

BEN
Are you saying this woman... she's like
the cosmic pizza delivery man, but
instead of leaving something, she's
warning you that you're going to be
swallowed alive?

JOHNNY
And yet she kissed me on the cheek...

SUE
(cold look at Johnny)
What?!

Reed doesn't smile. He just slowly approaches a screen and
marks a spot: Earth.

REED
We're the next planet. It's already
written. We can't wait for him to
arrive. If we want to stop him, we have
to get out... now.
(pause)
We must fly toward Shalla-Bal's point of
origin. Intercept Galactus before he
enters the solar system.

BEN
Are you saying we go straight for him?!
Are you out of your mind, Reed? He's
supposed to be a world-destroyer. We
don't know what we're up against. That's
suicide! We're light years away...

REED
Not if we use EXCELSIOR III. It's
designed to warp space. We can be there

in three days, if everything works as planned.

Johnny, sitting with his feet up on the table, slowly lowers his legs. His face is pale.

JOHNNY

Get out... again? No, no, no. Reed, no way. Last time I lost control in the atmosphere. I almost burned myself to a crisp.

BEN

And now you're scared of a trip to space, Torch?

(imitating a female voice)

"Oh no, I can't go. What if I mess up my hair in front of my cosmic girlfriend?"

JOHNNY

She's not my girlfriend! Besides... what if I don't want to be a hero, Reed?

REED

(approaches, calmly)

It's not about being a hero, Johnny. You had contact with her. Shalla-Bal sought you out for a reason. That makes you important. It's now... or never.

Johnny looks at him. He hesitates. Takes a deep breath. Then nods.

JOHNNY

If that thing is going to devour the Earth, I guess I want to be on the side trying to stop it.

SUE

We're in this together. We're a family.

(glance at Reed)

And where you go, I go.

Reed takes his hand. The tension dissipates for a moment.

SLOW ZOOM TO THE HOLOGRAM OF THE EARTH... SURROUNDED BY A SUBTLE PURPLE AURA THAT INTENSIFIES.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTUS'S SHIP, INTERNAL CHAMBER - DEEP SPACE

A vast floating temple among galaxies. There is no apparent gravity. Everything is purple light, structures of liquid energy and living matter. Echoes of dying stars resonate in the air.

SHALLA-BAL flies on her board, entering the heart of the Titan.

The chamber darkens as she approaches.

A GIGANTIC SILHOUETTE EMERGES FROM THE BACKGROUND. ONLY THE INCANDESCENT PURPLE EYES, FLOATING IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE OUTLINE OF GALACTUS'S HELMET, WHICH REACHES KILOMETERS HIGH, ARE VISIBLE.

SHALLA-BAL
Earth has been alerted. The Four are
aware of your arrival.

A silence. Then, a deep, distorted, inhuman voice... as if speaking from the core of the universe. It vibrates through every metal, through the bones of whoever hears it.

GALACTUS
And you think that will stop the
inevitable, my herald? Do you think the
cries of insects can stop an ocean?
(pause)
I am the cycle. The balance. Where there
is excess, I devour. Where there is
noise, I silence.

SHALLA-BAL
(kneels on the board)
I know. But these humans... they are
different. They have will. Technology.
And one of them... looked at me without
fear.

GALACTUS
Let them prepare. Let them unite. All
will be consumed.

CUT TO:

INT. REED'S LAB - DAY

A large screen displays a model of the solar system and the trajectory of the EXCELSIOR III spacecraft.

Reed leans over a console, reviewing data. His eyes are tired. The faint hum of power can be heard.

Franklin enters and silently observes his father.

FRANKLIN
Dad? Are you coming to dinner?

Reed turns and sees him. He smiles softly.

REED
(crouches down)
Frankie. I need us to talk about
something very important.

Franklin leans closer. There's silence.

REED
 (gentle, but firm)
 Your mom and I... we're going away for a while. Into space. There's something out there, something big. Something that could damage our world. And to protect it... we need to understand it first.

FRANKLIN
 Are you going to fight?

REED
 We're going to find answers. We're going to prevent a fight. But I can't take you this time. You're safer here.

Franklin looks down.

FRANKLIN
 Is it because I don't have powers? Is that why I can't go?

REED
 (moved, moves closer and looks him in the eyes)
 No, Frankie. That doesn't make you any less.

Franklin is silent for a few seconds. Then he takes a step toward him and hugs him tightly. Reed is startled for a moment, then wraps his long arms around him, protecting him.

FRANKLIN
 (whispering)
 I'll take care of the planet for you, Dad. I promise.

REED
 And I'll take care of you... from wherever I am.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAUNCH STATION - MORNING

A huge launch pad gleams under white spotlights. The silver EXCELSIOR III spacecraft, with side fins and a retro-futuristic aerodynamic design, is parked vertically, thrumming with energy.

Hundreds of people watch from afar. Some protesters carry signs reading, "*Don't provoke the cosmos*," "*God doesn't live in a vacuum*," and others applaud with Fantastic Four flags.

CUT TO:

ARCHIVE IMAGES IN BLACK AND WHITE

- The ship's return four years ago.
- The media explosion.
- Pregnant Sue.

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O)

After four years without a single human ship leaving planet Earth, today the story takes a new leap into the stellar abyss. With humanity torn between adoration and fear for its protectors, Dr. Reed Richards and his team embark on a mission beyond the known boundaries. Their objective: to intercept a cosmic threat known only as... Galactus.

INT. CENTRAL OBSERVATORY CONTROL BASE - CONTINUOUS

Green screens with lines of code and star charts. Technicians in white uniforms communicate frantically.

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O)

The EXCELSIOR III, built by Richards himself, is the first human-made craft capable of generating its own gravitational field and bending light to travel beyond Saturn's rings.

INT. EXCELSIOR III, MAIN COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

Reed sits in the pilot's seat, adjusting the coordinate parameters. Ben checks the pressure levels. Sue watches the planet through the window. Johnny is tense, not speaking.

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O)

From New York... from planet Earth... from the small spark that still believes in heroes...

EXT. EXCELSIOR III, PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

The thrusters roar with a high-pitched vibration. The structure shakes. Emergency lights flash.

EXT. NIGHT SKY

EXCELSIOR III ascends with a celestial beam that parts the clouds. A trail of blue fire is left behind. The camera rises with the ship, passing through atmospheric layers... into the absolute blackness of space.

CUT TO:

INT. GALACTUS'S SHIP, INTERNAL CHAMBER - DEEP SPACE

SHALLA-BAL, ethereal and steady, glides in on her lightboard. Her silhouette glows silver, but her face shows concern.

In front of her, the immense silhouette of GALACTUS.

SHALLA-BAL
(looking at him, unafraid)
The humans are coming. Their ship has
crossed the atmosphere. They will arrive
soon.

Galactus doesn't respond. Only an oppressive silence. It
sounds like stellar thunder vibrating in the nothingness.

Shalla-Bal moves a little closer, respectfully but firmly.

SHALLA-BAL
They are not like other worlds. They
will fight.

A deep throb is heard, as if a cosmic heart were activating.

Shalla-Bal watches, disturbed, but says nothing more. She
turns around, floating on her board.

**EXT. DEEP SPACE - NEAR THE GALACTUS SHIP - INTERSTELLAR
DARKNESS**

The EXCELSIOR III emerges from hyperspace, a silver ship with
electric-blue engines that glow as it passes through a purple
nebula.

In front of them, covering their entire field of vision...

THE GALACTUS SHIP.

A colossal structure, black and violet, with impossible
geometries. Curved towers rotate slowly like the gears of a
celestial clock. Its size is larger than a planet.

INT. EXCELSIOR III, COCKPIT - SAME

Ben gets up from his seat and presses himself against the
glass.

BEN
For the love of... Is that a ship or a
universe?

Johnny is shocked; he's not joking this time.

JOHNNY
That's not human technology. It's not
even technology.

Reed, fascinated, activates the scanners. Holographic
graphics fail when trying to measure size.

REED
Not even our computers can process its
structure. It's as if it's alive... or
made of physics we don't understand.

Sue looks fearful.

SUE
What kind of being needs something like
that... as a home?

EXT. GALACTUS SHIP - OUTER PORT

A gigantic hexagonal opening activates. A tunnel of liquid light forms, enveloping the EXCELSIOR III. As if the ship were gently sucked into a gravitational pulse.

INT. EXCELSIOR III - LANDING BRIDGE

The entire ship trembles gently as they land on a floating platform, suspended in a purple void. Around them, colossal towers float in the distance.

A harmonic hum is heard, rattling in the bones.

The ship's hatch opens.

The four descend slowly, dressed in their retro 1960s outfits, each bearing their symbol: the shining 4.

The air is thick, as if reality itself were trembling.

From the end of the energy corridor, a figure floats toward them.

SHALLA-BAL, ethereal and elegant, stops in front of them. She looks solemn.

SHALLA-BAL
You're welcome. The Devourer of Worlds
awaits them.

Johnny looks at her, not with desire this time, but with suppressed fear.

JOHNNY
What if we decide not to go through?

SHALLA-BAL
There's no way back until you hear what
he has to say.

Reed nods and takes the first step.

REED
Come on. We're too far from home to
hesitate now.

BEN
Yes, and we must meet Johnny's
girlfriend.

The four advance through a curved glass corridor. In the distance, stars twinkle, seemingly extinguished as they pass near the ship.

THE CAMERA SLOWLY ZOOMS OUT AS THEY WALK TOWARD A RADIANT PORTAL, TINY IN COMPARISON TO THE MONSTROUS INTERIOR.

INT. GALACTUS SHIP - INTERNAL CORRIDORS - INTERDIMENSIONAL SPACE

Shalla-Bal floats forward a few inches above the dark crystal floor, her robes billowing as if responding to a nonexistent breeze. The Fantastic Four follow her silently, surrounded by walls pulsing with purple and black light. Echoes of distant voices resonate without origin.

BEN
(to Johnny)
Ask your girlfriend about Galactus.

JOHNNY
I don't want her to want to talk to me.
Besides, she's not my girlfriend.

BEN
She's the first woman you've spoken to,
and she's naked.

REED
She's not naked. She's dressed in a
metallic substance.

SUE
(to Shalla-Bal)
Tell us who Galactus is.

SHALLA-BAL
He was... the last.

Johnny frowns.

JOHNNY
The last of what?

Shalla-Bal stops in front of a translucent wall, which begins to project images like fire on the glass. A universe can be seen collapsing in on itself.

SHALLA-BAL
The last survivor... of a universe that
no longer exists. One before his own.
When everything known was extinguished,
he ascended... or descended. No one
knows.

Ben crosses his arms, uncomfortably.

BEN
And why did he become a... monster?

Shalla-Bal continues walking. The walls now project images of Galactus emerging from a cosmic shell, floating in a sea of antimatter.

SHALLA-BAL

The new universe rejected him. He wasn't from here. His body was recreated by primordial energy. His hunger... was the consequence.

Reed listens with absolute attention, each word planting another piece in his scientific mind.

SHALLA-BAL

First he tried suns. Then moons. Then civilizations. Entire worlds...

SUE

And you? Why do you follow him?

Shalla-Bal finally stops before a door shaped like a moving mandala, as if swirling between dimensions.

She turns toward them, her eyes glittering like stellar ice.

SHALLA-BAL

Because someone must ring the bell before judgment falls.

Johnny takes a step forward, annoyed.

JOHNNY

And that makes you good? To warn that he's coming to destroy us?

SHALLA-BAL

And you? Will you stop him? With what strength? With what faith?

Reed steps forward. His eyes are calculating, but his voice holds compassion.

REED

We only want to understand. To avoid the inevitable.

Shalla-Bal nods slowly. The door in front of them begins to open with a cosmic roar, revealing a corridor of darkness and pure energy leading to the central room.

INT. GALACTUS SHIP, CENTRAL CHAMBER - MOMENTS LATER

A cosmic temple. A space vaster than any Earthly building. Columns of energy float upward like the spines of shattered galaxies. In the center, a throne formed from the fragments of dead stars.

And above it...

GALACTUS.

A colossal, living silhouette. Its face is a continent. Its helmet, a constellation. Its voice... a soul-shattering vibration.

The Fantastic Four look down on it. They look like insects before a god.

GALACTUS

They've come.

Everyone trembles. Ben clenches his fists, but holds back. Johnny swallows. Sue steps behind Reed.

Reed takes a step forward. He tries to sound firm, but his voice trembles slightly.

REED

What do you want from our world?

A silence. Then Galactus's voice shakes the place to its foundations.

GALACTUS

Power.

Images float around them: planet Earth, spinning, with flashes of energy rising like lights from certain places in the world.

GALACTUS (CONT'D)

Earth... is a node. A crossroads between dimensions. Its energy is ancient, unstable... and perfect.

Johnny steps forward angrily.

JOHNNY

Then find another source! There are thousands of planets!

Galactus barely notices.

GALACTUS

But only one... contains absolute potential.

REED

What's so special about our planet? Compared to the thousands there must be in the universe?

GALACTUS

There is a being who has all the power I need. That being will inherit this Cursed Throne.

REED

Tell us who that being is, and we will search for him for you.

GALACTUS
You mustn't search for him. He already
lives with you.

Who is he? SUE

SHALLA-BAL	GALACTUS
He wants the child.	I want the child.

What? BEN

REED
(whispering)
Franklin?

SUE
No. Reed, tell him no.

Reed steps closer. He stands in front of his family.

REED
You can't take him. He's not yours. He's
a child!

Galactus leans slightly toward them. The entire ship rumbles.

GALACTUS
He's not a child. He's a door. A living
rift between what was... and what is to
come.

Galactus's helmet glows with a purple flash. An image of Franklin as an adult floating in space, stars orbiting his head, appears for a second.

GALACTUS (CONT'D)
Entropy follows him. Rebirth needs him.

Johnny transforms into fire.

JOHNNY
You're not even going to touch him!

Galactus raises a hand. Johnny's fire goes out instantly. Johnny falls to his knees, gasping.

Sue helps him. Ben roars and steps in. Reed remains standing, trembling but steadfast.

REED
If you come for him...
(looks back at his family)
You'll have to get through us first.

GALACTUS watches. A deathly silence fills the ship.

Suddenly, a wave of dark energy begins to form behind the throne, as if a black hole had opened.

GALACTUS

Then... they will pay the price of hope.

The room begins to collapse in on itself. Gravity altered. Echoes. Ancient voices.

GALACTUS raises his gigantic cosmic hand toward the Fantastic Four. The shadow it casts is like an eclipse swallowing the world.

The hand descends like a mountain, rumbling, seeking to crush them.

Sue creates a force field around the team just as the gigantic palm falls.

BOOOOOM!

The impact shakes the structure, but the field holds... barely.

REED

(shouting)

Run!

Sue's shields shatter like glass under pressure. The group leaps toward a side hatch. Galactus's energy follows them, like a hurricane inside a building.

INT. GALACTUS SHIP CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Luminous tubes, floating corridors, zero-gravity doors.

The four run, fly, stretch, and jump, pursued by Shalla-Bal, who descends engulfed in silver fire.

SHALLA-BAL

They can't run away! He's already seen them! He always sees!!

REED

The ship! We must get to the EXCELSIOR!

ESCAPE SEQUENCE - MONTAGE

Ben charges an alien generator and throws it against a wall, opening an escape route.

Sue keeps shields flashing as cosmic energy discs launched by Shalla-Bal graze them.

Johnny accidentally separates from the group through a side hatch, slipping into a curved, zero-gravity tunnel.

INT. GALACTUS SHIP, NULLIFIER CHAMBER - SAME

Johnny tumbles into a circular chamber of suspended energy. In the center: a black device with silver runes floating on a pedestal.

The atmosphere changes. Absolute silence. Time suspended.

JOHNNY
(trembling)
What... what is this?

Galactus's voice echoes inside his mind, like a distorted memory:

GALACTUS (V.O)
*The end of the eternal. The beginning of
oblivion.*

A SUPREME NULLIFIER.

Johnny takes a step back, but can't stop looking at it. A tear escapes. He feels like he's standing in front of death itself.

INT. FINAL CORRIDOR - SAME

Reed, Sue, and Ben arrive at the hangar. Galactica III is ready, but the walls distort. Galactus's ship tries to hold them back.

SUE
(screaming)
Where's Johnny?!

BOOM.

Johnny flies into view, engulfed in fire. But now his fire is dimmer, as if something has touched him from the inside.

EXT. EXCELSIOR III - MOMENTS LATER

The EXCELSIOR III takes off at full speed as Galactus's ship partially collapses behind them. Shalla-Bal watches them from afar, motionless.

An ambiguous expression on her face.

INT. EXCELSIOR III - IN EARTH ORBIT

The ship passes silently through the atmosphere. Inside, the Fantastic Four sit in their stations, but no one says anything.

Their faces are marked by the weight of what they've just experienced.

Johnny looks out the window. Ben crosses his arms, serious. Sue hugs his arms, holding back tears. Reed, standing, stares at the controls... and thinks.

Awkward silence.

BEN
Well... that was a cosmic nightmare.

JOHNNY

Do you think he's going to try? Come... now?

SUE

Of course he's coming. He warned us.

BEN

And he's not coming for tea. Did you see his size?

Pause. Reed turns slowly toward them.

REED

(hesitating)

We have to... consider all the variables.

(pause)

Including... what he asked for.

Sue frowns slowly. Johnny turns away.

SUE

What... are you saying, Reed?

Reed looks down. He says it almost without a voice.

REED

I'm not saying we should. But... if Franklin is the price for saving the entire planet...

The atmosphere freezes. Sue's face goes from bewilderment to fury.

SUE

Are you suggesting we give our son to that thing?!

REED

I'm saying we need to evaluate all the variables. Galactus isn't just any force, Sue! He's the death of civilizations!

SUE

(screaming, through tears)

Franklin is a child! My son! Our son! And you're already calculating his life like he's a laboratory variable!

Ben and Johnny look down.

SUE (CONT'D)

(trembling)

You're a monster when you let logic replace the heart.

EXT. BAXTER TOWER, MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

The four walk to enter the tower. Surrounded by news vans, reporters, cameras, and onlookers.

The Fantastic Four descend under a barrage of flashbulbs. The crowd shouts questions.

REPORTER 1
"What was that thing in
the sky, Miss Storm?!"

REPORTER 2
Is Galactus real?! What does
he want?

Johnny, visibly shaken, can't contain himself.

JOHNNY
(loudly)
Galactus wants a human!

Sue stops dead in her tracks and turns to him.

SUE
(screaming)
"Johnny! Are you crazy?! You shouldn't
have said that!"

REPORTER 3
A human? Who?

Ben puts his hand to his forehead, tense. Reed looks at Sue, then at the reporters, and something inside him snaps.

REED
(cold, direct)
Our son.

Flashes explode like a thunderstorm.

REPORTER 4
What do you mean?!

Sue is in complete shock. The world stops for a second.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The doors open with a ding. The Fantastic Four, still in their classic costumes and covered in stardust, enter the lobby of their tower.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A young woman in a nanny's uniform, about 25 years old, is trembling in panic in front of the elevator. It's MARCIA, Franklin's nanny. Her eyes are watery and bulging.

MARCIA
It's great you're back! I can't handle
this! That kid isn't normal! He... he
did something!

REED
Where's Franklin?

MARCIA
(shaking, backing away)
In the living room! But don't go in!
He...

BEN
(confused)
What the hell is she saying?

Marcia runs down the hall, screaming.

Silence. Everyone looks at each other, tense.

Sue runs.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

The Fantastic Four cautiously enter the enormous hall. But what they see stops them in their tracks.

In the center of the room are four figures.

Four exact duplicates of themselves. Dressed the same. Standing the same. But pale, without pupils, like living shadows.

JOHNNY'S DOUBLE
(flame lit)
Don't be afraid. We're part of him.

BEN
(taking a step back)
What the fuck...?

REED'S DOUBLE
He imagined us... and here we are.

Suddenly, a childish giggle is heard. From a corner, Franklin comes out.

FRANKLIN
Hi, Mom. Hi, Dad. Do you like my friends?

Sue runs up to him and hugs him.

SUE
Franklin! My love! Who are they?
Franklin looks at her, smiling.

FRANKLIN
I dreamed about you... and I felt alone,
so I daydreamed about you.
The doubles freeze.

Johnny steps forward, his eyes fixed on his double.

JOHNNY
(shivering)
That's not a trick... I feel his heat.
He's... on fire.

Reed approaches his double, observing him with scientific horror.

REED
These projections are made of real
matter... they're not holograms.
(pause)
Franklin... how did you do this?

FRANKLIN
(shrugging)
I don't know. I just thought about it
out loud.

A hush falls over everyone.

Suddenly, all the doubles slowly fade away, like floating dust.

Franklin clings to Sue.

FRANKLIN
Did I do something wrong?

Sue clutches him to her chest, crying with relief and fear.

SUE
No, honey, don't worry...

INT. BAXTER TOWER, FRANKLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Franklin is fast asleep under a blue star-spangled quilt. Sue sits beside him, tenderly stroking his hair.

She leans down and kisses him on the forehead. Then she slowly sits up, straightens his teddy bear, and walks to the door.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sue carefully closes the door. When she turns, she finds Reed waiting for her silently, leaning against the wall with a tense expression.

INT. REED'S LAB - CONTINUOUS

They sit face to face, amid screens, blueprints, and floating energy fragments in capsules. Reed holds a tablet with anomalous readings.

REED
There's no doubt anymore. Franklin...
he's fully awake. His psionic levels
have surpassed all standards.

Sue lowers her gaze.

REED (CONT'D)
He didn't just project versions of us.
He recreated our energy. Our
consciousness.

SUE
So we have to protect him, not display
him like an experiment.

REED
(looking at her, serious)
Sue... by using his powers like this,
he's sending a signal. Like a beacon.
Galactus will come faster.

Sue pulls away, hurt.

SUE
You said in public that he wants
Franklin! Do you have any idea what that
means? You left our son scarred!

Reed is silent. He lowers his head.

SUE
Do you know how many threats we've
received today? How many crazy people
might want to take him first?

Reed approaches slowly.

REED
I know... and I shouldn't have said it
like that. But we needed time,
distraction, controlled panic. And I did
it.
(pause)
It wasn't out of fear... it was because
I couldn't bear to lose him.

Sue looks at him. Her eyes are still filled with rage... but
also with love. She sighs. She takes a step toward him.

SUE
We have to fix this, Reed. Together.

He nods.

REED
We will. I promise.

Silence. She cups his face. They kiss. Slowly, deeply. As if
forgiving each other for everything that hasn't happened yet.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK, TIMES SQUARE - DAY

A swarm of journalists, camera crews, helicopters, and citizens swarm around a makeshift podium. Army guards and S.H.I.E.L.D. personnel are monitoring the area. The giant screen in Times Square is broadcasting live.

The Fantastic Four are present, lined up. Reed is in the center, his face serious and exhausted. Beside him: Sue with a restrained expression, Johnny uncomfortable, and Ben with his arms crossed, like a protective wall.

The din subsides as Reed approaches the microphone.

REED

Citizens of the world... this is the truth.

Pause. Cameras zoom in. A helicopter circles overhead.

REED (CONT'D)

A few days ago, we received a warning from a cosmic entity called Galactus. A being of incalculable power.

(pause)

What this being seeks... is not a resource, nor a precious metal. What it desires... is my son. Franklin.

A murmur of horror and confusion ripples through the crowd. Some people scream. Others cover their mouths.

REED (CONT'D)

Franklin Richards has developed abilities beyond what our science can comprehend. Powers that, somehow, draw the attention of Galactus.

(pause)

And as a father... I must take responsibility.

Reed takes a deep breath. His voice now becomes louder, more determined.

REED

For years, the Fantastic Four have used our abilities to protect this world. But if our powers pose a risk to its existence...

(looks at Sue, then at Ben and Johnny)

Then we must consider the unthinkable. I've always studied our powers to enhance them, but now I must work on a protocol to eliminate our abilities. To neutralize them completely. And if necessary, Franklin's powers as well.

Sue takes a step forward, visibly shaken, but Reed gently takes her hand.

REED (CONT'D)
We need time. I know this sounds extreme... but Galactus is no ordinary enemy. He isn't defeated by force, or by alliances.

A tense silence. Reed takes a step back. The image of the four of them together, uncertain and vulnerable, is transmitted to the entire world.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, MAIN HALL - DAY

The elevator door opens with a ding. Reed, Sue, Johnny, and Ben enter, visibly exhausted after the conference.

They walk.

Suddenly, Reed stops in his tracks.

REED
(alarmed)
Stop.

The four of them look toward the center of the lobby: there's a young man, about 17 years old, thin, wearing glasses and a slung backpack, sitting with his hands clasped together. He stares at the floor.

It's PETER PARKER.

Sue assumes a defensive stance. Johnny lights his flames.

REED
Get out of here. You're not taking my son.

Peter stands up slowly, without moving abruptly.

PETER
I don't want any trouble. I just... need to talk to you, Doctor Richards.

SUE
How did you get in?

PETER
(pointing discreetly to the ceiling)
Through the skylight on the sixth level. It wasn't sealed... sorry. It's just that if I knocked on the door, they wouldn't let me in. They have very high security.

Reed looks at him suspiciously.

JOHNNY

And what do you want? Have you come to warn us? Are you working with Galactus?

Peter looks at him, confused and nervous.

PETER

What? No. No! I... I don't know anything about that. I just...

He takes a small, crumpled notebook out of his backpack.

PETER (CONT'D)

It might sound crazy, but I have powers. For about two years now. And if I've learned anything... it's that I don't want them.

Sue frowns. Reed crosses his arms. The tension is cut like a knife.

PETER

I heard about your son. And what he said at the conference. That you're looking for a way to eliminate the powers. I... I want to help you.

Johnny laughs.

JOHNNY

Help? And what do you do? Do you shoot rainbows from your fingers?

Peter takes a deep breath.

PETER

No.
(raises his hand)
I'm throwing this.

THWIP!

A spider web hits the wall behind Johnny, wraps him up from head to toe, and knocks him to the ground like a sack of potatoes.

JOHNNY

What the...?! Reed!

Ben laughs as he helps him up.

BEN

Hahaha! This skinny guy left you like a mummy, Johnny.

Reed, intrigued, approaches Peter, who is already open to his notebook, showing equations, molecular structures, and genetic simulations scribbled in pencil.

PETER
I've been studying my mutation. My powers are activated by a radioactive-based mutagenic compound... but if a specific inhibitor is applied to the central nervous system, I believe it can be deactivated without killing the host.

Reed watches him with growing interest. He leans closer.

REED
And how did you get this data?

PETER
I work in the science lab at Midtown High School... sometimes I sneak into Empire State University. I know it sounds crazy, but if you'll let me help...

Reed interrupts.

REED
Do you want to get rid of your powers?

Peter nods.

PETER
I want my life back.

Reed watches him. Silence. He looks at Sue. She looks at Reed approvingly.

Then Reed nods slowly.

REED
What's your name?

PETER
(extending his hand to Reed)
Peter... I'm Peter Parker, sir.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEEP SPACE - DARKNESS

The nothingness of space. Absolute silence.

In the distance, a reddish dot flickers. It grows larger.

Little by little, the monstrous profile of a titanic ship reveals itself from the shadows of the cosmos.

It is Galactus's ship.

Gigantic. Colossal. Alive.

Its geometric structures float and rotate as if time itself were folding around it. Tubes of purple energy crisscross the

ship like veins. Parts of its surface warp with patterns that seem to breathe.

The camera zooms out, and we see its silhouette eclipsing entire planets. As if darkness itself were moving.

A distant moon splits in two as soon as it passes through. It doesn't touch it. It destroys it with its presence.

EXT. BAXTER TOWER, BALCONY OF JHONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

New York City sleeps, but Johnny leans on the railing of his high balcony, alone, staring up at the stars.

In his right hand, he holds a simple gold necklace with a small pendant: a carved star. He turns it carefully between his fingers, as if it were fragile.

His eyes are glassy. He whispers something to himself, but we don't hear him. Only the wind.

Suddenly, a star in the sky flickers... and moves. Johnny follows it with his eyes, frowning.

The star gets closer and closer... until it floats down in front of him, over the void, with ethereal grace.

It's Shalla-Bal approaching with the table. She floats in the air, calm.

Johnny takes a step back, nervous, but doesn't turn on his powers. He wipes away his tears.

SHALLA-BAL
I'm not here to fight.

Johnny watches her. The silence lasts for a few seconds, and then...

JOHNNY
How do we stop him?

Shalla-Bal slowly lowers herself to the level of the balcony, without touching it.

SHALLA-BAL
They can't.

Johnny tightens his grip on the collar. He looks at the ground.

JOHNNY
So it's over? Is it over?

SHALLA-BAL
I didn't come to pass judgment. I came to remind you that sometimes... fires can't be put out by fighting. Sometimes they transform.

She reaches out, and a small cloth flag materializes between her fingers. It's a white flag, charred around the edges, with Johnny's face drawn on it. (THE SAME ONE JOHNNY LEFT ON THE MOON YEARS BEFORE)

SHALLA-BAL

You left it on the Moon, remember? A promise that you would return.

He takes it slowly.

JOHNNY

I thought no one would see her.

SHALLA-BAL

I saw her. There's something in you that others can't see. But unlike them, I can see it.

JOHNNY

I see something in you too. I know you don't want to do what he tells you.

She steps off the board and walks around the balcony. Johnny looks at her carefully.

SHALLA-BAL

My world was called Zenn-La. It was a jewel suspended in a forgotten galaxy. Endless gardens. Singing skies. Art, thought, peace...

Johnny listens in silence. The city shines below them.

SHALLA-BAL

And then... He came. Galactus. Like the dawn of a hungry god. We saw him appear... so large that he hid three moons at once.

FLASHBACK - ABSTRACT AND COSMIC VISUAL STYLE

-We see a green crystal planet being enveloped by shadows.

-Blue-skinned people fleeing as the sky opens like a wound.

-A solitary figure (Shalla-Bal) rises amidst the chaos.

SHALLA-BAL (V.O)

We didn't come with weapons. We didn't have armies. Only fear.

Back to the present. She lowers her gaze slightly.

SHALLA-BAL

Her previous Herald was destroyed in an attempted rebellion. Galactus needed a new guide. One who knew worlds... one who understood the beauty of what is about to die.

Johnny swallows.

JOHNNY
And you accepted?

SHALLA-BAL
(softly)
No. I begged. I begged him not to. I offered him everything... and he offered me something in return: to be his voice, to be his shadow, to be the one who knocks on the door before the end.

Johnny freezes.

JOHNNY
Why you?

SHALLA-BAL
Because I loved my planet too much. Because I saw that no one else could bear what was coming. Because I preferred to live with guilt... rather than watch him die without hope.

Shalla-Bal slowly rises on the board.

SHALLA-BAL
What's coming doesn't stop. But it can be understood. If you look beyond the fear... even in the heart of the devourer, there's a spark of reason.

JOHNNY
Which one?

SHALLA-BAL
The universe is older than you think. And there are worse things than Galactus's hunger. He is balance. And you... are unbalancing something bigger.

She spins. Johnny watches her rise like a reverse star.

JOHNNY
Don't you see you're doing harm?

Shalla-Bal stops in the sky, without turning around.

SHALLA-BAL
If I had wanted to harm you, I wouldn't have let you escape and have a second chance.

And she leaves, floating among the constellations.

Johnny is left alone with his thoughts... and the flag in his hand.

INT. REED'S LAB - NIGHT

Reed Richards is leaning over a prototype the size of a washing machine. Inside, a translucent sphere spins, projecting pulses of purple energy.

To one side, Peter adjusts components with surgical precision, wearing gloves that look like they're made of metal mesh.

PETER

Ready. Connected the core to the negative frequency modulator. It should now pick up any omega-class cosmic presence.

REED

(nodding)

Perfect. Now we just need to stabilize the dimensional translation.

PETER

Shall we use the quantum processor in Room 4?

REED

No. Sue is using that to protect Franklin's dreams. We'll use the core from the old Negative Zone prison.

Peter smiles, a little nervously.

PETER

Are you sure that's safe?

REED

No.

A BEEP. The device's lights flash, and a holographic map of the galaxy is projected. A dot flickers, like a pulse in the distance.

They both look at each other.

REED

He's coming closer.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, STRATEGY ROOM - NIGHT

Reed Richards stands at the front, visibly tired but determined.

Beside him is Peter Parker, serious, holding a notebook.

Seated are Sue, Johnny, and Ben. Franklin is not there.

REED
After weeks of testing, multidimensional
analysis, and quantum calculations...
I've come to a conclusion with Peter.

Silence. The three look at him expectantly.

REED (CONT'D)
The technology needed to nullify our
powers... exists. But developing a safe
way to use it would take years. Years we
don't have.

JOHNNY
So we're screwed?

REED
Not exactly.

Reed nods to Peter. Peter walks to the center of the room,
activating a projection. A 3D model of Galactus appears,
along with an energy simulation with a childlike figure in
the center: Franklin.

PETER
Plan B. We discussed it last night. It's
not pretty. It's not simple. But it's...
possible.

SUE
(suspicious)
What kind of "plan B"?

PETER
Galactus doesn't just detect cosmic
power. He seeks it. He desires it.
Franklin... he's already a living energy
source, even without knowing it.

Peter points to the simulation.

PETER (CONT'D)
If we project his psychic presence at
the right point, at the right time... we
can lure Galactus into a trap. A cosmic
hook.

BEN
And what kind of trap can stop that
monster?

REED
A mass teleporter. With modified
technology. Connected to a dimensional
rift at the edges of the non-universe.

Ben and Johnny look at each other in confusion.

SUE
(stands up)
Are you talking about using my son as bait?!

PETER
And destroy the ship too. The ship concentrates his consciousness. If we destroy it while we're taking him out of the plane, we could leave him trapped between dimensions. Not dead. But... still. For a long time.

Sue glares at Reed, then at Peter.

SUE
I'm not going to let them use Franklin as a trap.

REED
We're not saying he's in danger. Just projecting his energy, nothing more. He wouldn't be physically present.

Sue freezes. Silence.

PETER
Besides. Galactus isn't going to land. He can't even. His ship, his mass... his mere presence in the atmosphere is going to create gravitational waves, seismic ruptures, magnetic shocks...

BEN
In English, genius?

PETER
He's going to destroy the city. Just by passing by. Some buildings... they're going to collapse without him touching them.

JOHNNY
Collapse how? As in "loud noise," or as in "run and scream"?

PETER
As in "disappear off the map."

BEN
Is there a way to prevent it?

PETER
Only one: evacuate New York. The entire metropolitan area. Before it enters orbit.

BEN
Reed... does this have any real chance?

REED
If all goes well... yes. If something goes wrong... it could attract not just Galactus, but something worse. But it's better than waiting for destruction.

Peter looks down for a second. Johnny crosses his arms.

JOHNNY
I agree. It's our chance.

SUE
Reed... how long will it take for Galactus to arrive?

Reed stops. He looks at her for a second in silence, as if he doesn't want to answer.

REED
Two days. Maybe less, if he detects the boy's energy spike before then.

SUE
And will everything be ready?

REED
Almost. Peter has been instrumental. His understanding of the quantum neural spectrum is... exceptional. Without him, we wouldn't even be close.

Sue looks at him, surprised to hear Reed flattering someone else.

SUE
I guess we should trust that kid. Although it still feels weird having him here.

BEN
(to Johnny)
Ha ha. Looks like they've already taken your job, Johnny.

Johnny looks at Ben, growling.

REED
I understand. But his ideas are ahead of his time. Literally.

Johnny stands up.

JOHNNY
If we're going to face the world-eater in two days, can I ask for something?

REED
If it's a gunship with a flamethrower, the answer is no.

JOHNNY
Better. New suits! Ours smell like dead
space since last time.

REED
So what do you propose? A onesie with
flames embroidered on it and your face
on the chest?

JOHNNY
That wouldn't be bad. Maybe with lights
that say "Single Available."

Reed shakes his head and smiles for the first time in days.

REED
Okay. I'll make something more resistant
to cosmic plasma and Johnny Storm's ego.

Everyone laughs.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - SCENES WITHOUT DIALOGUE

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

ALARMS SOUND.

SCREENS IN TIMES SQUARE flash with a red warning:

"URGENT EVACUATION - ALIEN THREAT - FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS"

People stop their cars and look up at the screens.

INT. REED'S LAB - DAY

Johnny, shirtless and sweating, helps Reed, Ben and Peter assemble a huge contraption. Johnny uses his flames to weld a structure together. Peter reviews codes with superhuman speed. Reed, with a quantum screwdriver, adjusts a glowing sphere that beats like a heart.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, FRANKLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sue Storm, kneeling in front of Franklin, hugs him. He holds a stuffed animal. She smooths his hair and strokes his cheek. Then she moves toward the door, but stops and watches him sleep. She wipes away a tear.

EXT. BROOKLYN PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Ben, in his rock form, surrounded by elementary school children. They touch him, hug him. One gives him a baseball cap. Ben places it on his enormous head. He smiles. He plays with a jump rope, the children laugh.

A teacher approaches him and nods. Ben nods too. The two talk.

INT. REED'S LAB - DAY

Peter saying goodbye to Reed.

EXT. BAXTER TOWER, BALCONY - SUNSET

Reed looks down at the city from above. The streets begin to empty. Sirens. Helicopters. People carrying suitcases. No one knows where to go.

The sky changes color.

SOMETHING IS APPROACHING...

CUT TO:

INT. BAXTER TOWER, FRANKLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Franklin is in his bed, sitting cross-legged, wearing star-print pajamas. He looks curiously at his parents. Sue and Reed sit on either side of him, serious but calm.

SUE
(gently)
Franklin... we have something very
important to tell you.

Franklin thinks for a moment and asks:

FRANKLIN
Am I going to school yet?

REED
(smiles faintly)
I wish that were it, champ.

He pauses. He takes her small hand in his long, trembling fingers.

REED
In the next few days, everything is
going to change. You're going to see
things... things that might scare you. But
we want you to know something: you're
not alone.

SUE
There's someone very, very big coming
from space. He's bigger than a building.
Than a hundred buildings.

Franklin squints, confused.

FRANKLIN
Is it a monster?

SUE
(hugs him firmly)
It's dangerous, yes. But you're strong.
And you have a family that loves you
more than anything.

REED
That being... it's coming because it
senses your power. It wants to hurt you
so it can take you. But we're not going
to let that happen. Not while we're
here.

Franklin swallows. His eyes water.

FRANKLIN
What if I'm a monster too?

SUE
Don't say that. You're our miracle. Our
sunshine.

She strokes his cheek. Reed places his hand on the boy's
chest.

REED
The power you carry inside... it's
immense. But what truly matters is
what's here. (touches his heart) And
that, Franklin... is what makes you
special. What's going to save us.

A long pause.

Franklin nods slowly, but then hugs his mother tightly. She
holds him close, restrained.

FRANKLIN
Will you be with me when I arrive?

SUE
Always.

REED
Until the end of the universe.

The three of them hug.

The camera slowly zooms out. The lamp flickers softly, like a
distant star about to go out.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

The city is in a state of total evacuation. Sirens sound in
the distance. Helicopters hover overhead, megaphones order
evacuation.

Cars, buses, bicycles, even makeshift carts: all move slowly across the bridge. The faces of the citizens reflect panic and resignation. Some cry, others pray.

INT. BUS - SAME

On one of the crowded buses, Peter sits next to his AUNT MAY, who is holding a small bag of medicine.

AUNT MAY

Look at that dog in the basket, Peter.
Poor thing. He must not understand
what's happening.

Peter tries to force a smile, but his face suddenly tenses. He puts his hand to his temple.

SUBTLE, METALLIC SOUND EFFECT.

His spider-sense activates like a lightning bolt. The world goes almost silent. Only his rapid breathing can be heard.

He looks up... and then all the passengers raise their eyes to the sky.

EXT. NEW YORK SKY - CONTINUOUS

A cosmic shadow extends over the city. The clouds turn violet.

GALACTUS, gigantic, indescribable, is entering the atmosphere.

Its silhouette pierces the clouds like an awakened god.

A ring of energy surrounds its immense form as electrical discharges erupt in the sky.

Civilians begin to scream, cry, and run out of their cars. Some kneel.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Aunt May squeezes Peter's arm tightly, confused.

AUNT MAY

Peter, what is that? Is it another one
of those aliens?

Peter stands up abruptly, as if possessed by duty.

PETER

I'm sorry, Aunt. I have to go. It's...
it's the lab. Reed Richards needs me.

AUNT MAY

Peter, you can't get off! The city is
falling!

PETER
Just trust me, okay?

He kisses her forehead tenderly and jumps out the back door of the bus as it grinds to a halt in the chaos.

EXT. BASE OF THE BRIDGE - SECONDS LATER

Peter runs into an alley between the abandoned cars.

With a burst, he launches himself between the buildings, swinging on their webs, passing through the violent winds emanating from the sky.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - QUICK CUT

-Peter crossing Central Park amid plumes of smoke.
-Giant screens in Times Square loop the image of Galactus.
-Soldiers evacuating hospitals.
-A child holds a Thing doll up to the sky, hoping the heroes will win.
-Peter approaches the silhouette of BAXTER TOWER, shrouded in force fields.

EXT. SKY OVER NEW YORK - SAME

From above, a colossal shadow slowly descends... GALACTUS, crossing the atmosphere like a living comet. Its body is taller than any skyscraper, its hull flashing with violet lightning.

CLOSE-UP SHOT:

-Migratory birds flee en masse.
-The waves of the Atlantic retreat as if the ocean itself feared them.
-The Statue of Liberty, dwarfed by its side, is engulfed in a storm of wind and cosmic energy.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - SECONDS LATER

BOOM!

Galactus lands in the ocean with a titanic impact. A monstrous surge rises, forming a wall of water. The Statue of Liberty trembles.

EXT. MANHATTAN - CONTINUOUS

A tremor shakes the entire city.
Glass shatters.
Old buildings collapse like houses of cards.

Cars are blown into the air.

INT. BAXTER TOWER, GROUND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The tremor shakes the foundations.
Lights flicker. Alarms sound.
Franklin hugs his mother, scared.

INT. REED'S LAB - SAME

Reed stands in front of a locked metal compartment with a blue light.

Johnny, Sue, Franklin, and Ben rush in after feeling the tremor.

Reed adjusts his glasses, his expression mixing fear with determination.

REED
The time has come.

He presses a button.

REED (CONT'D)
I have something to show you, and
Johnny... I know you're going to love
it.

The compartment opens slowly.

ANGLE CHANGE:

The camera focuses only on the Fantastic Four's faces.

Their eyes widen. Johnny smiles. Sue steps forward, touching something out of frame. Ben nods proudly.

Silence. Subtle, epic music.

JOHNNY
(looking at the costumes)
I want to take back everything bad I
said about you.

REED
I think I still have an allergy to
identical suits.

CRASH!

A side window bursts open.

Amid a gust of wind, Peter is thrown inside, rolling across the metal floor.

SUE
What the...?!

JOHNNY
Parker?

Reed immediately turns around.

REED
Peter! I told you to go with your aunt.
You shouldn't be here!

PETER
(panting, sharp)
I know. But my Spidey sense... it was
like an explosion. I had to come!
Galactus is here. I'm not staying on a
bus while everything goes to hell!

BEN
That kid has some nerve.

Reed sighs. He looks at Peter seriously. There's a tense
silence.

Then he turns around.

REED
I knew you were going to disobey.

He presses a button. A vertical compartment opens.

REED
I designed it just like you described.
Resistant to cosmic energy. Lightweight.
You called it... "Quantum Spider,"
didn't you?

PETER
...Really?

JOHNNY
And I thought I was the favorite.

BEN
(patting him hard on the shoulder)
You're in, kid!

Peter stares at the suit like a kid.

REED
Peter, just do me a favor, don't do
anything I wouldn't do.

Peter smiles.

REED (CONT'D)
Okay. Everyone get ready. This isn't a
mission. It's the final war.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - LATER

An unnatural silence fills the deserted avenues. Times Square
is completely evacuated. Electronic screens still glow with
frozen images: RED ALERTS, Fantastic Four symbols, and a
countdown that has already reached zero.

In the exact center of the square is a circular energy
platform that pulses gently, like a heart about to burst.

Franklin stands on it. He's afraid, but he doesn't show it.

He's surrounded by his parents, Johnny and Ben. All wearing the new suits designed by Reed.

Reed kneels in front of Franklin.

REED

Everything's going to be okay, son.

Franklin nods. He doesn't tremble. His suit begins to react. From the platform below him, energy towers slowly rise, projecting a tracking field: they're sending out a specific signal, a frequency only Galactus can hear.

Blue beams shoot into the sky like antennas. The screens in Times Square begin to fail. A faint cosmic hum is heard... as if the universe were holding its breath.

Johnny looks up at the sky, his fists balled. Ben crosses his arms. Sue takes Reed's hand, her eyes fixed on her son.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - SAME

An UNNATURAL SILENCE covers the coast. On the horizon, beyond the floating wreckage of the harbor, an immeasurable figure emerges from the ocean.

GALACTUS.

He walks. Each step sinks the sea. The waves retreat as if the ocean fears him. His head, impossible to fully comprehend, eclipses the rising sun. His eyes don't shine: they absorb the light.

EXT. LIBERTY ISLAND - CONTINUOUS

The Statue of Liberty still glows in shadow. A solitary figure before a hungry god.

Galactus approaches, slowly, like someone moving a branch out of the way. A hand miles wide reaches out toward her. His palm doesn't touch her directly. With only the compressed air and the gravitational pull of its energy, the statue begins to tremble... and then, as if bronze were turning to glass, it shatters. A shower of fragments falls into the water.

The remains of the torch spin in the air before crashing into the sea like meteorites.

EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN - MOMENTS LATER

Galactus makes landfall. The water rises behind him like a wall, covering what remains of the harbor. The nearest skyscrapers vibrate from the sheer pressure of his stride.

He places a gigantic hand on a Brooklyn apartment building—IT SINKS as if made of sand. The streets tremble. Sewers burst. Glass shatters for miles.

His other hand grazes an office tower in Battery Park—the top half of the building disintegrates, falls sideways like a

melting block of ice, and crushes a bank and a subway station.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Galactus approaches the center where the four are, who are tiny compared to his size.

Reed steps forward.

REED
(shouting with tense calm)
Galactus! We can give you what you want...
but we need time! We can extract
Franklin's powers without killing him.
We can transfer them to you!

Galactus stops a few feet away. His silhouette covers all of Times Square. Franklin trembles, holding Sue's hand.

GALACTUS
I want the child. I want the power.

REED
You won't have it! Not like that!

Reed presses a control device on his arm. The street trembles. Suddenly, a RING OF QUANTUM ENERGY appears behind Franklin: a pulsing, blue-and-gold vortex that swallows the light like a contained black hole.

REED
Now!

But as the portal begins to activate, the gravitational pull of Galactus's body intensifies. His mere presence warps space-time in the area. The Quantum Teleportation Device begins to spark and partially collapse.

Reed stares at the readout in horror.

REED
"No...! It's overloading the dimensional core!"

Galactus takes another step. The edge of the portal begins to implode, sucking in nearby buildings.

Galactus's body is partially sucked in... but he halts the process with brute force, resisting the portal's pull. His gigantic hand reaches out toward Franklin.

SUE
"Franklin, back off!"

She covers him with a force field as the four of them launch an attack.

FAST-PACED ACTION SEQUENCE - NO DIALOGUE:

Ben rushes forward with a colossal fist, slamming his ankle down with all his might. The giant doesn't flinch.

Johnny ignites a supersonic flare and flies around Galactus's face, momentarily blinding him.

Sue reinforces the portal's force field, attempting to force Galactus's body inside.

Reed stretches his arms around Galactus's torso, trying to bind him to the vortex's energy, but the giant's structure is unstoppable.

GALACTUS

You're small... like everything that
tries to challenge me.

With a cosmic roar, Galactus destroys the portal with a blast of purple and silver energy. The vortex collapses in on itself, taking only inert structures with it.

Reed falls to the ground, wounded. Sue covers Franklin. Johnny falls smoking onto an abandoned taxi.

Galactus grabs Reed by the hands and feet and stretches him out.

Reed is trapped. His elastic body is stretched beyond its limits. The creaking of his spine is heard. He screams in pain.

FRANKLIN

(trembling, crying)
Dad!

Franklin is motionless, paralyzed by terror. Sue, wounded, barely manages to keep him covered with a weakened force field. Ben is unconscious. Johnny struggles in the rubble.

CUT TO SHALLA-BAL:

High above, flying over the ruined city, Shalla-Bal, enveloped in a silver and blue glow, observes the horror.

Her gaze rests on Franklin. She sees his fear. His trembling. She remembers something...

TEMPLE IN ZENN-LA (FLASHBACK):

A little girl (Shalla) hides behind a temple, watching her planet surrender to the shadow of Galactus. Her mother hugs her, crying. She looks up at the sky, at the same god of doom now stalking Earth.

BACK TO THE PRESENT:

Shalla-Bal closes her eyes. Her gaze changes.

She flies at supersonic speed, leaving a trail of light that cuts through the smoke.

GALACTUS
BUGS! I WILL BURN THIS PLANET!

With a gesture, he releases a wave of cosmic energy that splits Times Square. Buildings buckle, the ground cracks.

SHALLA-BAL FALLS TO THE GROUND, EXHAUSTED.

Sue protects everyone with a force field.

CUT TO: A MECHANICAL WHIRLING

Suddenly, something moves in the shadows, among the ruins. A giant metallic device emerges from the side of the Baxter Building.

Galactus raises an arm to destroy it—

ZIP!

A web beam stops it. Galactus turns his head. And then...

HEROIC ENTRY - SPIDER-MAN:

Peter lands nimbly in the middle of Times Square, wearing a completely new suit:

Blue-black and white, similar to the Fantastic Four's, with the "4" insignia on the chest. He's wearing his traditional Spider-Man mask. On his back: a quantum web-slinging device he created with Reed.

The smoke clears around him. Peter stands firm. He looks at Galactus with nerves of steel.

SPIDER-MAN
Who's the insect now?

He presses a button on his wrist. The giant device activates, launching hundreds of energy strands like quantum webs toward Galactus.

Spider webs cling to buildings, lighthouses, abandoned helicopters, cranes... everything around them becomes a massive, three-dimensional web, designed for a single prey: Galactus.

Peter launches himself into the air and maneuvers at inhuman speeds, entangling the Titan's feet and arms, activating nodes that collapse the support structures, causing Galactus to lose his balance.

GALACTUS
(screaming as he falls)
NOOO!

Galactus staggers.

He falls onto some buildings. The impact is seismic.

All of Times Square vibrates with a cosmic rumble. Dust. Light. Restrained fury.

The Fantastic Four run toward him, impressed.

Reed watches. He smiles, proud. Johnny applauds.

REED

Yes. I knew it.

As they all gather, Galactus moves slowly, furiously behind them, still trapped but beginning to tear apart the quantum grid.

And in the background, Sue looks at her son, Franklin, knowing the worst is yet to come...

A FEW BLOCKS AWAY:

Among the rubble, Shalla-Bal's body lies semi-conscious. Her armor is cracked, her luminous skin covered in dust and alien blood. Her cosmic tablet floats a few feet away.

She crawls slowly, barely holding on. Her hand stretched out toward the tablet...

JOHNNY

I never thought someone like you...
...would die for people like us.

Boots stop in front of her. Shalla-Bal looks up.

It's Johnny. His white suit is dirty and torn, his face scratched. But his eyes, for the first time, don't hold arrogance, but rather genuine gratitude.

JOHNNY

Thank you... for saving Reed. For
staying. You could have left, and you
didn't.

Shalla-Bal tries to get up, but falls. Johnny quickly kneels to support her. She gasps.

SHALLA-BAL

I'm not as good as you think....But the
boy... the boy didn't deserve to die.

Johnny holds her carefully.

SHALLA-BAL

The power... of Galactus... is not eternal.
If you help me... I can do something more.

Johnny looks toward the board, then sees Galactus still trapped, but slowly freeing himself.

Johnny takes a deep breath. The weight of the moment crushes him. But then he smiles tenderly.

JOHNNY

Then let's go to your board. It's not over yet.

He stands up with her in his arms and walks toward the cosmic board, determined.

The camera pulls back, showing Johnny advancing through the rubble with Shalla-Bal in his arms like a warrior carrying a fallen goddess.

Peter approaches and throws a web at the board, pulling it to Shalla.

IN SLOW MOTION:

The board is pulled closer by the force of the web, and Shalla climbs onto the board. Johnny lets go of her, and he bursts into flames to fly.

GALACTUS, freed from Peter's cobwebs, rises like a raging titan. His cosmic armor glows an ominous red. His eyes are like dying suns.

GALACTUS

Enough resistance!

His hand rises. In his palm, a circle of purple and black energy collapses in on itself. A beam of pure reality annihilation erupts directly toward Franklin, who watches in terror from the center of the street.

REED

(screaming)

NO!

But someone is already running.

SUE...

With all her power, she creates a colossal force field between Franklin and the beam. The impact is brutal. The energy wave crashes like a quantum tsunami.

The field vibrates, rumbles, cracks.

Sue screams with exertion. Her hands tremble. Galactus's beam begins to consume her, piece by piece.

FRANKLIN

Mom!

Reed tries to run toward her, but a wave of energy pushes him back. He can only watch, helpless, as his wife dies before his eyes.

SUE
(straining her voice, trembling)
Take care of... our son!

A tear flows down her cheek, but evaporates in midair.

With a final scream, Sue focuses all her energy on the field. And it explodes in a shockwave of invisible force, shaking all of Times Square.

Galactus staggers. His once imposing body cracks with lines of energy. His face, for the first time... shows pain, but he's still standing. Ready to keep fighting.

FRANKLIN
(screaming, in a voice not his alone)
I HATE YOU!!!

His hands ignite. An aurora of blue and white energy surrounds him. The ground splits. The sky curves. Everything bends toward Franklin.

GALACTUS TAKES A STEP BACK. FOR THE FIRST TIME, HE FEELS INTIMIDATED.

FRANKLIN
I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU FROM THIS WORLD!

He fires a pure cosmic ray, which hits Galactus directly in the chest. The colossus staggers.

SHALLA-BAL places her hand on Johnny's chest. A white flame like a star envelops him.

Johnny has now transformed into a celestial flame, streaking across the sky like a divine comet.

In his hands, a quantum warp bomb, brilliant, pulsating.

It flies straight toward Galactus at incalculable speed.

Just as he raises his arm to crush Franklin, Johnny hits him in the back with the bomb. The blast is like watching a star being born upside down.

Galactus falls to his knees, his armor shattered, his energy decaying.

Franklin se desmaya por la fuerza del rayo cosmico, pero Jhonny lo recoge.

CUT TO BEN:

He looks at his watch, clenches his jaw, and presses a huge button on a briefcase:

BEN
Time to go, giant.

A quantum machine activates behind Galactus. A vortex of multidimensional energy opens like a divine eye.

Galactus is sucked in bit by bit, roaring, weakened.

GALACTUS
(writhing)
YOU CAN'T... CONFINE ME... IN TIME...!

But he can't resist. His body and essence are sucked into the vortex.

Inside, he finds himself trapped in a loop: walking eternally through dead galaxies, never arriving.

BACK TO TIMES SQUARE:

The city has been left in ruins. Black clouds swirl slowly around a fading sun. The wind blows with metal, ash... and loss.

In the middle of the smoking crater of the battlefield, Rees is on his knees. He holds Sue's motionless body in his arms. Her white and blue jumpsuit still glows faintly, but her eyes are closed. Too still. Too cold.

Reed's face is stained with tears, ash, and suppressed despair.

REED
(whispering, broken)
Sue... No, no, no... Not yet... Don't leave
me, Sue, please...

He strokes her hair. His body stretches slightly, trying to cover her with his elastic embrace, as if he could protect her from fate itself.

Soft footsteps are heard on the rubble.

Ben arrives first. He stops a few feet away, silent. He looks at Reed. His huge hand closes tightly. He says nothing.

Peter arrives swinging. As he touches down, he takes off his mask.

Johnny, with Franklin asleep in his arms, arrives behind.

SHALLA-BAL arrives last. She kneels beside Sue, places her hand on her forehead, and lowers her gaze in respect.

SHALLA-BAL
(soft voice, first in her native language, then
in English)
Light... that never goes out. Your
sacrifice... saved more than this world.

The wind blows harder. Sue's hair dances for the last time. Reed leans his forehead against hers.

REED
I'll come with you too... but not
today. Today... I have to take care of
him. Like you asked.

Absolute silence. Only the crackling of distant buildings.

The camera slowly zooms out. A close-up shot shows the five:
Reed, Ben, Johnny, Franklin, Peter, and Shalla-Bal... all
surrounding Sue Storm's body, in the middle of a collapsed
Times Square.

CUT TO:

EXT - BAXTER TOWER ROOF - NIGHT - DAYS LATER

The sky is clear. The lights of New York flicker in the
distance, townspeople returning to the city, reflected in the
black glass of Baxter Tower. The wind blows gently.

SHALLA-BAL watches the city. Her board hovers beside her,
glowing with a soft light.

Johnny approaches her silently.

JOHNNY
So you're leaving...

SHALLA-BAL
My time here is over. I don't belong in
this world... And if I stay, I'll only
bring more shadows.

JOHNNY
You saved Reed. You saved my nephew. You
gave everyone hope. I think you do
belong here.

Shalla-Bal turns around. There's a wound on her side. Her
eyes are wet, but firm.

SHALLA-BAL
I can't stay, Johnny. I've defied the
cosmic balance. Galactus doesn't forget.
He'll come for me soon. And I have to be
there... far away... to prevent it.

JOHNNY
(takes a step closer)
And what about me?

Silence. The two look at each other. A heavy pause.

SHALLA-BAL
You showed me something I thought was
lost... Warmth... without destruction.
Fire... with compassion.

She touches Johnny's chest. He closes his eyes for a second.
His breath catches.

SHALLA-BAL
If the universe ever breaks again...I
will seek your flame.

JOHNNY
I... will never stop seeking your light.

Shalla-Bal leans in close and kisses him gently. A short, deep, almost timeless kiss. BUT AS SHE DOES IT, HER FACE RETURNS TO THAT OF A HUMAN.

She walks away toward her board, which shines brightly.

SHALLA-BAL
Goodbye, Johnny Storm...

The board rises slowly. Johnny watches it, motionless, until it disappears among the stars.

Johnny is left alone. The wind blows harder. He stares at the sky for a moment longer... and lights a small flame on his finger. A white spark.

He smiles faintly.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE AFTER THE BATTLE

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O)
Three months have passed since the Day of Silence... When the sky cracked, and a cosmic being descended upon Earth, hungry for existence...

IMAGES:

-A shot of the partially reconstructed Statue of Liberty, with cranes working around it. In the background, a sunrise over New York City.

-Families returning to their homes. Children drawing on the sidewalks with colored chalk. A wall with murals showing Sue Storm's face surrounded by invisible flames in the shape of hearts.

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O)
Humanity endured. Thanks to the sacrifice of the Fantastic Four... and the woman who became our final shield: Susan Storm Richards.

-A bronze monument in Central Park. It depicts Sue erecting a protective force field while holding a child's hand.

-Reed Richards giving a lecture at the UN. He speaks seriously, holding a small, glowing device in his hands:
"Sue's Flame."

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O.)
*The cosmic battlefields have left rifts
 that will take time to heal.*

-Reed Richards leads a new planetary scientific alliance to prevent future interdimensional attacks.

-Ben walking through a rebuilt school. A boy shakes his hand. He smiles. He's wearing a Hawaiian shirt over his suit. A group of children runs after him.

-Johnny training in a desert area, now wrapped in a white flame, controlling it with new movements. The cosmic fire is already a part of him.

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O.)
And although the Invisible Woman is no longer among us, her legacy is visible in every child who sleeps peacefully. In every building that rises. In every time someone chooses to protect... instead of destroy.

-Franklin on the roof of Baxter Tower, looking at the sunset. He's wearing glasses that belonged to his mother. Reed approaches him, hugs his shoulders.

FEMALE REPORTER (V.O.)
Because she didn't die to save a world... She died to teach us how to live in it.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CEMETERY - DAY

A soft mist covers the cemetery. Old and new tombstones line up under trees bare from winter. The sky is gray. All is silent.

Reed, with a full beard and dressed in black, holds his son Franklin's hand. They walk between graves until they reach one with fresh flowers.

THE HEADSTONE READS:

*SUSAN STORM-RICHARDS
 Mother, Wife, Heroine.
 "In her silence, she protected the universe."*

Franklin lets out a sigh. Reed kneels before the grave.

REED
 Hello, honey... Today I told Franklin how you used to sing in the kitchen while you baked pancakes. How you laughed at my impossible ideas... How you were the balance in all of this.

Franklin strokes the stone with his small hand. Then he sets down a wildflower plucked from the grass.

REED (CONT'D)

I don't know if I'm doing this right...
but he's so much like you. And not a day
goes by that I don't wish I could fix
this. But even I... I can't reach the
dead.

Reed stands up, looks at the headstone one more time, and turns around and they walk.

REED

Remember what Mom used to say when the
sun went down?

FRANKLIN

That it looked like the sky was sad.

REED

Yeah... just like today. Do you want to
play a while before we go?

FRANKLIN

Sneak peek?

REED

Yeah, but only close by. No more going
far, okay?

FRANKLIN

Promise!

Franklin runs between the mausoleums, laughing. Reed covers his eyes and counts.

REED

One... two... three...

MOMENTS LATER...

Reed looks around. But Franklin isn't there.

They walk.

REED

Franklin... Franklin!

He runs through the cemetery paths, panting. Until he stops suddenly.

FRANKLIN is standing in front of Sue's headstone, but he's not alone. Beside her, holding her hand with chilling calm, is a tall man in a green cape and metal gloves. His face isn't visible because his back is turned, but it's VICTOR VON DOOM.

Reed remains motionless. The wind ruffles the man's cape. Franklin stares at him fearlessly.

VICTOR
(still not turning around)
I'm sorry for your loss.

Reed takes a step forward, nervous, protecting his son.

REED
Who are you? Let him go.

VICTOR
Calm down. We were just talking.

VICTOR
Don't you miss her? Don't you want her
back?

Pause. Reed grits his teeth, his breathing quickening.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
(relaxed, grave)
Your son has his mother's innocence...
and the potential of a god. I couldn't
leave without meeting him.

REED
Let him go. Now.

VICTOR
Oh, Reed. Always so protective... But
I'm not here to fight.

He pauses. The cloak flaps as if something invisible is
pushing at it.

VICTOR
I'm here because... I have an answer. A
way to bring her back.

REED
And what's the way?

VICTOR TURNS SLOWLY. HIS COLD EYES STARE STRAIGHT AT REED
THROUGH THE MASK.

VICTOR
I hold it in my hand.

CUT TO BLACK:

SUPER:

The Fantastic Four will return in Avengers: Doomsday

THE END