

# CHILDREN OF THE STARS

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**ACT ONE**

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FADE IN:

**EXT. DEEP SPACE — TIMELESS**

Not the darkness of night. The darkness before light.

A field of stars — ancient, indifferent, burning.

Then: a shape. Not a ship. A decision.

It moves the way intelligence moves — with purpose that precedes motion.

It is heading somewhere specific.

It has been heading there for a very long time.

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT — ROUTE 375 — NIGHT — 1997**

October 14th. A two-lane highway that doesn't know it's famous yet.

No traffic. No sound except wind and the distant complaint of something electrical.

A single pair of headlights. Moving at highway speed.

Then — not moving.

The car has stopped. Not pulled over. Stopped. As if mid-thought.

**INT. SARAH'S CAR — CONTINUOUS**

SARAH MARTEN, 28. Pregnant. Seven months. Practical shoes. A voice recorder in the cup holder — she's been documenting the drive.

The engine is dead.

She tries the key. Nothing. She checks her phone. No signal.

She is not panicking. She is the kind of person who does not panic first.

She records.

**SARAH**

(into recorder)

Route 375. About forty miles past Alamo. Engine cut at—

(checks watch)

11:47 PM. No warning light. No sound before it stopped.

I'm going to try the hazards.

She tries the hazards. Nothing.

She looks up.

Through the windshield: a light.

Not headlights. Not a flare.

A geometry of light.

It descends with the patience of something that has never needed to hurry.

**SARAH**

(recorder — quieter now)

Okay.

Okay.

(a beat)

I'm going to get out of the car.

She gets out.

The light is close now — close enough that it has temperature. Not heat. Something else.

Sarah stands in the middle of Route 375.

She puts one hand on her stomach.

She looks up.

**SARAH**

(barely audible – to the  
unborn child)

It's okay.

I've got you.

The light reaches her.

She doesn't flinch.

A figure at the edge of the light – not threatening. Not  
human.

Something in its posture: apology.

Something in its movement: care.

It reaches toward her – toward the child – and the light  
changes.

Sarah inhales sharply.

Not pain.

Recognition.

**INT. ALIEN VESSEL – CONTINUOUS**

Not clinical. Not cold.

Curved walls that breathe with soft light. The geometry of  
something grown, not built.

The figure leans close to Sarah. It speaks – not in  
language.

In frequency.

**ALIEN FIGURE**

(in resonant, translated  
tones)

The bridge is open.

The child will carry it.

(a pause – something  
softer)

Forgive us the weight.

Sarah's hand stays on her stomach.

The child kicks.

The figure withdraws.

The light closes.

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT — ROUTE 375 — CONTINUOUS**

The car engine turns on.

The headlights come back.

The road is empty.

Sarah stands in the headlight beams for a long moment.

Then she gets back in the car.

She picks up the recorder.

**SARAH**

October 14th, 1997.

11:54 PM.

(pause)

File One.

She drives.

Behind her: nothing but dark road and the question she just became part of.

CUT TO:

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — ELIAS'S BEDROOM — LOS ANGELES — PRESENT DAY**

A wall of waveforms. Printed, pinned, annotated in red pen.

A workbench with three radios in various states of disassembly — NOT STATIC. In progress. Always in progress.

ELIAS MARTEN, 17. Dark circles under sharp eyes. Headphones around his neck like a second spine.

He is bent over a laptop. On screen: a waveform.

The same waveform. Seventeen years older. Layered now. Complex.

He doesn't know that yet.

He knows only that it has been there his entire life and that tonight it is different.

His pencil traces the peak.

His hand is very steady.

**ELIAS**

(to himself)

What changed.

A knock.

**SARAH (O.S.)**

Elias. It's late.

**ELIAS**

I know.

The door opens. Sarah, 45. The same practical quality. The recorder is gone but the habit of documentation remains.

She looks at the waveform on his screen.

Something moves in her face – barely. Quickly hidden.

**SARAH**

You should sleep.

**ELIAS**

It changed tonight.

The frequency. It shifted.

I've never seen it do that.

Sarah is very still.

**SARAH**

You recognize it?

**ELIAS**

Yeah.

(beat)

I don't know from where.

Sarah looks at the waveform one more time.

She turns off his desk lamp.

**SARAH**

Sleep.

She goes.

Elias stares at the dark screen.

The frequency hums, below hearing, in the walls.

He puts on his headphones.

The waveform is still there. In the static. In the space between signals.

Not gone.

Waiting.

Somewhere above – above the city, above the atmosphere – the geometry of something ancient makes a small adjustment.

It has been patient.

It has been patient for seventeen years.

Tonight, patience ends.

**EXT. DEEP SPACE – CONTINUOUS**

The signal moves.

Not toward Earth.

Through it.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE – ELIAS'S BEDROOM – CONTINUOUS**

Elias takes off his headphones.

The static is gone.

Replaced by something else.

Voices.

Millions of them.

Not loud. Not frightening.

Present.

He sits very still.

Then — from somewhere in the frequency — a single girl's voice, clear:

**GIRL'S VOICE (V.O.)**

(distant, wondering)

...I hear you...

Elias closes his eyes.

Sarah, in the hallway outside, puts her hand flat against his door.

She heard it too.

Not the voice.

The shift.

**SARAH**

(barely above a whisper)

It's time.

END OF PAGES 1-10

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — GARAGE — PRE-DAWN**

Banks of equipment. Oscilloscopes. Frequency analyzers.  
Years of careful work.

Elias is at the main console, headphones now ON. His face:  
controlled concentration cracking at the edges.

The waveform on his screen is spiking in patterns he has  
never documented.

He grabs his notebook. Tries to write. The pen leaves a  
groove but no ink — he's pressing too hard.

**ELIAS**

No no no — stay with it—  
He slams the laptop shut.

Silence — except for his breathing.

Sarah appears in the garage doorway.

**SARAH**

Elias.

**ELIAS**

How long have you known.  
Not a question. The way you say something you've been preparing to say.

**SARAH**

Known what?

**ELIAS**

That it was going to do this.  
(beat)  
That I was going to feel like this.  
Sarah comes into the garage.

She looks at the equipment. Her equipment – she built this room.

She sits beside him.

**SARAH**

I knew it was coming.  
I didn't know when.  
Not yet – I don't want this to be—  
(she stops herself)  
I need you to trust me for a little longer.

**ELIAS**

What did you hear?  
Sarah looks at him for a long time.

**SARAH**

The same thing you heard.  
(quiet)  
The signal passed through me first.  
In 1997.  
Elias absorbs this.

The delayed-reflection motif: on the oscilloscope screen, the waveform echoes itself by exactly 41 seconds. It has always done this. He's never known why.

He knows now it is his mother's heartbeat the night of the contact. Recorded. Returned.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — KITCHEN — EARLY MORNING**

DAVID MARTEN, 47, is attempting to repair the toaster. Third morning this week. He is a man who fixes what he can reach.

CHLOE, 14, eats cereal and scrolls her phone.

Her phone buzzes — an emergency alert.

**CHLOE**

Dad. There's a — what's a  
'deep-space radiation event'?

**DAVID**

What?

**CHLOE**

Emergency alert. Says there's some  
radiation thing from space.

Scientists are 'monitoring.'

(reading)

'Citizens may experience mild  
neurological phenomena.'

(looking up)

What's neurological phenomena?

**DAVID**

(not looking up from  
toaster)

Probably a headache.

Space broke the toaster, I think.

Elias enters. He looks like someone who has been awake for  
the wrong reasons.

David glances up.

**DAVID**

You sleep?

**ELIAS**

Not really.

Sarah enters behind him, puts her hand briefly in the small  
of his back as she passes — a touch that means: I'm here.

We'll talk later.

Elias sits. Stares at his hands.

His right hand, flat on the table, trembles slightly.

He puts his left hand over it.

Chloe watches this.

She doesn't say anything.

**SARAH**

(to David, carefully)

How's the toaster?

**DAVID**

Terrifying.

It has more pieces than I remember  
putting in.

Sarah, at the counter, quietly slides her old voice recorder into her pocket. She has been recording the signal changes since 3 AM.

**EXT. CITY BUS — MORNING**

Elias rides. Two empty seats on either side of him — a personal exclusion zone that travels with him everywhere.

He stares out the window. Below the surface of his face: frequencies.

Then — he hears it. A whisper. In Polish.

He turns.

Three rows back: MAYA, 17. Sketch pad on her knees. She's drawing something geometric — a pattern.

She feels him looking. Looks up.

Their eyes meet.

She doesn't look away.

Neither does he.

The bus moves.

**INT. NADIA'S APARTMENT — WARSAW — DAWN**

NADIA VOLKOV, 16. A wall of mathematical notation – her own. Competition trophies. A Regional Olympiad medal on the desk.

She is solving an equation that doesn't come from any textbook.

The pencil moves on its own.

Then stops.

Floats.

Nadia stares at it.

**NADIA**

...That's interesting.

Not fear.

Assessment.

She writes in her notebook: 'Frequency-associated kinetic response. Repeatable? Test tomorrow.'

She looks at the equation. It is more right than the right answer.

Outside: snow.

She closes the notebook.

She opens it again.

She writes: 'Someone is broadcasting this.'

She underlines it twice.

**INT. LOS ANGELES HIGH SCHOOL – PHYSICS CLASSROOM – MORNING**

MR. ORTEGA writes on the board: WAVE INTERFERENCE – CONSTRUCTIVE VS. DESTRUCTIVE.

The equation is, coincidentally, adjacent to the alien signal's base frequency. He doesn't know this.

Elias does.

His pen moves across the page – but not taking notes. Drawing the waveform. The one from this morning.

**MR. ORTEGA**

Can anyone tell me what happens  
when two waves of identical  
frequency meet?

Elias, without thinking:

**ELIAS**

They become one.

Mr. Ortega pauses.

**MR. ORTEGA**

They amplify each other.  
Constructive interference.  
Close, Marten.

**ELIAS**

(quietly)

No — they become one wave.  
That's different from  
amplification.  
Amplification increases magnitude.

(beat)

Becoming one changes the nature of  
both.

The class is quiet.

The pen on Elias's desk rolls to the edge.

Then lifts.

One centimeter. Two.

His desk neighbor stares.

The pen drops.

The signal surges — only Elias feels it.

He stands. Takes his bag.

**MR. ORTEGA**

Marten—

**ELIAS**

I'm sorry. I have to—  
He's already out the door.

In the hallway: every locker ripples slightly as he passes.

Like liquid glass.

Like a stone thrown in still water.

He walks faster.

Behind him, Maya steps into the hallway.

Watches him go.

END OF PAGES 11-20

**EXT. LOS ANGELES RIVER CHANNEL - DAY**

Elias walks the concrete channel alone.

The signal: present, constant, getting louder.

He stops.

Looks at his reflection in a pool of standing water.

His reflection is delayed - by exactly 41 seconds.

He watches this.

He has seen it before.

Today it is different.

Today the reflection's lips move.

Saying something he can't hear.

**ELIAS**

What do you want from me.

Nothing answers.

But the frequency shifts.

And for a moment - just a moment - the voices are not overwhelming.

They are a conversation.

He is simply not yet able to hear his side of it.

**INT. BLACK SUV — MOVING — SAME TIME**

AGENT MARIN, 40s. The face of a person who has seen classified things and learned to metabolize them.

On his tablet: a GPS grid. One pulsing red dot.

Elias Marten. Walking the river channel.

Beside Marin: a junior analyst.

**ANALYST**

Signal's getting stronger around him.

He's broadcasting.

**MARIN**

He's not broadcasting.

(beat)

He's receiving.

Marin looks at the GPS dot.

A seventeen-year-old kid in a river channel in Los Angeles.

Something crosses Marin's face — not doubt.

Something he hasn't been trained out of yet.

Conscience.

**EXT. RIVER CHANNEL — CONTINUOUS**

A soda can on the ground lifts three feet.

And drops.

Elias didn't mean to.

He stares at it.

His hands are shaking again.

Not from fear.

From \*volume.\*

**EXT. WARSAW — ROOFTOP — NADIA'S APARTMENT BUILDING — SAME TIME**

Nadia stands at the edge of the roof.

The city below. Snow has stopped. The air has that particular post-snow clarity.

Her notebook is open.

She is solving the equation from this morning.

The answer is something she has no notation for.

She stares at it.

**NADIA**

(to herself)

Who's broadcasting this.

She writes: 'Source: Los Angeles? Signal-origin triangulation needed.'

She looks up at the sky.

The signal, to Nadia, sounds like mathematics.

It sounds like a proof that wants to be solved.

She turns a page.

At the top of the new page she writes: 'Question one.'

She caps her pen.

She makes a decision.

She goes back inside to pack.

**EXT. ATLANTA — POLICE STATION — DAY**

MARCUS CARTER, 19. In the back of a police cruiser. Calm. Unnervingly calm.

Two officers in the front. On the radio: dispatches about 'unusual incidents downtown.'

**OFFICER**

So you're saying you stopped the van.

(beat)

With your hand.

**MARCUS**

I'm saying the van stopped.

My hand was in front of it.

(beat)

Causality is yours to assign.

Three black federal SUVs pull into the station lot.

Marcus watches them through the window.

He doesn't look surprised.

**MARCUS**

(very quietly)

There we go.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — KITCHEN — DAY**

Sarah at Elias's laptop. The waveform files open.

She pulls out her recorder. Sets it beside the laptop.

Compares waveforms: Elias's from this morning. Her original recording from 1997.

They are the same signal.

Older. Layered. But identical at the root frequency.

She exhales.

**SARAH**

(to the recorder)

File 213.

(beat)

It's begun.

**INT. PENTAGON — SECURE CONFERENCE ROOM — DAY**

DIRECTOR ADRIANNE LANCASTER, 55. The posture of someone who has been the last line of defense for so long they've forgotten there are other lines.

Across from her: STRONG, her senior analyst. GENERAL THOMAS.

On the table: satellite data. Global neurological anomaly reports.

On a screen: a world map. Glowing points in Los Angeles, Warsaw, Atlanta, Osaka.

**STRONG**

First detected at 01:43 UTC. Signal appears to be broadcasting on a frequency we have no prior data for.

Worldwide neurological anomalies: currently four thousand confirmed. Projected to reach millions by end of day.

**LANCASTER**

Containment options.

**STRONG**

We have a suppression array that can dampen the frequency. Pentagon-level authorization required.

(beat)

And there is one other option. An orbital defense platform. It would eliminate the signal at source.

Lancaster looks at the map.

Los Angeles. A single point, brighter than the others.

**LANCASTER**

Who's in Los Angeles?

Strong slides a photo across the table.

A high school yearbook photo.

Elias Marten. 17.

END OF PAGES 21-30

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**ACT TWO**

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**EXT. LOS ANGELES RIVER CHANNEL — LATE AFTERNOON**

Elias sits in the drainage channel.

And a figure resolves from the light at the waterline.

KAIYA. Female-presenting. 20s in appearance. Eyes that contain too much distance to belong to someone 20.

She sits beside him without asking.

**ELIAS**

You followed me.

**KAIYA**

The signal brought me to where you already were.

(pause)

That is technically different.

**ELIAS**

Who are you.

**KAIYA**

An observer.

My people watch emerging civilizations.

(beat)

At transition points.

**ELIAS**

What kind of transition.

**KAIYA**

The kind your species is in the middle of.

(pause)

In 1997, your mother was a pathway. The signal needed a biological bridge to introduce its frequency to a developing neural architecture. You were that architecture. You were modified – gently, carefully – before you were born.

Elias is very still.

**ELIAS**

Modified.

**KAIYA**

A relay point. A biological amplifier. The signal cannot reach millions of people at full frequency without causing damage.

(beat)

In 1989 it tried without one. Fifteen recipients. Five died.

**ELIAS**

And now you need me to–

**KAIYA**

Carry it. Receive the full frequency and distribute it safely. Without you – 1989. At scale.

(a pause)

There is a girl in Warsaw. Her name is Nadia. She hears the signal as mathematics.

(beat)

She will be part of the network. You will need each other.

**INT. OSAKA - TANAKA APARTMENT - YUNA'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

YUNA TANAKA, 14. The room of someone who draws while asleep.

Her walls are covered in star maps.

Tonight she is awake, adding to one.

The map is geometrically perfect.

It shows a stellar configuration approximately 26,000 light-years from Earth.

It points somewhere specific.

MIKA, her mother, stands in the doorway.

**MIKA**

Yuna. It's past midnight.

**YUNA**

(not looking up)

I remembered it.

I needed to get it down before I forgot.

**MIKA**

You remembered a star map.

**YUNA**

Yes.

(finally looking up)

Mama. Someone is trying to talk.

A lot of people.

(beat)

Someone is scared for me.

(pause; calm)

They don't need to be.

Mika crosses the room.

She sits beside her daughter.

She takes her hand.

Outside: the night clears. Stars visible over Osaka.

Mother and daughter look at them together.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — ELIAS'S BEDROOM — NIGHT**

Elias at his desk. He searches for 'Nadia Warsaw signal mathematics.'

Nothing useful.

He opens the waveform program.

Puts on headphones.

In the static — faint — a thread.

A frequency that moves like equations.

He traces it.

He writes in his notebook: 'Warsaw. Nadia.'

He pauses.

Writes: 'Tomorrow.'

**INT. PENTAGON — LANCASTER'S OFFICE — NIGHT**

Lancaster alone.

On her desk: an old file. 1989. Photographs of fifteen children.

One of them: DANIEL REYES. Nine years old.

She looks at his photograph.

On her wall: the global map. Signal hotspots glowing.

Los Angeles brighter than the rest.

She picks up her phone.

**LANCASTER**

Initiate Project Silence.

(pause)

And find the amplifier.

END OF PAGES 31-40

**INT. FEDERAL FACILITY — HOLDING SUITE — NIGHT — WASHINGTON  
D.C.**

Marcus at a metal table. A tray of food untouched.

Agent Marin enters.

**MARIN**

They want to run some non-invasive  
neurological tests tomorrow.  
EEG, fMRI. Nothing painful.

**MARCUS**

And if I say no?

**MARIN**

I'd advise against saying no.  
(beat)  
There's a kid in Los Angeles.  
We think he's linked to your signal  
somehow.

**MARCUS**

How old?

**MARIN**

Seventeen.  
Marcus looks at his hands.

**MARCUS**

(quiet)  
Kid.

**INT. WARSAW — NADIA'S APARTMENT — LATE NIGHT**

Nadia packs a bag. Deliberate. Efficient.

Regional Olympiad materials — she will not be competing.

She sets them aside.

She takes her notebook. Her best pencils. The equation.

She calls a number she has never called before.

A number she found in the signal.

It rings twice.

No answer.

She looks at the equation.

**NADIA**

(to herself)

Tomorrow.

**INT. OSAKA — TANAKA APARTMENT — LATE NIGHT**

Mika, alone now, examines Yuna's star map.

She photographs it.

She sends it to an astronomer friend.

His reply comes in forty seconds:

'WHERE DID SHE GET THIS? THIS IS A REAL STELLAR CONFIGURATION.'

Mika stares at the phone.

She looks at her sleeping daughter.

Back at the map.

**INT. PENTAGON — COMMAND CENTER — NIGHT**

Lancaster presides over a room of analysts.

Strong: nine thousand, four hundred confirmed anomalies.  
Growing.

On the main screen: the suppression array grid.

**STRONG**

Suppression array is ready.  
Global deployment on your  
authorization.

**LANCASTER**

Deploy it.

A countdown begins.

90 seconds.

The dots on the global map — each a human nervous system carrying the signal — begin to dim.

One by one. Then in clusters.

The silence spreading across the map like winter.

**EXT. LOS ANGELES — ELIAS'S BEDROOM WINDOW — NIGHT**

The signal stops.

Elias wakes instantly.

Sits up.

Headphones. Static.

The waveform on his laptop: flat.

He stares at it.

Something in his chest: the specific ache of a sound you've heard your entire life going silent.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — HALLWAY — CONTINUOUS**

Sarah is already there.

Recorder in hand. She has documented the silence: 3:14 AM.

Elias comes out of his room.

They look at each other in the dark.

**ELIAS**

What happened?

**SARAH**

Someone turned it off.

**ELIAS**

Who.

Sarah looks at him for a long moment.

Then she turns on the hall light.

She sits down on the floor.

He sits beside her.

**SARAH**

There are some things I need to  
tell you.

And she begins.

END OF PAGES 41-50

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

They have moved from the floor to the kitchen. Better light.

The recorder is on the table. File One playing - the 1997  
recording.

The crude waveform from the night of the contact.

Elias listens to his mother's voice from before he existed.

**SARAH (O.S.)**

(from recording)

October 14th, 1997. 11:54 PM.

File One.

He turns it off.

**ELIAS**

How many files.

**SARAH**

Two hundred and thirteen.

He absorbs this.

**ELIAS**

Since 1997.

**SARAH**

Since 1997.

**ELIAS**

You were documenting me.

**SARAH**

I was documenting the signal.

(beat)

The signal was growing with you.

They're the same thing.

(pause)

Elias – the modification they made.

It wasn't damage.

It was a bridge.

You were built to carry this.

Your DNA has never been fully human.

(beat)

You are more than human.

Silence.

**ELIAS**

Did the signal hurt you.

(this is the most  
important question)

In 1997. When it– when they–

**SARAH**

No.

I was scared.

(beat)

But I was not hurt.

And neither were you.

That matters.

**ELIAS**

The government knows.

**SARAH**

They know now.  
They didn't know I existed.  
I was careful.  
(pause)  
There's a woman - Director  
Lancaster.  
She runs something called Project  
Silence.  
She was involved in 1989.  
She watched a child die because  
there was no amplifier.  
(beat)  
She's frightened of what happens  
without you.  
She's equally frightened of what  
happens with you.  
She's going to come for us.

**ELIAS**

When.  
A sound outside.  
Headlights across the kitchen wall.  
Two pairs.  
They look at each other.

**SARAH**

Now, I think.

**EXT. MARTEN HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Two black SUVs. Marin gets out of the first.  
He doesn't have his weapon drawn.  
He looks tired.  
And - unexpectedly - he knocks on the door.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS**

Sarah opens it.  
Marin.

**MARIN**

Ms. Marten.

My name is Agent Marin.

(beat)

I'm not here to take your son.

I'm here because Director Lancaster needs to understand what she's dealing with.

(pause)

I think you can help her understand.

(beat)

And I think — if she understands — she might not destroy it.

Sarah looks at him.

Then behind her: Elias, in the doorway.

Then at the hard drive in her hand.

213 files.

Seventeen years.

**SARAH**

Give me five minutes to get my coat.

END OF PAGES 51-60

**INT. SUV — MOVING — NIGHT**

Elias and Sarah in the back. Marin up front.

Kaiya is already in the vehicle.

Elias doesn't ask how.

**MARIN**

(to Kaiya)

You're the observer.

**KAIYA**

Yes.

**MARIN**

Any chance you could have led with that?

**KAIYA**

You would not have believed me.  
Your protocol requires evidence.

(beat)

Elias is the evidence.

Marin drives.

Elias looks out the window.

The signal – suppressed – is a ghost frequency.

Present but muted.

Like hearing music through a wall.

**ELIAS**

(to the window, quietly)

Because if I hear everyone again...  
I won't be able to pretend I'm  
alone anymore.

**KAIYA**

You were never alone.  
You were simply the only one  
listening.

Elias looks at her.

This is the most honest thing anyone has ever said to him.

**EXT. WARSAW – RESIDENTIAL STREET – NIGHT**

Nadia walks in snow.

She stops.

She feels the absence of the signal the way you feel a room go cold.

She looks at her phone.

Opens a new note.

Writes: 'Signal suppressed. Human agency. Government.',

She looks up at the sky.

**NADIA**

(to the sky)

Come back.

She hails a cab.

Destination: airport.

**INT. FEDERAL FACILITY — MARCUS'S ROOM — NIGHT**

Marcus lies on his bed. Ceiling tiles.

The suppression grid is giving him a headache he won't admit to.

He feels the ghost frequency.

He focuses on it.

And under the suppression — faint — he hears it:

A kid.

Somewhere in Los Angeles.

Hearing the same thing.

**MARCUS**

(to himself)

Kid.

(beat)

I hear you.

**INT. OSAKA — TANAKA APARTMENT — NIGHT**

Yuna draws.

A face.

She has never seen this person.

17-year-old boy.

Dark circles. Headphones.

She writes beside the drawing: 'The one who has to decide.'

Mika watches from the doorway.

She has stopped asking her daughter to explain.

She has started writing things down too.

**EXT. EARTH ORBIT — NIGHT**

The suppression grid. A lattice of satellites, geometric, deliberate.

Below it: the world.

And below the suppression — moving through it, unchanged — the signal.

Not from orbit.

From within.

From eleven thousand nervous systems that have already been changed.

Patient.

Waiting.

Like a breath held before a word.

END OF PAGES 61-70

**EXT. ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE — PRE-DAWN**

A military jet. Cold Washington air.

Armed personnel line the stairs.

Elias, Sarah, Kaiya, and Marin descend.

**MARIN**

Director Lancaster wants to see you.

(to Elias)

You and your mother.

The observer—

**KAIYA**

I will stay with Elias.

Marin looks at her for a moment.

Nods.

They board separate vehicles.

**INT. PENTAGON — CORRIDOR — EARLY MORNING**

Sterile hallway. Security doors.

Elias maps the building as he walks. Exit. Exit. Stairwell.

**KAIYA**

You're cataloguing the exits.

**ELIAS**

Force of habit.

They stop at a door: DIRECTORATE — STRATEGIC THREAT ANALYSIS.

**MARIN**

The Director will see you in the conference room.

She'd like to begin with—

**SARAH**

I'm going in with my son.

Marin looks at her.

Then at Elias.

Then at the hard drive in Sarah's hand.

**MARIN**

I'll tell her.

**INT. PENTAGON — CONFERENCE ROOM — CONTINUOUS**

Lancaster is already seated.

She looks at Sarah with the assessment of someone who expected a civilian and found a researcher.

The global signal map on the wall: the suppression grid holding, thinning at the edges.

A live clock in the corner: time until grid failure.

**LANCASTER**

Sarah Marten.  
(pause)  
The 1997 Nevada contact.  
(beat)  
You documented it.

**SARAH**

Two hundred and thirteen files.  
Seventeen years.  
(she sets the drive on  
the table)  
Everything you don't have.  
Lancaster looks at the drive.  
  
She looks at Elias.  
  
She looks at Kaiya.  
  
Something shifts in her.  
  
Very slightly.  
  
She picks up the drive.

**LANCASTER**

The signal is reforming.  
The grid gives us roughly eighteen  
hours.  
(beat)  
I'm listening.  
Sarah opens her laptop.  
  
File One.  
  
The recording from 1997.  
  
The crude waveform plays.  
  
In the room: Lancaster, Elias, Kaiya, Sarah, Marin.  
  
And the voice of a 28-year-old woman on a Nevada highway who  
drove home because a child kicked.  
  
Nobody speaks while it plays.

**INT. PENTAGON — INTERROGATION SUITE C — EARLY MORNING**

The same table. Different energy.

Lancaster across from Elias and Sarah. Kaiya near the wall.

On the table: Sarah's hard drive. 213 files. Seventeen years.

Lancaster hasn't touched it.

**LANCASTER**

You drove to Nevada in October of 1997.

**SARAH**

I was visiting a friend in Ely.  
Took the long way back.

**LANCASTER**

Route 375.

**SARAH**

(beat)  
You already know the route.

**LANCASTER**

We know every reported incident on that highway going back forty years.

(pause)  
Yours was the only one that produced a child.

**ELIAS**

How many others?

**LANCASTER**

Fourteen confirmed contacts on that corridor between 1981 and 2003.  
Two reported physical interaction.

**ELIAS**

And the children?

**LANCASTER**

(careful)  
One other. 1989.

**SARAH**

Daniel Reyes.  
Lancaster's jaw tightens – almost imperceptibly.

**LANCASTER**

You did your research.

**SARAH**

I had seventeen years and a reason.  
(she gestures to the  
drive)  
File forty-seven. His name appears  
in a declassified NIH report.  
Cause of death: 'undetermined  
cardiac episode.'

**LANCASTER**

That file is–

**SARAH**

Available if you know where to  
look.

(beat)

I know where to look.

Lancaster studies Sarah for the first time. Not as a  
variable. As a person.

**LANCASTER**

Why didn't you come forward?

**SARAH**

(without bitterness)

Come forward to who?

The question lands.

Marin shifts his weight.

**KAIYA**

(from the wall)

Neither do you.

(when Lancaster turns)

You asked who gets to define an  
attack on humanity.

(beat)

Neither do you.

The room is very quiet.

**INT. PENTAGON — HOLDING CORRIDOR B — SAME TIME**

MARCUS CARTER walks a sterile hallway. Fresh clothes. No restraints.

He counts ceiling tiles.

**MARCUS**

(to no one)

Forty-one. Forty-two.

(beat)

Why are there forty-three?

The agent stops at a door. Scans a badge.

**AGENT**

Someone wants to meet you.

**MARCUS**

(under his breath)

That's what everyone says before  
something terrible happens.

**INT. PENTAGON — SECONDARY BRIEFING ROOM — CONTINUOUS**

Elias at a table.

Marcus enters.

They look at each other.

Recognition — not personal. Deeper. Like hearing a song  
you've never learned but somehow know.

**MARCUS**

You're the one in Los Angeles.

**ELIAS**

You stopped a van.

**MARCUS**

A van, technically.

(beat)

With a fully loaded roof rack.

**ELIAS**

I bent a waveform through a wall.

**MARCUS**

(sitting down)

We're in serious trouble, aren't  
we.

**ELIAS**

Yes.

**MARCUS**

I hear them too. All the time now.

(even with the  
suppression grid)

Math. Voices. Someone crying in a  
language I don't recognize.

(beat)

Sometimes I hear my grandmother.  
She's been dead for eleven years.

**ELIAS**

It's not her.

**MARCUS**

I know.

(beat)

But it sounds exactly like her.

(quieter)

When she was happy.

**EXT. REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT — ARRIVALS — EARLY MORNING**

NADIA VOLKOV emerges through automatic doors.

16. Sharp-eyed. A battered notebook under one arm.

She opens to the last page.

43 questions. Seven categories. Color-coded.

At the top, underlined twice: 'WHY AN AMPLIFIER AND NOT A TRANSLATOR?'

Marin is at the curb.

**MARIN**

Nadia Volkov?

**NADIA**

(not looking up)

You have excellent timing.

(beat)

Or the signal does.

She gets in the car.

**INT. PENTAGON — SECONDARY BRIEFING ROOM — CONTINUOUS**

Elias and Marcus feel it simultaneously.

A tremor.

Not seismic.

The signal, under the suppression grid, breathing.

**MARCUS**

That's the signal.

**ELIAS**

The grid's degrading.

The light above them flickers.

And then — both boys hear it simultaneously:

A girl's voice. Distant. Precise. Speaking in numbers.

**ELIAS**

(barely audible)

Warsaw.

**MARCUS**

She's early.

**INT. PENTAGON — LANCASTER'S OFFICE — SAME TIME**

Lancaster at the window.

Strong enters.

**STRONG**

The Warsaw asset just landed. Marin has her.

(beat)

Osaka girl's mother won't authorize transport.

**LANCASTER**

Leave the Osaka girl where she is.

(beat)

For now.

(pause)

Strong – the 1989 children.

How many had parents who knew?

**STRONG**

None, Director.

Lancaster absorbs this.

**LANCASTER**

(almost to herself)

She documented every signal for seventeen years.

(beat)

Get me Sarah Marten.

Just her.

I want to see the files.

END OF PAGES 81-90

**INT. PENTAGON – SECURE CONFERENCE ROOM – EARLY MORNING**

Lancaster and Sarah. Just the two of them.

The laptop open. File One playing.

Then File 88. A newer waveform – the same base pattern, layered. Complex.

**LANCASTER**

When did this start?

**SARAH**

March 2014. Elias was fourteen.

**LANCASTER**

(quietly)  
Adolescent neurological  
development.  
(pause)  
It planned this.

**SARAH**

Or it grew toward it.  
(beat)  
I don't think they plan the way we  
do.  
I think they wait.  
Lancaster looks at the waveform.

The absolute certainty she carries like armor develops a  
hairline fracture.

**INT. PENTAGON — SECONDARY BRIEFING ROOM — SAME TIME**

Elias. Marcus. Nadia.

Three chairs in a triangle.

Kaiya at the corner.

Nadia has her notebook open to page one.

**NADIA**

Question one.  
(reading)  
'The signal operates on a frequency  
measurable in Hz ranges, yet no  
existing satellite array identified  
it until last week. How?'

**KAIYA**

The signal does not travel through space.

(beat)

It travels through relationship.

(pause)

Minds that have been prepared to receive it.

The signal has been present on Earth for seventeen years.

It became measurable only when enough receivers were active.

**MARCUS**

So what is it?

Everyone looks at Kaiya.

**KAIYA**

It is a question.

(beat)

The same one your species has asked since you first looked up.

(pause)

'Are we alone?'

(beat)

The signal is the answer delivered as an experience.

Not information.

Contact.

Marcus stares at the ceiling.

Nadia writes three words and underlines them twice.

Elias looks at his hands.

**ELIAS**

And I'm the one who amplifies it.  
Pushes it through everyone who's  
been changed.

**KAIYA**

Not push.  
 (beat)  
 Receive.  
 And let it pass through you without  
 breaking.  
 (pause)  
 A pushed signal overwhelms.  
 A received and released signal  
 connects.

**NADIA**

(without looking up)  
 Question two.

**INT. PENTAGON — DIRECTOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM — SAME TIME**

Lancaster. Strong. GENERAL THOMAS. ADMIRAL PEARCE.

Holographic display of Earth. The suppression grid glowing,  
 thinning.

**ADMIRAL PEARCE**

Nine hours, forty minutes. The grid  
 won't hold past hour eight.

**LANCASTER**

I'm betting on evidence.  
 (beat)  
 New evidence.  
 A civilian researcher with  
 seventeen years of longitudinal  
 data.  
 (pause)  
 One prepared subject who has shown  
 zero neurological deterioration  
 despite continuous exposure.

**ADMIRAL PEARCE**

One subject.

**LANCASTER**

One prepared subject.  
 (beat)  
 Which is exactly what we didn't  
 have in 1989.

**GENERAL THOMAS**

What are you proposing?

**LANCASTER**

Nine hours.  
Give me nine hours to assess  
whether a controlled amplification-

**ADMIRAL PEARCE**

You want to let the signal through.

**LANCASTER**

I want to know if letting it  
through is survivable.

(pause)

Before we destroy something that  
may not be a weapon.

(beat)

It does want something.  
I'd like to know what that is  
before we make it permanent.

**GENERAL THOMAS**

Eight hours, Lancaster.

(beat)

If the grid fails before your  
assessment-

**LANCASTER**

I'll authorize the platform myself.  
Thomas nods.

Pearce says nothing.

But she doesn't override.

**INT. PENTAGON — SECONDARY BRIEFING ROOM — LATER**

Nadia is on question fourteen.

**NADIA**

'Are the modifications to Elias  
Marten's DNA reversible?'

**KAIYA**

Yes.

(beat)

They were designed to be temporary.  
After the signal passes through.

(pause)

You were not meant to carry this  
permanently.  
The modification was a bridge.  
Bridges are not meant to be lived  
on.

**ELIAS**

Would I still hear them?

**KAIYA**

(the longest pause yet)

Not the way you hear them now.

(beat)

Faintly.

The way you hear a song you've  
memorized.

Not the song itself.

(pause)

The shape of it.

**ELIAS**

(soft)

I've been hearing them my whole  
life.

(beat)

I never thought about what it would  
be like to stop.

No one speaks.

The fluorescent light flickers once.

The signal breathes.

**INT. PENTAGON — SECURE CONFERENCE ROOM — SAME TIME**

Sarah and Lancaster. The laptop closed.

**LANCASTER**

I watched a nine-year-old boy lose  
his mind in 1989.

(beat)

His name was Daniel.  
He didn't have a mother who kept  
213 files.

**SARAH**

Is that your way of saying Elias is  
different?

**LANCASTER**

(slowly)

It's my way of saying—

(pause)

I don't know yet.

(beat)

But I'm listening.

The most honest thing Lancaster has said in the entire film.

Sarah nods.

She opens File One.

**INT. PENTAGON — CORRIDOR — CONTINUOUS**

Nadia rounds a corner. She stops when she sees Elias.

He stops when he sees her.

They've never met.

But she knows him.

**NADIA**

(catching herself)

Sorry. I do that when I'm  
surprised.

(beat)

You're shorter than I imagined.

**ELIAS**

You imagined me?

**NADIA**

I drew you.  
(holds up notebook)

Page twelve.

Elias looks at the sketch.

Unmistakably him. Dated four days ago.

**ELIAS**

(quietly)

How?

**NADIA**

The signal.

When I solve the equations it shows  
me things it wants me to know.

(beat)

I think you're the reason it  
brought me here.

**ELIAS**

I think we brought each other here.

Nadia considers this. Writes it down.

**NADIA**

(not looking up)

I have forty-three questions.

**ELIAS**

I have maybe four answers.

**NADIA**

(finally looking up)

That's a terrible ratio.

**ELIAS**

Yeah.

END OF PAGES 91-100

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — MORNING**

A different kind of room.

No interrogation table. Four chairs in a loose circle — the  
geometry of a conversation.

A monitor shows the live global signal map. The countdown:  
07:41:22.

Elias enters. Then Marcus. Then Nadia, notebook open. Then Kaiya.

Then Sarah.

Something passes between Elias and Sarah that can't be put into dialogue.

**ELIAS**

Is she—

**SARAH**

She's listening.

(beat)

That's more than I expected.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS**

Nadia has drawn a schematic. A circle with three points.

**NADIA**

I've been thinking about the geometry.

(shows notebook)

Three receivers. One amplifier. One observer.

Marcus — kinetic.

Yuna — visual.

Me — mathematical.

(beat)

We're not doing the same thing.

We're doing complementary things.

**ELIAS**

The signal doesn't have to go everywhere at once.

**NADIA**

You can direct it.

(beat)

Like a—

**ELIAS**

Prism.

Nadia writes this word down.

**KAIYA**

This is consistent with the design.

(pause)

The original architects anticipated a network.

Elias was the anchor.

You were meant to be the nodes.

(beat)

Without Yuna the geometric distribution is incomplete.

**ELIAS**

Has anyone actually asked her?

**INT. PENTAGON — COMMUNICATIONS SUITE — MOMENTS LATER**

A video call. The screen shows YUNA TANAKA — 14, cross-legged on her bed in Osaka.

Elias, Nadia, and Marcus in frame.

**YUNA**

(in English, careful)

I knew you would call.

(beat)

I drew all of you.

**NADIA**

Yuna — did you already decide?

**YUNA**

I decided in March.

When I drew the map the first time.

(pause)

My mother is still afraid.

MIKA TANAKA steps partially into frame.

**MIKA**

(to Elias, directly)

She says it doesn't hurt.

**ELIAS**

(honestly)

It didn't hurt me at low amplitude.  
I won't lie to you about full  
frequency.

(beat)

We're doing everything we can to  
make sure it doesn't.

**MIKA**

What happens to her if this goes  
wrong?

Elias meets her eyes through the screen.

He doesn't fill the silence with comfort.

**MIKA**

(finally, to Yuna)

She does what she decides.

She always has.

(voice breaking  
slightly)

Just—

Bring her back the same.

**YUNA**

(to her mother, gently)

I will be the same, Mama.

(beat)

Just more.

Mika covers her mouth.

Doesn't argue.

**INT. PENTAGON — DIRECTOR'S OFFICE — SAME TIME**

Lancaster paces.

On one screen: countdown clock — 06:58:14.

On another: the live feed of Sublevel E.

On the third: the orbital defense platform. Green.

**STRONG**

Admiral Pearce is invoking  
contingency protocol seven.  
General Thomas has to co-sign any  
further delays.

**LANCASTER**

The eleven thousand.  
Do we have a breakdown by age?

**STRONG**

Average age: nineteen point three.  
Youngest confirmed: eleven.

(pause)

There's also a cluster. Seven  
children. Rural Montana. Ages nine  
through fourteen.

Lancaster turns back to the window.

**LANCASTER**

(quiet)

It found the children in the places  
with the least interference.  
Rural areas. Low electromagnetic  
noise.

(beat)

It wasn't random selection.  
It was careful.

She looks at the orbital platform status light.

Green.

Waiting.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — KITCHEN — SAME TIME — LOS ANGELES**

David at the kitchen table.

The toaster in pieces. Third attempt.

On Elias's tablet: a news alert: 'GLOBAL NEUROLOGICAL EVENT  
REPORTED.'

David reads it.

He picks up his phone. Dials.

**SARAH (V.O.)**

(answering)

David.

**DAVID**

(controlled, barely)

Where are you.

**SARAH (V.O.)**

Washington.

**DAVID**

Is he—

(voice tightening)

Sarah. Is he okay?

**SARAH (V.O.)**

He's exactly where he's supposed to be.

**DAVID**

(very quiet)

You knew this was coming.

(beat)

For how long?

**SARAH (V.O.)**

Since 1997.

David is very still.

He puts one hand flat on the kitchen table.

**DAVID**

(barely steady)

You carried that.

(beat)

Alone.

**SARAH (V.O.)**

I thought if I told you, you'd have to choose.

(beat)

I didn't want you to have to choose.

**DAVID**

(finally)  
Is he scared?

**SARAH (V.O.)**

(soft)  
Yes.

**DAVID**

(slow)  
Tell him—  
(clears throat)  
Tell him the toaster still doesn't  
work.  
Tell him I need him to come home  
and fix it.

**SARAH (V.O.)**

(barely above a whisper)  
I'll tell him.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS**

Sarah steps back into the room.

She crosses to Elias. Leans down. Says something in his ear.

We don't hear it.

But we see his face.

The tension in his jaw releases.

Just slightly. Just enough.

He nods.

The countdown clock: 05:08:41.

The signal breathes. Closer now.

END OF PAGES 101-110

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**ACT THREE**

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**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — DAY**

The countdown: 02:14:07.

The signal map pulses. Once. Twice. Like a heartbeat finding its rhythm.

Elias opens his eyes.

**ELIAS**

(to Kaiya)

It's early.

**KAIYA**

The grid is failing faster than projected.

**STRONG (V.O.)**

(over phone)

Grid integrity at thirty-one percent.

We've lost six northern nodes.

Rate of decay just doubled.

(beat)

Time to full collapse: ninety minutes. Maybe less.

**ELIAS**

(to Lancaster, quiet)

We need to start now.

**INT. PENTAGON — DIRECTOR'S OFFICE — SIMULTANEOUS**

Admiral Pearce at Lancaster's desk.

The orbital platform status: GREEN. READY.

**ADMIRAL PEARCE**

(into phone)

I want a targeting solution in the next fifteen minutes.

Don't wait for Lancaster.

I said don't wait.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS****MARIN**

(to Lancaster, low)  
The Admiral is upstairs.

**LANCASTER**

I know.  
(pause)  
Marin.  
(beat)  
Lock the floor.

He looks at her.

Then: a nod.

He speaks into his earpiece.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS**

Elias, Marcus, Nadia. Yuna on screen. Sarah at the edge.

Kaiya at the center.

**KAIYA**

When it arrives — let it come.  
(beat)  
It will feel like every voice  
you've ever suppressed returning at  
once.  
You will want to run.  
You will want to shut it out.  
(pause)  
This is the only moment in your  
life when you must not.

**KAIYA**

(to Marcus)  
You will feel the pressure first.  
In your chest.  
This is not pain. It is volume.  
Turn it outward. Not inward.

**KAIYA**

(to Nadia)

When the frequency reaches you –  
you will see patterns no human  
notation can hold.

Do not try to write them down.

(the faintest warmth)

For once in your life – do not  
write it down.

Feel it.

Nadia's hand hovers over her notebook.

She closes it.

She puts it on the floor.

**KAIYA**

(to Yuna on screen)

You will feel it like a map  
completing itself.

You know what to do.

**YUNA**

I know.

**KAIYA**

(to Lancaster)

You will see things on your  
instruments that have no precedent.  
Do not act on them until I tell you  
it is over.

(beat)

Can you do that?

**LANCASTER**

I'll try.

**INT. PENTAGON – SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E – MOMENTS LATER**

The countdown: 01:47:33.

And then–

The counter stops mattering.

Elias looks up.

His eyes go to the ceiling, then beyond it.

**ELIAS**

(barely audible)

It's here.

**INT. PENTAGON — COMMAND CENTER — SIMULTANEOUS**

Every terminal spikes simultaneously.

Technicians pull off headsets.

Strong stares at a waveform she has never seen.

**STRONG**

(quiet)

It's not coming from orbit.

(checks again)

It's coming from everywhere.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS**

The signal hits Elias like pressure.

Not pain. Weight.

The weight of being heard by something vast.

He grips the arms of his chair.

His hands go white.

**ELIAS**

(through his teeth)

There are so many—

**KAIYA**

I know.

**ELIAS**

I can't—

**KAIYA**

You can.

**ELIAS**

There are millions of them—

**KAIYA**

Elias.

(beat)

You have been listening to them  
your whole life.

They are not new.

(pause)

You are simply no longer alone in  
hearing them.

Something shifts in his face.

He stops fighting.

He opens his hands.

The room hums.

A single overhead light flickers and holds.

*FLASH SEQUENCE — RAPID CUTS — GLOBAL:*

A construction worker in Nairobi stops mid-swing. Puts his  
hand on his chest. Looks up.

A woman on a subway in Seoul reaches out and touches a  
stranger's arm. The stranger doesn't pull away.

A classroom in São Paulo — seven children simultaneously put  
down their pencils.

A fishing boat in the North Atlantic — two men who haven't  
spoken in days look at each other.

A nursing home in Manchester — an old woman who has not  
recognized her daughter in six months turns and says her  
name.

A child in rural Montana runs outside, stands in a field,  
arms out, face to the sky.

Not fear.

Recognition.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS**

Marcus grips his chair. His nose bleeds — one clean line.

He doesn't wipe it.

**MARCUS**

(eyes closed)

I've got it.

(barely)

I've got it.

Nadia's eyes are open wide. Absolutely still.

The pen she put down rolls across the floor toward the center of the room.

She doesn't notice.

On screen: Yuna.

Her star map is glowing.

Not the paper – the map itself.

Every line she drew over three years of sleepless nights: luminous.

**YUNA**

(eyes closed, whisper)

There it is.

There it is.

There—

**INT. PENTAGON — DIRECTOR'S OFFICE — CONTINUOUS**

Pearce at the terminal. Targeting solution loaded.

Her hand on the authorization key.

On screen: Elias's vitals.

Heart rate: 140. 148. 153.

She watches the number.

Her hand on the key.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS**

The pressure builds.

Elias's hands are shaking now.

**ELIAS**

(through clenched teeth)  
Something's - it's too much-

**KAIYA**

(measured)  
The signal is asking.

**ELIAS**

Asking what-

**KAIYA**

Listen.  
Elias freezes.  
He stops fighting the pressure.  
He listens.  
And in that silence - beneath the roar of millions of voices  
-  
He hears it.  
A single frequency.  
Not a voice.  
Not words.  
A question asked in the only language the universe has ever  
used consistently:  
The desire to know if it is alone.  
Elias's face changes.  
The tension goes out of it.  
What replaces it looks, from the outside, like grief and  
wonder arriving at the same moment.

**ELIAS**

(very quiet)

Oh.

(beat)

Oh. You've been—

(he stops)

You've been waiting.

A silence.

**ELIAS**

(barely above a breath)

We're here.

**INT. PENTAGON — COMMAND CENTER — CONTINUOUS**

Strong watches a counter-signal appear on her monitor.

Not from orbit.

From Earth.

Thousands of points of light on the map.

Then thousands more.

**STRONG**

(stunned)

The signal is being answered.

(beat)

By everyone.

**INT. PENTAGON — DIRECTOR'S OFFICE — CONTINUOUS**

Pearce watches the global map fill with points of light.

Her hand on the authorization key.

The counter in the corner: 11,247.

847,000.

1.2 million.

2.7 million.

Her hand lifts from the key.

She doesn't decide to lift it.

It simply rises.

Like a reflex.

She stares at it.

Then she picks up the phone.

Calls off the targeting solution.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — CONTINUOUS**

The signal peaks.

For three seconds — or three years — the room has lost its relationship with time.

Every person in it is aware of every other person.

Not their thoughts.

Their presence.

The fact of each other.

Lancaster — at the edge of the room — feels it too.

A recognition.

Not of the alien.

Of the people in this room.

Elias's breathing. Sarah's stillness. Marcus pressing his palm to his sternum.

Nadia, eyes wide, absolutely silent.

Kaiya — the only one unaffected — watching all of them the way someone watches people they have waited a very long time to meet.

Then—

The peak passes.

Like a wave that has broken and now pulls back along the shore.

The signal doesn't disappear.

It settles.

Like something that was always present but finally stopped straining.

Elias exhales.

Long. Slow. Complete.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — MOMENTS AFTER**

No one speaks for a long time.

**MARCUS**

(rough, low)

That was—

He doesn't finish.

**NADIA**

(very quietly)

I don't have a category for that.

On screen: Yuna. Eyes open. Wet.

Her star map — every line complete.

Mika staring at it.

**YUNA**

(to Elias)

Did they hear us?

**ELIAS**

(soft)

Yes.

**YUNA**

Good.

(beat)

I told them we were sorry it took so long.

**MARCUS**

(to Elias)

What did you tell them?

**ELIAS**

(very honest)

I just said we were here.

(beat)

That seemed like enough.

**INT. PENTAGON — CORRIDOR — MOMENTS LATER**

Lancaster walks.

Strong falls into step.

**STRONG**

Forty-seven million confirmed resonance events in the first twelve minutes.

No fatalities.

No hospitalizations directly attributed to the signal.

(pause)

Fourteen reports of anomalous kinetic events.

Similar to the Carter incident.

**LANCASTER**

Dangerous?

**STRONG**

(carefully)

One man in Edinburgh apparently lifted a car off a dog.

Lancaster absorbs this.

**LANCASTER**

Is the dog okay?

**STRONG**

Yes, Director.

**LANCASTER**

(walking)

Then we have some new things to figure out.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — SHORTLY AFTER**

Kaiya stands at the center of the room.

Something has changed in her – the particular stillness of someone completing a very long assignment.

Elias notices.

**ELIAS**

(quiet)

You're leaving.

**KAIYA**

My function here is complete.

**ELIAS**

Will I hear from you again?

**KAIYA**

Not in this form.

(beat)

I have been an observer.

My people observe.

We do not remain.

**ELIAS**

Is that hard? Leaving?

**KAIYA**

(the longest pause she  
has ever taken)

I observed your species for  
seventeen years.

(beat)

I have watched you be cruel.  
Frightened. Small.

(pause)

I have watched you drive home from  
a dark highway because a child  
kicked.

I have watched a boy spend his  
entire life hearing everyone—

(pause)

—and still be surprised when  
someone hears him back.

(very long beat)

Leaving is—

(she stops)

Complicated.

(pause)

For an observer.

**ELIAS**

Was that an emotion?

**KAIYA**

(the faintest trace of  
warmth)

I am not certain.

(beat)

I will observe it further.

Something almost like a smile, from Elias.

**KAIYA**

(to the room)

You are not the same species you  
were this morning.

(beat)

You will spend some time not  
knowing what to do about that.  
You will argue about it.  
Some of you will be afraid.  
Some will deny it.

(pause)

You will form committees.

(beat)

But you will argue your way slowly  
toward something better.  
It is inefficient.

(beat)

But it is yours.

**KAIYA**

(only to Elias)

You are no longer alone.

(beat)

You were never meant to be.

(pause)

It simply took seventeen years to  
deliver the message.

**ELIAS**

Thank you.

(beat)

For waiting.

Kaiya holds his gaze for one last moment.

Then she looks away.

And she walks out of the room.

No light. No shimmer.

She simply walks out.

The door closes.

**INT. PENTAGON — CORRIDOR — CONTINUOUS**

Lancaster watches Kaiya pass in the hallway.  
 Kaiya slows, just slightly, as she passes.

**KAIYA**

(without turning)  
 You closed the observation window.  
 (beat)  
 That was the right decision.  
 (pause)  
 In 1989.  
 (beat)  
 Some things should not be witnessed  
 without permission.  
 You understood that then.  
 You understand more now.  
 She turns the corner.  
 Lancaster stands in the corridor alone.

She takes one breath.

Then she goes back to work.

**INT. PENTAGON — SUBLEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM E — LATER**

Nadia is on the phone with Warsaw. Rapid Polish.

**NADIA**

(into phone)  
 Tak, Mama. Jestem dobrze.  
 Marcus sits alone for a moment. He looks at his hands.  
 Flexes them.  
 The fluorescent light above flickers.  
 He looks up at it.

**MARCUS**

(to the light, quietly)  
 We are going to have conversations  
 about boundaries.  
 The light holds steady.  
 He nods.

**INT. PENTAGON — HALLWAY OUTSIDE SUBLEVEL E — SAME TIME**

Sarah and Elias.

The hallway empty.

**ELIAS**

Is it always going to be like this?

**SARAH**

I don't know.

(beat)

Kaiya said it fades.

Over time.

(pause)

Not all the way.

**ELIAS**

I heard Dad.

(pause)

In the signal.

Everyone was — it was millions of  
people, Mom, it was millions—

(he steadies)

And I heard Dad.

(beat)

He was worried about the toaster.

Sarah lets out something between a laugh and a breath.

**SARAH**

He always fixes what he can reach.

**ELIAS**

You've been carrying this since  
1997.

**SARAH**

Yes.

**ELIAS**

You could have told me earlier.

**SARAH**

I thought about it every year.

(beat)

And then I'd look at you—

(her voice)

You were so you.

Even with all of it.

(pause)

I didn't want to change that before

I had to.

**ELIAS**

It didn't change me.

**SARAH**

(looking at him)

No.

(soft)

It didn't.

She puts her hand on his face.

He lets her.

Two seconds. Three.

Then he steps back.

**ELIAS**

Can we go home?

**SARAH**

Yes.

(beat)

Eventually.

(beat)

There are a lot of committees  
first.

**ELIAS**

(already walking)

Can I skip the committees?

**SARAH**

(following)

Absolutely not.

CUT TO:

**EXT. MARTEN HOUSE — LOS ANGELES — EVENING — TWO DAYS LATER**

The neighborhood, going about its evening.

Sprinklers, garage doors, the smell of someone's dinner.

A car pulls up.

Elias gets out first.

He stands on the driveway.

Looks up at the sky — still the pale blue of early evening.  
The first stars not yet visible.

He closes his eyes.

Listens.

The signal is there.

Quieter now. Settled.

The way music sounds after a concert — not gone. Living in  
the bones.

He opens his eyes.

He goes inside.

**INT. MARTEN HOUSE — KITCHEN — CONTINUOUS**

David is at the counter.

The toaster is in pieces in front of him. Third attempt.

He hears the door.

He turns.

Elias in the doorway.

They look at each other.

David's face does three things in two seconds.

**DAVID**

(gruff, covering)  
The toaster's still broken.

**ELIAS**

You took it apart again.

**DAVID**

It was an experiment.

**ELIAS**

What was the hypothesis?

**DAVID**

That I could fix it without you.

**ELIAS**

And?

**DAVID**

(gesturing at the  
pieces)

Inconclusive.

Elias crosses the kitchen.

He sits at the counter.

He picks up a piece of the toaster.

David sits beside him.

They work in silence for a moment.

**DAVID**

(low, not looking up)  
Your mother told me.  
(beat)  
All of it.

**ELIAS**

I know.

**DAVID**

You're my kid.

(pause)

Whatever you are—

(he looks at Elias)

Whatever—

(beat)

You're my kid.

The room is very still.

Elias looks at his father.

This man who repairs broken things.

Who brings tea.

Who says 'Space broke the toaster' as a complete sentence and means it.

Elias picks up two pieces of the toaster.

Connects them.

A click.

**ELIAS**

(quietly)

I know, Dad.

They work.

The kitchen sounds: the clock, a car outside, the toaster slowly becoming a toaster again.

Through the kitchen window:

The sky deepening.

The first star—

Then two.

Then the rest, arriving one by one, the way they always have.

But the boy watching them—

Knows, now, that some of them are watching back.

He doesn't look away.

FADE TO BLACK.

"In the twelve months following the Event, 847 governments issued formal statements."

"211 agreed on the language."

"This was considered unprecedented."

FADE OUT.

**THE END**