

OUR NAME IS ADAM

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FADE IN:

Stars shine through the darkness of space.

Suddenly, the void seems to CONTORT. Space FOLDS IN ON ITSELF as a TUNNEL OF PULSATING LIGHT appears. A wormhole.

A SPHERICAL CAPSULE emerges from the tunnel -- a spaceship, futuristic in design, but badly damaged, trailing smoke and debris, as if it's been on the receiving end of an intergalactic ass-kicking.

The capsule WHIZZES PAST, wiping frame to REVEAL --

Earth. Dark blue seas under fleecy white clouds. PUSH INTO --

INT. STAR CAPSULE - NIGHT

THE PILOT is ensconced in a glass cockpit, his face largely obscured by a HEAVY MASK.

DATA superimposes over the viewscreen, including the date -- JUNE 4, 2013. The Pilot curses under his breath.

THE PILOT

All right, let's find a soft spot to set her down. Initiate landing sequence.

COMPUTER VOICE

*Warning. Main power at nine percent. Core destabilizing. Re-entry not advised.*

The Pilot switches to manual navigation and THROTTLES DOWN --

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

TRACKING WITH THE CAPSULE as it's drawn into the Earth's atmosphere, blazing like a comet.

INT. STAR CAPSULE - NIGHT

SPARKS and SMOKE and SCREAMING ALARMS --

COMPUTER VOICE

*Main power at seven percent. Six percent. Five percent.*

The Pilot glances to a GROUP PHOTOGRAPH, wedged onto the console. SIX ASTRONAUTS in MATCHING FLIGHTSUITS. The photograph is smeared with blood.

Darkness ahead: a STORM SYSTEM, gathering strength over the northeastern United States. The view through the cockpit window transitions from BLAZING FIRE to SWIRLING CLOUDS and POCKETS of LIGHTNING.

The Pilot closes his eyes, straining under the jaw-rattling G-forces. He whispers under his breath, an unheard prayer.

Gradually, turbulence fades. The ship steadies. A moment of relief ... broken by a SCREAMING ALARM --

COMPUTER VOICE  
*Warning. Terrain. Warning. Pull up.*

Storm clouds break to REVEAL --

The ground, coming up fast. Too fast. The Pilot PULLS UP as the capsule plummets for a heavily-wooded area, struggling to level off.

Just before the moment of impact, The Pilot's eyes flick down to the blood-stained photograph --

-- *to one woman in particular* -- before we CUT TO --

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Kids playing baseball on a summer afternoon. Bottom of the ninth, score tied, winning run at the plate. From the CHANTS of the crowds, his name must be Tommy --

TOMMY ARCHER, 16, the very picture of stoic concentration. He taps dirt from his cleats, meeting eyes with the PITCHER ... who doesn't seem too happy to see him.

IN THE STANDS, we find BONNIE ARCHER, late 30's, cheering louder than every other parent in attendance.

BONNIE  
Come on, Tommy, focus! You've got this!

TRACK THROUGH THE CROWDS, until we find a SMALL KID weaving through the legs of the spectators. This is ADAM ARCHER -- twelve years old, but easily mistaken for nine, half a foot shorter than everyone else in his class.

Adam strains to peer over shoulders ... but he's not watching the game. His attention is fixed on SUSIE WILCOX, 15 -- every kid's first crush, standing alone at the fence.

Adam finishes off a can of purple-flavored soda as if it were liquid courage. He tries to crush the can. Can't. Frustrated, he approaches.

For a moment, Susie doesn't even realize he's there ...

ADAM  
Hey, Susie.

Susie turns -- looking too high. She glances down to find Adam (shorter than she expected) grinning up at her.

SUSIE  
Hey ... Andy, right?

Adam is about to correct her, when -- **CRACK!** Tommy hits a LINE DRIVE HOMERUN, deep into center field.

The CROWD GOES WILD as Tommy rounds the bases -- so fast he nearly overtakes one of the other runners. Adam is still trying to get Susie's attention. He indicates Tommy --

ADAM  
That's my brother.

Susie snaps a look at Adam --

SUSIE  
*Really?*

Adam smiles, nods. Susie leans in ...

SUSIE  
Do you think you can introduce me?

The smile fades. *Not what he was trying to accomplish.*

ON THE FIELD, Tommy comes into home, winning the game, instantly surrounded by teammates. Adam is left alone at the fence, watching as Tommy is swept away in a sea of admirers.

INT. BONNIE'S CAR - DAY

Bonnie drives, sneaking sidelong glances at Adam, who stares absently out the window. Trying to break the silence --

BONNIE  
I talked to Coach Zimmer. He says you can try out for the team next year, if you want.

ADAM  
Why bother? I can't run, I can't hit. I can't even breathe!

BONNIE  
Well, not with *that* attitude.

ADAM

Besides, the cut-off's fourteen.  
I'm too young.

BONNIE

Coach Z says he's willing to make  
an exception. He says if your genes  
are half as good as Tommy's --

ADAM

They're not half as good, that's  
the whole point. *Please* don't make  
me try out.

BONNIE

*Make you?* When have I ever *made* you  
do anything?

ADAM

(ticking them off)  
The football team. The soccer team.  
The marching band. The wrestling  
team. You know this arm still  
doesn't bend all the way back.

BONNIE

Really?

Adam demonstrates the "deformity". Bonnie waves it off.

BONNIE

Oh, you're fine.

ADAM

Face it, Mom. I'm not Tommy.

Bonnie looks to Adam ... but he's already turned back out the  
window, disengaging. She doesn't know what to say.

EXT. FARMINGTON HILLS - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

A lonely cul de sac on the edge of untamed wilderness.  
Thunder RUMBLES distantly ... a storm on the horizon.

INT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

A labrador retriever named BOSCO follows faithfully underfoot  
as Adam stomps upstairs. He pauses in front of Tommy's room --

The shelves are stacked with TROPHIES -- MVP, All-State  
Football, tae kwon do, even a science fair ribbon. The  
surrounding room is filled with SPACE MEMORABILIA, including  
a FULLY ASSEMBLED SHUTTLE MODEL. Adam notices a SPACE-THEMED  
COMIC BOOK lying nearby. He takes it -- glances to Bosco --

ADAM  
Don't tell on me, okay?

Off Bosco's reaction, just happy for the attention.

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A SNOWBOARDER swooshes through a half-pipe on a giant plasma screen. Adam is focused on the game, working the balance board like a pro, with a style all his own ... until he's interrupted by a LIGHT KNOCK on the door. He turns off the game and dives into bed, where a textbook is waiting.

ADAM  
Come in!

Bonnie enters, modeling a skirt and blouse, hair tied tightly back. She spins --

BONNIE  
What do you think?

ADAM  
Is it a date or a job interview?

BONNIE  
Little of both, I guess.

ADAM  
What was wrong with the last guy?

BONNIE  
Carl? I don't know. He was nice.  
Unambitious.  
(sensing Adam's tone)  
You think I'm being too picky.

ADAM  
No. I think it's encouraging for a woman your age.

Ouch. Bonnie takes a seat on the foot of the bed.

BONNIE  
Okay, I deserved that. I'm not being picky for *me*, you know. It's all for you.

ADAM  
Why? I'm not gonna date him.

BONNIE  
No, but Tommy's grown, and you're halfway there ...

(MORE)

BONNIE (CONT'D)

I just don't want you going the rest of the way without some kind of male influence in your life.

ADAM

You're close enough.

BONNIE

Thanks. I think.

Bonnie comes to her point --

BONNIE

Listen. You don't have to try out for the team if you don't want to. I know you're not Tommy. I know things don't come so easy for you. (conspiratorial)  
But you know what? I think that's what makes you stronger.

ADAM

Stronger than *Tommy*? Have you *met* Tommy?

BONNIE

Who knows. You might surprise yourself. But if you don't try, you'll never know.

Bonnie turns Adam's textbook right-side-up (it's been upside-down this whole time). With a smile, she heads for the door.

ADAM

Mom.  
(off her look)  
You look nice.

Bonnie beams.

ADAM

I mean --

BONNIE

No no, stop there. Stop at sweet.

ADAM

-- for a *mom* --

BONNIE

-- can't hear you, already gone.

She closes the door behind her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tommy sits watching TV. ON SCREEN, amateur footage of a FLAMING OBJECT crashing out of the sky -- the star capsule.

REPORTER (O.C.)  
*-- obtained this exclusive footage  
of the unidentified object, which  
crashed somewhere over Oakland  
County late last night.*

Bonnie passes behind Tommy, in a hurry --

BONNIE  
Okay, I'm headed out. Watch your  
brother, okay?

TOMMY  
(fixed on the screen)  
Did you see this? That thing  
crashed like five miles from here.

BONNIE  
Hey. Are you listening?

TOMMY  
Yeah, I got it, watch the insect.

BONNIE  
Don't call him that.

TOMMY  
(yeah yeah)  
Have a good date.

Bonnie gives herself one last look in the mirror, and then she's gone. Tommy rewinds the TiVo to watch the footage of the crashing object one more time. He shakes his head.

TOMMY  
That's no meteor ...

EXT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

DISTANT POV -- Bonnie gets in her car and drives off. A HAND comes into frame and pulls back a branch. Someone's watching.

INT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The house is silent and dark. Tommy crosses to a window. He's about to climb down, when suddenly --

ADAM (O.C.)  
*What are you doing?*

Tommy spins -- Adam CLICKS ON a flashlight and shines it into Tommy's eyes.

TOMMY

Jesus! You scared me. Kill the light, Kickstand.

ADAM

Don't call me that. Why are you sneaking out?

TOMMY

You know Mom has the neighbors spy on us. If she comes back, tell her I'm out studying with Walter.

ADAM

Okay. What are you *really* doing?

From below, a FAMILIAR VOICE --

SUSIE (O.C.)

*Hey, Tommy! What's taking so long?*

Adam glances out the window to find SUSIE WILCOX waiting below. Tommy smiles, letting the implication speak for itself.

TOMMY

Studying. With Walter.

Adam is heartbroken, but not surprised. Tommy hesitates, misinterpreting his brother's expression as fear.

TOMMY

Hey. If you're scared to stay here by yourself --

ADAM

I'm not scared!

He said that louder than intended. MUFFLED LAUGHTER from below. *Now Susie's laughing at him!* Adam looks like he wants to disappear into a black hole. Tommy flashes an appeasing smile, ruffles Adam's hair. Adam jerks back, annoyed.

TOMMY

Good boy.

With that, Tommy VAULTS out the open window, shimmies down the drainpipe and lands with an IMPRESSIVE FLIP.

PUSH IN ON ADAM, watching his brother disappear with Susie. He repeats, almost to himself --

ADAM

I'm not ...

A THUNDERCLAP startles Adam, BANGING his head on the windowsill. He pulls the window closed with a SLAM.

EXT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The storm RAGES; lightning FLASHES; rain sheets down.

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Adam lies in bed with the lights on, flipping through the comic he stole from Tommy's room.

ON THE PAGE, bold letters are splashed across an illustration of a futuristic spaceship: **WELCOME TO THE FUTURE!**

Suddenly, POWER GOES OUT. Adam groans, climbs out of bed.

EXT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Adam runs through the rain, coat held over his head. He reaches the BREAKER BOX and is about to flip the switch, when a NOISE spins him around --

He switches on his flashlight and examines the rain-soaked yard. Nothing there. False alarm.

Adam is about to turn back to the breaker, when the NOISE REPEATS, louder -- coming from the shed. A SHADOW drifts past the lone window. No doubt about it; *someone's in there*.

Panicked, Adam starts to run back for the house, when something stops him. He turns back to the shed. A look of STOIC DETERMINATION fills his eyes. He steps forward.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Adam approaches -- an OPEN LOCK hanging from the door. He pushes through --

SOUNDS of RUMMAGING nearby -- a SHADOWY FIGURE is rifling through the contents of the shed, selecting VARIOUS TOOLS and tossing them into a pile on the floor.

A floorboard CREAKS under Adam's weight. He ducks into hiding as the figure TURNS to REVEAL --

It's THE PILOT from the star capsule -- recognizable only by his eyes -- dark brown with SPECKS OF GREEN. A rare anomaly.

The Pilot illuminates the shed with a POWERFUL BEAM that emanates from a device that looks like an ADVANCED IPHONE.

Content that he's alone, The Pilot goes back to work, selecting his tools, failing to notice as a SMALL HAND picks up a socket wrench from the pile behind him, and --

CRACK. The wrench makes SOLID CONTACT with the back of The Pilot's head. The Pilot slowly turns to meet eyes with his attacker --

ADAM stands there, wet and trembling, holding the wrench like he knows how to use it. The Pilot blinks, woozy.

THE PILOT

You ...

Adam frowns: *me?* With that, The Pilot's eyes ROLL BACK and he crumples to the floor. Adam drops by The Pilot's side -- amazed, overwhelmed -- *he can't believe he just did that!*

ADAM

Oh my God, oh my God ...  
 (then, smiling)  
 Oh my God!

Adam takes a closer look at this stranger --

He's wearing a FLIGHTSUIT with an insignia that reads NEXTSTAR CORP. Something protrudes from an open pocket. Adam delicately reaches down and pulls out --

A familiar blood-stained photograph: six astronauts in matching jumpsuits. The Pilot is in the middle, his arm slung around the shoulder of a man whose face is obscured by dried blood. Adam chips away the blood to reveal the face ...

Suddenly, The Pilot's hand SNAPS OUT, clutching the photograph. Adam YELPS and brings the wrench down once more --

THUD. Ouch.

CUT TO BLACK.

Sounds of rain fade to a gentle shower.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

ON THE PILOT, coming to. His vision focuses -- ADAM stands opposite, clutching his inhaler, ready for anything.

REVEAL -- The Pilot has been tied to a chair. The binding job is needlessly elaborate, employing a lot of rope, a lot of tape, and even a garden hose for good measure.

THE PILOT

... what happened?

ADAM

I knocked you out. Try anything funny and I'll do it again.

The Pilot is struggling to wrap his head around that. He peers at Adam -- this weak, asthmatic kid --

THE PILOT

... you?

Adam nods and takes a hit off his inhaler -- somehow making that seem like a badass gesture. He throws down the lock that he found hanging from the shed door. It CLANKS at The Pilot's feet.

ADAM

Only three people know the combination to that lock. Me, my brother, and my Dad. And my Dad's gone, so how'd you open it?

As The Pilot explains, we notice that he's starting to work free of his bonds, fumbling through the restraints.

THE PILOT

... lucky guess. I take it you've already called the cops?

ADAM

I will if you don't tell me the truth.

For some reason, that makes The Pilot smile.

THE PILOT

The truth? Sure, why not. The truth is, I am ... an astronaut.

ADAM

An astronaut.

THE PILOT

From the future.

ADAM

The future.

THE PILOT

Yes. I have to repair my spaceship and complete my mission, or the future as you know it -- as you *will* know it -- will cease to exist. Any information beyond that is strictly classified.

A long pause. Adam pulls out a cellphone and starts dialing.

THE PILOT  
What are you doing?

ADAM  
I'm calling my mom. She's way worse  
than the cops.

THE PILOT  
I believe you. Listen ...

The Pilot trails off when he sees that the phone in Adam's hands isn't a normal phone -- it's the iPhone-looking device we saw The Pilot using earlier.

THE PILOT  
... where'd you get that?

ADAM  
I took it from you. It's called  
*stealing*, something you obviously  
know a lot about.  
(he can't get it to work)  
What is it anyway, like an iPhone?

For the first time, The Pilot seems genuinely scared. He desperately fumbles with his bonds, trying to get free.

THE PILOT  
Listen, kid ... could you point it  
another way? --

ADAM  
-- I don't recognize these apps --

THE PILOT  
-- Adam -- !

The Pilot FREES HIMSELF, just as the device ACTIVATES, emitting a SHOCKWAVE that PROPELS Adam and The Pilot back off their feet, DEMOLISHING the roof of the shed in the process. Splinters fall like rain.

The Pilot recovers. He retrieves the smoking gadget from Adam -- now and forever known as the ATHENS DEVICE. Adam looks up at this flightsuited stranger. Seeing him with new eyes.

ADAM  
... not an iPhone?

The Pilot shakes his head 'no'.

ADAM  
... astronaut?

The Pilot nods his head 'yes'.

ADAM  
... from the future?

The Pilot nods again 'yes'. *Now he's getting it.*

Adam pulls himself to his feet -- the gears in his head whirling -- until only one question remains. A slow smile.

ADAM  
... *spaceship?*

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Adam follows The Pilot into the woods, struggling to keep up. The Pilot scans the area, searching for something.

ADAM  
This is incredible. No one's gonna believe that an astronaut crashed in my backyard! And from the future!

(a sudden thought)  
... wait a minute. You're not here to terminate anyone, are you?

THE PILOT  
Not yet. My ship crashed more than a decade short of its target. The sooner I get out of here and get on with my mission, the better.

ADAM  
What's your mission?

THE PILOT  
Can't tell you. Classified.

ADAM  
Oh, come on, who do you think I'm gonna tell? Who do you think would *believe* me?

THE PILOT  
Doesn't matter. From this point forward, the less you know about me, the better.

ADAM  
Why? Because of the ripples?

THE PILOT  
 (a backwards glance)  
 ... the *ripples*?

ADAM  
 Yeah. I mean, how does it work? Can you cause a ripple in the past that changes the future, like in *Back to the Future*, or are you creating an alternate reality to branch off from this one, like in *Star Trek*?

THE PILOT  
 That's, uh, classified.

ADAM  
 Can you at least tell me what year you're from?

THE PILOT  
 Nope. Classified.

ADAM  
 Well what's the future like?

THE PILOT  
 It's very classified.

ADAM  
 What are we *looking for* out here?

KONK! Adam COLLIDES into SOMETHING INVISIBLE and falls flat on his ass. The Pilot is relieved --

THE PILOT  
 Finally. I swear, I can never remember where I parked the damn thing.

The Pilot activates his Athens device -- pushes a button --

THE PILOT  
 You might want to stand back.

Suddenly, the air around Adam starts to SHIMMER --

THE STAR CAPSULE UNCLOAKS, towering over him, standing TWO STORIES TALL. PUSH IN on Adam, taking it in, overwhelmed. He smiles --

ADAM  
 Welcome to the future ...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Pilot has scaled the shell of the ship; he's using the tools he stole from the shed to pry open an access panel. FAR BELOW, Adam calls up to The Pilot -- mid-argument --

ADAM

Come on, it's not like I want to leave the *galaxy*, just -- take me around the moon or something! What's the big deal?

THE PILOT

First, it's not an amusement park ride. Second, you aren't trained. Third ... what are you, nine?

ADAM

I'm twelve.

THE PILOT

(a glance down)  
Really? Late bloomer?

Adam flips The Pilot the bird.

*KA-CHUNK!* The Pilot finishes peeling away the panel. A SOFT BLUE GLOW shines from within. Slowly, reverently, he reaches in and pulls out --

THE CELIUM CORE. A blue orb, about the size and shape of a softball, pulsating with an unknown, self-generated light.

ADAM

What is that? And don't say classified.

THE PILOT

I was worried it was damaged in the crash. It's celium -- an elemental energy, harvested from the deepest regions of the Earth. It's what makes it all possible. Time travel, superluminal flight ... all of it.

ADAM

Cool ...  
(beat)  
Can I have it?

The Pilot looks down at Adam: *you've gotta be kidding*. Adam shrugs: *worth a shot*.

MOMENTS LATER, The Pilot shimmies down the length of the capsule, landing with an IMPRESSIVE FLIP -- the same move we saw Tommy employ earlier. He assesses the ship's damage.

THE PILOT

I'll need a day, maybe two, to get her off the ground. All I need from you is to keep my presence here a secret until I finish my repairs. Do you think you can handle that?

ADAM

Depends. What's in it for me?

THE PILOT

For starters, I won't lock you in the ship's brig until I'm ready to take off.

ADAM

You *wouldn't*.

The Pilot gives Adam his best poker face ... but ultimately caves, his bluff called --

THE PILOT

What do you want from me, kid?  
Stock tips?

ADAM

I told you. I want to help.

THE PILOT

And how do you think you can help?

Adam isn't sure he wants to broach this, but sees no choice --

ADAM

... I can tell you something.  
Something you should probably know.

THE PILOT

What's that?

The Pilot notices Adam is backing away from him. The Pilot's expression darkens. *Uh-oh*. He matches Adam's pace forward.

ADAM

Before, when you were passed out?

THE PILOT

Yeah ...

ADAM  
I, uh ... I sort of ...

THE PILOT  
Adam. What. Did. You. Do?

INT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - FOYER - NIGHT

POLICE LIGHTS strobe red-and-blue in the driveway as Adam stands alone at the door, talking to TWO COPS.

COP 1  
A noise. You heard a *noise*.

ADAM  
Yeah, like a *boom -- boom -- boom*.  
I thought maybe someone broke in,  
but it was just the storm.

COP 2  
Are you here by yourself?

ADAM  
That's why I got scared. You're not  
gonna tell my Mom, are you?

As Adam speaks, PULL BACK to REVEAL -- THE PILOT, crouched in hiding about ten feet away, Athens device in hand. Bosco immediately comes up and starts licking his face.

THE PILOT  
No -- no, bad dog. *Bad. Dog.*

ON COP 1, craning his neck to peer into the house. All he sees is Bosco's tail, swishing happily back and forth.

COP 1  
... do you mind if we step inside a  
minute?

He's already letting himself in, but Adam blocks his path.

ADAM  
Sorry. I'm not supposed to let  
strangers into the house.

COP 1  
You're not supposed to call the  
cops over a thunderstorm, either.

COP 2  
Hey, c'mon, give the kid a break.  
You remember being that age, don't  
you?

COP 1  
Not really.

COP 2  
(to Adam, friendly)  
What are you, nine?

It pains him to the core, but Adam nods 'yes'. Cop 2 gives Cop 1 an imploring look, and Cop 1 relents --

COP 1  
All right, we'll let this one slide. Just remember, 911's only for emergencies, all right?

ADAM  
Yes, sir.

COP 2  
Lock this door when we're gone.

The cops head off. Adam starts to push the door closed, when he sees BONNIE'S CAR pulling up at the curb. Bonnie is out in a panic, running for the house.

BONNIE  
Oh my God, what happened!? ADAM!

COP 1  
He's fine, ma'am, just a little misunderstanding ...

Adam SLAMS the door and runs for The Pilot's hiding spot --

ADAM  
Hey, you gotta get out of here, my mom's -- !

-- but The Pilot is gone. Shit!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Pilot explores the house, pausing in front of a SHELF of FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS. One in particular catches his eye -- Adam and Tommy are posed with their FATHER, several years earlier.

The Pilot is so caught up staring at the photograph, he hardly notices as Adam comes barreling into the room --

ADAM  
What are you doing!? My Mom's home!

THE PILOT  
What?

ADAM

Hide!!

Too late -- a light FLICKS ON, and Bonnie comes in, a maelstrom of maternal concern.

BONNIE

Adam!

She pulls up short at the sight of The Pilot. Frozen moment. They all just stare at each other ... until The Pilot flashes a smile and extends a hand --

THE PILOT

Hey there. You must be Adam's Mom.  
Mike Denton. Nice to finally meet  
you.

Bonnie doesn't take The Pilot's hand.

BONNIE

What's going on here?

THE PILOT

Huh. I guess your son hasn't  
mentioned me after all.  
(to Adam, reprimanding)  
I told you, Adam. It's nothing to  
be ashamed of. Needing a tutor.

Adam and Bonnie register this with comically matching expressions. A *tutor*? Suddenly, TOMMY comes bursting in.

TOMMY

Mom, what happened to the shed -- ?  
(he stops, re: The Pilot)  
Who's this?

Adam chimes in quickly --

ADAM

He's my, uh, tutor. Science tutor.

THE PILOT

Adam just got a little scared,  
being left here alone and all.

Bonnie shoots Tommy a burning look. *Alone?*

THE PILOT

I don't live far, so he gave me a  
call and I came right over.

BONNIE

Well ... thank you, Mr. -- sorry,  
what was your name again?

The Pilot hesitates -- *for a second, he can't remember the name he obviously made up* -- but it comes back to him --

THE PILOT

Mike. Denton.

BONNIE

Out of curiosity, who's paying you?

Adam thinks fast --

ADAM

I am! I didn't want you to know I  
needed help, so I saved my  
allowance and paid him myself.

Tommy regards Adam with suspicion. The Pilot feigns surprise.

THE PILOT

You're kidding. Your own allowance?  
(to Bonnie)  
I swear, I had no idea.

BONNIE

Well, that ends now. I'm more than  
happy to pay. How much do I owe you  
for tonight?

THE PILOT

No no, please. It was my pleasure.

BONNIE

At least let me make it up to you.  
For the inconvenience. How about  
dinner tomorrow? My treat.

Something in Bonnie's tone tells The Pilot she won't be taking 'no' for an answer. He gives in with a smile.

EXT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Adam and Bonnie send The Pilot off from the doorway --

BONNIE

Are you sure you don't need a ride?

THE PILOT

It's no problem, I live close. See  
you tomorrow, Adam! We'll make some  
progress on that science project.

Wink wink. Adam catches the drift. He nods, speechless, as The Pilot heads off down the street. Finally, Adam turns to address his mother's withering gaze --

ADAM  
... I'm sorry I lied.

But Bonnie just pulls him into a hug.

BONNIE  
I'm just glad you're okay.

Over his mother's shoulder, Adam meets eyes with Tommy -- casually chucking a ball into his open glove, not bothering to hide his mistrust. *THUD -- THUD -- THUD --*

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Adam lies in bed. He looks up as Tommy darkens his doorway.

TOMMY  
Hey.

ADAM  
Hey.

TOMMY  
So. You hired a tutor.

ADAM  
Yep.

TOMMY  
With your own allowance.

Adam says nothing.

TOMMY  
It's funny, cause I thought you were saving for a wii.  
(he regards the console)  
That one there.

ADAM  
I -- won that off Joe. On a bet.

TOMMY  
Really. What'd you bet?

ADAM  
That you'd hit two homers in your game against Southfield. You hit three, so he had to kick in the extra controls.

Tommy stares at Adam -- *through* him -- then nods, giving up the line of questioning for now.

TOMMY

All right. Next time you need help,  
just ask me. That's what I'm here  
for.

Tommy heads off. Once alone, Adam pulls out the space comic --

An illustration of a square-jawed astronaut smiles out at him: ***ADVENTURES THROUGH SPACE AND TIME WITH ASTRONAUT MIKE DENTON***.

Adam frowns. He looks from the comic to Tommy's departing shadow ... *his own suspicions starting to form* ...

EXT. OPEN FIELD - NIGHT

A METEOR SHOWER is in progress, streaks of light racing across the nighttime sky. Strangely, one of the meteors seems to be going the WRONG DIRECTION -- getting larger, closer.

A BURST OF FIRE as the meteor breaches the atmosphere and CRASHES DOWN into the field. It's another star capsule.

The door HISSES OPEN and a MAN EMERGES, descending the ramp. He wears the same flightsuit as The Pilot, but the insignia identifies him as a higher rank. This is THE CAPTAIN. We recognize him as one of the astronauts from the blood-stained photograph. His cold shark eyes survey the empty field ...

The Captain pulls something from his pocket. It looks like an iPhone. *We already know it's not.* The device BEEPS RHYTHMICALLY. The Captain follows its signal.

ACROSS THE FIELD, a PARK RANGER SUV pulls up and a RANGER climbs out -- staring up in awe at the star capsule towering over him. He spots The Captain -- runs to intercept --

RANGER

Uh, excuse me? Sir? Park's closed.  
Anyway, you can't leave your, uh...  
(squints at the ship)  
... what is that?

Without even looking up, The Captain DISCHARGES a PULSE OF SOUND WAVES from his device (a bloomer) -- sending the Ranger SPRAWLING BACK into an unconscious heap.

The Captain resumes his search. His device beeps FASTER, until he finds himself standing over a BLINKING TRANSPONDER, landed in the periphery of the field.

The Captain picks up the transponder. Stiffs a smile. Then CRUSHES it in his hand until it stops blinking. He stalks off, muttering under his breath --

THE CAPTAIN

Lucky break, kid ... you only get one of those.

MOMENTS LATER, an OFF-SCREEN BLAST --

The Ranger jolts to his feet in time to see the star capsule taking off, rising into the sky, before CAMOUFLAGING with the starfield beyond and VANISHING COMPLETELY.

The Ranger falls to his knees and faints.

EXT. SKY OVER MICHIGAN - NIGHT

The Captain pilots his capsule into position, high over the GLITTERING LIGHTS of the world below. With the rest of the ship camouflaged, he appears to be FLOATING -- until --

THE CAPTAIN

Computer. Let's begin.

COMPUTER VOICE

*Initiating surveillance.*

DATA APPEARS, swirling around The Captain. An ERUPTION OF SOUND as the capsule monitors COUNTLESS TRANSMISSIONS and CELLPHONE SIGNALS; it's a BLUR of NOISE, but The Captain is able to parse it effortlessly, resting back as if he were listening to classical music.

THE CAPTAIN

I know you're out there ...

The noise builds to a CRESCENDO as we CUT TO --

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The next day. The Pilot works on the ship, sorting through a mess of tangled wiring. Adam serves as The Pilot's helper, handing off tools, trying not to get underfoot.

ADAM

So you're saying there are others like you? Other astronauts?

THE PILOT

Not many. Six in all. The program was extremely selective. Even where I'm from, no one knows we exist.

ADAM

Why not?

As he works, The Pilot activates the ship's MEMORY BANK and HOLOGRAPHIC RECORDINGS of PAST VOYAGES explode all around him. Adam staggers back as STARS and NEBULAE swirl past -- a tour of the cosmos in the middle of the Michigan wilderness.

THE PILOT

Since the 1960's, interstellar travel has been the government's game. Arnand Zucker changed all that. A self-made man -- an entrepreneur -- and, incidentally, one of the richest men on the planet. At least he was, until he sunk his fortune into the first private sector space program.

(beat)

It was a total accident, the first time we did it.

ADAM

Did what?

The Pilot smiles. Even now, it takes his breath away.

THE PILOT

Broke the speed of light.

Suddenly, the holographic view of the cosmos CONTORTS into a WORMHOLE. We witness the rush of FASTER THAN LIGHT SPEED.

THE PILOT

Celium made it all possible. And the faster we flew, the further back we went. First just a few seconds ... then a day, then a week, then a year. Nothing could stop us. The final barrier to man's dominion over space and time had fallen. But if the government found out what we'd done, they would've shut us down in a heartbeat. So, we kept it a secret. We all agreed, the power was too great to share with the world. Turns out, it was too great for us, too. The program took a turn. Zucker ... changed.

ADAM

And that's why you're here. That's your mission! You're trying to stop time travel from being invented!

The Pilot doesn't deny it. He looks up at the capsule with a mixture of awe and contempt.

THE PILOT

God willing, you'll grow up in a future in which this machine never exists.

Holographic images FADE, returning the woods to their original state. The Pilot goes back to work, as Adam is hit with a sudden thought --

ADAM

What about the other pilots? Aren't they gonna come looking for you?

A beat -- just a hint of emotion --

THE PILOT

Not all of them ...  
(then, cutting off questions)  
Hand me that torque wrench.

Adam obliges. As he does, we WIDEN to REVEAL -- TOMMY. Spying from the cover of heavy woods. *No way of knowing how long he's been there, or how much he overheard ...*

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

That night. Adam and Tommy sit opposite The Pilot and Bonnie at the cramped dinner table. Bosco is affectionately licking The Pilot's palms, nuzzling against his leg.

BONNIE

That's amazing ... he *never* takes to strangers like that.

The Pilot quickly stands, trying to shake off the beast.

THE PILOT

Anyone need a re-fill?

BONNIE

You know, why not. Special occasion. The glasses are in the --

But The Pilot is already pulling a glass from the appropriate cupboard.

THE PILOT

... lucky guess.

Adam frowns; *he's heard that exact excuse before.* The Pilot returns to his seat, surreptitiously kicking Bosco away, but the dog's not budging. Finally, Tommy makes his move --

TOMMY

So. How's your science fair project coming?

ADAM

Since when do you care?

TOMMY

Since I saw it. Today. *In the woods.*

CLANK. Adam drops his fork.

TOMMY

I have to admit, I'm impressed. Did you build that all on your own?

BONNIE

Build what?

ADAM

It's a ... a, uh --

THE PILOT

It's a spaceship.

Adam shoots The Pilot a look. *What are you doing!?*

BONNIE

A spaceship? Really?

THE PILOT

Just a model, of course. A prototype of what I think space travel will look like in the future. Kind of a hobby of mine. Adam's been helping me out.

ADAM

Yeah, but I mean, it doesn't *fly* or anything.

Adam LAUGHS, as if that were ridiculous ... then keeps laughing, overselling it. The Pilot quietly kicks him.

BONNIE

(indicates Tommy)

Well, you should definitely talk to this one.

(MORE)

BONNIE (CONT'D)

I thought it was just a phase, you know, all kids want to be astronauts when they grow up, but we're still waiting for him to grow out of it.

TOMMY

Mom --

BONNIE

What? Don't be shy.  
 (to The Pilot, beaming)  
 He's already been accepted to Caltech. Full scholarship.

TOMMY

I haven't decided if I'm going yet.

THE PILOT

You will.  
 (off Tommy's look)  
 Trust me. I have kind of a knack about these things.

*Across the table, Adam looks from The Pilot to Tommy ... the resemblance is becoming harder to deny with every moment.*

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Bonnie washes dishes over the sink; The Pilot is on drying duty. THROUGH THE DOORWAY, Adam discreetly listens in.

BONNIE

I want to thank you for taking an interest in Adam. He tries hard, but sometimes he just needs a little extra push. I'd do it myself, but there aren't always enough hours in the day.

THE PILOT

You do enough.

BONNIE

... yeah? How would you know? You just met me.

THE PILOT

I hear it from Adam. In fact, just the other day, he was telling me how much he appreciates everything you do.

BONNIE

Adam said that? Not a chance ...

THE PILOT

He talks about you a lot, actually.

BONNIE

(beat)

What else does he say?

THE PILOT

He says ... it couldn't have been easy for you. To raise two kids all on your own. To lose your husband so young. He says he understands.

BONNIE

Understands ... ?

THE PILOT

Why you push him so hard. He says he doesn't want to let you down.

Bonnie is moved, almost to tears, but she plays it off with a shrug, forcing herself to focus on the dishes.

BONNIE

That doesn't sound like Adam.

ON ADAM, reacting; *it sure doesn't!* The Pilot resumes drying.

THE PILOT

Sometimes kids have a hard time saying what they really mean. Until it's too late.

Bonnie finds herself staring at The Pilot. He catches her eye and she looks away, embarrassed.

BONNIE

Sorry ... you suddenly just seemed so familiar to me.

THE PILOT

One of those faces, I guess.

Bonnie's hand comes down, accidentally brushing against The Pilot's ... and it lingers. Instantly, The Pilot JERKS AWAY.

THE PILOT

Uh, you know, damn, look at the time. I should go.

BONNIE

You sure? Dessert's in the oven. My world famous cobbler.

THE PILOT

No, yeah, I forgot, I'm late for a thing. But thank you. For dinner. And, uh ... you know ... I meant it. What I said. See ya!

The Pilot trips over his own two feet, stumbling on his way out the door, leaving Bonnie dumbstruck. She turns back to the dishes with an inward sigh --

BONNIE

World famous cobbler ... who are you kidding?

CLOSE ON ADAM, staring after The Pilot ... the beginnings of an idea starting to take hold ...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A FLASHLIGHT BEAM cuts through darkness as Adam steps through the woods. Suddenly --

KONK! He finds the star capsule the same way he did before, and falls flat on his ass.

MOMENTS LATER, Adam feels around the shell of the invisible ship, looking for a way in. Suddenly, BLUE LIGHT fills the air, piercing the evening mist. Adam's hand is SCANNED.

COMPUTER VOICE

*Welcome, Adam Archer.*

Adam frowns --

ADAM

It knows me ... ?

The capsule UNCLOAKS and the doorway OPENS. Adam checks around -- no sign of The Pilot. He steps inside.

INT. STAR CAPSULE - NIGHT

Lights FLICKER ON, revealing the central command console -- a complicated array of levers and switches.

Adam sits in the pilot's chair, which immediately CONTORTS to fit his shape. A JOYSTICK is thrust into his grasp, like the control mechanism for a fighter jet.

ADAM

Wow.

A RED BUTTON is perched on the stick. It has all the tempting appeal of any red button to a curious 12-year-old mind ... so, naturally, Adam PUSHES IT --

The capsule ROARS TO LIFE, the HUM of machinery building to a HIGH WHINE.

A SIGNAL IS TRANSMITTED and we FOLLOW IT, out of the ship, into the sky, through clouds, until we arrive at --

EXT. SKY OVER MICHIGAN - NIGHT

The Captain sits in a meditative pose amid his cocoon of data. The signal reaches his vessel. His eyes SNAP OPEN.

THE CAPTAIN

Got you.

The capsule UNCLOAKS, materializing around The Captain, as he RACES OFF, zeroing in on his target.

INT. STAR CAPSULE/EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The viewscreen comes alive with DATA and MEASUREMENTS; contour lines SCANNING and MAPPING the heavens above.

Adam TOUCHES one of the stars, and our view ZOOMS IN, mapping the constellation in incredible three-dimensional detail. The lights of the cosmos SPARKLE in Adam's eyes ... until --

THE PILOT

What the hell are you doing!?

The Pilot drags Adam backwards out of the ship.

ADAM

Hey! Get off!

Once clear, The Pilot uses his handheld device to deactivate the capsule. He scans the skies, genuinely worried.

THE PILOT

I told you not to touch anything!

ADAM

I was only looking for ...

He trails off. The Pilot turns.

THE PILOT

*What?*

ADAM

... proof.

(off The Pilot's look)

The first time you saw me, you recognized me. And -- and you knew my name before I told you, and the combination to the shed, and Bosco actually *likes* you, and -- admit it!

In The Pilot's eyes: resignation. *He's busted.* Adam has never been more sure of anything. He nods.

ADAM

You're Tommy.

A beat ... then The Pilot BURSTS OUT LAUGHING.

THE PILOT

Tommy? You think I'm *Tommy*!?

ADAM

... aren't you?

THE PILOT

No. Adam. God. I'm you.

This sinks in. Adam stares at The Pilot. Shakes his head.

ADAM

No way.

THE PILOT

All right. You broke your arm on Brad Walden's trampoline when you were six years old. When the doctor set your arm, it left a scar.

ADAM

How did you -- ?

The Pilot rolls up his sleeve, revealing a LIGHT SCAR on his right arm -- a slightly peculiar CURVED SHAPE.

Adam rolls up his own sleeve. While his younger scar is slightly more prominent, it's the EXACT SAME SHAPE.

A surreal, universe-bending moment. Adam staggers back. The Pilot is about to explain further, when a LOW BEEPING catches his attention. He moves to the star capsule, peers inside --

The main viewscreen FLASHES a warning: INCOMING FIRE DETECTED.

Before The Pilot can react, a PULSE descends from above and the capsule EXPLODES in a BALL OF FIRE, throwing the Adams back off their feet.

IN THE SKY, The Captain's star capsule has arrived, already circling around for another shot.

The Pilot recovers from the blast. He takes in the WRECKAGE of his ship, devastated. Suddenly, Adam starts RUNNING back in the direction of his house. The Pilot gives chase.

ADAM

Help! Mom! Tommy! HELP!!!

THE PILOT

Adam! Get back here! We have to leave them out of this!

ADAM

Leave ME out of this!!!

THE PILOT

It's too late for that!

The Pilot TACKLES Adam. They wrestle around. Adam FLAILS and PUNCHES and KICKS and SCREAMS.

THE PILOT

You're only hurting yourself!

The Captain broadcasts overhead --

THE CAPTAIN (O.C.)

*That was your only warning, Adam.  
Give up now, and there'll be no  
need to involve the kid further.*

Adam breaks from The Pilot, starts waving his arms in the air.

ADAM

We surrender! We surrender!

The Pilot pulls Adam hard into the woods.

THE PILOT

Jesus, cut it out. You're embarrassing yourself.

ADAM

But he's only after you!

THE PILOT

You are me. He can take out either one of us and still get what he wants. And no offense, but you're a hell of an easier target.

ADAM

So what are we gonna do!?

THE PILOT

Relax. I have a plan.

The Pilot pinches a pressure point on Adam's neck -- the kid instantly falls unconscious.

IN THE CAPSULE, The Captain's radar detects TWO TARGETS -- one moving, one not. *He pursues the target that isn't moving.*

ON THE PILOT, running for all he's worth. He slides down into a CRATER, landing amid the SCORCHED WRECKAGE of his star capsule. In the debris, he finds what he's looking for --

The celium core. Glowing and intact. He takes it and RUNS --

IN THE CAPSULE, The Captain flies low to the ground. The console maps the woods before him -- too thick to penetrate.

He FIRES a PULSE of SOUND WAVES --

Trees BEND and SNAP, clearing a path. WIDEN to REVEAL --

Adam. Still unconscious, as the capsule bears down on his position. *The Pilot is using his younger self as bait!*

ON THE PILOT, pitching through heavy woods, desperately trying to activate his handheld device. *It must have been damaged in the blast.*

IN THE CAPSULE, The Captain closes in, radar locked, ready to fire, when he sees -- ADAM, lying helpless before him.

ON THE CAPTAIN ... the faintest hint of RECOGNITION ...

Suddenly, The Pilot appears, throwing himself between Adam and the ship. He MEETS EYES with The Captain through the cockpit window as his Athens device POWERS UP, UNFOLDING into a HANDHELD WEAPON. He raises the blaster --

THE PILOT AND THE CAPTAIN FIRE SIMULTANEOUSLY. The blasts COLLIDE in a SHOCK WAVE that sweeps The Pilot off his feet.

IN THE CAPSULE, The Captain struggles to regain control of his ship, circling around, lining up another shot.

ON THE PILOT, recovering. He searches the area and finds his blaster -- landed in the branches of a tree, high above.

The Pilot RACES FORWARD and PARKOURS UP THE TREE. Adam comes to, just in time to see this, amazed: *look at me go!!*

ON THE PILOT, reaching the top. He grabs for the blaster, but it FALLS FROM HIS GRASP, clattering down the branches. *Damn!*

The Captain FIRES. No time to think. The Pilot LEAPS from the tree, using the branches the way a gymnast would use the uneven bars. The tree EXPLODES above him, erupting in flames--

-- as The Pilot lands on his back, blaster now in hand. He aims up at the capsule as it passes overhead -- FIRES --

A direct hit. The pulse SLAMS INTO THE CAPSULE, and the ship SPINS off course, slicing across treetops.

ON ADAM, climbing to his feet, completely unaware of the MASSIVE SHIP hurdling towards him. The Pilot sees what's happening --

THE PILOT

ADAM, DOWN!

Finally, Adam sees the ship coming. He stands there, frozen, too scared to do much of anything else.

From The Pilot's POV, the ship CRASHES, and Adam is LOST in a CLOUD OF DEBRIS.

Panicked, The Pilot runs for the wreckage, but just as he approaches, the capsule ZAPS OFF into the sky at near the speed of light. Gone. Retreated. For now.

Dust clears and we find ADAM, lying on his back near the crash site. The Pilot crouches over him --

THE PILOT

Adam. Are you all right? Can you hear me?

Adam comes to. His hand instinctively goes to a SHRAPNEL WOUND on his neck and comes back bloody. He gasps --

ADAM

I'm bleeding ... I'm bleeding!

The Pilot inspects the cut -- nothing serious.

THE PILOT

I think we'll live.

Adam fumbles for his inhaler. The Pilot frowns -- sensing something. His hand goes to his own neck, where the EXACT SAME SCAR has formed. A look of realization -- *figuring out the rules* -- as Adam takes a DEEP HIT off his inhaler.

ADAM

Am I gonna die?

The Pilot snaps to attention.

THE PILOT

No, you're not gonna die. You're a soldier now, and I'm your commanding officer. That means you do exactly what I say, when I say it, and you live. Understand?

A beat. Adam nods.

ADAM

Yes, sir.

THE PILOT

Good. And right now ...  
(he thinks; nods)  
*We need to run.*

The Pilot takes Adam's hand and HAULS him off into the woods.

EXT. SUMMIT - NIGHT

The star capsule has landed on an isolated summit, damaged from the fight, on its last legs. The Captain deploys a BEACON, which SHOOTS UP into the sky. A moment passes ...

Suddenly, the sky above CONTORTS. A WORMHOLE OPENS, and ANOTHER STAR CAPSULE APPEARS, coming in for a landing beside The Captain's busted vessel. The door opens --

THREE ASTRONAUTS step out, wearing matching flightsuits, each of them recognizable from the blood-stained photograph.

JASPER is bulky and tough. LAURA is steely and focused. DASH is the youngest. He greets The Captain with a smile --

DASH

Hiya, Cap. Little engine trouble?

THE CAPTAIN

Shut up, Dash.

The Captain pushes past, into the newly arrived capsule. The astronauts exchange nervous glances -- *not the greeting they were expecting*.

IN THE CAPSULE, The Captain arms himself from a RACK of FUTURISTIC GEAR. We catch glimpses of devices to be employed later -- bloomers, stilt runners, plasma gloves, etc.

LAURA

Where's Adam?

The Captain's eyes say it all. Jasper reads him.

JASPER

... he got away? Jesus, how'd you let *that* happen!?

LAURA

Take it easy, Jasper. Everyone makes mistakes. He's only human.

The Captain seems almost offended by that. He pulls on a THICK GLOVE, laced with electric circuitry.

JASPER

You should know, Cap, the others are starting to talk. Boss is worried you might not be up for this job.

THE CAPTAIN

I'm handling it, aren't I?

JASPER

I don't know. Are you?

THE CAPTAIN

Adam's on foot with a small kid in tow, he couldn't have gotten far. I just need more time.

JASPER

Time's the one thing we don't have. I'm sure I don't have to remind you what's at stake here.

The Captain's glove CRACKLES with power. Jasper backs off.

THE CAPTAIN

No. You don't.

The Captain stalks past Jasper, out of the capsule.

THE CAPTAIN

I have the situation under control. I'll find Adam. I'll bring him in. *Alive.*

LAURA  
And if you can't?

THE CAPTAIN  
(beat; he nods)  
Then I'll handle him myself.

As if to illustrate the point, The Captain FIRES the glove: a BOLT ERUPTS from his palm, and RIPS a TOWERING SYCAMORE to splinters. Jasper and Laura are impressed. Dash intervenes --

DASH  
I don't mean to be a buzzkill, but  
... does anyone even know where  
Adam's going?

Off The Captain's reaction -- working it through. He nods --

THE CAPTAIN  
We have work to do.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED ROAD - NIGHT

Adam and The Pilot hitchhike along a deserted road. The Pilot is using his Athens device as a compass. Adam trails behind, struggling to keep up, puffing on his inhaler.

THE PILOT  
We'll keep off the main roads -- no  
airports, no public transportation.

ADAM  
Can you slow down?

THE PILOT  
I'll get you back to our Mom as  
soon as this is over. Until then,  
we have to stick together.

ADAM  
Seriously ... I can't breathe ...

THE PILOT  
Yes you can.

Adam goes to take another hit, when he TRIPS and TUMBLES down an embankment. He looks up. GASPS.

ADAM  
My inhaler!

It's gone. Adam frantically paws at the earth until he finds himself at The Pilot's feet. He looks up. The Pilot is holding the inhaler. Adam is relieved, but The Pilot promptly HURLS the inhaler deep into the woods.

THE PILOT  
There. Now, breathe.

Adam stares at The Pilot in utter shock ... then starts to HYPERVENTILATE, panicking beyond reason.

ADAM  
I can't -- I can't! I'm gonna die!

THE PILOT  
You're not gonna die.

ADAM  
I can't breathe! My lungs are collapsing! You're trying to kill me!

The Pilot grips Adam's shoulders, forcing eye contact.

THE PILOT  
Adam. Look at me. Look at me!

Adam focuses on his older self. The Pilot speaks calmly --

THE PILOT  
*You can breathe.*

The Pilot inhales deep, demonstrating. Adam does the same. The Pilot exhales slowly. Again, Adam does the same.

ADAM  
I can breathe ...

The Pilot nods. Adam smiles -- breathing regularly now. He ERUPTS in ECSTATIC CELEBRATION.

ADAM  
I CAN BREATHE!

THE PILOT  
Congratulations.

The Pilot resumes walking down the road. Adam follows -- keeping up effortlessly now --

THE PILOT  
You can breathe, you can run, you can jump, you can swim.  
(MORE)

THE PILOT (CONT'D)

You can do just about anything a normal kid can do, and then some. Just stop eating peanuts. Mild allergy. Very common.

ADAM

Really? That's it?

THE PILOT

That's it. You would've found out for yourself soon enough, but we don't have that kind of time. We have a long road ahead of us.

ADAM

You still haven't told me where we're going.

THE PILOT

That's classified.

Adam pulls up short.

ADAM

... *still!*?

The Pilot doesn't break his stride; *he's obviously not joking*. Adam rolls his eyes and follows, muttering under his breath: *unbelievable ...*

EXT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

The doorbell RINGS. From inside, we hear FAST-APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS. The door SWINGS OPEN -- Bonnie is a nervous wreck, surprised to find police officers crowding her doorstep --

The Captain, Jasper, Laura and Dash, all dressed as cops. Jasper takes point --

JASPER

Good morning, ma'am. You filed a missing persons report?

BONNIE

I tried ... the woman on the phone said to call back after it'd been twenty-four hours.

JASPER

That would be Cheryl. We apologize for her. May we come in?

Off Bonnie's scrutinizing reaction ...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

PHOTOS have been splayed across the coffee table, pictures of Adam yanked from their frames. Empty frames everywhere.

JASPER

... and that's the last time you saw your son? He hasn't called or tried to make contact?

Bonnie is distracted, trying to get a look at The Captain, who keeps to the rear of the group, back turned.

BONNIE

Uh ... no, he hasn't. I've been trying to think of who he might be with, but Adam never really had a lot of friends ...

(she trails off)

This just isn't like him.

Laura displays a photo of The Pilot.

LAURA

Do you recognize this man?

Bonnie looks at the picture, and goes TOTALLY STILL.

BONNIE

Well yeah, that's Adam's tutor. Why do you have his picture?

JASPER

This man was seen crossing state lines earlier today with a boy matching Adam's description. We have reason to believe he may have kidnapped your son.

BONNIE

No, that's -- that's impossible, he was just here. I made him dinner, he was ... he ...

Tears spring to Bonnie's eyes, the gravity of the situation finally sinking in. She covers her face.

BONNIE

Oh my God ... oh God, how could I be so stupid?

ON THE CAPTAIN, softening somewhat at the sight of Bonnie breaking down. He steps forward and lays a hand on her arm.

A cautious glance from the "officers" -- The Captain is clearly breaking protocol. Bonnie finds herself staring at him -- a moment of connection -- *almost* recognition ...

BONNIE

I'm sorry. What did you say your name was?

THE CAPTAIN

... Evans.

Bonnie shakes her head, it doesn't ring a bell.

BONNIE

I must be losing my mind.

THE CAPTAIN

No you're not. You're just under a lot of stress. Try not to worry.

(a salesman smile)

We're the good guys.

Bonnie looks into this stranger's eyes, and calms somewhat ... finding something there she can trust.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Adam and The Pilot are on foot, cresting a hill that overlooks a SMALL TOWN in the rural mid-west. Farmland stretches as far as the eye can see.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Adam wanders the aisles, filling a basket with Red Bull and candy bars. OUTSIDE, The Pilot is seen conversing with a MEXICAN FAMILY in what we can only assume is PERFECT SPANISH.

Adam lays the goods on the counter. He notices a LAND LINE -- whispers to the clerk, conspiratorial --

ADAM

Can I use your phone?

INT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - TOMMY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A cell-phone VIBRATES -- picked up by Tommy --

TOMMY

Hello.

(his eyes widen)

... Adam!? Jesus Christ, Mom's been worried sick about you!

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE BEDROOM AND THE STORE --

ADAM  
I know, that's why I'm calling.  
Just tell her I'm okay.

TOMMY  
Where are you?

ADAM  
Uhh, Iowa, I think? Somewhere in  
Linn County.

STORE CLERK  
( chiming in )  
Actually, Linn's to the east.  
You've crossed over into Benton.

ON TOMMY, taking all this down --

TOMMY  
Benton ... okay, look, just stay  
there. I'm coming after you.

ON ADAM, seeing The Pilot approaching through the window.

ADAM  
Okaygreatgottagobye.

He HANGS UP, just as The Pilot enters, arm around the  
shoulder of the Mexican patriarch; they're laughing like old  
friends.

THE PILOT  
Good news, Adam! Mr. Ramirez here's  
been kind enough to offer us a  
ride.

MR. RAMIREZ  
This is your son? He looks just  
like you!

Adam catches The Pilot's look: *play along*. He shrugs --

ADAM  
That's what everyone says.

They start to leave when the clerk intervenes --

STORE CLERK  
Hey! One dollar for the phone call.

*Busted*. Adam meets his older self's accusing stare with an  
expression of exaggerated innocence.

INT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - FOYER - DAY

The Captain and his team are half out the door, Bonnie feeding them pictures as they go --

BONNIE

Are you sure you don't need any of these? They might help with the search --

LAURA

No, ma'am, thank you, we have everything we need --

TOMMY (O.C.)

*Mom!*

Tommy comes bounding into the room. He pulls up short, locking eyes with The Captain ... for a moment, forgetting what he came in to say.

BONNIE

Tommy, this is Officer Evans. He's in charge of finding your brother.

The Captain extends a hand.

THE CAPTAIN

Nice to meet you, Son.

Reluctantly, Tommy shakes the man's hand. *Some kind of charge between them.* He shakes it off, comes to his senses.

TOMMY

I know where Adam is.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

The Pilot stalks away from the store, Adam trailing behind.

THE PILOT

I said no phone calls, didn't I? Come to think of it, I'm pretty sure I made that very clear.

ADAM

I know, but -- I don't see what the big deal is. It's just Tommy!

THE PILOT

Oh, sure, it's just Tommy. Except who the hell do you think is -- ?

He catches himself before he says too much. Adam frowns.

ADAM

Who do I think is what?

High above, a LOUD POP as the SOUND BARRIER IS BROKEN. A collective gasp from the sparse crowd of pedestrians -- heads tilted back, camera phones aimed to the sky ... but there's nothing to see, no trace of whatever caused the sound.

Only The Pilot knows. He drags Adam off towards the pickup.

THE PILOT

*This is why we don't make phone calls.*

INT. STAR CAPSULE - DAY

The console scans the crowd below, automatically focusing in on THE PILOT, bartering with Mr. Ramirez.

THE PILOT

*Lo siento, Senor, pero mi hijo y tengo que pedir prestado el camion.*

LAURA

Target acquired.

DASH

(hopeful)  
Break out the stilts?

THE CAPTAIN

Not yet. Get us in range. I want to talk to him.

JASPER

*... talk? Due respect, sir, but I think the time for diplomacy is over.*

A beat. The Captain nods, sure of himself.

THE CAPTAIN

I want to talk to him.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Mr. Ramirez is shocked at the WAD OF CASH The Pilot has just piled into his hands.

MR. RAMIREZ

Are you sure, Senor? This is more than ... twenty thousand dollars!

THE PILOT

Yeah, well, it's worth a lot less  
where I come from.

(to Adam)

Get in!

MOMENTS LATER, the Adams PEEL OUT of the lot, leaving the Ramirez family behind. Amazed at their good fortune.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The Pilot drives, pushing the truck to capacity, weaving through heavy midday traffic.

ADAM

Are you mad?

THE PILOT

With you? No. I'm thrilled.

Suddenly, The Pilot's Athens device VIBRATES like a cellphone. Adam covers his ears against the noise.

The sound takes on shape and texture, until a VOICE emerges from the device -- THE CAPTAIN -- as if he's sitting right next to us. INTERCUT between the pickup and the camouflaged star capsule, hovering just overhead.

THE CAPTAIN

Pull over, Adam. No need for this  
to get out of hand.

THE PILOT

Is that you, Cap?

THE CAPTAIN

Listen. We can do this the easy way  
or the hard way, but no matter  
what, I'm taking you home.

A beat, as The Pilot considers ... shakes his head --

THE PILOT

You're gonna have to catch me  
first.

THE CAPTAIN

(sighs)

Have it your way, Kickstand.

Adam's head is spinning, but that last part registered loud and clear.

ADAM

... TOMMY!?

The Pilot reaches out and TIGHTENS Adam's seatbelt, before VEERING sharply across the meridian, into the opposing lane of traffic. Cars swerve and honk.

IN THE CAPSULE, The Captain (who we now know is TOMMY, age 46) turns to the others -- nods --

THE CAPTAIN

Take him down.

JASPER

Now you're talking. Break out the stilts, Dash!

Dash pumps his fist, *yesss*, moves for the back of the ship.

FOLLOWING THE TRUCK, weaving through SCREAMING TRAFFIC as the air above the road starts to SHIMMER. The star capsule UNCLOAKS, directly overhead. A hatch SLIDES OPEN --

Dash drops to the road below, wearing a pair of CURVED FIBERGLASS APPENDAGES that absorb the impact. As soon as he's clear, the ship RESUMES CAMOUFLAGE and DISAPPEARS.

Dash LUNGES after the pickup, FASTER than the surrounding traffic, sprinting on the stilts like a gazelle.

IN THE PICKUP, Adam sees Dash coming.

ADAM

Holy shit!

THE PILOT

Stilt runners. Cool, huh.  
(regretting it now)  
I helped design them.

ON DASH, closing the gap. He pulls on a PLASMA GLOVE. The circuitry CRACKLES and SPARKS, juicing up, until -- **BAM!** A BOLT emanates from the glove, RIPPING INTO THE PAVEMENT.

THE PILOT

That's enough, Tommy! Someone's gonna get hurt!

THE CAPTAIN

Little late for that, isn't it?

THE PILOT

You know that wasn't me. *You know I didn't kill JR!*

Adam glances to the blood-stained photograph. SIX ASTRONAUTS are featured -- including one woman we haven't met yet.

*The picture is starting to comes into focus.*

ON DASH, running alongside the pickup without even breaking a sweat. He FIRES his plasma glove --

-- just as The Pilot SLAMS on the brakes. The blast MISSES, taking out the FRONT TIRES of a BIG RIG, which SKIDS OUT across the freeway.

Adam CLINGS TO THE DOOR and SCREAMS as The Pilot pulls the wheel hard over, executing a perfect three hundred and sixty-degree spin -- skirting the perimeter of the pile-up.

The Pilot clears the damage area -- a CATAclysmic WRECK filling his rearview. He accelerates off-road, through the guardrail, heading for a DISTANT CORNFIELD.

Dash leaps over fishtailing cars like an Olympic runner clearing hurdles, pursuing the Adams into the field.

EXT. CORNFIELD - DAY

The Pilot DRIVES, flattening stalks of corn that obscure his vision. The conversation continues --

THE CAPTAIN

I'm sorry Adam, I'm just not buying it. If you didn't do anything wrong, then why'd you run?

The Pilot hesitates before answering.

THE PILOT

Because ... there wasn't anyone left in the program I could trust.

This sinks in.

EXPLOSIONS blow CRATERS in the field. One gets too close. IONIZED GAS SHREDS the pickup's tired like MOLTEN LAVA.

THE PILOT

Take the wheel!

No time to explain, The Pilot's already climbing out of the truck.

ADAM

I DON'T EVEN HAVE A LEARNER'S PERMIT!!

The Pilot climbs along the outside of the truck, onto the flatbed. Stalks of corn WHIP OUT at him as he aims his blaster through the field, counting down Dash's time between jumps. He FIRES --

Direct hit. Dash is BLOWN BACK -- alive, but out of the game.

ABOVE, the star capsule UNCLOAKS -- long enough for JASPER to drop out on his own pair of stilts. The Pilot takes advantage -- aims up --

THE PILOT

Sorry, Tommy.

He FIRES. The blast SLAMS into the ship, knocking it off course. IN THE COCKPIT, Laura fights with the controls.

LAURA

Dammit! He took out our flight systems! We're going down!

The Captain SLAMS his device, breaking the connection.

JASPER (O.C.)

*Don't worry, Cap, I'm on it!*

ON JASPER, leaping through the field like Superman.

THE CAPTAIN

Jasper! Remember, we're taking him alive! Him *and* the boy!

Jasper pretends not to hear, focused on the chase. AHEAD, corn stalks BEND, indicating the pickup's position.

IN THE TRUCK, The Pilot takes the wheel, shoving Adam aside --

ADAM

What happened? You didn't hurt Tommy, did you?

The Pilot gives Adam a sideways glance: *you're worried about him!*? Before he can answer, MORE PLASMA BOLTS, MORE EXPLOSIONS, dangerously close. The doors are BLOWN AWAY. The Pilot checks his mirror -- Jasper gains at a FULL SPRINT.

THE PILOT

Sorry, kid. Looks like you're gonna have to jump.

ADAM

Don't call me -- *wait, I have to WHAT!?*

THE PILOT  
Duck and roll. Easy peasy.

The Pilot KICKS Adam out of the truck. OUTSIDE, Adam ducks and rolls, the corn stalks softening his fall. Kind of.

ON THE PILOT, driving, coming up on the end of the field.

BEHIND HIM, Jasper reaches top speed and LEAPS --

-- sailing CLEAR OVER THE TRUCK --

-- and landing in The Pilot's path. He TURNS and FIRES --

**BOOM!!!** The pickup TILTS END-OVER-END, tumbling over Jasper's head, coming to a stop several feet away.

Debris settles. Jasper's stilts FOLD IN AUTOMATICALLY as he calmly approaches the mangled remains of the pickup.

The Pilot staggers from the wreckage, dizzy, but ready to fight. A SINGLE TOUCH from Jasper's glove sends him FLYING BACK. Out cold.

JASPER  
I won't lie, Adam. I've wanted to  
do that for a *long* time.  
(he aims the glove)  
This is for JR.

Before Jasper can fire, a SHOCKWAVE intervenes, dropping him like a sack of potatoes. REVEAL -- The Captain stands behind him -- the source of the blast. He looms over The Pilot ... for the first time, the nickname sounds almost endearing --

THE CAPTAIN  
Sorry, Kickstand. No more running.

FURTHER BACK, we hear the sound of the plasma glove CHARGING UP. The Captain turns -- ADAM is now wearing Jasper's glove.

ADAM  
*Don't call me that.*

Adam FIRES and The Captain goes FLYING BACK, unconscious.

The Pilot finally comes to -- The Captain and Jasper splayed out before him. Adam stands triumphantly over them.

THE PILOT  
Did ... did you do that?

Adam shrugs: *I guess I did.* No time to celebrate, though; sounds of pursuit near. Adam and The Pilot RUN through the field. As they do, we RISE UP to REVEAL --

A train, pulling out of a train yard in the distance.

INT. RAIL CAR - DAY

The Pilot helps Adam into the moving train, before hauling himself aboard. He instantly COLLAPSES, wounded, exhausted.

Adam steps close, as if he means to help ... but grabs The Pilot's Athens device and LEAPS BACK. The device UNFOLDS into BLASTER MODE. *This time, Adam knows how to use it.*

ADAM

Start talking.

THE PILOT

Adam, what the hell are you -- ?

Adam FIRES, blowing the train door off its hinges.

THE PILOT

Jesus!

ADAM

Tell me the truth! Why's Tommy trying to kill us!?

(beat; he swallows)

Am I a murderer?

THE PILOT

Adam ... *no.* Of course not, think about what you're saying. You know me.

ADAM

No I don't! I don't know anything about you! It's all CLASSIFIED!!

A long beat. Adam has a point. The Pilot rests against the wall of the rail car ... too exhausted to keep fighting.

THE PILOT

You really want to know?

Adam nods. The Pilot manages a weary smile.

THE PILOT

You asked for it.

INT. RAIL CAR - SUNSET

The train cuts across the horizon, touring the countryside. Adam and The Pilot sit, legs dangling over the edge, where the door used to be ...

THE PILOT

I remember when I was your age, all I wanted was to be a world champion snowboarder, like Shaun White. There was this one trail I was obsessed with ...

ADAM

The Streif.

The Pilot nods, that's the one.

ADAM

So, what happened?  
(off look)  
We don't even like to fly.

THE PILOT

Things change. One day, about ten years from now, Tommy shows up at your door out of the blue. He's not alone. Arnand Zucker is with him.

FLASH: The Pilot SHAKES HANDS with Zucker. Good firm grip.

THE PILOT

He says he wants Tommy to join some sort of experimental space program. Tommy's the golden boy, none of it's possible without him ... but he won't go without you.

ADAM

And Tommy gets what Tommy wants.

Adam produces the group photo. He indicates the UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN.

ADAM

What about her?

THE PILOT

Jimmy Ryan. JR for short. Zucker recruited her from basic training at the Air Force. The first time you set eyes on her, it's like ...

FLASH: JR's face, for just a blink, and then she's gone.

The Pilot falls silent at the memory. Words fail him.

ADAM

... gross.

THE PILOT

You'll understand one day.

ADAM

Did you ever tell her how you feel?  
I mean, do I?

A beat. The Pilot shakes his head 'no'.

THE PILOT

It was never part of the plan.

ADAM

... figures.

The Pilot takes the photograph and stares down at JR.  
Haunted, heartbroken. Re-living the memory.

THE PILOT

One night, she calls you up and  
says she needs to tell you  
something. Something she can't tell  
anyone else. Not even Tommy.

FLASH: We're inside an apartment -- signs of a struggle,  
furniture tossed around. Blood-stained photos protrude from  
cracked frames. The Pilot crouches over JR as she WHISPERS.

THE PILOT

She found out that Zucker was going  
into the past for personal gain --  
expanding his empire, building his  
fortune. She confronted him ...  
said it was time to take the  
program public.

ADAM

... so he killed her.

FLASH: JR dies in The Pilot's arms. He holds her close.

THE PILOT

I couldn't save her ...

Adam catches the slip: 'I' instead of 'you'. The Pilot forges  
on --

THE PILOT

You know it's only a matter of time before they come after you. So you do what you always do.

ADAM

(nods, not surprised)  
I run away.

FLASH: The Pilot takes the bloody photograph from its frame. He RUNS out the back as POLICE LIGHTS arrive at the front.

THE PILOT

But you have a plan. You know it's not enough to just go back and save JR; that's not what she would've wanted anyway. You have to end the program. You have to end it from the beginning.

ADAM

... then what happens to you?

THE PILOT

I don't know. I'm as new at this as you are. My guess is, I cease to exist. My future will be in your hands. Try not to screw it up.

A beat. Adam feels the weight of responsibility ...

ADAM

How do we stop the program?

The Pilot's device displays an old NEWSPAPER CLIPPING. The headline reads: *NOBEL LAUREATE KILLED IN FATAL CRASH*. Below, a picture of a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN.

THE PILOT

Dr. Marie Gordon. Zucker's partner, in the early days of the program. She was the first person to predict the applications of celium. If we can convince her to abandon her research, we can kill Zucker's dream in the crib before it ruins a single life.

ADAM

(on the article)  
This says Marie Gordon died in a car crash more than ten years ago.

THE PILOT

July 2, 2000. That's how far back we have to go. Which is why I was trying to repair my ship.

ADAM

Your ship was destroyed.

THE PILOT

Thanks, I noticed.

ADAM

So ... what are we doing now?

THE PILOT

Now, we're finding another one.

This sinks in.

ADAM

Oh. Well that's not too hard. We just have to invent time travel. Decades before anyone else.

A long pause, as the Adams take in the task before them. Adam has one last question ... but he's almost afraid to ask.

ADAM

Do we ever ride the Streif?

The Pilot wants to lie ... but can't. Adam reads the truth in his eyes, obviously not finding the answer he was looking for. The Pilot puts a consoling hand on his shoulder, as the train rides on ...

CUT TO:

INT. STAR CAPSULE - NIGHT

The Captain mans the console, studying a map of Adam's trajectory -- a ROLLING INDEX of possible destinations. One in particular catches his eye: GRAND LAKE, COLORADO.

Suddenly, a PRESENCE from behind. He speaks without turning --

THE CAPTAIN

How's the arm, Jasper?

REVEAL -- the astronauts are all VISIBLY INJURED from the previous altercation. Dash has a black eye; Laura's face is bruised. Jasper got the worst of it, his arm is in a sling.

JASPER

*Fine, sir. While we're on the subject, would you care to explain why you shot me?*

THE CAPTAIN

You know why. Our mission hasn't changed.

JASPER

Our mission is bigger than Adam, and you know it.

THE CAPTAIN

Are you here to doubt my resolve, or do you actually have something useful to report?

LAURA

Actually, sir, Dash had an idea. A solution we might have overlooked.

Finally, The Captain turns -- focused on Dash --

DASH

Well, yeah, I mean ... the core's back online, right? All systems are go, so why don't we just go back *further*? To, like, before Adam became such a problem.

THE CAPTAIN

And do what exactly?

Dash doesn't have the heart to say it, but Jasper does.

JASPER

Neutralize him, sir. Take him out, before he lives to be a threat to the program, the team, and everything we've fought for.

The Captain nods, as if that makes perfect sense ... then, he LUNGES for Jasper, SLAMS him hard against the cockpit wall.

LAURA

Captain, stop -- !

THE CAPTAIN

Are you out of your mind? We're here to *minimize* ripples, and you want to *kill* him!?

JASPER

How do you know he's not planning  
to do the same thing to us?

The Captain blinks; he hadn't considered that. He releases Jasper. Shakes his head.

THE CAPTAIN

No ... Adam wouldn't do that.

JASPER

The same way he wouldn't kill JR?  
Or confiscate one of the old man's  
ships?

LAURA

Jasper has a point. After all this,  
we still don't even know what  
Adam's trying to do.

THE CAPTAIN

There's nothing he can do. Not  
here. To affect real damage to the  
program, he'd have to get back at  
least another ten years. And  
without a ship ...

The Captain trails off as realization touches his eyes. He SPINS to the console -- still displaying a map of Grand Lake.

THE CAPTAIN

Lock these coordinates and fire up  
the grid for re-entry!

LAURA

... sir?

THE CAPTAIN

I know where Adam's going. MOVE!!

The astronauts scramble to their stations, as The Captain fixes his stare on the map ... a lion closing in on his prey.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The star capsule RACES OFF, leaving a BLAZING STREAK.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLORADO - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A truck passes a sign: **WELCOME TO HISTORIC GRAND LAKE, COLORADO.** It pulls over to let Adam and The Pilot out.

EXT. SHADOW MOUNTAIN JUNIOR HIGH - DAY

Students swarm out the front, crowding the main lawn. The Adams watch from across the street.

ADAM

Is that her?

A GIRL, 13, is leaving school -- the only one of the crowd not surrounded by friends and classmates. She power-walks (her regular pace), quickly outdistancing her peers. This is JR. The Pilot glances down to the photograph -- still stained with JR's blood. He nods, shaken.

THE PILOT

That's her. Jimmy Ryan.

MOMENTS LATER, JR continues her power-walk home. Adam and The Pilot follow a safe distance back.

ADAM

What do I have to do?

THE PILOT

Talk to her. You know how to talk to girls, right?

ADAM

Uh, *no!* Why, do you?

THE PILOT

... not really. Just -- I dunno. Introduce yourself.

ADAM

As what? Her future lover?

THE PILOT

You're not -- I mean -- she's not my -- we haven't --

ADAM

Wow, I really don't get better at this, do I.

THE PILOT

Just give her this.

The Pilot hands Adam a FOLDED NOTE.

THE PILOT

You have to convince her to read it -- and, more importantly, to *believe* it.

ADAM  
Why? What does it say?

Adam starts to unfold the note. The Pilot snatches it back.

THE PILOT  
It's *private*.

ADAM  
How can something be private from yourself? Technically, *I'm* the one who's gonna write it.

THE PILOT  
You haven't written it yet, and when you do, you'll understand why you wouldn't let you read it.

ADAM  
That doesn't even make sense!

Adam and The Pilot engage in a quick tug-of-war over the note. Suddenly, a VOICE --

JR (O.C.)  
*Um, excuse me? Hi.*

The Adams turn -- JR has somehow gotten BEHIND THEM, pepper spray in hand.

JR  
So, you guys have been following me for like six blocks now. You should know I'm a state-ranked brown belt and my dad's a cop.

THE PILOT  
Investment banker. In jail for securities fraud, if my math is right.

JR frowns --

JR  
How'd you know that? Who are you?

ADAM  
He's your boyfriend. Or, uh ... he wants to be.

The Pilot rolls his eyes: *smooth, kid*. JR sizes up The Pilot -- a monosyllabic judgment --

JR

Ew.

EXT. PARK - DAY

LATER. JR sits alone on a park bench, reading the note. Adam and The Pilot keep their distance.

ADAM

Do you think she's gonna buy it?

THE PILOT

I don't know. You never know what she's gonna do. That's part of her charm.

ADAM

I don't think she likes me.

THE PILOT

She will. And when she does, you'll know what it feels like to achieve something important.

Adam has no idea what that means. JR is returning with the note; she offers it back to The Pilot. He studies her for a reaction.

THE PILOT

Did you read it?

JR

(nods)

You should be a science fiction writer. I'm not kidding, no one's ever written anything that cool for me. But you didn't think I'd actually *believe* it, did you?

THE PILOT

You have to. If you don't, you're gonna die.

JR

Yeah, I got that part. Charming.

(she glances to Adam)

Who are you supposed to be? His co-pilot?

ADAM

No. I'm him. Like, now. Today.

JR scrutinizes the pair, noticing something. She steps close, staring into Adam's eyes. He shifts, uncomfortable.

ADAM

What?

JR

Nothing. It's just strange. You both have an anomaly in your right eye. Specks of green ... a birth defect. Rare. Kind of pretty.

(then)

I still don't believe you.

She turns to leave --

THE PILOT

JR, wait --

JR

Don't follow me, freak.

The Pilot watches JR go. He calls out, desperate --

THE PILOT

Your mom started calling you JR when you were five, cause she thought Jimmy sounded too much like a boy's name.

JR

Nice try. Everyone knows that.

THE PILOT

You have a recurring dream that you're being chased by your neighbor's dog. In your underwear.

JR stops in her tracks. Turns to The Pilot. He continues -- remembering every little detail about the woman he loved --

THE PILOT

You were scared of spiders when you were little, so you convinced your Mom to buy you a pet tarantula, and now you're not scared anymore. In school, you sometimes get questions wrong on purpose cause you don't want to skip another grade. You try not to raise your hand in class, but sometimes you can't help but show everyone how smart you really are. You tell people you want to be a doctor when you grow up ... *but you really want to fly.*

JR looks at The Pilot -- and in this moment -- she believes.

From above, a SONIC BOOM. A STAR CAPSULE DESCENDS FROM THE HEAVENS, LANDING LESS THAN A HUNDRED FEET AWAY.

Adam, JR and The Pilot stare in dumbstruck silence as the capsule HISSES OPEN, right in the middle of the park.

JR STEPS OUT -- *the woman from the photograph come to life!* She's 43 years old, and stunning in her silver flightsuit.

As if on cue, the WIND picks up and SNATCHES the photograph from The Pilot's hands. It flutters away, never to be seen again, but The Pilot doesn't seem to notice or care. He just steps forward, like a switch has been flipped and he finally knows what he has to do.

The Pilot SCOOPS JR into his arms, and KISSES HER long and well. For a moment, JR goes with it ... then REARS BACK and --

**SLAP!!!** -- she delivers a blow so fierce, it nearly spins The Pilot around full-circle. Only now do we see the ANGER in JR's eyes.

JR

You son of a bitch. *Do you have any idea what you put me through!?*

JR displays the NOTE, now visibly aged. She wags it in The Pilot's face --

JR

*Thirty years!* For thirty years, I carried this stupid note! I was --  
(points to Young JR)  
-- *she!* She was going to have a life of her own! And you took that from me! From her, from us!

A beat, as temperatures cool. The boiling anger fades from JR's eyes, but she remains stiff, arms crossed. She remembers her manners and nods to Young Adam --

JR

Hello, Adam.

Mouth agape, all Adam can think to do is wave. JR notices her younger self, staring blankly forward, practically catatonic.

JR

Am I all right?

THE PILOT

Probably not.

INT. JR'S HOUSE - DAY

Young JR sits on a couch, wearing the exact same expression.  
Utter shock. BEHIND HER, JR takes in her childhood home --

JR

Incredible. Everything's just the way I remember it.

(re: her caged tarantula)

Hey, Terry!

ADAM

Yeah, I'm sure it's all fascinating, but *can someone please explain to me what the hell just happened!?*

JR

Not much to explain. I got your note. And everything happened just the way you said. When the time came, I commandeered one of Zucker's ships and came back here -- to the coordinates you left for me.

ADAM

Okay, so ... does that mean it's over? Did we win?

JR

Not quite. Tommy's still coming after us, and Zucker's mission is still a go.

That last part caught The Pilot's attention --

THE PILOT

What mission?

MOMENTS LATER, a BLUEPRINT is unrolled across a table -- a schematic of a STAR CAPSULE, like the others we've seen, but the measurements indicate a ship of MUCH LARGER SCALE.

JR

I found this in Zucker's vault.

ADAM

What is it?

THE PILOT

It's a star capsule, but ...  
(studying the schematic)  
... is this even possible?

JR

As far as I can tell, it operates by the same principles as the first generation model. Except it's a lot faster.

ADAM

What does that mean?

JR

It means this ship can take Zucker back in time as far as he wants to go -- into the *ancient* past. And that's not all. For months, he's been stocking up on men, supplies, weapons.

(nods, sure of it)

He's building an army.

This sinks in.

THE PILOT

He doesn't just want to change the past. He wants to *conquer* it.

(beat)

When do they launch?

Surprisingly, JR smiles.

JR

They might have a little problem there.

INT. JR'S HOUSE - DAY

A HEAVY CASE is set down. JR throws it open. A HEAVENLY BLUE LIGHT emanates from within. Adam peers inside to find a GIANT ORB OF CELIUM, filling the entire crate.

ADAM

Whoa!

(he tries to lift it, but can't)

You got the mother lode!

JR

Zucker's gonna need all of it to power his machine. Without this, he's stuck.

THE PILOT

For now. He can always harvest more.

JR

The enrichment process takes time --

THE PILOT

-- not enough. You've slowed him down, but we don't have a second to lose.

(off JR's look)

Our mission hasn't changed. Make sure your ship's ready to fly. We're outta here in five minutes.

JR

I'm gonna need at least an hour to--

THE PILOT

-- *five minutes*. That's an order, Lieutenant.

The Pilot turns away. A look of hurt disappointment crosses JR's face. She closes the case with a SLAM.

EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

Adam pursues The Pilot out of the house as The Pilot lugs the crate of celium into the yard.

ADAM

What are you doing?

THE PILOT

What's it look like? You wanna give me a hand?

ADAM

(ignoring that)

You brought that girl back from the dead. You said she was the girl of our dreams, and you're acting like you're not even happy to see her!

THE PILOT

You wouldn't understand.

ADAM

I really wish you'd stop saying that.

THE PILOT

You never had to lose her.

JR's capsule UNCLOAKS, right in the middle of the lawn. Adam follows The Pilot inside.

ADAM

I don't believe it. You're a ...  
you're just a ... you're a little  
chicken-shit!

The Pilot sets the crate down with a HEAVY THUD.

THE PILOT

I don't think you're one to talk.  
In fact, I *know* you're not.

ADAM

Yeah, but guess what? I'm *twelve!*  
I'm *allowed* to be chicken-shit, but  
you ... *you're supposed to be*  
*better than this!*

THE PILOT

Better? Kid. I'm an *astronaut*. I've  
broken the speed of light, I hosted  
a kickball tournament on the moon,  
I've been to Saturn! *Saturn!!* What  
more do you want from me?

ADAM

I want you to grow a pair, and *tell*  
her -- !

JR

-- tell me what?

JR has appeared outside the capsule. The Pilot seems like  
he's about to talk, when Young JR calls out from the doorway--

YOUNG JR

Uh, guys? I think you might want to  
come see this!

INT. JR'S HOUSE - DAY

Adam, The Pilot and JR gather around the TV, broadcasting a  
LOCAL NEWS REPORT. ON SCREEN, cell-phone footage of people  
gathering on a street, staring up at a FLAMING STREAK in the  
sky. Amateur footage of The Captain's arrival.

REPORTER

-- *strikingly similar to the*  
*disturbance witnessed yesterday in*  
*Iowa, though the government*  
*continues to deny aircraft testing*  
*in the area.*

The Pilot glances to Adam.

THE PILOT  
Want to go for a ride?

EXT. JR'S HOUSE - DAY

Adam, JR and The Pilot come running out of the house, now dressed in MATCHING FLIGHTSUITS.

YOUNG JR  
Hey! What about me?

JR goes back to her younger self.

THE PILOT  
No time for goodbyes!

JR whispers something in Young JR's ear. Young JR reacts with a disbelieving look. Then, relenting, she shrugs.

YOUNG JR  
... I'll try.

JR  
That's my girl.

JR continues for the capsule. Adam comes alongside.

ADAM  
What'd you tell her?

JR  
I told her not to be so hard on you.

ADAM  
Oh ... Thanks!

INT. JR'S CAPSULE - COCKPIT - DAY

Our trio straps themselves in as the capsule HUMS to life. JR enters coordinates, charting their course via an interactive map of the Solar System.

THE PILOT  
Marie Gordon died on July 2, 2000,  
in London, England, at the corner  
of Oxford and Regent. We have to  
get back at least before then.

JR  
(looking out the window)  
One problem.

JR indicates a FLAMING STREAK in the sky.

THE PILOT

Tommy.

INT. THE CAPTAIN'S CAPSULE - DAY

The viewscreen ZOOMS IN and FREEZES a STILL-FRAME of The Pilot's passenger -- blurry, but unmistakably JR. Glances are exchanged among the crew.

DASH

I don't get it. If Adam killed JR,  
why would he bring her back?

JASPER

He obviously just needed her ship.  
Right, Captain?

A hint of doubt in The Captain's eyes. He blinks it away.

THE CAPTAIN

Hit 'em with the EMP.

INT. JR'S CAPSULE - DAY

SCREAMING ALARMS --

THE PILOT

They've got weapons lock! He's  
gonna cripple our flight systems  
with one shot!

ADAM

Take off, take off!

THE PILOT

Can't, the grid's still firing up!

Adam DUCKS and COVERS.

EXT. SKY - DAY

The Captain's capsule FIRES. A PULSE descends over JR's capsule.

**BOOOOMMMMM!!!** DUST SETTLES to REVEAL -- the capsule remains untouched. Gleaming like new.

INT. JR'S CAPSULE - DAY

JR

Shields are damaged ... thirty  
percent capacity.

Adam and The Pilot peek out from cover.

ADAM

This thing's got *shields!*?

JR

I read your note. Decided to make some upgrades.

THE PILOT

(he has to admit it)  
You're awesome.

JR

I know. Grid's up.

THE PILOT

Rock and roll.

EXT. JR'S HOUSE - DAY

JR's capsule EXPLODES into space and The Captain pursues -- TWO MATCHING STREAKS in the clear blue sky. JR watches from her window, eyes fixed into the heavens. *She's hooked.*

YOUNG JR

Wow.

EXT. SPACE/INT. JR'S CAPSULE - NIGHT

Finally: a lightspeed chase across the cosmos. The Pilot drives, textbook evasive maneuvers.

JR

He's on our tail! Can you shake him?

THE PILOT

Always wanted to find out.

The Pilot BANKS HARD, accelerating towards an ASTEROID FIELD. JR sees what he's doing and SHOUTS back to Adam --

JR

Seat belts!

INT. THE CAPTAIN'S CAPSULE - NIGHT

The Captain locks onto JR's ship. MILLIONS of CHUNKS of INTERGALACTIC ICE and ROCK, from BUICKS to BASKETBALLS, go SOARING PAST.

LAURA

Captain, fall back! You're gonna get us all killed!

But The Captain remains focused, unwavering.

INT. JR'S CAPSULE - NIGHT

The Pilot clears the larger rocks, but SMALLER DEBRIS PELTS THE SHIP. CRACKS snake across the viewscreen.

The Pilot's device VIBRATES -- The Captain's voice ECHOES --

THE CAPTAIN

Adam, think about what you're doing. If you go back any further, I can't protect you.

THE PILOT

Is that what you've been doing so far? *Protecting* me?

THE CAPTAIN

I convinced Zucker to let me bring you in alive, but if you do this, all bets are off. No telling what the old man might do.

THE PILOT

I understand the risks.

JR

INCOMING!!

AHEAD, a COLOSSAL ASTEROID, the size of a skyscraper hurdles towards them. The Pilot targets a MINISCULE OPENING and BLASTS THROUGH, threading the needle. A moment passes ... then The Captain emerges, also clearing the belt.

The viewscreen now shows a CLEAR VIEW of OPEN SPACE.

JR

Now's our chance. If we're gonna breach, it has to be now.

The Pilot's finger hovers over a BIG RED BUTTON. The Captain's voice rings in his ears.

THE CAPTAIN (O.C.)

*It doesn't have to be like this. Just circle back, we can talk this through. Please, Adam ...*

THE PILOT

Sorry, Cap. I've made my choice. You make yours.

ADAM PRESSES THE BUTTON --

The ship GAINS SPEED, throwing Adam violently back against his seat. A COUNTDOWN appears --

*TIME TO BREACH. :59, :58, :57 ...*

INT. THE CAPTAIN'S CAPSULE - NIGHT

DASH

They're gonna breach!

The Captain knows what he has to do ... and it kills him.

THE CAPTAIN

Sight target. Prepare to fire.

LAURA

Captain, if we fire at this speed,  
we could rupture their fuel cells.  
We could kill them!

JASPER

Torpedoes are locked! I don't know  
how much longer I can hold them ...

A moment's decision ... The Captain nods --

THE CAPTAIN

Fire.

EXT. SPACE/INT. JR'S CAPSULE - NIGHT

A torpedo LAUNCHES, FRACTURING OFF into a MULTI-HIT PROJECTILE.

JR

Weapons away!

The Pilot VEERS across space -- a deadly game of cat and mouse with the fractured torpedo. JR climbs in back with Adam, helping him situate his mask.

JR

Okay, focus. You're about to get a  
crash course in faster-than-light  
astronautics. Speed is all about  
reducing friction. The ship will do  
its job, but you have to do yours.  
*Clear your mind of everything, all  
thoughts and memories, even the  
sound of my voice. Can you do that?*

Adam nods, but his eyes are full of fear.

The projectiles FLANK the ship, coming in for the kill, just as the countdown reaches ZERO.

THE PILOT  
Drive's online! Everybody ready?

ADAM JR  
Ready for what!? Punch it!

The Pilot PUSHES A LEVER --

The space ahead seems to CONTORT as the projectiles close in from all directions. They COLLIDE with a MASSIVE ZERO-GRAVITY EXPLOSION.

INT. THE CAPTAIN'S CAPSULE - NIGHT

The Captain watches as the vacuum of space absorbs the blast to REVEAL --

The ship is gone. He PUNCHES his console. *Damn!*

EXT. WORMHOLE/INT. JR'S CAPSULE - NIGHT

BREACHING THE LUMINAL BARRIER. We shift into ADAM'S POV, experiencing the teeth-rattling rush of lightspeed for the first time. He glances out the window as the starfield COLLAPSES into a SINGLE POINT OF LIGHT; the light EXPANDS into a TUNNEL, which ENVELOPS the ship as we TRANSITION TO --

A BRILLIANT FLASH OF IMAGES --

FLASH: Tommy hits a LINE DRIVE HOMERUN as CROWDS CHEER and Adam watches from the sidelines.

FLASH: Adam pulls away from Tommy at the window --

ADAM  
I'm not scared!

FLASH: Adam shakes hands with an UNSEEN MAN --

TOMMY  
Adam, this is Arnand Zucker. He has a proposition he'd like to discuss with you ...

FLASH: JR's smiling face.

JR  
Hi, I'm Jimmy Ryan. My friends call me JR. You must be Adam ...

FLASH: All of the astronauts pose in their flightsuits -- Adam, Tommy, JR, Jasper, Laura and Dash -- one happy family. A picture is taken (the picture). With a FLASH --

Adam's eyes SNAP OPEN, coming out of his trance to the SOUND of SCREAMING ALARMS --

JR

Dammit! We're out of warp!

THE PILOT

A projectile must've connected before we breached. How far back did we get?

JR

One way to find out.

THE PILOT

Sling-shot?

JR

Sling-shot.

YOUNG ADAM

What's sling-shIIIIIIIIIIIT!!!!

THE PILOT SLING-SHOTS THE CAPSULE AROUND THE MOON --

The sudden speed causes Adam to RETCH in his mask. He apologizes to JR with his eyes.

The Pilot completes the sling-shot maneuver, ROCKETING back towards Earth. Gravity takes hold and the capsule enters the atmosphere. It instantly catches FIRE. Layers of the exterior shell BURN UP and PEEL OFF, disintegrating immediately.

A LAND MASS appears through the clouds. EUROPE.

EXT. LONDON - RIVER THAMES - DAY

Tourists fill the Parliament grounds, posing in front of the Big Ben, snapping photos from Westminster Bridge. In the distance, the London Eye is gleaming and freshly-built.

INT. JR'S CAPSULE - DAY

Adam's SCREAMS are overwhelmed by the DEAFENING NOISE of the crashing ship. The Pilot decelerates, but the ground is coming up fast. *It's gonna be close ...*

EXT. RIVER THAMES - DAY

**BAM!** The capsule SMASHES into the Thames, SKIPPING LIKE A ROCK.

A PAIR OF SAILBOATS ahead. Adam BANKS HARD, skirting between the watercraft as the occupants dive over the side.

ON THE BRIDGE, tourists see the ship coming. They RUN SCREAMING, abandoning their belongings. It looks like the capsule is on a collision course --

-- before it LOSES ALTITUDE at the last moment, passing UNDER THE ARCHES, displacing HUGE AMOUNTS OF WATER, which SOAKS the pedestrians above.

The capsule skids to a graceless stop across the river surface. It bobs a moment. Then SINKS.

INT. JR'S CAPSULE - DAY

Descending rapidly through the river depths. JR starts to unlatch the celium crate.

THE PILOT

Leave it! There's no time! Don't worry, it'll survive the blast!

ADAM

Blast ... *what blast!?*

The Pilot finishes keying in a sequence. He moves for an EMERGENCY HATCH.

THE PILOT

On my count, take a deep breath!  
Make for the surface! They're gonna try to arrest us, so swim *opposite directions!* Lead them off!

(a sudden thought; he looks to Adam)

Are you sure you can do this?

Adam manages a weak thumbs up.

ADAM

Easy peasy.

The Pilot smiles, finding comfort in Adam's humor. He grips the hatch --

THE PILOT

One! Two! THREE!

Everyone takes a DEEP BREATH and The Pilot OPENS THE HATCH --  
 Water SLAMS into the cockpit, SUBMERGING our group. They swim  
 off DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS as the capsule SINKS into oblivion.

EXT. RIVER THAMES - DAY

Adam pulls himself out of the river. IN THE DISTANCE, he sees  
 The Pilot and JR, already surrounded by police.

MOMENTS LATER, Adam pushes through the crowd. The Pilot and  
 JR are under arrest, handcuffs SNAPPED on as The Pilot pleads  
 with the squad leader --

THE PILOT

Listen, I know how this is gonna  
 sound, but what day is it? What  
 year?

JR

Adam ...

JR is focused on a newsstand. Every paper features the  
 current date: *JULY 2, 2000*.

A look of SHEER PANIC crosses The Pilot's face. He LUNGES  
 against his restraints, pulling free from the constable. He  
 reaches for his Athens device --

-- but it's knocked from his hands, skidding across the  
 ground, stopping at Adam's feet. Adam picks it up.

The Pilot is overpowered, SLAMMED onto a car hood. His head  
 is held down, forcing his gaze to Adam. He SHOUTS --

THE PILOT

Adam! It's up to you! You have to  
 save her!

(Adam doesn't understand)

Marie! She's gonna die, Adam!  
 Today!

COPS start coming towards Adam when they see him holding the  
 fallen device.

THE PILOT

GO!!

Adam comes to his senses and RUNS, slipping off into the  
 crowd, using his lack of size as an advantage to evade  
 police. Mid-run, he activates the device --

A newspaper article fills the screen: *NOBEL LAUREATE KILLED  
 IN FATAL CRASH*. FOCUS on the time of the accident: 2:45 PM.

Adam has a clear view of the Big Ben: just past 2:30. He inwardly groans -- *figures* -- then HAULS ASS. Behind him --

SPLA-WHOOOOSSSHHHHHH! The capsule DETONATES, sending a GEYSER SHOOTING STRAIGHT UP, right in the middle of the Thames.

CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

DR. MARIE GORDON, 50's, is at the podium, addressing a sparsely-crowded auditorium. As she speaks, we PAN THROUGH the crowd -- a sea of drooping eyelids and disbelieving smirks. *This woman obviously isn't taken seriously.*

MARIE

... as we know, an object gains mass as it gains speed, which requires energy, so as an object approaches the speed of light, its mass becomes infinite -- thereby requiring an equal amount of energy to break the luminal barrier. In short, to go *beyond* infinity. But what if infinity is closer than we think? What if we could break the luminal barrier without even breaking the speed limit on the M4, through the manipulation and deformation of spacetime itself?

Muffled laughter from a distant corner of the auditorium. Marie shrugs -- the possibilities alive only in her imagination.

MARIE

What if?

EXT. LONDON STREET CORNER - DAY

Adam runs to catch a DOUBLE DECKER BUS, already pulling away. He barely makes it -- breathlessly addresses the DRIVER --

ADAM

Wait! Please, I need to get to the corner of Oxford and Regent.

DRIVER

Oxford and Regent? What does this look like to you, son? It's a bloody tour bus!

Adam notices -- the bus is FILLED WITH TOURISTS. A moment's decision. Adam aims his blaster at the driver.

ADAM

Not anymore.

DRIVER

What's that? Video game?

Adam shuts his eyes and emits a SHOCKWAVE that SHATTERS EVERY WINDOW on the bus. PASSENGERS SCREAM, evacuating the bus in droves.

ADAM

No, wait! Where are you going!? I can't drive this thing myself!

Quickly, Adam is alone -- except for ONE KID, smiling from a nearby seat, up for a little adventure. Adam glances to the now-vacated wheel. *What choice does he have?*

INT. DOUBLE DECKER BUS - DAY

Adam drives, barreling through downtown traffic, trying to look at a map and keep his eyes on the road at the same time.

ADAM

Oxford and Regent, Oxford and Regent ... *why's everyone driving on the wrong side of the road!?*

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

The Pilot and JR are seated in back, a SINGLE OFFICER up front. His radio CRACKLES --

DISPATCH

*All units be on the lookout, we have a disturbance in progress, west of Regent Park.*

OFFICER

Go ahead.

DISPATCH

*Looks like some kid's taken a tour bus on a bit of a joyride. American, most likely.*

The Pilot and JR share a look. *Uh-oh.* SIRENS WAIL as the officer REVERSES DIRECTION --

INT. DOUBLE DECKER BUS - DAY

Adam SWERVES to avoid a collision. Ahead, traffic is STALLED.

Adam can't reach the brakes, so he VEERS onto the sidewalk.

ADAM

Kid! Help with the brakes!

The Little Kid answers the call of duty, manning the pedals.

LITTLE KID

I just want you to know, you're the coolest kid I've ever met in my entire life.

ADAM

... okay. You push, I'll steer!

The kid palms the gas.

INT. MARIE'S CAR - DAY

Marie drives at a leisurely pace, sipping coffee. The clock on the dash reads 2:42. Her cellphone RINGS. She answers.

MARIE

Hello? Arnie! I was just on my way to see you. How'd it go today?

A beat. Marie's face drops. *Clearly, whatever she's hearing, it's big news.*

MARIE

You're joking ... you're joking!  
And it's stable? At *that* temperature?  
(not a chance)  
The measurements must be off. Run it again.

INT. DOUBLE DECKER BUS - DAY

Adam takes a HARD LEFT and the double decker bus TILTS UP ON ONE END, barely making the turn.

ADAM

What's the shortest way to Oxford Circus!?

KID

Through the park!

Off Adam's reaction -- *why not?* --

EXT. REGENT PARK - DAY

The bus tears through the park, scattering joggers, upending picnic tables. Total pandemonium.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

The officer coasts along a quiet street.

OFFICER

Liz, I'm heading east on Regent. I  
don't see any tour bus ...

DISPATCH

*It should be there ...*

The Pilot turns towards the park. Eyes go wide --

THE PILOT

BRACE!!

THE BUS COMES OUT OF NOWHERE, clipping the front of the patrol car, sending it SPINNING OUT across lanes of traffic. We can faintly hear Adam SHOUTING back as the bus VEERS OFF towards Oxford Circus --

ADAM (O.C.)

*Sorryyy ... !*

The cruiser is badly-damaged but operational, the officer unconscious behind the wheel. The Pilot and JR climb out in time to see the bus careen around a bend. A shared glance ...

JR

I'm driving.

MOMENTS LATER, the patrol car SCREECHES off in pursuit of the bus, leaving the officer splayed out across a park bench.

INT. MARIE'S CAR - DAY

The clock on the dash reads 2:44. One minute to go. Marie is still on the phone with "Arnie" --

MARIE

Well, I'm not saying you can't have  
a party, let's just not get ahead  
of ourselves. We should at least  
verify the --

She hits a bump and spills coffee on her blouse.

MARIE

Oh ... shoot, just a second.  
(fumbling for a napkin)  
Three PhD's and I can't even have a  
cup of coffee without making a mess  
of myself ...

INT. DOUBLE DECKER BUS - DAY

The bus SLAMS through a barricade, riding the shoulder. Adam checks the time. Exactly 2:45.

ADAM

*Gas, hit the gas, don't stop, don't stop!!*

The kid SLAMS THE GAS, flooring it.

EXT. OXFORD AND REGENT - DAY

Marie's car comes to a stop at a busy intersection. WIDEN to REVEAL the road signs -- OXFORD and REGENT.

The light turns green. Marie idles into the intersection, failing to notice an SUV, racing through the opposing red light at 70 mph, barreling down on her, too fast to stop.

Suddenly --

**CRASH!!** The double decker bus comes out of nowhere, blocking the SUV and absorbing the collision in the nick of time.

The crash SLAMS the bus sideways into Marie's car, SMASHING it against a concrete partition.

Then, silence. *No way of knowing who survived.*

PUSH IN on the smoking husk of the bus. The doors OPEN --

Adam staggers out. He finds Marie's car, pancaked between steel and concrete. He climbs onto the sunroof. Starts POUNDING on the glass.

ADAM

*Hello? Dr. Gordon!?*

No response. Adam finds a loose chunk of debris and SMASHES in the sunroof. He drops into the car --

INSIDE THE CAR, Marie is slumped against the wheel. From somewhere, we hear the DISEMBODIED VOICE of the man she was talking to --

VOICE

*Marie, are you there? Marie? Can you hear me?*

Adam finds and hangs up the phone. He focuses on Marie. It's hard to even tell if she's even breathing ... until her eyes BLINK OPEN and settle on Adam.

MARIE

Hello.

Adam smiles, overcome with relief.

ADAM

Hi.

MARIE

I don't mean to be rude, but who are you?

ADAM

I'm, uh ...  
 (settling on the truth)  
 ... an astronaut from the future.

Marie takes that in. Nods, delirious.

MARIE

All right.

She passes out. Adam collapses in the passenger seat beside her. Exhausted.

EXT. OXFORD AND REGENT - MOMENTS LATER

The Pilot and JR pull up in the busted patrol car. Adam and the Little Kid are hauling Marie from the wreck between them.

ADAM

I did it! I saved her!

The Pilot takes in the MASSIVE PILE-UP.

THE PILOT

Yeah ... good job ...

SIRENS approach. The Pilot and JR hurry to help as we CUT TO--

NEW ANGLE -- The Captain spies on the scene from a distant rooftop. He turns to the other astronauts ... all waiting for a decision. He nods.

THE CAPTAIN

Call it in.

CUT TO:

INT. PICADILLY RESTAURANT - DAY

Adam and The Pilot wolf down food with bizarrely synchronous gestures, mirroring one another's idiosyncracies. Across the table, Marie can only stare.



THE PILOT

You're harnessing celium. In your lab, as we speak. That's how it all starts.

MARIE

Let go of my hand.

THE PILOT

It's silicon-based, highly unstable, until you try testing it at extreme temperatures, at which point it not only stabilizes, but yields an unlimited output, essentially *creating* energy from nothing. Tell me I'm wrong.

MARIE

I don't even know what celium is. Frankly, it sounds made up.

This Pilot blinks. He wasn't prepared for that. He lets go of Marie's hand.

MARIE

... it's a good story, though. Race against time, save the world and all that. Very exciting. And the outfits. I love the outfits.

With that, Marie is gone, leaving our trio behind, in their matching shiny flightsuits.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Marie exits the restaurant. As soon as she's clear, we notice that her hands are SHAKING. She strides quickly off.

CUT TO:

EXT. VACANT FIELD - NIGHT

A star capsule comes in for a landing before The Captain, standing alone in an open field. The ramp descends and Jasper emerges, followed shortly behind by Laura and Dash. They have to SHOUT over the ROAR of the machine --

JASPER

It's not good! The old man says you've lost control! He wants Adam neutralized!

THE CAPTAIN

Neutralized ... ?

The Captain notices the KILL TEAM emerging from smoke behind Jasper, filing down the ramp. Trained soldiers, armed to the teeth, faces obscured by high-tech faceplates.

THE CAPTAIN  
... you're gonna kill him!?

Jasper shrugs: *what'd you expect?* The Captain looks to Laura and Dash to confirm, but they can't meet his gaze.

THE CAPTAIN  
I can't let you do that.

JASPER  
I thought you might feel that way.

Jasper nods to the soldiers. They APPREHEND The Captain, grabbing him by either arm.

THE CAPTAIN  
What the -- *what are you doing!?*

JASPER  
What you should've already done.  
Sir.

Restraints are clamped on. Jasper steps close.

JASPER  
Not to worry, Cap. Your title will be reinstated as soon as Adam's handled. The old man wanted me to be clear about that. In the meantime ...

Jasper gives a signal and the kill team moves out in perfect formation, to a series of waiting transports. The Captain is helpless to do anything but watch. *This is gonna get ugly ...*

CUT TO:

EXT. RENT-A-CAR - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Pilot and Adam sit alone in a (presumably) stolen car, staking out the lot of a rental agency.

ADAM  
What do we do now?

THE PILOT  
Follow the good doctor until she leads us to something we can use against the program.

Adam nods, staring vacantly out the window. The Pilot notices his distant expression.

THE PILOT  
What's wrong?

ADAM  
Nothing ...  
(then)  
When we were coming in, back on the ship, I thought I ...

THE PILOT  
... saw something?

ADAM  
Yes.

THE PILOT  
Like a memory?

ADAM  
Yes! Except, it was strange. Like a memory that never happened.

THE PILOT  
It did happen, it just hasn't happened yet. We call them flashbulb premonitions. We've all had them. Try not to worry about it.

The Pilot can see Adam isn't satisfied. He leans in --

THE PILOT  
Listen. I know you've got questions. I would, too. But if I told you everything you wanted to know, you could wind up on a completely different course.

ADAM  
Different from what? From you?  
(beat)  
What if I don't *want* to be you?

The question stings. JR returns to the car, cutting off the conversation.

JR  
She's on the move. Purple Neon, heading north on Barton.

The Pilot keys the ignition.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Tailing a DODGE NEON into a residential neighborhood. AHEAD, a HOUSE PARTY is in full swing.

BLASTING MUSIC can be heard all the way down the street. Nearly a hundred people are crammed into the house, many spilling onto the lawn, where a table tennis tournament looks to be entering its third hour.

JR

This *can't* be where she's going.

But sure enough, Marie leaves her car and heads straight into the party. Adam takes in the crowd.

ADAM

These are the people who take over the world?

THE PILOT

It's always the nerds. Wait here.

The Pilot gets out. Adam and JR share a glance once he's gone ... roll their eyes, follow after him.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The place is packed. Marie moves through the ocean of bodies until she finds who she's looking for -- a YOUNG MAN with his back turned, staring forward at something with great interest. She SHOUTS over the music --

MARIE

Arnie! I need to talk to you!

ARNAND ZUCKER hardly seems old enough to be out of college, let alone the master of the universe we know him to be.

ZUCKER

Not now, Marie. I have to concentrate.

MARIE

It's important!

ZUCKER

So is this.

Zucker holds up a PING PONG BALL. With the focus of a heart surgeon, he BOUNCES it across the table, into a red plastic cup. Crowds ERUPT in CELEBRATION. The vanquished player groans -- lifts his cup in salute --

ZUCKER

Drink it! And leave the ball in  
this time! Boss's orders!

Finally, Zucker turns to Marie. His smile fades when he sees her -- still banged up from the accident.

ZUCKER

My God, what happened to you?

MARIE

What? Oh -- this, nothing. I was in  
a car accident.

ZUCKER

You were in a car accident, and  
that's *not* what you want to talk to  
me about?

Off Marie's reaction: *where to begin?*

ACROSS THE PARTY, The Pilot enters, drawing a bit of attention to himself. He spots Zucker and Marie across the room. Starts making his way over.

BACK TO ZUCKER AND MARIE -- mid-story --

MARIE

... but you should have seen them,  
Arnie, they were genuinely serious.  
They actually believed --

ZUCKER

-- what? That they were from the  
future? Come on Marie, it's obvious  
someone was having a go at you. The  
important thing is, you're safe.  
And you're at a party! Try to  
lighten up a bit.

Zucker hands Marie a drink.

MARIE

I don't want this.

ZUCKER

You will. When I tell you why we're  
celebrating.

Marie looks Zucker in the eye ... and for a moment, all worries of time-traveling astronauts are forgotten.

MARIE

You verified the results?

ZUCKER

I'm telling you, M, this stuff is *miraculous*. I can feel it, this is everything we've waited for, everything we've worked for. I've already put in a bid to double our lab's supply.

Over Zucker's shoulder, Marie spots THE PILOT, coming towards her through throngs of partygoers.

MARIE

Arnie --

ZUCKER

(talking over her)  
-- and we even have a name for it now, too! Jared thought it up on the way over. And here I thought he was completely useless --

MARIE

-- Arnie, that's him, that's --

ZUCKER

Celium.

Marie FREEZES at the word.

MARIE

... what?

ZUCKER

Celium! That's what we're calling it! Has a ring, don't you think?

Marie meets eyes with The Pilot across the room. She pushes past Zucker.

MARIE

Excuse me.

Zucker watches after Marie as she intercepts The Pilot and discreetly pulls him out the back door. His eyes narrow, suspicious ... then he addresses the crowd --

ZUCKER

Who's my next victim?

Volunteers CHEER, pushing enthusiastically forward.

EXT. BACK LAWN - NIGHT

Marie confers with The Pilot and JR --

MARIE

Okay, so assuming for one second I believed you are who you say you are ... what's the next step?

JR

That depends. You're sure Zucker knows about celium?

MARIE

He begins field testing tomorrow. He's already buying up mines of the stuff.

JR

It won't be long before he turns his attention to space.

MARIE

Space. *Outer* space? No no, that's impossible. Arnie gets *carsick*.

So far, The Pilot has said nothing. Marie notices, worried.

MARIE

What are you going to do?

THE PILOT

Whatever I have to.

(then)

I'm sorry.

MARIE

For what?

A SUBTLE PULSE and Marie faints into The Pilot's arms. A few partygoers notice, but The Pilot waves off their concerns --

THE PILOT

She's fine! Just had a bit too much to drink ...

JR helps The Pilot ease Marie into a comfortable resting position.

THE PILOT

Stay with her.

She knows what he's thinking.

JR

Adam, you can't do this.

THE PILOT

Starting tomorrow, the company goes public with the results. If Zucker dies tonight, the program dies with him.

JR

If we do it like this, we're no better than he is.

The Pilot nods, he knows it's the truth. Something occurs to him; he looks around. *Uh-oh.*

THE PILOT

Where's Adam?

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The beer pong tournament has become TRULY EPIC. Adam sinks a MASTERFUL SHOT. Crowds ROAR, hoisting Adam up in victory as the loser -- Zucker -- is forced to drink.

ZUCKER

You're quite good at this, young man! I think your size gives you an unfair advantage.

The Pilot appears, fixed on Adam.

THE PILOT

There you are! You had me worried sick.

ZUCKER

Oh, I'm sure he didn't mean any harm. Is that your little one? I can tell, he's got your eyes.

(then, on closer inspection)

Good God man, what are you *wearing*?

Zucker pauses when he notices the logo on The Pilot's suit: NEXTSTAR CORP. Even drunk, we can detect a flash of the cold, calculating intelligence in Zucker's eyes.

ZUCKER

Ah, I see. You came with Marie, didn't you. I heard you played something of a practical joke on her. I can assure you, I will not be so easily fooled.

THE PILOT

I believe you.

ZUCKER

Although, I admit, I am impressed.  
You only could've known what you  
knew if someone with access put you  
up to it. One of my staff, perhaps?  
Maybe even someone in this house?

(a conspiring whisper)

Give me their names, and whatever  
they paid you, I'll double it.

THE PILOT

Is there someplace we can talk?

For a moment, the two lock eyes. Across the table, Adam  
watches with the interest of a voyeur. Finally, Zucker  
smiles, ignoring whatever internal warnings may be sounding.

ZUCKER

Of course. Follow me.

Zucker leads The Pilot off. As he does, The Pilot quietly  
reaches into his pocket, and activates his Athens device.

CUT TO:

EXT. VACANT FIELD - NIGHT

Dash keeps watch over The Captain. He's pacing, nervous. The  
Captain's eyes follow him, sensing weakness.

THE CAPTAIN

They're gonna kill him, Dash. You  
know Jasper, he won't even give  
Adam a chance to surrender.

Dash stops pacing.

THE CAPTAIN

I know you like him. I know he was  
your friend. We can still save him.

A beat. Dash is toying with the key to The Captain's  
restraints. He turns. A decision reached.

DASH

Make it look good.

Dash tosses the key. The Captain realizes what he's asking.

MOMENTS LATER, the CRACK of a PUNCH, and Dash SPRAWLS OUT in  
the field, unconscious. A transport races off.

INT. TRANSPORT - NIGHT

The Captain drives in a panic, swerving through traffic. His Athens device is tuned to the kill team's frequency --

JASPER'S VOICE

*All units stand by, prepare to push  
in on my command.*

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The kill team sweeps through shadows, checking weapons, positioning charges. None of the surrounding partygoers comes close to noticing.

INT. HOUSE - ZUCKER'S PARLOR - NIGHT

Zucker leads The Pilot into a private study. A DRUNK COUPLE excuses themselves from making out, avoiding eye contact. "Sorry, Boss." Zucker crosses to the bar.

ZUCKER

You know what they say. The harder  
they work ...

He starts preparing a couple drinks. Unbeknownst to them both, ADAM crouches at the door, listening in.

ZUCKER

So, what are you, exactly? The  
three of you. Some sort of  
traveling troupe?

THE PILOT

Something like that.

The Pilot's hand remains in his pocket -- like a gunslinger preparing to draw. Zucker hands him a drink. The Pilot uses his free hand to accept it.

ZUCKER

Of course, I can take a joke as  
well as the next fellow, but you  
must understand, what we do here is  
very sensitive.

THE PILOT

And what's that exactly?

ZUCKER

We punch holes in the universe.  
(a disarming smile)  
That's the dream, anyway.

THE PILOT  
... interesting dream.

The Pilot takes a sip without breaking eye contact.

ZUCKER  
So, go on. A deal's a deal. Who put  
you up to it?

The Pilot just stares at Zucker. Impossible to read.

CLOSE ON ZUCKER, starting to realize something is wrong here. Something in the way The Pilot is staring at him ... the slow-burning intensity behind his eyes.

Zucker moves to get around The Pilot. A BURST OF MOVEMENT --

The Pilot DROPS his glass and PULLS his Athens device. It retracts into BLASTER MODE as the glass SHATTERS and Adam RUNS IN --

ADAM  
Don't!

The Pilot freezes. Finger on the trigger.

THE PILOT  
Get out of here, Adam.

ADAM  
You can't do this. This isn't us!

THE PILOT  
(convincing himself)  
We don't have a choice.

ADAM  
We have to. We're not a killer!

Zucker looks between the two Adams.

ZUCKER  
... we?

THE PILOT  
Shut up!

The Pilot's grip tightens ... but his hands are shaking. He's losing his nerve. *He can't do it.*

Just as he starts to lower the weapon -- **BOOM!** AN EXPLOSION ROCKS THE HOUSE.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

CHARGES DETONATE one by one, SHATTERING windows, DEMOLISHING the face of the house. SCREAMING PANIC as guests scramble to evacuate.

RANDOM PARTYGOER  
It's the cops!!

Jasper and his team advance into the melee, rifles raised.

JASPER  
All units advance! Sweep in pairs!  
No one leaves until we ID the  
targets!

Faceplate readouts SEE THROUGH WALLS, scanning and identifying the panicked crowd as they flee past.

INT. ZUCKER'S PARLOR - NIGHT

The Pilot picks out from under debris. Zucker is gone. *Damn*. He crouches over Adam, SLAPS him awake.

THE PILOT  
Listen. I want you to stay here.  
Hold for my signal, then run. *Don't*  
wait for me. Here --

The Pilot hands Adam his Athens device.

ADAM  
What's this for?

THE PILOT  
Think like me. You'll know what to  
do.

With that, The Pilot SPRINTS from the room, head down.

He slides into the kitchen as artillery pock-marks the wall behind him, EXPLODING the contents of the fridge.

Back to the counter, The Pilot KICKS the stove until it JARS LOOSE. A gas line SEVERs, HISSING flammable fumes.

ON THE KILL TEAM, sweeping through the house.

SOLDIER'S POV -- Pilot-shaped infrared BREAKS COVER and RUNS. On instinct, the soldier raises his rifle --

JASPER  
No, DON'T!!!

-- and FIRES, catching the gas line, which SPARKS, then IGNITES in a STAGGERED, CATAclysmic EXPLOSION that DEVASTATES what's left of the house. The Pilot dives clear of the blast.

ON ADAM, feeling the impact of the explosion. He SPRINTS out a side exit, unnoticed in the commotion.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

The Pilot recovers from the blast. He starts to stand, when a VOICE from behind stops him cold.

THE CAPTAIN

Adam.

The Pilot turns. THE CAPTAIN has his blaster raised. The Pilot shows his hands.

ON ADAM, crouched in hiding. From his vantage point, he can see The Pilot's predicament. He STARTS FORWARD, intending to intervene --

-- but The Pilot wordlessly signals him to stay back. All the while, The Pilot keeps his gaze fixed on The Captain. SOUNDS of the kill team getting closer hang over the scene.

THE CAPTAIN

No more running, Adam. It's over.

(re: the house)

Looks like you pushed one too many of the old man's buttons when you stole that celium.

THE PILOT

You think I'm just gonna tell you where it is?

THE CAPTAIN

There's no other way out of this. They've cut off every escape within fifty miles. If you even *try* to run, they'll shoot you. And JR. You want out of this, you have to do what I say.

THE PILOT

That's what I'm good at, right? Doing what you say. Following orders. Look where it got me ...

THE CAPTAIN

You know none of this was my fault. You started this ... you can end it.

The Captain retracts his blaster. Moving forward, as though approaching a wild animal.

THE CAPTAIN  
Just stop running. Just *trust me*.

A long beat, as The Pilot decides ...

EXT. BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Soldiers clear the flaming wreckage. JR is with them, already restrained. Through the smoke, a figure appears -- THE CAPTAIN, accompanied by The Pilot.

THE CAPTAIN  
Relax, gentlemen! I want it noted,  
he surrendered of his own accord!

JR  
Adam! Where's -- ?

The Pilot subtly shakes his head: *don't mention the kid*. JR clams up as Jasper PUSHES past her -- badly burned from the blast, and pissed.

JASPER  
Where is he? I'm gonna kill him!

Jasper raises his blaster to The Pilot, but The Captain steps between them.

THE CAPTAIN  
Wait, Jasper, wait! It's okay, we got him. He told us where the celium is, I've already dispatched a retrieval team. It's over ...

A beat. Slowly, Jasper calms. He begrudgingly stows his weapon ... but can't help but SLUG The Pilot once in the gut, doubling him over. JR winces.

That accomplished, Jasper nods to the others. Soldiers advance. The Pilot glances back in the direction Adam took off, before he's SHOVED forward.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Adam watches from hiding as the star capsule TAKES OFF, vanishing into the sky. We HOLD on his face ... a helpless 12-year-old kid, lost and alone.

CUT TO:

EXT. CUL DE SAC - NIGHT

Emergency vehicles have arrived; cops and EMTs swarm the street. Adam sits in an open ambulance, blanket around his shoulders. Two EMTs converse --

EMT 1  
(re: Adam)  
What's his story?

EMT 2  
The kid? Shock, most likely.  
According to his statement, he  
hasn't even been born yet. All in  
all, no stranger than half the  
statements I've taken so far  
tonight.

ON ADAM, staring down at a cellphone in his hands. He's already dialed a number, but hesitates before hitting SEND.

Finally, he does. The phone DIALS.

INT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A MAN picks up. We may or may not recognize him from the shelf of photographs we saw earlier. It's Adam's father.

MAN  
Hello.

INTERCUT WITH ADAM. Tears immediately fill his eyes.

ADAM  
... Dad?

MAN  
Excuse me?

Behind the Man, BONNIE appears -- several years younger, and several months pregnant.

BONNIE  
Who is it, hun?

The Man puts down the phone and moves off with a shrug. Bonnie picks it up.

BONNIE  
Hello?

ON ADAM ... soaking in the sound of his mother's voice. For a moment, speechless. *He's never felt more alone.*

BONNIE (O.C.)  
 ... hello? Is anyone -- ?

Adam hangs up. He goes to put the phone away, when he notices the Athens device, still in his hands.

He remembers The Pilot's final words to him --

ADAM  
 Think like me ... think like me,  
 think like me ...

As if on cue, the ambulance RUMBLES to life and ACCELERATES down the street. Adam clings to the door to keep from falling out. EMTs give chase.

EMT  
 Hey, what the -- STOP!!

Adam crawls to the partition, slides it over to REVEAL --  
Marie is behind the wheel, driving like a madwoman.

ADAM  
 ... Dr. Gordon!? What're you  
 doing!?

MARIE  
 What does it look like? I'm  
 stealing an ambulance.  
 (off look)  
 You want to help your friends,  
 don't you?

ADAM  
 How? They're already gone!

MARIE  
 That all depends on your  
 perspective. I can tell you *where*  
 they're going. Only question is,  
*when* will they get there?

Adam notices a SCALPEL, lying on a tray of medical equipment. He picks it up. Looks from the small knife to the Athens device in his hands. An idea occurs. He grins.

ADAM  
 Step on it!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The ambulance PLOWS through a police barricade.

CUT TO:

INT. STAR CAPSULE - NIGHT

DATA flashes across the cockpit screen, showing the new date: JUNE 4, 2043. The Pilot sits alone, restrained in his chair. He frowns, notices --

A SCAR has materialized on his left arm -- a SINGLE INCISION has turned the curve-shaped scar on his right arm into the number 9. As this sinks in ...

THE CAPTAIN (O.C.)

*Strange ...*

The Pilot hides the scar as The Captain takes the empty seat beside him. He indicates out the window. A distant view of Earth.

THE CAPTAIN

... up here, everything looks the same.

The Pilot says nothing. The Captain lowers his voice --

THE CAPTAIN

You gotta give the old man some credit. Just explain what happened, tell him you overreacted. He's not a monster. He'll understand.

THE PILOT

We had a deal. We said we wouldn't try to change the past.

THE CAPTAIN

Really? Then what've you been doing this whole time?

THE PILOT

That's different.

THE CAPTAIN

Is it really?

The Pilot suddenly doesn't seem so sure.

THE CAPTAIN

Try to think of the bigger picture. We've got a chance to shape the future. Isn't that the dream?

THE PILOT

Not my dream ... I never wanted any of this.

THE CAPTAIN  
Then why didn't you just quit?

The Pilot considers ...

THE PILOT  
Because, I couldn't remember.

THE CAPTAIN  
Remember what?

THE PILOT  
Who I was, if I wasn't the guy  
trying to live up to your standard.

That stings.

THE CAPTAIN  
... and now?

THE PILOT  
Now, I remember.

From the pilot's chair, Laura interrupts --

LAURA  
We're here.

THROUGH THE WINDOW, NextStar headquarters comes into view --  
a towering structure that doubles as an AERONAUTICS BASE,  
complete with its own FLIGHT CONTROL TOWER.

MATCH DISSOLVE:

The same base, forty years earlier, still under construction.  
The main building is nearly complete, but the flight tower is  
nowhere to be found. We are --

EXT. NEXTSTAR CAMPUS - NIGHT (2000)

A shift change is in progress -- SECURITY PERSONNEL coming  
in, CONSTRUCTION CREWS going out.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Marie kills the engine as Adam finishes bandaging his arm,  
fixed on the approaching compound.

ADAM  
*This is NextStar?*

MARIE  
It will be. Here ...

Marie hands Adam a CARDKEY.

MARIE  
You'll need this to access the  
elevators.

ADAM  
Will it get me past the guards?

MARIE  
No.

Marie climbs out.

ADAM  
Where are you going?

MARIE  
To get you past the guards.

With that, she's gone.

INT. NEXTSTAR LOBBY - NIGHT

A security guard named FRANK mans the front desk, listening to ISLAND MUSIC via headphones ... which is why he doesn't notice as a CRANE rumbles to life outside the facility.

Frank HUMS ALONG to the music as the crane arm SWINGS AROUND, getting closer ... closer ... closer ... Finally --

**CRASH!** THE CRANE SLICES THROUGH THE BUILDING. Frank dives for cover as SMOKE and DEBRIS fills the air. He scrambles to his feet, failing to notice as ADAM sneaks in through the commotion, hiding behind a SCALE MODEL of an EARLY STAR CAPSULE DESIGN that dominates the lobby.

Frank fumbles for his radio --

FRANK  
Disturbance on level one,  
requesting backup! Repeat,  
requesting immediate backup ...

Frank sighs, taking in the surreal sight of the crane arm, wedged through the middle of the rotunda.

FRANK  
... cause I sure as hell ain't  
cleaning this up.

INT. NEXTSTAR HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - NIGHT (2043)

The Pilot and JR are escorted through the SAME LOBBY, now glistening and intact. They pass by FRANK -- the same guard, manning the same desk, now well past retirement age.

THE PILOT

Hiya, Frank.

FRANK

Mr. Archer.

AHEAD, a man stands with his back turned, facing a BANK OF MONITORS that cycle through NEWS BROADCASTS from around the world. Fires in Moscow. Bombings in Washington. Riots in Greece. Looting in Japan. Global pandemonium.

THE CAPTAIN

... sir?

The man turns -- ARNAND ZUCKER, now in his 60's. But this isn't the optimistic kid we met before. This man is hard and cold, his genius long-since joined with madness.

The crate of celium is set down before Zucker and opened -- the blue glow fills his eyes. He addresses The Pilot --

ZUCKER

I'm curious ... did you really believe you could swim upstream from fate? I admit, I've enjoyed watching you try. But here we are, despite your best efforts ... right back where we started.

THE PILOT

Not exactly, sir.

Zucker bristles. For a minute, it seems like he might do The Pilot harm ... but instead, he just smiles. Almost charming.

ZUCKER

I want to show you something.  
(he nods to The Captain)  
It's time.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT (2000)

Adam starts to sneak off, when BROKEN GLASS CRUNCHES underfoot. Frank SPINS --

He clicks on his flashlight and steps around the star capsule model. Adam is careful to move with him, keeping the model between them as they trade positions.

A tense beat. Frank turns away, content that he's alone. Adam breathes a sigh of relief ... until the model TILTS FORWARD and SMASHES to the floor.

Frank stares at Adam. Adam stares at Frank. Adam smiles ... then RUNS. Frank CHASES after him, grabbing for his walkie.

FRANK

Breach! Security breach on level one! He's heading for the elevators!

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT (2043)

Striding for the elevators. Zucker leads the way --

THE CAPTAIN

Are you saying we have to leave now? *Tonight?*

ZUCKER

My hands have been forced. Your brother's stunt has drawn some unwanted attention to our operations. It won't be long before the wrong people start asking the right questions.

Off the reactions of the astronauts. Nervous, unsure.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT (2000)

Adam race for the elevators. Security guards move to cut him off, but Adam LAYS THEM OUT with WELL-TARGETED BLOOMERS. Guards fly like popcorn against the lobby walls.

AT THE ELEVATORS, Adam fumbles with the cardkey. He SWIPES it through a reader. A RED LIGHT FLASHES. Access denied.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT (2043)

A GREEN LIGHT FLASHES as Zucker SWIPES his cardkey. A SECRET ELEVATOR opens. From the looks of the crew, no one knew it was there -- not even Tommy. Zucker enters.

ZUCKER

Going down?

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT (2000)

Adam swipes again, again, again. Nothing but red. NEARBY, guards have regrouped and are CHARGING towards him.

Finally, the GREEN LIGHT FLASHES and the elevator OPENS. Adam runs inside, tap-tap-tapping the DOOR CLOSE button. The doors close, just as the guards POUND against them.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT (2043)

Crammed into the elevator, going down. *Way* down. Zucker whispers to The Pilot --

ZUCKER

The truth is, in retrospect it seems almost inevitable -- your betrayal. You never had any stomach for the bigger picture.

THE PILOT

Enlighten me.

ZUCKER

It got to me when I was young. Crawled in behind my eyes like a parasite, and soon, I couldn't see anything else. It was a *vision*.

THE PILOT

... a vision of *what*?

ZUCKER

The future.

The elevator stops. Doors open to REVEAL --

INT. SECTOR NINE - DOCKING STATION - NIGHT

A CAVERNOUS CHAMBER, filled with SOLDIERS and ENGINEERS, clambering over the frame of a TOWERING STAR CAPSULE --

It's the machine from JR's blueprints, brought to vivid, awe-inspiring life. Zucker has the unmistakable glow of a father's pride --

ZUCKER

Just as I always imagined it would be.

The Pilot notices a sign that reads SECTOR NINE. He subconsciously covers the scar on his arm.

INT. SECTOR NINE - NIGHT (2000)

The SAME ELEVATOR opens to reveal the SAME FACILITY ... but no star capsule. *Not yet built*. Adam enters --

Behind him, the elevator is CALLED UP. *Only a matter of time before the guards return.* Adam quickly gets to work. He selects an app off the device and FIRES, CRATERING the floor.

INT. DOCKING STATION - NIGHT (2043)

A platform DESCENDS, lowering the soldiers and astronauts past the frame of the incredible ship.

ZUCKER

I'm calling her The Ark. Capable of withstanding speeds nearly a thousand times greater than the first generation model.

JR notices MASSIVE ELECTRIC GENERATORS lining the walls of the chamber. She frowns --

JR

What are the generators for? The capsules don't run on electric power.

ZUCKER

Clever girl. It turns out, Dr. Gordon had it right all along. The key to superluminal travel isn't to move faster than light, but to deform spacetime into faster-than-light speeds. Like a doorway into the past, and all you have to do is ... step through.

JR

A doorway. You're talking about a *black hole*. In the middle of *Europe*.

ON THE ASTRONAUTS, frozen by this revelation. Zucker is prepared for this. He nods, admits --

ZUCKER

The dream is coming at a larger cost than originally imagined. And yes, the world as you know it will likely be destroyed. But from the ashes, a *new world* will be born. A new future, of our own design ... under *our* control.

THE PILOT

You mean *your* control.

Zucker ignores that -- focused on the others --

ZUCKER

I never could have gotten this far  
without you. All of you.

(beat)

I hope you're with me now ...

The astronauts are clearly conflicted ... but also aware of the HEAVILY-ARMED SOLDIERS, standing to attention nearby. The Captain is the first to step forward.

THE CAPTAIN

We're with you, Boss.

The Pilot shoots The Captain a glare, which he ignores. One by one, the other astronauts step forward, joining The Captain.

Zucker grins: *as he expected*. He nods to his CHIEF TECH --

ZUCKER

Fire her up.

Switches are flipped, and generators ROAR to life -- huge amounts of energy cycling through this facility.

EXT. NEXTSTAR CAMPUS - NIGHT

MAGNETIC FIELD EMITTERS rise from underground, forming a CIRCLE. They begin to ROTATE, faster and faster.

INT. SECTOR NINE - NIGHT (2000)

Adam digs in a frenzy, deepening the hole. The elevator is on its way down. *Whatever he's doing, he's running out of time.*

INT. DOCKING STATION - NIGHT (2043)

The station has turned into a hive of activity, soldiers loading GEAR and SUPPLIES onto the Ark. JR whispers to The Pilot --

JR

In case we don't get out of this, I  
just wanted to say thank you.

THE PILOT

For what?

JR

For saving my life.  
(off The Pilot's look)  
It's probably the nicest thing  
anyone's ever done for me.

This sinks in. Their hands join through restraints. NEARBY, The Captain overhears the exchange ...

Zucker SHOUTS UP to the engineers on top of the Ark --

ZUCKER  
Lock in the payload!

HIGH ATOP THE ARK, the celium core is locked into place. The entire ship POWERS TO LIFE, the WHINE of machinery building to a POWERFUL ROAR.

EXT. NEXTSTAR CAMPUS - NIGHT

The array spins FASTER, a BLUR of IMPOSSIBLE MOVEMENT.

The air above the campus starts to RIPPLE and BEND. We've seen this sort of anomaly before. It's a wormhole, except this one is just a few miles off the ground.

Surrounding buildings start to COME APART, uprooted into the expanding vortex.

INT. DOCKING STATION - NIGHT (2043)

The Pilot is SLAMMED against the side of the ship, held down, prepared for execution. JR SCREAMS --

JR  
NO!! Tommy, do something! Don't let them do this, Tommy, please!

The Captain crosses to Zucker --

THE CAPTAIN  
Sir, we had a deal.

ZUCKER  
I agreed to let you bring your brother in alive. And there he is, perfectly alive.

THE PILOT  
It's okay, JR, just look away. Look away!

Zucker leans close to The Captain --

ZUCKER  
Don't forget what we're doing here, Tommy. We're rebooting the *entire human race*. We at the beginning must be uncorrupted. We must be *pure*.

(MORE)

ZUCKER (CONT'D)  
 (he offers a blaster)  
 All of us.

THE CAPTAIN  
 ... sir?

Zucker places the blaster in The Captain's hand -- then raises The Captain's arm, until his aim is fixed to the back of The Pilot's head.

ZUCKER  
 Show me your heart is still in this game.

Zucker steps back, as if he's flipped a switch, and he's waiting to see what will happen. Glances pass between the astronauts. *They didn't sign up for this.* JR struggles --

JR  
 No, Tommy, *listen to me!* This isn't you, Tommy. *You can't do this!!*

JR's voice rings in The Captain's ears. A long moment ...

... then, his arm LOWERS, as if it's been drained of strength. He looks to Zucker and shakes his head -- a single, whispered syllable --

THE CAPTAIN  
 No.

Zucker nods his disappointment. He takes back the blaster.

ZUCKER  
 That's the problem with soldiers, isn't it. Once they stop following orders, they outlive their usefulness.

Zucker raises the blaster -- aimed at The Captain. The Captain closes his eyes, accepting his fate.

ZUCKER  
 I hope you don't mind my saying ...  
 I've always thought of you as a son.

Zucker's finger grazes the trigger, when suddenly --

*BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP.*

The noise is FAINT and DISTANT. Zucker is the first to hear it. He lowers the blaster.

ZUCKER  
Quiet, QUIET!!

Workers pause in their duties, and the sound becomes clearer--

*BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP.*

Soldiers fan out, instinctively rooting out the source of the noise -- an oddly comical sight, like a SWAT team hunting for a cricket.

INT. SECTOR NINE - NIGHT (2000)

Adam stops digging. He enters a FAMILIAR DATE onto the Athens device -- JUNE 4, 2043 -- then buries the weapon --

INT. DOCKING STATION - NIGHT (2043)

Soldiers gather around a point on the floor where the noise is loudest. A soldier LEANS DOWN --

SOLDIER  
What is that?

ON THE PILOT ... surreptitiously backing away from the noise. He indicates for JR to do the same.

INT. SECTOR NINE - NIGHT (2000)

As Adam fills the hole, we PAN DOWN to the buried Athens device. A COUNTDOWN has begun ... a forty year countdown.

INT. DOCKING STATION - NIGHT (2043)

MATCH PAN below the floor, where the SAME DEVICE has remained buried for the PAST FORTY YEARS. The countdown finishes --

3 ... 2 ... 1. *BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEEEEEEEEEEEEP* --

AN EXPLOSION RIPS THROUGH THE FLOOR, BLOWING A GIANT CRATER RIGHT THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF THE CHAMBER.

Machinery goes HAYWIRE; the roof RETRACTS and is immediately RIPPED AWAY by the PULL of the WORMHOLE, swirling above.

TOTAL PANDEMONIUM: The Pilot and JR STRIKE in unison, taking out a pair of soldiers before they're overpowered, restrained, about to be shot ...

... but the astronauts make their move.

Dash grabs a rifle as Laura palm-thrusts a soldier's nose. Jasper activates his plasma glove, sending soldiers shooting across the chamber. The Pilot and JR twist free.

IN THE SKY ABOVE THE CAMPUS, the wormhole continues to EXPAND, spreading its path of destruction.

Equipment is RIPPED FROM WALLS, as though uprooted by a POWERFUL TORNADO. Engineers flee in an end-of-the-world panic, abandoning their stations, running for their lives.

Zucker steps forward, completely disconnected from the chaos that surrounds him. He stares up at the wormhole, entranced, as astronauts and engineers seek refuge inside the Ark.

The Pilot turns back to find Zucker, standing out in the open, clutching a rail. They meet eyes. Unbelievably, Zucker is SMILING.

ZUCKER

I've always wanted to punch a hole  
in the universe!

With that, he LETS GO and goes FLYING into the void. It pulls him in, and he's GONE -- VANISHED into space and time.

IN THE FACILITY, the last of the engineers piles into the Ark -- all except JR. She's still outside, working the generator controls, struggling to stay on her feet. The Pilot SHOUTS --

THE PILOT

JR!! GET OUT OF THERE!

JR

I HAVE TO SHUT DOWN THE ARRAY! IF I  
CAN OVERLOAD THE GENERATORS, WE  
MIGHT HAVE A CHANCE!

The Pilot sprints to a storage locker in the Ark, starts frantically pulling on a flightsuit. The Captain approaches --

THE CAPTAIN

Adam, what are you doing? You can't  
go out there!

THE PILOT

You can't stop me.

The Captain GRABS The Pilot and SLAMS him against the wall.

THE CAPTAIN

Want to bet?

The Pilot looks his brother in the eye -- admits --

## THE PILOT

I'm not as strong as you, Tommy ...  
I'm not strong enough to lose her  
again.

A moment between them. Frustration. Anger. And then --  
finally -- understanding. The Captain releases The Pilot.  
Hands him an OXYGEN MASK.

## THE CAPTAIN

Good luck, Kickstand.

## THE PILOT

Don't call me that.

ON JR, gripping onto the console as her feet LEAVE THE  
GROUND, pulled in by the wormhole. She REACHES for a SHUTDOWN  
LEVER -- almost there -- *almost ...*

And just as she finally GETS IT, she LOSES HER GRIP and goes  
FLYING out of the facility, into open space, reaching out for  
help that isn't there.

*SLOW MOTION -- everything seems to happen at once --*

The Pilot allows himself to be YANKED from the Ark, pulled in  
by the wormhole. He angles his body like a GUIDED MISSILE,  
reaching for JR as the void extends its maw.

HANDS CLASP. The Pilot goes for a chute strap, but the  
gravitational forces are INCREDIBLY STRONG. His eyelids  
flutter, on the edge of consciousness.

BELOW, generators ERUPT, unable to handle the power.

The array SHUTS DOWN and the wormhole collapses in on itself,  
VANISHING in a VIOLENT ERUPTION OF BLINDING WHITE LIGHT.

The light fades. We're left with the view we began with --

Stars shine through the darkness of space.

The Pilot and JR enter frame -- FLOATING, as though  
weightless, eyes closed, hands clasped, wind whipping at  
their hair. REVEAL --

They're free-falling from THOUSANDS OF FEET IN THE AIR,  
unconscious at terminal velocity.

Suddenly, The Pilot's eyes drift open. He looks to JR,  
falling alongside him, almost dreamlike. He notices the  
ground, coming up fast. *Very fast. This could be the end.*

A BURST OF AWARENESS --

The Pilot pulls JR in and ACTIVATES HIS CHUTE. It deploys, but just before we can find out if they made it, we --

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. NEXTSTAR CAMPUS - SUNRISE (2000)

The headquarters are still in decent condition, save for the crane arm wedged through the middle of the lobby.

YOUNG ZUCKER steps out of an approaching car. He finds MARIE, flanked by building security. She smiles when she sees him.

MARIE

Hello, Arnie.

Zucker is staggered by the scale of the destruction.

YOUNG ZUCKER

Marie ... what have you done!?

MARIE

Let's just say I made an investment in the future of this company.

Zucker's expression hardens.

YOUNG ZUCKER

You don't have a future with this company. Not anymore.

Marie thinks it over. Smiles.

MARIE

I can live with that.

She gives Zucker a kiss on the cheek and heads off, leaving him baffled.

EXT. CAMPUS - SUNRISE

Adam stands alone, half a mile from the facility, studying the fading stars. Marie approaches on foot. Adam shakes his head without turning from the sky.

ADAM

They should be back by now.

Marie follows Adam's gaze into the heavens. A solemn beat ...

Finally, a FAMILIAR SOUND -- a SONIC BOOM. A HUGE SMILE fills Adam's face.

EXT. NEXTSTAR HEADQUARTERS - SUNRISE

Back at the facility, Zucker catches a FLEETING GLIMPSE of the star capsule coming in for a landing, vanishing behind the treeline.

Zucker starts moving forward ... slowly at first, then breaking into a MAD SPRINT.

EXT. CAMPUS - SUNRISE

The capsule lands. The door HISSES OPEN, venting steam. Adam waits, holding his breath as a FIGURE emerges from the steam.

The Pilot. Impossible to read the expression on his face, until he steps aside --

JR is with him. They're holding hands, alive and well.

Adam dashes up the ramp and FLIES into The Pilot's arms.

ADAM

I knew we'd make it.

THE PILOT

I'm glad one of us did. By the way, that stunt with the Athens device? Couldn't've done it better myself.

The Pilot acknowledges Marie as she ascends the ramp, staring up at the ship, amazed. He shakes her hand. Sincere.

THE PILOT

Thank you. If there's anything I can do ...

Marie is still taking in the sight of the capsule. *Her dream come to life.* She smiles.

MARIE

I could use a ride home.

EXT. CAMPUS - SUNRISE

MOMENTS LATER, Zucker arrives at the landing site -- winded, panting for breath. He scans the area -- no sign of the star capsule. *Maybe it was just his imagination.*

Suddenly, behind him, a FLAMING STREAK cuts across the sky, before FADING and DISAPPEARING ... as if it was never even there at all ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ARCHER RESIDENCE - SUNSET (2013)

Bonnie steps outside, lugging a garbage bag. She looks like she hasn't slept in days. Behind her, a SHOOTING STAR falls from the sky and lands in the woods behind her house.

Bosco takes off into the woods, BARKING like mad.

BONNIE

Bosco! Dammit ... dumb dog ...

She runs after him.

EXT. CLEARING - SUNSET

Adam and The Pilot emerge from the capsule. *Home*. An awkward moment between them ... neither sure what to say.

THE PILOT

I guess this is it ...

ADAM

Will I ever see you again?

They both smile, realizing what an odd question that is.

FURTHER BACK, Bonnie chases Bosco into the woods --

BONNIE

Bosco! C'mere, boy ...

BACK TO THE ADAMS -- they can hear Bosco getting closer. The Pilot turns back for the capsule ... but stops. *He can't resist*. He crouches down before his younger self.

THE PILOT

All right, listen. *Don't* join Joe Kirkpatrick's paintball tournament unless you want to lose vision out of your right eye for three months. Don't ask Leslie to prom; she'd say yes, but you'd rather go with Stacey. Also, you love asparagus, but you're about to develop a late-term allergy to avocado, so stay away from the guacamole at Kyle Friedman's graduation party. And one night, freshman year, Amy Gilfoil's gonna offer you a ride back to your dorm. I know it's tempting, I know she's cute, but *don't get in that car*. And, uh ...

(he thinks, nods)

... yeah. That's it.

ADAM  
Why'd you tell me all that!?

THE PILOT  
Because those were *my* mistakes. You  
have to start making your own.  
Starting now.

A beat. Adam nods. The Pilot extends a hand. Adam shakes it.

EXT. CLEARING - MOMENTS LATER

Bonnie pushes into the clearing. She pulls up short, the  
breath stolen from her lungs.

WHAT SHE SEES: Adam stands in the middle of the clearing with  
his back turned. Bosco happily wags his tail, as if to say:  
*look who I found!*

BONNIE  
... Adam?

Adam turns. Bonnie wills herself to move. She stumbles  
forward and THROWS her arms around her son, overcome with  
relief.

BONNIE  
Oh my God ... are you okay, baby?  
Are you hurt?

ADAM  
I'm fine. Really, Mom, I'm okay.  
(then)  
How are *you*?

Bonnie pulls back from the hug. She finds herself caught up  
staring at Adam. *She almost doesn't recognize him.*

ADAM  
... what?

BONNIE  
Nothing, I just ...  
(she has to ask)  
When did you get so grown up?

AN OFF-SCREEN BLAST cuts off Adam's reply. Bonnie GASPS as  
the star capsule RISES over the horizon.

Adam takes his mother's hand -- watching the capsule go with  
an expression of total serenity.

Bonnie soaks in the calmness of Adam's expression ... *maybe for the first time noticing the silver flightsuit he's wearing.* She holds her son as if he's the only thing keeping her upright.

The capsule departs, receding into the heavens, until it's just another point of light in the star-speckled sky.

An ENERGETIC MUSIC CUE kicks in as we CUT TO --

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

The star capsule RACES through the cosmos. AHEAD, a WORMHOLE forms. The ship PUNCHES THROUGH --

A BRILLIANT FLASH OF IMAGES

FLASH: Adam at high school graduation. Bonnie and Tommy wave enthusiastically from the stands.

FLASH: Adam exchanges vows with JR. Tommy is his best man.

FLASH: Adam hits the Streif, swooping through a mean-looking half-pipe, working the balance board like a pro, with a style all his own.

Focus on an ELDERLY MAN, cheering from the crowds. Pride fills his eyes, which sparkle and shine. With specks of green.

FADE OUT.

THE END