

GOOD MORNING, MIDNIGHT

Written by

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Based on the novel by

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FROM A BLACK SCREEN -

WHAT SOUNDS LIKE A ROARING STORM... SURROUNDING US... ALMOST DEAFENING.

SUPER: *March 24th, 2034. Four Days After The Event.*

FADE IN:

EXT. ARCTIC CIRCLE - DUSK

ANGLE ON AUGUSTINE, (70), heavy winter coat, weathered face covered in gray stubble, standing at the center of a violent blizzard, peering upward. The deep lines on his face are from squinting, not smiling. Augustine doesn't smile.

Snow swirls all around him... that storm THUNDERING.

Then we see what's causing this storm... a large, MILITARY-STYLE HELICOPTER is rising into the dim dusk-blue arctic sky. We can make out the SILHOUETTES OF FIGURES in the windows.

Augustine watches it ascend. The snowstorm around him settles... the THUNDER OF THE HELICOPTER FADES. The helicopter continues rising... JOINING SEVERAL OTHER COPTERS further above... already bending into formation.

This is a LARGE EVACUATION.

MOSELY (O.S.)

Still time to change your mind!

Augustine looks over to MASON MOSELY, (60s), striding across a path in the snow toward him. Beyond Mosely there's a LAST HELICOPTER still grounded on the FLAGGED LANDING AREA... MEN, WOMEN, and a FEW CHILDREN HURRIEDLY FILING IN.

MOSELY (CONT'D)

Transferring the last of the outpost families, but still some open seats.

Augustine shakes his head... looks back to all those helicopters dotting the sky.

AUGUSTINE

Like a race to see who can die first.

Mosely moves beside Augustine... shares the view.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

There's nothing left out there for them.

MOSELY

The slim hope of reaching a bunker... but more of just a chance to see family... friends... even if it's only for a few minutes.

(beat)

Desperation can turn even the smartest of us into fools.

A LONG BEAT, then--

MOSELY (CONT'D)

We were so close. But we still failed, didn't we?

AUGUSTINE

Every day. In some way or another.

(beat)

Then the world failed us.

MOSELY

It's your infectious positive attitude that always sustained me through the bleak times.

(looking around)

You're going to get bored up here all by yourself.

AUGUSTINE

I've been waiting years to finally get rid of-

Augustine COUGHS INTO HIS MITTEN... lightly at first, but grows harder. When he lowers the mitten, there's BLOOD DOTTING THE MITTEN AND HIS SNOWY STUBBLE. Mosely gives a gentle nod toward the blood. Augustine wipes it from his beard.

MOSELY

The terminal patient outlives the rest of humanity. Someone should put you in a medical journal.

AUGUSTINE

Shame there'll be nobody around to read it. I could've been famous.

MOSELY

(smiles)

Continue your treatments anyway.

AUGUSTINE

If I was in a hurry to die, I'd go  
with you.

An O.S. WHISTLE. A SOLDIER waving from that last helicopter. Mosely waves back, then shakes Augustine's hand. This is a sad moment... two friends saying goodbye for the last time.

MOSELY

I'll miss our chess matches,  
Augustine. And all those hours  
spent looking up.

Mosely turns... starts back for the helicopter.

MOSELY (CONT'D)

Don't forget to turn off the lights  
before you leave! You know how  
pissed the suits back home get when  
we run up the power bill!

Mosely gives Augustine a final grinning wave.

EXT. HELICOPTER - DUSK

Mosely moves toward the open door, as a FRANTIC WOMAN with a TODDLER in her arms, pushes back out of the helicopter.

FRANTIC WOMAN

Jonathan! Michael!

The Soldier extends his arm, stopping her.

SOLDIER

What's the problem?

FRANTIC WOMAN

My sons. They aren't here!

SOLDIER

You sure?

The Frantic Woman nods as she pushes past.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Hey! We can't wait for you!

MOSELY

(to the Soldier)  
Are you checking off names?

SOLDIER  
 Nobody gave me a list. I just put  
 people on the chopper.

An OLDER WOMAN scrambles out.

OLDER WOMAN  
 Katherine! The boys already left!

The Frantic Woman spins back.

OLDER WOMAN (CONT'D)  
 (pointing up)  
 They put them on another  
 helicopter. I saw them.

FRANTIC WOMAN  
 Alone?!

OLDER WOMAN  
 They're with Doctor Rogg. She said  
 to tell you she'll meet you on the  
 ground.

SOLDIER  
 Okay then, that's that. We gotta  
 go. Now.

The Older Woman helps the Frantic Woman back onto the  
 helicopter. Mosely moves past the Soldier.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)  
 (off Augustine)  
 What about him?

MOSELY  
 He's staying.

The Soldier squints back toward Augustine.

SOLDIER  
 Why?

MOSELY  
 Because the rest of us aren't.

The Soldier rolls his eyes... follows Mosely in, sealing the  
 helicopter door behind.

--AUGUSTINE watches the chopper blades whir to life... the  
 snow turning into a cloud as the helicopter rises upward...  
 higher... falling into the rear of the formation.

Augustine waits for the row of dots to disappear, then turns... starts walking toward the LARGE, DESERTED COMPOUND OF BLUE AND WHITE STEEL BUILDINGS nestled against the incline of the Cordillera Mountains. Many of the buildings are enclosed by circular glass igloo-type structures. Several SATELLITE ARRAYS aim their oversized dishes upward.

A MASSIVE DOMED OBSERVATORY stands above everything else at one end... large telescope aimed up toward the arctic sky.

This is the *Barbeau Observatory Station*. And Augustine is all alone here.

INT. COMPOUND KITCHEN - NIGHT

ON A MICROWAVE OVEN. A frozen meal slowly spinning inside. DING. Augustine pops open the door... removes the plastic tray of food.

INT. COMPOUND CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Rows of empty tables. Augustine sits at one in the far corner, eating. The room is silent except for Augustine's fork dragging across the plastic tray.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine stands at the center of the room, surveying the abandoned space... the remains of his colleagues' desks: piles of research, personal items, half-filled coffee cups.

His eyes settle on a computer monitor... an INFRARED WORLD MAP ON THE SCREEN... a SIMULATION PLAYING OUT... YELLOW BECOMING ORANGE, BECOMING RED... SPREADING OVER EVERYTHING.

He stares at the image a moment, then grabs a TRASH CAN... starts wiping all the desks clean... adjusting the equipment... making this place his own.

CUT TO:

A WIDE SWATH OF DARK ARCTIC SKY. Milky clusters of stars in an unpolluted black night. Until the sky GLITCHES, then shifts left...

...and we realize this is an image projected on Augustine's monitor - images received from the telescope. With a few clicks, the image ZOOMS... pushing through deep space... past a SUPERNOVA EXPLODING with light.

With a few more clicks, Augustine sets the control room into motion, the high tech equipment powering up. Lone computers processing. Monitors flashing.

Augustine opens a drawer... pulls out a glass and whiskey bottle... fills the glass... takes a sip as he moves over to an extensive, wall-sized, working chart of our solar system covered in pins and post-its.

He drags his finger from Earth... past Mars, to Jupiter... weaving through its 69 moons, and through an asteroid belt labeled *LOFTHOUSE BELT*... landing on a single moon, **K-23**.

Augustine moves to the telescope... the whiskey whirling in his glass as he types in coordinates. With a SLOW HUM, the telescope rotates its position in the sky, and projects an image - the small, pale grey dot of a distant exo-planet.

Augustine stares at it. And we HEAR THE ECHO OF A CROWD'S DISTANT APPLAUSE, as--

FLASHCUT TO:

*INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT*

*The APPLAUSE is all around us now, as a YOUNGER AUGUSTINE, (30s), gives a presentation at a Ted-Talk-style astrophysics conference. **Dr. Augustine Lofthouse** is printed across the screen behind him.*

*AUGUSTINE*

*In our galaxy alone, there are billions of stars.*

*A large image of our galaxy lights up the screen.*

*AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)*

*Each one a sun to its own solar system. And most of these suns have planets. So it stands to reason that, of these hundreds of billions of "exoplanets" that exist in our galaxy, at least one of them has the potential to support life.*

*Augustine talks over images of different planets.*

*AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)*

*In the last five years, we've identified over 3,000 of these exoplanets, in hopes that one would lie within the habitable zone. A Goldilocks planet.*

*(MORE)*

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Not too hot, not too cold... just right to fulfill mankind's growing need for a second home.

The images behind Augustine look anything but habitable. Ice planets, water worlds, and gaseous orbs fill the screen.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

But so far, we've found none. And the math says that the further out in the galaxy we look, the longer and more difficult it will be for man to ever reach it.

Augustine pulls up an image of Jupiter.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

So what if we looked a little closer to home. Jupiter, with its 69 moons, right here in our solar system. Some of them life-sustaining, but none of them habitable... certainly not a Goldilocks.

An image of a massive cloud of asteroids.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

And just beyond Jupiter, the thick cloud of a circumstellar disc of rock, otherwise known as the end of the line. Until now.

The same image from the observatory projects on screen... the steady spiral of a small, pale grey dot of an exo-planet.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

This is K-23, Jupiter's previously undiscovered moon. Not quite an exoplanet, this moon's atmosphere is governed, not by the sun, but by Jupiter itself. And while further probing will need to test its atmospheric habitability, we can confidently say that based on its mass, radial velocity, and orbit... it could be just right.

INT. AUDITORIUM LOBBY - NIGHT

A large reception following Augustine's presentation. A small swarm of people form around him, as he shakes hands, and signs a few copies of his book: AFTER EARTH.



*He continues moving through the people... to the open bar... signals to the BARTENDER.*

*AUGUSTINE*

*Whiskey, neat.*

*The Bartender rests a glass in front of Augustine. Augustine stares at it a moment, as if he's unsure whether to drink it.*

*WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)*

*How much of what you're searching  
for is reality?*

*Augustine looks up... to the face of the most beautiful WOMAN he's ever seen... smiling at him as she sits beside him. We don't know it yet, but her name is JEAN.*

*JEAN (CONT'D)*

*And how much of your Goldilocks  
planet is just a fairytale?*

*And before Augustine can answer, we're interrupted by a BEEPING sound.*

#### **BACK TO SCENE**

*Augustine breaks his focus from the whirling liquid in his hand... turns off his own BEEPING WRIST WATCH.*

*INT. COMPOUND MEDICAL ROOM - NIGHT*

*Augustine unbuttons his shirt, revealing an IV PORT in his chest. He connects an IV LINE to the port. The line runs up to a hanging bag.*

*Augustine settles into a recliner... turns on an IPOD. VAN MORRISON'S *Into The Mystic* flows from a speaker... as the drip of his CHEMO TREATMENT begins.*

*VAN MORRISON (V.O.)*

*We were born before the wind.  
Also younger than the sun.  
Ere the bonnie boat was won as we  
sailed into the mystic.*

*He watches the liquid pulse into his chest, then gazes up... THROUGH THE GLASS ROOF... to the ENDLESS BLANKET OF STARS flickering above, as the MUSIC PLAYS.*

*VAN MORRISON (V.O.)*

*Hark, now hear the sailors cry.  
Smell the sea and feel the sky.*

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

The silhouettes of the structures against the moon-swept snow. The glowing sky sparkling overhead.

VAN MORRISON (V.O.)  
*Let your soul and spirit fly into  
 the mystic.*

We FOLLOW THE MUSIC UPWARDS INTO THE NIGHT SKY... floating toward all those stars.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

An Arctic Fox trots across the dim landscape.

INT. COMPOUND - AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Augustine lies in bed, staring at the BUZZING ALARM CLOCK... watches the 7:03 changes to 7:04... finally reaches out to tap the clock... the BUZZING STOPS.

Augustine rises up with some effort... painful and stiff. He sits there a moment, catching his breath, then pulls open the top drawer of the night stand... reaches inside... a FEW MEDICINE BOTTLES sprawled on top of a thin mess of old papers and photographs. The bottles all have something about "...as needed for pain" printed on the labels.

He lifts one of the bottles... tosses a few pills into his mouth, then drops the bottle back inside. The bottle rolls to a rest on a couple CREASED PHOTOGRAPHS... one with a PARTIAL GLIMPSE OF JEAN.

Another photo is face-down... a faded-ink *June 14, 2008* scribbled on the back of the photo.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine stands at a window, sipping a cup of coffee. That same constant blue-dusk outside... except for a SLIVER OF PINK staining the dark sky.

A SHAPE APPEARS FROM THE SHADOWS... a POLAR BEAR with a BLUE TAGGING COLLAR. It lumbers across the compound.

AUGUSTINE  
 Welcome back, George. Just the two  
 of us now.

Augustine watches the Polar Bear wander up and over the crest of a hill, then grabs his coat from a table.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

Augustine follows the Polar Bear's tracks in the snow... up the hill. He's breathing hard by the time he reaches the top... looks down to the snowy valley below. There's a rosy pink streak of sunlight across the white.

The Polar Bear reaches that streak, then plops down, basking in the warm light... looking exhausted.

Augustine sits stiffly on the ground.

AUGUSTINE

Our morning walks aren't as easy as they used to be, huh, old man?

Then Augustine and the Polar Bear both look up to the sky... waiting for something. The sky suddenly turns to fire, a deep orange, then crimson. Augustine closes his eyes... lets the warm sunlight hit his face.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

But they're worth it.

A few moments of sun basking Augustine's face, then almost as quickly as it appeared, the sun sinks away... the dim blue night returns.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

And just like that it's gone.

Augustine opens his eyes... looks beside him... sees Jean standing in the snow, wearing just a t-shirt and shorts. She's staring up at the sky.

JEAN

A lot like life.  
(smiles at Augustine)  
Comes and goes in a blink.

Augustine stares at Jean... almost seems a little scared. He closes his eyes... reopens them... JEAN IS GONE.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine at the telescope... peering through the lens... typing some data into a computer. Then he FLINCHES IN PAIN...

just enough that he needs to steady himself against the desk... stands there a moment waiting for it to pass, then sits down... catches his breath.

He notices the CHESSBOARD... pieces spaced around like a game was stopped in the middle. He stares at the board a moment, then moves his black bishop... takes a white rook.

INT. COMPOUND KITCHEN - NIGHT

Augustine holds a bowl of cereal... pours a stream of soy milk over it. He starts eating as he walks out.

INT. COMPOUND CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Augustine enters with the cereal... sits down and freezes mid-bite... because there's a HALF-EMPTY BOWL OF CEREAL ALREADY SITTING ON THE TABLE... spoon tilted on the edge.

Augustine looks around, half-expecting to see someone else in here with him. But of course the room is empty. Augustine's eyes drift from his bowl to the other... then to the kitchen... finally--

AUGUSTINE

Half dose on meds, asshole. We're not doing this *losing it* shit.

Augustine lifts the other bowl, pouring the contents into his own... continues eating.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

The moon's soft glow over the compound.

INT. COMPOUND - AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The alarm clock BEEPS. Augustine sleeps on his side, back to the clock... not budging. There are a few specks of blood on the pillow near his mouth. The Clock JUST KEEPS BEEPING.

INT. COMPOUND MEDICAL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine stands on a DOCTOR'S SCALE... keeps tapping the weight over pound by pound... lighter and lighter. It finally balances. He stares at it... not happy.

AUGUSTINE

I know, Doc... wasting away. Gotta  
keep the weight up.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine at a desk... asleep in a chair.

-- THE TELESCOPE... suddenly HUMS TO LIFE ON ITS OWN...  
begins slowly rotating.

Augustine's eyes blink awake to the HUMMING SOUND. He  
focuses on the moving telescope... then the computer screen  
image of the telescope's view... gliding over dark space.

The telescope comes to a stop.

Augustine stands... goes to the computer... squints at the  
empty space on screen... taps some keys... zooming in...  
tighter... tighter... until a SPECK APPEARS ON THE SCREEN.

He types in few more directives... a LIST OF ACTIVE MISSIONS -  
satellites, probe missions, manned crafts. Augustine scrolls  
down the list...

NEOWISE - INACTIVE

VOYAGER 3 - INACTIVE

INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION - EVACUATED

ORION 2 - COMPLETED

**AETHER - ACTIVE**

...stops. Augustine's cursor hovers over AETHER. He clicks  
on it... a photo of Aether's FIVE PERSON FLIGHT CREW appears.  
He stares at it a moment, then clicks on Aether's FLIGHT  
PLAN. It fills the screen. Augustine studies it.

Suddenly, a FIRE ALARM SOUNDS... lights blinking overhead.  
Augustine's head snaps around to the sound.

INT. COMPOUND KITCHEN - NIGHT

Augustine enters the smoke-filled kitchen... flames consuming  
an empty frying pan, still on the stove.

He grabs a fire extinguisher from the wall, sprays the pan,  
putting out the fire... then stands there in the smoke and  
mist, staring at the pan.

AUGUSTINE

I didn't do that. I didn't do that!

Augustine heaves the extinguisher away with a frustrated toss... slides down the wall to the floor. And when he does, a FRIGHTENED LITTLE GIRL, (8), IN A YELLOW DRESS COMES INTO VIEW, HIDDEN BENEATH A SHELF, STARING BACK AT AUGUSTINE.

Augustine returns the stare, not certain he can trust his eyes... sure he's just seeing things again. So he closes them... holds them closed for a long moment before opening.

The Little Girl is still there.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Goddammit.

INT. COMPOUND HALLWAY - NIGHT

Augustine rushes along the dorm-like hall, throwing open doors...

AUGUSTINE

Hello?!

...scanning in empty bedrooms.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Anybody?!

Augustine reaches the last door... pushes it open... empty. He stares at it, thinking... then looks back down the hall... the Little Girl stands at the far end.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Is anyone else with you?!

The Little Girl doesn't answer.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine's holding the radio mic, dialing through channels and frequencies.

AUGUSTINE

Repeat... this is Barbeau Observatory. An outpost family member was left behind during the evacuation. Someone needs to return for her.

Nothing but static. He switches the channel again.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
This is Barbeau Observatory. I  
have an outpost child here.

Augustine looks to the doorway... the Little Girl is standing there, nervous... afraid.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
What's your name?

The Little Girl just stares back.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Do you speak English?  
(in Spanish)  
*Spanish?*

The Little Girl doesn't react.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
(into radio)  
An unidentified girl. She isn't  
talking. Seven or eight years-old  
maybe. I think she's alone. She  
needs immediate pickup.

Augustine waits for some answer... still only static.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Jesus Christ.  
(to the Little Girl)  
You're not supposed to be here.

The Little Girl kneels down in the doorway... just stares back at him. Augustine dials in another frequency.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
This is Barbeau Observatory.  
Eighty-one, fifty-four North.  
Seventy-five, one West.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

The blurred figure of Augustine is visible through the icy window.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)  
If anyone is receiving this, please  
respond.  
(beat)  
I have a serious problem.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

The wind whips across the ground, swirling miniature snow-tornadoes over the surface.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

The steel hangar doors sway and slam in the gusts.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON AUGUSTINE'S HAND pouring a glass of whiskey.

Augustine's standing in the far corner of the room with the bottle and glass... eyeing the Little Girl sitting in the doorway as he takes a drink.

AUGUSTINE

What the hell am I supposed to do  
with you?

The Little Girl offers no answer.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

The Little Girl's expression doesn't change.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

(angry)

Well I know you're not the world's  
youngest goddamn astrophysicist. I  
would have heard about you.

Augustine's tone frightens the Little Girl... tears fill her eyes. She stares at the floor a moment, then stands... walks out. Augustine stands there a moment... takes a drink.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Shit.

Augustine puts down the glass... walks to the doorway... sees the Little Girl moving down a hallway, her yellow dress fluttering as she goes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Hey.

She doesn't look back. Augustine gives an ANNOYED GRUNT, then follows after her.



INT. COMPOUND HALLWAY - DUSK

Augustine trails the Little Girl along the hall... watches her veer through a doorway. He reaches it... looks in to see it's a STORAGE CLOSET.

The Little Girl drops down onto a pile of scavenged blankets and winter coats. The closet's white walls have several magic marker-drawn PURPLE FLOWERS (IRISES) on them.

AUGUSTINE  
 (glancing around closet)  
 This is where you've been staying.  
 Christ.  
 (off the pictures)  
 I guess you drew those?

The Little Girl doesn't answer. Augustine just stares down at her a beat, then--

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 Somebody's gotta be coming back for  
 you.

INT. COMPOUND - STORAGE CLOSET - DUSK

The Little Girl returns Augustine's gaze.

AUGUSTINE  
 Because I can't help you. Do you  
 understand? I'm the wrong person.

They hold a look...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 I'm the wrong person.

...then Augustine turns... disappears from the doorway. Gone for a long moment before he appears again.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 (annoyed)  
 Are you hungry?  
 (mimes eating)  
 Food. Hungry?

INT. COMPOUND CAFETERIA - DUSK

Augustine sits on one side of the table, sipping a cup of coffee, watching the Little Girl directly across from him, gobbling down a microwaved hamburger.

AUGUSTINE

What about family? Any brothers or sisters?

The Little Girl doesn't even look up... just keeps eating.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

You're not deaf, right? You can hear me talking to you?

Nothing. Augustine SNAPS HIS FINGERS. The Little Girl's eyes roll up... *she heard that...* then goes back down to the food.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

So that's clear. But you can't talk. Or just won't. Or just want to piss me off.

(beat)

Twelve years I've been here. Longer than you've been alive. Always people around. I was really looking forward to some alone time.

Augustine's eyes settle on the notepad beside her. Another purple flower on the top page.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

But you do draw a good flower. That an Iris?

The Little Girl's head immediately snaps upward... as if Augustine called her name. They hold a look... Augustine trying to understand what just happened... the Little Girl waiting for more. Then Augustine points at her.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Iris.

The Little Girl nods... immediately goes back to eating. Augustine watches her a long moment, then--

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Okay.

So that's what we'll call the Little Girl... *IRIS*.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - DUSK

Augustine at a desk, holding the radio mic as he looks at the computer... that *SPECK OF THE SPACESHIP AETHER* still zoomed in on the screen.

AUGUSTINE  
 (into radio mic)  
 This is Barbeau Observatory. Is  
 anyone receiving this?

Static. Iris walks up beside Augustine... shares the view.  
 He notices... watches her lean closer.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 Don't touch anything.

Iris reaches toward the screen, but Augustine pulls her arm  
 down... shakes his head.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 No touching.  
 (motions around the room)  
 Anything.

Iris look back to that speck on screen. Augustine watches.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 Aether.  
 (taps the screen)  
 It's a spaceship. Far away.

Augustine points to another monitor zoomed in on a planet.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 On its way back from a planet  
 called K-23. That was supposed to  
 be our future.

Augustine stares at the speck a beat...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 Didn't quite work out like we'd  
 hoped.

...then changes radio frequency.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 (into radio mic)  
 This is Barbeau Observat-

Augustine COUGHS... hard enough to splatter blood across the  
 desk. Iris steps away, frightened.

Augustine self-consciously wipes a sleeve across his mouth...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 I'm sorry. It just... I...

...grabs a sheet of paper to wipe the blood from the desk. And he COUGHS AGAIN... harder... longer... makes his way out of the room.

INT. COMPOUND - BATHROOM - DUSK

Augustine is on his knees over a commode, coughing... vomiting. He catches his breath... slides around against the wall... sees Iris standing just outside the door, watching him. Augustine weakly pushes the door closed.

INT. COMPOUND - AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - DUSK

Augustine sits on the edge of his bed, digging some pain pills from the nightstand. He gulps them back... tilts over on the bed, his eyes fluttering closed... until he spots Iris dragging her pile of blankets and coats into his room... building her nest.

AUGUSTINE

No... not here.

Augustine rolls out of bed... yanking Iris' nest out the door.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

This is my room.

INT. COMPOUND - EMPTY BEDROOM - DUSK

Augustine tosses the blankets and coats onto an empty mattress.

AUGUSTINE

Here.

Iris moves beside Augustine... stares at the bed.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

You sleep here.

Augustine walks out... leaves Iris alone in the room.

INT. COMPOUND - AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Augustine falls back into his bed with a groan... lies there in pain... hears RUSTLING BEHIND HIM... Iris dragging her gear back into his room... making her nest on the floor.

Augustine doesn't have the strength to fight... just looks back to the digital clock. 1:43. His eyes drift closed.

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK... QUIET... UNTIL A GENTLE CHIMING RISES AROUND US.

INT. TINY ROOM - MORNING

ANGLE ON A DIGITAL CLOCK TABLET SCREEN... 6:00 AM. A hand enters the frame... taps the screen. The chiming quiets.

Then we see who silenced the clock... SULLY, (30s), a mass of flowing brown hair around her naturally pretty face. She rises from her bed, wearing a tank top and bike shorts.

Sully stands up in the windowless space... steps into a blue jumpsuit, tugging it halfway and tying the sleeves around her waist. She ponytails her hair as she slides back the PRIVACY CURTAIN.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Sully steps out... starts down a narrow hall... past some other open curtains, revealing more windowless sleep spaces... various personal touches, photographs, sketches, book-shelves, and reading lights.

One curtain is still closed. Sully brushes her hand against it as she passes.

SULLY

You awake, Devi?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Make it dark again.

Sully continues on toward the warm light of morning sunshine ahead... steps into a LARGE LIVING SPACE filled with futuristic machines... a RING-SHAPED CENTRIFUGE SPINNING AT THE CENTER... OVERHEAD LIGHTS PROJECTING THAT WARM SUNSHINE GLOW... and WINDOWS WITH ONLY DEEP DARK SPACE BEYOND.

This is "LITTLE EARTH" on the Spacecraft AETHER.

INT. AETHER - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Sully moves straight for the kitchen area, grabbing a protein bar from the cabinet.

She glances to the EXERCISE SPACE, where COMMANDER HARPER (40), Montana-rugged, runs steel-faced on the treadmill.

She catches his eye... they exchange a wave, and Harper immediately hits the STOP BUTTON... the treadmill winds down.

Sully continues past a sleek couch, where IVANOV, (40s), Aether's Russian pilot is slumped back, playing a RACING VIDEO GAME.

SULLY  
You started early.

IVANOV  
Champions never rest.

SULLY  
Still trying to beat the times your boys sent up here, huh?

Ivanov uses body-english trying to keep his car on the track, but it crashes violently into a wall... spins out.

SULLY (CONT'D)  
And they win again. Some pilot you are.

Ivanov tosses the controller away.

IVANOV  
It's like they pay you to distract me.

SULLY  
I do it for free.

Sully continues toward a ladder... climbs... begins to float.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - SPACE

Sully launches herself out of the gravitational heaviness of Little Earth and its spinning centrifuge... up into the body of the ship... a zero gravity circular hallway.

Sully floats past a GLASS LAB, where South African astrodynamacist THEBES, (38), glances up from a computer screen filled with COURSE MANEUVER COMPUTATIONS. They exchange a smile and nod as Sully floats through the glass-domed CUPOLA... stars glowing against the blanket of deep space.

She continues on... veers into--

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully pulls herself through the doorway... into a small room made up of walls of switches, buttons, radio equipment and computer screens. There's an ORANGE-STREAKED SPACE ROCK resting on her work area.

Sully straps into her seat, holding herself secure in her zero-gravity office. She PUTS ON SOME HEADPHONES.

Harper, Thebes, and Ivanov come floating into the doorway... peering inside. She sees them.

SULLY

Seriously?

HARPER

Find us a voice out there, Mission Specialist Sullivan, and we'll all leave you alone.

Sully starts flipping switches... turning dials. She pulls a tablet from a compartment... it slips from her hand... starts floating away until she grasps it again.

SULLY

You're giving me performance anxiety here.

Sully types some coordinates on the tablet keypad, then hits a button... a computer screen reads "*Scanning For Signals*". The pod is silent. Harper, Thebes, and Ivanov are focused on the screen.

THEBES

What's she hearing?

Harper motions for Sully's attention, then taps his ear. Sully unplugs the headphones... still nothing but silence. They wait... watch the screen. Thebes closes his eyes, straining to hear something... anything. Then--

HARPER

What frequency is this?

SULLY

I'm running S, X, and Ka.

Another beat of silence, then--

IVANOV

Shit.

HARPER  
That puts our last contact with  
Mission Control at...?

SULLY  
Including the controlled blackout?

HARPER  
(shakes his head)  
Post blackout.

SULLY  
Ninety-seven hours.

Ivanov SMACKS THE WALL...

IVANOV  
SHIT!

...then propels himself back down the hallway.

THEBES  
Any chance it's an orbital issue?

SULLY  
(shakes her head)  
If Mojave goes offline, Spain or  
Australia immediately grabs signal.  
No gaps.

HARPER  
ISS?

SULLY  
Dark. Nobody's talking anywhere.

A SUDDEN BLAST OF WHITE NOISE. Thebes shoots an excited  
glance at Sully.

SULLY (CONT'D)  
Just coming from the Jupiter probes  
we left behind. Picking up a storm.

Sully twists a dial... the sound grows louder.

HARPER  
That confirms the comm issues  
aren't on our end.

They sit, float, think.



HARPER (CONT'D)

Open all channels, and set to  
record any incoming transmissions  
in case something's out there.

(turning to leave)

Then meet us in Little Earth.

Sully nods. Thebes follows Harper out, floating away down  
the hall. Sully looks back to that SCANNING SCREEN... her  
reflection staring back at her... and she looks scared.

HARPER (V.O.)

Pretty clear we've got a problem.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Harper sits on the corner of the dining table. Sully leans  
against a counter with DEVI, (28), Aether's female engineer,  
sipping coffee beside her.

Ivanov is on the stationary bike, casually pedaling. Thebes  
is propped on the back of the couch.

HARPER

We're ninety-seven hours silent,  
and the comm issue's not ours.  
It's like earth just flipped a  
switch... turned itself off.

SULLY

With no signs of distress. Mission  
Control's last transmission ended  
with a "Goodnight, Aether".

THEBES

And we're positive there's no  
chance it's some type of glitch?

HARPER

Ninety-seven seconds might be a  
glitch. Ninety-seven hours leaves  
us with some more unattractive  
possibilities.

Ivanov snorts from the bike... stops pedaling...

IVANOV

(sarcastic)

*Unattractive.*

...mumbles some Russian under his breath.

THEBES

Two years away, and they decide to go dark when we're almost home.

DEVI

Maybe my ex has more pull than I realized.

HARPER

In every likely scenario we're looking at some type of worldwide event way beyond just equipment failure.

The crew looks stone-faced, forced to consider the grim possibilities.

SULLY

I tried to make contact with the K-23 Colony Flight. Should have been in the air a week ago.

HARPER

Unless it never launched.

IVANOV

I'm still receiving data from the computers from Houston.

DEVI

The data transfer delay is longer. If comms stay out, we'll lose computer connectivity in another twenty-four hours or less.

THEBES

But we still have no idea why. Some type of large scale EMP attack?

SULLY

Or could be atmospheric, RF pollution, a geomagnetic storm that--

IVANOV

--None of that could last this long, or disrupt both hemispheres.

Sully almost doesn't want to say this, but--

SULLY

Unless it was airborne debris, from something like a massive detonation.

IVANOV  
The word you're looking for is  
"nuclear."

A BEAT, then--

DEVI  
But we would know that.  
(glancing to the others)  
Right? I mean Mission Control  
would have informed us if-

HARPER  
-No.

THEBES  
There's no benefit for them to tell  
us.

IVANOV  
That's company line bullshit,  
Thebes.

THEBES  
No, that's logic, Ivanov.

HARPER  
You and I have done this enough  
times to know the drill, Alexy.  
Even if we assume they had time to  
alert us, what would it accomplish?  
Their job is to keep our stress  
level down.

Ivanov starts pedaling again.

IVANOV  
I'm calm. Don't I look calm? I'm  
just sitting here imagining my wife  
and boys laughing and playing as  
they turn to ash on a radioactive  
beach.

HARPER  
That's what I'm talking about. None  
of us are going to fixate on worst  
case scenarios. Does us no good.  
So until we know different, we keep  
doing our jobs. Collect the data.  
Analyze it.  
(looking at Sully)  
While Sully does everything she can  
think of to initiate contact as our  
approach nears.

Sully nods... starts out.

SULLY

On it.

HARPER

(to the others)

We're gonna play this straight,  
just like any other flight home.  
'Cause right now that's all we can  
do.

DEVI

This is my only flight home. Never  
done it before, so not a lot for me  
to compare it to.

THEBES

Some lucky charm you turned out to  
be, Devi.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully at her wall of switches, dials, and buttons. She's  
wearing her headphones. WE HEAR WHAT SULLY HEARS... sounds  
like endless ocean waves crashing.

She takes a bite of a granola bar. A few crumbs break away,  
float around her head. She tweaks a couple dials... picks  
the crumbs from the air, tosses them into her mouth.

A HAND rests on Sully's shoulder, startling her just a bit.  
She turns... sees it's Harper. She removes the headphones,  
and the sounds go quiet.

HARPER

Sorry.

SULLY

I get lost in the noise.

Harper unplugs the headphones... those *OCEAN WAVES* crash  
around them both now.

HARPER

Would put me right to sleep.

SULLY

I wouldn't mind that either. You  
could just wake me when we land.

Harper strains a half-smile... Sully notices.

SULLY (CONT'D)  
Think it's that bad, huh?

HARPER  
(shrugs)  
I've done eleven flights. Been at  
least one hiccup with every one of  
'em.

Sully breaks off part of her granola bar... floats it over to  
Harper.

SULLY  
Maybe it's time you start  
considering the problem is you,  
Commander Harper.

Harper smiles... tosses the bite into his mouth.

HARPER  
There it is. Our first sign of  
mutiny.

Then he pulls a DECK OF CARDS from his pocket... starts  
dealing... floating Sully's cards over to her.

SULLY  
(gathering cards)  
You want to change the game? I'm  
on about a two month winning  
streak.

Harper straps himself into the seat beside Sully...

HARPER  
I'm pacing myself.

...rests the deck on the desk shelf. Sully places the space  
rock on top to hold them down. They each look over their  
hands of cards.

HARPER (CONT'D)  
Try to keep Devi relaxed... her  
mind occupied. I know what to  
expect with Ivanov and Thebes. But  
it's her first trip.

SULLY  
She'll be fine. Smartest engineer  
I've flown with.

HARPER  
Smart's great when there are things  
to do.

(MORE)

HARPER (CONT'D)

(beat)

But when you're trapped in this can  
with a buncha shit that's out of  
your control... a little bit of  
dumb can be valuable.

Sully discards. Harper scoops it right up.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Why do you think I like you so  
much, Mission Specialist Sullivan.

Sully smiles... their zero-gravity card game continues, as  
the universe's waves crash around them.

Then WE PUSH OUT THE WINDOW INTO DEEP DARK SPACE. EVERYTHING  
GOES IMMEDIATELY SILENT...

...stays that way for a long moment... until STARS BEGIN TO  
APPEAR, and we realize we're looking at a night sky... then  
we HEAR A DISTANT SQUEAKING... PAN DOWN TO TWO ARCTIC  
WOLVES... standing frozen on a hill overlooking THE BARBEAU  
OBSERVATORY COMPOUND... that SQUEAKING IN THE DISTANCE.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Augustine stands on a compound rooftop, bundled in heavy  
winter gear, TURNING A CRANK ON THE MASSIVE RADIO ANTENNA...  
SQUEAKING as it rotates inch by inch.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

Augustine climbs down the ladder... starts back along his  
tracks toward the compound... notices the Wolf watching him  
from the hill.

AUGUSTINE

Nothing here for you!

Augustine CLAPS, trying to scare the Wolves away. But the  
animals don't flinch.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Numbers shift in your favor and you  
get cocky, huh?

Augustine continues toward the Observatory Building... sees  
Iris watching from a large window, her yellow dress almost  
glowing in the dim blue night.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Iris meets Augustine at the door with a steaming cup of coffee.

AUGUSTINE

(annoyed)

I keep telling you, I don't need you to do that. You're gonna spill it on something important... or burn yourself.

Iris just keeps holding the cup out... until Augustine begrudgingly takes it.

Augustine drags off his outer layer of clothes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

No going outside on your own. Understand?

He points at the door, shakes his head.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Still no outside for you.

Iris understands enough to nod. Augustine moves across the room to the radio controls, sipping the coffee. Iris follows.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Hear anything while I was out there?

Augustine looks to Iris... points at the radio.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Voices? Noise?  
(points again)  
Anything?

Iris shakes her head. Augustine lifts the radio mic.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

This is Barbeau Observatory.  
Eighty-one, fifty-four North.  
Seventy-five, one West. Channels  
open for response.

Augustine waits... waits... starts scanning more channels and frequencies... keeps getting nothing but that same static.

Iris kneels on the floor... starts drawing on the back of a paper... a ROCKET LAUNCHING INTO THE SKY.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

The damn antenna's our problem.  
Doesn't matter what direction we  
put it. Just not strong enough to  
reach where we need it to.

(to Iris)

That's why they're not answering.  
They can't hear us.

Iris doesn't look up from her drawing. Augustine just  
watches her.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

And you've got no idea the trouble  
you're in.

INT. COMPOUND CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Augustine and Iris sit across from each other, both eating  
from microwaved trays. Augustine watches Iris just picking  
at some vegetables.

AUGUSTINE

Yeah. Nothing like some good green  
rubber for lunch. I always told  
'em they needed to give us better  
meals. Nobody listened.

(beat)

When I was in the Canary Islands,  
we'd get the freshest...

Augustine stops... rolls his eyes... realizes he might as  
well just be talking to himself.

ANGLE ON IRIS... just brushing the food around the tray...  
WHEN A VERY GREEN PEA ROLLS ACROSS THE TABLE TOWARD HER.

Iris looks up. Augustine rests his empty cup on it's side,  
the opening facing Iris. He nods to the pea...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Only thing peas are any good for.

...then FLICKS HIS FINGER.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

You hit it. Try to get in my cup.  
Pea soccer.

Iris isn't sure what's going on.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

You never played this?



Augustine dumps what's left in Iris' cup onto the tray...  
tilts hers over to match his. Then he grabs the pea...  
flicks it... the pea bounces off the rim of her cup.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

So close.  
(nods to her)  
Your turn.

Iris half-smiles... steadies a pea in front of her... flicks  
it clumsily sideways.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

God, you're terrible.

Iris smiles broader.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I've got some serious teaching to  
do here.

Augustine grabs another pea... cocks his finger and thumb.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Like this. Technique won the  
Lincoln Elementary Cafeteria  
Championship.

Augustine flicks... another near miss. Iris' turn... she  
sends the pea sailing high over the cup, bouncing off  
Augustine's neck.

AND IRIS LAUGHS. Augustine's jarred by the sound.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Well that's something.

WE PULL BACK as they continue playing across the table...  
until we DRIFT OUTSIDE THE FROSTY WINDOW... watching them  
through the glass.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine's typing some coordinates into a computer. The  
screen looks like some type of flight plan. Iris is peering  
through a smaller telescope aimed at a blank wall.

Augustine's WATCH BEGINS BEEPING.

Iris' head spins toward the sound. Augustine taps the watch,  
silencing it. He just looks at it.

AUGUSTINE

Shit.

Augustine rises... starts walking out of the observatory.  
Iris follows. Augustine looks back.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

This I do by myself.

(points)

You stay here. And don't break  
anything.

Iris just stares up at Augustine with her big, innocent eyes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Here. Or go to your room or  
something.

Augustine turns... continues walking. And of course Iris  
continues following. Augustine sees her, just GROANS...  
keeps walking.

INT. COMPOUND MEDICAL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine drops into the chair, rigging himself up for  
another round of chemo.

Iris watches curiously as Augustine plugs the IV line into  
his chest port.

AUGUSTINE

I know. Doesn't make much sense to  
me either.

Augustine settles in... doesn't turn on any music this  
time... just watches Iris move around the room, pulling  
medical supplies from drawers... climbing on the scale.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

There's no rule that you have to  
touch everything.

Iris makes her way around the room, back to the LIGHT SWITCH,  
where she begins clicking it off and on... the room going  
dark, then light again... repeating.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

No more.

Iris keeps clicking.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

(harder)

I said cut it out.

(snaps his fingers)

My God. Leave it alone.

Iris stops. The room's dark.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Go take a nap or something. Have a little respect for the dying.

Jesus.

Iris eases back toward the center of the room, her head craned upward... staring through that glass ceiling toward the star-filled sky beyond.

Augustine watches her a moment, then--

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Polaris.

Augustine points upward.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Right there. The brightest one.

You see it?

Iris' eyes follow Augustine's finger.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

That's Polaris. Most important star in the sky. If you're ever lost, it'll always help you find your way.

Iris stares up... smiles... holds her arms out, and begins to slowly turn beneath them... letting all those stars just wash over her.

Augustine watches her a moment, but he doesn't smile... just watches... until he closes his eyes.

FLASHCUT TO:

*EXT. CANARY ISLANDS - DAY*

*The giant silver globe of the GTC TELESCOPE perched along the coast.*

*Jean stands along the cliffs, wearing shorts and a t-shirt. A 30-Something Augustine approaches from the GTC.*

AUGUSTINE  
I called your cell. You didn't  
answer.

JEAN  
Sorry. Was just thinking.

AUGUSTINE  
You can't answer your phone when  
you're thinking?

JEAN  
I can. I just didn't.

AUGUSTINE  
What's wrong?

JEAN  
What color is the water?

Augustine begins to turn to glance over the cliffs, but Jean  
holds his head... keeps his eyes locked on her.

JEAN (CONT'D)  
Without looking. What color?

Augustine hesitates... isn't thrilled with whatever game Jean  
is playing.

AUGUSTINE  
Blue.

Jean's lips curl into the slightest, sad smile as she  
releases him. Augustine looks down to the STUNNING GREEN  
WATER rolling onto the beach.

JEAN  
The river behind us. When it's  
high after the rains... it sounds  
like thunder. It's beautiful.

Augustine turns... sees the river winding from the hills.

JEAN (CONT'D)  
But you've never heard it.  
(looking up)  
You're so focused on what's up  
there, that you're blind to all the  
things around you. To everything  
that really matters.

AUGUSTINE  
Up there is all that matters. You  
used to know that too.

*Jean gives the hint of a nod.*

*JEAN*

*I'm sure you're right.  
(half-smiles)  
You always are, Augustine.*

*AUGUSTINE*

*If this is about the baby... the pregnancy. I'm sorry, but there's no room in our life for that. The work's too important. That's the only reason I said to end it now... to-*

*JEAN*

*-I'm not pregnant. You're safe. It was just a... possible sighting of a life form that ultimately proved false.*

*A LONG BEAT, then--*

*JEAN (CONT'D)*

*You want to be an explorer, Augustine. To discover new worlds. To give life some hope. But while you're doing all that, your own life is just slipping away. And that breaks my heart.*

*Jean turns... starts walking away.*

*JEAN (CONT'D)*

*And that's why I didn't answer the phone.*

*Augustine watches Jean leave. He could call out to her... if he did, she'd probably turn around. But instead, he just looks back to the green water below... then to the horizon... the hint of the moon appearing in the darkening sky.*

*THAT'S WHEN SOMEWHERE A LITTLE GIRL SCREAMS.*

*CUT TO:*

*INT. COMPOUND MEDICAL ROOM - NIGHT*

*Augustine awakens in the chair. Sees Iris staring up, CRYING... as LOUD THUDS RUMBLE ABOVE THEM...*

*...and Augustine looks up... sees TWO DEAD GULLS on the glass ceiling... another falls... THUD...*

blood sprays over the window... THUD... THUD... falling faster... louder... as if it's raining dead birds...

...and Iris jolts and cries with each strike.

Augustine stares up, confused... starts unplugging from the chemo unit.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

The snowy ground is dotted with dead birds of all sizes.

A compound door opens... Augustine steps outside, wearing an OXYGEN MASK, and carrying a DIGITAL AIR-CONTAMINATION DETECTOR in his mittened hand.

The Detector BEGINS TO BEEP... QUICK AND STEADY... the gauge bouncing along the fringe of red. Not good.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine's at a computer. Iris stands beside him, staring at that same INFRARED WORLD MAP on the monitor screen... watching as a deep red covers almost everything.

AUGUSTINE

It shouldn't be this far north...  
not yet. Unless it's worse than  
everyone...

(without looking at Iris)

I can't keep you safe here.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine's back at the radio. Iris stands at the chessboard, randomly moving the pieces.

AUGUSTINE

Repeat. This is Barbeau  
Observatory. Is anyone receiving?  
(static, changes channel)  
Barbeau Observatory. Confirm  
reception.

More static... seems even louder now... more hopeless.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Goddammit!

Augustine angrily shoves the radio unit off the desk.

Iris drops the chess piece... spins to the noise.

Augustine sits there, a little out of breath... thinking. Then his eyes SETTLE ON A TOPOGRAPHIC MAP hanging on the wall.

Augustine walks to it... runs his hand along the map.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Up here. Lake Hazen. There's a  
weather station.

Iris drags a chair over... climbs up for a better view beside Augustine.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
They've got a radio system...  
antenna stronger than ours.  
(beat)  
If we could get there... it's a  
long way. I don't know if I...  
(spirits sinking)  
It's too far.

Iris runs her tiny hand randomly over the map... feeling it... moving from point to point. Augustine watches her.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
But with a sled... enough supplies.  
(beat)  
It's north... protected by this  
mountain range here. The air might  
still be good. At least for a  
little longer.

Augustine keeps staring at the point on the map... nodding... becoming more sure of this idea.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
We get to that antenna...  
somebody'll hear us.

Then he gently moves Iris's hand to *Lake Hazen*.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
We have to take a trip.

INT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - HANGAR - NIGHT

Augustine tears a tarp off a SNOWMOBILE. He tries to crank the engine... just CLICKS. He opens the hood... stares down at the engine... his breath heavy behind the oxygen mask.

He moves around the machines and tool chests... wheels a BATTERY CHARGER over... begins connecting the cables... then coughs... harder... blood spatters across his mask.

AUGUSTINE

Son of a bitch.

(beat)

Who are you kidding?

He just stands there a moment... ready to turn... to walk out. But instead, he goes back to connecting the cables.

INT. COMPOUND - AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Augustine gathers gear into a backpack... opens the nightstand drawer, dumping the pill bottles and photographs in with the rest.

INT. COMPOUND HALLWAY - NIGHT

Augustine stands in the Medical Room doorway, staring at the chemo unit... the chair. Iris walks up beside him.

AUGUSTINE

Can't fit that in my pack.

(beat)

No point now anyway.

Augustine and Iris walk away together.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Augustine gathers some PAGES FROM THE PRINTER. Then he and Iris stand at the center of the room. Augustine's looking over it all... the telescope... the images on the computers. *This room is his life.*

AUGUSTINE

Everything I know is here. Never expected to leave it.

Augustine looks down at Iris... maybe second-guessing his plan. He finally nudges her toward the door.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

What the hell have you gotten me into?

Augustine shoves the pages into his backpack as they walk out.



INT. COMPOUND ENTRY - NIGHT

Augustine kneels in front of Iris, pulling a knit cap over her ears... zipping up a too-big winter coat.

AUGUSTINE

Unless you've got a suitcase you  
wanna tell me about, this is the  
best I could find lying around.

Augustine slides a small oxygen tank into Iris' coat pocket... runs the mask up, strapping it around her nose and mouth. She tries to push it away, but he holds it firm.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

You have to.

Augustine slips his own mask on.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

So do I. See.

Augustine turns the nozzle of Iris' tank. The HISS of air flowing into her mask. She startles at the burst of cool air against her.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

It's okay. Just breathe.

Augustine takes a deep breath into his mask. Iris takes a small one... then larger... smiles.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Not so bad, right? Don't take it  
off. No matter what.  
(motions to her mask)  
Never off.

Augustine stands... looks out the door.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

We ready?

Iris reaches her tiny hand up, taking Augustine's. He looks down, almost surprised. Then--

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Here we go.

Augustine pushes the door open. The Arctic air hits them. They step out into it.

EXT. BARBEAU OBSERVATORY COMPOUND - NIGHT

Augustine and Iris walk through the snow toward the waiting snowmobile. There's a large sled attached, stacked with supplies, tent, gasoline cans, rifle, observatory gear.

Augustine helps Iris on, then slides aboard in front of her.

AUGUSTINE

Hold onto me.

Iris doesn't move. Augustine presses the starter button... the snowmobile ROARS TO LIFE... and Iris immediately wraps her arms around Augustine's waist.

Augustine turns the throttle... the snowmobile lurches forward... moves slowly across the grounds.

Augustine stops beside a LARGE STEEL POLE. He reaches up, opening a POWER BOX... pulls the lever, and THE ENTIRE OBSERVATORY GOES DARK.

Augustine throws a last look over the shadowy silhouettes painted on the white snow, then twists the throttle... the snowmobile carries them into the darkness.

INT. OBSERVATORY CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Looking out through a frosty window. A finger-drawn rocket ship flies toward a distant planet. Beyond the drawing, we can see Augustine and Iris driving away.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

ANGLE ON A MONITOR... TWO TWIN BOYS IN MATCHING SOCCER JERSEYS fill the screen, excitedly talking over each other in Russian... recounting their most recent win, as their MOTHER smiles behind them.

Then we see Ivanov in a chair, holding a REMOTE as he watches the video. His face is emotionless... almost as if he's staring at a blank screen.

The Twin Boys playfully push at each other to get center stage as they talk. Their Mother's smile turns into a WONDERFUL LAUGH.

Ivanov rewinds the video... it plays out again... that smile turning into a laugh.

--IN THE KITCHEN AREA... Sully, Devi, and Thebes eat... Sully watching Ivanov.

THEBES

He's going back to the early ones... watching them over and over.

SULLY

I can't imagine what he's feeling. The not knowing.

THEBES

At least the unknown allows some hope. Something to hang onto.

DEVI

I keep thinking about my sister and her kids... what might be happening... how much I'd like to see them. See anyone. Even my ex, and I hate him.

THEBES

(to Sully)

Who's the first person you'd want to see back home?

Sully considers the question, then half-grimaces and shakes her head.

SULLY

Think I'm sort of a lousy human being. Haven't fostered a lot of deep meaningful relationships.

(shrugs)

But I guess that's why I've never been afraid during a launch... never felt like I was risking anything... leaving anyone behind.

DEVI

That's sad.

SULLY

Is it? I honestly don't know. I mean my mother was everything to me. She taught me about the stars. Taught me to be curious. Pushed me to join the program. But then she got sick... and it all went so bad so fast. When she was gone it was like... screw it, let's fly. Was nothing left for me down there.

THEBES

I kind of get it. I used space to leave my wife years before she left me.

(off their looks)

Our daughter... she drowned when she was three.

DEVI

God. I'm sorry.

THEBES

We couldn't get past it. Or maybe just I couldn't.

SULLY

All this time squeezed together up here, and you've never told us that.

THEBES

No point. It was so long ago.

DEVI

I thought you were just split up like every other couple I know. Do you guys have any other children?

THEBES

(shakes his head)

Grace... my wife... she wanted to try again, but I...

(shrugs)

...it's like those people who as soon as their dog dies, they run out and get another one just like it. Never made sense to me. How can you just replace something you loved with every ounce of your heart?

(beat)

So instead I ran away.... took any mission I could find. Stayed above the earth as much as possible. Then once after returning home, I walked into our house and my wife was gone. And part of me was happy. A house can only hold so much sadness.

DEVI

That kind of thing... you still have to carry it with you.

THEBES

(nods)

But I try to narrow my focus onto only what I'm doing and nothing else. If I'm gathering data, I only think of the data. Reading a book, I only think of the words on the page. When I brush my teeth, I think of only brushing my teeth.

(beat, smiles at them)

And when none of that works, I talk to you.

Sully offers a sad smile... drops a hand on Thebes'. She looks over to Ivanov's monitor... the faces and voices of his perfect, happy family... being rewound... played again.

SULLY

Lotta broken pieces flying around up here.

Thebes nods... walks over to the couch... turns on the tv and video game.

THEBES

Ivanov, let's go.

Ivanov just keeps watching his family video.

THEBES (CONT'D)

Come on. I've been practicing.

Ivanov watches another moment, then finally turns off his monitor... grabs a game controller and falls onto the couch beside Thebes.

SULLY

(to Devi and herself)

And when you play the game, think of nothing but the game.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Harper's at a computer, running diagnostics on the engines. Sully floats in.

SULLY

Why don't you have a family?

HARPER

(without looking up)

Jesus. How are things in the comms pod, Mission Specialist Sullivan?

SULLY

I mean you're pretty old. Did you ever even consider it?

Harper shoots Sully a glance, then shakes his head as he continues working.

HARPER

I hate kids. The noise... smells. Who the hell wants that?

SULLY

Billions of people. Literally.

HARPER

Did I miss the slideshow of all your little monsters runnin' around?

SULLY

I know. It's weird. I never really thought about it before.

HARPER

That's because people who want to read bedtime stories or coach Little League don't spend two years at a time five hundred million miles from home.

SULLY

Ivanov does it.

HARPER

Alexy's an asshole. He'd be the first one to tell you. The only way his wife doesn't kill him is for him to spend ninety percent of their marriage in space.

They sit there in silence for a moment, then-

HARPER (CONT'D)

Strange time to start wishing you had someone waiting for you down there.

SULLY

I'm not.

Sully starts floating back out.

SULLY (CONT'D)  
More just wondering why I never  
have.

Harper watches Sully drift back down the circular hall.

INT. AETHER - SULLY'S ROOM - SPACE

Dark. Sully in bed... can't sleep. Her curtain flutters...  
Devi stepping inside.

SULLY  
(whispering)  
Hey.

Devi moves close enough for Sully to see her eyes are red and  
wet from crying.

DEVI  
I keep going through all the  
possible explanations. Thinking  
through every scenario.  
(beat)  
There's only one logical answer.

A moment, then Sully slides back on her bunk so that Devi can  
climb up beside her. Sully runs a gentle hand over Devi's  
hair... tucks it behind her ear.

DEVI (CONT'D)  
I want my two years back. I want  
to spend it surrounded by my  
family. Laughing with my sister.  
Arguing with my father. Driving an  
old van across Ireland. I want to  
spend it falling in love.  
(beat)  
Not wasted up here. Where nothing  
we did mattered.

SULLY  
We don't know that yet. It's like  
Harper said, we have to keep doing  
our jobs... and hoping it's all  
going to be okay.

A LONG BEAT, then--

DEVI  
Are you afraid?

ANOTHER BEAT.

SULLY

Yes.

Then they both close their eyes... hope for sleep.

WE PUSH SLOWLY IN ON SULLY'S EYES... TIGHTER... TIGHTER...

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

You awake?

...and the eyes open... and we realize THEY BELONG TO IRIS.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

Augustine stands beside the snowmobile, filling the tank with a gas can. Iris blinks herself awake... immediately touches her oxygen mask.

AUGUSTINE

It's okay. You're still covered.

Augustine finishes with the gas can... holds out the Air-Contamination Detector for Iris to see. The gauge is now between YELLOW AND GREEN.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

And levels are down. See. Almost green. We could probably take 'em off, but better safe.

(touches his mask)

Not much longer.

Augustine stows the gas can back on the sled. A GUST OF WIND WHIPS ACROSS... throws a wave of icy powder over them.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Turn away from it.

Augustine steps up between Iris and the wind... turns her body to face the other direction.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Let the jacket do the work.

The wind finally lightens. Iris turns back around toward Augustine.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

You're tired?

Augustine tilts his head over, closing his eyes.



AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Sleepy?

Iris nods.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Me too.

Augustine looks back to the Detector, then squints out across the tundra... sees the SHAPES OF TWO ARCTIC WOLVES WATCHING FROM ALONG A RIDGE.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Just need to go a little further.

Augustine climbs back onto the snowmobile... starts the engine... pulls off across the snow.

Iris buries her face into Augustine's back, shielding herself from the winds.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

An orange tent is set up in the middle of endless tundra. A lantern inside makes the tent glow like a single orange bulb floating on a white sea.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Iris is sitting up inside a sleeping bag, eating a protein bar, as she stares at the DETECTOR UNIT in her hand... *LEVELS ON THE EDGE OF GREEN.*

Augustine arranges his gear... rests the HUNTING RIFLE beside his sleeping bag.

AUGUSTINE

(off the Detector)

We're okay for now. Don't need to keep checking it.

Augustine reaches for the Detector, but Iris holds tight.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

We're safe here.

(inhales deep)

Good air. Safe.

The deep breath makes Augustine COUGH... harder... then GROANS A LITTLE.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

At least you are.

Augustine digs his pills from the backpack... empties a couple into his hand... tosses them back, then notices Iris watching him with nervous eyes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Don't worry. Not gonna die on you yet.

Augustine moves stiffly into his sleeping bag... his body hurts.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Just feels like it.

He settles in... closes his eyes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Rest for a few hours. Then we can start moving again.

He lies there... can hear the CRUNCHING OF IRIS'S CHEWING.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

That's a good bar, huh?

More CRUNCHING. Augustine opens his eyes... sees Iris just staring down at the Detector as she chews.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Maybe chew a little faster. See if we can't get this over with.

Iris' chewing doesn't alter... the same constant crunching and grinding.

Augustine finally reaches over, snatching the Detector away.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I told you we're fine. You don't need stare at it all night.

Iris' eyes fill with tears.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

You need to sleep. I need to sleep. That's the only way we'll make it where we need to go.

Augustine shuts off the lantern... the tent goes dark... we can barely make out their shapes in the tiny space, when... CRUNCH... then--

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Goddammit.

EXT. ARCTIC SKY - NIGHT

A shooting star blazes across the sky... fizzles out just above the horizon.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - TENT - NIGHT

The wind still gusting. Iris appears, sneaking out of the tent, carrying the Detector Unit. She slides her oxygen mask over her face, then starts walking... holding the BLINKING Detector ahead of her... letting it guide her to clean, safe air.

She looks up... to POLARIS shimmering above... veers her course to follow.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

Iris leans into the wind, still holding that Detector out in front like a guide. She walks with high knees to traverse the deep snow.

The Detector BEEPS... the gauge SOLID GREEN. Iris tugs the mask from her face... BREATHES... smiles.

Then an O.S. GROWL. Iris looks back... sees THOSE TWO WOLVES FROM THE RIDGE... frozen a few yards away... glowing eyes locked on her.

Iris spins, the Detector slipping from her hands as she starts running through the snow.

The Wolves leap in pursuit... bounding after Iris.

Iris stumbles face first into the snow... throws a frightened glance back as she scrambles back to her feet...

...the Wolves are almost on her now.

Iris tries to run again... falls again... and the Wolves leap.

SLAM TO:

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Augustine awakening from his dream with a start. Sees HE'S STILL HOLDING THE DETECTOR UNIT.

Then he looks to the mound of Iris' sleeping bag... touches it... Iris is gone.

AUGUSTINE

Shit.

Augustine scrambles up, grabbing the rifle as he hurries out of the tent.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - TENT - NIGHT

Augustine charges from the tent... immediately freezes... because Iris is sitting just beside the tent...

...staring off at the incredible AURORA BOREALIS FLOWING THROUGH THE SKY... dancing streams of green, purple, and blue lights.

Iris looks at Augustine, a huge smile covering her face.

Augustine catches his breath... relaxes... rests the rifle against the tent, then sits down in the snow next to Iris... shares the view.

After a moment, Augustine turns his eyes from the incredible beauty... and watches Iris gazing up, in awe.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

FROM HIGH ABOVE... the snowmobile is like a dot moving across a white world.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

ON ARCTIC HARES... BOUNCING STRAIGHT UP HIGH IN THE AIR.

The snowmobile glides over the snow. Augustine pointing toward the Hares as they pass.

AUGUSTINE

(yelling back to Iris)  
Arctic Hares! They jump up instead  
of out! So they can see further!

Iris just grins as she watches the pogo-hopping animals.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

The snowmobile stopped... idling. Augustine as binoculars raised... peering off toward a GRAY SHAPE in the distance.

AUGUSTINE

I'm not sure.

Augustine hands the binoculars to Iris. She looks toward the shape.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Hang on.

Iris grips onto Augustine as he turns the throttle... head toward that distant shape.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - CRASHED PLANE - NIGHT

A PRIVATE JET rests tilted in the snow. One wing severed off, with a flapping tarp over the gaping hole left behind in the fuselage.

The wind has blown deep drifts against one side of the plane. There's some loose luggage and supplies scattered in the snow.

The snowmobile pulls up. Augustine and Iris look over the scene.

AUGUSTINE

Trying to find a safe zone.

(beat)

Storm or ice might've brought them down. Or they just left too late.

Then Augustine climbs off.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Stay here.

(hard)

Here. I mean it.

Iris understands... nods.

Augustine pulls the rifle and flashlight from the sled... moves toward the downed plane.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Hello?!

No answer. Augustine reaches the tarp... grabs a flapping corner... opens it to peer in.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Hello?

Augustine steps inside.

INT. PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Augustine's flashlight beam floats over the wreckage... shredded steel... seats torn from their moorings... the charred remains of a small campfire on the floor.

Augustine makes his way to the cockpit... the FROZEN CORPSE OF THE PILOT still strapped into the seat. Another tarp hangs over the shattered windshield.

TOOLS rest beside the RADIO UNIT.

Augustine moves back past that flapping tarp... toward a PILE OF SHEET-COVERED SHAPES.

Augustine hesitates... already knows what he's going to find before he pulls back the sheet... reveals the FROZEN BODIES OF A FAMILY... a MOTHER and THREE CHILDREN.

And that's when a GLOVED HAND SUDDENLY GRABS AUGUSTINE'S ANKLE.

Augustine jumps with a start... aims the light down onto WHAT'S LEFT OF THE FAMILY'S FATHER... frozen streams of blood from his frostbitten ears and nose. All the fingers on his other UNGLOVED HAND are black.

The Father makes a GUTTURAL BARK... a desperate plea for help.

MOVEMENT from the front of the plane... Iris staring at the scene, wide-eyed.

AUGUSTINE

I told you to stay outside!

Iris is too stunned by the scene to move.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Now! Get the hell out!!

Iris rushes back out through the tarp.

Augustine looks over the bodies, then back down to the Father. The man's still gurgling... trying to speak.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

Then Augustine turns off the flashlight... steadies the rifle in his hands...

...as WE DRIFT BACK TOWARD THAT FLAPPING TARP... the wind beating it against the fuselage when the GUNSHOT RINGS OUT.

EXT. PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Augustine walks outside. Iris stands between him and the snowmobile. Her eyes are filled with tears. Augustine slows beside Iris... rests a hand on her head... starts to speak, but instead just continues walking.

He stores the rifle and flashlight back on the sled, then notices something in the distance... THE TWO WOLVES... watching from across the tundra.

Augustine gazes back at them a moment, then pulls one of the gas cans from the sled... carries it back toward the plane.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

The Wolves... standing on a ridge... watching the snowmobile drive across the tundra...

...as behind it, FLAMES POUR OUT OF THE PLANE, devouring everything inside.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

The lantern glowing. Augustine and Iris are beneath their sleeping bags. Iris just stares up at the roof of the tent. Augustine watches her. Then--

AUGUSTINE

What you saw... that's not going to happen to you.

Iris turns to look at Augustine.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

We aren't going to let that happen.

They hold a look... until Iris closes her eyes. Augustine turns off the lantern.

ANGLE ON THE LANTERN BULB... GOING DARK... JUST THE FINAL GLOW OF THE FILAMENT DYING... THEN BLACKNESS TAKES OVER... FOR SEVERAL LONG MOMENTS THAT'S ALL WE SEE...

...UNTIL THE EXTERIOR OF THE AETHER APPEARS... gliding past us.

INT. AETHER - SULLY'S ROOM - SPACE

Dark except for a reading light. Sully's reading a novel... *The Left Hand Of Darkness*. It's all quiet... until the CLICKING OF CARDS BEING SHUFFLED... SHUFFLED AGAIN... and a small smile creeps over Sully's face.

INT. AETHER - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Sully enters. Harper is already at the table, dealing.

SULLY  
(half-whisper)  
I think we're supposed to be sleeping.

Sully sits down across from Harper.

HARPER  
I'm the commander of this mission. How do you expect me to sleep with what's been taking place?  
(off Sully's look)  
I haven't won a hand since we left K-23. That shit stops tonight.

SULLY  
Maybe we should change games. You any better at *Go Fish*?

Sully discards...

HARPER  
Don't patronize me.

...and Harper scoops it up.

HARPER (CONT'D)  
Will only make this beating you're about to take worse.

SULLY  
That sparkle in my eye. That isn't fear.

Harper chuckles... discards. As the game continues-



HARPER

I got into NASA because I was good at math. I don't like to use the word *Prodigy*, but-

SULLY

-Yeah, I read your bio. You also broke the family dog's leg when you tried to fly it in a wooden rocket you built in the backyard.

HARPER

That's irrelevant.

SULLY

Not to the dog.

HARPER

Did you know there are over sixty billion possible combinations of rummy hands at the start of each game?

SULLY

(shakes her head)

But I know there seems to be only one possible outcome at the end.

HARPER

So this little streak you're on-

SULLY

-The streak that's lasted from one side of the universe to the other?

HARPER

Is simply a miniscule blip of luck among sixty billion possible combinations.

Harper picks up...

HARPER (CONT'D)

But when you apply genius level math skills to the game...

...discards.

HARPER (CONT'D)

...you can shift all those combinations to your favor.

Sully scoops up Harper's discard.

SULLY

And that's what you're doing now.  
Overpowering me with math.

HARPER

You're what my fellow  
mathematicians refer to as a  
*Simpleton*.

Sully snorts a little laugh...

HARPER (CONT'D)

So I wouldn't expect you to  
understand.

...discards. And Harper smiles...

HARPER (CONT'D)

But you're about to.

...reaches for the card... just as RED LIGHTS BEGIN  
FLASHING... a SIREN BLARES.

Sully and Harper are both rising to their feet... as Ivanov  
comes charging out of his room in just a t-shirt and  
shorts... races past. Harper and Sully drop their cards...  
follow after Ivanov.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

More red lights and sirens. Ivanov hurries to his  
controls... starts clicking in commands.

IVANOV

We've deviated off course.

HARPER

How far?

IVANOV

Impossible to know yet. Auto  
deactivated at some point.

SULLY

Related to the comms blackout?

Ivanov doesn't answer... just keeps clicking.

HARPER

Shut us down.

(off Ivanov's look)

Kill the engines before we get  
completely sideways up here.

Ivanov works the instruments... the red lights go white...  
the sirens quiet.

Thebes and Devi enter... take in the scene.

SULLY  
Problem with auto-pilot.

DEVI  
How does that happen?

HARPER  
Not uncommon.

IVANOV  
And not a problem when Mission  
Control can help us correct.

DEVI  
So now we're just floating out  
here. And off course?  
(off Sully's nod)  
How far?

Ivanov gives an ANNOYED GRUNT... some RUSSIAN CURSES.

HARPER  
Need to figure that out.

THEBES  
What's the variance for the alarm?

IVANOV  
Zero point two degrees.

THEBES  
The alarm sounded for what... about  
eighty seconds?

DEVI  
At thirty-thousand miles per hour.

HARPER  
Plus coast speed after engine kill.

DEVI  
And guidance and telemetry are-

SULLY  
-non existent without comms.

IVANOV

I suggest we don't just hang around  
up here hoping for that to  
change... waiting for earth to  
throw us a rope.

A LONG BEAT OF THINKING.

THEBES

Sully, what can you hear out there?

SULLY

Jupiter probes. The beacon we left  
behind at Colony Site One on K-23.  
The supply probe on its way there  
now. I don't know what else...  
some dying satellites and-

THEBES

-ISS?

SULLY

(nods)  
Transmissions are dark, but I can  
pick up feint location pulses.

DEVI

(to Thebes)  
You can use that.

THEBES

(nods)  
Reference the K-23 beacon as our  
starting point.

IVANOV

That's behind us.

THEBES

And build a course from there to  
the ISS.

HARPER

Close enough to earth for me.  
Start building.  
(to Sully)  
Get him exact numbers on the beacon  
and pulse. Devi, help Thebes with  
the course design. And move  
fast... we're drifting while you  
work.

The group fans out. Harper follows... looks back to Ivanov.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Run internal tests to make sure auto was all we lost. If we're clear, we'll re-fire once we have the plot.

IVANOV

And then what?

HARPER

Cross our fingers, Alexy. Shit, that's all I do half the time anyway.

Harper exits... leaves Ivanov to go back to his controls.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully, Thebes, and Devi floating inside the pod. Sully's working the dials and switches... locking into a sound... a PING.

SULLY

Colony beacon.

Thebes scribbles something into a pad.

THEBES

(to Devi)

We'll need our exact distance traveled from K-23.

Devi starts floating out.

DEVI

I'll pull it up.

THEBES

And the current orbit position.

(to Sully)

We can base it off the transmission delay speed and scheduled orbit position.

(looking out the small window)

Need our own guidepost.

SULLY

(pointing past him)

Polaris. We'll go *old school* just like Magellan.

INT. AETHER - THEBES' LAB - SPACE

Thebes at his laptop running course computations. Devi's looking over his shoulder. They watch an animated line stretch across the mapped screen.

DEVI

Ten models, ten matching results.

Thebes nods... carries his laptop from the lab.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Ivanov's looking over the coordinates on Thebes' screen.

IVANOV

You're sure about these numbers.

Thebes hesitates.

DEVI

Yes.

Harper looks from Devi to Thebes. Thebes nods.

HARPER

That's our course.

IVANOV

From this distance, it's like hitting the head of pin. If they're off even a-

HARPER

-They aren't, Alexy.

Harper nods for Ivanov to lock in their course. Harper crosses his fingers for him. Ivanov GRUNTS... keys in the coordinates.

HARPER (CONT'D)

And if they are, we'll know as soon as we hit Neptune.

Harper nods to Thebes and Devi as he heads out.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Good work.

INT. AETHER - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Harper walks into the kitchen area... stops at the table... the deck of cards now spread out in a *Smiley Face* design.

HARPER

Goddammit.

INT. AETHER - SULLY'S ROOM - SPACE

Sully's back in her bed, reading...

HARPER (O.S.)

You know that's a win for me!

...then smiling.

EXT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - SPACE

The engines BLAST... FIRE ERUPTS... WHITE SMOKE CONSUMES US... FOR A LONG TIME... BEGINS TO CLEAR, and WE REALIZE IT'S A SNOW CLOUD BEING THROWN UP FROM THE BACK OF THE SNOWMOBILE.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

The world's a little brighter than we're used to.

The snowmobile tears across the tundra, dragging the sled. Iris clings to Augustine, her face pressed sideways against his back, watching the world race past... spots a few SQUARE SHAPES in the distance.

Iris tugs on Augustine's jacket... points.

Augustine slows... squints out at the shapes... veers toward them.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

Three rectangle-shaped steel pre-fab pods rest at various angles in the snow. There is NORWEGIAN PRINT along each wall. Transportation cables are still secured around them.

Augustine and Iris climb off the snowmobile... walk through the snow toward the pods.

AUGUSTINE

We were supposed to get these.  
More office space for the  
observatory.

Augustine pushes open a pod door... glances around inside.  
The walls are thick with foam insulation.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Plans changed I guess.  
(glancing up)  
Choppers must've just dumped 'em  
here.

A CLANK from beside him... Iris opening another pod door.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Easy.

Augustine joins her... enters the pod.

INT. STEEL POD - DUSK

Augustine and Iris glance around the empty pod. It's like a newly constructed room... open light fixtures and exposed electrical outlets.

AUGUSTINE  
Would've been nice. Might've  
actually gotten my own place to  
work.

Augustine turns... starts back out.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Oh well. Got it eventually I  
guess.  
(off Iris)  
For a little while anyway.

Iris follows Augustine to the door, but stops before stepping back outside.

Augustine walks a short distance, then looks back... sees her.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Time to go.

Iris doesn't budge.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
We can stop in a couple hours.

Still nothing. Augustine looks to the stowed tent on the sled, then back to Iris.



AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

It is a helluva lot warmer inside there.

(beat, nods)

But just for one night.

INT. STEEL POD - NIGHT

The lantern glows at the middle of the room. Iris is in her sleeping bag beside it, drawing a woman's face... with long purple hair.

Augustine sits back against a wall, chasing some pain pills with some whiskey from his flask.

AUGUSTINE

That's pretty. Is that your mom?

Iris holds it up so Augustine can get a better view. Augustine stares at it.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I knew a pretty face like that once. Hair was a little different shade.

Iris goes back to drawing.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

And she was as loud as you are quiet. When she'd laugh, everybody would turn and look.

Augustine smiles.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I think she laughed so much because she was smarter than all the rest of us put together. And she knew it.

(beat)

Tell me something about your life.

Iris scribbles in more purple hair.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Anything will do.

(off her silence)

Iris.

Iris looks up.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Ask me a question.

A BEAT, then--

IRIS  
Did you love her?

Augustine stares back in shock... wasn't expecting to hear Iris speak. None of us were. And as Augustine stares, WATER BEGINS DRIPPING DOWN ON IRIS'S HEAD... then on Augustine's head... harder... faster. Until--

IRIS (CONT'D)  
We need to leave.

SLAM TO:

INT. STEEL POD - NIGHT

Augustine waking from his dream... sees WATER SPRAYING IN FROM A COUPLE OPEN OUTLETS... HEARS LOUD POPPING FROM OUTSIDE... realizes the pod is TILTED AT A STEEP ANGLE, and he has slid down to a corner, his sleeping bag-covered legs submerged in a puddle of water... Iris's drawing of the purple-haired woman floating beside him.

He spins... sees the terrified Iris standing at the other end of the pod, holding onto a joist in the wall.

Augustine starts crawling up the angled floor, grabbing his backpack as he moves... still not sure what the fuck's happening. The O.S. POPPING GROWS LOUDER.

AUGUSTINE  
(to Iris)  
Hold on! I'm coming!

The pod SUDDENLY LURCHES DOWNWARD... Augustine slides back... Iris SCREAMS... and MORE WATER POURS IN THROUGH SEAMS.

Augustine struggles back up the incline... reaches Iris, then looks out the pod door... everything's at a crooked angle... twisting further.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
We're on ice. It's breaking away.  
We've gotta jump!

The pod shifts again. Iris loses her grip... starts sliding down, but Augustine hangs onto her.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
I've got you!

Augustine pulls Iris back to him...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Hold onto me!

...lifts her up as much as he can, then half-tumbles from the sinking pod.

EXT. STEEL POD - NIGHT

Augustine and Iris slam to the ice as the pod sinks further below the surface.

Augustine immediately looks toward the snowmobile... the sled sinking through a widening crack in the ice... half-submerged.

AUGUSTINE  
(pulling Iris up)  
C'mon!

Augustine hurries over the ice... more POPS AND CRACKING as the fissures from the sinking pods spread.

Augustine throws Iris across the snowmobile, then climbs on in front of her... starts the engine...

...just as the rear of the snowmobile drops... gravity pulls them toward the icy waters.

Augustine guns the engine. The snowmobile tracks churn on the ice... grip... lurch forward... but the ice splinters beneath it... the snowmobile is stuck.

Augustine leaps off to push the machine as he guns the throttle... straining with everything he has to give it on the rapidly splintering ice...

...but the snowmobile keeps slipping downward into the water.

Augustine finally releases the throttle... grabs Iris by the arm to yank her free... pulls her to safe ground.

The snowmobile sinks faster into the crack. Augustine lunges to grab the tent and rifle from the sled...

...just as the ice gives away under his weight. He dives back to solid ice with Iris... slides her further away, then watches the snowmobile sink from view.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 Goddammit!

He slams a fist into the snow.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 GODDAMMIT!!

He catches his breath, then begins gathering his gear...  
 backpack, tent, rifle, supply pack.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 We should've kept driving. We  
 shouldn't have stopped.

Augustine scans the landscape, then looks up to the stars...  
 POLARIS SHIMMERING.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 We've gotta walk now.  
 (to Iris)  
 We've got no choice. We have to  
 walk.

Augustine starts walking. Iris follows right beside him, as  
 the ice POPS and CRACKS behind them.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

An endless white ocean of windswept snow. Augustine trudges  
 across it. Iris is right behind him, stepping in Augustine's  
 tracks as she follows.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

Augustine and Iris huddle against a large rock, as the wind  
 whips the snow past them. Augustine digs a protein bar from  
 his pack... breaks it in half to give to Iris.

AUGUSTINE  
 All we have.

Iris takes a bite. Augustine shoves the remaining half back  
 in the pack. He leans back against the rock... closes his  
 eyes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
 We'll wait for the winds to die  
 down. Just for a little while.

Iris slides up against him.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

Augustine leads Iris up a snow-covered slope. His steps are slow... weak. He drops to his knees, COUGHING... spitting up blood, staining the white snow.

He remains hunched over on all fours for a moment... until Iris rests her small gloved-hand on his back... and Augustine straightens... rises to his feet... continues the climb.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

An Arctic Hare sits motionless on the ground. Suddenly a GUNSHOT blasts the ground just beside it... sends the Hare darting away.

Then we see Augustine standing in the distance, rifle still aimed. He and Iris watch the Hare bound out of sight.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - TENT - NIGHT

Iris stands beside Augustine as he sets up the tent... using a rock to hammer the stakes into the hard ground.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Augustine hands Iris the last of the protein bar. She holds it without biting.

AUGUSTINE

It's okay. I'm not hungry.

Iris still doesn't eat. Augustine shakes out a couple pain pills... shows them to Iris.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I like these more anyway.

He tosses the pills into his mouth. Iris takes a tiny bite.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

There should be food at Lake Hazen.  
More than we'll ever need.

(beat)

And no peas I bet. Just the good stuff. Pizza and cheeseburgers.

The wind rustles the tent... half-lifts a corner. Augustine puts his weight on it, pressing the corner stake back down.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I used to think I wanted to be an explorer... lead the way across new worlds instead of just finding them for others to see.

(beat)

Now... not so sure I was ever built for that. Younger days maybe.

Augustine drifts over until he's lying down.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

What about you? Are you going to explore when you grow up?

(closes his eyes)

If you do, find someone you like to do it with.

Iris lies down beside Augustine...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

And keep 'em beside you forever.

...stares at his weathered face, then runs a small finger along a deep wrinkle... running up from the corner of his eye, across his forehead... down the other side.

And Augustine's asleep before she finishes.

EXT. TENT - DUSK

Augustine kneels in the snow, looking over the map. He's weak... sweating from fever... holding in coughs. Iris kneels beside him. The wind pounds against them, flapping the map over. Iris grabs the edge to hold it down.

AUGUSTINE

We just need to stay headed in this same direction. We get tired, we'll take a break. Someplace outta the wind.

Augustine starts folding the tent back up.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

We've got to be getting-

Suddenly Iris bolts away. Augustine turns to see where... then realizes the WIND HAS FILLED UP THE OPEN TENT... is pulling it loose from the stakes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Oh, God.

Augustine jumps up.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
I forgot to close it up! Grab it!

Iris nears the tent just as the last stake snaps free. The tent starts rolling away like a giant orange ball.

Augustine and Iris continue the chase, but the tent is just skimming across the snow... pulling away from them... finally POPS FULL OF WIND... lifts off into the air...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
NO!

...flying away... higher... further.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Please.

Augustine slows... can only watch it shrink in the distance. Iris stops running... looks back to Augustine.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
(beaten)  
It's the wrong way. And we won't catch it. I can't catch it.

Augustine COUGHS HARDER... drops to his knees.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
I can't.

The tent vanishes against the sky.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

Augustine and Iris walk, heads turned away from the wind... the snow blasting across them.

Ahead of them is nothing but open, wind-swept tundra.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

A field of scattered boulders.

Augustine and Iris huddle beneath a rock's overhang. Augustine's digging a hole in the snow... burrowing deeper... using the rock and snow to protect them from the winds.

He curls up against the rock... pulls Iris to him... unzips his jacket to wrap it around her.

AUGUSTINE

We'll be okay. I promise. We'll  
be okay.

They squeeze together... trembling... desperately trying not  
to freeze to death.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - TUNDRA - NIGHT

The winds blow... the snow swirls over the ground like white  
tumbleweeds.

FLASHCUT TO:

INT. CANARY ISLANDS SHACK - DAY

*The Younger Augustine stands at the edge of a kitchen table,  
staring down at a FOLDED LETTER. Behind him there are  
PHOTOGRAPHS OF AUGUSTINE AND JEAN on the refrigerator door.  
The house feels empty. It's so quiet, we can hear the HUM OF  
THE REFRIGERATOR... the BOARDS CREAK UNDER AUGUSTINE'S FEET  
when he finally leans to lift the letter.*

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - TUNDRA - DUSK

Augustine awakens, still under that rock overhang. Snow  
pours down around him. He blinks his bearings back, then  
looks beside him... Iris awake... shivering.

AUGUSTINE

We should keep moving. Can you  
walk?

(off her silence)

Iris... can you walk?

Iris manages a nod.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DUSK

Snow pouring down. Difficult for Augustine to see more than  
a few feet ahead. Iris follows right behind, one gloved hand  
holding onto the back of Augustine's jacket.

Augustine's head is lowered... watching the ground. He looks  
exhausted... weak.

He stops walking... stares just ahead of him... WHERE A LINE  
OF ANIMAL TRACKS CROSS THE SNOW.

Augustine squints ahead.



AUGUSTINE

I think something's here.

He looks around... no sign of anything. He looks behind them... just in time to catch a GLIMPSE OF SHAPES DARTING IN THE SNOW... crossing their tracks.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

They're circling us.

Augustine pulls Iris closer... squints into the blizzard... catches another fleeting glimpse... a WOLF.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

GET OUTTA HERE!

Augustine shakes the rifle strap off his shoulder... shakily aims it toward the blurred shapes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

GO ON!

BOOM... Augustine fires a shot. Iris throws her hands over her ears.

More glimpses of TWO WOLVES... appearing then disappearing in the heavy snow... still circling.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Are they really there?

Iris doesn't answer... just stands against Augustine with her hands still over her ears.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

ARE YOU REALLY THERE?!

Augustine tries to hold his aim on the predators, but the snow is working against him... the wind is blowing so hard... and he's so cold.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I don't know. I can't see... I can't-

Suddenly a WOLF DARTS STRAIGHT AT THEM... JAWS SNAPPING...

...BOOM... Augustine's shot buries in the ground beside the Wolf... sends the animal bounding back out of sight...

...just as ANOTHER WOLF STRIKES FROM THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION... clamps its jaws onto Augustine's sleeve.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

GET AWAY!

BOOM... into the ground again. The Wolf starts its escape...  
BOOM... Augustine's shot catches the Wolf in the hip... sends  
it spinning... YELPING from somewhere behind that wall of  
snow.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

GO ON!

Augustine reaches to hold Iris close to him... can't feel  
her... looks down... and realizes IRIS IS GONE.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Oh, God. IRIS!

Augustine starts turning in a tight, panicked circle...  
peering through the blizzard.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

IRIS!

He scans the ground, searching for Iris' tracks. But there  
aren't any.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

COME TO MY VOICE! I'M RIGHT HERE!

A DARK SHAPE APPEARS IN THE WHITE SNOW. Looks like Iris...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

HERE!

...then becomes THE OTHER WOLF... LEAPING... JAWS WIDE.

Augustine's finger instinctively pulls the trigger... BOOM...  
the Wolf SLAMS INTO AUGUSTINE... they tumble back into the  
snow... the Wolf dead beside Augustine.

Augustine scrambles to his feet...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

IRIS!

...charges headlong into the violent snow...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

FIND MY VOICE!

...panicked... veering around... stumbling.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
The wind's covered your tracks! I  
can't follow you!

Augustine stops... waits...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
I can't follow you. IRIS!!

...listens...

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Please say something. CRY OUT!

...strains to hear anything behind the winds.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
I'M RIGHT HERE!

Augustine's screaming leads to COUGHING... PAINFUL GASPS IN  
THE COLD AIR... he stands there hunched over... squinting  
into the blizzard... then begins to cry.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
I'm right here.

Augustine drops to the snow... COUGHING... spitting up blood.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
I'm right here.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - NIGHT

Augustine lies huddled on the ground, asleep... a blanket of  
snow across him. He awakens... looks around... sees the DEAD  
WOLF a short distance away, half-covered in fresh snow.

Augustine pulls himself up... scans the area... sees the  
TRAIL OF BLOOD from the injured wolf leading back across the  
tundra. But there's nothing else. No sign of Iris.

Augustine just stands there... finally looks beaten.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - LATER

Augustine is almost sleep-walking up a slope...  
expressionless... lost... completely broken now... his body  
weak and trembling.

He stumbles... slides back down the slope a few feet... lies  
there a moment before struggling back up... retracing the  
climb... moving further until he falls again... slides back.

And this time Augustine doesn't stand back up. He just lies there in the snow. Finally closes his eyes. This is where Augustine dies.

EXT. ARCTIC SKY - DAWN

That pink blaze Augustine first sat under with the Polar Bear. But it's brighter now.

EXT. ARCTIC WILDERNESS - DAWN

Augustine lies in the snow. The pink color washes over him... warms him. His eyes flutter open in the warmth.

AUGUSTINE'S POV... on the SILHOUETTE OF A FIGURE STANDING OVER HIM.

IT'S JEAN. In the same t-shirt and shorts.

Jean leans slowly down toward us... and WE REALIZE IT'S IRIS... her face red from the freezing cold... lips wind-burned... her hair caked with snow and ice.

Augustine pulls Iris to him.

AUGUSTINE

You're okay. You're okay.

Augustine holds her for a moment... then she helps Augustine to his feet.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

I thought I'd lost you.

Iris points ahead of them, then leans into Augustine, helping him make the climb to the crest of the hill...

...where LAKE HAZEN AND THE BUILDINGS OF THE WEATHER STATION sit just on the other side. A LARGE RADIO TOWER rises from one of the rooftops. There's a HERD OF MUSK OXEN along the edge of the lake.

And right now it all looks like paradise.

Augustine gives a weak laugh... can't believe what he's seeing.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Look what you did.

Iris points up... and Augustine's eyes follow... to POLARIS. He smiles... nods.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
You're a natural explorer.

Together they start walking down to the compound.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Let's see if we can't get you  
someplace safe.

And WE PAN BACK UP TO POLARIS... shimmering in the sky...  
then PULL BACK AND REALIZE WE'RE--

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Ivanov stands at the window, looking out toward Polaris.

HARPER (O.S.)  
You still feel good about our  
course?

Ivanov nods... turns to Harper, just leaning in.

IVANOV  
Going where Thebes told me to go.

HARPER  
And then we get to go home.

IVANOV  
You believe that?

Harper moves back out.

HARPER  
Until somebody tells me different,  
Alexy.

Ivanov turns back toward Polaris.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully floating... eyes closed... the waves of space crashing  
all around her. The sounds are steady and constant...  
unchanging... until a CRACKLE... and Sully's eyes immediately  
open.

ANOTHER CRACKLE... LOUDER... and Sully's head slowly rolls  
toward the radio controls, almost like she's afraid if she  
moves too fast, she'll make it stop.

Then--

STATIC VOICE (V.O.)  
 (barely audible)  
 Station.

Now Sully moves quickly... shutting off other channels... eliminating some of the waves... focusing on what she isn't sure she really heard.

STATIC VOICE (V.O.)  
 Repeat. This... *static*...  
 weather... *static*... eighty-one  
 degrees north... *static*.

Sully flips more switches... turns more dials.

STATIC VOICE (V.O.)  
 ...out there?

Sully throws on her headphones... strains to hear. But now that voice is gone.

SULLY  
 This is the spaceship Aether.  
 Returning from Jupiter Mission.  
 Can you hear me?

Nothing for a long moment, then--

STATIC VOICE (V.O.)  
 Station... *static*... eighty-one  
 degrees... *static*.

SULLY  
 I can hear you. Are you receiving  
 this?

CUT TO:

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - NIGHT

Iris sits beside a burning wood stove. Augustine's at the radio. He's weak... sick.

SULLY (V.O.)  
 Repeat. This is Mission Specialist  
 Sullivan onboard the spaceship  
 Aether.

Augustine just stares at the radio... stunned to hear this voice. It's like he's been hypnotized by it.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Are you receiving this  
transmission?

Augustine's trembling hand hits presses a button.

AUGUSTINE  
Yes.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

A smile covers Sully's face.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)  
I'm receiving. This is Lake Hazen  
Weather Station.

Sully LAUGHS.

SULLY  
Lake Hazen, I can't tell you how  
happy I am to hear your voice.

STATIC, then--

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)  
...same.

SULLY  
For some reason we've lost contact  
with NASA. And everyone else.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - NIGHT

Augustine leans closer to the radio... wants to hear every  
syllable.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Do you have information on the  
transmission blackout?

Augustine hesitates... not sure how to answer.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Lake Hazen, are you there?

AUGUSTINE  
Here. How much have you been told  
about conditions on earth?

SULLY (V.O.)  
We've received nothing.

INT. AETHER - HALLWAY - SPACE

Harper floats along the passage... SULLY'S VOICE GROWING LOUDER...

SULLY (O.S.)  
What can you tell us?

...as he floats closer... down the passage until he reaches the Comms Pod doorway... sees Sully with her headphones on... a blank stare on her face.

HARPER  
Is that Mission Control?

A tear slides down Sully's cheek. She hesitates a moment, then--

SULLY  
Lake Hazen, can you repeat your last transmission?

Sully pulls the headphones plug.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)  
I said I don't have all the details, but there's been-

A THUNDEROUS CRACK... so loud Sully cups her ears... LOUD STATIC FILLS THE POD. Sully flips down the volume.

HARPER  
What the hell was that?!

Sully shakes her head... starts flipping switches to reconnect...

...as Harper pulls himself out into the-

INT. AETHER - HALLWAY - SPACE

Harper grips the walls, leveraging his float along the hallway... to the glass-domed cupola... just in time to see the ship's COMMUNICATION DISH FLOATING PAST along with SMALL ASTEROIDS AND SHARDS OF STEEL.

HARPER  
Goddammit!

Harper continues along the passage. Outside, the dish's severed arm bounces across the cupola's outer shell, then sways... almost like it's waving goodbye as it drifts off into space.



LOUD THUDS of the asteroids pounding against the ship. Sully appears out of the Comms Pod.

SULLY  
What is it?!

HARPER  
Asteroid took out the comms  
antenna!

Harper rapidly pulls himself down the ladder.

MORE THUDS. Sully looks up to see SOFTBALL-SIZED ROCKS careening off the ship.

Sully follows after Harper.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - NIGHT

Augustine adjusts the radio channels.

AUGUSTINE  
This is Lake Hazen. Aether, I lost  
you.

Static. He adjusts again.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Mission Specialist Sullivan, do you  
read?

Static. Augustine just sits there a moment, then turns... toward Iris.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
What happened?

Iris doesn't have an answer for him.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Sully enters chaos. Harper, Ivanov, Thebes, and Devi criss-crossing the deck, frantically working instruments.

The ship continues to SHUDDER AND BANG.

THEBES  
Are we altering course?

IVANOV  
That's what I'm trying to do.

HARPER  
Because we're in a rock fight we  
can't win, Alexy.

IVANOV  
I know how to fly the ship!

Ivanov works more controls... the POUNDING CONTINUES... THEN  
SLOWS... QUIETS. Everyone stands frozen... listening...  
hoping.

DEVI  
(off a screen)  
We look clear.

IVANOV  
I'd been watching the radar all  
day.  
(to Thebes)  
Showed no debris around us for  
miles.

THEBES  
Could be related to the same  
malfunction that hit autopilot.  
I'll do a run.

DEVI  
Possibly just a solar gust. Could  
come out of nowhere. I can check  
readouts for inconsistencies.

HARPER  
(shakes his head)  
Stay on current to assess any  
damage beyond the comms.  
(to Sully)  
Status of secondary and tertiary  
communications?

SULLY  
Lost everything.

HARPER  
Son of a bitch.

Harper starts down a passage.

HARPER (CONT'D)  
(to Sully)  
Come with me.  
(to the others)  
Full reports on all systems. And  
if the radar is off, fix it.

Ivanov, Thebes, and Devi move about the flight deck, running instrument tests.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully and Harper floating. Not speaking. Sully's looking at Harper, waiting for a response.

HARPER

No one else gets that information.

SULLY

They deserve to know what-

HARPER

-It's one unconfirmed voice.

SULLY

It's the only voice out there.

HARPER

Last man on earth just happened to stumble onto your frequency?

Harper shakes his head... starts out.

HARPER (CONT'D)

We're not creating doomsday without some more information.

SULLY

How are we supposed to do that now?

Harper stops in the doorway... thinking. OFF THEIR LOOKS-

INT. AETHER - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

The crew gathered around the table. Devi's holding a tablet... running through the systems status for the others.

THEBES

There's damage, but nothing serious enough to put us at risk.

(looking at Sully)

Except the communications satellite.

HARPER

What about some of the other exterior panels?

(MORE)

HARPER (CONT'D)

Possible to rewire at least some basic communications through them... rig a makeshift comms antenna?

IVANOV

No one's been talking to us anyway.

Sully fights the urge to look at Harper.

HARPER

Like to be ready when they do.

DEVI

I can compare schematics to see what might be a match. But it's unlikely.

A BEAT, then-

DEVI (CONT'D)

The paraboloid.

(off their looks)

From the landing module. Might give us some of the components we need to build an antenna.

SULLY

That could actually work. And I should have plenty of circuit redundancies in the comms pod we can use.

IVANOV

How functional?

SULLY

The gain won't be as high.

DEVI

Doubt it'll have enough strength to retrieve the uplinks from the probes, but-

HARPER

-Probes aren't a priority. Not anymore. This is all about hearing voices.

SULLY

If all we're looking to do is get us a line to earth, this should work. Theoretically.

HARPER  
How long will it take to construct?

Sully and Devi exchange a look.

DEVI  
We can do it in three days? Four  
on the outside?

HARPER  
Need it in half that. Getting too  
close to reentry point to keep  
flying blind for long.

Sully understands... nods. She and Devi move for the  
ladder... start climbing up.

IVANOV  
Will require a long walk outside.  
Prep the site and install. At  
least two people.

HARPER  
(to Thebes)  
You reset radar?

THEBES  
(nods)  
Appears to be working.

HARPER  
Test it again. Can't have another  
surprise with anyone outside.

Thebes heads off to work. Harper and Ivanov sit in silence a  
moment, then--

IVANOV  
Even if this works, it just gets us  
back to the same silence.

A BEAT, as Harper decides how to respond. Then--

HARPER  
We'll reach somebody.

INT. AETHER - HALLWAY - SPACE

Thebes and Devi rise up into the passage, floating the  
landing module's satellite dish... guiding it along the  
passage.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully has the instrument panel taken apart... is floating near the floor, reaching deep inside to remove wires and circuits.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

The landing module dish rests on the table. Sully's working on the wiring. Thebes hands her some wire cutters... she snips a line.

Devi enters, carrying a STEEL HYDRAULIC ARM.

DEVI

Stole this from the LM platform base support. NASA can worry about how to unload their supply canisters when we get back.

Devi checks the arm's fit against the back of the dish.

SULLY

Should do the trick.

The Little Earth lights suddenly dim.

THEBES

Ship's trying to tell us to get some sleep.

DEVI

I'm not tired.

Sully shakes her head. Thebes taps some buttons on a wall-tablet...

THEBES

Then I'll play God. The sun sets when I say so.

...the false daylight returns. The group continues working.

Harper enters.

HARPER

How we doing?

SULLY

So far so good.

DEVI

Should come in under the deadline.

HARPER

Don't cut corners though. Needs to be right.

(to Thebes)

We'll set the walk when you can give us clear skies.

SULLY

Who's going out?

HARPER

Gotta be you and Devi. I'll probably tag along.

(off the dish)

Help carry that thing.

SULLY

In case you forgot, there's no gravity out there. Not going to be too heavy for us girls to handle.

Harper shrugs... continues out of Little Earth.

HARPER

I don't ever like to miss a chance to stroll around the block.

Sully, Thebes, and Devi continue working. Then--

DEVI

Is he going because he's worried... because I've never walked before?

SULLY

(shakes her head)

You've trained for this. He wouldn't send you out if he wasn't sure you could do it.

DEVI

Good.

(beat)

As long as one of us is.

INT. LAKE HAZEN WEATHER STATION BUILDING - BATHROOM - DUSK

More like an indoor outhouse. Augustine bends over a white bowl, cupping handfuls of water to his face. Then a RED DRIP SPLASHES INTO THE BOWL... spreads pink in the water.

Augustine looks up to the mirror... sees the trail of blood seeping from his nose. He wipes it away with a rag...

holds the rag against it as he notices Iris standing behind him in the mirror's reflection. She looks worried.

AUGUSTINE  
Just a scratch.

Augustine turns... steps out toward her.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Not going to keep us from talking  
to someone again soon.

Augustine runs his hand across Iris's head as he passes.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
Everything's going to be fine.

INT. AETHER - AIRLOCK VESTIBULE - SPACE

The newly constructed comms dish rests against a wall. Sully, Harper, and Devi finish putting their spacesuits on.

HARPER  
(to Devi)  
How are you feeling?

DEVI  
I could throw up again.

HARPER  
Do it now before you secure the  
helmet. It's a bitch to get off.

Devi nods... turns... pukes.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Ivanov and Thebes watch monitors... images of the ship's exterior... the radio dish site... the airlock with Devi vomiting.

THEBES  
There's number four.

IVANOV  
She's so little. Where's it all  
keep coming from?

INT. AETHER - AIRLOCK VESTIBULE - SPACE

Devi stands back up.



HARPER

You good?

Devi nods. Sully slides Devi's helmet on... begins manipulating it into place.

SULLY

We can go as fast or slow as you're comfortable out there.

Another nod from Devi. Sully and Harper secure their own helmets, clip CABLES to the hooks on their suits.

HARPER

(to Sully)

Goes for you too. No rush, understood?

There's a real concern in Harper's eyes. Sully sees it... nods.

They start gathering the dish and toolbox.

HARPER (CONT'D)

We clear to exit?

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Thebes studies the radar.

THEBES

All clear.

EXT. AETHER - AIRLOCK - SPACE

The airlock opens with a BLAST OF VAPOR. Harper rises from the airlock first, carrying the dish with Devi. Sully follows with the toolbox.

Devi's eyes are wide as she takes in the view.

DEVI

(nervous smile)

Oh my God.

HARPER

No other view quite like it.

They begin moving along the hull of the massive ship... using handgrips to pull across the storage tanks, radiation shields and solar panels... their tether floating like one long snake around them.

IVANOV (V.O.)  
Installation site is just ahead.  
Twenty-five meters... twenty-  
meters. Look for the ladder.

HARPER  
See it.

Harper leads them toward the ladder. They climb up to the top of the ship... and the damaged comms antenna site.

Harper and Devi lower the new dish to the site. Sully straps tethers around the base, holding it secure to the ship, then uses a drill to start removing bolts from the twisted comms wiring panel lid... frees the lid, exposing a patch of severed wires.

HARPER (CONT'D)  
Okay, guys, do your thing. Just  
forget I'm even here.

Sully and Devi begin working on the wires like surgeons... cutting and splicing.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Ivanov and Thebes watch the monitors.

IVANOV  
Why are you there, Harper?

ONSCREEN... Harper flips the camera off with his oversized white glove.

Ivanov and Thebes smile.

EXT. AETHER - SPACE

Sully and Devi work on the panel wiring. Devi loses her wirecutters... they float away...

DEVI  
Shit.

...until Harper grabs them... hands the cutters back to Devi.

DEVI (CONT'D)  
Sorry. Little different feel than  
training in Houston.

HARPER

What should be down goes up. Just gotta make your brain start thinking backwards.

SULLY

Spoken by an expert in that field.

HARPER

Beginning to feel like I'm back in that asteroid storm. Gettin' hit from all sides.

THEBES (V.O.)

If you want a quick break, Venus crossing at about ten o'clock. Won't get a view like this again.

Sully, Harper, and Devi turn... watch as a magnificent orange planet appears... gliding across the black of space.

DEVI

Didn't have those in Houston either.

ANGLE ON SULLY'S REFLECTIVE HELMET MASK... Venus glowing over her amazed eyes.

SULLY

And that's why I'm up here.

HARPER

Why we're all up here.

They stand frozen... just staring in wonder.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Thebes enters, carrying two coffee cannisters... hands one to Ivanov.

THEBES

How are they doing?

IVANOV

Just locking it down.

EXT. AETHER - SPACE

Devi's bent over the base, using the drill to secure the last of the bolts into the hull.

Harper's stuffing the wires into the panel box, and tightening the lid.

Sully has a receiver unit connected to the new dish... testing the frequencies.

POV FROM INSIDE SULLY'S HELMET... on the receiver... we can HEAR THE STATIC.

SULLY

Levels are in line. We should be good to go.

THEBES (V.O.)

All clear to move back when you're ready.

Harper stows his tools.

HARPER

Devi, are we secure?  
(off Devi's silence)  
Devi?

Devi slowly raises up.

DEVI

Yes.

HARPER

Then let's get back and see who wants to talk to us.

Sully and Harper begin toward the ladder, but Devi doesn't react.

SULLY

Devi?

Nothing. Sully and Harper move back toward Devi... see her dazed eyes blinking... rolling back in her head.

HARPER

Devi!

DEVI

Just a little dizzy.

HARPER

(to Sully)  
Get her moving.

Sully and Harper begin pulling Devi along the hull.

HARPER (CONT'D)  
Thebes, what are her suit readings?

THEBES (V.O.)  
All level.

HARPER  
They're wrong.

Harper's moving faster now, propelling himself from handhold to handhold... floating toward the distant airlock.

HARPER (CONT'D)  
Sully?

SULLY  
I'm good.

HARPER  
Get ahead of us. Start on the airlock.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Thebes is rushing into the passage as--

HARPER (V.O.)  
Have medical waiting for us.  
Carbon dioxide issue.

EXT. AETHER - SPACE

Sully's racing across the ship's hull. We can hear her FRANTIC BREATHING.

HARPER (V.O.)  
Devi! Can you hear me?!

--DEVI'S LINE GETS TANGLED ON A STORAGE TANK... jerks Harper to a halt.

HARPER  
Goddammit.

Harper instantly unclips both their tethers... is now floating free as he pulls Devi along the ship.

DEVI  
(weakly)  
I'm sorry... I'm sorry.

HARPER  
Not your fault. No more talking.

--SULLY's at the airlock... trying to open.

HARPER (V.O.)  
Airlock status?

SULLY  
Clearing for entry.

HARPER  
We can't wait.

SULLY  
Won't have to.

That HISS as the airlock begins to open.

INT. AETHER - AIRLOCK VESTIBULE - SPACE

Thebes and Ivanov stand at the window peering in, as Sully and Harper enter with Devi. The airlock seals closed behind them...

...and Thebes and Ivanov open their interior door to enter.

Harper tears Devi's helmet free. Thebes hurries an oxygen mask over her face.

HARPER  
Devi. Breathe in!

SULLY  
Devi! Please breathe!

Harper unzips Devi's suit... grabs the DEFIB PADDLES... presses them to her chest.

Sully and the others lean back... ZAP... Devi's body arches. Harper checks for a pulse.

HARPER  
Son of a bitch. Devi!

ZAP... Devi's body arches again... Thebes keeps pumping oxygen into her until Harper finally just slumps...

...and Sully begins to cry... Thebes and Ivanov just stare down in shock.

THEBES  
The suit read fine. It read fine.

Sully reaches to take Devi's hand.

HARPER  
Go run the comms system setup.

SULLY  
She was my-

HARPER  
-It's gonna take time to get it  
working. We still have a mission  
to finish.

SULLY  
What mission? I don't even know  
anymore. Do any of us?!

A BEAT OF SILENCE, then--

HARPER  
Now, Sully.

Sully wants to scream at Harper... scream at anyone... but  
instead she just moves out the door, pulling off her suit.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully sits at her station, keying in commands... flipping  
switches... getting the comms system working again.

Then she begins to cry.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Sully enters. Thebes is cleaning up the waste from the dish  
build. Harper is studying a SHIP SYSTEMS CHECK on a tablet.

SULLY  
Should be fully online within the  
hour.

Harper carries the tablet past her...

HARPER  
Let me know when you're able to  
transmit.

...steps into his room, pulling the curtain closed behind  
him. Sully stares after Harper a moment.

THEBES

He's blaming himself. Thinks he should have caught Devi's condition sooner.

SULLY

It happened too fast.

THEBES

(nods)

But that's not how he sees it. He thinks he was too worried about you.

Sully's surprised... confused.

SULLY

What?

THEBES

I might not be able to feel love anymore, but I still remember what it looks like.

INT. AETHER - HARPER'S ROOM - SPACE

Harper has the tablet on his desk... stands over it as he works. The curtain sways open... Sully. They just stare at each other moment.

SULLY

It was no one's fault.

HARPER

My ship. My fault.

SULLY

(shakes her head)

Not this time.

Harper's eyes begin to dampen. Sully steps to him... leans against him, resting her head against his chest.

Harper wants to wrap his arms around her, but he isn't sure how. And before he can--

IVANOV (O.S.)

I have our first visual on earth!

Sully and Harper throw back the curtain... see Ivanov standing in a passage entrance. He looks devastated.



IVANOV (CONT'D)  
Worst case.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

ANGLE ON A MONITOR... the image of earth onscreen... except it's not that blue ball we're used to seeing... now the entire planet is covered in a thick layer of smoke.

IVANOV (O.S.)  
I tied into the old Astron  
satellite telescope signals.

Sully, Harper, Ivanov, and Thebes stare at the image.

THEBES  
My God.

IVANOV  
Definitely nuclear.

THEBES  
At a scale no one thought possible.

HARPER  
We all knew it was possible. Just  
didn't think anyone would be stupid  
enough to do it.

Sully rests a hand on Ivanov's shoulder.

IVANOV  
We don't know what's under all  
that.

A BEAT, then--

HARPER  
Yes we do.  
(off Ivanov's look)  
Sully made contact just before the  
comms went down. An Arctic weather  
station.  
(off the monitor)  
Told her about this. About no safe  
areas left... and no one.

IVANOV  
(to Sully)  
And you didn't think you should  
tell us?!

HARPER

It was my call. I wanted confirmation first.

Rage merges with the sadness in Ivanov's eyes... they glisten with tears.

HARPER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Alexy.

Ivanov exits down the passage.

THEBES

If there was a voice at this weather station, there must be pockets of habitable areas.

SULLY

He said he's been tracking levels. With the spread rate, he believes any clean zones are only temporary.

Thebes considers that, then turns back to the monitor.

THEBES

What have we done?

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Sully enters from the passage... sees Ivanov sitting in front of the monitor, watching another FAMILY VIDEO MESSAGE... his Sons playfully fighting over center position as they tell him a story... while Ivanov's Wife ducks in to blow him a quick kiss before disappearing from view.

The Boys continue their excited story, then Ivanov rewinds to his Wife's kiss... plays it again.

Sully suddenly feels like she's invaded Ivanov's privacy... drops her eyes... walks out.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully swims into the pod... starts working the dials without strapping herself in. Then she stops... begins to cry... for the world... for Devi. She curls up in a fetal position... just floating.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - DUSK

Augustine sits alone at the radio desk. He pulls some PAPERS AND PHOTOGRAPHS from his backpack... starts to flip through them when a CRACKLE OF STATIC BURSTS FROM THE RADIO.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Lake Hazen, this is Aether. Are you receiving?

Augustine drops the photos to hit the mic button.

AUGUSTINE  
Loud and clear, Aether.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Nice to hear your voice again, Lake Hazen. Our comms system went offline.

AUGUSTINE  
With a bang. Wasn't sure I was going to get you back.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully's strapped into her seat.

SULLY  
We're operational now, and just got a visual on earth. Unfortunately it seems to confirm everything you told me earlier.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)  
Afraid we didn't do a very good job of looking after the place while you were away.

SULLY  
Are you seeing any new data that might suggest possible safe entry points for us?

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)  
No.

Sully closes her eyes... *fuck.*

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)  
My best guess is all survivable areas are underground.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - DUSK

Augustine lifts some papers from the desk... the PAGES HE PRINTED OUT AT THE OBSERVATORY.

AUGUSTINE

So I'd like to suggest something else.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Sully, Harper, Ivanov, and Thebes stand around the table, all staring down at a flickering tablet screen filled with math equations.

SULLY

I wrote down exactly what he told me.

HARPER

(to Thebes)

This make sense to you?

THEBES

If we wanted to fly back to K-23, yes. It's a pretty genius plan design actually. Deviate our approach toward earth, then make gravity our friend to save fuel on the turnaround.

IVANOV

But why would we do that?

SULLY

Because he's saying there's nothing left for us down there.

HARPER

Do we know who this guy is yet?

A moment of Sully realizing she doesn't know.

SULLY

I didn't have a chance to ask. Just ran this straight in here.

IVANOV

It doesn't matter. We're not sling-shotting our way back out into space.

SULLY

He's sure we'll die down there.

IVANOV

He's alive. How's that possible?  
Are you talking to Superman?

THEBES

The Poles would be the last areas  
hit.

SULLY

He told me air contamination levels  
were rising at his location. And  
he sounded sick.

IVANOV

We still don't know. Not for sure.

HARPER

We all saw what it looked like.  
He's giving us an option to consi-

IVANOV

-Everyone dies. And when it  
happens, I want it to be down  
there. Not here.  
(walks away)  
Not here.

A BEAT, then--

HARPER

How long before we have to make a  
decision?

THEBES

To adjust from the current course  
to this... and keeping our speed  
up... no more than a few hours.

Harper looks to Sully, then walks out.

*INT. MAUNA KEA OBSERVATORY - DAY*

*High tech facility. A BEARDED Augustine peers into a  
telescope. He's eight years older than the last time we saw  
him.*

*He raises up from the telescope to scribble some notes...  
stops... because he's just noticed Jean standing in the  
doorway. She waves.*

*EXT. MAUNA KEA OBSERVATORY - DAY*

*The domes perched high atop the island of Hawaii... above everything. A thick carpet of clouds surrounds the peak.*

*JEAN (V.O.)*

*I was on the island, so I wanted to drop by and say hello.*

*Augustine and Jean stand outside a dome. Augustine's holding some photographs just out of our focus... staring down at them.*

*JEAN*

*You can keep those.*

*AUGUSTINE*

*(as he looks at them)*

*The rock I sent. Did you tell her it was from me?*

*Jean smiles... shakes her head.*

*JEAN*

*What do I keep telling you, Augustine? If you want her to know you exist, you can do the introduction yourself.*

*A LONG BEAT, as Augustine stares at one of the photos.*

*AUGUSTINE*

*This could have been different. If you'd told me the truth... hadn't left.*

*Jean looks out over the incredible view surrounding them... then squints up to the sky.*

*JEAN*

*She would have known your name. That's the only difference.*

*Jean leans in to kiss Augustine's cheek...*

*JEAN (CONT'D)*

*And we both know it.*

*...then starts walking toward a car.*

*JEAN (CONT'D)*

*Enjoy the view, Augustine.*

*Augustine watches Jean climb into the car... pull away. Then he looks out at the clouds... then back to the photographs.*

*POV FROM BENEATH AUGUSTINE... and we can see that INK-SCRIBBLED 2008 on one of the photographs.*

EXT. LAKE HAZEN WEATHER STATION - DUSK

The sky is brighter... almost feels like day.

SULLY (V.O.)

Repeat. Lake Hazen, this is Aether.  
Are you still picking this up?

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - DUSK

Iris kneels in a chair, wearing that yellow dress. She uses the radio desk for leverage to spin herself around in circles.

SULLY (V.O.)

Are you there, Lake Hazen?

Augustine moves slowly... weakly... across the room to the radio... eases into the chair... taps the mic.

AUGUSTINE

I'm here, Aether.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully strapped into her seat. She isn't wearing her headphones.

SULLY

I thought I might've lost you.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

Not yet. Were you able to run the numbers on the course correction I gave you?

Sully looks beside her... and we see Harper is in the pod also.

HARPER

Lake Hazen, this is Aether Flight  
Commander Gordon Harper. Your  
numbers are intriguing.

(MORE)

HARPER (CONT'D)

But they make me curious where you came up with them and how you know so much about our flight plan. Who exactly are you?

A LONG BEAT, then--

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

Augustine Lofthouse.

Sully and Harper immediately look at each other. *They know that name.*

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

And you're on your way back from the planet I first saw almost forty years ago. I wish I'd found it a year sooner... might've saved a lot of lives.

HARPER

Doctor Lofthouse... I'd hoped to meet you on our return... tell you all about your planet.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - DUSK

Iris has stopped spinning... just watches Augustine.

HARPER (V.O.)

This was definitely not the way I'd seen this conversation playing out. And I'm sorry.

AUGUSTINE

Nothing to be sorry for, Commander. What took place down here... you and your crew have the ultimate alibi.

(beat)

The question now is whether it will also be your escape plan.

HARPER (V.O.)

Given your location, how can you be certain there are no safe regions? In the southern hemisphere? Antarctica?

AUGUSTINE

I've been pulling data from every reachable location and following all map simulations.

(MORE)



AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

If there is an uncorrupted area, I haven't found it. I'm sure there must be small temporary pockets but the odds of you hitting it on your re-entry-

Augustine COUGHS... turns from the mic.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully and Harper can hear Augustine coughing. They exchange a glance. It finally quiets.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

Three years... maybe less. The planet will sustain life again... for you to return or for survivors to join you. But until that ha-

More COUGHING... Augustine struggling for breath.

HARPER

Take a rest, Doctor Lofthouse. Thank you for your help... for all the work you've done. We'll discuss our options up here, and hopefully speak again.

They wait for a response... just silence. Harper leans over, switching off the mic. They sit there a quiet moment, not looking at each other.

HARPER (CONT'D)

What do you think?

A LONG BEAT, then--

SULLY

That I'm the wrong person to ask. Because if we go back to earth, it could all end.

(beat)

And I'd like to have more time with you.

Their eyes meet. Then Harper reaches over... takes Sully's hand.

INT. AETHER SPACECRAFT - LITTLE EARTH - SPACE

Sully, Harper, and Ivanov standing around the kitchen area.

IVANOV

The mission I signed up for is scheduled to end on earth.

HARPER

If there's a voice down there to trust, I feel like it's his.

IVANOV

Lofthouse doesn't know my family isn't safe. No one can tell me that.

HARPER

Alexy, we can't guarantee a re-entry location that-

IVANOV

-I'd rather have a few days of hope than a lifetime of wondering.

They hold a look... until Harper nods... understands.

HARPER

Okay. You can use the re-entry pod as we slingshot. We'll still have the LM.

IVANOV

You can handle the flight back without me?

HARPER

I only let you hang around for the laughs, Alexy.

Ivanov half-smiles... pulls Harper into a quick hug...

IVANOV

Then we should go work on programming the redirect. Try to make it easy for you.

...starts walking toward the passage. Harper follows. Sully stands there, watching them exit. Then-

THEBES (O.S.)

I think I'll go with Ivanov.

Sully turns... sees Thebes standing in the doorway.

THEBES (CONT'D)

He could use a friend.

(shrugs)

(MORE)

THEBES (CONT'D)

And if my ex is still down there...  
she's alone... scared.

SULLY

Thebes, she's-

THEBES

-I know, Sully. But I'd like to  
talk to her if she isn't.

(beat)

And my mind's so tired from trying  
not to remember. It could use the  
rest.

Sully moves to Thebes... hugs him... holds him.

EXT. SPACE -

Aether cuts across the blackness. The smoke-engulfed earth  
is in the distance.

INT. AETHER - FLIGHT DECK - SPACE

Ivanov and Thebes are suited up for their re-entry. They  
exchange hugs with Sully and Harper.

SULLY

(to Ivanov)

I hope you find them waiting for  
you.

IVANOV

I'll bring them up to K-23 to see  
you.

Sully nods... but they both understand how this is going to  
end. Another hug, then Ivanov and Thebes climb down the  
tunnel toward the re-entry pod.

SULLY

They're going to be all right.

HARPER

I hope so.

SULLY

And us?

Harper reaches down... takes Sully's hand.

HARPER

We're going to be all right too.

EXT. AETHER - SPACE

The RE-ENTRY POD disengages from Aether... blasts downward toward earth.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - DUSK

ANGLE ON A BEEPING AIR DETECTOR resting on the floor... it's bouncing near the RED LEVELS. Augustine's hand reaches into frame... turns the detector off.

Augustine sits on the floor against the wall... weak... sweat glistening on his face... deathly sick. He shakes the LAST TWO PAIN PILLS from the bottle... tosses them into his mouth... lets the empty bottle roll away on its own.

He closes his eyes... leans over to lie on the floor. He's there a few moments until the CRACKLE OF STATIC.

SULLY (V.O.)  
...Aether... *static*... receiving?

Augustine doesn't react.

SULLY (V.O.)  
...*static*... Hazen... *static*...  
Aether.

Then Iris crouches beside Augustine... begins shaking him awake. Augustine's eyes flutter open.

AUGUSTINE'S POV ON IRIS... wearing that yellow dress as she nudges him again.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Can you hear me?

Augustine stares at Iris a moment, then struggles for the strength to rise... finally does... makes his way to the radio... drops into the chair, and hits the mic button.

AUGUSTINE  
I hear you, Aether.

Iris sits up on the edge of the desk beside Augustine.

SULLY (V.O.)  
We're headed into an ionization  
blackout so I'm going to lose  
you...

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully strapped in, headphones on. She's fiddling with the gold-streaked space rock as she talks.

SULLY

...but I wanted to contact you first. To thank you. Commander Harper and I are returning to K-23.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

I'm glad. The rest of the crew?

SULLY

Captain Ivanov and Specialist Thebes decided on re-entry.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

They have family down here?

SULLY

Yes.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

Weren't there five of you?

Sully nods a moment before replying.

SULLY

Flight Engineer Devi. She suffered an accident during the flight.

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

I'm sorry.

SULLY

With everything that's happened down there, just losing one person up here... I'm sure it seems like it shouldn't matter, but it does.

(voice cracks a bit)

Very much. I'm sorry... I know you've probably lost so many.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - DUSK

Augustine pulls a couple photos from the pile... looks at a picture of Jean.

AUGUSTINE

I lost everyone that mattered a long time ago. Made a bargain... traded them for the stars.

(MORE)

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Now they're just an old man's regrets.

SULLY (V.O.)

They shouldn't be. You discovered so much up here.

AUGUSTINE

I just point. You're the explorer. Tell me what it's like... to stand on it. K-23.

INT. AETHER - COMMUNICATION POD - SPACE

Sully smiles at the thought.

SULLY

It's amazing. The colony site... it feels like Colorado. Have you ever been there? To the mountains?

AUGUSTINE (V.O.)

Yes.

SULLY

The air's so crisp. And the planet has that smell...

CUT TO:

EXT. COLORADO MOUNTAINS - DAY

Augustine stands in an open meadow. Mountains surrounding him. His eyes are closed as he inhales.

SULLY (V.O.)

...it's like the pine trees are hidden somewhere... underground... waiting to burst through.

INT. LAKE HAZEN - RADIO BUILDING - DUSK

Augustine sits at the radio, eyes closed.

SULLY (V.O.)

I kept looking up expecting to see a blue sky. But it was orange.

AUGUSTINE  
From the light reflecting off  
Jupiter.

SULLY (V.O.)  
It's so beautiful. I wish you  
could have seen it.

Augustine's eyes flutter open.

AUGUSTINE  
Lake Haven will have to do.

SULLY (V.O.)  
How did you end up there?

Augustine lifts a FACE-DOWN PHOTO from desk... the one with  
the **2008** scribbled on the back. He stares at an image the  
rest of us still can't see.

AUGUSTINE  
Thought maybe I could help someone.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Well you definitely did. And thank  
you again for that, Doctor  
Lofthouse.

AUGUSTINE  
Augustine.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Augustine.  
(beat)  
And I'm Iris.

Then we SEE THE PHOTO AUGUSTINE IS STARING DOWN AT... A  
PICTURE OF A SMILING IRIS IN THAT YELLOW DRESS.

AUGUSTINE  
I know.

A tear slips from the corner of Augustine's eye.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
It's very nice to talk to you.

SULLY (V.O.)  
Well I hope you understand how-

STATIC... a long, constant stream.

AUGUSTINE  
Hello? Aether.  
(off the static)  
Iris? Are you still there?

Just that static. Sully is gone. But just in case--

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)  
(into the mic)  
Have a good life.

Augustine sits there a moment, staring into the static... then he rests the photo back on the desk... and we realize IRIS ISN'T SITTING THERE ANYMORE. He stands... walks out.

And that STATIC KEEPS CRACKLING.

EXT. LAKE HAZEN COMPOUND - DUSK

Augustine walks slowly... body aching... across the grounds... to the edge of the lake. He sits down in the snow... stares over the icy water. It's beautiful... peaceful... silent...

...until O.S. FOOTSTEPS APPROACH... and Iris steps up beside Augustine... sits down in the snow beside him, wearing that same yellow dress.

AUGUSTINE  
I never used to notice views like  
this.  
(beat)  
Thank you for that.

They sit in silence a moment, then Iris tilts her head over to rest on Augustine's shoulder... sharing the view together.

FADE OUT.