

MY FELLOW EARTHLINGS

Written by

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EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

The majesty of the White House appears like a postcard.

CASEY (V.O.)
President's Son's log, July 24,
2025. Greetings from me and all my
fellow Earthlings.

INT. EAST ROOM - DAY

A large ballroom with a goldenrod yellow color scheme.

Against the far wall, a buffet line is set up with American-style cuisine, the desserts at the end.

To the right of the desserts and in the corner is CASEY'S BIRTHDAY CAKE which looks like the bottom of the sea with several COLORFUL FISH in carts on a roller coaster hill: the best of both worlds for Casey.

CASEY (V.O.)
Birthdays celebrate another trip
around the sun, with each candle on
the cake representing how many
we've taken so far. It's a moment
when humans reflect on their lives,
but it's funny how my parents
stopped putting candles on their
cakes.

The PRESS CORPS stand off to the side across from the buffet.

VARIOUS PEOPLE, Congressmen, friends, and others, wait for the First Family to arrive. They stand beside the press.

CASEY (V.O.)
Let me show you what a normal human
10-year-old's birthday doesn't look
like.

To the sound of applause, CASEY JOHNSON (10), a curious and sensitive boy, enters with his parents:

PRESIDENT HARPER JOHNSON (40s), a short man with a tall personality and VICE PRESIDENT ELIZABETH JOHNSON (40s), a statuesque, no-nonsense woman with a litigator's mindset.

A PIANIST plays a lengthy intro to "Happy Birthday" at the piano by the cake.

As the intro concludes and builds to the actual song, Casey's babysitter, BRIDGET MATTINGLY (19), leads everyone in singing when through the door thunders

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MADDOX (50s), a bulldog of a man, flanked by TWO MILITARY MEN.

Everything stops.

Casey glares in disappointment which breaks Bridget's heart.

All eyes are on Maddox who whispers in Harper's ear.

Harper, Elizabeth, Maddox and the Two Military Men rush out.

Bridget sighs and turns to comfort Casey, but he's gone.

JEFF DANTON (22), an ambitious aide with impeccable hair, sees how she's in distress and comes over to her side.

Unseen, Casey peers out from under the birthday cake table.

JEFF

Some birthday party, huh?

BRIDGET

Just another day in the White House
and another day as babysitter-in-
chief.

Casey darts out from under the table and leaves the room.

HALLWAY BEFORE OVAL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Bridget and Jeff scan the hallway for any sign of Casey.

BRIDGET

Casey? Casey? If you come back,
I'll play Monopoly with you and
even let you win.

CASEY (V.O.)

Ah, poor Bridget. She used to be my
best friend. Till I became a pawn:
like the classic Monopoly shoe.
That's a game that trains humans to
grab as much land and money as you
can.

OVAL OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Maddox, Harper, and Elizabeth stand before the HMS Resolute desk under which

Casey holds a finger to his mouth.

CASEY (V.O.)

This was information I could never have gotten, locked in a room somewhere with Bridget, playing a game with fake money to buy fake properties where we pass Go instead of going to jail.

DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF STEVE KRANTZ (30s) joins them, to Maddox's consternation and indigestion.

MADDOX

Sir, what's he doing here?

Krantz's eyes glaze over as he runs a hand through his spiky, already messy hair.

Harper raises a hand to calm Maddox.

HARPER

Krantz is okay to be here. He's like a portable air freshener, always keeping things fresh. Am I right, Krantz?

Krantz takes a deep breath.

KRANTZ

If you say so, sir. What's important, though, is that, with your reelection campaign kicking into gear, a little late I might add...

Now Harper raises a hand to Krantz.

ELIZABETH

I don't know, Harper. I think there are leaks in your administration. Those reporters in there were--

HARPER

Madame Vice President, are you saying they know about the UFO crash in the Mojave?

Casey's eyes go wide at this and has to cover his mouth so he doesn't give himself away.

ELIZABETH

Mr. President, that's not what we call it these days. And what we call it is rare bird.

Harper sighs and turns to Maddox.

HARPER

I'm sorry, general. You always give the best details. Especially when they're about me. You were saying...?

Maddox appears reluctant to speak--his attitude and approach a world apart from Harper's.

MADDOX

We did as you ordered, sir. We shot down the... rare bird.

Harper does a victory dance to Elizabeth's disdain.

Krantz appears like he's about to throw up.

KRANTZ

You shot down a... We can do that?

Harper's eyes light up.

HARPER

With a weapon that can neutralize an engine. Isn't that something? You see, like I always say, there's nothing we can't do!

KRANTZ

But... But... But do we know the ramifications of this? The impact on the poll numbers and otherwise?

Elizabeth is stunned--like she's looking at someone who has invaded her husband's body.

ELIZABETH

You've changed. Where's that--?

HARPER

Hardware store owner whose first slogan was your handyman will be handy in the White House?

(MORE)

HARPER (CONT'D)

And I have been: just changed the lightbulbs in the Oval last week.

ELIZABETH

That was the first thing I made you change. But as corny as that was, I admired the sentiment. You used to be for the working person.

HARPER

I still am. Right, Krantz? Krantz, I'm letting you cheat by giving you the correct answer.

Harper taps Krantz on the shoulder, and it seems like that might cause him to tip over.

ELIZABETH

Krantz is right to be concerned. It's not a feather in your cap for your reelection campaign. If you mishandle it--

HARPER

It could be a thorn, or should I say beak, in my side?

She stares at him searching for an answer.

ELIZABETH

You're banking on it to help you. But how?

She stares at Maddox, forcing the truth out of him.

MADDOX

Alien technology could help with the conflict in the Middle East.

Krantz almost tears his hair out.

KRANTZ

You mean the escalating tensions. When you say conflict, it sounds too much like...

There's an urgent knock on the door.

JEFF (O.S.)

Mr. President?

Harper grimaces.

HARPER

What now? We were just about to give Krantz a nervous breakdown.

JEFF (O.S.)

The press is waiting in the East Room and...

Harper sighs and swings the door open to see a nervous Jeff, with Bridget attempting to hide behind him.

HARPER

Go on. Deliver the news. I can tell from your tone whatever it is must be of grave national interest. Or at least be enough to keep Maddox awake.

JEFF

It is, sir. I mean, it's really important. Bridget lost Casey.

Bridget punches Jeff's back, and he overreacts: "Ouch!"

HARPER

Bridget?

She sticks her head out from Jeff's side.

BRIDGET

Mr. President?

She steps all the way out and at the urging of his finger, slinks into the Oval Office.

The weightiness of his silence prompts her excuse.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

You know how slippery your son is. I always try to keep him in my line of sight...

Casey winks and smiles up at Bridget from under the HMS desk.

She almost swallows her tongue, and Casey enjoys every moment of her discomfort.

She opens her mouth to tell Harper, but he cuts her off.

HARPER

Find him, Bridget. You have an important job, and if you can corral him, more duties may eventually be entrusted unto you. Jeff, run ahead and prep the press.

She opens her mouth to speak, but Jeff shakes his head.

Jeff follows Harper, Elizabeth, and Maddox who march out.

Bridget turns with scorn on Casey who giggles.

BRIDGET

Come on, you! Get out of there.

Casey emerges and stands with an impish grin.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

You're enjoying this! You really want me to be fired.

He frowns.

CASEY

From your big position as babysitter-in chief?

She can't escape his glaring eyes.

BRIDGET

Fine. I'm sorry I said that, but it's just--

CASEY

What? Something you've outgrown? I think we both have.

BRIDGET

Fair enough. But dude, you hiding in here, in the Oval Office where secret meetings are held...

He blushes, staggered by what he's heard.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Casey? What did you hear?

CASEY

I don't know if I should tell you. You haven't exactly been on my side lately.

BRIDGET

Of course I'm on your side, but you know I have to report to your father. Is this something that could get us both in trouble?

He can't hold it in anymore.

CASEY

There's a UFO crash site in the Mojave Desert!

She covers her ears.

BRIDGET

That's top secret information! That you never heard. Got it, bucko?

CASEY

You asked me.

She still digests the news.

BRIDGET

Do you know what this means? This means everything changes. Our understanding of our place in the universe changes.

CASEY

Just imagine what we might learn. Dad's excited. In a way I haven't seen him in a long time.

He realizes something.

CASEY (CONT'D)

That's why we watched "E.T." last night.

FLASHBACK - PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

On the couch, Casey plays a game on his PORTABLE DEVICE and looks up at his insistent father who holds a DUSTY VHS TAPE OF "E.T." before him like it's a rare treasure.

Off Casey's frown, Harper glances at the box and wipes and blows away the thick layer of dust.

Harper searches everywhere in their HOME ENTERTAINMENT CABINET, but there's no VHS player to be found.

He raises his head from a STACK OF JUNK to see his son point with a certain amount of smugness at the TV on the wall.

Casey has found the movie for rent on a streaming app.

BACK TO SCENE.

CASEY

Of course, Dad got called out for important president stuff more times than E.T.'s finger and heart lit up. Funny, though, how at one point in the movie he mumbled, "What a load of crap!" What did he mean by that?

Bridget still reels from Casey's earlier revelation.

BRIDGET

I should tell your father you heard him, but if I did... Casey, you must swear your most serious swear--

CASEY

Give me a break! A pinky swear?

BRIDGET

That you'll never tell your father where I found you.

CASEY

How about if I cross my heart and hope to die?

He crosses his heart with an index finger, and she grits her teeth and balls her hands into fists.

BRIDGET

If you wouldn't be such a handful, maybe your father'd make me an intern.

CASEY

You've got top secret info now, comrade.

She runs a hand through his hair and ruffles it.

BRIDGET

You're something else. Come on, you little rebel. Let's get you back to your party.

CASEY
You mean Dad's press event.

BRIDGET
Case, your dad's up for re-election.

CASEY
But I'm not old enough to vote.

Bridget rubs her temples and takes a deep breath.

INSIDE EAST ROOM - LATER

On a SCREEN behind a platform plays a campaign commercial:

BEGIN MONTAGE:

-- Harper strolls through the Kentucky woods with a FISHING POLE resting on his shoulder.

HARPER
Everything I am today is because of
the lessons my father taught me.

-- He brushes aside some plants to reveal a small pond.

-- He casts his fishing line.

HARPER (CONT'D)
He taught me patience and respect,
which every fisherman knows is the
key to catching any fish.

-- As his line gets tugged on, he winks at the camera.

HARPER (CONT'D)
That's what I've brought with me to
the White House.

-- He pulls up on his fishing pole and reels in a FISH that's
a little too big for such a small pond.

HARPER (CONT'D)
And I'll deliver it again--straight
to your dinner tables.

-- He holds up his catch and grins.

HARPER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'm Harper Johnson, and I approve
this message.

END MONTAGE

Beside the platform, Elizabeth whispers to Harper while both smile at the REPORTERS who stand opposite the buffet.

ELIZABETH

That's a crock, and you know it!

HARPER

Keep smiling, Madame Vice President!

ELIZABETH

About everything, including your father. He was not the model of patience, that's for sure.

Her words strike him deep, causing him to remember.

FLASHBACK - KENTUCKY POND - DAY

A ten-year-old Harper waits for a fish to bite his fishing line, but CONRAD JOHNSON (34) levels his RIFLE at a FISH they see in the pond and shoots.

Harper jumps at the sound of gunfire and falls down, his butt getting soiled by the mud.

As he cries, Conrad reaches into the pond, grabs the fish he shot, and forces Harper to hold it.

END FLASHBACK

Krantz nudges Harper out of his reverie and gets him to move onto the platform to field questions by the Reporters.

Casey and Bridget enter, and as Harper considers an answer, Krantz spots Casey and urges Harper away from the podium.

KRANTZ

There's our birthday boy!

Krantz waves at Casey to come over, and he steps to the back of the platform.

Casey tries to hide behind Bridget, but there's no escaping the attentive eyes of the guests who clap for him.

Casey ascends the platform as CAMERAS FLASH: their lights like a number of spaceships blinding him.

He steps on a STOOL to reach the podium.

SAMANTHA (30s), an intrepid reporter, pushes forward.

SAMANTHA
Happy birthday, Casey. We've
watched you grow up in the White
House.

Several nod, reporters and guests, as they gaze at the PHOTOS
on the wall behind the buffet that show Casey's...

-- (7) wide grin, sitting atop the HMS Resolute desk.

-- (8) tiny smile by the Easter Bunny in the Rose Garden.

-- (9) forced smile behind the entrance gate like he is
behind bars: the White House in the distant background.

Casey sweats with all eyes on him.

HARPER (O.S.)
Remember what we talked about, son.

SAMANTHA
Three years later, what's it like
to be the president's son in the
White House?

Beside the press, Bridget urges restraint which sets him off.

CASEY
It's never felt like home. More
like a prison--four years and no
chance of parole.

Harper looks sick, and Elizabeth gazes down in embarrassment.

Krantz appears out of nowhere and is by Harper, urging him
off to the side.

The Reporters look like hungry wolves: Casey's POV sees them
licking their chops as they scribble in their NOTEBOOKS.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Oh no! Looks like I've caused an
international incident.

GREEN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The walls a forest green color, it's like a cosy living room.

On a couch facing the fireplace, Bridget sits with Casey
who's so bitter he won't look up or respond to anything.

Elizabeth slips into the room unnoticed.

BRIDGET

You know what you're supposed to be
in front of the public.

CASEY

Supposed to be? I'm a ten-year-old
kid! That's what I'm supposed to
be!

Bridget studies Casey's face and grapples with what to say.

Elizabeth's heart seems to break.

BRIDGET

You used to be different. You used
to be--

CASEY

Like some show pony.

BRIDGET

You're a star! The public loves
you, but now, you've decided to--

CASEY

Be myself?

Elizabeth comes all the way in and sits beside Casey.

Harper enters unseen.

Bridget relaxes and smiles at Elizabeth in gratefulness for
her being there.

BRIDGET

How much have you heard?

ELIZABETH

Enough. It seems my boy's having a
tenth-of-a-life crisis.

CASEY

Yep. That's ten years of hard
living. Actually only three of
that, but it feels like we've been
here longer.

Elizabeth puts a hand to the side of Casey's face and strokes
his cheek with her thumb.

Harper watches with keen interest.

ELIZABETH

Talk to me, honey. Why do you feel this way?

CASEY

There are too many rules!

ELIZABETH

To keep you safe, darling.

CASEY

And you and dad are never here.

ELIZABETH

Your father and I are keeping the country safe.

CASEY

But that's not what they say about daddy. They call him... What's the word? Bellycose?

Elizabeth laughs.

ELIZABETH

You mean, bellicose. That's wanting war, but he doesn't. He wants peace for us.

There's doubt in her eyes that's not lost on Casey.

CASEY

Before we came to the White House, I remember how he'd put me on his shoulders at night, and we'd gaze up at the stars. He told me how he felt about them as a kid.

ELIZABETH

And how did he feel?

CASEY

Like anything was possible. Reaching them meant we could one day cure cancer. We could give everyone opportunities. We might even all have flying cars!

Harper makes a grand entrance.

Casey runs to him with a big hug.

HARPER

I did say that, didn't I? Was I on something? Just kidding!

Harper looks to Elizabeth, and they both sigh.

CASEY

Are we still going to Disneyland?

HARPER

Of course, buddy! Let me just square things away in D.C., and we'll head out.

CASEY

And then, no more D.C. stuff?

HARPER

Not while we're there. And if there is, I promise you can ride your daddy like a mule through the halls of Congress! Come to think of it, I'd kind of like to see their reactions to that.

Harper takes out his phone and holds it in such a way where it's obvious he's hiding something.

On his phone's screen, a Presidential Maps app opens up to show this route: "Disney to Secret Alien Landing Site."

Elizabeth gives him a skeptical look.

CASEY

Will you ride Space Mountain with me?

HARPER

Of course! And with my hands up the whole time!

She shakes her head at Harper.

ELIZABETH

You haven't ridden a roller coaster in 20 years.

HARPER

Then it's high time I did again! I haven't had enough things around here to make my stomach queasy.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - PRESIDENT'S SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

Harper sets their SUITCASES on a LUGGAGE TROLLEY.

There's a knock on the door, and he opens it and tips Jeff who rolls the trolley out the door.

Harper heads for the door as well, but Elizabeth gives a gentle tug on his arm.

She goes to their bed and sits and pats the place beside her.

He resigns himself to it and sits next to her.

ELIZABETH

Why're we going to California?

HARPER

To go to Disneyland, my dear. Space Mountain awaits! And so does my queasy stomach.

ELIZABETH

You've got a team handling the rare bird.

HARPER

You think I'm trying to stick my beak in where it doesn't belong.

ELIZABETH

You are the president. But you're also my husband. And my sleep-mate.

She gazes into his eyes until he nods.

HARPER

I don't sleep much these days. The eyeball stickers I place on my eyes aren't really convincing.

ELIZABETH

So, no matter how "funny" you try to be in front of your team, I know the real you and the man I married.

Harper lies back on the bed.

HARPER

I keep seeing the bomb go off from last week.

She stares down at him and moves a stray hair from his eyes.

ELIZABETH

Our son's very perceptive, you know.

HARPER

I still want all those things I told him about--even the flying cars. Especially the flying cars!

ELIZABETH

You're drinking too much lately.

HARPER

I see the men and women who went over there to make a difference, thinking I've got their backs...

She lies back, holds him to her, and rocks him.

EXT. DISNEYLAND GATE - DAY

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS make room for the first family.

Harper, Elizabeth, and Casey pose for a photograph in front of the gate.

Krantz takes a picture with his PHONE.

CASEY

That better be the last one.

Krantz examines the picture he just took and puts a thumb up.

Harper acts more boss-like than he is, playing to his son.

HARPER

Go on! Get out of here!

Contradicting himself, Harper motions for Krantz to come closer so he can whisper to him.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Let's get that out on all our social networks!

KRANTZ

This'll help counter Casey's speech.

Harper gives the okay sign, and Krantz leaves them, marching past a Secret Service Agent.

Harper brings his son and wife together for a group hug.

HARPER

Now let's ride that roller coaster!
Isn't this great, quality family
time?

HARPER'S PHONE BUZZES in his pocket, and he takes it out.

Elizabeth puts up a finger of warning.

Casey's about to explode.

Defeated by a phone call, Harper shrugs and looks pathetic.

HARPER (CONT'D)

It's Maddox. Who's easier to
displease: a 10-year-old or a five
star general? See, there's no such
thing. I just gave him one more
star.

Harper wanders off to the side and takes the call.

Casey's sad eyes gaze up at Elizabeth who pulls him near.

A little down from Harper, Casey follows, Bridget in pursuit.

Harper grows despondent.

HARPER (CONT'D)

We're headed towards a full-blown
war.

He listens and is now energized by what he hears.

HARPER (CONT'D)

This is the chance we've been
waiting for.

MADDOX (O.S.)

Sir, I know how excited you are,
but--

HARPER

I have to be there. This is not
like you going to church: and
general, I'd better see you there
this Sunday.

MADDOX (O.S.)

I still advise caution, sir. We've
only heard from them once or twice
every decade over their secure
device--

HARPER

Left conveniently in Area 51. I'm surprised they didn't leave a post-it with directions.

MADDOX (O.S.)

And with their ship in our backyard, they've begun broadcasting a message to stay away since last night.

HARPER

But the chance that there's a survivor...

Casey's eyes grow big.

He spins around to Bridget.

CASEY

There might be survivors!

BRIDGET

That's something you shouldn't have heard.

As if Bridget finally hears the news for herself, she takes a moment and a breath.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Let's just... I know how disappointed you are.

CASEY

Disappointed? That was last month or the one before it when we were supposed to go scuba diving.

Harper strides over to Casey to deliver some exciting news.

HARPER

Hey pal, sorry, but we've gotta mosey on over to the Mojave: there's a new butte they want the POTUS to see. Ask your mother what new and improved buttes mean to me.

CASEY (V.O.)

This is a classic example of the parental white lie. What they think is in the best interests of their child, candy-coats that lie to save them from ever learning how the real world works.

Casey glances over at Bridget with a sneer.

CASEY
Don't you mean a butt?

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - DAY

SUPER: MOJAVE DESERT, CALIFORNIA

Casey, Bridget, and Jeff sit in the back as the car comes upon a crowd of 100 or so people with signs such as, "Area 51 Part 2," "Aliens are Our Friends," and "E.T. Phone Me" with hearts on the background of the last one.

A line of news vans runs along the checkpoint perimeter: interlocking fences set up by the National Guard.

Their limousine stops at the checkpoint.

JEFF
All this over a new butte?

Casey sputters laughter at the incredible sight.

CASEY
New butt, my ass!

Bridget pinches Casey's leg: "Ouch!"

BRIDGET
Watch your mouth!
(beat)
There're so many leaks in this
administration, I feel waterlogged.

Jeff's stunned.

JEFF
Wow. Did you just leak something to
me?

CASEY
You said leak! I gotta pee.

Bridget makes a half-hearted attempt to grab Casey as he hops out of the car.

JEFF
He can't go far. Not with that
Secret Service Agent out there.

Jeff peers out, intimidated by an ETBI (EXTRA TERRESTRIAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION) AGENT in a vinyl-like suit.

JEFF (CONT'D)

That guy looks like he means
business--like he could break me in
half.

Bridget leans over.

They stare in wonder as they narrate their view.

BRIDGET (O.C.)

That does not look like a Secret
Service Agent--with those extra
thick sunglasses that have a thick
band. It's almost more of a visor.

JEFF (O.C.)

And that does not look like a
standard issue handgun attached to
his belt. More like a checkout
scanner head on a wide barrel.

INT. PRESIDENT'S LIMOUSINE - SAME TIME

Harper's window down, he gawks at the growing press corps.

He rolls it up, furrows his brow, and turns to Elizabeth.

HARPER

How did this happen? How did they
find out? Did Krantz host an alien
reveal party?

ELIZABETH

I don't know, Harper. Maybe the
checkpoint perimeter and row of
tanks parked out there were clues.

HARPER

You're right. You're right. I
should've put my toys away.

He rocks back and forth with his head in his hands.

HARPER (CONT'D)

I should've let my team handle it
with as little fanfare as possible.
But at the same time, we have to be
prepared for any response.

ELIZABETH

This job has turned you into a
pretzel.

She's struck a nerve.

HARPER

I'm no pretzel! It's time to prove
my father wrong.

ELIZABETH

Oh, Christ! This is no time to be
thinking of him. He was always too
hard on you.

HARPER

He's why this humble hardware store
owner ran for mayor and then
reached out and took the
presidential brass ring! I can do
it again! This time, with a whole
galaxy of constituents!

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - OUTSIDE PRESIDENTIAL LIMO - DAY

Casey stares up at the north of six feet ETBI Agent whose
grim expression makes him look as if his smile broke.

CASEY

I gotta pee.

The ETBI Agent says nothing.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Are you a robot?

ETBI AGENT'S POV:

Through the agent's glasses that register different colors
within and beyond the spectrum, Casey appears red and with
this designation above: "Casey, Code Name Explorer, human."

BACK TO CASEY'S POV

ETBI AGENT

Return to your vehicle.

Casey remains still, and it's like a Mexican standoff.

CASEY

Would you like me to go right here?
I can.

Casey starts to unfasten his jeans, and the ETBI Agent waves
his hand in panic: the most human thing he's done.

ETBI AGENT
Go ahead. Just hurry, and don't go
far.

Casey salutes him and ducks into the bushes behind the agent.

INT./EXT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

Bridget grows alarmed as she sees Casey enter the bushes.

JEFF
He'll be all right.

BRIDGET
That agent out there's an ass!

JEFF
Take it easy.

BRIDGET
No. Have you seen that sign?

Jeff peers out and over the left shoulder of the ETBI Agent
at this sign: "Toxic Chemicals Beyond This Point."

He shrugs and points at the ETBI Agent.

JEFF
He's not wearing a mask. If
something dangerous is in the air,
a few feet won't make a difference.

She hops out of the car.

ETBI AGENT
Ma'am, get back in the car.

BRIDGET
What's taking Casey so long?

ETBI AGENT
He's fine, ma'am. Trust me: he
won't be able to get very far.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - PRESIDENTIAL ENCAMPMENT - DAY

On the other side of the motorcade, Harper, Elizabeth,
Maddox, and Krantz sit at a fold-up table behind a
bulletproof screen 100 feet from...

An ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT that looks like two saucers connected
by a pyramid-shaped cockpit.

Severe BLACK SCORCH MARKS underneath it and a major dent along the cockpit.

SEVERAL STAFF patrol the perimeter with EQUIPMENT for analyzing the soil and the air.

There's a ROW OF TANKS along the side, 50 feet away.

Something surrounding the craft has Harper's rapt attention.

ELIZABETH

Are you okay?

HARPER

I could swear the area around the craft grew...

Maddox nods.

MADDOX

Clearer. Like the forcefield came down. If only for a moment.

HARPER

Maybe it's growing weaker. We have to be vigilant--find the right moment to get in there.

Elizabeth is troubled by her husband's eagerness.

ELIZABETH

And do what?

Harper angles around the bulletproof screen and marches a few steps toward the ship.

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS #1 and #2 run to intercept Harper, but he holds his hands up for them to stop.

MADDOX

Come back, Mr. President!

ELIZABETH

Christ on a cracker! The general just said to be cautious, and here you go doing the opposite.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - SAND DUNE - DAY

Casey emerges from the bushes.

CASEY (V.O.)

Being my daddy's son, I chose to explore. Human curiosity is, well, very curious. What didn't kill the cat, because he's got nine lives, was fair game.

Amazed to see the alien ship, he tumbles down a sand dune.

He gets up, brushes sand out of his hair, face, and clothes and approaches the ship in awe of the saucers that glow and oscillate with lights that have colors beyond our spectrum.

WALT approaches Casey, obscured by the oscillating lights:

Taller with features that could be from all races of humanity and wearing a t-shirt from Disneyland.

Walt looks human except for a bright light that emits from his cheek.

As Walt draws closer, Casey takes a few steps back.

The two halt and stare at each other.

CASEY

Is that your ship?

When Walt speaks, it's as if his voice has been through a filter that makes it higher and purer than a human voice.

WALT

Yes. You don't need to be afraid of me.

Casey faces Walt.

CASEY

I'm Casey. What's your name?

Walt speaks, but it's an OVERPOWERING SOUND THAT'S GRATING: like all of the alphabet smooshed together and whooshed out.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Have you been to Disneyland?

Walt nods.

CASEY (CONT'D)

How about I call you Walt?

He smiles--too perfect for a human--and nods.

WALT
Like your Walt Disney!

PRESIDENTIAL ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Maddox rises and faces Harper and Elizabeth.

MADDOX
Mr. President, I cautioned you
against such a bold move, but you
insisted.

Harper meets Maddox's serious eye contact.

HARPER
And now?

MADDOX
And now, with the advent of these
warning broadcasts amid other
clues, we think there must be a
mother ship.

ELIZABETH
And mother must be pissed!

Harper laughs off their concerns.

HARPER
They've been surveying us for
decades without doing anything.
It's like having a peeping tom for
a neighbor.

ELIZABETH
Decades?

HARPER
So why would they want to fight us
now?

ELIZABETH
You shot down one of their ships!

SAND DUNE - DAY

Casey steps closer, and it's like he's standing at a doorway
or portal: on one side is Casey and his world as the
president's son, and on the other is Walt with his ship.

Never the twain shall meet?

The glow from Walt's cheek mesmerizes Casey.

Walt smiles again: such a warm, alluring smile.

Without knowing it, Casey continues to drift closer to Walt.

WALT

My face covering must have worn off.

CASEY

You mean makeup?

WALT

In your manner of speaking, yes. I have to apply it over my whole body before every scouting trip.

CASEY

You're a Boy Scout?

Casey stands about three feet from Walt.

Walt LAUGHS, and it is more like a HAPPY MELODY than a laugh, but then his sigh is like a SAD SONG.

WALT

My parents didn't want us to meet: that is, they didn't want me to expose my identity to any human.

The two are now a couple of feet apart.

CASEY

Sounds like you're worried about getting in trouble. Sounds like me-- or used to be until...

They are now a foot from each other.

WALT

Your father disappointed you.

Walt's insight overwhelms Casey--like someone sees him for the first time.

CASEY

Yes. How do you know?

WALT

I know about humanity.

CASEY

You've been scouting us for years.

WALT

Centuries. I, personally, have been for about five years. And I've come to appreciate so much about your species.

CASEY

But?

WALT

Now you're the one reading me! But there's the darker side--like when your people caused my ship to fall from the sky.

CASEY

That sounds like my father these days.

WALT

Have you run away from him?

CASEY

I wish I could sometimes. But the Secret Service guys would bring me back.

(chuckles)

If Bridget couldn't.

Casey's inches from Walt.

The glow from his cheek is a MAGNIFICENT SUNBURST.

WALT

If only you could fly away!

Walt winks, and WINGS, the whitest and fluffiest imaginable, spring out from behind his back and spread until they cast a sizable canopy over the two of them.

CASEY

Wow! That's amazing! It must be killer to have those!

Walt's taken aback.

WALT

No harm will come to you. Wanna try them out?

A grinning Casey allows Walt to hold him by the armpits.

Casey gives a nod, and Walt leaps with him into the sky.

PRESIDENTIAL ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Harper goes around the bulletproof screen, too fast for Maddox, and paces 50 feet before the alien shuttlecraft.

Secret Service Agents #1 and #2 edge closer.

MADDOX

Mr. President, there's still so much we don't know about the aliens' capabilities.

HARPER

If they had another ship with lasers, they'd have already obliterated us if they wanted to. Or, at least, given us a nice trim. Maybe a little cut off the top of our continent.

Maddox looks like his heartburn is out of control.

MADDOX

You're making a lot of assumptions!

At the table in the tent, Elizabeth reads a TOP SECRET FILE while Maddox looks lost in the space between them.

ELIZABETH

Things were much simpler during the days of Area 51.

Harper draws closer to the craft to Maddox's dismay and dares to reach out a hand.

The Secret Service Agents rush toward Harper.

MADDOX

Mr. President, don't!

Harper's hand reaches a point in the air where it can go no farther, and he acts like he's been jolted by electricity.

Secret Service Agent #1 looks ready to suffer a heart attack, but Secret Service Agent #2 points to Harper's smile.

Maddox rushes to Harper who stands still and shrugs.

MADDOX (CONT'D)

Mr. President, that's not funny!

ELIZABETH

Yes. You got our hopes up!

HARPER

Good one, Madame Vice President.
That would've set you up nicely.

Maddox, stuck in the middle of those two, appears tortured.

HARPER (CONT'D)

We're okay, General. That's how
people in a well-worn marriage talk
to each other.

Maddox gets a call in his earpiece and grows ashen.

MADDOX

Mr. President, we've lost a visual
on Explorer.

With a concerned look, Elizabeth turns to Harper.

He points to Walt flying around with Casey who's having the
time of his life.

INSIDE THE FORCEFIELD - CONTINUOUS

Held by Walt in the air, Casey waves at his father who, in a
daze, waves back.

CASEY

This is so cool! Look at my dad: he
seems so small.

WALT

Flight gives you perspective.

They zip past Harper's outstretched hands that can't pierce
the forcefield and zoom up to view the CRAGGY MOUNTAINS.

CASEY

Wow! You can do this anytime you
want. It must be amazing to be you.

WALT

From my perspective of Earth, I
think being a human boy must be
amazing.

Walt flies down and lands beside his ship.

CASEY

Try being the president's son for a
while. We used to live a simpler
life, and he used to be more
careful. I guess I was, too.

The oscillating lights from the saucers bathe them in an unnatural glow--as if Casey is now an alien.

WALT

Humans can make irrational choices.

CASEY

Like running toward an alien spacecraft?

There's that perfect smile again from Walt.

WALT

I am from a morally logical species.

CASEY

You choose what makes sense. But what do you mean by morally?

WALT

Our choices should also include our emotions to assess the correct balance.

CASEY

You're Spock and Kirk! They're characters on a--

WALT

TV show that shows a positive vision of the future for your world.

Casey's jaw drops.

CASEY

How do you know so much about our pop culture?

WALT

It's the greatest gift of humanity and a main focus of my expeditions. But what I was saying is I can't take big risks simply because it isn't in my nature. Our hope has been to watch over humans and help them to be morally balanced.

CASEY

But you just took a big risk! You flew with me in front of my dad. Unless, maybe you meant to do that?

Casey's assessment catches Walt off-guard. He studies his young human friend with great interest.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Maybe you've got parents who're watching us now.

Walt's eyebrows go up, much like Spock, only a sharp light emanates from his eyes.

EXT./INT. MOTHER SHIP - SPACE

An arrowhead-shaped giant vessel with plate-like structures like the armored scales of an anteater hovers.

Inside, it's like an artificial wooded landscape, everything resembling something out of an alien forest.

Walt's parents, ten feet in height, peer down at a SMALL BASIN OF CLEAR LIQUID.

Middle-aged, around 200 Earth years, GABRIEL and ANGELICA (their human names) are bright like humanoid-shaped suns-- their wings spread with a rainbow of colors.

As older members of their species, they have pronounced, bony ridges above their eyebrows: males such as Gabriel have even more pronounced ridges.

Angelica pours a dark liquid, a drop or two of Walt's blood, into the basin.

They speak in English with their species' subtitles: a mixture bordering on Elvish with Chinese-like characters.

ANGELICA

He's flying with the human boy? In front of the Earthlings?

GABRIEL

You'll recall, I proposed abridging his stay.

ANGELICA

And you'll recall I advised against revealing this ship to the humans.

Gabriel nods at the soundness of the logic.

GABRIEL

Which could have occurred if we drew closer to Earth. I worry that our son wants to be of their flesh.

They peer down at the blood in the clear liquid: it remains in the center and does not move within the gelatin surface.

ANGELICA

He is still in flux.

GABRIEL

He could be either hyper emotional or hyper logical. I had my own struggles with this at his age.

Angelica gives a grim nod.

ANGELICA

You still do. Exposure to an Earthling might sway him one way or the other.

A beam of light, a laser dewdrop, forms above the basin, and the head of a SUPREME COUNCIL male appears.

He wears a golden grill that covers his head.

GABRIEL

Father?

SUPREME COUNCIL

I tried as long as I could, against my own better judgment, to keep your "accident" a secret.

ANGELICA

It appears to no longer be one.

SUPREME COUNCIL

This incident threatens to disrupt our people's place in the cosmos. There are many who believe if humanity gets its space wings too early, it could lead to the Great Destabilization Period predicted by our ancestors.

GABRIEL

Please, Supreme Council, we pray you speak in the extremity.

SUPREME COUNCIL

At the least side of the scale, our scouting program is in jeopardy. Not to mention, Gabriel, your promotion.

Gabriel's eyes burn red.

Angelica grows dark as her light dims for a moment.

ANGELICA

And we could then no longer
intervene to save humanity from her
follies?

SUPREME COUNCIL

Take care of this immediately, or
we may all be cast in a dark place!

The DEWDROP blinks out.

GABRIEL

We must use any means necessary.

She takes issue with his tone and grows concerned.

ANGELICA

We must follow the morally logical
path. Let's hope our son will
follow one consistent with his
training.

GABRIEL

It is in his blood.

ANGELICA

That's what troubles me.

As they look back down on the basin, the blood juts out in a
dramatic streak that runs from left to right.

They grow alarmed, the lights from their bodies blinking.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - OUTSIDE WALT'S SHIP - DAY

As he receives a video communication on his contact lenses,
Walt turns away from Casey.

GABRIEL (O.S.)

Son, you know what you must do.
It's the only way the humans will
choose the morally logical option.

Walt turns back to Casey who wears a smile of innocence.

CASEY

Is everything okay?

Walt scrunches up his face like he's in pain.

WALT

I can feel my parents' disapproval.

CASEY

All the way from their... mother ship?

Walt nods.

WALT

My adolescent years are different from yours.

CASEY

They can't be more painful than mine.

WALT

I'm expected to grow up to be a morally logical adult.

CASEY

Sounds like my parents' expectations for me.

WALT

The stakes are higher for my species. Some of us, you should know, go astray. We veer too far emotionally or logically and become either a raging beast or a coldly psychotic creature.

Casey's eyes light up.

CASEY

Fallen angels?

WALT

You've come to include us in your myths. And my actual fall from the sky was because I acted inappropriately--stayed too long and hung around too close to where there was danger.

CASEY

I've been bad lately. I went where I wasn't supposed to go. But what does Dad expect when he does the same thing?

WALT

My parents demand perfection. I represent my father who hopes to get a promotion with the exploration faction. He wants to move us to a neighboring galaxy that has a planet you'd consider paradise.

CASEY

Let's face it: when you're a kid, you've got all these expectations placed on you. Our parents' dreams... But they aren't ours.

WALT

When you put it like that, it makes one think.

Casey nods.

CASEY

That's hardly moral... and certainly not logical.

Walt ponders this as he studies Casey.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - DAY

Bridget and Jeff sit in the leather seat, a space between them large enough for a ten-year-old.

Bridget's head hangs low from worry--she can't bring herself to look at Jeff.

He reaches out and takes her hand. It's a sweet moment, but as if he's touched a hot potato, he pulls his hand away.

JEFF

I'm so sorry. That was...

She leans over and kisses him on the lips.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Wow! I mean... Hmm, that was interesting.

BRIDGET

Don't get any ideas. I just seized my rosebud--in the moment.

JEFF

"Gather ye rosebuds while ye may?"

Her smile wilts on the vine as she clenches her fists and beats on the back of the chair in front of her.

Jeff removes his EARPIECE and lets it dangle.

JEFF (CONT'D)
They'll find him. And if you're
worried about toxic chemicals--

BRIDGET
What if Casey's right?

JEFF
About the toxic chemicals?

BRIDGET
About there being survivors from
the alien ship.

Jeff looks like he's trying to add one plus one and figure out how to make the result a billion.

JEFF
Are you saying...? An alien ship
crashed over...?

She shakes her head and gives a tap to his forehead.

BRIDGET
You're so adorable!

JEFF
And you think if an alien survivor
sees Casey...

BRIDGET
Now you're on board my wave length!

The car door flies open, and the ETBI Agent hunches down and peers with intensity into the car.

ETBI AGENT
Jeff, you need to haul ass over to
Eagle One. The press is gathering
like a bunch of buzzards.

Jeff hops out and dashes away.

ETBI AGENT'S POV:

Through the agent's glasses, Bridget appears as a FLASHING BRIGHT RED SHAPE: "Bridget, Code Name Second Momma, human" and another message below: "Beware: extremely volatile."

BACK TO BRIDGET'S POV

The ETBI Agent grows sheepish.

BRIDGET
You lost him, I'm guessing?

ETBI AGENT
That'd be correct.

BRIDGET
He can't go far, you said? He'll be fine?

The ETBI Agent shrugs.

ETBI AGENT
Stay in the car, Bridget.

The ETBI Agent smiles at her.

Bridget scowls as he shuts the door.

Alone inside, she curls into a fetal position and whimpers.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - OTHER SIDE OF MOTORCADE - DAY

Jeff stands on the summit and peers out at the gathering storm of press.

Major network news vans park down a ravine 50 feet away.

In a line, reporters make their way up the only accessible road which is the one occupied by the president's motorcade.

Harper appears behind Jeff and startles him with a pat on the back and points to the snaking press line.

HARPER
See that snake? Tame it.

JEFF
Tame it? I'm not the press secretary!

HARPER
If you ever want to be, son, you'd better step up now. Tame the snake. Say it.

As if hypnotized, Jeff nods.

JEFF
Tame the snake.

Harper turns to go when Samantha, the reporter from earlier, shouts out a question to stop him.

SAMANTHA
Mr. President, are you still
sticking with your story about why
you're here?

Harper nods.

Eager to go, Samantha's shouted questions root him in place.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
I've received word from a credible
source that you brought your son.
Is a geological formation what he
wants to see on his birthday?

Jeff jumps in front of Samantha before she can edge closer.

JEFF
Kindly step away.

Harper gives Jeff a thumbs-up.

SAMANTHA
Don't the American people have the
right to know what's happening in
one of their national parks?

Her question makes Jeff reconsider.

JEFF
Give us some space and time. We'll
have a press conference in an hour.

HARPER (O.S.)
A press conference? Am I hearing
things now on top of my
hallucinations?

Jeff looks over to see Harper squinting at him.

SAMANTHA
An hour?

Jeff smiles and nods to maintain confidence that's not there.

Harper comes back, grabs Jeff, and ushers him away.

HARPER
Are you out of your mind?

JEFF
Possibly, sir.

HARPER
And how did that reporter know my son came along? We had a decoy back at the White House. There's no way that wasn't convincing!

FLASHBACK - EXT./INT. WHITE HOUSE - CASEY'S ROOM - DAY

The second floor window shade reveals a head's silhouette.

Inside that room, a BRIGHT LAMP points to a CARDBOARD CUTOUT of Casey that has a button on its chest: "Vote for My Dad!"

END FLASHBACK

Harper shakes his head, disbelieving that didn't work.

Jeff appears like he wants to leave his body.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL TENT - DAY

Harper, Maddox, Elizabeth, and Krantz sit around a table.

Harper bangs his fist on the table in a sudden outburst.

HARPER
They've got my son! Tell me,
General, for all the marbles that I
still have left, you've established
the source of energy for that
godforsaken forcefield?

Krantz keeps staring down like he's about to be sick.

Maddox rests his bulldog mug on his clasped hands.

MADDOX
We have. It looks like it's the
alien himself. Those saucers, with
their lights, seem to indicate the
ship is the power source, but the
origin point of the forcefield is
on the alien like he's wearing it.

HARPER

Let's torch the son-of-a-bitch!

Elizabeth's horrified.

ELIZABETH

Not with him so near our son.

Maddox lets a beat play between husband and wife.

MADDOX

The forcefield pulses allow for a micro second of vulnerability. They'll permit us to fire our energy reduction laser at the alien. That might possibly wound him, but it'll be harmless to Casey if we micro focus the beam.

Harper considers this with a bite of his knuckle.

HARPER

You have my blessing. The sooner we get it done, the sooner we tamp down the press hysteria. And keep Krantz's heartburn from becoming a nuclear meltdown.

Elizabeth grabs Harper's hand--not a loving but a desperate gesture as if to shake her husband awake.

ELIZABETH

Our son's life is on the line. No offense to the General, but all this cockamamy talk about micro focusing the energy laser doesn't mean Bo-diddly-squat when it comes to our son.

MADDOX

No offense taken, Madame Vice President. If it helps at all, the weapon has been tested thoroughly.

ELIZABETH

In a laboratory!

HARPER

Let's manage this operation quietly. I don't want any more alarm bells going off before the press conference. Mine, especially-- I wear them around my neck like a cow wears a cowbell.

What Harper said last makes Krantz lose his breath.

KRANTZ

This is not a campaign stop, Mr. President.

HARPER

Jeff stepped up and made a promise to the press. He took initiative, and we should admire that--so I've been told.

KRANTZ

Jeff? The guy who fetches our donuts and coffee?

HARPER

I've been meaning to say you need to lay off the pastries.

Krantz appears ready to cry as he mouths, "Goddamnit!"

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - OUTSIDE WALT'S SHIP - DAY

Casey marvels at the design of the ship.

Walt guides him closer to one of the saucers.

CASEY

Is your ship too badly damaged to fly?

Walt nods.

WALT

What your people did is an incredible leap forward.

Casey eyes a TUBE that runs vertical along the side of the saucer that continues to spin its light.

CASEY

Do you think we got the technology from your people?

WALT

That would be another reason for us to retreat into our world.

CASEY

But think of all the good we can learn from you.

Walt's light, now from his cheek to his mouth, dims.

WALT

You're not ready. Without my people, you would've already destroyed yourselves through nuclear war.

Casey absorbs the weight of Walt's words and examines the tube which reaches down to a few inches from the ground and is the width of two humanoids.

WALT (CONT'D)

It's a life-pod that would jettison me back to, as you'd say, the mother ship.

CASEY

What do your people call it?

WALT

A homeward temple: that's as close as I can interpret it.

CASEY

A temple? It makes you sound very...

Walt taps a few buttons on the EXTERIOR BLINKING CONSOLE.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Religious.

Casey steps closer, and a hatch opens.

He studies the INTERIOR CONSOLE which does not flash.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Too bad it doesn't work. You can't get back to your parents.

Walt has the perfect poker face.

He gestures for Casey to step inside to examine it closer.

Casey looks across from the ship and sees a U.S. AIR FORCE JET scramble in the sky.

Casey doesn't see Walt's look of concern and steps inside.

Walt follows him with a frown asking for forgiveness as the panel doorway seals shut.

INSIDE LIFE-POD TUBE

Casey blinks in dismay at Walt.

The INTERIOR CONSOLE FLASHES, and Walt touches a few buttons.

WALT

Grab onto the handles. And put your
feet inside the two below you.

Walt models what to do. He grasps two handles above him and
inserts his feet into two below.

A forcefield bubble generates around him.

Walt shouts, which comes out muffled.

WALT (CONT'D)

Do it now!

Casey gets his hands into the handles but not his feet as the
tube WHOOSHES UP in the most extreme elevator ride ever.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - PRESS CONFERENCE - MOMENTS BEFORE

At the top of the hill before the presidential encampment,
Harper stands on a PLATFORM at a PODIUM.

He gazes down at the SEA OF REPORTERS in the valley.

SAMANTHA

Mr. President, what're you trying
to hide from the American people?

HARPER

We're not hiding anything. But if I
told you, I wouldn't be very good
at it, now, would I?

SAMANTHA

Clearly you didn't want us to know
your son came with you. It seems
like something unexpected has
happened at this site.

HARPER

No--nothing unexpected. Now having
strawberry cream cheese for bagels,
out here, that would be unexpected.
As for our son...

An EXCITED MURMUR from the crowd makes Harper stop. He turns
to look behind him at what the reporters point at:

A LONG TUBE shoots up into the sky, leaving a FLAMING CONTRAIL brighter than a dozen rockets.

A swarm of reporters hurl questions along the lines of this one: "Did the alien take your son?"

Harper sinks to the ground and sits in a daze.

INT. LIFE-POD TUBE - SKY AND THEN SPACE

Casey flounders, grasping for dear life to the handles.

Walt releases his hands from his handles and unhooks his feet as the forcefield around him disappears.

He spreads his wings just enough to maneuver to Casey whose legs fly up toward the top of the tube.

Casey's fingers, one at a time, lose their grip.

Walt battles the forces tugging at him.

Down to an index finger for each hand, Casey almost succumbs to the g-force, but

Walt pushes Casey down and nudges his hands and feet into position in their respective handles and backflips away as the forcefield snaps into place.

Walt grits his teeth and zips back into his position across from Casey as his forcefield activates.

The two look at each other with a complex mix of emotions.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL TENT - NIGHT

At a table, Harper, Elizabeth, Krantz, and Maddox watch a live news feed on a PROPPED-UP TABLET:

CNN NEWS FEED

Casey exits the presidential limousine.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)

As you can see, the president's son has traveled with him and seems to know something about the true nature of this trip to the Mojave Desert.

A flustered ETBI Agent allows Casey, his pants unbuttoned, to duck into the bushes to pee.

SAMANTHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Voters have questioned this
 president's fitness for office.
 After watching this, they may
 question his fitness as a father.

On the other side of the bushes, Casey tumbles down the sand dune to land a few feet from Walt.

SAMANTHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 His ruse successful, Casey meets
 what from afar seems like a human
 boy his age. But on closer
 inspection...

The camera zooms to focus on the light from Walt's cheek.

SAMANTHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Is an extra-terrestrial--a survivor
 from the crashed spaceship.

A new shot shows Walt flying with Casey.

SAMANTHA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 An alien from another world with
 what one might describe as angel
 wings.

The next shot is the life-pod tube zooming into the sky.

Samantha faces the camera with a grim assessment.

SAMANTHA (ON TABLET) (CONT'D)
 But is this really an angel? It
 looks like E.T. isn't so friendly
 after all.

END CNN NEWS FEED

No one speaks for some time. They look for cues from Harper.

Finally, he bangs on the table to punctuate his words.

HARPER
 Get these alien bastards who took
 my son!

Harper's eyes, as if laser beams, aim at Maddox's head.

Maddox gazes down at his hands, clears his throat, and faces his distraught leader.

MADDOX

We have a visual of their mother ship from our satellites.

ELIZABETH

But?

MADDOX

But it's too big for us to neutralize. Plus, there are too many unknowns concerning their offensive capabilities.

Harper almost upends the table with a sudden movement.

HARPER

I want a solution! Now! And if each of you don't come up with one, you can walk or hitch a ride all the way back to D.C.

KRANTZ

What if we examine the shuttlecraft?

Harper points an annoyed finger at Krantz that then bobs up and down at the possibilities.

Encouraged, Krantz smiles and continues.

KRANTZ (CONT'D)

There's no forcefield now that the alien's gone, right?

ELIZABETH

My baby's up there on a strange ship in space! I can't believe I'm saying that.

She covers her tears.

HARPER

She's right. Now that they have Casey, who knows what they might do.

EXT. MOTHER SHIP - SPACE

Earth's a ball in a billiards game set against black velvet.

Mother ship maintains its orbit: frozen in time.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - CASEY'S CELL - SPACE

The roomy area, fenced off with a forcefield that glows like reflected glass, is made to resemble a human child's bedroom.

A bed has a bedspread with the look of a video game console.

CASEY (V.O.)
Betrayal is a dish colder than ice
cream, and it only comes in one
flavor: yuck! It's the main thing
that keeps humans from advancing,
and yet here a supposed angel was
doing this to me.

Wearing TINTED GLASSES, Casey frowns at Walt who stands on the other side of Casey's cell, his body fully shining its light but dimmed somewhat by the forcefield and the glasses.

Walt steps closer to the forcefield, hesitant to overpower Casey with his brilliant glow.

WALT
Do the glasses protect your eyes?

Grumpy, Casey faces Walt and takes off the glasses.

The glare from Walt's body makes Casey squint in pain--so much so that he puts the glasses back on.

A giant TV screen spans a wall, and a CUBE sits on a table.

WALT (CONT'D)
That's the universal controller.
You can shape it into whatever kind
of controller you want.

Casey manipulates the CUBE until it becomes a game console controller, and he presses a button which makes an endless list of video game choices pop up on the TV screen.

He shakes his head and shifts the cube into a TV remote. A push of a button brings a variety of Earth shows and movies.

He throws the controller down, and it turns back into a cube.

Walt ponders what to say.

WALT (CONT'D)
Casey?

CASEY
What?

Walt sighs.

Casey looks over to the side of his cell to see a large rectangular box, like a restaurant's pizza oven, with pictures on top of a variety of Earth dishes.

WALT
If you're hungry, that food atoms
builder--

CASEY
Food atoms builder? As in, F.A.B.?

Walt rubs his nose.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Maybe it should be F.A.T.?

It takes a moment, but Walt finally cracks a smile.

WALT
Just let me know if there's
anything you need. I want to make
sure your stay--

CASEY
My stay? Are you out of your alien-
freaking-mind?

Casey marches to where there's only inches between them.

WALT
Your stay is not meant to be
permanent.

CASEY
What was all that talk about our
parents' dreams versus ours?

WALT
It was real. But what is also real
is that this situation has put my
family, all my people, into
trouble. It was difficult to
balance the emotions I felt for my
friend with the logic of this
intergalactic problem.

CASEY
You're talking about your shuttle
on Earth. For humans, we think it's
more important to be honest with
each other. If that person's a true
friend.

WALT

I still have a lot to learn about human emotions. Nevertheless, your people must back away from the shuttle so we can destroy it.

CASEY

That was my father's dream: to help us advance technologically.

WALT

Your parents are your world's leaders. They must be reasonable.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL TENT - NIGHT

A BOTTLE OF KENTUCKY BOURBON gets poured into a BIG GULP CUP.

The man hoisting the bourbon to his lips: POTUS himself.

Harper and Elizabeth eat meatloaf and mashed potatoes.

He shovels food down his gullet while she stares at him.

ELIZABETH

How can you eat at a time like this?

Harper gestures for her to eat and mumbles, his mouth full.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

You already said it. We should accept their terms. So, why aren't we?

Harper gulps from his cup.

HARPER

It's more complicated than that. Not in a pretzel kind of way but more like one of those rubber band balls.

She stares in disbelief as it sinks in.

ELIZABETH

You mean it's more complicated when you throw in the war in the Middle East.

He raises his fork and shovels more food in his... *big, ugly, sloppy mouth.*

He catches her fierce stare and shrugs and mumbles again with food coming out.

She scoops up some mashed potatoes, rears back her hand, and while he mouths "no, don't do it," she hurls it at his face.

A SECRET SERVICE AGENT comes running, but Harper shakes his head and wipes the food off his face with his LINEN NAPKIN.

The Secret Service Agent glances at Harper who indicates he's fine, and the agent leaves.

HARPER

If you must know--

ELIZABETH

Yes, of course, I must know! You think somehow that alien technology will give us the upper hand.

HARPER

See, I don't even need to talk.

She gives a withering stare as desert winds rustle the tent.

HARPER (CONT'D)

But I will. That neat little trick they do with a forcefield could save thousands of our soldiers' lives.

ELIZABETH

But our son is in the nexus of all this.

HARPER

And studying their technology might also give us a clue about how to get him back.

ELIZABETH

You're playing Russian roulette with our Casey!

HARPER

Those aliens have been watching us for a long time, and all their interactions with humans have been peaceful. And to the point where it's like they're watching over us. Though not in a pervy kind of way.

She bangs her FORK on the table, and after glaring at him, finally forks some food into her mouth.

ELIZABETH
Goddamn it, Harper.

HARPER
It's...

She bangs her fork again and points at him.

ELIZABETH
How could you keep this information
from me?

He watches her anger turn to sadness.

HARPER
Honey, I guess since we got into
the White House, I've wanted to
shield you from--

ELIZABETH
Bullshit! You never wanted me to be
your vice president. You only did
after Krantz suggested it.

He nods, the bad boy taking his whipping.

HARPER
And he did because of my sagging
poll numbers.

ELIZABETH
That's not the only thing that's
been sagging again lately.

He laughs at the double-entendre, rises, and shakes a finger
at her in his admiration.

HARPER
Got it. Loud and clear. But just to
be sure, you could squeeze lemon
juice all over my cuts.

She waves a dismissive hand.

He pads over to stand behind her chair. He puts his hands on
her shoulders, and after smacking them a couple of times, she
allows him to massage her.

HARPER (CONT'D)
I promise to do better. See, I'm
throwing in a massage whenever you
ask for it and even when you don't.

ELIZABETH

And Casey?

HARPER

I'll let the aliens know we'll back away.

She takes one of his hands.

ELIZABETH

I know you only wanted to help our brave men and women.

He stoops over her and gives her a kiss.

HARPER

We'll get our son back. All this never would've happened if...

ELIZABETH

Bridget had kept an eye on Casey? Don't do that! Don't blame that poor young girl. You know our son-- we often underestimate him to our detriment.

HARPER

I already sent for her. But when she comes, I'll try not to bite her head off completely.

INT./EXT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

The open door reveals Bridget still curled into a fetal position despite Jeff's pleas.

Jeff leans through the door.

JEFF

Bridget? Did you hear me? Your presence has been requested at the executive tent.

BRIDGET

Tell them I'm sick. Use your ear-thingamabob.

JEFF

He won't take no for an answer. He is the president, for Christ's sake!

Bridget sits up and fixes the back of her hair.

BRIDGET
He blames me, doesn't he?

JEFF
I don't know if blame is the
right...

She scoots along the car seat and hops out--a fierce, focused
outrage burning in her eyes.

BRIDGET
Where is that man? I wanna see him
now!

Jeff appears confused.

JEFF
By that man, do you mean the
president?

BRIDGET
You're damn straight!

INT. MOTHER SHIP - CASEY'S CELL - SPACE

Gabriel and Angelica observe how Casey sits on his bed with a
grumpy, distracted look.

ANGELICA
You must be hungry.

Gabriel nods.

GABRIEL
It takes about two to four hours
for food in humans to move to the
small intestine.

Angelica shakes her head at her husband.

Gabriel glances off to the side at a DEWDROP MONITOR that
appears with a BRIGHT FLASH.

ANGELICA
Our food atoms builder--

CASEY
FAB or is it FAT?

She pushes on undeterred.

ANGELICA

You can make any kind of human food
imaginable. Waffles, hotdogs, hot
fudge sundaes...

CASEY

So you know about comfort food.
This is still a cell.

GABRIEL

This might bring us all some
comfort. It appears as though the
American humans are moving away
from Walt's ship.

Angelica gives one of those perfect smiles like Walt: hers is
so brilliant, it pierces Casey's glasses.

CASEY

By the way, where's Walt?

On cue, Walt appears from behind his parents with a WRISTBAND
made from a tree branch.

Angelica nods her approval.

ANGELICA

He's made you a... what would it be
in human English?

Walt steps before his parents and faces Casey who stands on
the other side of the forcefield.

Walt holds up the wristband: a tree branch like none on Earth
with embedded DEWDROPS like SHINING DIAMONDS against a
backdrop of a deep, rich brown.

WALT

It's a healthy friends forever
wristband. Made from the longest
living trees on my planet.

Casey drops his bitter shield to marvel at the gift.

In a SPECIAL GLOVE, Walt passes it through the forcefield.

Casey holds it and at Walt's insistence, wears it.

CASEY

How old are those trees on your
planet?

WALT
50,000 of your years. These are
trees that resist all forms of
bacteria and disease.

Walt looks to his parents who nod.

WALT (CONT'D)
They've helped our understanding of
the health of all botanical
species.

CASEY
Thanks. Not just from me but from
my people. Maybe we can trade more
with each other.

Gabriel and Angelica GROW DIMMER.

ANGELICA
Our exposure to you was unplanned.

GABRIEL
We did not know your people would
shoot down our son's ship. Such
aggressive behavior belies trust.

Casey gives a look of hope.

CASEY
Maybe that's changed now. We can
be, what did Walt call it? Morally
logical?

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - OUTSIDE WALT'S SHIP - NIGHT

In a camouflage suit, an ETBI Agent scrambles across the
ground on his belly.

He gets right up to the ship, and as he rises...

A PROBE from above beams a SPOTLIGHT down on the ETBI Agent.

PROBE
Human soldier, step away from the
ship.

For a moment, the ETBI Agent considers ignoring the command
but retreats one step at a time with his hands up.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Elizabeth leans over Harper who sits at the table. She lambasts him in her outrage as Bridget tiptoes in.

ELIZABETH
You promised to back away!

HARPER
And we did. This tent is nowhere near the ship.

ELIZABETH
You must've known the aliens would be watching. Casey was on his way back to us but not now!

HARPER
I had to try to access the ship while we could. It was the old ball and cup maneuver: while their eyes were over there, we were here.

ELIZABETH
I'm calling for your impeachment.

It's like a kick in the balls.

Bridget clears her throat, embarrassed to witness this.

Harper glares at Elizabeth: a lame attempt to reclaim power.

Elizabeth scoffs at him and stomps out.

HARPER
You're dismissed. Go on! We'll talk later about this matter, Madame Vice President.

Harper motions for Bridget to step forward, and she strides with full confidence to stand before the table.

HARPER (CONT'D)
As for you, young lady, how could you let Casey--

BRIDGET
You are going to listen for once!

It's like a slap.

HARPER
I am?

She takes a deep breath: *yes, this must be said out loud.*

BRIDGET

Sir, Mr. President, you've alienated your number one constituent. He once put you on Mount Rushmore, but now...

She stares at her feet, afraid she's gone too far.

HARPER

You're right.

She looks up in surprise.

BRIDGET

He still loves you. There's still time to win him back.

He stares a thousand miles at nothing.

HARPER

If we can get him back...

EXT. MOTHER SHIP - SPACE

The arrowhead shape twists, its pointy end like a bullet that rips through space.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - SPACE

The circular area resembles the inside of a tree trunk.

A LARGE DEWDROP-SHAPE hovers in the middle. The Supreme Council official, Gabriel's father, glowers in frustration.

On either side, Angelica and Gabriel await judgment.

All three speak in their language with English translations.

SUPREME COUNCIL

These humans continue to regress. Did you not train him during the lengthy voyage to Earth?

ANGELICA

What're you suggesting, father?

SUPREME COUNCIL

It's Supreme Council to you. It seems your son may not be up to the task.

GABRIEL

Your grandson had established a
bond with him.

SUPREME COUNCIL

That, too, has regressed.

The GOLDEN GRILL on the Supreme Council's head casts lines of
shadow on his face.

SUPREME COUNCIL (CONT'D)

The humans think we are not
serious. A measure of our power may
be in order.

Gabriel and Angelica give a reluctant nod.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - PRESS TENTS - NIGHT

Samantha and a gaggle of reporters emerge from their tents.

She gazes up at the sky to witness how...

The ARROWHEAD-SHAPED MOTHER SHIP appears, pointy nose first,
and hovers above like the sword of Damocles.

The crowd of onlookers gasp in awe and fear.

A FOCUSED LASER BEAM rains down as everyone scatters.

Samantha, though, freezes in place with her hands in the air
as if they could somehow protect her.

The laser stops short of striking the ground some 100 feet in
the air to leave a FIERY, HORIZONTAL CONTRAIL.

BEGIN MONTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

-- Samantha speaks into her MICROPHONE.

SAMANTHA

The aliens' mother ship just took a
warning shot. I can still smell the
burning laser, and you can see
traces of it.

-- A camera pans to show the FIERY TRAIL in the night sky.

-- Samantha points out her shellshocked colleagues.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

There can no longer be any doubt:
there is other intelligent life out
there, and it's not friendly.

-- A news monitor plays video of the MOTHER SHIP as it
careens through the sky.

-- A bank of TVs in an electronics store shows the same image
multiplied in a fearsome display.

-- The shot is on a TV inside a bar as patrons point at it
and ask for another round.

END MONTAGE

INT. MOTHER SHIP - CASEY'S CELL - SPACE

Casey lies on his bed.

He pulls Walt's wristband off and flings it across the floor.

Walt's motionless on the other side of the forcefield.

WALT

They'll work something out. They
have to.

Casey turns in fury to gaze at his jailer.

CASEY

And if they don't?

WALT

I give you both my thumbs, no harm
will come to you.

Casey sits up and tilts his head in confusion.

CASEY

You'll give me your thumbs?

WALT

It's the most I can pledge because
on my planet, with its wild
surfaces, your thumbs help you to
hold on in the most dangerous
situations.

Casey gets a wicked look and crosses his heart with his index
finger and waits for Walt's reaction.

CASEY
I just crossed my heart and hoped
you'd die.

Walt's confusion grows.

CASEY (CONT'D)
And I do hope you die.

A tear, bright like the tip of a branding iron, cascades down
Walt's cheek, and his overall light dims.

WALT
I would never wish that for you.

Walt's tear fascinates Casey who peers out from his barrier.

CASEY
You know what I would never do to
you?

Walt shakes his head.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Put you in a cage.

WALT
Casey, could you just try to eat
something? Maybe play a video game?

CASEY
You grabbed me from my planet and
put me in a cell with all kinds of
human stuff... I'm on a spaceship!
With an alien who cries lava tears.

WALT
That word alien, translated by my
language, is not a nice word.

CASEY
This is my point. I don't even know
what your people are called.

Walt considers this as if it's a puzzle.

WALT
You could call us the Winged Beings
that Soar Between the Pitfalls of
Truth.

Casey does a double-take.

CASEY

I'd call you an angel--at least, I would've before. Now you're a fallen angel.

WALT

You won't consider me your friend anymore?

CASEY

I tell you what--I'd feel a lot better if I could stretch my legs.

WALT

You've got plenty of room in there to--

CASEY

I want to explore.

WALT

My parents' ship?

Casey nods and watches as Walt weighs his options.

CASEY

How could it hurt? I'll still be trapped in the middle of space.

WALT

Okay. For a little while.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - RED SANDSTONE ROCK FORMATION - NIGHT

Harper balances along the edge at the top of a sand dune, his outstretched hands shaky.

A Secret Service Agent follows from a discreet distance.

Krantz hovers closer.

KRANTZ

Mr. President, what're you doing?

HARPER

Walking a tightrope, man! Can't you see?

Harper almost loses his balance but corrects his posture before he tumbles.

Krantz rushes forward to grab Harper, but it's not needed.

Harper grins, and Krantz shakes his head.

KRANTZ

I see you're drunk, Mr. President.
You're very drunk.

HARPER

I liked the first sentence you
said. Somehow, adding my title
sounds better.

KRANTZ

Either way, the point is you are
inebriated, sir.

Harper takes a few more steps along that imaginary line.

He turns with a grin to face Krantz.

HARPER

Intoxicated? Smashed, baked, three
sheets to the wind?

With the last of Harper's list, he waves his hands and
teeters on the verge of falling.

Krantz grabs him by the armpits as the Secret Service Agent
rushes beside them.

KRANTZ

I've got him.

The Secret Service Agent nods and takes a few steps back.

Harper's almost made sober by his near fall. He regains his
balance and stares out at the Mojave Desert landscape.

HARPER

Remarkable, isn't it?

Krantz looks at Harper in confusion.

HARPER (CONT'D)

The red sand. The swirls and curves
under moonlight. Like we're on
Mars.

Krantz takes in the surroundings.

KRANTZ

It is quite beautiful.

Harper turns to a Joshua tree: 20 feet tall, it gives a sense
of timeless majesty with the starry sky behind.

HARPER
As boys, we looked up at the stars.

KRANTZ
We did, sir.

HARPER
We dreamt of not only what we might become, we dreamt of what might be out there. But might has taken a fall these days.

KRANTZ
I didn't know you were a poet, sir.

HARPER
I'm not. I'm drunk!

With a gentle prod, Krantz guides Harper toward base camp.

HARPER (CONT'D)
My boy used to look at the stars with me. He helped me to understand what was at stake for us in the universe.

KRANTZ
I understand, sir.

Harper maneuvers so Krantz can hop on his back.

HARPER
You wanna climb on? I'll give you a ride.

Krantz raises an eyebrow at the sight.

KRANTZ
Let's get you back, sir.

HARPER
If you call me sir one more time, I'll knock you down that sand dune!

KRANTZ
What should I call you... sir?

HARPER
Goddamnit, call me Harper! It's my name. People aren't titles, you know.

KRANTZ
But yours is a really important
one.

 HARPER
My what?

 KRANTZ
Your title.

 HARPER
President?

 KRANTZ
Father.

Krantz's comment has struck a sober nerve.

As they continue to walk, their aspects grow smaller.

 HARPER
Do you think we can get my boy
back?

 KRANTZ
Yes.

 HARPER
Do you think we can get my wife
back?

 KRANTZ
You'll have to do that yourself,
Harper.

From above, they appear like two ants on a trek in the sand.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - MIMICKING NIGHT

Gabriel stands frozen where the Supreme Council spoke from a dewdrop in the center of what resembles a tree trunk.

Angelica comes to him and reaches a hand out to rub the back of his head to communicate support and affection.

He pushes her back and SNARLS, the sound viciously inhuman--a bird shriek and lizard growl.

They speak in their language with English translations.

 ANGELICA
Fight it, Gabriel.

His body emits a DARK LIGHT, and his eyes have a REDDISH GLOW like the overheating of a lightbulb filament.

GABRIEL
These Earthlings are beyond
reasoning, and their corruption is
thorough.

Her body blinks as the light from it goes off and on--alarmed to her core.

ANGELICA
You don't mean to--

GABRIEL
But I do, my nestmate. We must
destroy the debris and cease this
mission.

HOT TEARS fall from her eyes.

ANGELICA
And take the Earthling with us?

He GRUNTS this must be so.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - HALLS - SPACE - MIMICKING NIGHT

The lights, in various areas on every surface from floor to walls to ceiling, give a sense of being in twin moonlight.

Casey strides through the walls of tree branch design, like he's back at the White House, where no one can catch him.

Walt, though, takes flight in the airy room of the passageway to land before Casey.

WALT
Casey, I need you to slow down.
Please. Let me lead the way.

CASEY
This is incredible. Not like a
spaceship at all.

WALT
It's designed for comfort.

Casey nods.

CASEY
How long did it take you to get
here from your world?

WALT
40 Earth years.

Casey almost falls over.

CASEY
40? How old are you? For some reason, I thought we were about the same age.

WALT
By your years, I'm fifteen. While not exact, you can multiply that by four to get my age on my world.

Casey does the math in his head.

CASEY
60?

WALT
Very good.

CASEY
But if it took you 40 years to get here, that means...

WALT
When I left, from your perspective, I was four.

They stroll on as Casey allows Walt to go first.

CASEY
But how... how...? I mean, you seem like you went to school.

Walt stops and considers something. He then nods and guides Casey down a different corridor.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Your hallways don't just curve, do they? They seem to...

WALT
Slope? They were built, not just to resemble a forest, but also to give a sense of being in something that's organic. My people are most at home in nature.

This fascinates Casey as they come around to an opening where there's a room of sorts.

Walt gestures for Casey to enter which he does.

LIBRARY

As Casey and Walt enter, a door slides shut, but an optical illusion makes it seem like they're in an endless forest.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - STAFF TENT - NIGHT

Bridget gazes at the stars, lost in the vastness of space which seems to envelop the MOTHER SHIP.

Elizabeth appears beside her and also looks up.

BRIDGET

There are so many stars. In the city, we forget that.

ELIZABETH

As a boy in Kentucky, Casey used to believe those were holes punched in the sky.

Bridget turns to Elizabeth with a sly smile.

BRIDGET

I'm guessing Mr. President told him that.

Elizabeth touches Bridget's arm.

ELIZABETH

You know this family too well.

BRIDGET

I know Casey, anyway. He's always been a curious boy but lonely.

ELIZABETH

He's had you. Kids his age at school always see president's son before his name.

Elizabeth puts her arm around Bridget.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - LIBRARY - SPACE

Casey steps to a tilted piece of slab and runs a hand on it.

Walt gestures for Casey that it's okay, and Casey reclines on the stone slab.

Walt gives a VERBAL COMMAND in his language.

CASEY
What was that for?

WALT
I asked the diviner to limit its
learning modules to Earth ones.

CASEY
Diviner?

WALT
You would call it a computer, but
that term is too limiting. Touch
the learning branches to the sides
of your head, and you'll see what I
mean.

On either side of the stone slab are thin, clear "branches."

Casey turns to Walt with doubtful eyes.

WALT (CONT'D)
Just think of the subject you want
to learn about and key in on a
specific topic.

CASEY
Can it simulate stuff? Like maybe a
roller coaster?

Walt nods.

Casey moves the "branches" to touch either side of his head.

CASEY'S POV:

Against a SWIRLING GREY BACKGROUND, DISNEYLAND and SPACE
MOUNTAIN light up in RED LETTERS.

Casey finds himself strapped into a ROLLER COASTER CART and
going up into a dark tunnel that then flashes with lights.

-- Up ahead, a RED WORMHOLE SWIRLS.

-- The cart goes faster and faster as...

-- Casey is rocketed along a track inside what appears to be
the dark, coldness of space with a few TWINKLING LIGHTS.

END CASEY'S POV

Casey sits up on the slab, with a distant look about him.

WALT
What's wrong?

CASEY
It was too real. I rode Space
Mountain, but it made me feel like
I was really in space.

WALT
Try a learning module--anything
you'd like to learn about is within
reach.

Casey lies back down and applies the learning branches to
either side of his head.

CASEY'S POV:

Against SWIRLING GRAY, OCEANOGRAPHY and DEEP SEA EXPLORATION
light up in RED LETTERS.

MARIANAS TRENCH lights up amid a menu of options.

As if in a deep sea diver's suit, Casey plunges into the
depths of the ocean.

The sun on the surface grows dimmer until he's in INKY
DARKNESS that he himself, as his light source, ILLUMINATES:

-- A BLACK SEADEVIL ANGLERFISH'S razor-sharp teeth chomp at
food as an antenna-like tube projects from its head, a
glowing light at the end.

-- A BARRELEYE FISH'S eyes, GLOWING GREEN BALLS, flash within
the translucent front of its head.

-- A GOBLIN SHARK'S LONG POINTY SNOUT projects from above its
mouth of small, needle-like teeth.

END CASEY'S POV

Overwhelmed and somewhat frightened, Casey jerks up and sees
he's back with Walt in the ship.

CASEY
VR games got nothin' on this!

WALT
Ah, you mean virtual reality. These
learning modules are designed so
you can go into as much detail as
you want.

CASEY

I went deep sea diving and saw the most unbelievable fish.

WALT

Why did you quit so soon?

Casey sighs and looks down.

CASEY

But again, I felt alone. Without my family, I feel lost.

Walt sheds a LAVA TEAR.

WALT

I'd feel that way, too, without my parents. I'd never met someone near my age before I met you.

CASEY

I guess you didn't have fellow students you could run around with.

WALT

This was what you'd call my schoolroom. My parents designed a program for me that put me ahead of students on my planet.

Casey frowns as something occurs to him.

CASEY

I want to learn about you and your planet. Do you have any learning modules about that?

Walt's light dims.

WALT

I can't show you those. It would be like your government's top secret files.

Casey sits all the way to dangle his feet over the slab.

CASEY

But friends don't keep secrets from each other.

Walt sighs.

WALT

There are certain things you're not prepared to know. You shouldn't even know me.

Walt grows even dimmer.

CASEY

You gonna erase my mind or something?

WALT

Since too many Earthlings have seen me, there's only so much that can be erased.

Grumpy, Casey hops off the slab.

CASEY

But you can erase my mind.
(beat)
Let's go.

Walt doesn't know how to respond.

CASEY (CONT'D)

You're censoring so many things in your stupid library, might as well leave.

Walt shrugs, and they exit to continue the ship's tour.

INT./EXT. STAFF TENT - NIGHT

The large tent has room for up to 20. Five, including Bridget and Jeff, line up for food at a row of tables in the back.

Bridget and Jeff's PLATES have tacos, beans, and rice.

They make their way to a table in the corner.

Jeff attacks his food like it's been days since he's eaten while Bridget stares at hers.

JEFF

You don't like tacos?

BRIDGET

I don't like it that we're still here.

JEFF

We're pretty far from the--

BRIDGET

Pretty far is shit, that's what it is.

Jeff puts down his taco and studies her face in the light of the HANGING LANTERNS.

The desert wind batters their tent.

JEFF

You're worried about Casey.

BRIDGET

And Harper. And our country. Our planet...

He comes around and gives her a hug which she allows before she gives him a firm shove.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I just confronted the president.
The president...

He gets on one knee and looks upon her in sympathy.

JEFF

But he listened, didn't he?

She wipes a tear and laughs.

BRIDGET

He did.

She shakes her head at a terrible thought.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

He could've been taken by the alien, too. Or worse. I'm surprised his Secret Service agents let him do that.

JEFF

He is Casey's father. They gave him a little something...

BRIDGET

To settle him down?

He nods and stands and moves to the tent's entrance.

He marvels at something outside.

JEFF

The mother ship is gone!

Alarmed, Bridget jumps up and runs to see it for herself.

The stars shine on what seems like a normal, peaceful night--no sign of the spaceship.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - HALLS - SPACE - MIMICKING NIGHT

Walt again trails Casey who speeds along the forest-like hallway: tree branches twist in arcs and slopes.

WALT

Casey, please slow down.

Casey does when he sees a room with SHINING GLOBES in slots within VERTICAL METALLIC RACKS.

CASEY

Whoah! What's this?

Walt stops flapping his wings beside Casey.

WALT

You can't go there.

CASEY

Why not?

Casey enters.

MUSEUM OF KNOWLEDGE - CONTINUOUS

The globes cast a DIAMOND PATTERN GLOW wherever he steps.

Walt seems to consider grabbing Casey but refrains.

WALT

Please don't touch anything.

A diamond pattern falls on Casey's awestruck face.

CASEY

Okay. If you explain what these globes are.

Walt sighs and thinks for a moment.

WALT

I guess it won't hurt.

Casey jumps up and down in anticipation.

Walt points to a column of globes to the far left.

WALT (CONT'D)
Those contain modules about our
Earth scouting program.

CASEY
Is this another library?

WALT
More like a social and scientific
museum but top secret.

CASEY
Do you put these globes in your...
diviner?

WALT
There's a special device that's
required.

CASEY
You said this is also a scientific
museum?

Walt nods to the next column of globes.

WALT
That one contains information on
preventing the breakdown and
corruption of cells.

The implications stagger Casey.

CASEY
You mean for preventing things like
cancer? Even aging?

WALT
You are truly the brightest of your
species.

Casey frowns.

CASEY
If my people had this information,
it would do so much good!

WALT
Just like with any kind of
information or technology, it could
also be used for bad purposes.

Casey shakes his head.

COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - SAME TIME

Gabriel gazes with resoluteness at the DEWDROP SCREEN in the middle of the tree trunk environment.

Opposite him, Angelica averts her eyes.

SUPREME COUNCIL

Do this, and it will mollify some of your critics in the exploration faction. And Gabriel?

GABRIEL

Yes, father?

SUPREME COUNCIL

I can only cover for you for so long. If the others see you're losing control...

ANGELICA

No! That would mean he'd be placed in the soldiers faction.

The DEWDROP BLINKS OUT, and Angelica stares at Gabriel.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

This is not the morally correct path. Deceiving the boy who will think--

GABRIEL

It is necessary to put him back in his cell. Absolute compliance is required.

He GRUNTS, and his RED EYES GLOW in ferocity.

MUSEUM OF KNOWLEDGE - SAME TIME

Casey wanders over to the next column of globes.

CASEY

And these? What're these for?

The globes pulse off and on.

Walt looks down and away from Casey's prying eyes.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Come on! Tell me!

WALT

Those contain information on the
intergalactic laws of physics.

CASEY

Like from Isaac Newton?

WALT

We have our own Isaac Newton, and
she uncovered much more than he
did. That's the intergalactic part.

The sphere at the bottom of the column oscillates.

CASEY

And that one?

Walt rubs the bridge of his nose.

WALT

You are persistent.

(beat)

That tells about the wormhole my
people use to travel to your
galaxy.

CASEY

Wow! The location and how it works?

Walt gives a regretful nod.

He touches his ear and gives a half smile.

WALT

It looks like you'll be going home.

CASEY

Really?

A TEAR, like a drop of lava, trails down Walt's cheek.

WALT

I'll think of you often.

Casey realizes something.

CASEY

But I won't be able to think of
you.

WALT

You've seen and heard too much.

Casey cries and forces a few more tears than are actually there and shoos Walt away when he approaches to comfort him.

CASEY
Just give me a moment, will you?
I'll go. Just...

Walt turns away to give him a private moment: a moment Casey uses to snatch the WORMHOLE SPHERE at the bottom of the rack.

It tingles Casey which almost causes him to drop it.

It seems too large for his pocket, but the sphere shrinks to where it fits in his hand.

He pockets it just as Walt turns back around.

WALT
I'm sorry, Casey, but we really
have to...

Casey sells the idea that he's angry very well.

CASEY
Let's go. I wanna get the hell out
of here!

SHUTTLE BAY - MOMENTS LATER

After he sees the life-pods, Casey trails Walt.

WALT
Not yet. We need to get you to the
de-memory center.

Casey bows his head as if in prayer and acceptance.

After a few more steps, Casey makes a beeline for a life-pod.

WALT (CONT'D)
No, Casey!

LIFE-POD TUBE - CONTINUOUS

From inside, Casey peers out at Walt for the last time.

Casey holds up his hand: he has his WRISTBAND on.

WALT
You could get lost in space!

Casey wheels around to the BLINKING INTERIOR CONSOLE, and the hatch closes to seal him inside.

He closes his eyes for a moment, then opens them and punches buttons in the reverse order from what he saw Walt do before.

He jumps over to grab handles above and below. The forcefield pops into place, and the life-pod ejects from the ship.

SHUTTLE BAY - CONTINUOUS

Gabriel and Angelica rush in to where Walt gazes at the empty life-pod chamber.

They and Walt speak in their language with translations.

GABRIEL

Will humans ever cease to amaze me?

Walt dashes into the next life-pod.

ANGELICA

No, son! Your friend made his choice!

WALT

And I must make the morally logical one.

The life-pod hatch closes, and Angelica stares at Gabriel in concern: the totality of his eyes TURN RED.

INT. WAR ROOM TENT - DAWN

Maddox sits on the side of a table with Harper and Elizabeth looking glum from the other side.

MADDOX

Casey's craft's trajectory is misaligned.

ELIZABETH

Misaligned?

HARPER

You mean he won't land here?

Maddox grits his teeth.

MADDOX

He won't land on Earth.

Harper pounds the table and rises enraged.

HARPER
Those alien sons-of-bitches!

Elizabeth stands to placate her husband.

Maddox touches his earpiece and grows animated as he stands and pads toward the tent's entrance.

MADDOX
Another craft is approaching
Casey's.

Harper and Elizabeth glance at each other in wonder.

EXT./INT. WALT'S/CASEY'S LIFE-PODS - SPACE

Walt's life-pod veers closer to Casey's.

Inside Casey's, he stares wide-eyed at a VIRTUAL PORTHOLE that shows his craft will miss Earth's orbit.

An ALERT SYSTEM makes an ANNOUNCEMENT in Walt's language.

CASEY
What? I can't understand!

The alert system switches to English.

LIFE-POD ALERT
Warning! The vessel's trajectory is
not set for Earth.

Within the forcefield, Casey's look of dismay is amplified.

CASEY
Where am I going?

LIFE-POD ALERT
To deep space.

Casey gazes all around at the switches and gadgets: he's lost and might as well be already floundering in the void.

Inside Walt's craft, he clings to a handle with one hand and reaches with another to punch buttons.

Walt flies to his virtual monitor to gage his steering: on course to run parallel to Casey's craft.

Walt's life-pod maneuvers to veer alongside Casey's and extends RODS on both ends that clamp onto the other vessel.

Inside his, Casey feels a jolt, and the power goes out to leave him in the dark.

INT. WAR ROOM TENT - DAY

Maddox, Harper, and Elizabeth crowd around a TABLET on the table that shows a view from the International Space Station.

The two life-pods, long tubes like ordinary rockets, link up to each other.

MADDOX

The power has gone out in the one we think is Casey's.

HARPER

What are they doing to him?

Elizabeth puts a hand on Harper's shoulder.

ELIZABETH

Saving him.

MADDOX

Maybe.

HARPER

But where's it taking them?

The guiding life-pod makes a major course correction.

MADDOX

It looks like they're heading...
Confirmed! The trajectory is on
course to link up with the crashed
UAP's coordinates.

Elizabeth clasps her hands together in relief.

ELIZABETH

They're landing here!

Maddox beams at her.

MADDOX

That alien boy just saved your son.
(to Harper)
And, possibly, prevented an
intergalactic confrontation.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - NEAR WALT'S SHIP - MOMENTS LATER

The two life-pods crash land on their sides, Casey's breaking free from Walt's and skidding to a stop.

Ambulances, one for each, speed to pull up alongside.

Harper and Elizabeth rush toward Casey's as they see TWO EMTs in hazmat suits lift a limp Casey out.

On a gurney, Casey responds to an OXYGEN GAS MASK as it's placed over his mouth.

From 10 feet away, Harper and Elizabeth exhale and rush toward Casey, but EMT #1 holds up a gloved hand.

Harper looks over at Walt's life-pod and sees TWO MORE EMTs place Walt on a stretcher.

As Harper steps toward Walt, Elizabeth grabs his hand.

HARPER

Don't you see? There's no
forcefield. That means...

He taps his ear.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Execute Operation E.T.

Elizabeth waves her hands and shakes her head.

TWO ETBI AGENTS swarm in and take over for the EMTs who appear blindsided.

His gas mask still on, Casey bolts up in his gurney from 20 feet away and pleads.

CASEY

No! It's not morally logical!

Harper's head tilts as he processes what Casey said.

Walt lies on his gurney, his eyes wide open but blank, staring out at an alien planet.

INT. CASEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tubes attached to his arms, Casey lies in a gown on his hospital bed, cocooned in a hazmat tent.

CASEY (V.O.)

Walt's saving of my life made his betrayal seem in the distant past. Of course, I now realize it was coming from his father, and my father had pushed me into this mess without my even knowing it. We can have really long memories when we're hurt, but when self-sacrifice is involved, that changes everything.

Bridget can't stand still as she watches from outside.

CASEY

I'm fine.

BRIDGET

They have to run tests, Casey.

CASEY

I don't need to be in here.

BRIDGET

You've entered a brave new world. You were in space, with aliens, in a ship that has who knows what kind of germs or radiation.

Casey gets up and tests the range of the tubes.

CASEY

What're they doing with Walt?

The name throws Bridget.

CASEY (CONT'D)

My friend. And he's not an alien. He's an angel.

Harper and Elizabeth thunder into the room, all concerned.

Harper places a hand on Bridget's shoulder.

HARPER

How is he? Does he still recognize us? Has he grown any horns or a third eye?

Elizabeth scowls at her husband.

Casey takes another step forward, and a LOUD BEEP EMITS.

He takes a step back, and it stops.

CASEY

I'm fine!

Elizabeth gasps at the sight of her boy with tubes coming from his arms inside a hazmat tent.

ELIZABETH

Get back in bed, honey!

CASEY

Mom, where's Walt?

Elizabeth turns to Bridget for a translation.

BRIDGET

His alien friend.

Casey stomps his foot.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I said he's your friend!

Harper moves closer to the tent.

HARPER

Case, don't worry about him. We're just glad you're all right, but we have to be sure. The third eye and all!

Harper winks at Casey.

ELIZABETH

They won't take him anywhere near the press, will they?

HARPER

No, they're on the second floor in a mock-up of Casey's room.

Casey's eyes light up.

HARPER (CONT'D)

That's as close as they're getting to our boy. Can't we throw them out of the hospital? I mean, letting vultures in the building is a new low for the medical profession.

ELIZABETH

Freedom of the press--remember that one, Harper?

Harper rolls his eyes and moves closer to the tent.

Casey climbs back in bed and puts his sheets over him.

HARPER

That's it! You rest, son. If you feel any symptoms at all, make sure you let us know. Beam it to us, with your mind.

Harper mimes telepathy waves shooting from the sides of his head, and Casey laughs.

ELIZABETH

Let your nurse know, darling.

Harper and Elizabeth turn to Bridget who nods as they leave.

Bridget peers through the clear plastic at Casey who springs up and out of bed again.

CASEY (V.O.)

I had to return the favor. Walt had taught me to do the morally logical thing which means doing what makes sense and for the right reason, no matter the cost.

She shakes her head.

BRIDGET

No, Casey! N-o!

Despite her opposition, she rushes to the door, acknowledges the SECRET SERVICE AGENT there, and shuts it.

She comes back to see Casey turn the MACHINE off to the side of his bed.

He removes his tubes one at a time.

CASEY

You know the tests they're going to run on Walt won't be to see if he's sick.

She makes a pleading face.

CASEY (CONT'D)

They're going to dissect him like he's a bug. But if I can tell my story... If I can tell his story, that might set him free.

She crumbles.

BRIDGET

I'm so proud and pissed off at you
at the same time!

She sighs and smiles at him through her tears.

She looks to make sure no one else is nearby.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

What's the little marble you gave
me? And that wristband you had
looks different. Are those...?

CASEY

Don't tell anyone! Your honor as my
former babysitter-in-chief is on
the line.

BRIDGET

What am I now?

CASEY

My partner-in-crime!

He enjoys this way too much as she cringes.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Harper takes a video call on his phone from...

INT. MOTHER SHIP - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - SPACE

Gabriel and Angelica have grim expressions.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Their appearance stuns Harper, especially Gabriel's FIRE-RED
EYES that make him seem DEMONIC.

HARPER

Are you...?

ANGELICA

We're, as your son calls him,
Walt's parents.

HARPER

How did you...?

GABRIEL

What matters is you have gone
beyond the bounds of our patience,
Mr. President.

ANGELICA

If you do anything to harm our
son...

HARPER

Harm? We're tending to his
injuries.

GABRIEL

You don't know our biology, our
anatomy.

HARPER

Our doctors are more advanced than
you give them credit for, and they
have to do an emergency surgery.

Harper considers something, like his ace in a hand of cards.

HARPER (CONT'D)

As a good faith gesture, we'll back
away completely from your ships.

Angelica nods, but Gabriel appears suspicious.

GABRIEL

Return our son in good repair.

Once the video call ends, Harper mumbles to himself.

HARPER

Not before we get a good look at
him.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - SPACE

Gabriel waves his hand to summon the DEWDROP SCREEN.

Across from him, Angelica shakes her head.

GABRIEL

We must alert the Supreme Council.

His eyes are DARK BLOOD RED POOLS.

ANGELICA
But he'll send soldiers. Once
unleashed, these harnessed demons
cannot be caged.

He GRUNTS.

GABRIEL
Like me?

EXT./INT. CASEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Down the hallway, Bridget waves at the Secret Service Agent
for him to come to her.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
Ma'am, I can't leave my post.

BRIDGET
I saw something suspicious over
there.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT
Ma'am, I can't--

BRIDGET
Please, I think the aliens are
trying to get into Casey's room.

This gets the Secret Service Agent's attention.

She smiles and waves him over to her as Casey slips out of
his room and runs down the stairs.

INT. GOVERNMENT MEDICAL LAB - DAY

A HEAD DOCTOR in a hazmat suit and inside a tent hovers over
Walt with a NEEDLE.

The light from Walt's body is at its dimmest.

THREE MORE DOCTORS in hazmat suits observe from the other
side, and a NURSE facilitates the Head Doctor.

Walt's terrified and struggles to get up, but he's strapped
to the hospital bed.

WALT
I'm okay. I don't need...

The Head Doctor plunges the NEEDLE in Walt's arm, and Walt
struggles a moment more and is still.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A news crew is set up with the cameras on a hospital bed surrounded by a clear tent.

Samantha's in front of it with a MICROPHONE.

By a camera, a PRODUCER counts down with his fingers: 3-2-1.

SAMANTHA

I'm standing in a hospital room
made to look like Casey's. We're
told the doctors are going to
run...

Samantha sees Casey pad into the room.

OUTSIDE HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Secret Service Agent from before prepares to rush inside.

Before he does so, though, he taps on his earpiece.

MADDOX (V.O.)

This is Secretary Maddox. Agent,
stand down.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Sir, all due respect, I don't take
orders from you.

MADDOX (V.O.)

When I speak with your supervisor,
you won't be taking orders anymore
from anyone. Is that understood?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Loud and clear, sir.

INSIDE HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Casey smiles at Samantha.

SAMANTHA

Excuse me, folks. It appears like
the president's son is here and...

Casey nods his head and steps beside the camera.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Wants to say something.

Casey steps up to Samantha who gives him the microphone and at his urging moves off to the side.

CASEY

My fellow Earthlings, I know you're interested about what happened to me, but first, you should learn what's happening to my friend, Walt.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

Alarmed, Harper watches Casey's interview on his PHONE.

Elizabeth sits on the other side of the back seat and glares at him: *what now?*

He positions the phone so they can both see it.

CASEY (ON PHONE)

At this moment, he's about to be opened up and tested on if he hasn't been already.

HARPER

What the hell is he doing?

Elizabeth smiles, proud of her son.

ELIZABETH

Protecting his friend.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Casey steps closer to the camera.

CASEY

We all want to learn about other intelligent life. We're eager to make progress and explore the stars. But it should be when we're ready and not at the expense of my friend.

At the prodding of her Producer, Samantha steps into frame with a NEW MICROPHONE.

SAMANTHA

Can you tell us a little about your friend?

He pulls out the GLASSES Walt gave him and studies them.

CASEY
He's an angel. He comes from a
people that keep everything
balanced.

SAMANTHA
Balanced?

CASEY
You know, their feelings and their
smarts. I learned a lot from my
short "stay" with them.

She notices his wristband.

SAMANTHA
What's that? Can you hold it up for
our viewers?

He holds it up.

CASEY
It's something that'll last
forever.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

Harper appears like he's dizzy.

Elizabeth gives him a stern look.

ELIZABETH
There's only one thing to do. And
if you don't, we're finished.

He sighs and calls a number on his phone.

INT. GOVERNMENT MEDICAL LAB - CONTINUOUS

The Head Doctor raises a SCALPEL to make an incision in
Walt's chest but receives a tap on the shoulder.

An ETBI Agent whispers an order.

The Doctor puts his scalpel down.

INT. MOTHER SHIP - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - SAME TIME

The Supreme Council appears angry on the DEWDROP SCREEN.

Gabriel's RED EYES, though, revert to normal, and Angelica's light returns: a joyful radiance from her body.

SUPREME COUNCIL

I have our soldiers on standby.
They await my command.

GABRIEL

They will no longer be needed,
Supreme Council.

Supreme Council nods and the DEWDROP SCREEN blinks away.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - WALT'S LIFE-POD - DAY

Bridget's several feet away as Casey stands by Walt next to his new life-pod.

CASEY

I'm glad they didn't touch you.

WALT

Thanks to my friend.

CASEY

Will we ever see your people again?
Will I see you?

A GLOWING HOT TEAR runs down Walt's cheek and makes him the dimmest Casey's seen him.

Walt shakes his head and embraces Casey.

Walt shuffles over to the life-pod hatch.

CASEY (CONT'D)

I won't forget you now.

Walt turns around and smiles: too perfect for humans.

WALT

I'm glad.

CASEY

Don't be a fallen angel, okay?

WALT

I won't be. Now that I've met you.

Walt waves goodbye, boards the life-pod, and the panel door shuts with a finality that hits Casey hard.

He trudges over to Bridget who wraps an arm around him.

Walt's life-pod rockets into the sky.

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - FARTHER FROM WALT'S SHIP - MOMENTS LATER

Bridget smiles at Casey.

BRIDGET
You made a wonderful friend.

CASEY
I did.

He cries, and she hugs him so he lifts off the ground.

A LASER strikes the wreckage of all Walt's ships, spreading to immolate the wreckage in a BRIGHT FLASH.

She lowers him, and he opens his bleary eyes to see nothing: as if Walt, his shuttle, and his life-pods never existed.

BRIDGET
You'll always have his memory.

He nods, and a moment of reflection passes.

He frowns at Bridget.

CASEY
But what're we going to do about my mom and dad? They're at war, right?

BRIDGET
You could say that.

CASEY
Maybe you could say something.

BRIDGET
Me? You want me to broker peace?

CASEY
You still owe me a birthday present.

She pinches his arm, and he giggles.

BRIDGET
You brat!

INT. CONVENTION CENTER ROOM - DAY

A room with expensive-looking wood walls carved with fancy designs and a long table in the middle.

On one end of the table is Harper, on the other is Elizabeth.

Bridget stands in the middle.

HARPER

I don't know why we're doing this.
A pillow fight would be just as
therapeutic. Actually, more so.

ELIZABETH

You don't? After what you put Casey
through? After what you've put the
country through?

HARPER

Please, don't be so dramatic! I'm
glad we're not doing the pillow
fight: you hit too hard.

Bridget strikes the table so loud it even startles herself.

BRIDGET

You are here to listen!

ELIZABETH

Finally, someone can get you to--

BRIDGET

You, too!

Elizabeth's jaw drops along with Harper's.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Harper, you know...

Bridget takes a deep breath and wills the tears to not flow.
It seems like she might not go on but pushes forward anyway.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Mr. President, you know I love and
respect you and your family. So it
pains me to say this, but you've
been overreaching.

HARPER

Overreaching? I always ask,
politely, for food bowls to be
passed.

Across from Harper, Elizabeth puts a hand to her lips.

BRIDGET

You brought us here... You brought
your son here on a mission that
would make Don Quixote blush.

HARPER

I see you've been reading your
freshman literature.

BRIDGET

I thought we'd lost our Casey. God,
I love that kid so much! If he
never came back, I don't know what
I would've done. And after all my
worrying about my career, it made
me realize I was overreaching, too.
And if you overreach, you miss
what's in front of you.

Casey's head pokes out from under the table to stare in awe
at his former babysitter who doesn't see him.

As if by lightning, Harper is struck silent.

Elizabeth beams at Bridget.

Harper applauds and stands, and for a moment, Bridget is
uncertain the applause is for her.

HARPER

You're right. And you have learned
something after "only" being the
babysitter-in-chief. You've learned
so much more than I have in our
three years in the people's house.

A stray tear escapes Harper's eye.

Elizabeth runs to him and puts his head on her breast.

HARPER (CONT'D)

I, too, thought we'd lost Casey,
and in my bluster, I tried to hide
away my heart, but again you're
right, Bridget. What matters most
has been in front of me the whole
time.

Casey emerges from under the table and spreads his arms wide.

CASEY

I sure have been!

Bridget gets a mock angry look on her face and points at him.

BRIDGET
You little rascal!

She grabs him and tickles him.

Harper clears his throat to get their attention.

HARPER
Please, allow your president to
have the floor. For one more time,
anyway. I've decided to not run for
another term.

Elizabeth's in shock.

ELIZABETH
You won't?

HARPER
And I will support my wife in her
bid for the presidency.

Elizabeth's gleeful.

ELIZABETH
You will?

Bridget's at a loss.

HARPER
I've always felt like D.C. needs
another hardware store--a homey,
neighborhood-friendly one.

ELIZABETH
Are you being serious, darling?

HARPER
Darling? You haven't called me that
in a while.

Harper and Elizabeth join hands and dance.

ELIZABETH
Krantz would love this, but... No.
I think a return to Kentucky is in
order.

Casey runs to his parents who embrace him.

CASEY

Not that I'm complaining, Mom, but
what changed your mind? I thought
you loved the ivory castle.

She laughs and bends down to move a stray hair of his away
from his eyes.

ELIZABETH

I only became VP to help your
father, but now I realize being
mother-in-chief is a pretty
important job. And there's someone
here who picked up the slack but
got all the blame.

Bridget seems forgotten as Harper and Elizabeth turn to her.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Thank you to our lovely, sweet
Bridget. Who deserves more than
just our thanks.

Elizabeth elbows Harper.

HARPER

Of course, dear. And, ouch--boy,
those are some sharp elbows.
(beat)
But seriously, thank you, Bridget.
You're a natural for the country's
diplomatic corps.

BRIDGET

I am?

HARPER

I'll give you a golden referral for
an internship.

Bridget squeals in delight.

HARPER (CONT'D)

And don't worry about leaving Jeff
behind.

Elizabeth gives her husband a surprised smile.

ELIZABETH

Someone has warmed that cold, cold
heart of yours, darling.

HARPER

And, believe it or not, it's still beating.

(calls out)

Hey, Jeff! Come on in here.

Jeff plods into the room like he's in trouble.

JEFF

First of all, Mr. President, in my own defense, I'd like to--

HARPER

Jeff, just listen.

Harper turns to Bridget with a wry smile.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Some people don't know how to listen.

JEFF

I promise, sir, I'll work on...

Harper points to his ear.

HARPER

Jeff, you'll also get a golden referral letter.

Jeff is beside himself with joy.

HARPER (CONT'D)

For the same diplomat's office as Bridget--as an assistant to the publicist. Just hold back on calling for press conferences, will ya?

Jeff and Bridget share the moment, excited for their futures.

BRIDGET

Since you're in such a good mood, Mr. President, you won't mind Casey's demand?

HARPER

Casey's demand?

Casey nods with glee.

BRIDGET

We are in the happiest place on Earth!

Above the door is a sign: "Disneyland Convention Center."

BEGIN MONTAGE:

CASEY (V.O.)

And so, it turned out to be not
such a bad birthday after all. It
created memories that would help to
mark a period in my life when I was
of a certain age. That's better
than making a wish before blowing
out the candles. It was fulfilling
a dream I didn't even know I had.

-- At Disneyland, Harper and Elizabeth, with Casey in
between, stroll hand in hand in their alien costumes.

-- TWO SECRET SERVICE AGENTS, also dressed as aliens, scratch
everywhere and shift non-stop while they follow close behind.

-- On Walt's mother ship, in the Museum of Knowledge, Gabriel
and Angelica stare in dismay at the column of globes where
the wormhole information sphere is missing. The diamond
pattern glow flashes on Walt's smile which he covers now.

CASEY (V.O.)

And while my father's wish, which
every human has I'd imagine, to
become super advanced overnight
didn't come true, at least I've got
the map for how to get there. And
I'll show it to my father and
mother--but not until we've ridden
Space Mountain at least 5 times.
Casey Johnson's log--over and out!

-- In the mother ship's library that creates the illusion of
being in a forest, Walt lies on the titled marble slab. The
learning branches are on either side of his head as he
listens with a smile too perfect for humans.

FADE OUT.

THE END