



**TO THE DARK**

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**INT. CHURCH - DAY**

Cold coffee and stale crumbs stain a folding table in a stone church.

A tearful crowd sits in a circle in front of empty pews--a support group. A counselor comforts a young man.

YOUNG MAN

I just can't be alone anymore.

The group murmurs agreement. All tears and sorrow and peace. But their voices are hollow and barely audible. Muffled by our focus on a silent woman at the edge of the circle.

This is Madeline (30s). The kind of girl that'd beat you'd at pool and drink you under the table. Strong, in a broken kind of way--a faint scar on her cheek to prove it. She plays with a CROSS NECKLACE at her throat.

She has a far-off look. Focused on an intricate religious painting behind the altar. Swirling dark skies over swarming desperate crowds. An omnipresent glow from above that warms the hearts of those below.

COUNSELOR

Maddie? Earth to Maddie.

Madeline snaps to attention. Drops her hold on the necklace. Doesn't bother with feigned interest or sincerity.

MADELINE

Sorry, I wasn't listening.

COUNSELOR

If you aren't here to listen or talk, then why do you come?

MADELINE

Same as him.

(points to young man)

I didn't want to be alone.

Stunned silence from the group.

MADELINE (cont'd)

'Scuse me.

Madeline stands and heads for the exit.

**INT. CHURCH, LOBBY - DAY**

The door slams behind her and she sits on the ground. Pulls out a cigarette and a lighter. It doesn't work. She listens to the meeting continue in the sanctuary. Closes her eyes.

DIRECTOR JONES

That was rude, don't you think?

She looks up. Standing above her is DIRECTOR JONES (60s), stout. Tired for a man his age and out of place in his suit.

MADELINE

Think they'll let me back in?

DIRECTOR JONES

Not with that attitude.

They almost share a smile, or at least a familiarity. He offers her a hand. She gets up herself. Tries her lighter again. Unsuccessful.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)

You know you can't smoke in here.

She glances at a cross on the wall beside her. Bleeding eyes and a skeletal form stare down at her in all its glory.

MADELINE

Who's gonna stop me?

He chuckles. offers her a light. She takes it. Breathes deep.

MADELINE (cont'd)

You weren't supposed to check up on me. You promised.

DIRECTOR JONES

It's my job.

Jones looks inside the sanctuary. Everyone starts to clean up and fold away the chairs.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)

Anyway. I didn't come for that. Or for you.

MADELINE

(heads for exit)

Well, I don't wanna waste your time if you aren't here to see me.

DIRECTOR JONES

They're almost home.

MADELINE

(stops, turns)

That's not possible.

DIRECTOR JONES

I thought you'd be happy.

MADELINE

I am, but--

DIRECTOR JONES

They're early.

She coughs. Almost a cry in her throat. But holds it in.

MADELINE

I...I--

He grabs her hand. Forceful but warm.

DIRECTOR JONES

This is good news. Let yourself be happy. You deserve that. Don't you think?

Jones lets that sit. He heads for the exit.

MADELINE

When?

DIRECTOR JONES

They'll be here in two weeks. They're safe and alive. Nothing urgent to report.

MADELINE

Except that they're early.

DIRECTOR JONES

Except that.

He leaves. She builds some resolve. Goes back inside the sanctuary.

**INT. CHURCH - DAY**

And it's empty. The last few stragglers fold up chairs and clear donuts from the table.

She looks at the religious painting on the wall. The stars against the swirling black sky.

And it fades to--

**EXT. SPACE**

STARS. Real stars as far as the eye can see against deep black nothingness.

Quiet. Empty...except--

A sliver of light and metal drifts past. Jettisoning across deep space. A SHUTTLE bound for home. It races towards a familiar BLUE PLANET.

It glides slow and steady.

A whir of RADIO and transmissions CRACKLE from a satellite. A metallic murmur to voices: NEWS. One after another.

NEWS STATION #1

It's been three years--

NEWS STATION #2

--Three years and 47 days since they've departed.

The shuttle breaks the atmosphere. Glows red. Shines with all the fury of a thousand years of industry and spirit.

NEWS STATION #3

Our Fateful Five home at last.

#### **INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

A family and reporters around a television. Near future, but barely--advanced and modern with a 1950s retro vibe. All smart screens and beehive housewives.

The family: the LAURENCE'S. ELSIE (30s) hugs the life out of a TODDLER (3) on her lap. The GRANDFATHER(70s) shushes a GIRL (9) and BOY (7) fighting playfully on the floor.

They watch the shuttle on the screen. Just barely in focus, just barely in frame.

And the reporters in the room watch them. Catch every emotional reaction from the family.

#### **EXT. WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON - DAY**

CROWDS of cheering patriots outside the front gate. All signs and smiles and pure pride.

A REPORTER shuffles into view of a camera.

WASHINGTON REPORTER

And I'm here live in Washington. If you thought the crowds--

#### **EXT. BEACH - DAY**

CROWDS cover the sand, hills, and docks. It's all binoculars and flags and flashing cameras.

WASHINGTON REPORTER (V.O.)  
 --were big yesterday you should see  
 the traffic the President had to get  
 through at Cape Canaveral.

A young CHILD with a rocket-ship toy points above. The faintest white line of smoke trails in the blue sky.

Reporters check their mics and hair. Line up like a shooting range against the backdrop of the chaos and excitement.

BEACH REPORTER #1  
 After the shuttle went quiet two years ago, many in the scientific community thought this day would never come.

BEACH REPORTER #2  
 They've traveled longer and farther than any human.

BEACH REPORTER #3  
 Through our solar system and beyond.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Elsie poses in front of the screen with her children for the cameras. On their TV, the shuttle in all its glory. Shining and spinning towards home.

**EXT. BEACH - DAY**

A CHILD pulls at his FATHER's shirt.

CHILD  
 But why are they early?

FATHER  
 We should be thankful they're alive.

The Father scoops the Child up for a better view.

BEACH REPORTER #1  
 Hold on. HOLD ON. I have confirmation that they'll be landing any moment.

The beach ROARS with excitement. Watching the horizon as the shuttle races to the water. Slowing and burning towards...

A car horn BEEPS.

SPLASH.

**EXT. OCEAN - DAY**

The shuttle hits water. It buoys and surfaces.

BEEP.

**EXT. BEACH - DAY**

Cheering and applause in the sand. Hugging. Kissing. It's either the end of the world or the start of a new one.

BEEPPPPPPPP.

**EXT. BEACH ROAD - DAY**

Madeline holds the horn on her PICKUP TRUCK as she slowly moves through the hoards of people swarming the road. BEEPING. But it's useless.

She brakes. Leaves the car behind. Hurries towards the sand.

**EXT. OCEAN - DAY**

The shuttle bobs in the ocean. Charred but intact.

And we finally get a good look at it. The shuttle's base is an enormous cylinder, about the size of an airbus. Sleek brushed metal and expansive windows. It's covered in slanted capsules that jut out like shining crystals from the base. Bloom like metallic nubs of a flower.

A boat attaches to it. Ferries it to shore. A hint of a waving hand and smiling FACE from inside the bridge glass.

**EXT. BEACH - DAY**

An OLD WOMAN points at the horizon.

OLD WOMAN  
They're coming! I can see them.

A glimmer of metal quickly approaches shore. Towards a stage already prepped for the returning heroes. TECHNICIANS scuttle about making last-minute arrangements.

Madeline pushes through the crowd on foot. Through the sand. Toward a view of:

The shuttle arriving. The fanfare ensuing. Reporters and people of every creed and nationality coming together for the moon landing on drugs.

A once in a lifetime experience.

Madeline presses through the bodies blocking her path. A REPORTER notices her and grabs her arm as she passes.

BEACH REPORTER #1  
Can we get a quote?

MADELINE

Why? It wasn't me up there.

She roughly pushes the camera out of her face. Continues through the crowd.

Director Jones chats with OFFICIALS nearby. All handshakes and half-phrases. This is his moment just as much as it is for the rest of mankind. He goes to the podium.

DIRECTOR JONES

It's monumental what we've achieved here. Three short years ago we sent these five heroes into the unknown. We asked them to leave behind their families and their lives for a greater good and a greater mystery than we can even fathom. We asked them to leave behind the Earth they knew and travel among the stars for the first extra-solar landing on a potentially habitable planet.

The hoards go silent as CREAK. CAW. The grind of cracking metal. The shuttle opens.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)

As they return, ATLAS Corporation wants to thank all the collaborators on this mission. With continued support, there are no limits to the progress mankind can achieve.

Silence. Just flashing cameras as the whole world leans in.

And a head peeks out: CAPTAIN RAY LAURENCE (30s), everything a captain should be. A ken doll in a uniform.

The crowd ERUPTS.

The technician helps him out and he heads to the stage. Ray's followed by others we'll meet better later:

#2 HUA CHEN (female), Chinese, 40s. Waves to the crowds.

#3 AARAV (male), Indian, 50s.

#4 KLIMENT (male), Russian, 40s.

They all go to the stage, still in their spacesuits. All smiles and waves. Eating this up but...

Something's wrong. You can feel it. And none more than Madeline. She forces herself through the crowd. Looking for one face. The only one that matters.



The technician peeks his head back in the shuttle. Whispers to his boss. Crawls inside the craft. Shakes his head.

A HUSH falls over the crowd.

A real earth fucking hush.

Jones walks towards the astronauts. His feet echo on that damn stage on that dead quiet beach.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)  
 (to Ray)  
 Where is he?

A reporter jumps from the crowd. Forces his mic at them.

BEACH REPORTER #1  
 Where's Lieutenant Hughes?

RAY  
 Who?

The crowd starts to whisper. Jones motions to his staff.

RAY (cont'd)  
 Who's that?

A HUM of confusion across the beach. It spreads like fire.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 Get them out of here.

Security ushers the astronauts off the stage and away.

**TELEVISION: TALK SHOW - NIGHT**

TALK SHOW HOST  
 You think they're telling the truth?

GUEST  
 Why would they lie?

TALK SHOW HOST  
 Because someone's dead.

GUEST  
 Missing. That's all we know. You can't just go sending people out into the --BLEEP-- unknown without expecting some blood on your hands.

TALK SHOW HOST  
 I'm sure Lieutenant Hughes would agree with--

STATIC. The television is shut off.

**INT. ATLAS, WAITING ROOM - NIGHT**

We're in a WAITING ROOM. Elsie Laurence puts down the remote.

ELSIE LAURENCE

Well, we've all had enough of that.

The room is fluorescent and linoleum. Family and reporters wait. And they have been for a while.

Madeline sits in the corner. She stares at the ATLAS logo on the wall: a figure of a man holds a planet on his shoulders. *Or he's being crushed by it. It's hard to tell.*

An ARMY MAN opens the door. And all eyes turn to him.

ARMY MAN

Madeline Hughes?

**INT. ATLAS, WAITING ROOM - NIGHT**

Long white hallways. Scientists, technicians, military run around. All keep their distance. Jones hurries to greet her.

DIRECTOR JONES

I'm so sorry, I--

She punches him in the chest. More than hard enough for a grown man to bruise.

MADELINE

Do you know how long I've been waiting? And you left me out there with the rest of them?

He grabs her arm, pulls her away from the crowd.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Don't you touch me.

DIRECTOR JONES

I need you to breathe. Can you do that for me, Sergeant?

Not a breath. Not a blink from her. He puts a comforting hand on her shoulder. She throws him off.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)

Maddie, I--

MADELINE

Stop it.

Tears well up in her eyes. But she won't let them spill.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
What do you know?

DIRECTOR JONES  
No more than you. And I'm sorr--

MADELINE  
DON'T YOU SAY THAT.

He takes a step back from her. A moment.

DIRECTOR JONES  
We need your help.

**INT. ATLAS, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Madeline and Jones enter through a series of LOCKED ACCESS DOORS. They stop at the last one. Peer through the glass at a large HANGER filled with bustling technicians.

Inside the hanger, five GLASS CELLS. Covered enough for privacy, exposed enough to remind you you're a prisoner. A hint of movement inside them.

DIRECTOR JONES  
They're going through decontamination.

MADELINE  
Have they seen their families yet?

DIRECTOR JONES  
Not until I'm satisfied the debriefing is done.

MADELINE  
'When you know something', you mean.

DIRECTOR JONES  
I can't keep heroes behind bars for long, but as long as I'm allowed, yes. They'll stay right where they are.

MADELINE  
How long?

His look says it all. *He doesn't have much time.*

DIRECTOR JONES  
I'm out of options. They're sticking to their story.

MADELINE  
I don't even know what that story is. Everyone is saying something different.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 Their psychological and physical  
 evaluations are normal. And they all  
 have the same story. It's simple.  
 They don't remember him.

MADELINE  
 Then they're lying.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 Even Ray? Why would he lie?

MADELINE  
 That's your job to find out.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 If Charles was dead--

MADELINE  
 --don't say that.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 If he was dead, they'd have every  
 reason to tell us. This is different.

MADELINE  
 I don't see how I can help.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 I know you're hurting. But if anyone  
 can get Ray to talk it's you. He  
 trusts you. Asked for you by name.

That means something to her. That hurts.

MADELINE  
 So he remembers me?

**INT. ATLAS, HANGER - NIGHT**

Madeline enters the hanger. Technicians scuttle out of her way. She walks towards the cell. A single chair waiting.

She peeks inside and a face comes to the glass. Eyes red and manic in exhaustion. But a surprisingly calm demeanor. This is Captain Ray Laurence. Cleaned. And in fresh clothes.

RAY  
 Boy, is it nice to see your face.

He sits. Motions for her to do the same. She doesn't.

RAY (cont'd)  
 I thought you'd be happy to see me.

MADELINE

I am.

RAY

Bullshit.

MADELINE

Excuse me?

RAY

You're a bullshitter and always have been, Maddie.

MADELINE

You know, your family's here.

RAY

(his smile fades)

And they won't let me see them. So I'm stuck with you.

MADELINE

Lucky me.

RAY

Look I know what they're saying...I know so little right now, but something is wrong and they think I have all the answers.

She sits. Just listens. Waits for him to keep going.

RAY (cont'd)

But I don't know who this "other astronaut" was and if I had even a fraction of an idea I'd say something. But I don't. It was just the four of us up there the whole time. And that's all I know.

MADELINE

It's hard to believe.

RAY

But you do, right? You believe me? I wouldn't hurt anyone. I got this job for a reason. I put this mission and my crew first always.

MADELINE

But you never made it to the planet?

RAY

I can't explain it. We stayed on course the entire time.

(MORE)

RAY (cont'd)

And the closer we thought we were getting to Zenith, the faster we realized that something was wrong. We arrived right back where we started. Like we were turned around halfway. It's like something didn't want us to leave.

MADELINE

That doesn't sound like the Ray I know.

RAY

People change, I suppose. But I won't say I wasn't relieved to be home and see you again.

MADELINE

You mean Elsie and your kids...not me.

He stops. Curious. Wheels spinning.

RAY

Right, I meant everyone. I'm just excited to be on solid ground eating real food. Breathing our air.

MADELINE

So why did you ask for me?

RAY

They won't talk to me. It's all questions and tests. And I don't have the answers they need. So I need you to help me understand. Who was this 'other astronaut'.

Madeline watches him closely.

RAY (cont'd)

What?

MADELINE

Charlie Hughes.

RAY

I know his name, but--

MADELINE

He was my husband.

That shuts him up. He's confused and upset. *Tries to make sense of something that's wrong.*

RAY

No. That's not right. Is this some kind of joke?

MADELINE

I don't see what's funny about it.

RAY

No, seriously. Maddie, I can't have you against me too.

MADELINE

No one's against you. We're just trying to understand.

RAY

NO.

He BANGS the glass with a fist. Frustration building.

Madeline flinches back. He forces himself to calm.

MADELINE

What's wrong with you?

RAY

Nothing. It's just...fuzzy. Different.

He searches his memory.

RAY (cont'd)

You were pregnant when we left, right? That's why you didn't come.

MADELINE

I made that decision, yes.

RAY

And it was Charlie's child?

An odd look from her.

MADELINE

Of course.

RAY

And was it worth it?

MADELINE

I never got the chance to find out.

RAY

I--I'm sorry to hear that. And I'm sorry about Charlie. I wish I had more answers for you and everyone. I wish I could understand.

MADELINE

I believe you.

RAY  
Bullshit, again. You were never good  
at lying.

MADELINE  
I can't say the same for you.

Something between anger and a smile from him.

RAY  
I just need someone that believes in  
me right now. That's all. I've lost so  
much. My reputation, the mission,  
this...this guy I never even met.

MADELINE  
He wasn't just 'some guy'.

RAY  
I know. He was important to you.

MADELINE  
Charlie was *your* best friend.

RAY  
I didn't hurt him.

MADELINE  
And you didn't reach Zenith either.  
So what was the point of it all?

Tears well up in his eyes. Voice cracks. Wrings his hands.

RAY  
I remember...everything. But it's not  
like they're saying, Maddie. I told  
you. There were only four of us. I'm  
not delusional, not hiding anything.  
It's just...mixed up and backwards.

He stops. Collects himself.

Madeline breaks for a moment. A single tear spills down her  
cheek. She wipes it quickly. Like it never happened.

RAY (cont'd)  
I thought they were joking at first  
or I was sleeping. Thought I even hit  
my head coming down. But I can see it  
on your damn face. So I--I'm so  
sorry. I'll do whatever I can to make  
this right.

She looks away from him just to give herself a moment. Cracks  
a smile--only to stop the tears.



MADELINE

It sounds like you have nothing to worry about then.

RAY

Please, I need you to believe me.

He puts a hand to the glass between them.

She stands. Meets his gaze.

RAY (cont'd)

I just need to be with my family.

MADELINE

Don't we all?

A flare of anger from him. It twists across his face.

RAY

I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!

He SLAMS the glass again.

Madeline flinches. Takes a step back.

MADELINE

I'm sure they'll believe you.

She leaves. Heads for an "EXIT" sign at the end of the room.

RAY (O.S.)

MADELINE!

Another SLAM to the glass. She shudders, keeps walking.

She passes by the four other glass confinement cells.

BANG. Behind her.

As she walks by the first cell--Kliment, the Russian astronaut, sleeps soundlessly on his cot.

BBAANNGG.

The second cell--Hua paces her small room. She softens when she sees Madeline. A hint of sympathy. Hua half-waves.

BBBAAANNNGGG.

The third cell--Aarav sits at the edge of his cot, face in his hands. Looks up. And Madeline stops. Shares a long glance with him.

DIRECTOR JONES (O.S.)

We're not done here.

Jones walks towards her from across the hanger.  
She passes an empty cell. Hurries and leaves the room.

**INT. ATLAS, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

And down the hallways.  
Personnel clear a path. Jones tries to catch up.

**INT. ATLAS, WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Eager and waiting faces. Madeline rushes in through the door. Elsie scurries over to her.

ELSIE LAURENCE  
What's happening?

Madeline searches the faces in the room. Everyone knows. They're just waiting for her to say it first. To bring some meaning or mystery to it.

Jones stomps in behind her. Two MILITARY MEN at his side: PRIVATE HANELY & DIAZ (20s).

DIRECTOR JONES  
Where are you going?

MADELINE  
Charlie isn't here. They don't remember him or they won't tell me. So I'm going home.  
(a beat, hardening)  
Do your job, Director.

Madeline turns to Elsie.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
Ray can't wait to see you, Elsie. They'll bring you back soon.

Madeline goes to leave.

DIRECTOR JONES  
Stop.  
(a beat)  
SERGEANT!

She stops. He motions to Hanely and Diaz.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)  
They'll escort you home.

MADELINE  
I'll be fine. I don't need--

DIRECTOR JONES  
Trust me. You do.

**INT. CAR - NIGHT**

Madeline's in the back seat. Hanely and Diaz up front.

She opens the window a crack, a hint of fresh air. Takes a deep breath.

PRIVATE HANELY  
Ma'am, I'd close that if I were you.

They round a corner and a CROWD appears. Littering the streets with signs and flashing lights.

Madeline closes the window. They drive through the mob slowly. People clear as they go.

Signs: "**JESUS IS MY SAVIOR**" (bleeding cross)  
"**WE ARE NOT ALONE**" (Alien)

The car crawls down the road past them. The manic and desperate begging for any hint of truth.

They pull up at a small single-story house. Police are already dragging people away from the property line.

PRIVATE DIAZ  
We'll stay with you tonight, Ma'am.

**EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT**

Madeline slips out of the back of the car.

A FLASH of cameras blinds her.

Hanely and Diaz hurry her to the house. CHANTING and NEWS CREWS echo behind her. Begging for her attention.

One NUTSO, toga'd with a tin-foil hat, pulls from the police line and charges them. Latches onto Madeline's arm.

NUTSO  
You are not alone.

PRIVATE HANELY  
Get the fuck off.

PRIVATE DIAZ  
Get her inside.

Hanely pulls the Nutso off of Madeline. Beats him to the ground. Drags him away.

NUTSO  
WE ARE NOT ALONNNNNNEEE.

The crowd ROARS. Madeline's yanked up the steps and--

**INT. HOUSE - DAY**

The door closes behind her. It's quiet. Dark.

Diaz locks the entrance. Hurries to the windows. Pulls the blinds shut.

The room is cluttered, but in a loving lived-in sort of way. Nothing matching, but everything in its place. She doesn't take another step into the home. And you can tell just by the look on her face...she didn't expect to come back here alone.

On the wall beside her, a framed PHOTO of hopeful pilots. Madeline, Ray, and Charlie at the front. Smiling and laughing and hugging. Drunk on youth.

ANNA (50s), soft-spoken and comely, steps out of a bedroom. Diaz steps between them, on guard. Madeline pushes past him.

MADELINE

It's okay.

Diaz stands down.

ANNA

We saw on the news. Is it true?

MADELINE

(nods)

How'd she react?

ANNA

Confused, of course. But not more than normal. I gave her something to sleep.

MADELINE

Thank you, Anna.

ANNA

I'll be back tomorrow morning.

Anna heads for the door. Hanely slips in past her.

PRIVATE HANELY (O.S.)

Starting to clear up a little out there. Everyone's been pulled back to the street.

(re: Anna)

The police will make sure you get to your car safely.

ANNA

Thank you.

Anna leaves. Hanely locks the door behind her.

PRIVATE HANELY

Is she okay?

Hushed voices between the men. Not meant for her ears. She leaves the room. Heads down a hallway.

MADELINE

(voice cracking)

The sofa pulls out.

(collects herself)

It sticks a little.

And passes a closed bedroom door. Peeks inside. In a hospital bed and attached to an IV is EDITH (70s). Half-conscious and watching a TV hum continuously in the background.

Madeline isn't up for this fight tonight, but forces herself into the cluttered bedroom. Dusty hoarded memories on every wall and shelf.

**INT. HOUSE, EDITH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

MADELINE

How was your day, Edith?

Edith points to the TV. Slackjawed, but wired.

EDITH

It'll rot your brain. Always told my Charlie it'll turn it to mush.

MADELINE

Then let's turn it off. Get you to bed.

Madeline goes to the screen. Coverage on the astronauts fills the frame. Charlie's smiling face freezes and fades to black. Madeline takes a seat beside Edith.

There's a sound from the living room. Hanely and Diaz pull out the couch.

EDITH

Who's that? Who's here?

MADELINE

We have some company for the night.  
They're here to keep us safe.

Madeline wipes stray spittle from Edith's cheek. Notices a framed picture by the bed: a young Edith and Charlie smiling.

Edith beckons Madeline close. Whispers in her ear:

EDITH  
The new girl stole my pearls.

MADELINE  
Anna's been with you for years.

Edith doesn't respond. Searches her memory for...nothing.  
Madeline lightly touches the pearls on Edith's neck.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
Anyway. I found them for you. So  
let's get you to sleep.

Madeline gets ready to go. About to shut the light when--

EDITH  
Where's Charlie? They said he would  
visit today.

MADELINE  
He'll be back soon. He's on an  
important job. You should be so proud.

EDITH  
Not after he married that stupid  
girl. I never see him anymore. I wish  
she would leave and not come back.

Edith roughly grabs for Madeline's cross necklace.

EDITH (CONT'D)  
Why do you have his necklace?

MADELINE  
He wanted to keep us safe. Had to  
leave a little piece of him behind.

EDITH  
I...I don't believe you.

MADELINE  
Then Charlie can tell you himself  
when he's back.

Anger and confusion brews behind her eyes.

EDITH  
You're lying.

Edith spits on her. Turns her back to the stranger. Mumbles  
incoherently to herself.

MADELINE  
Goodnight, Edith.

Madeline clicks off the light. Leaves the room and closes the door behind her.

**INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Hanley and Diaz struggle with the couch.

MADELINE

She sometimes wanders at night. Don't shoot her.

Madeline heads up the hallway. Passes an open bedroom door. Dark, lights off. But enough moonlight bleeds through the curtains to see an EMPTY CRIB with a SPACE BABY MOBILE.

A single long glance from her and she closes the door.

Madeline goes into her own bedroom. Shuts the door.

**INT. HOUSE, MADELINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Now this is quiet. This is alone.

She undresses, takes off her soot and dirty clothes. Crawls into a cold empty bed.

Stares up at the ceiling. A skylight right above her head. Bright and sparkling with stars.

She curls into herself. CRIES. Shakes and heaves. Alone and finally able to let this out. Closes her eyes.

PRE-LAP: A baby crying.

The room vibrates and rumbles. A ROCKET LAUNCHES.

BLINDING SUNLIGHT to--

**INT. HOUSE, MADELINE'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Real sunlight floods into Madeline's room.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Are you awake?

She smiles, forgetting for a moment. A warm giggle. Reaches over to feel for a familiar lump in the bed beside her.

But it's empty. Her smile fades.

PRIVATE HANELY

Ma'am, are you awake?

She turns, Hanely stands beside her bed. She jerks away.

MADELINE

What are you doing in here?

PRIVATE HANELY

You were screaming.

He takes a step back. Heads for the door. There's a loud HUM of voices outside.

MADELINE

What's that?

PRIVATE HANELY

We can't get them to leave. Maybe you should stay somewhere else tonight.

She shuts the door in his face.

MADELINE

Thanks for your consideration.

**INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Madeline sits in the kitchen. A slop of oatmeal stares back at her. A loud HUM of the crowd from outside envelops the house. Hanely and Diaz wait on her couch. Watch her TV.

PRIVATE DIAZ

We have some errands to do today.

MADELINE

What kind of errands?

PRIVATE HANELY

Orders from ATLAS. We shouldn't hang around with that mob growing anyway.

PRIVATE DIAZ

Just let us know when you're ready.

She chucks the whole bowl into the trash with a THUNK.

MADELINE

You coming?

PRIVATE HANELY

Wait, don't--

She opens the door. And--

the crowd covers the block. They ROAR when they see her.

**EXT. HOUSE - DAY**

Pamphlets fly and catch the wind. One tumbles toward her and she picks it up. Her face printed black-and-white on the body of Mary Magdalene over text: **"THE END IS HERE"**.



She tears it up. More float across the sky. Litter the street. The crowd ROARS again. She rushes them.

MADELINE

Get out of here!

The crowd eats it up. CHANTS indiscriminately.

She breaks through the police line. Rips the pages from the crowd's hands. Pushes them away.

MADELINE (cont'd)

GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE.

But the crowd envelops her. Too close. Desperate for a touch. Madeline fights back. Steadies herself against the hoard.

And the Nutso from last night emerges from the chaos. Crazy eyed. STACKS of pamphlets under one arm. A Bible outstretched in the other.

NUTSO

*"I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former will not be remembered nor will they come to mind.*

He grabs for her. Drags her to the ground.

A GUNSHOT in the air. And the crowd scatters. SCREAMS and runs. Hanely holsters his gun. He and Diaz charge into the scampering crowd. Search for her.

Madeline kicks the Nutso off her, scrambles away. But is taken down by the trampling crowd.

Kicked and throttled to the pavement.

And BANG. Again. Another gunshot.

The beating footsteps thin. Hanely yanks her from the ground and they drag her towards the car.

**INT. ATLAS, MEDICAL - DAY**

Madeline grimaces as a NURSE stitches her forehead.

Her arm's in a cast--futuristic and 3D printed. Weblike and thin. *She'll wear this the rest of the time.*

NURSE

Someone must've been looking out for you.

The Nurse motions to the cross necklace on Madeline's neck.

MADELINE

It's not mine.

The Nurse smiles. Snips the last thread. Presses a bandage.

NURSE

Either way. Doesn't seem to matter  
how or why, but you're safe.

MADELINE

A gun would've been just as useful.

That sours the Nurse. Madeline turns to Diaz and Hanely on the far side of the room next to the ATLAS logo.

MADELINE (cont'd)

We should have gone to a hospital  
instead, not back here.

PRIVATE HANELY

Directors orders.

MADELINE

And if I wasn't trampled by a crowd  
this morning...what were you going to  
do, drag me back here?

(Privates share a look)

Well?

PRIVATE HANELY

Director's orders, Ma'am. Dragging  
and all.

Something passes by in the hallway. A BODY on a stretcher.  
*It almost looks like Charlie...almost.*

MADELINE

Is that...

She rushes out the door.

**INT. ATLAS, HALLWAY - DAY**

Madeline chases the gurney and technicians.

It slips into a room. She follows it, desperate for a glance.

**INT. ATLAS, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY**

Jones inspects the body. A PUBLICIST beside him.

Charlie's naked DEAD BODY is on a slab. *But something is off  
and uncanny about it.*

MADELINE

I--I don't understand.

DIRECTOR JONES

Perfect. You're right on time.

Madeline moves to him. Turmoil and uncertainty with every step. And reaches to touch his face. Barely grazes the skin.

PUBLICIST

It's silicone. Really lifelike.

DIRECTOR JONES

We spared no expense for an American Hero.

MADELINE

No time either.

PUBLICIST

We needed something for the funeral.

MADELINE

What funeral?

Jones motions for everyone to leave. They hurry out.

DIRECTOR JONES

You weren't supposed to find out this way. But I'm going to speak plainly because there's no time or energy for anything else. And you can handle it.

She backs away from him and the body.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)

I know this is hard. Seems rushed maybe...but it's important we make these decisions quickly. And that the funeral happens as soon as possible. It's just as much for you as the rest of the world. They need this.

MADELINE

That sounds like a load of horse-shit.

He won't take that bait. Lights a cigarette, offers it to her.

MADELINE (cont'd)

And you think you can just decide to have a fucking funeral?

DIRECTOR JONES

It doesn't mean we're not looking for him. Just trying to work with what we have to find out what really happened.

MADELINE

Like I said, horse-shit.

DIRECTOR JONES

I don't have answers for you. And more apologies and condolences aren't going to get you anywhere. You know that more than most. But if you want answers you can try to help us.

MADELINE

Why does everyone need something from me? ATLAS needs me to interrogate them or Ray needs me to believe him. You need me to bury a fricken' doll so that everyone can get their closure.

He offers her the cigarette again. She rips it from his hand.

MADELINE (cont'd)

You know what I NEEDED? I needed to be on that shuttle. And now? Now I need to live with that decision to stay. And I'd like to do it with some quiet...but the whole world now wants a piece of me too. So tell me, Jones, what else do you need?

DIRECTOR JONES

I need you to cooperate with something that's more important than your ego or guilt. You need to play the widow and fall in line.

MADELINE

No.

DIRECTOR JONES

What do you want from me? I don't think they're lying. They don't remember Charles.

MADELINE

Charlie.

DIRECTOR JONES

You and Ray were the only ones that called him that.

MADELINE

You should tell Ray that. Remind him.

A heavy moment.

DIRECTOR JONES

You'll be at his funeral tomorrow. That's an order. And I won't ask again. I can't have every news and government organization knockin' on my door for the next decade. I can't lose funding or have anyone lose faith. And we can't do this if we're racing a clock or public opinion. I need you on our side. And I need you to not expect him to come back.

Madeline quickly brushes a single tear from her eye. If he saw, he won't acknowledge it.

MADELINE

I can't do that.

She heads for the door. He follows her out.

**INT. ATLAS, HALLWAY - DAY**

DIRECTOR JONES

There's a lot at stake here. It's bigger than us.

MADELINE

It's easy to say that when you haven't lost anything.

A silence between them. *He's lost her. You can see it all over their faces. And that's important to him.*

A child GIGGLES up the hallway. Madeline turns to see Hua embrace two TWIN GIRLS (12). All love and hugs.

DIRECTOR JONES

Can't you see...we have to accept what's happened here and move forward. Be happy that any of them came back alive at all.

MADELINE

You're letting them go, aren't you?

DIRECTOR JONES

I couldn't keep them locked up forever.

**EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT**

Hanely and Diaz drive up to the property. The street is littered with scattered remains of the chaos from earlier. Trash and tents on the road. But the crowds are gone for now.

Madeline lets herself out. Beaten up from the day. Heads inside. Hanely and Diaz at her heels.

PRIVATE HANELY  
They'll probably be back tomorrow.  
But they arrested a few frisky ones.  
You'll sleep better tonight.

PRIVATE DIAZ  
Miss, you hear that?

MADELINE  
They'll be back tomorrow. Got it.

She stops at the door. Turns to them.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
I don't need you in the house.

PRIVATE DIAZ  
Director Jones insists we--

MADELINE  
Then go sleep on his couch.

She slams the door in their faces.

**INT. HOUSE - NIGHT**

PRIVATE HANELY (O.S.)  
We'll stay out here then, Ma'am.

Madeline locks it behind her.

**INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

She peeks inside Edith's room. Anna collects her things. Edith is already asleep.

ANNA  
Hard day?

MADELINE  
Probably not as hard as yours.

Anna affectionately squeezes Madeline's arm.

ANNA  
If there's anything I can do for you,  
just ask. I'm here for you too.  
(turns Edith's light off)  
She had a good day.

MADELINE  
Those don't happen much.

Anna heads for the door.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
Lock it behind you, please.

Anna nods and leaves. A CLICK of a lock behind her.

**INT. HOUSE, SHOWER - NIGHT**

Madeline washes the day off her. Emotional and distraught.  
*If it wasn't for the water, you'd probably see her tears.*

**INT. HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT**

She dries and wraps her body in a towel. Stares at herself in the mirror. Barely recognizable after the last few years.

Her cross necklace is crumpled on the counter. She hesitates to pick it up.

Reaches for it. Almost as if it will bite and--

EDITH (O.S.)  
Charlie, where have you been hiding?

Madeline freezes. Tiptoes to the door.

**INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

It's dark. The only light comes from the bathroom and Edith's bedroom down the hall.

EDITH (O.S.)  
How did you get in here?

Madeline grabs a knife from the kitchen counter as she passes. Hides it at her side.

EDITH (O.S.) (cont'd)  
It's so sweet of you to come.

Madeline slowly rounds the corner. And sees Edith sitting up in bed. A MAN with his back to us chats with her.

RAY  
I'm sorry I couldn't come sooner.

Edith spots Madeline in her doorway. One hand on her towel and one with a knife.

EDITH  
What are you doing walking around soaking wet like a dog?

Ray turns to Madeline. Smiles. Not concerned by the knife.

RAY  
You don't need that.

MADELINE  
Move an inch and I'll slit your throat.

RAY  
Even for an old friend?

Her knife doesn't lower--nor her resolve. He comes closer.

RAY (cont'd)  
You keep the key in that same blue  
flowerpot. It's not safe.

MADELINE  
From who?

EDITH  
What are you doing? Put that away.

MADELINE  
Get back in bed.

RAY  
You don't have to be scared.  
(raises his hands)  
I just needed to talk to you. And I  
couldn't wait until tomorrow.

MADELINE  
Why are you here?

RAY  
Because something is wrong. And it's  
not just your husband's disappearance.

Madeline glances at Edith, but she doesn't seem to follow.

MADELINE  
And you still don't remember him?

RAY  
That's what I'm trying to say. It's  
not just him. Everything is wrong...  
just a little bit. And I don't know  
if it's all in my head or--or what.  
But I need your help, because you're  
the only one that I trust.

MADELINE  
Well, I don't trust you.

*That pains him more than it should.*



RAY

Then don't do it for me. Do it for  
Charlie.

MADELINE

Don't *you* say his name.

EDITH

Do you know my son?

Madeline ignores Edith. Leaves the knife on a shelf.

MADELINE

What do you mean when you said  
everything was wrong?

RAY

Charlie isn't the only one I've  
forgot. And the things that I remember  
are...I don't know how to describe it.

MADELINE

Try.

Edith walks over. Madeline's distracted for a moment, enough  
for him to come close. He grabs her hand. Holds it taut.

RAY

It's like someone made a shitty copy  
of my life. It doesn't feel like my  
own anymore.

(manic, emotional)

I don't know what's wrong with you or  
me...but it's not safe here. So you  
need to trust me like you used to.  
Even if you don't remember.

EDITH

What are you doing in my home?

Edith gets close to Ray. Peers right through him.

EDITH (cont'd)

You're not Charlie.

RAY

I never said I was.

Madeline pulls her hand back from Ray. Tries to comfort  
Edith, but she's frenzied and crazed.

EDITH

You're not Ray. I've known Ray since  
he was a boy. You're not him.

MADELINE

It's okay.

RAY EDITH  
 I'm sorry to disappoint, YOU'RE NOT RAY.  
 but--

Ray backs away from Edith. Horrified.

Edith grabs the knife on the shelf. SWINGS it at him. Slices his outstretched palm.

RAY  
 Fuck.

EDITH  
 YOU'RE NOT REAL. YOU'RE NOT RAY.  
 WHERE'S CHARLIE.

Diaz and Hanely POUND at the front door.

PRIVATE DIAZ  
 Mrs. Hughes, are you okay?

PRIVATE HANELY  
 Unlock the door.

MADELINE  
 (to Edith)  
 It's okay.  
 (to Privates)  
 WE'RE OKAY!

Madeline grabs the knife from Edith's hand.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
 (to Ray)  
 Go out the back.

Ray runs off into the house. A CLICK of the back door.

EDITH  
 HE'S WRONG. I CAN SEE IT IN HIS EYES.

Madeline wraps a heavy arm around Edith's shoulder. Controlling, but firm.

Hanley and Diaz break down the door.

PRIVATE HANELY  
 Are you okay?

EDITH  
 I don't understand.

MADELINE  
 She just had a nightmare. We're fine.

Diaz and Hanely trade a look. Not believing that.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
 But, I'd appreciate if you could stay  
 the night either way. The couch is  
 yours.

Madeline leads Edith back to her bedroom.

**INT. HOUSE, EDITH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

And brings her to the bed.

EDITH  
 He's different.

MADELINE  
 I know.

Madeline pulls out the knife hidden behind her back. Stares  
 at the blood.

EDITH  
 Where's Charlie?

**EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY**

A sea of white stones in a military graveyard. Grey swirling  
 skies. The promise of heavy storms.

People sweat in their suits. All perspiration and empty  
 tears. In front of them, a hole in the ground with an open  
 casket filled with the silicone CHARLIE. Bugs swarm the mud.

Madeline stands at the front of the crowd. Takes off her  
 sunglasses. Red puffy eyes. *But trying not to feel this.*

Around her, the astronauts and Jones watch solemnly. A full  
 crowd. Elsie's baby fusses loudly as it starts to drizzle.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 Charlie's mother isn't coming?

MADELINE  
 She couldn't handle this. Not after  
 last night.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 I heard about that. I'm sorry. It  
 couldn't have been easy for you all  
 these years.

Bagpipes SKIRL. Military men fold a flag. It's draped over  
 silicone Charlie by CHILDREN.

The rain starts. Splashes the body. Pools at the eyes of the  
 doll. *Crying almost...as they overflow.*

Crying nearly as much as everyone around Madeline.

But she's not.

A PRIEST closes the casket. Mumbles some words.

Madeline tucks the cross necklace beneath her collar. Looks up to the sky as the rain comes down harder. Everyone pulls out umbrellas. The toddler CRIES.

She lets the rain hit her face. A moment of peace.

PRIEST

Mrs. Hughes, would you like to do the honors?

The priest offers her a shovel.

She walks to the grave. Dips a shoe into the moist sod and tips it over the edge. Walks off.

Behind her, Jones shovels dirt onto the coffin. The astronauts and their families follow.

**INT. CAR - DAY**

Diaz weaves through the graveyard to the exit. Jones sits beside Madeline in the back.

MADELINE

After today, I don't expect to see you again. This is the end of it. I'm done helping. But I played my part, so I need something in return.

DIRECTOR JONES

Depends what you ask.

Madeline pulls out a knife from her purse. It's wrapped in a plastic bag. The blade is covered in dried blood.

MADELINE

I need you to test this. It's Ray's.

He reluctantly takes the knife.

DIRECTOR JONES

We already tested his blood for abnormalities.

MADELINE

But did you compare his DNA to the sample from before he left?

Jones considers that. Passes the knife to Diaz in the front.

DIRECTOR JONES

(to Diaz)

Rush that.

(to Madeline)

This is a big ask.

MADELINE

No, it really isn't. I'm just going through you for common courtesy.

They sit in an uncomfortable silence. It begs for reconciliation and apologies.

DIRECTOR JONES

Maddie, I--I want--

MADELINE

Do you know what the last thing I said to him was?

(silence)

I told him to not come back.

DIRECTOR JONES

You were upset.

MADELINE

I still meant it.

Her face breaks, but she tries to hold it.

MADELINE (cont'd)

I was pissed and pregnant and fucking meant it. He should have stayed. It's his fault just as much as it's yours and the crews. So when I say I'm done with you and them I mean it.

DIRECTOR JONES

I never thought I'd see the day when you stopped fighting. But I won't argue anymore.

Madeline holds his look.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)

You were right to leave the mission before. You were never strong enough for it. That's clear now.

MADELINE

Yes, it is.

She turns from him and focuses out the window. It's serene, green. Impossibly quiet except for a growing thunder of--

CROWDS.

They're outside the gate. Pounding on the fences.

The graveyard gates open. There are hundreds of people waiting. Signs and screaming.

**INT. HOUSE - DAY**

Hushed and hollow conversations. Everyone in black. Faces painted in mourning.

Ray stares at a photo on the wall. Hopeful pilots drunk on youth. Madeline, Ray, and Charlie smile and laugh.

Madeline stands alone. Or at least alone as a widow could be at this type of thing. People talk and she nods.

A flash of LIGHT brings her out of it. Another camera. The Publicist urges a photographer on.

She spots Anna heading to the kitchen. Goes to her.

MADELINE

Where's Edith?

ANNA

Ray wanted to talk with her.

Madeline hurries off.

**INT. HOUSE, EDITH'S BEDROOM - DAY**

Madeline peeks in from the doorway. Ray and Edith argue. It's heated. Scattered. But hushed.

He grabs Edith's arm.

MADELINE

You shouldn't be in here.

Ray drops his hold on Edith.

RAY

I just wanted her to understand.

MADELINE

She can't.

Anna quickly hurries to Edith's side.

MADELINE (cont'd)

None of us can.

Madeline leaves and Ray follows her out.

**INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - DAY**

RAY

We need to talk again.

MADELINE

Not today.

She stops by the open nursery door. A few men inside smoke cigars next to an open window.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Really? Get the hell out of here.

They apologetically cough out their cigars and slink past her at the door. The MOBS outside can be heard from the window. She slams it shut.

It's clear she hasn't been in here for quite some time. A layer of dust on the empty crib.

Ray follows her in. Closes the door behind them.

Quiet. Still. And they're alone.

She reaches out. Delicately touches a baby mobile. Planets and stars drift in a circle. One piece is noticeably absent. *A rocketship missing its pair.*

MADELINE (cont'd)

I told Jones I didn't want to be involved anymore.

RAY

But that's not true, is it? I know you better than anyone. You need to know what happened.

MADELINE

You don't know me.

She tries to leave but he blocks her path.

MADELINE (cont'd)

You want me to get the knife again?

RAY

(smiles)

See. I knew you were going to say that.

(she's not amused)

And I know you can't agree with them. We can't lose any more time. We have to find out what's going on and do something.

MADELINE

You want to know what I think?

RAY

You know I do.

MADELINE

I think you got hit in the head, or went insane, or something else unexplainable...but that would be the best case scenario here. I hope you're telling the truth, because if not it means--

RAY

I killed him...

(a heavy beat)

That's what it would mean?

MADELINE

(nods)

Last night you said that everyone was "off" and "wrong". You need to explain that.

RAY

It's little things here and there. It's stupid but there was always this leaking faucet at my house. No matter how many times I fixed it, it'd be right back. I almost started to like it. You know...it wouldn't be home without it.

MADELINE

So Elsie hired someone to fix it when you were gone.

RAY

No. See that's not it. Home is supposed to feel a certain way. You close the door behind you and there's some sense of peace that you can't feel anywhere else. You can only get that with certain places and people.

He grabs her hand.

RAY (cont'd)

Do you know what I mean?

MADELINE

(pulls back)

I don't see how--



RAY

No. You're not seeing it. And you're not remembering just like the rest. I feel insane but--but Elsie and I split up two years before the launch.

MADELINE

No you didn't.

RAY

And that's not the only thing. My father died a week before the mission. I brought his ashes with me. But I get back and he's right there. Alive. Standing beside my ex-wife with a kid I don't recognize. And I don't understand.

MADELINE

Does she know?  
(he's silent)  
Have you told Jones?

RAY

They wouldn't understand. And I can't trust them.

MADELINE

Then you're right...you sound insane.  
(beat)  
But for once you sound honest and frankly just as lost as the rest of us. It doesn't look good on you.

RAY

(chuckles)  
I told you I missed you, right?

MADELINE

We shouldn't be in here.

She heads for the door to leave. Opens it.

RAY

Please, I--

Jones walks by in the hallway. Spots Ray. The hint of a question when he sees them together.

DIRECTOR JONES

Ray, can I have a minute?

MADELINE TWO

I'll leave you two alone.

She leaves them. Heads outside for a moment of peace.

**EXT. BACK YARD - DAY**

She spots Hua, Aarav, and Kliment chatting in hushed voices. They quiet when they see Madeline.

AARAV

It was a lovely service.

MADELINE

Only if you think he's dead.

HUA

We don't.

(beat)

Or...I should say, we hope he isn't.  
But we're sorry for your loss.

MADELINE

I don't need your condolences.

Aarav steps from the group towards her.

AARAV

And I don't have any to give for  
someone I don't remember.

MADELINE

You sound like Ray.

AARAV

And he's right. We don't have time  
for sympathy.

KLIMENT

There's no need to be rude. You know  
Jones forced her into this '*funeral*'.

AARAV

And I don't mean to be. We're all  
friends here and Madeline knows more  
than most what the risks were. But  
she doesn't understand and she  
deserves to.

Ray watches them from inside. Tries to listen to their conversation.

MADELINE

Is there something I don't know?

They all share a look.

KLIMENT

No, there isn't.

HUA  
But Ray--

KLIMENT  
No.

MADLINE  
What?

AARAV  
What no one wants to say is that Ray  
has been acting odd since we  
returned. Irrational. Spouting  
conspiracies and inconsistencies.

MADLINE  
Have there been any?

Another look between them.

AARAV  
Space can do strange things to the  
mind. We all knew when we left that  
our lives would not just stay frozen  
until our return.  
(beat)  
We just wanted you to be careful  
around him.

Ray comes outside. They all quiet.

RAY  
What are we talking about?

HUA  
It was a lovely service.

RAY  
I doubt she appreciates the sentiment.  
(off their silence)  
Jones needs us inside for photos.

MADLINE  
Then you shouldn't keep him waiting.

Madeline stomps off to the front yard.

RAY  
Where are you going?

Ray follows her closely. Aarav one step behind them.

MADLINE  
That's not your concern.

AARAV  
(to Kliment/Hua)  
Come on.

**EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY**

She goes through the gate to the front yard. The ROAR of the growing crowd DEAFENS.

HUA

We should get back inside.

Madeline goes for her truck in the driveway.

RAY

So you're running away again. Just like you did from the first mission.

MADELINE

That's not fair. I had a husband and child to think about.

RAY

Then what's your excuse now?

She glares at him. Her palm on the handle. The crowd in the road gets restless. Watches them argue. Feeds it. Fuels it.

MADELINE

And why should I help or trust you? You killed my husband. Whether it was incompetence or you killed him with your own hands...you were responsible.

RAY

So that's what you've decided?

MADELINE

Yes. I don't care if you remember anymore. There's no point to any of it.

KLIMENT

We should not have this conversation out here.

Aarav scans the crowd. There's a commotion. Police scatter.

AARAV

The crowd is getting restless.

MADELINE

And I don't care that things are different for you, Ray. Your own team doesn't trust you. Why should I?

Ray's face twists in anger. He charges Madeline. Kliment steps in between them.

KLIMENT

Let's calm d--

BANG.

Blood splatters Madeline's face.

Behind them, the Nutso with a GUN flails on the ground.  
SECURITY restrains him to the grass.

Ray grabs Madeline. Pulls her to the driveway.

RAY

Maddie, are you okay?

She's in shock. Trembles.

The Nutso smiles at Madeline. Holds her stare.

Ray brushes the blood from her face. Checks her for injury.

She can't blink. Barely breathes.

MADELINE

I...I think so.

Above her, Kliment coughs blood. He collapses. Gurgling.  
Eyes wide and far away from here.

The crowd SHRIEKS.

Aarav hurries to him. Cradles him to his chest.

AARAV

SOMEONE HELP US.

Everyone from inside rushes to the door and windows for a  
better look. Security and police hurry to Kliment's side.

Ray drags Madeline to the house, through the hoards begging  
for a look at the carnage.

RAY

We need to get inside.

He pulls her along. But just as quickly as the crowd  
started, it quiets.

An eerie calm.

Everyone pauses. All stop and look to the sky. *Silence  
catching like wildfire. A void left only for wonder.*

MADELINE

Stop.

He yanks her along, but Madeline won't budge. She stares  
above...

RAY

It's not safe.

And then he sees it. A bright white HALO of light above them. A flash growing across the sky. It lasts just a few seconds and dissipates. Shrinks back to a single point.

Ray watches in horror.

The ONLY sound is Kliment choking on his own blood.

Madeline's eyes are glued to the empty blue sky. She reaches out, almost as if she can touch it. A smile of something greater and grander. *This is just the miracle she needs.*

**INT. ATLAS, WAITING ROOM - NIGHT**

Madeline sits alone in the waiting room. A loud ticking clock and harsh fluorescents. Plays with the cross necklace.

She goes to the metal ATLAS logo on the wall. Uses it as a mirror to wipe dried drops of blood from her face.

Ray hurries in through the locked door.

RAY

You coming?

**INT. ATLAS, HALLWAYS - NIGHT**

They hurry down the hallway. Scientists and military shuffle about. Everyone running somewhere.

MADELINE

How's Kliment?

RAY

Still in surgery I think, but he's not our concern right now.

ARMY MEN run by them.

RAY (cont'd)

Everyone's scared.

MADELINE

And you?

RAY

(almost smiles)

It means something. I don't know what or why. But it's important. And it proves I wasn't lying. There's something bigger happening.

Ray heads into a large conference room with SOLDIERS at the door. FAINT SHOUTING from inside.

**INT. ATLAS, CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT**

Ray motions her in.

AARAV

And you expect us to just wait here?

DIRECTOR JONES

Yes. And we expect you to follow orders. You've compromised us enough.

AARAV

But we know it came from that planet.

DIRECTOR JONES

We don't know anything and you shouldn't pretend to.

(sees Madeline)

And what is she doing here?

RAY

If you want me here, then she's staying.

Jones stares her down. *Decades of history there. Support and betrayal and abandonment from both sides.*

DIRECTOR JONES

She's not part of this mission. Hasn't been for years.

HUA

Madeline should be here.

AARAV

She deserves to know.

DIRECTOR JONES

This was her choice.

RAY

Things are different now and you know that. She might be the only one that can communicate with it. And we might be your only chance to intercept it.

DIRECTOR JONES

We already rejected that option.

RAY

Then change your mind because--

MADELINE

WAIT.

The men quiet.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
 What is "it"? What's coming?

Aarav clicks a keyboard and a wall lights up with images. She walks to it. Watches raw footage of the light in the sky.

AARAV  
 The light appeared in the sky for eleven seconds. We believe it originated roughly 540 million miles away. Just past Jupiter.

Madeline traces the map with her hand.

AARAV (cont'd)  
 Based on the orientation of the anomaly compared to Earth's rotation it must have come from--

MADELINE  
 Zenith?

AARAV  
 (nods)  
 And whatever came through that anomaly is coming to Earth.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 She needs to leave. Now.

MADELINE  
 (ignoring Jones)  
 How long do we have?

AARAV  
 Two weeks.

RAY  
 Unless the shuttle intercepts it.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 I SAID THAT WASN'T AN OPTION.

RAY  
 The shuttle was built for two trips.

DIRECTOR JONES  
 Maybe if the first mission was considered a success then we'd be having another conversation. Clearly you brought something to our doorstep whether you remember it or not. I'm not about to let you four  
 (looks to Madeline)  
 or five, have the opportunity to make things worse than they already are.



HUA  
What about the signal? She should--

DIRECTOR JONES  
ENOUGH.

Diaz and Hanely hurry inside the room at the shouting.

RAY  
You'd rather we just wait for it to  
come than try to stop it?

DIRECTOR JONES  
We are all going to wait until we  
have instructions.  
(to Privates)  
Take her home, please, and keep her  
there. Don't let the press anywhere  
near the house.

MADELINE  
So that's it?

DIRECTOR JONES  
You said you were done. You and your  
husband are no longer our concern. We  
have bigger problems to deal with.

Diaz grabs her by the arm. Madeline pushes him off.

MADELINE  
I can show myself out.

She heads for the door. Ray follows her out.

**INT. ATLAS, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

MADELINE  
Should we be worried?

RAY  
Only if you plan to start following  
instructions for the first time in  
your life.

He heads off down an empty hallway.

RAY (cont'd)  
You coming?

**INT. ATLAS, SHUTTLE LAUNCH HANGER - NIGHT**

Madeline follows Ray into a large hanger with a glass  
ceiling. The charred and scarred shuttle sits at the center.

RAY  
My access to the command center is  
limited but...

He goes to the hatch and lets himself into the shuttle.  
Madeline hesitates outside.

RAY (cont'd)  
...they're a bit busy right now.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Dim blue light flickers on as he walks inside and through  
the ship. Madeline follows.

RAY  
What he's forgetting is that  
everything in science has redundancy.  
You need a fail-safe.

They pass small bedrooms, storage, a medical room. Stop at  
the bridge at the end of the long hallway.

*This place is holy for Madeline. You can feel it. Her  
trepidation within these walls. And her confidence. It's a  
ghost of what she once was.*

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - NIGHT**

All metal and glass. Four seats with an expansive view.

RAY  
And they couldn't stop us from  
leaving even if they wanted to. This  
is our mission and I have every  
intention of completing it.

MADELINE  
Jones is going to kill you.

RAY  
Then he can get in line because  
you've earned the right first.  
(off her silence)  
But if you don't, then I need you  
with me. It always should have been  
you up there.

MADELINE  
No.

RAY  
You don't want to?

MADELINE

Of course I do, but it's not the right decision. Whatever is out there is coming here whether we like it or not.

RAY

Jones wants to destroy it when it comes close enough. They're preparing a missile strike.

MADELINE

After what happened to Charlie maybe they should.

RAY

That's what I thought you'd say. I wasn't sure if I should show you this, but...

He places a key in the console. Clicks a few buttons.

RAY (cont'd)

...you have every right to hear the signal coming from it.

MADELINE

What signal?

RAY

He doesn't want anyone to know. Especially you.

STATIC crinkles through a speaker. It echoes in the room. A visual wavelength of the voice plays on the screen.

MADELINE

I don't hear--

SIGNAL

--h--eell--o.

Madeline freezes. Transfixed. She goes to the screen. Her finger traces the wavelength.

SIGNAL (cont'd)

*Hello is--ss anyone there?*

(static)

*Th--is is Sergeant Charlie Hughes from the shuttle Calypso.*

RAY

Now you see why we have to go?

It echoes in the room. Charlie's staticky voice on loop.

**INT. ATLAS, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Ray strolls past soldiers. Confident and not to be disturbed.

Their previous dialog continues over:

MADELINE (V.O.)  
They'll never let us take off.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Madeline wanders the shuttle alone. She's quiet and careful.

RAY (V.O.)  
Let me take care of that.

She stops at an empty personnel's quarters. Doesn't dare cross that threshold.

**INT. ATLAS, CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT**

Ray speaks with Aarav and Hua. Jones is noticeably absent.

MADELINE (V.O.)  
We won't be able to come back from  
this.

Aarav silently agrees with Ray. Hua doesn't and storms off.

**INT. ATLAS, DIRECTOR JONES' OFFICE - NIGHT**

Aarav sneaks into Jones' office. Unlocks the gates at the front of ATLAS. Watches on the monitor as floods of crowds stream into the compound.

RAY (V.O.)  
What are you really leaving behind?

He goes to the door. Watches military rush down the hallway. Ready for a fight.

Something distracts him. A REPORT on Jones' desk of a DNA test and a bloody knife. Aarav slips it into his pocket.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - NIGHT**

Madeline carefully dresses in a spacesuit. She's slow and precise. Practiced.

RAY (V.O.)  
But it's up to you.

Aarav enters the bridge. A quiet nod between them of what's about to happen. She takes her seat at the console.

MADELINE (V.O.)  
You're right. I have nothing keeping  
me here anymore.

**INT. ATLAS, SHUTTLE LAUNCH HANGER - NIGHT**

STEAM rises from the shuttle.

The ceiling above opens slowly. A clear night sky above.

Through the window, Madeline gasps at the starry expanse. Can't see anything but that. Holds dearly to her necklace.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - DAY**

Aarav is at the controls ready for takeoff. He glances at her uncharacteristic wonder. She regains her composure.

AARAV  
(friendly)  
You remember how to fly this thing?

MADELINE  
Better than you.

Madeline reorients herself to the controls.

There are GUNSHOTS nearby.

AARAV  
Dammit, I thought we'd have more time.

MADELINE  
Where's Ray?

AARAV  
He was going to talk to Hua.

There's a CLINK of a seal on the shuttle. Someone closes a hatch. A computerized voice rings out from the speakers:

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
Shuttle door sealed.

There's a scuffle in the shuttle hallway. Madeline and Aarav rush to see Ray drag Hua towards them. She argues with him. Her nose bloody and hands bleeding.

MADELINE  
What the fuck did you do?



Madeline straps her in. Ray watches intently.

MADELINE

I'll keep you safe. I promise.

Madeline takes her own seat. Secures the straps. And Ray twists the key.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER

Ignition countdown begin.

Armed forces storm the hanger below.

AARAV

They'll be obliterated.

RAY

They know better.

The shuttle shifts slowly skyward. LIGHTS flash.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER

Shuttle launch orientation in progress.

BULLETS dent the shuttle as it rises.

**INT. ATLAS, SHUTTLE LAUNCH HANGER - NIGHT**

Jones presses the army men on.

DIRECTOR JONES

What are you standing around for?  
Stop them!

ARMY MAN

It can't be stopped. They're sealed in. We have to get back now.

DIRECTOR JONES

We're not letting them leave.

Jones spots Ray and Madeline in the shuttle through the bridge window. Locks onto them.

DIRECTOR JONES (cont'd)

They won't take off as long as we're here. Blow the door off if you have to.

ARMY MAN

Sir?

DIRECTOR JONES

You heard me!

The army men rush the shuttle. Work at the sealed door.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - NIGHT**

There's BANGING at the hatch. Soldiers try to break it open.

RAY  
Initiate launch.

AARAV  
We can't.

Ray pulls out a GUN and points it at Aarav.

RAY  
We do what we have to. Nothing more.  
Nothing less.

MADELINE  
STOP THIS.

RAY  
This is his choice.

Aarav builds up the nerve to disobey.

MADELINE  
Ray, this isn't you.

RAY  
I'm starting to think the same about  
you.  
(takes off safety)  
You're not the same astronaut we left  
behind. You're incapable of doing  
what's necessary when--

Madeline flips a switch. The shuttle rumbles beneath them.

MADELINE  
My capabilities have never been  
questioned. Can you say the same?

Ray lowers the gun on Aarav. Looks to Madeline, who won't  
answer his gaze. She stares at Jones in the hanger below.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
Launch Initiated in 10.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
9.  
8.

**INT. ATLAS, SHUTTLE LAUNCH HANGER - NIGHT**

Smoke billows from the bottom of the shuttle. It clouds the  
room. The soldiers cough. They grab Jones and drag him to  
the hanger door.



OVERHEAD SPEAKER

7.  
6.

They close and lock it shut. Through layers of impenetrable glass, soldiers outside the door bang and beg for escape.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER (cont'd)

5.  
4.

DIRECTOR JONES

God save us all.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - NIGHT**

There's BANGING again from outside the shuttle door as soldiers slowly die.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER

3.

HUA

Please, help me!

Hua undoes her seat belt.

MADELINE

STOP!

And BAM. The shuttle lifts off. FIRES and propels upwards.

Hua is thrown from her seat and across the room in a disgusting CRUNCH of bone and blood.

Madeline CRIES out. But it's no use.

Hua, unconscious, is sprawled against the bridge door. Twisted and contorted against the frame.

The metal coffin shakes around them. Smoke and vibration.

Madeline fumbles with the latch on her seat belt.

RAY

DON'T. YOU CAN'T HELP HER NOW.

More shake and throttle. Tears at Madeline's eyes. Out the window, the ground peels away to clouds and a red sky.

Guttural moans and whimpers behind her.

**EXT. ATLAS - DAWN**

CROWDS watch the shuttle meet the rising sun.

Jones rushes outside for a better look.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - DAWN**

Creaking and rumbling as the shuttle burns against the dawn.

Rising and roaring and then  
silence.

Quiet.

Dark and black and peaceful as the shuttle breaks the atmosphere and gravity dips to zero.

Madeline's body goes limp. She breathes new air she's only dreamed of.

Ray and Aarav rip off their seat belts. Rush to Hua's side.

Madeline just stares ahead at the dark black nothingness and twinkling stars.

Globs of blood drift by. Speckles her face. Brings her back to hard reality.

And there's shouting behind her. Muffled at first.

AARAV  
Sergeant Hughes!

She spins. Aarav and Ray try to hold Hua's writhing body.

RAY  
We need gravity.

Madeline types a command into her screen. Behind her, Ray and Aarav brace themselves. Cradle Hua's body.

A CLUNK as it takes effect.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
Artificial gravity initiated.

They carefully carry Hua from the room.

**INT. SHUTTLE, MEDICAL**

Madeline follows at a distance as Hua's contorted form is forced on an operating table.

AARAV  
*(speaks in soft Arabic to Hua)*

Ray straps her to the table.

MADELINE

Is that really necessary?

RAY

You saw what she did with her seat belt. You wanna risk it?

The men work quickly. Almost in sync. A perfect team.

RAY (cont'd)

Morphine.

Aarav scours a cabinet. Brings out a single-serving syringe.

AARAV

We only have one more. We didn't restock after Kliment broke his leg.

RAY

It'll have to do.

Ray jams the syringe in her chest.

There's BEEPING over the shuttle speaker. Ray and Aarav barely notice. Madeline sneaks from the room.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Up ahead, the moon grows closer. Earth glows blue behind them. Madeline sits at Ray's seat.

An incoming TRANSMISSION flashes across the screen from ATLAS. Madeline rejects it.

She opens the log at the console. Digs through the shuttle's recordings and information.

She tries to open a file, but it's locked. Madeline types in her credentials and it flashes RED. RESTRICTED ACCESS.

**INT. SHUTTLE, MEDICAL**

Aarav SNAPS something back into place in Hua's arm.

A heavy silence between them.

RAY

I shouldn't have pulled my gun on you.

AARAV

No, you shouldn't have. Nor should you have forced Hua back out here.

RAY

I know none of you see it, but--

AARAV

Do not start that again. I have heard enough of your theories and inconsistencies. Charlie Hughes' disappearance was enough of a problem, and you want to add your conspiracies to the fire?

RAY

Something is wrong on Earth. You had to feel it.

AARAV

I felt my wife's arms and my children's love. That was enough. I was not looking for something to be wrong. I wanted to be home.

RAY

I didn't force you to--

AARAV

NO. I believe in what we are doing here. But I have every intention of returning home. I am not here for your fears or questions. I am here for mine.

Hua stirs in pain.

AARAV (cont'd)

Now, Captain. It would be best if you are not here in case she wakes.

Aarav busies himself with her vitals. Ray leaves.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

Ray heads straight to the bridge and--

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline is back in her own seat. She turns to him.

MADELINE

Is she okay?

RAY

She's alive. I doubt she'll make it back home though.

Ray checks the controls. Fills a screen with a map of their trajectory. A ticking countdown right below: **06:22:59.44**

06:22:59.43

RAY (cont'd)

We're almost seven days away. If there is anything out there...

06:22:59.37

Madeline looks away. Focuses on the logs on her screen.

MADELINE

I need access to the ship's logs.

RAY

Why?

MADELINE

Why not?

RAY

I thought you trusted me again and that's why you came.

She stands. Gets in his face.

MADELINE

You lost that trust the moment you dragged Hua up here and put a gun to Aarav's head.

RAY

I've always had to make difficult choices. But they're my choices to make as Captain. As a civilian on this mission, you should try to remember that.

MADELINE

So you won't let me review your logs?

He holds her look. Passes her, too close for comfort. Types in his credentials at her screen.

RAY

I have nothing to hide.

She takes her seat again. He watches her closely.

RAY (cont'd)

I'd be interested to see if you find anything though.

Another TRANSMISSION pops up on the screen. Ray hurries to his own seat.

RAY (cont'd)  
Don't open that.

Madeline quickly accepts the message.

RAY (cont'd)  
I said--

Jones flashes on their monitors. Ray glares at her. *It's a direct action against his command and he'll remember that.*

DIRECTOR JONES  
Do you know what you've done?

Silence. Ray builds up the courage to respond.

RAY  
Only what's necessary, Sir. You weren't willing to--

DIRECTOR JONES  
I wasn't willing to have you all killed and the planet put at risk for a fool's mission. You're right.

RAY  
It's done now. There's no coming back.

DIRECTOR JONES  
No, there isn't. But you won't be making it to the signal. I won't risk everyone's safety for you to try and make sense of all this. It's bigger than you, Captain.

RAY  
I know. That's what I was always trying to tell you.

MADELINE  
What do you mean we won't make it to the signal?

A heavy silence.

DIRECTOR JONES  
If you don't turn around, we'll fire on you from Luna Base One.

She looks to the cratered surface up ahead. Its bright landscape transfixed by spiderwebs of new construction.

MADELINE  
But that's a science facility.

DIRECTOR JONES

And science's greatest tool is survival. We're always prepared for the worst. It's our first line of defense.

(beat)

But if you come back--

Ray disconnects the transmission. Jones' image cuts out.

MADELINE

Why'd you do that?

RAY

You wanted to hear an ultimatum?

He paces the bridge. *Something in him starting to unwind.*

RAY (cont'd)

You never should have accepted that message. I said--

MADELINE

YOU said you needed me here.

RAY

And now we know they'd rather we die than make contact with the signal.

MADELINE

They're just scared.

RAY

They should be.

He looks to the glass. Stares at the distant cratered surface.

RAY (cont'd)

Can we avoid their range?

MADELINE

We need to loop around the moon to preserve fuel. We won't have enough to make contact and return if we don't.

Ray thinks.

RAY

And what if we don't give them the option? We have enough explosives below for an army.

MADELINE

ATLAS sent you with weapons?

RAY

We thought we were ready for anything.

MADELINE

And now you want to destroy the base?

RAY

No, just cripple them. And only if necessary before they shoot us.

MADELINE

That's wrong.

RAY

It's for the greater good. And we'll save enough explosives in case they're needed later.

MADELINE

Later? You're planning to harm whatever we find out there too?

RAY

If you were wandering in the dark, would you really assume that the first living thing you meet has your best interest at heart? Or even your survival as a blip on their radar.

MADELINE

You don't have to do any of this. The scientists on that base are innocent.

RAY

Then Jones can have their blood on his hands. He's forcing us.

MADELINE

Please, you can't. You're better than this.

RAY

Now you think that? Did your opinion change after you decided I murdered your husband? Or was it when I nearly got Hua killed?

MADELINE

Stop it.

RAY

No, you're right. You probably came to that conclusion when you barbecued those soldiers alive. Do you want to put that on me too?

(MORE)



RAY (cont'd)

No one's innocent here and as much as you want to blame me for Charlie, I--

MADELINE

Don't you dare pretend to understand me or what I'm going through.

RAY

Because you're going through this alone? Come on. We're all here in this shit-storm together. And I'm here for answers. Just like you. We aren't thinking about Earth or humanity. We're all here for ourselves. Don't pretend otherwise.

She's stunned. Silent. He locks the console from her.

RAY (cont'd)

We have less than two hours to prepare.

Aarav walks into the bridge.

AARAV

Prepare for what?

**INT. SHUTTLE, STORAGE**

Madeline checks missiles with Ray in a storage room. Aarav hovers beside her. They talk in hushed whispers.

AARAV

You can't agree with him.

MADELINE

I don't see any other options.

AARAV

There's always another possibility. Ray just doesn't want to see it. He never does.

Ray watches them whisper from across the room.

AARAV (cont'd)

And it's only gotten worse since returning to Earth.

MADELINE

I know.

Aarav yanks a connector PLUG off of a missile. It blinks RED. Text reads: "DISCONNECTED".

AARAV  
Then let's find an opportunity he is  
too blind to see.

They share a smile. Hers falters.

MADELINE  
You warned me about him. I'm sorry I  
didn't listen.

AARAV  
It seems I wasn't the only one that  
had concerns.

Aarav pulls out a slip of paper from his pocket. It's the  
DNA test for Ray. A perfect match.

AARAV (cont'd)  
I found this on Jones' desk. It seems  
they were worried about Ray as well.

Madeline reads the paper. No concerns to note.

AARAV (cont'd)  
Why would they test his DNA? What  
would they expect to find?

MADELINE  
I--

Aarav slips it back in his pocket. Ray notices from the  
other side of the room.

AARAV  
Of course, Jones had his concerns.  
But it validates my own feelings. We  
must be careful around Ray.

### **INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline enters the bridge. The moon is close. Its bright  
and shining surface eclipses their view of the stars.

The countdown reads: **06:21:09.07**

MADELINE  
Has he made any contact again?

RAY  
Do you really think he'd change his  
mind?

MADELINE  
I'm still not convinced Jones would  
try to kill us.

RAY

Because you're so special to him?

MADELINE

No. Because we haven't given him a reason to yet. We should open up a transmission and just talk to him. Explain why we're here. And you can tell him--

RAY

There's nothing to tell. We don't know anything.

MADELINE

So you think the best course of action is to kill those people instead of trying to resolve this?

Ray sits in his seat.

MADELINE (cont'd)

You don't have to do this.

RAY

You think I enjoy it?

AARAV

Yes.

Ray gives him a look.

MADELINE

What he means to say is...you're willing to kill those scientists, for what? A signal that might mean nothing.

RAY

Is that really what you believe? After hearing your dead husband's voice on the other end.

MADELINE

He's not dead.

RAY

We all have our beliefs that we hold on to. Some more realistic than others.

Aarav types on the console. Puts on a headset.

RAY (cont'd)

What are you doing?

AARAV

This is Doctor Aarav Jyoshi of the shuttle Calypso. We are armed and have no intention of returning home.

Ray rushes to him. Rips the headset off.

RAY

Do you realize what you've done?

Jones' voice comes in over the speaker:

DIRECTOR JONES (SPEAKER)

I didn't expect to hear from you again.

MADELINE

Jones, we're passing by the base in two minutes. Do NOT. I repeat DO NOT fire on us.

DIRECTOR JONES (SPEAKER)

Or you'll destroy the base?

Ray glares at Aarav.

RAY

Only if you give us no other option.

Quiet from the other end.

MADELINE

Hello?

Quiet.

MADELINE (cont'd)

(to Aarav)

You shouldn't have threatened them.

AARAV

I was only trying to warn them. If they knew what we're capable of they won't try to stop us.

MADELINE

What are they doing now?

AARAV

They are talking to the base.

RAY

And they'll tell them to shoot us out of the sky.

AARAV  
You don't know that.

RAY  
You should never have opened the  
communications back up.

MADELINE  
This was all your plan.

RAY  
And what would you prefer...that we  
turn back? Wait for whatever is out  
there to get to Earth first?

MADELINE  
I'd prefer that we don't go into  
every conversation assuming conflict  
is the best solution.

RAY  
You're one to talk.

AARAV  
Guys.

MADELINE  
What's that supposed to--

AARAV  
HEY.

ALARMS go off around them. Flashing lights on the bridge.  
From the moon, a distinct trail of a MISSILE heads for them.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
Heat Projectile Incoming.

AARAV  
We have our answer.

Jones' voice comes with static over the speaker again. One  
message. *Not a conversation or an argument anymore:*

DIRECTOR JONES (SPEAKER)  
I'm sorry.

A heavy silence on the bridge. Madeline moves to turn the  
message off. Surprised by the betrayal.

MADELINE  
(through the pain)  
I know.

She shuts off the transmission.

Aarav and Ray rush back to their seats.

AARAV  
Missile impact in sixty seconds. We  
cannot avoid the blast.

RAY  
It won't reach us.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
Missile Launch Activated.

Ray launches a missile.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER (cont'd)  
Missile Launch Unsuccessful.

Aarav and Madeline trade a worried glance.

Ray tries again.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER (cont'd)  
Missile Launch Unsuccessful.

RAY  
Aarav, what's happening?

AARAV  
We disconnected all the missiles.

Ray turns to Aarav. Anger and fear flashing across his face.

RAY  
What?

Madeline hurries to her console.

MADELINE  
Missle #15 is still connected. Try  
launching that one only.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
Impact in 10. 9.

Ray releases their only missile.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER (cont'd)  
8.

Ahead of them, the explosive from the moon speeds closer.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER (cont'd)  
7.

A missile separates from their ship and speeds out.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER (cont'd)  
Missile Launch successful.

AARAV  
We're too close for impact.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
5.  
4.

The missiles soar towards each other in open space.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
3.  
2.  
1.

Blinding LIGHT as the missiles meet.

Ray runs to Madeline and tackles her to the floor. Covers her body from the blast as the impact ROCKS their ship.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Quiet again. Almost peaceful.

We just see stars twinkling in the distance.

Madeline watches them with a smile before a flash of red light pulls her back to reality.

ALARMS ring inside the bridge.

Aarav puts out a small fire on the console.

Ray steers the ship.

Madeline struggles to stand. Shaky on her feet.

Ray hurries to her side. Balances her.

RAY  
You should lay back down.

Aarav takes over the controls.

MADELINE  
What happened?

Ray wipes blood from her forehead. Steadies her to sit.

AARAV  
We have damages, but we are on course.

Aarav pries a burnt panel from the wall and works on rewiring the damage.

MADELINE  
We made it through?

RAY  
Thanks to you not disconnecting the last missile.

AARAV  
(a glare from him)  
Yes, thank God for that.

MADELINE  
Was anyone hurt?

RAY  
We didn't shoot at the base, only their missile...so no. Except for you.

Madeline tries to focus. Finds it difficult.

MADELINE  
Good. That's good.

RAY  
(to Aarav)  
Are you okay here?

Aarav nods.

RAY (cont'd)  
I'll take her to medical.

MADELINE  
No, no I--

RAY  
Are better off to us alive. Come on.

Ray helps her from the room.

**INT. SHUTTLE, MEDICAL**

The door slides open. Madeline crashes at the first seat.

MADELINE  
Check on her first...please.

Ray doesn't argue. Goes to Hua's side. Checks her vitals.

RAY  
It was good that she was strapped in.



MADELINE  
Is she going to survive?

RAY  
Unlikely. Even if we were to go back  
to Earth right now.

MADELINE  
But she's still alive?

Ray nods. Comes to Madeline's side with liquid stitches.

RAY  
For now, yes.

MADELINE  
Then there's still hope.

He kneels beside her. Cleans her forehead.

RAY  
I don't remember you being an  
optimist before.

MADELINE  
You're right. That was all Charlie.

Madeline flinches as Ray secures the bandage.

RAY  
Sorry.

MADELINE  
It's fine.

A heavy silence. He cleans his hands at the sink.

RAY  
Do you think we'll find him out there?

MADELINE  
I don't know. But it lets me pretend  
a little longer. It's more than I've  
had for a while now.

RAY  
Do you want him to be alive?

MADELINE  
Of course.

RAY  
But then you'll have to tell him  
about his child.

Her face drops.

MADELINE

Says the person who would rather spread their father's ashes than be thankful he's alive.

RAY

That's not fair.

MADELINE

You should thank me for disconnecting the missiles when I did, or you'd have killed hundreds of innocent people.

RAY

This is about what's right and what's wrong. A handful of lives doesn't change that.

MADELINE

And Charlie is wrong, right? MY memories are wrong. That's what you think. You always put yourself first.

RAY

I've only done what's necessary.

MADELINE

(points to Hua)  
And she was necessary?

RAY

She's going to die because she's weak. I signed up to make the hard decisions. And I'll carry them out to the end that I see fit.

MADELINE

And what end is that?

RAY

Everything back to the way it was. And the respect and reputation I deserve.

MADELINE

And you think you'll only get that by reaching the signal?

RAY

No matter who or what is in my way.

Aarav enters. His hands black with soot.

AARAV

Is everything okay?

RAY  
 You mean after you almost got us  
 killed?

AARAV  
 We made the decision together.  
 (to Madeline)  
 At least I thought we did.

The mood simmers. Aarav goes to Hua's side.

AARAV (cont'd)  
 No one knows this ship better than  
 Hua. I may need her help.

RAY  
 We can try to wake her. But I doubt  
 she'll be pleased about it.

AARAV  
 Especially without the morphine.

MADELINE  
 Can I help with something?

The two turn to her.

RAY  
 Just get some rest. You'll need it.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

Madeline wanders the hallway. All the quarters are still  
 filled with personal belongings...all except one.

She goes inside.

**INT. SHUTTLE, EMPTY QUARTERS**

She sits in a bare room. Feels the fresh cut on her head.  
 Winces at the pain.

Madeline lays down. Unable to relax. She clicks the console  
 beside her bed. Plays a recording. Closes her eyes.

SIGNAL  
*Hello is--ss anyone there?*  
*(beat--static)*  
*Th--is is Sergeant Charlie Hughes*  
*from the shuttle Calypso.*

It stops. She plays it again. Madeline's eyes shoot open.  
 She goes to the console. Brings it to the bed. Alert. Aware  
 of--

SIGNAL (cont'd)  
*Hello is--ss anyone there?*  
*(beat--static)*  
*Th--is is Sergeant Charlie--*

STOP. REWIND.

SIGNAL (cont'd)  
*Hello is--ss anyone there?*  
*(beat--static)*  
*Th--is.*

STOP. REWIND.

She plays the STATIC. Slows it down. Listens for--  
 There's a KNOCK on her door. Aarav lets himself in.

AARAV  
 Madeline?

MADELINE  
 Wait.

Madeline plays the static. Listens for something only she  
 can hear.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
 I thought I heard something in the  
 signal. Some kind of voice.

AARAV  
 You mean, besides Charlie?

She nods. Barely looks up. Plays the static again.

AARAV (cont'd)  
 Space can play tricks on you. Just as  
 it did for sailors at sea.

MADELINE  
 This isn't that.

STATIC. If there's something there, *we don't hear it*. He  
 takes the console from her. Leaves it just out of reach.

AARAV  
 We need to discuss the missiles.

MADELINE  
 I did what I thought was right.

AARAV  
 I thought we agreed that no one else  
 would be hurt.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

Ray listens from outside the bedroom.

MADELINE (O.S.)

And no one was. But I couldn't risk us not reaching the signal. I only reconnected the one missile.

**INT. SHUTTLE, EMPTY QUARTERS**

AARAV

And if they had sent two missiles? What would we have done then?

MADELINE

Then something didn't want us going.

AARAV

I didn't consider you a religious person.

MADELINE

You don't have to be religious to know when the universe doesn't want something. But--

(beat)

We're supposed to be here, now...can you feel it?

AARAV

I felt it when we first left three years ago. I don't know what to feel anymore. But when I look in my children's eyes I want to see that. Pride or love or...anything. My Aaliyah and Ehan deserve that. We are all here searching for answers. It is not just you.

MADELINE

I won't make a decision alone again. We're on the same side here. We want the same things.

He takes the console. Plays the static and voice back.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Do you hear it?

AARAV

I only hear one voice. And it is the voice of someone I do not know.

She listens to the crackling static.

AARAV (cont'd)  
Hearing his voice must bring you some joy?

MADELINE  
I finally have something to fight for again.

AARAV  
That is what you believe?

Madeline nods. Hesitant, but vulnerable.

AARAV (cont'd)  
Have you ever thought that you have done nothing but fight for years. And coming here...being here, is just an excuse to stop it all.

She stares at him. Confused.

AARAV (cont'd)  
We will all find some conclusion at the end of this journey. Maybe you want that end and that peace more than the rest of us. You may be willing to risk your life but--

MADELINE  
--I came because this was the only option. Jones was right, I wasn't done fighting. Not yet.

He pats her hand.

AARAV  
Then you will not go alone.  
(heads for the door)  
Tell me if you find anything in that signal.

He leaves.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

The hallway is empty--Ray no longer listening in secret.

Aarav heads towards his own room.

**INT. SHUTTLE, EMPTY QUARTERS**

Madeline lays back in bed. There's glass above her. A cupola for twinkling stars, just like her bedroom.

And plays the recording.

SIGNAL  
*Hello is-ss anyone there?*

She stops it before it reaches the end. Rewinds again. Just to hear his voice.

SIGNAL (cont'd)  
*Hello is-ss anyone there?*

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline awakes suddenly to a field of stars before her. She's drifting through them, floating almost. But snaps out of it. She's just in the bridge. In her seat.

The countdown reads: **05:17:33.46**

She takes a swig of cold coffee at her console.

MADELINE  
 It looks like we won't have any  
 debris concerns from the belt at our  
 current traj--

Madeline looks to empty seats. Finds she's alone in the bridge. *That's odd.*

A small red BLINKING light draws her attention.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
 Fuck.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

Madeline searches the shuttle. Ray and Aarav aren't in their rooms.

She goes by medical. Hua's machines beep quietly with life. But she's alone.

At a ladder, Madeline listens. Voices argue below. She quietly climbs down a ladder to the storage room.

**INT. SHUTTLE, STORAGE**

Ray re-links the missiles. Argues with Aarav.

RAY  
 This is my decision to make.

AARAV  
 It is wrong.

RAY  
I got you home, didn't I? You trusted  
my judgment then.

Ray notices Madeline watching.

AARAV  
That is before you nearly killed Hua.  
And now you want my blessing to  
finish the job?

RAY  
I don't want your blessing. I just  
need you to listen to orders and  
stand down.

Aarav spots Madeline as well. Ray leaves their conversation.  
Heads over to her.

RAY (cont'd)  
Are you feeling any better?

She touches the scar on her forehead, almost forgotten.

MADELINE  
Yes, thank you.

AARAV  
(to Ray)  
We aren't done with this  
conversation.

Ray passes her and up the ladder. Madeline follows.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

MADELINE  
There's a problem on the bridge. An  
oxygen leak in Tank 3.

RAY  
We're aware.

AARAV  
It must have been caused by debris  
from the explosion.

RAY  
It's being handled.

AARAV  
That is one opinion.

MADELINE  
What does that mean?



RAY  
If untreated, we won't be alive to  
make it to the signal.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

MADELINE  
Then what are our options?

RAY  
It's not your concern.

AARAV  
He wants to shut off Hua's tank.

MADELINE  
You can't.

RAY  
It's the safest option. We shut off  
her reserve oxygen. Close the  
quarters and medical. We'll be  
isolated to the front of the ship.

MADELINE  
But we'll still leak our O2 supply?

RAY  
We'll have enough to make it where we  
need to go.

MADELINE  
Can we fix it?

RAY  
Hua could. But it's too dangerous for  
the rest of us.

MADELINE  
So we're supposed to just let her die  
and hide in here?

RAY  
We're still looking at other options.

MADELINE  
Good. Because your current one is  
shitty and--

RAY  
And you shouldn't forget that you're  
a civilian on this shuttle. While  
you're here, you're under my  
directives. Do you understand?

**INT. SHUTTLE, MEDICAL**

Madeline stares down at Hua. She's strapped to the table. Covered in wires and tubes. Her vitals unsteady on the console beside her.

BEEP

BEEP.

MADELINE

I'm sorry.

BEEP.

The medical door opens. Aarav and Ray walk in, still in an argument.

AARAV

This is no longer your mission, and you never should have considered it that. We all have a stake in this.

RAY

If you want your '*stake*' to make it home in one piece then you should stop challenging me.

Madeline turns to them. Not liking the tone. She and Aarav trade a worried glance.

RAY (cont'd)

How is she?

MADELINE

Unresponsive.

RAY

For now.

AARAV

I must dissuade from this again. If we wake Hua up, she may be in too much pain to tell us how to fix the tank. Without painkillers she'll be--

RAY

She's dying anyway. It's worth a try.

AARAV

But it's dangerous.

RAY

It is for all of us. She's not an exception.

They all stare at Hua. She seems peaceful, unconscious. But not for long.

RAY (cont'd)  
Wake her up.  
(Aarav hesitates)  
That's an order.

Aarav injects adrenaline into her IV.

Hua's eyes flutter, but stay closed.

MADLINE  
It's not working.

RAY  
Give her more.

AARAV  
It'll kill her.

Ray grabs the needle from Aarav hand. Moves to inject more and--

MADLINE  
WAIT.

Hua gags and writhes on the table. Eyes flash open and she SCREAMS.

Blood-curdling.

She pulls at her wires and restraints.

MADLINE (cont'd)  
You're okay.

AARAV  
This isn't fair. She had 13 broken bones. A fractured vertebra. And a brain bleed that--

Ray holds Hua's writhing body. And Hua shrieks in more pain. Trying to understand where she is and what's happening.

RAY  
Hua, I need you to listen to me very carefully.

She quiets. Her head spins as she takes in their faces.

RAY (cont'd)  
Oxygen Tank #3 is compromised. How do  
we circumvent the airflow system to  
redirect the remaining supply to  
another tank?

Her face twists in pain.

Ray shakes her. And Hua tries to talk. Barely audible moans.

AARAV  
She can't speak. This isn't worth it.  
We have to put her under again.

Aarav adjusts controls on her IV to release...

RAY  
NO.

MADELINE  
We're not gonna get anything from her.

Ray slams Hua against the bed.

RAY  
TELL US.

A gurgling MOAN stuck in her throat.

MADELINE  
Get off her.

Madeline pushes Ray off Hua. Releases the drug into the IV.

RAY  
What are you doing?

Hua SHRIEKS again. But it falters. Eyes flutter and close.

RAY (cont'd)  
We only had enough adrenaline for  
this once.

MADELINE  
Good thing I had enough common sense  
for the both of us then.

Ray stares daggers at her.

RAY  
Are you trying to get us killed? You  
really that scared about reaching  
that signal and finding your husband  
dead or nonexistent that you have to  
undermine every decision I make?

MADELINE

Only the wrong ones.

He SLAMS his fist to the wall. Madeline flinches but doesn't back down.

Ray stomps from the room.

RAY

You're gonna get us all killed.

He leaves.

Madeline shakes. Her hand trembling at her side. Aarav gives her a soft smile.

AARAV

So...what now?

MADELINE

I was gonna ask you that.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline watches the countdown tick away: 04:05:57.00

04:05:56.59

Ray sits in his seat. Watches the stars before them. Doesn't even look at Madeline.

She leaves the bridge.

**INT. SHUTTLE, STORAGE**

Madeline shuffles oxygen tanks from storage to the hallway.

Aarav works on an electrical paneling.

Ray locks the missiles into place.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

The lights are dimmer than normal. Madeline exits the bridge. A cup of coffee in hand. Tired.

She passes Ray's open room. He's asleep in bed.

Madeline continues on.

Knocks on a closed door. A pair of shoes neatly laid outside.

No answer.

She lets herself in.

MADELINE  
Aarav, it's your turn on the bridge.

**INT. SHUTTLE, AARAV'S QUARTERS**

Aarav kneels on the floor. Headphones on. Eyes closed. Feet bare. Scattered flower petals in a bowl before him.

AARAV  
*(Prays softly in Arabic. A mantra and  
lilt to his words)*

Madeline watches respectfully, unwilling to interrupt.

Aarav stands. Notices her standing in his doorway.

AARAV (cont'd)  
I'm sorry, I'm late for my shift.

MADELINE  
*(shakes her head)*  
No, I'm early.

He collects the petals. Stores them in an airtight bag.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
What are you listening to when you...

AARAV  
Pray?

Madeline nods. Aarav smiles. Holds out the headphones to her and she listens. There are soft Arabic voices on the other end. They pray in mantra.

AARAV (cont'd)  
I brought my family's voices with me  
for prayer. I did not want to feel so  
alone out here.

MADELINE  
That's sweet.

AARAV  
It helped me the first three years.  
It's not working as well now.

MADELINE  
I have to ask, why did you come? I  
understand Ray has his own concerns. I  
lost Charlie...Hua was...

AARAV  
Forced.

Madeline nods.

AARAV (cont'd)  
Please, come in.

Madeline does. The door closes behind her.

AARAV (cont'd)  
There are many gods in my faith. Some strong or wise. Others for nature or luck. But could you imagine returning home after a long journey...one in which the unexplainable and impossible occurs and your god goes by another name?

She just stares at him. Urges him to continue.

AARAV (cont'd)  
A name is something so simple, but if I cannot trust my memories or my faith, what do I have left but to seek answers.

MADELINE  
But you still pray, even though you cannot trust your faith?

That turns him. He heads for the door.

AARAV  
Do you believe Charlie is alive?

MADELINE  
Yes.

AARAV  
Why?

She unconsciously grabs her cross necklace. Plays with it between her fingers.

MADELINE  
Because I can feel it.

AARAV  
Even though your experiences and facts present a different truth?  
(she nods)  
Then it seems we shall both receive our answers one way or another.

**INT. SHUTTLE, KITCHEN**

Madeline eats something grey and meager alone.

The ship is quiet except for the low HUM of the engine.

She plays the recording quietly from a console in front of her. Studies the waves of Charlie's voice.

SIGNAL

*Hello is-ss anyone there?*

She focuses on the static. On a crest of a wave. *Maybe... maybe there's something there. The smallest lilt of a voice.*

There's a loud BANG from inside the shuttle.

Madeline shuts off the recording and hurries to the hallway. It's empty.

She tiptoes down the corridor. Stops at an open bedroom. It's Ray's quarters. Unlocked and tempting.

Checks that she's alone.

#### **INT. SHUTTLE, RAY'S QUARTERS**

Madeline sneaks into Ray's cabin. It's cluttered and disorganized. Looks like someone's already torn it apart.

She sits at his desk, pulls up the logs on his computer. But the screen has been smashed and broken.

Just beneath the keyboard, a sliver of paper sticks out. She looks to the door--still quiet. No one watching.

Madeline pulls out PHOTOGRAPHS from the keyboard. A handful of memories. His family/friends. A beach at sunrise. At the bottom of the pile, a photograph that's worn at the edges, folded. One that's been handled more than the rest.

She unfolds it and sees herself. The same photo we saw at Madeline's home. Madeline and Ray smiling and laughing with other hopeful pilots. Drunk with youth. It's identical in every way except that Charlie isn't there. It's not ripped or altered. He's just GONE.

*And it's more than unsettling.*

Outside Ray's window, a flashing light draws her attention. She goes to it. Spots Ray and Aarav in an AIRLOCK.

Madeline stuffs the photographs back where she found them.

Rushes from the room.

#### **INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

Towards them.



**INT. SHUTTLE, AIRLOCK**

Aarav dresses in a spacesuit. Checks his vitals.

MADELINE

What are you doing?

Aarav keeps going. Not about to argue or be distracted by his step-by-step preparation.

AARAV

Someone has to fix the ship.

MADELINE

We were looking for another option.

AARAV

We're losing oxygen by the second and we aren't sure how many we have left. I didn't leave my children behind just to die for no reason.

He hands her a headset.

MADELINE

But--

AARAV

I need you on the bridge to help. Can you do that for me? Keep an eye on him as well?

She nods reluctantly.

Ray comes in. Hands Aarav a toolkit.

RAY

Everything you need is in here.

MADELINE

You knew about this?

RAY

It was my idea.

Ray helps Aarav with a GAS canister onto the back of his suit. Locks it closed.

MADELINE

Maybe we make these decisions together moving forward, huh?

RAY

I didn't need to consult a civilian.

Aarav steps inside a pressurized room to the outside.

AARAV

It was my decision to make. Now let's do this without wasting any more air.

RAY

(sarcastic)

As long as Maddie doesn't have any objections, of course.

Ray puts a KEY into the console. Seals and locks the door. Thick GLASS between them.

AARAV

Suit checked and ready.

Ray checks a monitor.

RAY

Oxygen locked and stable.

Aarav tethers himself to the wall.

AARAV

Belay secured.

Ray clicks a button.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER

Door opening in

5.  
4.  
3.  
2.  
1.

There's a HISS of air as the door opens behind Aarav.

He's pulled at first, but tethered tight.

The air flings out into space. And goes quiet.

Aarav floats in the room.

RAY

Door's open.

AARAV

Tether secured. Starting descent.

He pulls at his tether. Works his way out of the room and to the deep black nothingness outside.

AARAV (cont'd)

You hear me, Sergeant Hughes?

MADELINE  
Loud and clear.

RAY  
Me too.

Madeline turns to Ray. He taps his headset.  
She leaves the room and heads for the bridge.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

She follows Aarav from inside. Window to window.  
Ray follows closely behind her.

RAY  
Did you find what you were looking  
for?

MADELINE  
I don't know what you're talking  
about.

RAY  
When you were in my room.

Barely a glance his way.

MADELINE  
Was there something I was supposed to  
find?

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline hurries into the bridge. Takes her seat.  
The countdown ticks to: **03:15:54**<sup>27</sup>

AARAV (MIC)  
10 meters until I arrive at the tank.

She watches him through the front window now. He rounds the  
base of the shuttle.

MADELINE  
Position noted. Stay sharp.

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

Aarav holds tight to the tether. Breathes deeply. *Something  
getting to him.* A nauseating look to the black and stars  
beneath him.

RAY (MIC)

You okay?

He switches his tether to a new rung of bar to continue on his way.

AARAV

Just reorienting.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline presses her face to the glass for a better look. Clutches that little cross on her neck. Ray watches her. She watches Aarav.

MADELINE

Take your time.

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

Aarav is slow and careful. Lowers himself down to the tank. A sigh of relief as he locks himself in against the basin.

AARAV

The tether is secured to the tank.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline watches Ray. He seems tense and frustrated.

RAY

Hurry up. Every second you waste we're losing--

MADELINE

Give it a rest.

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

Aarav pulls out the toolkit. Welds a patch onto the scratch in the metal. Thin streams of oxygen trickle out of it.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

RAY

I'm only being practical.

MADELINE

Maybe if you were out there yourself you'd be less "practical". We have as much time as it needs to take. If we rush it, we'll be worse off.

RAY  
Do I need to remind you again that  
you're here as a guest?

MADELINE  
I'm here because you asked me to  
come. Why? That's still a mystery.

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

AARAV  
Quiet. Please.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Ray and Madeline stop. A brimming anger between them.

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

Aarav sweats in his suit. Focused. His eyes go blurry. He  
welds the last patch closed.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

A monitor lights up. The oxygen warning calms and quiets.  
Ray evaluates it.

RAY  
We're good. It's sealed.

MADELINE  
Aarav, how does it look out there?

No answer.

Madeline goes to the window. Aarav is still tethered, but  
floating and nearly motionless.

Another ALARM goes off. This one for Aarav's suit.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
Aarav, you there? Do you hear me?

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

Aarav wheezes in his suit. Bathed in sweat.

AARAV  
Something is wrong.

MADELINE (MIC)  
What is it?

Aarav checks the oxygen level on his suit. It blinks red.

AARAV  
My oxygen is low. There must be a  
tear in the suit.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

She shares a concerned look with Ray.

MADELINE  
Keep calm. You'll be back inside in a  
minute. Can you head towards the  
door?

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

AARAV  
Yes. Slowly. Maybe.

Aarav puts one trembling hand over another. Drags himself up the shuttle.

MADELINE (MIC)  
Good. Keep going. Don't stop.

He turns and shakily adjusts his tether at the changeover. Doesn't quite secure the lock. His tether SLIPS and he--  
catches the rung barely by the fingertips. Struggles to lift himself back. Tethers to the shuttle again.

MADELINE  
Hand over hand. Slower. Careful.

Madeline watches him from the window. Aarav slows down.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

RAY  
He's not going to make it.

She hurries to the door.

MADELINE  
Get me in a suit.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

Ray follows Madeline out of the bridge.

RAY  
There's not enough time.

MADELINE  
That doesn't mean we shouldn't try.

RAY  
You can't go out there. It's not safe.

MADELINE  
I said I'm going.

**INT. SHUTTLE, AIRLOCK**

Madeline quickly dresses in a suit.

RAY  
This is pointless. He's been losing oxygen since he left.

AARAV (MIC)  
I can hear you...you know?

**EXT. SHUTTLE**

MADELINE (MIC)  
You're gonna make it back.

AARAV  
But if I don't, you're gonna tell my family--

MADELINE (MIC)  
I'm not going to tell them anything. You are.

AARAV  
No, you're going to tell them all why we're doing this. Tell Jones too. We only wanted to understand.

MADELINE (MIC)  
Stop talking. You're using up too much oxygen.

AARAV  
(wheezes)  
The tank is empty. There's nothing to lose anymore.

**INT. SHUTTLE, AIRLOCK**

MADELINE  
That's not possible.  
(to Ray)  
I thought you checked his tank?

RAY

I did but--

She shoves him towards the console.

MADELINE

Get that door open now.

RAY

It's too dangerous. We wait for him to get here. If he makes it...

Aarav rounds the corner outside.

Madeline rushes to the glass. And Ray shuts the outer door. It seals and locks.

MADELINE

You made it back. You're safe. We'll get you inside.

Aarav drifts in and out of consciousness. Smiles at her. Relieved to be back and safe. They share a warm look.

And...*nothing*.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Ray, open the door.

RAY

I can't.

MADELINE

Is it stuck?

She turns to him.

Ray takes the key out of the console.

MADELINE (cont'd)

What are you doing?

RAY

I told you he wouldn't make it.

Aarav's face drops inside the airlock. And he panics. Wheezes. Writhes in zero gravity. BANGS on the glass.

AARAV

*(breathless Arabic)*

MADELINE

You're killing him.

She grabs for the key, but he roughly twists her injured arm. Forces it behind her back.



Madeline SCREAMS. Fights against him.

RAY

I'm only doing what's necessary.

Aarav thrashes on the other side of the glass.

RAY (cont'd)

You said I left Kliment. Forced Hua...

Aarav goes limp. Eyes open and afraid.

RAY (cont'd)

...killed Aarav. But I'm doing this for us. Whatever is at the end of this road is not for anyone else. And I can't let them get in our way.

Madeline sobs in his grasp. Gagging on air and tears.

MADELINE

Just let him in. Please. We'll listen to whatever you say. Just don't let him die.

RAY

He's gone. You have to accept it.

Ray lets her go and she crawls to the airlock door. Madeline pulls herself up. Hits the glass with a stool. It bounces off and clatters to the floor.

MADELINE

He's not. He's right here.

Blood drips and floats from Aarav's eyes and nose. She grabs for the stool again. But Ray pushes it out of her reach.

RAY

No, Charlie. He doesn't exist. He never has. He's gone.

Madeline's face twists in pain and anger.

MADELINE

But you heard the signal.

RAY

It can't be real.

MADELINE

(not believing this)  
You're insane.

RAY

You don't feel it yet, but you will.

He comes to her, puts a soft hand to her cheek. She winces at the touch.

Madeline reaches for the stool.

RAY (cont'd)  
I needed you here with me so you can see it. Whatever is out there is something we have to face togeth--

CRACK.

She whacks him over the head with the stool.

Ray crashes to the ground.

Madeline runs for the door, but he grabs her by the ankle.

She kicks him off. A CRUNCH of bone in his nose.

And Madeline scrambles out.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

She runs for the bridge.

Ray barrels after her.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline closes the bridge door. Locks it just as Ray reaches the handle.

RAY  
Open the door.

He BANGS at the glass. But it won't budge.

RAY (cont'd)  
Open the FUCKING DOOR.

MADELINE  
No.

He forces his calm demeanor to creep back in. Wipes at his bloody nose. Runs his hands through his hair. Paces.

RAY  
Where you gonna go, Maddie?

Nothing from her.

RAY (cont'd)  
I won't hurt you.

MADELINE

You want me to open the door? Then tell me everything that happened to Charlie.

Another BANG to the glass.

RAY

CHARLIE DOESN'T EXIST.

He smiles. Grimaces. Nurses his bloody nose.

MADELINE

We'll find out when we reach the signal.

RAY

You think he'll be there? In what? Tell me how he could possibly be out there and coming back home.

MADELINE

I don't know. But I believe in him.

RAY

Even after you told him to not come back? After you let his child die?

A smile from him. Twisted and bloody.

MADELINE

STOP IT.

RAY

You have just as much blood on your hands as I do. And I can't take anymore. This is not on me.

Ray strolls off down the hallway. She watches him go. Worried.

Madeline rushes to the console. Brings up shuttle security footage.

She traces him down the hallway...

Into the medical bay.

He looks to the blinking red camera in the ceiling.

RAY (VIDEO)

You're watching, aren't you?

He goes to Hua's side.

Madeline stares in horror. Turns on the intercom.

MADELINE  
You don't have to do this.

**INT. SHUTTLE, MEDICAL**

He gets close to Hua's face. She's fully unconscious. *May as well be gone.*

RAY  
You have two choices. You let me in the bridge or Hua dies. The blood's on your hands. Do you understand?

Silence.

RAY (cont'd)  
I just needed you to trust me and none of this would have happened. But you couldn't do that.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline mutes herself. Chokes back a sob. Throws a tablet across the room. It shatters on the wall.

RAY (VIDEO)  
Maddie? Talk to me.

She collects herself.

MADELINE  
I won't open the door.

**INT. SHUTTLE, MEDICAL**

RAY  
Practical as always, aren't you?

Ray shuts off Hua's machine. Unplugs the tube from her mouth.

MADELINE (OVERHEAD)  
STOP, PLEASE.

Hua's body shakes and heaves.

RAY  
It's too late for that.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

MADELINE  
I'll release the oxygen from the ship unless you--

RAY (VIDEO)  
You don't have the authorization. Or  
are you forgetting again?

Madeline collapses to the floor. Sobs silently.

Hua's stifled breaths echo in the bridge. Her body writhes  
and falls.

A thin WHISP of a gasp before it all goes quiet.

RAY (O.S.)  
Are you happy now?

She cries to herself on the floor.

RAY (O.S.) (cont'd)  
You're strong. Doing whatever is  
necessary for your mission. But don't  
forget, you're locked in there just  
as much as I'm locked out. It's three  
days until we get to the signal. Can  
you last?

She doesn't answer. Glances to the countdown: **03:15:44.09**

**03:15:44.08**

And TAP TAP TAP.

Ray sits outside the door. Stares at her through the glass.  
More affectionate than he should be at a time like this.

RAY  
Don't worry. I'll stay with you.

#### **EXT. SPACE**

The shuttle drifts alone among the stars.

It appears silent and peaceful. A ghost at sea.

#### **INT. SHUTTLE, MEDICAL**

Ray stares at Hua's blue and dead body on the table. A  
steady BEEP in the background. A straight line on the  
machine. He unplugs it.

Peeks to the camera.

#### **INT. SHUTTLE, STORAGE**

Ray checks the missiles are connected. Looks to the camera.

He discreetly slips a crowbar into his sleeve.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

Ray makes his way back to the bridge. Outside the door are packets of food and water--untouched. Enough to know that it's been a few days.

The countdown ticks by to: **01:12:23:11**

From inside the bridge, we hear a familiar recording.

SIGNAL

*Hello is--ss anyone there?*

*(static)*

*Th--is is Sergeant Charlie Hughes  
from the shuttle Calypso.*

RAY

You're listening to that again?

Inside, Madeline sits hunched over the console. She doesn't acknowledge him.

He takes a seat outside the door again.

RAY (cont'd)

You need to eat or drink something.

MADELINE

I'm fine.

He cracks open a pouch of food to eat.

RAY

I'm sure you think that.

She stares at the food and he holds it out to her. Madeline shakes it off.

RAY (cont'd)

It's not any good. But it's better than starving.

MADELINE

I won't open the door.

RAY

It's been days and--

MADELINE

That doesn't change anything.

RAY

I won't hurt you.

MADELINE

Again...you mean.

She turns away from him.

RAY

Do you remember that time we went to the beach and watched the rockets take off?

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline shuts off the console. Listening. Really listening. Something churns inside her.

RAY

It was right after 36 hours straight of training. And everyone was exhausted. Gurney was taken to the hospital...everyone else crawled back to their bunk. But we were wired. Didn't care that training started again at six. We sat on the beach all night watching the shuttles practice take-off. Burning fuel against those summer stars.

She turns to him.

RAY (cont'd)

Do you remember what you said to me?

MADELINE

I said: "*I'll still get there. Whether it's on the shuttle or dead. I'm getting to those stars...*".

MADELINE

"...*I'll race you there.*"

RAY

"*I'll race you there.*"

A heavy silence.

He smiles. *Loving that memory and everything about her.*

RAY (cont'd)

Yeah, just like that. Scared the living hell 'outa me.

MADELINE

Is that why you want to break down the door with that crowbar?

His smile falters. Comes back bigger than before. Lays the crowbar to the ground.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
Or is it because you're just as  
scared of me as I am of you?

RAY  
I'm not scared of you anymore. Quite  
the opposite. And after everything  
we've been through...I don't  
understand why you won't trust me.

She goes to the glass. Stares him down.

MADELINE  
Because I never sat with you on that  
damn beach.  
(beat)  
Not with you. It was never with you.

That hurts him.

RAY  
You're just trying to upset me.

MADELINE  
After seeing your body count? Not a  
chance.

RAY  
So now you're certain I killed  
Charlie?

Madeline walks away from him. Back to the console.

MADELINE  
I think you tried to.

She plays the recording again. Louder this time.

SIGNAL  
*Hello is--ss anyone there?*

#### **INT. SHUTTLE, RAY'S QUARTERS**

Ray stares at the photo of him and Madeline. Tucks it into  
his pocket.

He takes off his wedding band. And looks at the inscription:  
"Race you to the stars" is carved in the metal.

In a closet, he pulls out a metal vase--an unmistakable URN.

#### **INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline lays on a makeshift bed on the ground. Stares at  
the stars through the window.



Plays with the cross on her neck.

**INT. SHUTTLE, AIRLOCK**

Ray dresses in a spacesuit. Connects his tank. Locks his mask. He sets the urn and ring inside the airlock. Seals the door shut.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

An ALARM sounds in the bridge. Madeline wakes suddenly and hurries to the monitor.

Through the cameras, she sees Ray near the airlock. The door to space opens. The urn visibly floats outside. A thin grey dust spreads out to the dark.

She watches with an odd curiosity.

**INT. SHUTTLE, AIRLOCK**

Ray glances to the blinking red light of the camera. It moves with him.

He smiles at it. Waves.

And connects his tether to a metal bar.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline watches him on the screen.

MADELINE  
What are you doing?

**INT. SHUTTLE, AIRLOCK**

He unseals the airlock door. The only thing separating the rest of the ship from space.

A loud ALARM overhead.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
MAJOR OXYGEN DEPLETION. OXYGEN SUPPLY  
COMPROMISED.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

The ship lurches back as the oxygen is flung into space. Loose articles in the ship fly into the nothingness outside.

The bridge door stays shut. Madeline's safe, for now.

RAY (VIDEO)  
If you won't open the door. Then I  
have to force you to come to me.

**INT. SHUTTLE, AIRLOCK**

The whistling oxygen fades and quiets.

Ray reseals both doors. Grabs another suit and tank.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

And heads back to the bridge. She waits at the glass.

He tosses the suit and tank on the floor between them.  
Smiles a boyish grin.

RAY  
I told you...whatever is out there,  
we have to face together.

MADELINE  
You've killed us.

RAY  
No, I'm saving you.

He looks at his watch.

RAY (cont'd)  
How long will your oxygen last you in  
there? Twelve hours if you're lucky.

Madeline sucks in air.

RAY (cont'd)  
Less, considering you haven't eaten.

She drops to the ground. Emotional and angry. Knees to her  
chest. Her back to the door and him. Just watches the stars.

He sits beside her.

RAY (cont'd)  
But I'll stay with you until you're  
ready. I'm here.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - LATER**

Madeline is at the console. Exhausted. She records a message.  
Glances at the countdown above them: **00:04:07:00**

**00:04:06:59**

MADELINE

(wheezing)

We're four hours out from it. Oxygen is limited. Radar is compromised. The readings from the signal don't make sense anymore.

RAY (O.S.)

Because nothing is there or it's coming to kill us.

MADELINE

(ignoring that)

The Captain is still showing signs of extreme distress.

RAY

Maybe because ATLAS tried to blow us out of the sky.

She struggles to breathe.

MADELINE

Charlie's message hasn't changed, but Jones...I need you to listen to the static. There's something there. I hear someone. I can't make sense of it though.

(beat)

I'll update you again when I reach it...if I can.

Madeline sits back on the floor. Barely able to keep herself up and awake.

RAY

You're not going to make it four hours. You know that.

She watches him through the glass. He waits comfortably outside the door with his suit and oxygen tank.

MADELINE

I hope I'm wrong.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - LATER**

The lights are dim.

Madeline sits by the glass door. Her back to it. Ray's back to the other side of the glass.

She wheezes. Coughs. Eyes starting to glaze over. Barely sucking in air.

RAY

And there was this small nebula we passed that's never been cataloged before. You should have seen it.

MADELINE

What did you name it?

RAY

We never agreed. You can have the honors if you like.

Madeline doesn't have the air to respond.

RAY (cont'd)

I've never seen anything like it. Kliment hurried so fast up the ladder for a view that he broke his leg. You should've heard him howling for days. And not about the leg of course...but that he missed the perfect view.

She's quiet. Barely conscious. He glances to the countdown. It's frozen at **00:00:00** and has been for a while.

RAY (cont'd)

You've made it so far. Only you could survive something like this. But we're past the signal now. You see that, right? There's nothing out here. We're alone.

Her eyes flutter and close.

RAY (cont'd)

Are you still with me?

Nothing.

RAY (cont'd)

I know you hate me. I could see it all over your face when I first saw you. I'm the last person you'd ever trust again...but--but you used to. I was the one person you could. And I wish you could still feel that.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER

Oxygen supply at 4%.

Ray sees her unconscious on the floor. He BANGS on the glass.

RAY

Maddie? OPEN THE DOOR.

She mumbles something incoherent.

BANG.

BANG.

It echoes through the ship.

RAY (cont'd)

MADDIE.

Madeline's eyes flit open and she reaches for the door release button. Reaches and--

RAY (cont'd)

You're almost there.

Fails.

Her arm falls back to her side.

He hits at the glass of the door with the crowbar. No luck.

RAY (cont'd)

Listen to me. Stand up and unlock the door.

He pries the panel off the wall. Digs inside for wires.

RAY (cont'd)

You have to wake up. Charlie's out there. We're so close.

Her eyes close.

BANG.

BANG on the glass.

He burns his suit on the panel. An electric spark cuts a thin hole through the material.

RAY (cont'd)

Fuck.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER

Oxygen supply at 3%. Bridge oxygen insufficient. Pre-programmed door opening.

RAY

Smart girl. You weren't ready to die yet.

The door slides open. Ray rushes to her side. Forces a mask to her face for oxygen.

RAY (cont'd)

Come on.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
Oxygen supply at 2%.

Madeline GASPS awake. Coughs. He presses the mask to her face as she tries to yank it off.

RAY  
No. You need to keep it on.

He rushes to the console. Tries to close the bridge doors to preserve what oxygen they have left.

Madeline crawls for the door. Grabs for the crowbar.

RAY (cont'd)  
Just hold on. You're going to be--

CRACK.

Madeline hits him across his back with the crowbar.

He crumples to the ground.

CRACK. She hits his mask. The glass spiderwebs.

Madeline wheezes. Glances to her tank and mask on the ground but doesn't have enough time to grab it before she has to SWING and--

It doesn't land.

Ray holds her hand taut. The bar right next to his face. Her hand trembles as she tries to overcome him.

He snaps her wrist back and she SHRIEKS. Falls to the ground. He presses the crowbar to her throat.

She pushes back, but it's hopeless.

RAY (cont'd)  
Why don't you feel it?

MADELINE  
*Because you're wrong.*

And she smiles.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
*But I got to those stars, didn't I?*

Madeline turns blue under the crowbar. He watches her go. Her eyes fluttering back and closed. His face twists in anger...*but no, this can't be it.*

RAY  
Yes, we did.

Ray loosens his grip and lays on his back. Gives up. The oxygen leaks from his suit. He tosses the crowbar across the room.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER  
Oxygen supply at 1%.

Madeline coughs. Gasps for air.

He tosses her the extra mask. And she desperately wheezes into it. Breathes deeply. Lays on her back. Defeated.

They watch the stars through the window. Both out of breath. Barely conscious. Tired of fighting.

OVERHEAD SPEAKER (cont'd)  
Shuttle systems critical.

The metal of the ship GRINDS around them. CREAKING in ways it shouldn't.

The lights in the bridge flicker and fade.

**INT. SHUTTLE, BRIDGE - LATER**

Madeline dresses in a spacesuit. Locks her mask.

The stars glow bright outside. The dark creeps in.

She secures the hole in his suit. Fills in the crack on his mask. Sits on the floor just out of his reach.

RAY  
Are you hungry?

Madeline shakes her head. He pulls out a packet of cigarettes from his pocket. Slides them to her across the floor.

RAY (cont'd)  
I brought them for you.

She looks to her tank.

MADELINE  
You want me to blow us up?

RAY  
No. I just wanted you to know that I brought them.

Madeline plays with the package.

MADELINE  
Jones always bugged me to quit. Said I couldn't go on the mission if I didn't.

It's a fond memory.

MADELINE (cont'd)

I guess he got his wish.

RAY

And what did your husband think about it?

MADELINE

He knew where I hid them in the house. Never gave me shit about it though...until I got pregnant. Then they disappeared overnight. Even the one in the flowerpot.

She smiles. But it falters. A heavy moment between them.

RAY

Do you really think it's Charlie out there?

MADELINE

I don't know.

RAY

And it was worth your life to find out?

She holds her necklace.

MADELINE

It was worth everything. He's all I have.

RAY

I once said that to you. And then I left.

MADELINE

Ray--

RAY

No. Whether you believe it or not... whether you think I'm insane or worse, I'd give anything to make you remember. You lost Charlie, but I've lost just as much. Do you understand?

A BEEP of radar. Something is close.

RAY (cont'd)

What's that?

She crawls to the console. Checks the equipment. She stalls. Confused. Hits buttons.



MADELINE

Radar.

RAY

That's not possible.

Madeline traces the blinking light as it draws near.

MADELINE

Ray, what did you see out here? There had to be something.

RAY

No, there wasn't. We never even made it to the planet.

MADELINE

Whoever it is, they're close.

SIGNAL (OVERHEAD)

*Hello is--ss anyone there?*

*(beat)*

*Th--is is Sergeant Charlie Hughes from the shuttle Calypso.*

RAY

STOP PLAYING THAT.

MADELINE

I--I'm not.

The shuttle drifts slowly forward. In the distance. A GLEAM of metal in the dark of space.

Madeline rips off Ray's mask.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Tell me what's out there.

He grabs for it back, but she keeps it out of his reach.

RAY

I don't know. There was no lost time. No pain or confusion. We just arrived right back at Earth.

MADELINE

In half the time?

RAY

Yes.

MADELINE

You arrived home just when you were supposed to be landing on the other planet.

RAY  
Like something turned us around  
halfway.

MADELINE  
You're lying again.

RAY  
No, I'm not. I just want to go home.

Madeline paces. Thinks. She checks the console. *Whatever it is...it's getting closer.*

MADELINE  
Because my home is wrong.

RAY  
...yes.

MADELINE  
Because you don't know Charlie. You  
never did.

RAY  
I would never lie to you.

A louder BEEP as *something* on the horizon comes closer.

MADELINE  
And I've never had any reason to  
trust you. Not in that way.

RAY  
You just don't remember.

MADELINE  
Do you remember? Really? Or do you  
just need something to believe in...

SOMETHING METALLIC pulls up beside them. Slow. Ready to  
dock. Ready to find them.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
...just like I did.

Madeline goes to the window and watches it pass. But it's  
not alien or unrecognizable. The word "CALYPSO" is painted  
across the metal. It's their ship. Their exact shuttle  
drifts silently beside them.

Ray staggers to her side for a better look.

RAY  
That's not possible.

The shuttle slows. Stops. Its lights off and windows empty.

It lurches against theirs. Locks into place.

MADELINE

They can't get in. They don't have  
the docking codes.

And just as quickly...their doors creak and unlock. The WHIR  
and clunk of metal giving way.

RAY

You so sure about that?

Madeline rushes towards the hallway. Ray grabs a hidden GUN  
stashed under the console. Follows her out.

**INT. SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

She watches the hatch. Behind their closed door is a dimly  
lit hallway. Nearly identical in every way to theirs.

MADELINE

It's our ship.

Madeline notices his gun.

MADELINE (cont'd)

Don't bring that.

Ray grabs the hatch on the door. Twists it open.

RAY

You'd bet your life on that?

Her silence isn't convincing. He opens the latch and grinds  
the door open. A hiss of displaced oxygen.

**INT. SECOND SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

He walks ahead of her.

RAY

Just stay close.

MADELINE

This is...impossible.

Madeline stops at an open room. Sleeping quarters that were  
empty on their own ship. But they aren't empty any longer.

It's strewn with the mess of a man. Photographs of her own  
smiling face taped to the wall. At the desk: a worn Bible  
and a wedding band tied to its ribbon.

**INT. SECOND SHUTTLE, CHARLIE'S QUARTERS**

Ray searches the room. Horrified by the reality he's seeing.

RAY

It's a deception. Nothing more.

A lone SPACESHIP baby mobile sits on the window ledge. A twin to the missing piece in their nursery.

Madeline takes off her helmet. Cries. Gasps through breaths.

RAY (cont'd)

Are you okay?

MADELINE

He's here.

Ray holds a light to the photographs on the wall. Sees Madeline and Charlie smiling. Laughing. *It's painful to him.*

RAY

This is wrong. We have to leave.

Madeline plucks an ULTRASOUND photograph from the wall. A crudely hand-drawn astronaut helmet around a grey unborn infant's head. She chokes back a laugh.

RAY (cont'd)

Come on.

Ray grabs Madeline. Pulls her from the room.

**INT. SECOND SHUTTLE, HALLWAY**

MADELINE

NO.

She throws him off.

MADELINE (cont'd)

He's here.

He grabs for her again. Drags her back to their own ship.

MADELINE (cont'd)

STOP.

RAY

You're acting insane. How do you not see it? Something is messing with your head. You can't believe this. There's no Charlie. There never has been. I need you to remember... remember me. Remember us.

Her face breaks. Contorts.

MADELINE  
There was never an "us".

She fights against his grip.

MADELINE (cont'd)  
You're hurting me.

He pulls the gun. Presses it to her head.

RAY  
They did something to you.

MADELINE  
Please, I--

RAY  
I won't leave you behind again.

The seal behind them locks. And the passage back to their own ship closes. Ray drops his hold on her. Races to it. BANGS on the metal.

A SHADOW fills the hallway. Long and omnipresent. A figure of a man in the bridge.

And the bridge door slides open.

Just the outline of a figure...but as it comes into the light--it's CHARLIE. Older maybe, tired and bearded. But it's him. Smiling. Tears in his eyes.

RAY (cont'd)  
Don't come any closer.

MADELINE  
Charlie?

RAY  
This isn't possible.

Madeline rushes to Charlie.

And they collapse into each other's arms.

With trembling hands, through space and time...they've found each other. *True love. True peace at last.*

MADELINE  
I found you.

He presses her cross necklace in his palm.

CHARLIE  
You always had me.

She traces her fingers to his face. Every detail. Every memory behind those eyes.

He places a hand to Madeline's stomach. Beams at her.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Tell me everything.

She tries. But her face breaks. Contorts.

MADELINE  
There's nothing to tell. I'm--I'm so sorry.

It takes him a moment, but he registers that reality.

She sobs into his chest. *Letting years of that go.*

CHARLIE  
It's...okay. It's okay. I'm here now.

He dries the tears from her eyes. Kisses her forehead.

And Charlie turns his attention to Ray, watching them with insane curiosity.

Ray refocuses. Points a shakey gun at Charlie.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Put the gun down, Ray.

RAY  
I--I don't understand.

Madeline gets in between them. Blocks Charlie from Ray's aim.

CHARLIE  
Give me a moment to explain.

RAY  
Don't come any closer.

CHARLIE  
You never came home.

RAY  
Stay back.

CHARLIE  
Nothing turned you around or changed your memories.

Ray shoots at Charlie's feet. But Charlie barely flinches.

RAY  
I said stay--

CHARLIE

The Ray I knew wouldn't hurt anyone.

RAY

That's not true.

Madeline grabs Charlie. Stops him from getting any closer. Charlie raises his hands slowly.

CHARLIE

You completed your mission, Captain.  
You made it to the other planet.

RAY

No--we--I didn't.

CHARLIE

You just didn't expect to find home  
at the other end.

Ray's aim falters. And the gun lowers. Tears in his eyes.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

But things were wrong, right? Little  
things here and there. You couldn't  
put your finger on it.

(beat)

None of the others would come back.  
They stayed behind. Nothing seemed  
wrong...enough.

RAY

I don't understand.

Something catches Madeline's eye from the bridge. A flash of light and movement. She heads towards it. Mesmerized. Leaves the conversation behind her.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

You had a missing astronaut when you  
landed. Someone you'd never heard of.  
They must have thought something  
horrible had happened.

RAY (O.S.)

They thought I killed him...you.

**INT. SECOND SHUTTLE, BRIDGE**

Madeline follows the cascading light.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Then can you imagine stepping out of  
that shuttle and being an astronaut  
that no one remembers...

Millions of stars are snuffed out by the growing halo in front of her.

A figure shrouded in light sits at the console. It's back to Madeline. She slowly walks towards them and the light. Succumbed to it all.

CHARLIE (O.S.) (cont'd)  
Because we're meant to believe we're  
alone in this dark cold universe.  
That nothing has a reason.

And the figure turns and it's MADELINE--ANOTHER MADELINE.  
*Minute details of difference, but a near mirror image of her likeness and her soul.*

CHARLIE (O.S.) (cont'd)  
But we were never alone.

Neither Madeline are scared or startled as they stare at one another. *There's a peace between them.*

MADELINE TWO  
Do you want to see it?

Madeline nods. The bright halo outside surrounds the shuttle.

Charlie and Ray come up behind our Madeline. Just as transfixed as she is.

And she goes to the glass.

They're enveloped by the glow. Cascaded in a warm kaleidoscope of space and light. Ray cries at the sight.

Our Madeline closes her eyes. *Feeling something more than seeing it.*

And the light fades. Replaced with a dim glow from Earth filling their view.

An Earth we could only dream about. A mirror image of our familiar blue planet. TWIN moons shine in the glare of a warm sun.

Our Madeline presses her palm to the glass. Holds the cross at her neck.

And Charlie wraps his arms around her. Watching the eclipse of light and life of a lifetime.

CHARLIE  
And we'll never be alone again.

FADE TO BLACK.