

Finding Elpis

by

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EXT. PARK - SERIES OF SHOTS

We start off with a shot of XIMENA'S cellphone screen as she swipes through her photos folder. She has several albums titled ELPIS. She selects one of them and scrolls through as if showing them to us.

A) First is a candid shot of IESU, a slim 32-year-old man with a tan and long black hair, wearing an apron and hairnet as he is shown volunteering at a Christmas soup kitchen.

Ximena's thumb swipes.

B) Then, a more professional headshot being taken of ERIK RHODES, a lithe 33-year-old pale-skinned man with and black hair and blue eyes.

C) He then looks annoyed when ORPHEUS, a 33-year-old man with black hair and brown eyes gets his headshot taken with an armful of first-place music trophies.

Ximena's thumb swipes.

D) DOOMER, a 33-year-old man with a stubbled face and drained expression, is directly compared to the Doomer meme, down to the touque and cigarette.

Ximena's thumb swipes.

E) JAGUAR, a tan 34-year-old young man lifts weights at a gym.

Ximena's thumb swipes.

F) STARMAN, a 33-year-old man with a stockier build and dirty-blond hair and brown eyes, is seemingly seated alone at a restaurant.

Ximena lingers on this particular one a while before she swipes again.

G) A simple announcement poster saying "To our fans: Elpis has made the difficult decision to disband after our last show next Friday. We thank each and every one of you for your support over the years. Love, Starman, Doomer, Iesu, and Erik Rhodes."

She gently "underlines" the words "LOVE, STARMAN" with her thumb.

She then puts her phone away to reveal the park.

Title card: Finding Elpis

EXT. STAGE - EARLY EVENING

It is a simple stage in a park, before stone seats. IESU is on his phone. ERIK RHODES is looking at himself in a pocket mirror. DOOMER is smoking in front of the drumset.

In the foreground towards stage right, STARMAN is talking to LENI, a slim 32-year-old woman with wavy shoulder-length blonde hair and blue eyes and freckles.

STARMAN

So this is it, huh... Our last show.

LENI

I still can't believe it.

STARMAN

Thanks for coming out to this, Leni.

LENI

I wouldn't miss it for anything in the world. You know that, right?

She squeezes his shoulder. In the background we can just barely see XIMENA, a slim 33-year-old blonde woman poised with a camera taking snapshots from behind a tree.

STARMAN

Kinda sad that this is gonna be our biggest turnout. It's like everyone's glad to get rid of us.

LENI

Oh, quit it. Maybe that's how many people want you to stick around a little longer. Besides, people are late all the time.

STARMAN

Yeah, I guess.

LENI

C'mon, babe. Cheer up. People still like melodic rock.

DOOMER (O.S.)

Starman! Mic check!

STARMAN

Gotta go. See you after the show.

LENI

Love you.

They kiss and Starman rushes off to the stage. Leni sighs.

She is then joined by ORPHEUS, and JAGUAR.

JAGUAR

Man... I feel responsible for this.

ORPHEUS

We made our choice, Jag. It was for the best.

JAGUAR

Was it, though?

Orpheus looks away.

LENI

C'mon, you guys. Let's just enjoy this last show. They've been working so hard for this.

ORPHEUS

Yeah... You're right. Erik has especially come a long way.

STAGE

STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES are standing on the stage, instruments ready. Erik Rhodes tunes his violin. Doomer looks up at the darkening sky.

DOOMER

Just what we need, rain. Pretty bad too, by the looks of those clouds.

IESU

Count on you to pump everyone up, Doomer.

ERIK RHODES

Honestly, it's just as well. This violin is why I didn't eat for almost a week.

He gestures to his pristine violin, which everyone looks admiringly at.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

The last thing I want is for it to get wet, outside, in front of literally no one at all.

STARMAN

Guys, c'mon. I know this whole thing sucks, but can we please just have this show?

Lightning strikes and rain falls. Everyone groans as they take cover under the overhang.

ERIK RHODES

Can't we just go home? Call this a wash? No one's here and no one will be here.

DOOMER

Yeah, I'm out. Making a big ceremony about Elpis breaking up after this is just cringe, anyway.

IESU

I hate to say it but yeah. Was good while it lasted.

STARMAN

You guys...

Lightning strikes again and the rain falls harder. A light then shines on the band and no rain falls on them.

IESU

Hey, who ordered the spotlight?

STARMAN

Not me...

He shields his eyes with his hand and pauses. He begins to levitate.

STARMAN

Hey, what the--?

Iesu, Doomer and Erik Rhodes also begin to levitate and then shoot up inside the pillar of light, Doomer dropping his paradiddles and Starman his microphone, Iesu his bass guitar and Erik Rhodes his violin and bow, all screaming.

INT. SPACESHIP

STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES are all in a heap on the floor of the spaceship.

Erik Rhodes gets up first as he looks around, panicked. Starman pinches himself and Iesu and Doomer both rush towards opposite ends of the spaceship to look out of the windows.

LOR SALVIATOR, a 7-foot tall humanoid alien with purple skin and a bald head wearing robes not unlike a wizard's, appears from the cockpit.

LOR SALVIATOR

Greetings, gentlemen of Elpis! I do apologise for this rather abrupt introduction. I simply had to meet you before you permanently retired. I'm a huge fan of yours, you see...

ERIK RHODES

A 'huge fan'? Man, you kidnapped us! Who even are you?

LOR SALVIATOR

Ah, dear me, you're absolutely right, Mr Rhodes. How rude of me. I'm known as Lor Salviator, but you can call me Lor.

Everyone looks on, confused.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

I'm originally from the planet Elpis, though I'm really something of a collector of planets, you can say.

ERIK RHODES

Elpis...

DOOMER

Lor Salviator... Aww man, that sounds like a crazy band name!

IESU

Are you seriously gonna ignore the part where he said he collects planets?

LOR SALVIATOR

I understand that this is all very strange to you. But you must understand, gentlemen...

He reveals that underneath his wizard-like robes he is wearing an Elpis band T-shirt that the band had never seen before.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

You have been mistaken this whole time about your popularity. For you see...

He gestures to outer space from the windows.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

Here you are deeply loved, you have touched our hearts and souls, so much so that you're the only reason we haven't continued our wars against each other. You are simply unpopular on your home planet.

STARMAN

On Earth? So you're saying...

ERIK RHODES

I'm popular with aliens?!

DOOMER

Always thinking about yourself as usual, huh, Rhodes...

IESU

Again, you're just gonna ignore the part where he says we're the reason aliens aren't at war?

LOR SALVIATOR

That's right. I wanted to prove to you that you shouldn't give up. I just had to be a little more forceful about it, sadly.

IESU

"Forceful"?

LOR SALVIATOR

Why, my previous methods just weren't working, they were much too subtle! I never knew you had such a thing as spam emails or that humans forget their dreams almost immediately upon waking!

DOOMER

Yeah, that one's a pain to deal with for sure.

LOR SALVIATOR

Not to mention your newspapers are now practically useless, so full of lies and other distractions.

STARMAN

Um... That's all very nice, but we're still confused. Like right now... Where are we? What are we on?

LOR SALVIATOR

You are on my spaceship and right now we are currently headed towards your moon. Before we get started on the tour I've taken the liberty of setting up for you, there are a couple things we have to do first. Two of your biggest fans are absolutely beside themselves with excitement to see you.

ERIK RHODES

Well, of course, I'd be glad to meet them.

LOR SALVIATOR

Of course, Mr Rhodes. Please sit over there while we land.

He motions towards four rather comfortable-looking seats before moving towards the cockpit. Outside of the windows Earth can be seen in stark relief, and Starman is

particularly arrested by the sight.

EXT. STAGE - NIGHT

Meanwhile, on their show on Earth, the crowd has grown fairly large and they are standing around in wait, XIMENA is there, too. LENI is on her phone, distraught.

LENI

Of course your phone dies.

She looks at the gathered crowd, all of them murmuring, Ximena watching her. She turns around and JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are before her.

LENI

Nicky, Oscar! I really don't know what to do, they were here and now I can't reach them. I've been calling and calling.

JAGUAR

And nothing, huh?

LENI

Can't track Tommy or Immanuel or Doomer. It's so weird, it's like they've just disappeared!

ORPHEUS

That's definitely not like them... Still, I guess we can step up and do something in the meantime. These people didn't show up just to miss the show.

He makes a determined hand gesture.

ORPHEUS (CONT'D)

Leave it to Jag and I. Give them a taste of the old Elpis. They'll owe us for this.

LENI

Thank you so much.

Orpheus and Jaguar leave to go onstage. Jaguar picks up the second bass guitar and Orpheus the guitar, tapping the microphones.

Upon the third tap, the crowd stops murmuring and wait as they start a song. The spotlight shines on them as they play, the crowd murmuring again but some cheering. Leni, meanwhile, tries reaching Starman again but to no avail.

LENI

Seriously though... What happened to you?

Meanwhile, Orpheus and Jaguar wrap up their song to decent applause. Orpheus clears his throat.

ORPHEUS

How's everyone doing tonight?

The audience cheers.

ORPHEUS

Jaguar and I wanted to thank you for coming out tonight. We're sure you're wondering where Starman, Iesu, Doomer, and Erik Rhodes are. The truth is...

JAGUAR

They called us to sub for them due to unforeseen complications. We know you've been waiting for this last show so let's have a good time while we wait for them to come back.

The audience gives confused applause while Orpheus and Jaguar start with another song. Meanwhile Leni looks out at a blink-and-you'll-miss-it flash in the sky.

INT. PANDORA PALACE - VAULT CHAMBER

Title card: Pandora

OZZY, a young boy no older than 14 with shaggy silver hair and eyes with a lithe build (similar to a snow leopard), is standing before PANDORA'S VAULT, a large golden cube with odd accent markings on it. He eyes the door while listening hard.

Inside it the very faint sounds of something stirring inside it can be heard.

PIROUZ, a young man of about 16 with a more lithe build and golden hair and eyes and black tear marks (like a cheetah), enters the room.

PIROUZ

There you are, Ozzy! C'mon, get out before Tigris Khan or Koko Khanoum see you!

OZZY

Do you think the stories about The Vault are true?

PIROUZ

I dunno, but c'mon! You know we're not supposed to be in here.

OZZY

Koko Khanoum keeps saying The Vault is where it all began and how it would grant your wish every thousand years. Too bad it won't happen for us, huh?

PIROUZ

What would you even wish for, anyway?

Ozzy pauses to think while Pirouz tries in vain to drag him away.

OZZY

Maybe I'd wish for it to happen all the time.

PIROUZ

That's stupid, Ozzy.

They both jump when a loud sound comes out of Pandora's Vault, like a car engine.

PIROUZ

Ozzy! What'd you do? Your curiosity's gonna get both of us killed!

OZZY

I didn't do anything! We were never here!

They both run out of the room, and Pandora's Vault remains how it is, the car engine sounds appearing to get quieter but not diminishing.

EXT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE

Title card: Moon, Mare Serenitatis

LOR SALVIATOR escorts THE BAND out of his spaceship.

They are on the light side of the moon. Moon jellyfish "swim" in the air.

PRINCESS ALMAS, early 20s with long flowing silver hair and wearing a wedding dress, runs towards them with her crystal castle behind her.

Erik Rhodes looks excited to see her until she runs clean past him and holds Doomer's hands, resulting in the former looking quite affronted.

LOR SALVIATOR

May I introduce you, gentlemen, Sir Doomer in particular, to Her Highness Princess Almas.

DOOMER

P-Princess?

PRINCESS ALMAS

I hope you can forgive me for calling you out like this. It's an honour to finally meet you.

DOOMER

Likewise...

He does a shallow bow, clearly unsure if it's appropriate. Princess Almas titters.

PRINCESS ALMAS

You're just as handsome in person, Sir Doomer. Just like Endymion himself.

DOOMER

H-Huh? Me?

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, uh... You know I'm here, right, Princess?

Her eyes are shining just like diamonds, and she looks just like she would in a shoujo manga.

PRINCESS ALMAS

The very heartbeat of the band and all its songs, a man so full of mysteries I could study him for entire lifetimes and still not unearth all there is to know about him...

To the rest of the band's surprise, Doomer is suddenly looking much handsomer than usual with a clean shaven face and even cleaned eyebrows, and his brown hair neatly brushed without his touque.

DOOMER

Well... As soon as this tour's done I'll come back to you. Go to the moon for a girl a second time.

Now Princess Almas herself seems to shine, and she embraces Doomer just like a lover would, and he reciprocates the action.

Even a slight distance away from the band they're clearly in their own little shoujo manga world.

ERIK RHODES

What the hell am I watching?

LOR SALVIATOR

Her Highness has been an avid fan of Elpis for a long time, and she has been watching Sir Doomer in particular. It's wonderful to see them getting along so well.

IESU

Yeah...

LOR SALVIATOR

Don't worry, Sir Iesu, I'm sure our next destination will be just as delightful for you.

IESU

What, do I also get a princess?

LOR SALVIATOR

No, I daresay this one is more personal to you.

ERIK RHODES

What about me? Don't I get something?

LOR SALVIATOR

Rest assured, Mr Rhodes, you shan't be disappointed in due time.

Starman meanwhile looks on at Doomer and Princess Almas, a thousand different emotions all over his face.

EXT. STAGE - NIGHT

ORPHEUS and JAGUAR are playing "Elysia," a keyboard and acoustic guitar medly on their respective instruments.

Orpheus especially appears to have an aura around him as he plays that like space dust spreads across the audience, and a few of them wipe away tears.

Jaguar looks out at LENI, whose face we can't see but instead we see her silhouette, showing she's alone in the crowd.

When they're finished, they earn a raucous applause that's almost as impressive as what Elpis got on the titular planet. Orpheus takes a bow while Jaguar reluctantly follows.

ORPHEUS

Thank you, thank you. Once again, thank you all for coming out to our show.

He stands smiling with his arms out for a few seconds and then follows Jaguar backstage.

JAGUAR

Hey, uh... No sign of them at all, it looks like. Why would they bail on their own farewell show?

ORPHEUS

Hell if I know, especially Erik.

When they are behind the stage, Leni is there, looking distraught. Jaguar is the first to reach her.

JAGUAR

Len... Nothing at all?

She shakes her head, her face pale.

LENI

It's weird... Nicky, when you played, I almost forgot they weren't up there with you.

She brightens up a little bit.

LENI (CONT'D)

I swear I could've seen them on stage, all of you together again, just like the old days.

Jaguar and Orpheus exchange a brief look.

LENI (CONT'D)

But then I snapped out of it the moment you stopped playing.

ORPHEUS

Damn... Sorry, Len.

LENI

No, no, it's not your fault. I was projecting. But yeah... I don't know what to do.

JAGUAR

Well, in any case it's not good for you to be alone right now. I'm sure they'll turn up.

LENI

Yeah... I guess so.

We can then catch a brief glimpse of XIMENA watching them from behind a tree.

EXT. SIRIUS - DAYTIME

LOR SALVIATOR has brought STARMAN, IESU, DOOMER, and ERIK RHODES out of the spaceship behind them to the dog planet Sirius. It is full of greenery and ponds, as well as colourful plants and many sticks of different sizes strewn

around.

All around them are all sorts of DOGS who rush up towards them. Most of all Iesu gets surrounded by them and doesn't know who to pet first.

LOR SALVIATOR

You are the most beloved member here on Sirius, Sir Iesu. All through word of mouth from your biggest fan.

IESU

You don't mean...

LOR SALVIATOR

Oh! Here he comes now.

In the distance a figure comes running, getting bigger and bigger the closer it gets. It is AKIRA, a sprightly Rottweiler. He tackles Iesu and licks his face.

IESU

Oh my God... Akira, it's you?

Akira barks and kisses Iesu some more.

IESU

I've missed you so much, boy...

DOOMER

But didn't Akira die like two years ago? How'd he end up here?

LOR SALVIATOR

All dogs eventually take residence on Sirius.

Iesu slowly gets up, Akira in his arms.

ERIK RHODES

Hey, so... Can we bring him with us? Call him a team pet or something?

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm afraid not, for you see... Once a dog returns to Sirius, he or she may never leave. This is their true home.

IESU

Seriously...

ERIK RHODES

But... We will come back here, right?

LOR SALVIATOR

Of course. Akira will be waiting for you. Incidentally he's made friends with Laika and Hachiko. I'm sure they would also love to meet you, as would all the ones you've seen on your Internet.

Iesu is silent, still holding Akira. Starman, Doomer, and Erik Rhodes also look at him with concerned expressions on their faces.

IESU

I'm sorry, guys. I don't wanna say goodbye to him again, however temporarily. I won't do the tour.

ERIK RHODES

What? You're out?

STARMAN

So now not only do you not wanna go home, but you want to stay here on a planet full of dogs.

He is the personification of defeat.

STARMAN (CONT'D)

Well damn, that's that. It's over. We've lost you forever.

LOR SALVIATOR

Oh my. Looks like I ruined things a little bit.

DOOMER

This is a little more than "a little bit." You just used the nuclear option, or whatever your version of that is.

LOR SALVIATOR

So much I still don't understand about humans despite studying them for so long...

He thinks about it as the other dogs give the band attention. Iesu, meanwhile, looks at Akira.

IESU

You're still gonna be here, eh, boy?

Akira barks, licking Iesu'S face. He chuckles.

IESU

Sorry, you guys. You're right, this isn't fair. I'm still in.

LOR SALVIATOR

Look, here's Hachiko himself, right
along with Laika.

HACHIKO, an Akita, appears alongside LAIKA, a part-husky and part-terrier mongrel dog. They both approach Iesu as he opens his arms and hugs all three dogs.

IESU

At least you won't be alone this
time... I'm sorry you all had to
wait so long, but it's good to know
you're home, eh? And you're happy.

Iesu lets go of them and gets up, rubbing his eye.

IESU

You're my biggest fan, huh boy...
Been watching me all this time from
here?

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed he has. Never once missed a
single show.

IESU

God... Thanks, Lor. I never thought
I'd see him again.

LOR SALVIATOR

My pleasure, sir Iesu.

IESU

I'll be back, boy. Enjoy the tour.

Akira barks as Iesu reluctantly joins everyone heading back to the spaceship.

EXT. ELPIS - NIGHT

STARMAN shields his eyes and a large AUDIENCE of tens of thousands of attendees cheers.

The stadium is held inside a giant mountain and in the distance is an expansive forest. The band is all equipped with much flashier instruments, ERIK RHODES in particular holding a pure white violin.

LOR SALVIATOR steps up holding a microphone.

LOR SALVIATOR

Thank you all very much for
waiting. Without further ado, here
is Elpis, the band!

He gestures for the band to begin. IESU exchanges a look with Starman while DOOMER begins playing the drums. They play "Seven Seals" and the audience cheers so loudly their music can't be easily heard.

Erik Rhodes plays a solo as the cheering continues and the song ends.

STARMAN

Jesus Christ...

IESU

You're telling me...

They are all stone-faced except for Erik Rhodes who bows theatrically with a beatific smile as the audience calls for an encore.

DOOMER

That was the worst song we've ever done, and they're still eating it right up.

IESU

They really love us, huh... And here I was thinking Lor was just messing with us.

LOR SALVIATOR

Well, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attendance. That concludes our first show. Let's hear it again for Elpis!

They cheer again and Starman is carried back onto the stage, helped up by Iesu and they all bow as the stage lights dim.

They make their way back to the spaceship but Erik Rhodes is stopped by three young ELPIAN GROUPIES who like Lor Salviator are tall with purple skin and wearing elegant robes.

ELPIAN GROUPIE 1

Oh, Erik Rhodes! In the flesh!

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, it's me.

She gushes and then nearly faints. Erik Rhodes smiles warmly at them.

ELPIAN GROUPIE 2

You're our favourite! Please, can you stay a little longer?

ERIK RHODES

I'd really love to stay and chat but we gotta go. See you at our next show?

He begins to reluctantly leave and more groupies muscle in in front of each other.

The growing crowd is at least ten people deep and every single one of them wants to reach out and touch Erik Rhodes, and they scream at each other to get out of the way.

INT. SPACESHIP

Here STARMAN makes the same face as he does in the previous scene. The spaceship is moving, he and IESU are seated at the table in the cafeteria.

DOOMER enters the scene drinking out of a Sucker Punch juice box. He sits down opposite Starman.

STARMAN

That's it. I have to go back.

Leni... She's not okay. Lor!

He stands up and marches towards LOR SALVIATOR who is standing as he watches the distance they are traversing, which looks like a starry night sky. He stays right where he is, not turning to face Starman.

LOR SALVIATOR

Isn't it marvellous, Sir Starman?

Such a wonderful start to your galaxy-wide tour.

Starman now stands beside him.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

And you'll only get better and better once you get used to larger audiences.

Starman does his best not to look swayed.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

I daresay before long you'll be known on every corner of the universe.

STARMAN

Lor... We have to go back. Please. I have to see Leni again.

LOR SALVIATOR

You will. I don't intend to hold you hostage, you know.

STARMAN

That's not the point! Look, maybe these guys don't, but I want to go home. Leni needs me.

LOR SALVIATOR

It's a wonderful thing to be needed.

STARMAN

Stop that! Look, turn this ship
around and take me home or I'll--

Now Lor Salviator turns to face him, cutting him off.

LOR SALVIATOR

Or you'll what? Sir Starman, you do
realise you're on my ship, correct?

STARMAN

Yeah...?

LOR SALVIATOR

And you've never once ventured
outside of your home planet?

STARMAN

Well, no, it's not like I even
could, but--

LOR SALVIATOR

So I don't imagine you know your
way around the galaxy.

Starman looks away in defeat, and Lor Salviator's expression softens.

LOR SALVIATOR

I understand your feelings but good
sir, you're still thinking much too
small. You have a very important
role out here.

STARMAN

Come on... We're not actually the
most popular band in the galaxy.

LOR SALVIATOR

Interesting, even when I showed you
Elpis' entire populace coming out
to your first show, you're still
convinced they don't mean anything
to you.

STARMAN

I never said that.

LOR SALVIATOR

No, but it's how you feel, correct?
None of it matters as long as you
still have Miss Leni.

Beat.

LOR SALVIATOR

Could it be... You're concerned you
soon might not have her if it means
following your dream?

Starman blusters, until finally he turns around to rejoin the band at the table.

STARMAN

I can't believe this. I gotta go back.

DOOMER

How? You don't even have a way of getting back home. You literally jump ship, all that'll happen to you is that you'll die in the middle of nowhere and just float around until the universe itself dies. Assuming you don't just burn out or whatever.

STARMAN

I know that! Just... Come on. Why are you all resigned to your fates? Do you... Actually not want to go back at all?

Iesu, Doomer, and Erik Rhodes all exchange looks.

DOOMER

Look, man. I'm sorry to be the one to tell you this, but technically this is all your fault.

STARMAN

The hell do you mean it's my fault?

DOOMER

You wanted the band to succeed more than any of us. We didn't have to do that farewell show. Hell, we didn't even have to get together in the first place.

Lor Salviator approaches behind them, though no one pays any attention to him.

DOOMER (CONT'D)

But you insisted, somehow we caught Lor's attention and next thing you know, we're here. This is all because of you.

ERIK RHODES

Not only that, but back home nobody gave a damn about us as a band. Now we're galactic superstars. We're so loved now that aliens all over the galaxy are gonna riot if we don't commit to it, so I figure, why not?

IESU

They're right, we finally know what our hard work paid off, and I don't want aliens to riot because of us.

Starman slumps in his seat, thoroughly defeated.

STARMAN

Shit... You're right. If I knew it would come to this...

ERIK RHODES

What would you do, not talk to any of us? Never get into music? Just... Stay in a small town in the middle of nowhere for the rest of our lives?

Lor Salviator nods in approval.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

Come on, man. Get real for a second. You know that's not what you'd do. You're the reason we're all friends anyway.

Iesu and Doomer nod. Erik Rhodes slowly eyes each of them as if wondering if he should say what he says next.

ERIK RHODES

Besides... Might do you some good to get away from Leni for a while.

Iesu and Doomer facepalm and groan.

STARMAN

Okay, WHAT did you just say, Rhodes?

ERIK RHODES

You heard me. You always wanted us to be a serious band but ever since you and her got together, Elpis's sound suffered.

Starman is visibly shocked to learn this.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

You were spending more time with her than practicing with us. We were covering for you the entire time, Jaguar and Nicky got sick of it. Kept saying we should give you the axe.

Erik Rhodes hits the table with the side of his fist for emphasis.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

Well, guess what? Telling your own
cousin he's getting it instead
isn't as easy as you'd think.

Starman slumps in his seat like every single one of those
words hit him like a sack of bricks.

STARMAN

I had no idea.

IESU

Yeah, and we weren't ever gonna
tell you until he said something.
So thanks for that, Rhodes.

ERIK RHODES

Hey, keeping this under wraps any
longer is bad for me. I'd rather
say it now to knock some sense into
him than when we're actually
fighting.

IESU

No kidding.

ERIK RHODES

(to Starman)

Besides, neither of them can sing
or play the guitar like you can. I
had to be realistic, the choice was
obvious.

STARMAN

Wow. I'm sorry, you guys.

Lor Salviator appears to want to interrupt but doesn't when
Starman speaks again.

STARMAN (CONT'D)

I guess you're right, I'm gonna
have to really pull my weight. But
damn... I can't just forget about
Leni.

ERIK RHODES

Well, I hate to break it to you,
but you gotta at least try to shut
up about wanting to go home. You
can't have it both ways and this
time you're definitely outnumbered.

Iesu and Doomer nod somberly while Lor Salviator also
appears to silently agree.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

You gotta make a decision. Do you
want Elpis to succeed or not?

There is a pause while Starman thinks hard about this, his heartbeat audible. He looks at each of his bandmates and finally Lor Salviator behind him.

LOR SALVIATOR

I understand, Sir Starman. Allow me to connect you to Miss Leni.

He leads them towards the cockpit as he dials something into the dashboard.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is cozy and lived-in, with different rock band posters and photographs lining every available stretch of wall.

The television turns on by itself, as we hear but don't see Doomer, Iesu, and Doomer, whose voices sound like recordings, gradually rousing Orpheus and Jaguar awake who were asleep on the couch.

DOOMER (O.C.)

Crazy how Elpis has Sucker Punch. Could've sworn I dreamt it.

IESU (O.C.)

Well, Lor did say he tried to reach us in our dreams so technically you might've. Though by all accounts it was free advertising for them.

DOOMER (O.C.)

You think one day they're gonna advertise like this on Earth? Give everyone a mandatory brain chip and you can't block ads, and all your dreams are really gonna be ads? And you just keep funnelling more and more money that isn't even real into products and services until you're really just a glorified machine masquerading as a human?

IESU (O.C.)

Okay, seriously, don't even joke about that.

ERIK RHODES (O.C.)

What a good show, easily the best I've ever done. You guys were all right, I guess.

DOOMER (O.C.)

Well, gee, thanks.

ORPHEUS rubs his eyes.

ORPHEUS

Man, what time is it? Why're you watching TV all of a sudden?

JAGUAR yawns.

JAGUAR

I was just gonna ask you the same thing.

LENI enters the living room, rubbing her eye, languid from just having been awakened.

LENI

You guys, the neighbours're gonna complain.

They all jolt fully awake upon seeing STARMAN on screen.

LENI

Babe! What the hell, I gotta be dreaming this!

STARMAN

No, no, you're not. It's actually me.

LENI

But how are you talking to me from the TV?

STARMAN

It's uh... A long story.

LENI

Well, tell me! I've been worried sick this whole time! You just... Ran out on your last show without telling me anything! What the hell was that all about?

STARMAN

You're totally not gonna believe it.

Leni laughs.

LENI

What, you're gonna tell me you got abducted by aliens or something?

Starman is silent and looks sheepish. Leni stops smiling. Orpheus and Jaguar laugh, too.

ORPHEUS

Yeah, that makes sense. Abducted by aliens. It's so obvious.

LOR SALVIATOR appears onscreen, spooking Leni, Orpheus and Jaguar.

LOR SALVIATOR

You must pardon me, sirs and madam. I did indeed snag them away without your permission. My name is Lor Salviator and I am indeed from the planet Elpis, where we currently are right now.

JAGUAR

Woah! That is some insane stage makeup!

LOR SALVIATOR

It is an honour to make your acquaintance, sirs Jaguar and Orpheus. Such a shame you had irreconcilable differences and had to quit the band.

Starman clears his throat and Lor Salviator steps aside.

STARMAN

Look, Leni...

He places his hand against the screen as if reaching out to her.

STARMAN

We have a galaxy-wide tour and I have no idea when we'll be back.

He looks away ever-so-slightly, though his hand lingers.

STARMAN

I... Just wanted to let you know so you don't worry about me. I'm fine.

There is an uneasy silence.

ORPHEUS

Tsk. Well, sounds like Starman's gone insane.

STARMAN

I haven't gone insane! At least I don't think so. This has actually happened to us.

ORPHEUS

Right. Of literally all the bands to ever exist, ours is the one to be a hit with aliens and hold the universe together. Sounds like a really bad movie.

Erik Rhodes pushes Starman aside on the screen.

ERIK RHODES

You're just mad that I made it and you didn't, especially after you stole my stage name.

Iesu facepalms.

IESU

Oh great, here we go again.
Orpheus-gate 2.0.

ORPHEUS

Cope harder, you wanted to call yourself "Orpheus" when your violin made everyone's ears bleed.

ERIK RHODES

You cope harder, you with your god-given talent didn't become a hit with aliens all over the galaxy.

Everyone barring Leni is exasperated at this exchange.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

Admit it, Nicky, you lost. Nobody even knows who the hell you are, meanwhile, I'm a galactic superstar.

ORPHEUS

People do know who the hell I am, your being a hit with aliens doesn't mean a goddamn thing!

ERIK RHODES

Says the guy who's NOT a galactic superstar.

DOOMER

Shut up, Rhodes. Both of you. I know this sounds batshit but it's true. We can hardly believe it ourselves but we've seen it.

He is visibly moved, looking somehow even handsomer, and the band nods along.

DOOMER (CONT'D)

We've seen Elpis and the crowd we've drawn was insane. It's... Humbling, honestly. Space is so big, you have no idea.

Leni clears her throat, and Starman once again takes the central position on the screen.

LENI

So this whole time I couldn't reach you... was because you're in outer space? Is that what you're telling me?

STARMAN

Well... Yeah. Kind of out of the service area, heh.

Leni is silent as she looks at him, shaking her head. Finally she stands up and turns around.

STARMAN

Wait, Leni!

She can be heard running away and finally slamming the bedroom door.

INT. JOHNNY VALENTINE'S SWEETSHOP (FLASHBACK)

Title card: Seven years ago

LENI is 25 and STARMAN 27. They are in Johnny Valentine's Sweetshop, a 1950's style dessert cafe complete with black and white tiles and Rachmaninoff playing on the sound system.

Between them is a slice of red velvet cake and a chocolate sundae, bites from both sides to indicate they've been sharing. They each have their own large mugs of coffee for Starman and hot chocolate for Leni.

LENI

Gosh, I'm having so much fun. I've always wanted to go here.

STARMAN

I'm glad you like it. To be honest with you ever since I saw you at the studio I've been wondering about you. Getting all sorts of song ideas.

Leni blushes something amazing.

LENI

R-really?

Now Starman looks embarrassed.

STARMAN

Y-yeah. Sorry for saying it like this but you bringing Jaguar in was probably the best thing that happened to me.

LENI

Oh wow. Seriously?

STARMAN

Yeah. I still can't believe you're here with me right now, actually.

Leni blushes again.

LENI

Man, you know all the right things to say. It's no wonder I love all your songs.

STARMAN

I'm glad. Hope you'll like the rest of them, too.

LENI

I'm sure I will. I love everything you do.

STARMAN

That's good. You think we can make it big? Be honest.

LENI

Of course! I can't wait to see how well you do, I'll be there every step of the way.

Beat.

LENI

I-I mean, you know, if that's okay.

Starman also pauses, and they both giggle.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME (PRESENT)

It is late morning, the curtains are drawn so natural sunlight is filtered. "Starman" by David Bowie is playing on an old radio.

LENI is laying on the couch in a t-shirt and shorts, staring at the ceiling with the radio beside her. She is haggard from bad sleep and her hair is a mess.

Her phone shows nothing but outgoing calls to Starman. She tries to reach him one more time, once again to no avail.

A KNOCK then sounds on her door.

She very reluctantly gets up and goes to answer it and the bright sunlight makes her flinch as XIMENA becomes visible, wearing a pink jacket, white tank top and pale blue denim hot pants.

She is holding a bag of fast food from Burger Planet and looks messianic when doing so.

LENI
Can I... help you?

XIMENA
Hi, Leni.

LENI
Hi..?

XIMENA
You don't know me. But I know you.
My name is Ximena, and I'm a fan of
Starman's.

LENI
Oh. Then, how'd you get this
address? You're... A stalker?

XIMENA
That's not important. Look, I know
he went missing. I can't find
traces of him anywhere.

Ximena sizes Leni up, also glances inside the apartment over
Leni's shoulders.

LENI
Look, it's too early in the morning
for this and you're really creeping
me out.

Leni tries to close the door but Ximena grabs hold of it.

XIMENA
You want to find him, don't you?
Seeing as you're his girlfriend and
all.

LENI
Well... Yeah, obviously.

XIMENA
Then isn't his stalker the best
help you could hope for?

LENI
That... You've got a point there, I
guess.

XIMENA
Exactly. Besides, you're in no
position to investigate looking
like that. You haven't even eaten
anything yet, have you?

She presents the bag of fast food.

XIMENA

It's your favourite, spicy chicken burger and small fries with lemon iced tea.

LENI

...Thanks?

XIMENA

Relax, I'm not a STALKER-stalker. I'm not gonna hurt my favourite musician's girlfriend.

LENI

That's, uh... Good. Yeah.

Ximena thrusts the bag into Leni's hands.

XIMENA

Come on, eat up. We got a lot of work to do if we want to find them. My keylogger on Starman's phone isn't even picking anything up.

LENI

...what were you saying again about not being a "stalker-stalker"?

XIMENA

Oh, I am a stalker-stalker-stalker. In that I stalk his stalkers. Not the kind of stalker who goes out and hurts people.

Leni makes the most priceless face imaginable before backing away.

XIMENA

Oh yeah, he's got so many. I mean, they all do. But no doubt you already knew about that, huh, since you caught one a couple years ago at the Johnny Valentine's.

Leni slowly begins to close the door.

XIMENA (CONT'D)

Too bad I didn't get to her first, so that's on me. I got her eventually, though, so you don't have to worry about her anymore.

LENI

Hey, uh, listen, thanks for this, but you should go.

XIMENA

Oh, don't worry, I'll be back. You shouldn't be alone right now. You never know who could be lurking, knowing your situation.

LENI

...Right, okay, bye now.

She then shuts the door and locks it and sighs deeply. She inspects the bag of fast food and her stomach grumbles.

With a look of resignation she goes to the kitchen and sits down, unpacking the food. With some hesitation she takes a bite, and as more seconds pass by her eyes begin to water until she stops.

After more seconds her phone rings, which she ignores. Finally she gets up and grabs it, but doesn't check it.

She marches back to the front door and opens it, and Ximena looks up from her phone.

LENI

Alright, I'll bite. Since you came all the way here and the guys and I couldn't find any leads, who better than his stalker?

XIMENA

Excellent! You won't be disappointed. We will look all over the world if we have to.

LENI

Yeah... The world. Yeah. We're gonna do it. We're gonna find them. They've gotta be somewhere in the world...

Ximena lets herself into the apartment.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

XIMENA is typing away at her laptop while LENI sits beside her, not quite rapt but also not as out of it as before. She can't see that behind her through the window stars are moving.

JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are outside smoking on the balcony but neither one pays attention to the stars either.

ORPHEUS

I'm pretty sure Leni's lost it, letting Starman's stalker help find them.

JAGUAR

Can't really blame her, though.
She's pretty desperate. Hasn't
slept much the past week.

They stand as they are, and Jaguar breaks the silence first.

JAGUAR

Do you really think they are...
y'know...

ORPHEUS

No way. We must've had a shared
hallucination or something.

JAGUAR

Right... Right, totally.

Meanwhile, in the living room, Ximena is still typing away
and Leni now leans back until she's lying down on the floor
and staring at the ceiling.

XIMENA

How bizarre... I hacked into lots
of phones and cameras and police
databases, nothing's turning up.
It's like they just vanished into
thin air or got written out of
existence altogether.

Leni pinches the bridge of her nose.

XIMENA (CONT'D)

They're not anywhere in the world
as far as I can tell.

LENI

Man... I knew he was struggling but
why'd he go this far?

XIMENA

Wait, were you about to break up?

Both girls look at each other, and Leni flashes red as she
sits back up.

LENI

No, we were not gonna break up, if
you really must know.

XIMENA

Uh-huh.

LENI

I'm serious! At least... I'm pretty
sure...

Leni pauses, thinking, Ximena hugs her, which she doesn't
fight.

XIMENA

We'll find him, Leni. If for no other reason than me getting closure about this.

Jaguar enters the living room, followed by Orpheus. Jaguar rushes towards Leni but doesn't touch her as Ximena lets go. He clears his throat.

JAGUAR

Um, so... Any luck?

XIMENA

No... I saw a transmission that seemed kinda promising but the connection was really bad.

Leni looks down, distraught.

XIMENA (CONT'D)

Went offline the moment I clicked and I couldn't find it again. Honestly felt like I imagined it.

ORPHEUS

Yeah, well. It's been a rough week, we're all pretty desperate for some kind of an answer.

LENI

At this point I really might just settle for them being abducted by aliens after all.

No one talks for several seconds.

LENI

I mean, it makes perfect sense, right? The craziest stuff always does. No one just vanishes. Otherwise, well... God, I don't even wanna think about it.

Jaguar and Orpheus exchange looks.

JAGUAR

Uh, listen, Len. You should really go to bed. Let us figure this out, okay?

LENI

But if I go to bed and wake up, he's not gonna be here, is he?

Jaguar looks particularly affected by what she said, and seems about ready to object but doesn't when she speaks.

LENI

All his stuff is here, all of our memories in this apartment... And he's not here. What the hell is even the point?

This time Ximena notices Jaguar catching himself from touching Leni's shoulder.

LENI (CONT'D)

If I have to go through that everytime I go to sleep, I'd rather just never wake up.

JAGUAR

Okay, that's it, Len. Go to bed. You're not thinking straight.

For just a moment Leni's heart appears to skip a beat, and she doesn't resist as Jaguar pushes her towards her bedroom door and practically shuts it behind her.

Meanwhile, Ximena eyes Jaguar who tries to look nonchalant.

JAGUAR

What? It's not what you're thinking.

XIMENA

Uh-huh. What isn't?

JAGUAR

...whatever you're thinking.

XIMENA

Then it definitely is. Way to not read my mind.

Jaguar sighs.

JAGUAR

Look, it doesn't matter, anyway. I'm not gonna be that guy.

XIMENA

That's nice and honourable of you.

Jaguar looks away.

JAGUAR

You don't have to put it that way.

XIMENA

What? I love a good love triangle as much as anyone else. Especially one I can tell has been a thing for years.

Jaguar cringes just a little bit.

XIMENA (CONT'D)

But I can't be disloyal as
Starman's biggest fan and Leni's
friend, so I have to root for him
over you.

Jaguar makes the most priceless face imaginable, and Orpheus
pats his shoulder as Ximena resumes typing.

INT. STUDIO (FLASHBACK)

Title card: Seven years ago

Here LENI and JAGUAR are aged 25 and 27, respectively, Leni
holding a guitar case as Jaguar follows behind, exasperated.
They have just entered the studio where the younger 26-year
old ERIK RHODES is seated, looking miffed until they come
in, when he stands up.

JAGUAR

Look, I don't know about this.

LENI

Aw c'mon, why not? I kept saying it
looks like it'll fit your vibe.

ERIK RHODES

You're here for the audition?

LENI

Yeah, he is. Plays really good
guitar.

ERIK RHODES

Hmm, all right.

LENI

Go on, show him.

Jaguar sighs as he takes his case from her and begins
donning his acoustic guitar. He plays "Stairway to Heaven"
but abruptly stops after the first three seconds.

JAGUAR

Sorry, sorry. I'll do it again.

He starts over, and though still visibly nervous, he gets
less so as he plays. All the while Erik Rhodes's face is
still. Jaguar then plays "Wonderwall."

ERIK RHODES

Well, you're better than the other
three we had, though you don't
exactly look all that serious.

IESU, aged 26 here, then enters with AKIRA. Leni kneels down
to pet him.

LENI

Hey, you! What's your name?

IESU

Oh, hey, Oscar, you finally made it! And this is Akira. He's a rescue.

JAGUAR

Yeah, well. When you, Nicky and Leni are all telling me to come...

ERIK RHODES

Alright, well, the others should be here soon.

LENI

Then I'll come back later, Oscar, Immanuel.

IESU

You don't have to do that, stick around.

LENI

You sure?

IESU

Yeah! Akira can really use the socialisation.

ORPHEUS, 26 here, enters with DOOMER, also 26, behind him. Doomer wordlessly heads straight for the drumset while Orpheus sets up his keyboard. All the while Leni is playing with Akira.

Then STARMAN, also 26, enters and zeroes in on Leni.

ORPHEUS

At last, the elusive leader shows up.

STARMAN

Hey, it's not my fault the buses were on strike. Anyway... Who's that?

ORPHEUS

That's Leni. She brought Oscar from our ethics class, finally.

STARMAN

Leni... Nice to meet you. I'm Tom.

LENI

L-likewise.

Jaguar silently watches this exchange but nonetheless keeps a straight face.

STARMAN

Anyway, sorry. Oscar?

JAGUAR

Yeah. I play the guitar.

STARMAN

Oh, you're gonna be backup, then.
Cool. Anyway, let's get started.

They all play a song, their instruments on acoustic, Leni seated on the couch with Akira laying on her lap when they're finished, her clapping rousing him awake.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, you definitely work better
that the other three.

IESU

Good stuff, Oscar.

ERIK RHODES

Anyways, besides that, you can
think on it for a while, but the
rest of us were coming up with
stage names. I'm gonna be Orpheus.

ORPHEUS

Uh, no, you're not. I picked
Orpheus. I earned it.

ERIK RHODES

Are you serious? You know that's my
name!

ORPHEUS

Yeah, well. If you wanted it, you
should've done better at the
Christmas competition.

IESU

"Christmas competition?"

ERIK RHODES

Screw the Christmas competition!
It's rigged anyway!

ORPHEUS

Says the guy who loses every single
time.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, whatever, you would win every
time when it's rigged that bad. I
mean, seriously, you believe
Grandpa when he says your music is
magic? That's bullshit and you know
it.

ORPHEUS

I'd call that a God-given talent, which, if you remember, is what Orpheus had. Ergo, I don't care if you think it's bullshit, you are not Orpheus!

Both of them huff and turn their backs on each other, leaving everyone in a stunned silence until Starman clears his throat.

STARMAN

...Yeah, to answer your question, their family has a competition every Christmas and it gets pretty intense. Not surprising, though, given literally everyone is an award-winning musician.

IESU

Jesus.

Erik Rhodes then sighs, breaking his silence first.

ERIK RHODES

You know what? Think I'm just gonna go by my actual name after all. I don't even need to pretend I'm a legend, I'll just be one.

Orpheus rolls his eyes but Starman gives him a thumbs up.

STARMAN

Well... In that case, I've been thinking about mine, Major Tom sounds cool and all but if you're going by your real name, I'll go with Starman. You know, like that David Bowie song?

IESU

Yeah, I like that one. Me, I was just drawing a blank. Honestly think I'll go with Iesu after all. What about you, Damien?

Everyone turns to look at Doomer, who shrugs.

DOOMER

I'm gonna be Doomer.

IESU

Doomer? Yeah, that fits.

JAGUAR

In that case... I already figured mine out, I'll be Jaguar.

ORPHEUS

Hmm... Yeah, you do look like a Jaguar.

ERIK RHODES

Good stuff, we're all spoken for.
Now, let's keep going.

Leni smiles wide and claps as Jaguar looks back on her and smiles, too, while Starman's own gaze on her lingers.

INT. JOHNNY VALENTINE'S HOMESTYLE RESTAURANT (FLASHBACK)

Title card: Six years ago

JAGUAR, 28 here, is seated at a booth with IESU, 27, and ORPHEUS, 28, between them some half-eaten entrees and half-empty drinks. He is visibly upset as he rather savagely cuts his steak.

IESU

Uh, Oscar? You good?

JAGUAR

I'm fine.

IESU

Okay... In any case, Imma go. Got a double shift at the shelter. They're all excited to see Akira again.

Iesu hurriedly leaves the table after putting down some bills and Orpheus sighs. Jaguar stops cutting. From the window Iesu can be seen untying AKIRA'S leash from a lamppost and they walk off together.

ORPHEUS

You are really not taking it well.

JAGUAR

What does she even see in him?
Guy's never worked a day in his life and it shows.

ORPHEUS

Look, I get it. He's an all-style-no-substance, spotlight-hogging pain in the ass, but she still chose him. You have to accept that. There's no accounting for taste sometimes.

JAGUAR

Am I too close to her, do you think? Like at a point, do you just not exist anymore, no matter what you do?

ORPHEUS

I mean... Maybe? If that's how you
wanna see it? But look, just
because he's being a load, doesn't
mean you can be one, too.

Jaguar stares at his steak, as if in apology.

ORPHEUS (CONT'D)

He can say all he wants that he's
serious about making it, but you
and I, we don't make that kind of
noise.

JAGUAR

You're right, I'm sorry. But
just... Urgh...

He downs his drink. His cellphone then rings and he sees
that it's from Leni. He pauses before answering.

JAGUAR

Hey, Len. What's up?... Oh,
nothing, just having
dinner...after? No, I'm not doing
anything... Yeah, sure, we can go
get some pancakes. Okay, cool. Bye.

He closes his phone.

ORPHEUS

Pancakes, huh?

JAGUAR

Yeah. Said there's something she
wants to tell me.

ORPHEUS

Huh. Sounds kinda serious.

JAGUAR

Yeah... Well, I'm done here. Mind
getting this one?

ORPHEUS

Sure, just pay me back later.

Jaguar then gets up and leaves the restaurant.

INT. STUDIO (FLASHBACK)

Title card: Four years ago

DOOMER, IESU, ERIK RHODES, JAGUAR, and ORPHEUS are
practicing a general tune but give up when Orpheus expresses
frustration.

ORPHEUS

Okay, seriously. This is the third time this week he's been late. Erik, you gotta do something.

JAGUAR

Yeah, this... Can't really go on.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, I'll have to talk to him.

ORPHEUS

No, Erik, you gotta actually make a decision this time. I know he's your best friend but think for a second.

The studio entrance door opens.

ORPHEUS (CONT'D)

He's always late and every time he shows up, he's worse than last time. How does he expect Elpis to flourish when he won't put in the work?

ERIK RHODES

Look, I'm not happy with how he's been acting since he moved in with Leni, either. But you know this isn't just our band.

ORPHEUS

That's your problem, Erik. You're not all that serious, either.

ERIK RHODES

I'm not serious? Dude, you're always bitching about him one way or another, and the sound you're going for doesn't fit Elpis!

ORPHEUS

Well, excuse me for wanting to go back to what worked.

Doomer takes out a bag of gummy worms and eats some like he's watching a TV drama.

ORPHEUS (CONT'D)

In case you haven't noticed, less and less people are coming to our shows and buying the CDs.

Iesu takes notice from over his phone and quietly gasps.

ORPHEUS (CONT'D)

Starman's voice and guitar is turning them all away. It's obvious he's weighing us all down!

IESU

Hey...

Iesu motions to the doorway but neither Erik Rhodes nor Orpheus look that way.

ORPHEUS

You're too soft, Erik. He's your best friend, I get it. But if you don't do something, then I'm leaving.

Erik Rhodes gives a small shake of his head and pinches the bridge of his nose as he sighs.

ERIK RHODES

Okay, fine. If that's what you want, then sure.

ORPHEUS

Thank you! About goddamn time you saw some sense.

ERIK RHODES

You're absolutely right, Nicky. It's so obvious what I should've done.

IESU

Hey, Rhodes...

ERIK RHODES

No, Iesu. He's got a point. I should've done this a lot sooner.

Jaguar appears relieved for just a moment.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

I hate to say it, but I let my emotions get in the way for a long time and we've all suffered for it.

He takes a breath, and Orpheus looks satisfied if a little regretful. A somewhat faint thud is heard on the wall on the other side of the doorway. Erik Rhodes then looks at him and places a hand on his shoulder.

ERIK RHODES

You can't quit, Nicky. You're fired.

Orpheus's expression flits between several different emotions at once, until finally he exclaims:

ORPHEUS

Wait, WHAT?

DOOMER

Oh my God, he finally did it.

JAGUAR

He "finally" did it?

ORPHEUS

Erik, you're... You're actually firing me? Are you insane?

ERIK RHODES

Look, if you're gonna be the guy who can't reel his own ego in and be a part of the team, then obviously you can't be here.

Jaguar's facial expression says "are you actually serious right now?"

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

Go and do your own thing, you keep messing with our sound, stealing the spotlight like we're just your backup anyway.

Doomer starts drinking a can of Rocket Punch.

ERIK RHODES (CONT'D)

If anything, you're driving audiences away because they can't tell if they should be listening to us or watching you.

Orpheus is speechless, and for a while no one says anything. Finally, though, Jaguar looks at the doorway where Iesu initially hinted at and sighs.

JAGUAR

Well, then... I guess that's it, huh. There's no place for me here, either.

ERIK RHODES

I don't want anyone here who doesn't want to be here. If you're also gonna complain, then go. Best of luck to you.

IESU

Rhodes...

ERIK RHODES

Whatever, I'm done here. I can't focus, you're all pissing me off. Just as well Starman's not here.

He storms out of the studio, and Orpheus does too after the shock wears off.

Jaguar follows him and once he gets to the doorway he sees LENI now slumped on the floor with her back to the adjacent wall, a box of doughnuts beside her. He tentatively stands beside her.

JAGUAR

Sorry you had to hear all that,
Leni.

Leni breathes gently, shaking ever-so-slightly.

JAGUAR

It's... Not your fault, okay?

Leni doesn't answer. Jaguar moves to touch her shoulder but ultimately doesn't.

JAGUAR

Again, Len, I'm sorry. And you were
the one who convinced me to try
out.

LENI

Tommy's sick, you know.

JAGUAR

Huh?

LENI

I came here to give you guys these,
Tommy's dead asleep. Was up all
night practicing, and he already
wasn't feeling well. I was just out
getting medicine, and I figured
since I was close by...

On the inner side of the doorway, Iesu and Doomer listen in, Orpheus on the other side parallel to Jaguar.

LENI

But yeah. I'll uh... I'll not say
anything to him. I wasn't even
supposed to be here, right?

JAGUAR

Leni...

LENI

Don't worry about me, okay? I'm
uh... Sorry you're leaving, though.
Unless... You change your mind?

Jaguar looks away.

JAGUAR

...No, I'm out, too.

LENI

Oh. Okay.

Jaguar now furtively looks at her and nobody says anything.

INT. ICHIGO ICHIE'S SOUFFLÉ PANCAKE CAFÉ (FLASHBACK)

Title card: Two years ago

LENI, 30 here, and JAGUAR, 32, are seated at their usual table at Ichigo Ichie's, and both of them look awkward, not fully able to look at one another.

Leni fidgets before speaking first.

LENI

Thanks for coming out, Oscar. I've missed you.

Jaguar doesn't answer. Leni gives a nervous smile.

LENI

How is everything with you? I'm sorry I've just been so busy. Elpis...

She gives a halfhearted laugh.

LENI (CONT'D)

Well, they've been working really hard, and I have to help out. Be the cheerleader, you know?

She slowly relinquishes the facade, and it's evident in her shoulders slumping.

LENI (CONT'D)

Especially since, well... Things aren't going all that great.

Still Jaguar doesn't respond.

LENI

Oscar... Are you mad at me?

Now he looks at her, which makes her gasp just a little bit, and his expression softens.

JAGUAR

No, I'm not mad at you. Sorry, just got a lot on my mind.

LENI

Well, tell me, let's catch up! You've really buffed up, huh? What do you do now?

JAGUAR

Nothing much, just working out.
Life's not that interesting.

LENI

Come on, I wanna hear about it. If
anything, my life's been TOO
interesting.

Jaguar's reply is bemused here.

JAGUAR

Oh yeah?

LENI

Yeah! Tommy and I were out at the
Johnny Valentine's and this crazy
stalker actually tried to attack me
after we left!

Now his reply is more genuinely concerned.

JAGUAR

Oh my God. When was this? Are you
okay?

LENI

Yeah, I mean I'm still shaken but I
wasn't hurt. I'm okay.

JAGUAR

Are you sure? That sounds pretty
scary.

Leni laughs awkwardly.

LENI

Really, I'm fine. It's all part and
parcel of being a musician's
girlfriend, right? At least I
wasn't alone.

She stops fake-laughing when she sees Jaguar looking
stone-faced.

LENI

I mean, obviously I'm not excusing
it, but you know what I mean,
right? Things are gonna happen.

A WAITRESS comes and sets down their orders before them, a
stack of strawberry soufflé pancakes for Leni and a simpler
stack of flatter pancakes with mixed fruits for Jaguar, and
cups of red tea for both of them.

LENI (CONT'D)

Tommy was pretty shaken up, too, so
I have to show it wasn't quite that
(MORE)

LENI (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 bad. I have to keep morale up, you
 know?

JAGUAR
 I don't--

LENI
 Otherwise, well... I'll just get in
 the way, and nobody needs that.

Jaguar looks at her piteously.

LENI
 Besides, it was just a one-off,
 it's not like that happens all the
 time.

JAGUAR
 Len...

LENI
 But seriously, don't worry about
 me. I didn't mean to bring the mood
 down. Let's have the pancakes,
 okay? Man, I am starving!

She digs in with maybe a little too much enthusiasm and Jaguar looks like he's about to speak up but ultimately decides to also eat his pancakes, albeit more calmly.

EXT. BACKSTAGE. OLYANA

Title card: Olyana

DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES are onstage on Olyana, whose dominant colour scheme is soft pinks and creams, and even the stage calls to mind a massive white lily without the stamens.

STARMAN, meanwhile, is surrounded by OLYANANS who are roughly the same height and have green skin, appearing to wear oversized flowers as hats and clothes. He is halfheartedly signing autographs.

OLYANAN 1
 What an honour it is to meet you,
 Man of Stars!

STARMAN
 I'm glad to meet you, too. Sorry
 I'm not up there singing for you.

OLYANAN 2
 Not at all, this in and of itself
 is fortuitous. To get to speak with
 you is a dream.

STARMAN

You really love us, huh...

OLYANAN 3

Of course! Your songs are so full of longing and hope, your dreams from your little planet planted the most curious of seeds.

STARMAN

They did?

OLYANAN 4

Yes. Humans are a tragic species and yet you have boundless love and imagination. It's a shame you have convinced yourselves you cannot see it.

STARMAN

We have, huh... You know, you're right, now that I think about it. Thank you so much.

The Olyanans smile at him and Starman himself smiles and has renewed energy as he signs autographs and soon excuses himself to join Doomer, Iesu, and Erik Rhodes on the stage.

The audience cheers as Starman picks up his guitar and takes the microphone and begins playing the starting notes of "Flipside."

STARMAN

"I look in the mirror and see a stranger, not even my name is mine anymore..."

The audience cheers loudly as the song continues.

EXT. CHANGGIES - EVENING

Title card: Changgies

The planet Changgies basically a giant, endless plain, with simple buildings made of what looks like giant fossil bones draped with animal pelts. A similar structure acts as a stage but no one is performing on it.

Instead, Starman, Iesu, Doomer, and Erik Rhodes are surrounded by CHANGGIANS, who are all statuesque Amazonian women with long flowing hair and wearing clothing not unlike barbarians.

Every single one of them is gushing over the guys, but special attention is given to Erik Rhodes who is having a much easier time accepting this than the others. He is autographing some helmets.

ERIK RHODES

Aaaand that's you, thank you so much.

CHANGGIAN 1

You wield your pen like an expert swordsman, just like you do your instrument.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, well. Can't be caught lacking, looking at the likes of you all.

The Changgians giggle as he grins, continuing to autograph a sword. Iesu, meanwhile, looks a bit distraught and another Changgians takes notice.

CHANGGIAN 2

You look rather flush, like you can use a good mug of mead.

LOR SALVIATOR

We do indeed have time if you would like to oblige, Sir Iesu. But please come back before nightfall.

IESU

Nah, I'm good, thanks. Let Erik Rhodes have some fun.

Before anyone can object, he leaves the group and keeps walking until he sees a small encampment of REFUGEES, no taller than five feet and with pink skin and black eyes.

Their encampment is comprised of a broken down spaceship no bigger than a king size bed, and they are gathered around a metal pot with what looks like broth boiling inside.

One of them, who appears to be a young boy, looks up from his spot and nudges another child who looks like his older sister. They both jump up and run to Iesu and chatter at him in an unintelligible alien language.

IESU

Hey. Sorry, didn't want to interrupt your meal.

The children chatter excitedly at him and even start pulling him towards their circle, and their parents even clear the way for him and their older brother sits him down while their older sister gives him a bowl of the broth.

Before the mother can practically force it down his throat Iesu takes a tentative sip from the edge of the bowl. He looks confused as his forehead begins sweating and with it his chest heaving, and then he looks like his very mind has been blown.

IESU

Wow. That's the best thing I've
ever tasted in my life.

The refugees smile at him and chatter excitedly, and when he finishes his bowl of broth the mother serves him another one, which he notices is all that remains and he got more than everyone else.

IESU

Oh, no, thank you. Please.

He resists but ultimately the refugees refuse and he has no choice but to eat the rest. Finally he gets up, and one by one they all take turns hugging him, the father even lifting him up as he does so.

IESU

Thank you. But man... Wish I could
give you something, too.

He searches his pockets and finds nothing inside except for a handful of coins.

IESU

Sorry, guys, it's all I have.
Please take it.

He offers it to the youngest refugees, who hugs his legs. Iesu smiles and sits down with them some more.

IESU

Man... Wish I could speak your
language, learn how you got here,
what your planet was like...

He looks at Lor Salviator in the distance talking to other Changgians, and for a brief moment narrows his eyes before turning his attention back to the refugees.

EXT. KLELLIA - DAYTIME

Title card: Klellia

The planet Klellia has very little actual land; the only land is an islet in the middle of endless blue ocean. The attendants this time all appear to be merpeople with various seastars, crustaceans and kelp adorning their hair.

STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES all stand on the islet which itself is surrounded on all sides with Klellians. They are playing their own cover of "Space Oddity".

A small skiff carrying seven REFUGEES, this time ones that look like cat people no taller than two feet, sails with various Klellians either moving out of their way or gently pushing them forward like a mosh pit.

When the skiff stops in front of a group of Klellians and capsizes, Iesu is the first one to stop playing and dives into the crowd and they carry him towards the refugees.

He picks up three of them and the surrounding Klellians pick up and ferry over the remaining four. They are all carried over to the stage islet where Iesu is pulled up by Erik Rhodes most prominently, and Doomer takes the refugees from him.

Iesu then checks each of them to see if they're okay and they are, if a little shaken. While he's kneeling they all surround him in particular and lick his face and rub against him in thanks.

IESU

How about something just for you
guys?

The refugees cheer and Iesu sits down and plays a short song for them on his bass guitar which still elicits applause from the audience at large as well as the refugees.

Iesu is then pounced on by them and he laughs as they cuddle up to him just like cats would do.

Later, after the show, Doomer is relaxing on the islet while Iesu and Erik Rhodes are swimming with the Klellians, and Starman himself swims up to the islet and climbs upon it.

STARMAN

Hey, Doomer, I've been thinking.
You and the princess are really
getting along, right?

DOOMER

I'd say so, yeah.

STARMAN

So things are probably getting
serious.

DOOMER

More or less. Why?

Starman hesitates.

DOOMER

Yeah, it is unfair, isn't it? But
if it helps, you're the reason the
best thing that ever happened to
me, well, happened to me.

Starman smirks but you can tell that stung a little.

DOOMER

And you're having fun right now,
aren't you? We couldn't do this
(MORE)

DOOMER (cont'd)
back on Earth, worrying about
everything and nothing. Being
plugged into the workings of the
world. It's all so far away now,
it's nice.

STARMAN
That's true.

DOOMER
I'll be honest, the thought of us
disbanding sucked. I'm more
motivated than ever to do well
knowing we can hang out like this
sometimes.

Starman is affected by what he said, and he turns to face
the water.

STARMAN
Thanks, man. I guess I know what I
wanna do now.

Before Doomer can respond, Starman jumps back into the water
and resumes swimming. Shortly after he leaves, Erik Rhodes
and Iesu join him on the islet.

DOOMER
So... I think he's figured it out.

IESU
Yeah, eh.

ERIK RHODES
It's for the best, guys. He had to
come around on his own.

They murmur in agreement as Starman swims.

INT. PARVA SEIBEL

Title card: Lor Salviator's mansion, Parva Seibel

Lor Salviator's mansion interior shows a mauve living room
lined with sets of armour and priceless jewelry and artwork
along the walls, with one long couch in the centre looking
at it all on one side.

IESU is seated in front of a large half-oval window
overlooking an even larger multicoloured garden that spans
at least one hill and a marble fountain, with a clear starry
sky above.

Just within the line of sight is a small brown planet acting
as a satellite. ERIK RHODES joins him but he doesn't bring a
chair to sit down.

ERIK RHODES

Imagine seeing something like this
back home, huh?

IESU

Yeah... All this space just for
you.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah... You never cared much for
luxury, huh?

IESU

No... It seems pretty wasteful. And
he has a dozen of these places.

ERIK RHODES

I think it's more than a dozen.

IESU

Yeah, you wouldn't get it.

ERIK RHODES

Hmph.

Erik Rhodes leans against the wall beside the window.

IESU

You know... Ever since we went to
Sirius, I've been thinking. With
how famous we are after all...
Shouldn't we be more responsible?

ERIK RHODES

Responsible how?

IESU

I dunno, just... Remember when Lor
said we're peace ambassadors?

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, so?

IESU

So... Doesn't that mean we should
maybe do something more than just
making music for the fans?

ERIK RHODES

Maybe, I dunno. I'm good with this
just being my life.

IESU

Of course you are...

ERIK RHODES

Hey, you're the one who asked. I
never said my way was the right
(MORE)

ERIK RHODES (cont'd)
 way, just that it's mine. Clearly
 it's not yours.

IESU
 Yeah... Clearly.

ERIK RHODES
 Whatever, man.

Erik Rhodes leaves and Iesu sighs, once again looking up towards the smaller brown planet. LOR SALVIATOR comes in and stands in Erik Rhodes's spot.

LOR SALVIATOR
 Is something on your mind, Sir
 Iesu?

IESU
 Kinda. Was just telling Erik Rhodes
 that there's gotta be more to all
 this fame. It doesn't seem right
 for this to be all I do.

LOR SALVIATOR
 I see... Your motivations are more
 than just fame and success, aren't
 they, Sir Iesu?

Iesu makes a bashful expression.

LOR SALVIATOR
 In that case I have something I
 would like to show you. I noticed
 you noticing it just now.

IESU
 Is it that planet not too far from
 here?

LOR SALVIATOR
 The very same. It's called Yueyue.
 Shall we head off? It will be a
 quick trip.

He ushers him out of the room.

EXT. YUEYUE - DAYTIME

IESU stands in the middle of a barren wasteland, where a highly advanced society once stood. Only the base foundations of buildings remain, the debris splattered about as if it had been bombed.

Even the sky is a very unflattering shade of brown. A weak breeze is audible. He looks absolutely crestfallen and even falls to his knees and hands, LOR SALVIATOR stands as normal.

IESU
What happened to this place..?

LOR SALVIATOR
This was once a very prosperous
kingdom. Its peoples were peaceful
and wished only to live their
lives.

A TUMBLEWEED rolls by them.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)
Unfortunately their plentiful
resources made them a prime target
for pillagers.

Just a stone's throw away from them what appears to be a
hollowed out, now dirty lake basin is seen.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)
So in a final act of defiance they
torched their homeworld and
themselves along with it. It truly
is a tragedy, they had such a
beautiful planet, not unlike yours.

IESU
Not unlike... ours?

He very gingerly gets up and wipes his face. Then he hears a
rustle, and turns to look at a YUEYUAN PET shaped similarly
to a rodent who runs towards him. He picks it up.

IESU
Hey, you. What are you doin'? This
is your home, huh?

Iesu chuckles as he puts the animal down. It yaps and little
by little similar ones creep out from the ruins, and run
towards Iesu, trying to climb up his legs. He crouches down
to greet them all with a hug.

LOR SALVIATOR
I'm truly astounded by your love of
living things, Sir Iesu.

IESU
This is their planet now, huh?
Almost like Sirius.

LOR SALVIATOR
Indeed.

IESU
Were they pets? They must've been,
to be this happy to see us. Wow,
all of you lost your masters. I
hope you know it wasn't your fault.

He gets up to face Lor Salviator.

IESU
Hey, Lor... There are other Yueyues
out there, right?

LOR SALVIATOR
Indeed there are, Sir Iesu.

IESU
So there's gotta be a bunch of
refugees and whatnot, right?

LOR SALVIATOR
Indeed there are.

Iesu regards Lor Salviator pointedly, as if about to ask a heavy question but deliberates if he should.

IESU
Lor... don't you feel any sort of
greater responsibility? Not like
guilt or anything, but...

He clears his throat.

IESU (CONT'D)
Well, I guess there's no point
beating around the bush.

He steels himself.

IESU (CONT'D)
I've been wondering about how you
have so many planets, and if,
well... You actually have something
to do with it.

Iesu looks like he regrets it, while Lor Salviator looks on kindly.

LOR SALVIATOR
It's no wonder you are so loved by
the downtrodden of the galaxy, Sir
Iesu.

Iesu keeps a straight face.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)
To answer your question, my family
did indeed acquire wealth through
what you would no doubt call
shameful means, but it is still my
inheritance and only I can do with
it as I wish.

Lor Salviator takes out a small pouch and empties it before the Yueyuan pets, which appears to be cereal.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

I cannot heal the wounds of those who have suffered on my own with my resources. All it will do is enable another great tragedy in the future.

He turns to face Iesu again.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

But you, Sir Iesu, and your fellow bandmates, can and will heal many with your art. It will naturally not be instantaneous but you have indeed contributed so much more than you realise.

He clasps his hands.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

This is why I have decided to give you your tour across the galaxy. I simply wish to help you.

IESU

I see... Sorry, Lor.

LOR SALVIATOR

None taken. In fact I have to say, I'm glad we are having this conversation. You have given me much food for thought. I hope this conversation has been similarly enlightening for you.

IESU

Yeah, it has... But I still think I should be doing a lot more than just playing music. In fact...

He looks at the Yueyuan pets happily eating the cereal.

IESU (CONT'D)

Is it true that aliens think we as humans are total idiots?

When Lor Salviator's face doesn't show any particular expression, Iesu quickly continues talking.

IESU (CONT'D)

I mean we have all these problems we can't solve and we're killing the planet, seeking out new ones to exploit...

A couple Yueyuan pets approach Iesu for food, which he doesn't have.

IESU (CONT'D)

We say we want world peace but have no idea what that even means...

LOR SALVIATOR

I haven't asked anyone that myself nor have I seen it. Honestly, I never cared to find out something so trivial...

Iesu looks just a little bit offended at this sentence.

LOR SALVIATOR (CONT'D)

...and I daresay no one else ever stops to think about it. But I certainly don't think that about you.

IESU

Right... Guess that sorta thing really doesn't matter ultimately, huh.

He crouches down to offer his hand to the Yueyuan pets and they flock around him for pets.

IESU

You know, that's actually good to know. We talk about it all the time on Earth.

He picks some of them up.

IESU (CONT'D)

We both want and don't want to know whether or not you're out here, if you will attack us, laugh at us...

He looks down at the pets in his arms as more of them flock around him.

IESU (CONT'D)

Guess it is pretty stupid, but that's what we are. And maybe that's all right after all.

Finally Iesu smiles and puts down the pets he was holding.

IESU

Thank you, Lor. Let's go back.

LOR SALVIATOR

Of course, Sir Iesu. Might I say, I do look forward to your endeavours across the wider galaxy.

Lor Salviator smiles and ushers him back to the spaceship.

INT. PANDORA PALACE - VAULT CHAMBER

Once again OZZY and PIROUZ are before PANDORA'S VAULT, sweating with anticipation as the still, silent air floods the room.

They both jump when they hear not the sounds of a car this time, but rather Viking war horn and an ensuing battle.

PIROUZ

W-what's going on in there?!

OZZY

I dunno, but I really wanna see now.

He reaches over to the door and Pirouz grabs his arm.

PIROUZ

Hey, quit it, Ozzy! If His Highness finds out, do you know what'll happen to us?

OZZY

I'm not scared of Léon.

Pirouz gasps, clapping his hand over Ozzy's mouth as he looks around furtively. They both jump again when they hear a stranger sound, similar to Ramiel's shape changes from Rebuild of Evangelion: You Are (Not) Alone, minus the scream.

They jump again when The Vault's door pounds and almost seems to want to burst open. They press their backs against it but it pounds again, much harder this time, and they struggle to resume their position when the third pound bursts the door right off, seemingly crushing them.

We can't see what came out except for a bright shining light giving way to a kaleidoscope inside The Vault, the images converging to show FOUR WHITE SILHOUETTES forming but before they get more defined, they seem to converge into one FEMALE FIGURE, which then exits The Vault at a leisurely pace.

When Ozzy and Pirouz crawl out from under the door, it is long gone, leaving behind a similarly fading trail of golden stardust.

OZZY

Owww...

PIROUZ

That can't be good...

When he gets over being hurt, Ozzy turns around to look inside The Vault, and we don't see what he sees but he and Pirouz both gasp, terrified.

INT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE

PRINCESS ALMAS is in her room, before a mirror with a large basin full of water and a couple lillies in it. Her hands are in a prayer position.

In her mirror a scene is painted: the kaleidoscope of Pandora's Vault's interior and rather than a bright female figure coming out, a COWLED MALE FIGURE (later revealed to be Erebus, played by Doomer) is visible, making her open her eyes.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Oh my... It's you.

The figure in the mirror is silent, he doesn't even move.

PRINCESS ALMAS

So you're the one guarding Pandora's Vault. Those poor boys, I hope they're not too hurt.

The figure in the mirror is still silent, though he moves just a little. Princess Almas smiles.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I can tell you're kind underneath your cloak of shadow. But you're lonely, too, aren't you?

The cowled figure actually looks down. Princess Almas reaches out to him, her fingers touching the mirror.

PRINCESS ALMAS

That's why you opened The Vault. And with the timing of Elpis's tour...

She gets steadily worried, but then decides to smile.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm sure Sir Doomer and his friends will do well. I wonder what your face looks like past that veil.

The cowled figure then fades out of the mirror, and Princess Almas once again assumes the prayer position and the next scene that shows is LOR SALVIATOR'S SPACESHIP travelling through space, though not long after the PANDORAN WARSHIP is also visible.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes... I'm sure they will be all right... He promised he would return...

She tightly grips her own hands.

INT. PANDORAN WARSHIP

The interior of the warship is made of what looks like wood, covered with tapestries illustrating famous historical battles, primarily in Mongolian style.

At the bow is LÉON, a 33-year old young man with long luxurious blond hair and heroic build and piercing green eyes wearing a wine-red toga-like robe, sits on top of a lion-like throne with his chin on his left fist.

He watches the galaxy pass by at a leisurely pace.

With his other hand he opens a locket whose inner picture we don't see, and sighs. TIGRIS, a man somewhere in his late 30s-early 40s with red hair tied back and tawny eyes, appears wearing a black toga-like robe.

TIGRIS

To think, once upon a time all of these stars--no, the entire universe!--belonged to Pandora. And then The Vault was opened.

Léon closes his locket.

TIGRIS

We must take it all back. Make great our name once again. With you on the throne once and for all, Your Highness.

LÉON

And take it back, we shall. But the galaxy seems rather silent, does it not? Might be a trap lying in wait.

TIGRIS

It's only because they've heard word of our advance. It's been a good millennium, Your Highness. They must be trembling against Pandora's might, even in its shadows.

LÉON

I suppose that's correct.

TIGRIS

Forgive me, Your Highness, but you may rest assured that this time we will be successful.

LÉON

Indeed... those who dare call themselves 'Elpis'...

He balls his fists. Tigris looks somberly on. Léon draws a shuddering breath and finally rises.

LÉON

I'm going to my chambers. Alert me should it be necessary.

Tigris bows and Léon leaves him. PALANG, a burly man of about 37 with auburn hair and deep tan, enters the room and bows.

PALANG

Tigris Khan! I received an alert from the Palace. Pirouz and the ocelot insist they are blameless.

TIGRIS

Is that so?

PALANG

Aye. They say The Vault has opened.

Léon re-enters the scene and both of them bow.

LÉON

Truly? After all this time?

PALANG

Aye, Your Highness.

LÉON

Then alert them of their next task. I will pardon them for their mischief this time since they bore witness to such a rare event in my stead.

PALANG

Of course, Your Highness.

Palang leaves them with a final bow.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME

JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are setting up a satellite dish on the balcony while LENI and XIMENA, now wearing a tinfoil hat, are adjusting the mini radio to the same feed.

Jaguar momentarily winces, Orpheus frantically grabbing hold of the satellite dish.

He then starts stumbling as if dizzy.

He's about to go inside when PIROUZ blocks his way to the door.

Pirouz grabs his wrist and within a flash, they're both gone.

Leni and Ximena don't notice any of this as the latter types up a storm on her laptop.

XIMENA

I can't make heads or tails of these signals. Think the line's dying.

Leni then looks out at the balcony and gets up, hurrying over to the balcony where Orpheus is gently setting the dish down to the side. Ximena follows and is aghast.

XIMENA

Why'd you put the dish down? I was so close!

LENI

Nevermind that... Where's Oscar?

ORPHEUS

I uh... Think he got abducted.

Leni is silent while Ximena shakes her head.

XIMENA

Come on, aliens aren't real.

ORPHEUS

You'd be surprised.

Leni collapses onto her knees in shock.

LENI

First Tommy and them... Now Oscar?

XIMENA

Leni, what are you talking about?

Orpheus looks from one woman to the other and sighs.

ORPHEUS

Leni...

Leni gets up and nods.

LENI

Yeah... I guess we were gonna have to talk about that elephant in the room sooner or later, huh?

XIMENA

What did you call me?

LENI

Sorry, no, that came out wrong, it's just... Well... I'm sorry, I can't do it.

She tags Orpheus, who faces Ximena.

ORPHEUS

Okay... Let me preface this by saying your tinfoil hat is very apropos right now.

XIMENA

Why thank you. A girl's gotta have style.

ORPHEUS

Right, yeah. The truth is... Aliens are involved. And now it turns out there's more than one.

LENI

More than one?

ORPHEUS

Yeah, this one was different. Just grabbed hold of Oscar and bolted. Said "You're coming with me," it was surreal.

LENI

Do you think... It's some kind of warning? Because we're looking for Tommy and the rest?

XIMENA

Slow down, you guys. You're seriously talking about aliens?

ORPHEUS

Yeah. The rest of Elpis hit it so big they got abducted by an alien who organised a galactic tour for them. Man, that still sounds weird to say it.

LENI

But what would this one want with Oscar?

ORPHEUS

I dunno, but let's maybe go back inside.

XIMENA

Yeah... Wouldn't surprise me if they're onto us. Hope you got more tinfoil, we're gonna have to cover the entire apartment in it.

Orpheus helps Leni get up and they all close the balcony door.

INT. PANDORAN WARSHIP

JAGUAR stunned, is now standing before TIGRIS, PALANG, PIROUZ, and OZZY who instead of regarding him with a stoic expression like the others is awestruck.

He nonetheless falls in line with the others, standing at attention and kneeling when LÉON comes into the frame, facing Jaguar.

LÉON

At ease. Good work, Pirouz.

PIROUZ

Your Highness.

LÉON

Now then... Prodigal Son of Black Panther. I, Léon, have come to forgive your sins.

JAGUAR

What sins? Who the hell are you?

TIGRIS

How dare you talk to His Highness like that!

Tigris moves to take action but Léon's raised hand halts him.

LÉON

The sin of not knowing your true birth, your true lineage, a last son of Pandora.

JAGUAR

Uh... I'm not from Pandora, think you got the wrong guy.

LÉON

It is not possible. You simply do not know it yourself. To prove it to you... Palang. Present the heirloom.

Palang in turn takes a small box from his satchel and opens it to reveal a black bangle shaped like a roaring black jaguar complete with brilliant emerald eyes, and he then grabs Jaguar's arm and places it on his wrist.

The bangle's eye jewels glow and even a pulsation is heard like a quickening pulse.

Jaguar tries to take it off but it appears to be tightening around his wrist in resistance, and he groans and clutches his head.

When he stands up, his normally brown eyes now have a distinct green hue. He looks over his hands as if they've also changed.

JAGUAR

What is this? My blood... It feels so hot...

LÉON

It calls out for Pandora. You have awakened, Son of Black Panther, and it is time for you to come home at long last, lead Pandora to glory once again!

Tigris, Palang, Pirouz and Ozzy all clap, while Jaguar looks at them all, confused.

JAGUAR

Uh... That's cool and all, but I'm gonna have to refuse.

TIGRIS

You cannot refuse your king's orders, however revered your bloodline.

JAGUAR

Okay... Elpis being famous all over the galaxy is one thing, but me being alien nobility is just...

Léon, Tigris, Palang, Pirouz, and Ozzy all look away, and the room falls silent.

LÉON

Yes... "Elpis"... Of all the things plundered from The Vault... That loss will forever sting.

Jaguar winces.

JAGUAR

Why... Is my blood boiling...?

LÉON

Because, despite your stubborn ignorance, you felt something at the mention of "Elpis." You know deep in your bones that the name is tainted with terrible loss. Do you mean to tell me it is not so?

Everyone is silent as Jaguar hesitates to answer, his face reddening as he thinks.

JAGUAR CLOSES HIS EYES AS FLASHES OF LENI APPEAR ON THE SCREEN, ENDING WITH HER AND STARMAN AND A HEARTBROKEN JAGUAR.

Jaguar opens his eyes once again, and now he is panting as steam seems to rise from him as his brows furrow and even his eyes seem to glow.

LÉON

You know it to be so! Son of Black Panther, just as you have been lost to Pandora, you, too, have had a loss inflicted unto you! Verily, your soul itself cannot lie.

Jaguar quakes, his own skin seemingly reddening under the tan like he's literally burning up, and for an instant it also looks like his canines have lengthened into fangs.

Ozzy looks especially wowed by his transformation.

Finally, when he stops shaking and breathing heavily, Jaguar's shoulders and back are straight and his face looks almost as stoic as the others', except for a quiet look of determination.

When he speaks his voice is noticeably lower, tinged with old heartache mixed with rage.

JAGUAR

Fine. I will aid you in your revenge quest against Elpis.

LÉON

At last, I knew you would come to your senses, Son of Black Panther! Today, the tides of fate will turn, Pandora will once again know greatness with you!

JAGUAR

But you're gonna do something for me first.

Tigris once again looks about ready to pounce on Jaguar and is again stayed by Léon's raised hand.

LÉON

Of course, Son of Black Panther.

Jaguar looks away, seemingly back towards Earth.

INT. LOR SALVIATOR'S SPACESHIP

LOR SALVIATOR is driving when he notices a message on his dashboard. Frowning, he accepts it.

Meanwhile, THE BAND is having a meeting at the table, Starman is sombre. Erik Rhodes is wearing a band shirt

featuring himself.

STARMAN

Okay, guys... I've been thinking,
and I've made a decision.

ERIK RHODES

All right, let's have it.

STARMAN

You guys are locked in, I can tell.
And I'm really glad to see it.
We're more united than ever.

He pauses.

IESU

So... What? That's a good thing,
isn't it? It's what you wanted.

STARMAN

Yeah, but again, I've been
thinking. Guys... As soon as this
tour wraps up... I'm gonna quit.

DOOMER

What? Are you serious?

STARMAN

Yeah. I know it's not fair to you,
but--

ERIK RHODES

You're goddamn right, it's not! You
know, I can see why Nicky was
pissed off at you. You didn't even
want to be a real rockstar
underneath it all, did you? You
just liked the idea of it, but now
that you have to actually play the
part, you say it's too much and not
what you wanted. Tell me this,
then; was I wrong to stand up for
you?

Silence descends on the table until Erik Rhodes speaks
again.

ERIK RHODES

Look, we've come this far. We're
quite literally out of this world.
Are you telling us that you really
are gonna throw it all away because
of Leni? Are you actually gonna
stoop that low?

Doomer takes a tentative sip of his can of Sucker Punch.

IESU

Rhodes..!

STARMAN

Don't you dare drag Leni into this,
Rhodes!

ERIK RHODES

I'm not the one doing that, you
idiot! You're just trying to pull a
fast one on us, quietly using her
as your excuse! If I were her, I'd
dump your ass right now!

STARMAN

All right, that's it!

He and Erik Rhodes both get up and make to fight each other,
as Iesu tries hopelessly to break them up. Doomer,
meanwhile, is still watching like it's a juicy TV drama.

IESU

Hey, Doomer! Help me out here!

DOOMER

Why? We all knew this was coming.
Too bad we don't have popcorn.

Iesu shakes his head and looks over at them, then finally
steps in and grabs both of them by the ear, instantly
stopping the fight. Doomer is even more interested now.

IESU

All right, that's it. Neither of
you get to talk.

ERIK RHODES

But--

IESU

No buts! I've had it with both of
you being idiots about this whole
thing. Yeah, it sucks that you have
to be away from Leni, and also that
you basically backed the wrong
horse. But guess what? We were
meant for this role one way or
another. God only gives you as much
as you can handle, and neither of
you are in this alone.

Starman and Erik Rhodes both exchange softening glances
while wincing in pain as Iesu holds onto their ears.

IESU

I know it doesn't matter to the
rest of you, but if we're the only
humans in the galaxy to make it

(MORE)

IESU (cont'd)

this far... I don't just wanna be a musician. I want to do something worthwhile. I don't know what that is yet, but I'll figure it out, and no matter what, it's because of you guys I'm out here.

He looks from each of them, still not letting go of Starman and Erik Rhodes's ears.

IESU

Maybe we will break up after all at some point. That's fine, everything has its own timeline. But if we are, I'd rather it be for a real reason, not because we can't handle a challenge.

With that, he lets go of their ears. Doomer claps. Lor Salviator then joins them and clears his throat.

LOR SALVIATOR

Gentlemen... I just received a rather concerning transmission from Pandora. It seems Sir Jaguar has been abducted.

IESU

What? Oscar?

LOR SALVIATOR

Not just that, but he's taken Miss Leni with him.

STARMAN

WHAT?

DOOMER

Wait, he got abducted... And he took Leni with him?

LOR SALVIATOR

I do not know the details, but I have been invited to speak to His Highness the incumbent King of Pandora. I lament that I am unsure how the tour will proceed.

STARMAN

Let's just put the tour on hold, then. I'm guessing they're on Pandora, right?

LOR SALVIATOR

Not presently, they are on the way. I'm afraid it's a rather long trek, about ten parsecs away.

STARMAN

It doesn't matter, we're going there right now. God, who the hell does Jaguar think he is, taking Leni when I'm away!

DOOMER

Woah. He's fired up.

ERIK RHODES

If only he felt this way about the band...

LOR SALVIATOR

I understand, but you will have to be patient. I did indeed have a show planned on every planet in the galaxy, and it doesn't do to just drop them. Please have a seat while I make the announcement.

He gestures for them to remain where they are while he returns to the cockpit. Starman continues seething.

STARMAN

Leni... Of all people, why her? Is he targetting my one weakness, is that it?

The rest of the band don't say anything, only exchange looks.

INT. PANDORAN WARSHIP

LÉON is seated, once again looking into the locket whose contents we don't see, with his cheek resting against a fist.

He then shuts the locket and stands up, walking forward seemingly towards us and inspects.

LÉON

How odd that you remind me so much of her. Maybe I can understand why he brought you here.

The camera then shows that he is talking to LENI, whose arms are being held by PALANG on one side and TIGRIS on the other.

LENI

What did you do to Oscar? And where are you taking us?

LÉON

Nothing untoward, I simply gave the Son of Black Panther what belonged rightfully to him. And you are both
(MORE)

LÉON (cont'd)
coming home, to Pandora. We shall
begin festivities upon landing.

LENI
Fes...tivities?

LÉON
Surely on your planet you still
have weddings with the one who
chose you?

LENI
We-wedding?! You've got it all
wrong, we're not like that!

LÉON
Then why did he only agree to come
with us if you were by his side? Do
you not love him?

Leni is at a loss for words, and her expression goes from
confused to shocked.

LENI
...Oh. Oh no.

LÉON
I see... The House of Black Panther
is still steeped in tragedy
centuries later... To have his
chosen human not love him...

LENI
Look, it's not what you're
thinking, you got it all wrong.
I... I do love him, but not like--

LÉON
I've heard enough. My men will show
you to your quarters, you may groom
and sleep on this long trek to
Pandora. If I'm curious about your
words, I will call for you. Now be
off.

Tigris and Palang escort Leni out of Léon's vicinity and
take her through the hallway leading to a room, where Jaguar
sits staring at the window.

They let her go and leave, and Leni rubs her arms.

LENI
Man, but he's so full of hot air...
Even if he is a king.

She looks at Jaguar, who is still looking through the window
at the passing stars and planets. She walks towards him.

LENI

Hey, Oscar... Is it true? Do you...

He turns to look at her, and she pauses. Her expression then softens with a tinge of sadness.

LENI

Of course. I'm such an idiot, you don't even need to say it. I'm so sorry, Oscar. I must've hurt you really badly.

She looks down. Jaguar then puts his hands on her shoulders, and she looks up, her arms close to her as if in defense.

LENI

But you know this is wrong. I... I can't do this to Tommy.

JAGUAR

Leni.

LENI

No, Oscar... We can't. We shouldn't.

JAGUAR

You don't have to pretend with me. We've known each other for ages. I know what you can't tell him, even if you don't want to admit it to yourself.

Leni stops resisting.

LENI

What I... Can't tell him?

JAGUAR

It's hard for you to be a musician's girlfriend, isn't it? It always has been. You had to deal with being the girl who nearly broke the band, to being the biggest fan... And then Starman and the rest struck gold with the tour... He wasn't there for you, but I was. I saw it, Leni, don't act like I didn't! Don't act like I don't know!

Leni pants, and now drops her arms and her shoulders shake under his hands.

LENI

You're right... It is hard... But I can't tell him that, because otherwise he'll give up...

JAGUAR

You're doing it again, shouldering a burden that's not yours. Don't you get it? You're making yourself miserable to make him happy, and I can't stand it anymore!

Leni gasps, but she doesn't get angry; in fact she sighs softly.

LENI

You're right, huh... Of course you are. But Oscar... This is still wrong.

Now Jaguar sighs, but out of frustration.

JAGUAR

You're deflecting again.

LENI

No, I'm... Not...

She closes her eyes as Jaguar leans closer, and then he himself stops. Leni opens her eyes, and after a quick pause, blushes and covers her mouth as he lets go, her heartbeat audible.

LENI

Oh my God...

For a moment she fiddles, not entirely sure what to do next, then she groans.

LENI

Dammit, this is the part where I dramatically run off but I don't know the layout of this place... And I also don't like those guys...

OZZY

Whaaaat? You don't?

OZZY then crawls out from under the bed, spooking both Leni and Jaguar. He artfully pounces up against Leni.

OZZY

I was just starting to fall for you, too...

Leni makes the most priceless face imaginable.

LENI

Uh, I'm flattered, but... You're just a kid...

OZZY

Don't you go calling me "the ocelot," too, just because I'm a little younger than you. I'm also of noble blood.

LENI

You don't say...

PIROUZ then pops up behind Leni and sighs, spooking her again.

PIROUZ

Everyone on Pandora is of noble blood, Ozzy. You're not that special.

He then looks Leni up and down.

PIROUZ

Are all Earth females as skinny as you? How do you hunt?

LENI

Uh... No, we usually don't physically hunt. Not anymore, anyway, definitely not for food.

PIROUZ

Pfft, no wonder your planet is so weak.

LENI

Hey!

Then Jaguar moves, picking up both Ozzy and Pirouz by their collars like how a parent cat lifts kittens and marches them out of the door, shutting it behind them.

Leni facepalms as he returns to where he was at the start, looking out the window. She feigns laughter.

LENI

This is what I get for being involved with musicians, isn't it? Never a dull moment with you guys...

Jaguar doesn't answer, so she sighs again.

LENI

Well, I guess there's nothing else I can do. I'm just gonna go to sleep, I'm exhausted.

She pauses, but Jaguar doesn't seem to respond, so she very gingerly crawls into the bed on her left side and shuts her eyes.

Meanwhile, Jaguar remains where he is and notices Lor Salviator's spaceship tailing not far behind.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - EVENING

ORPHEUS and XIMENA are alone in the apartment, both of them wearing tinfoil hats. The curtains are drawn, the air is heavy and silent. Both of them are clearly disturbed.

They both jump, Ximena even yelps when the TV turns on by itself and PRINCESS ALMAS comes on the screen, briefly eclipsed by a MOON RABBIT looking curiously at the screen until she picks it up and puts it away.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Forgive me for scaring you. But I saw what happened with your friends. And what lovely headwear!

XIMENA

You're another alien?

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm not an alien, I'm Princess Almas. Of the moon.

XIMENA

What do you want with us?

ORPHEUS

Ximena, chill. You said you saw them?

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes, that was Pandora, a very old planet. Once upon a time it was a mighty empire. It's believed that the very first time Pandora's Vault was opened, the universe itself was born.

Orpheus and Ximena are silent, completely gobsmacked as they exchange looks.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Then one day Pandora suffered The Great Plunder, leading to the overwhelming majority of its inhabitants fleeing across the universe. Sir Jaguar was one such descendent of the diaspora, but he was the most important one; he is an adopted orphan, is he not?

Ximena is shocked to learn this, meanwhile Orpheus keeps his expression as still as he can.

ORPHEUS

...How did you know that?

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm an ardent fan of Elpis, I know everything about you all.

XIMENA

Them's fighting words.

ORPHEUS

So then... What? Why's his being an adopted orphan important?

PRINCESS ALMAS

Because he's the only descendent of the architect of Pandora's Vault. He isn't fully Pandoran but that doesn't matter; without him, Pandora can't fully realise the secrets of The Vault.

ORPHEUS

So... Why are you telling us this? Are we in danger?

PRINCESS ALMAS

(to Orpheus)

You might be, in a manner of speaking. I wanted to warn you ahead of time.

ORPHEUS

Why? What's gonna happen to me?

PRINCESS ALMAS

I must go now. I will contact you should it be necessary.

With that, her image on the TV disappears.

ORPHEUS

What the hell...

XIMENA

The plot thickens, finally... Look, you know what this means, right?

ORPHEUS

...No, I don't.

XIMENA

You and I are gonna have to work together. I'll fit you with the best possible bugs so I can livestream everything you're doing, and I'll make sure you can hear me, too.

ORPHEUS

...why?

XIMENA

Isn't it obvious? It's only a matter of time until we find out that there's something special only you can do! You're the only one who hasn't been abducted!

ORPHEUS

I mean... I guess...

XIMENA

You're feeling left out, right? There has to be a reason. It's all making sense to me.

ORPHEUS

Uh... That's... Good, at least, I guess.

XIMENA

You stay here, I have to go home and get the materials. Whatever you do... Don't answer the door for anyone. In fact, don't even go outside.

ORPHEUS

Uh... Okay, but what if--

Before he finishes that sentence, Ximena is already out the door. He takes off his tinfoil hat and crumples it up.

INT. LOR SALVIATOR'S SPACESHIP

STARMAN is in the cockpit standing beside LOR SALVIATOR, his face flushed and knuckles white from how hard of a fist he's making on the wall.

The dashboard has a GPS system in a language completely unintelligible to us, and the window shows the ship moving quite quickly with the stars whizzing on by and the warship not too far away.

All the while the planet Pandora, a massive orange orb, slowly getting closer and closer, fault lines like tiger stripes becoming more visible as they get closer.

STARMAN

Lor... I'm really sorry, but how the hell is the speed of light so damn slow?

LOR SALVIATOR

Because of your nerves running faster, Sir Starman. I assure you, we will reach Pandora before you know it. For your safety, please join the others at your seat.

Somewhat reluctantly, Starman leaves the cockpit and makes his way towards the seats close to the end of the spaceship, past the lounge, where IESU, DOOMER, and ERIK RHODES are already seated and strapped in.

He sits beside Iesu, who is praying and crossing himself while the others have their eyes closed. When he is done fastening his seatbelt, he also partakes in the prayer ritual.

PIROUZ is briefly visible in a side window running downwards.

Iesu's praying gets more fervent when the spaceship seems to go even faster, and the sudden speed spike even makes the others clasp their hands in a prayer position as well.

The scenes outside the windows show where the stratosphere is penetrated, showing them getting closer and closer to the ground. Starman is the first to open his eyes as he sees the top spires of stone castles overrun with vines.

INT. PANDORA PALACE - THRONE ROOM

PIROUZ arrives first and bows before LÉON who is seated on his throne. TIGRIS and PALANG are on either side of him.

LÉON

Excellent work, Pirouz. At ease, now.

Pirouz joins Palang at his side, standing at attention. LOR SALVIATOR'S SPACESHIP lands and OZZY appears, wearing a band shirt with Lor Salviator on it.

PIROUZ

(to Ozzy)

What are you wearing?

OZZY

Isn't it cool?

PIROUZ

No, you look lame. Take it off before--

No sooner than he says this does Léon turn to look at them, and it's a rather long couple seconds. He then turns around without even so much as a "hmpf." Ozzy grins while Pirouz is gobsmacked.

LOR SALVIATOR and THE BAND enter, and Lor Salviator bows his head at Léon who simply closes his eyes once.

LOR SALVIATOR

It's a pleasure to meet you face to face, Your Highness. Though it is unfortunate it is not under different circumstances.

LÉON

Indeed, you have that tour, but Pandora has urgent matters that take precedence for me.

LOR SALVIATOR

I do wish you congratulations on seeing the opening of The Vault. It's truly an auspicious occasion, surely one that will see good fortune for Pandora.

LÉON

Of course, as you very well know, Pandora has suffered the loss of Elpis, the last treasure of The Vault.

Elpis the band all exchange looks, none of them dare speak.

LOR SALVIATOR

Well, Your Highness... You have two forms of Elpis before you; myself, and the band.

Ozzy lights up at the mention of it, though Pirouz nudges him.

LOR SALVIATOR

But you long for the true form most of all, I can tell. And that's why you have summoned Sir Jaguar.

The band all silently ask each other the same question.

LÉON

Yes, The Son of Black Panther has been away from my watch for far too long. I daresay it's his absence that has been keeping true Elpis at bay.

STARMAN

True Elpis?

LÉON

In that case it's rather fortunate he is not fooling about with your other charges.

ERIK RHODES

Hey!

IESU

Shhh!

LÉON

Especially since so soon after he agreed to come home, he's already expressed interest in being wed.

STARMAN

No...!

LÉON

It's not entirely unusual to take foreign brides, but I've never known one to be human. If I'm to be honest, she has a rare beauty about her. One whose face launches a thousand ships.

STARMAN

Okay, no! Even if you are royalty, you can't just say that about my girlfriend!

ERIK RHODES

No way you actually got that reference...

TIGRIS

Silence! How dare you interrupt His Majesty!

LÉON

Oh? Did The Son of Black Panther steal your woman away from you? My interest is further piqued. If she's desired by so many, then it really would behoove me to notice her myself.

DOOMER

Oooooh...

ERIK RHODES

You are seriously getting too much of a kick out of this.

IESU

Right?

LÉON

But alas, she is not for me to take, not as long as The Son of Black Panther draws breath. Especially as their wedding draws near.

STARMAN

Well, I object to the wedding, full stop. Leni's mine.

Tigris glares at him, as if roaring. Léon simply looks down at Starman from his throne.

LÉON

You know, once upon a time, before
The Great Plunder, when such
disagreements arose, the grooms
would fight one another to the
death and the champion would marry
the bride. A noble tradition, would
you not agree?

LOR SALVIATOR

Pardon me, Your Highness, but I
would rather not watch them fight.
We do have a tour to resume.

LÉON

Of course, I don't plan to keep you
long. In fact, why don't you think
of this meeting as the start of a
new friendship? As you well know,
The Vault bears gifts for any and
all, and perhaps it is time to get
acquainted with this new Elpis,
especially since the new couple are
at least mostly human.

LOR SALVIATOR

Very well, Your Highness, we shall
oblige.

LÉON

Excellent. Then we can begin
preparing for the wedding. Pirouz,
Ozymandias, show our new guests the
way. I would like to speak to Lor
Salviator, Tigris and Palang may
accompany me.

His men all bow and see to their orders. Ozzy inspects Starman in particular, seemingly judging him, before grabbing him by the wrist and carting him off towards the courtyard.

INT. PANDORA PALACE - VAULT CHAMBER

LÉON and LOR SALVIATOR are now before Pandora's Vault, TIGRIS and PALANG guarding the entrance. The Vault's door is open and the kaleidoscope lining is visible, changing every second.

LÉON

We weren't able to close it.

LOR SALVIATOR

I see... So this is what the
interior looks like.

He seems intrigued, not noticing the brief look Léon gives him. But when Léon himself looks forward, Lor Salviator smirks.

LOR SALVIATOR

I know the real reason you've summoned me. Now that the others aren't here, don't let's keep putting on airs, Your Highness.

Léon himself smirks.

LÉON

Of course. Though I'll have you know, my previous speech wasn't entirely barren of the truth.

LOR SALVIATOR

I wouldn't think so, Your Highness. I would of course want nothing more from you than your friendship, but undoubtedly you know that I know the shameful relationship of our families, and you seek restitution.

Léon doesn't respond, he simply maintains his stoic expression.

LOR SALVIATOR

And you no doubt also know that I have no intention of acquiescing, for I have no compunctions about the ever-distant past.

LÉON

True, I am well aware. Despite my age I am not so naive to think that you forfeiting your birthright would be enough to bandage old wounds.

LOR SALVIATOR

I am glad to hear as such, Your Highness. Then tell me, what would you want me to do for you instead? Perhaps...

He gestures with his head towards The Vault.

Then, the kaleidoscope pattern shifts and turns dark, almost impenetrably black. Then, from that darkness the bottom half of EREBUS'S face is visible, but not his eyes. That half of his face looks just like Doomer's goatee.

EREBUS

No. He will not sate me.

LÉON

He who hails from the thieves that wronged you will not?

EREBUS

He does not possess true Elpis, despite wearing her name. Offering him to me would be pointless.

LÉON

I see... What a relief for you, Lor Salviator.

EREBUS

If you can bring me Elpis herself... I will bless Pandora with riches beyond your imagination. Until then... You shall not disturb my solitude.

With that, The Vault's door closes seemingly on its own as Erebus's face is similarly enveloped in the darkness, as if folding himself into it. Shortly after, JAGUAR stands before Tigris and Palang facing Pandora's Vault, seemingly deep in thought, his hand covering his bangle.

EXT. PANDORA PALACE - COURTYARD - DUSK

STARMAN is trying his best to resist OZZY'S efforts, but the lad is just too strong despite his looks. His grunts catch LENI'S attention from a flower bed. Little by little stars are poking out as the sky darkens.

STARMAN

Leni!

LENI

Tommy.

He runs over to envelop her in a hug.

STARMAN

Are you okay?

LENI

Yeah, I'm fine. Uh... It's really you, right, not some... Skinwalker?

STARMAN

Yeah, it's actually me. Look... I'm sorry I caught you caught up in all this. And I promise I'll do everything I can to get us both back home.

LENI

Tommy.

STARMAN

I know my being a galactic superstar's been really hard for you, and now you're caught up in whatever the hell this thing is with Jaguar that Pandora's forcing onto you--

LENI

Tommy.

STARMAN (CONT'D)

But I've made a decision. Leni... I don't care about making it anymore. I was dumb before, it took Erik saying it for me to get it, but he was right. This whole time... I only liked the idea of being a rock star. What I want most of all is to be by your side.

LENI

Tommy!

He stops talking, though Leni doesn't seem mad. If anything, she's sober.

STARMAN

Sorry, yeah, I just missed you. I'm actually kinda glad you're here in that case--

LENI

Tommy. Stop.

STARMAN

Leni?

LENI

I've been thinking a lot, too. And actually I had a similar revelation while talking to Oscar.

STARMAN

Okay, so we're on the same page.

LENI

No, Tommy... I don't think we are. Maybe we just thought we were.

STARMAN

What do you mean?

Leni hesitates.

STARMAN

Cuz like... I don't really wanna be famous all over the galaxy, even just in our town was enough for me.

LENI

No, Tommy. I mean... You know I support you 100%.

STARMAN

Yeah, of course, you're the reason I've gotten so far.

LENI

And I got to thinking, you know, sometimes I didn't feel like I was doing enough and I wondered why when I was doing everything I could. Well... I realised I know what the answer is.

She grabs his hands, and her eyes are shining with tears about to fall.

LENI

Tommy... I want you to be a galactic superstar. You've worked so hard for it and I'm really, really proud of you. I realised I would do anything to support you, except the one thing you absolutely need me to do.

STARMAN

Which is... What?

She takes a deep breath and with a nod, takes her hands out of his.

LENI

I have to let you go.

Silence hits them like thunder. Even Ozzy, watching, is hit by the news.

LENI

I've really been thinking about it a lot, and I think this is the best way forward, for both of us. And I'm not saying this because of Oscar, either. I really do want you to succeed, and anything else I do will just be holding you back.

STARMAN

That's not true, Leni. You're the reason I even got this far, and being away from you was torture.

LENI

You mean you weren't happy knowing all your hard work paid off? All you could think about was me?

STARMAN

Yeah!

LENI

Tommy... That's the problem. I don't wanna be the one holding you back. I love you, and because of that I have to let you be who you were meant to be; a galactic superstar. Please, try to understand.

By now it's evening with more visible stars, and the air around them is full of unspeakable words. Neither of them can look at the other for long, certainly not in the eyes.

STARMAN

Okay, Leni. I understand. But... Do you actually wanna be with Jaguar?

This question temporarily catches Leni off-guard.

LENI

I... Don't know.

STARMAN

Because if you do... That's fine, but don't do it because you feel like you should. Don't... Make the same mistakes we did.

LENI

Yeah... I'll try.

They hug.

STARMAN

I'll do my best, too. I'll keep playing with the guys... Hopefully you'll still tune in and catch us.

LENI

Of course. I'm Elpis's #1 fan, you know.

Then, a light appears to shine in the sky like an exceptionally bright star and even descends upon them.

Leni is especially taken by surprise, not just because of what she sees but whom.

Bright hands that appear white to us reach over to Leni's face and embrace her features like a mother would.

Sure enough, they belong to ELPIS, who though we don't see her face is played by Leni, and has seemingly infinite halos radiating from her head, and her long golden hair moves like she's underwater.

LENI

Hey... I think I know you.

STARMAN

No way...

Ozzy and PIROUZ now join them, similarly mesmerised.

OZZY

It's her...

Immediately they both kneel. Then, Elpis hugs Leni and before she knows it, her feet aren't touching the ground.

STARMAN

Leni...?

Elpis's light flashes brightly then, and when it's gone, so are she and Leni.

INT. PANDORA PALACE - VAULT CHAMBER

The same flash of light now appears before Pandora's Vault, right between LÉON and LOR SALVIATOR, with JAGUAR not far behind. LENI's long blonde hair even longer and she appears to glow golden, just like Elpis.

Jaguar approaches and holds her tightly as The Vault door opens.

EREBUS'S face is still only half-visible from his cowl, but he's nonetheless moved.

EREBUS

Elpis...

Erebus appears to notice Jaguar's bangle, whose eyes are glowing golden.

EREBUS

Master, you have returned as well.

JAGUAR

I have... Erebus.

EREBUS

Then I will fulfill my end of the bargain, should you wish.

Jaguar nods, and the kaleidoscope pattern around Erebus shifts again and he also appears to transfigure with it. The patterns shuffle ultimately into a smaller version of Pandora's Vault within it, itself ultimately silver in colour.

For a while no one knows exactly what to do, and then the door of the smaller Vault opens and once again there's a kaleidoscope formation inside it.

MONTAGE

The kaleidoscope pattern appears to set up each fragment:

A) INT. PANDORA PALACE - BANQUET HALL

Erik Rhodes, chatting up female Pandorans, gets beamed away.

B) INT. PANDORA PALACE - LIBRARY

Doomer is looking at an palace map on the wall, only to get beamed away as well.

C) INT. PANDORA PALACE - CHAPEL

Iesu, praying on the gets beamed away, too.

D) EXT. PANDORA PALACE - COURTYARD

Starman, gobsmacked on the stone bench, finds himself levitating as he also gets beamed away.

E) INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT

Orpheus, with Ximena fashioning several devices onto him, also gets beamed up, all those devices falling to the floor.

INT. PANDORA'S VAULT

Now STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, ERIK RHODES, and ORPHEUS are inside The Second Vault, looking around in confusion as JAGUAR, LENI, LOR SALVIATOR and LÉON look from the other side.

STARMAN

Hey, what gives? Where are we?

DOOMER

I have the weirdest déjà vu right now...

ORPHEUS

Woah... Bout time I got in on this thing.

ERIK RHODES

Haha, you were an afterthought.

IESU

Uh, you guys...

The kaleidoscope patterns return and they appear to be in deep space, even floating. The Vault Door shuts without warning.

INT. PANDORA PALACE - VAULT CHAMBER

JAGUAR, LENI, LOR SALVIATOR, and LÉON are speechless, the Main Vault open with the second sealed shut, Erebus nowhere

to be seen.

LÉON

I do not understand. How will this benefit Pandora beyond our wildest dreams?

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm afraid I don't know, Your Highness. Perhaps it is up to Elpis now.

LENI

Elpis... Oh God, is this my fault?

Léon turns to look at Leni, and to her surprise, bows to her.

LÉON

No, it is not. You were the key to the secret of The Vault. Perhaps it is as Lor Salviator says, it is up to Elpis now.

LENI

But... Where did they go? Oscar, can you call that Erebus guy again?

JAGUAR

All right... Erebus. Come to me.

But Erebus doesn't come.

JAGUAR

Erebus!

Still nothing.

JAGUAR

Quit screwing around and get over here!

As before, nothing.

JAGUAR

Well, that's just great. The hell is the point of being called "Master" if the other person doesn't even listen to you?

Though he's hidden from view, OZZY'S SNEEZE can be heard.

LENI

But I also don't understand... What happened to me?

JAGUAR

The same thing that happened to me,
Len. You've awakened. You are
Elpis.

LENI

I'm Elpis, huh... All because I
told Tommy the truth?

As soon as she says this, ELPIS appears again before her,
and sure enough, when we see her face, she is played by
Leni. She strokes Leni's hair.

LENI

Yeah... You're right. I have to
believe they'll be all right. Even
though I'm not his girlfriend
anymore... They still depend on me.

She looks to Jaguar, who nods.

LENI

And no matter what, you're with me.

LOR SALVIATOR

We are as well, Miss Leni. You're
not alone.

LÉON

Yes, indeed you are not. We can
postpone the festivities should you
both choose.

JAGUAR

I think that would be best, yeah.

LENI

Um, also, Mr Lor.

LOR SALVIATOR

Oh, of course. How rude of me for
taking this long to realise it. I
hope you can forgive me for taking
them away from you without
permission. Honestly, I caused you
much pain, Miss Leni.

Leni gently shakes her head.

LENI

It's true, you did, but if it
weren't for you, I would've stayed
the same forever. I wouldn't have
realised something important. But
that's not what I wanted to talk
about. Mr Lor... I want to find
them with you. I don't want to do
what I did on Earth, I know you

(MORE)

LENI (cont'd)

have the means. So... It's not a galaxy-wide tour, but uh...

LOR SALVIATOR

I understand, Miss Leni. It's not an adequate enough apology, but nonetheless I am more than willing to oblige. I trust you will join us, Sir Jaguar?

JAGUAR

Of course.

Ozzy and PIROUZ both come out of what looks like the ceiling, landing on their feet. Léon sighs.

LÉON

Very well. These two will join you, in my stead. It could very well prove beneficial for their training.

Ozzy cheers, Pirouz nudging him but nonetheless he's also excited for this next adventure. They both bow to Léon.

LOR SALVIATOR

Thank you for your magnanimity, Your Highness. I will of course take the best care of your subjects and hope to return to you with good news.

LÉON

Aye. May you have a fruitful voyage.

LENI

It was nice to meet you, Your Highness.

JAGUAR

Yeah... Thank you for everything.

OZZY

I can't wait... I've always wanted to meet Lor Salviator! Hey, is it true that you own an entire galaxy?

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm not quite there yet, I'm afraid, but in due time.

PIROUZ

I'll secure us a galaxy of our own, Your Majesty. I swear it on my honour.

LÉON

I'm glad to hear it, Pirouz. Until
we next meet.

They all leave the room, and when they leave, The Second Vault stirs open, as if luring us inside it.

The kaleidoscope patterns reflect four different scenes: one is a flowery planette we will later learn is Anthus; one is the very pit of Tartarus; one is Mt Olympus; and one is an expansive desert.

They all zoom away to appear as locations within various points in space, across endless stars, as LOR SALVIATOR'S spaceship travels.

Title card: To Be Continued