

Finding Elpis

by

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WE START OFF WITH A SHOT OF XIMENA'S CELLPHONE SCREEN BEARING PICTURES OF THE BAND AS SHE SWIPES AS IF SHOWING THEM TO US.

FIRST WE SEE A CANDID SHOT OF IESU, A SLIM 33-YEAR-OLD MAN WITH A TAN AND LONG BLACK HAIR, WEARING AN APRON AND HAIRNET AS HE IS SHOWN VOLUNTEERING AT A CHRISTMAS SOUP KITCHEN, HIS NAME WRITTEN IN A SIMPLE FONT.

XIMENA'S thumb swipes.

THEN, WE SEE A MORE PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOT OF ERIK RHODES, A LITHE 33-YEAR-OLD MAN WITH PALE SKIN AND BLACK HAIR AND BLUE EYES, FOLLOWED BY ONE OF HIM SLICKING BACK HIS HAIR, BOTH OF THEM BEARING HIS NAME IN A STYLISED FONT.

XIMENA'S thumb swipes.

WE THEN SEE ONE OF ORPHEUS, 33 WITH BLACK HAIR AND BROWN EYES, SIMILARLY PROFESSIONAL, BEARING HIS NAME IN THE SAME STYLISED FONT.

XIMENA'S thumb swipes.

NEXT WE SEE ONE OF JAGUAR, A TAN 34-YEAR-OLD YOUNG MAN LIFTING WEIGHTS AT A GYM, BEARING HIS NAME IN A SIMPLE FONT.

XIMENA'S thumb swipes.

THEN, WE SEE JUST ONE OF DOOMER, A 33-YEAR-OLD MAN WITH AN AVERAGE BUILD, IN A TOQUE AND BLACK CLOTHES AND STUBBLED FACE, DIRECTLY COMPARING HIM TO THE DOOMER MEME BECAUSE OF HOW SIMILAR THEY LOOK.

XIMENA'S thumb swipes.

FINALLY WE SEE A SERIES OF CANDID SHOTS OF STARMAN, A 33 YEAR-OLD MAN WITH A STOCKIER BUILD AND DIRTY-BLOND HAIR AND BROWN EYES, SOME WHERE HE IS PLAYING THE GUITAR AND OTHERS WHERE HE IS SEEMINGLY ALONE AT RESTAURANTS. THE LAST ONE HAS HIM CHEERING AS HE HOLDS HIS GUITAR IN A SUPERSTAR POST, HIS NAME WRITTEN IN A COMIC-STYLE WORD ART FONT.

Then we see a phone video though it takes place inside a bag; we hear a snippet of a song that cuts off.

Another video is the same, albeit with a different song snippet.

We see another photo where we can actually see the whole band, all six of them performing onstage.

XIMENA scrolls once again through similar photos and happens upon a simple announcement poster saying "To our fans: Elpis has made the difficult decision to disband after our last show next Friday. We thank each and every one of you for your support over the years. Love, Starman, Doomer, Iesu, and Erik Rhodes."

She then puts her phone away so we return to the present scene of the concert.

Title card: Finding Elpis

EXT. OUTDOOR STAGE - EARLY EVENING

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

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

STARMAN

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

LENI

I still can't believe it.

STARMAN

Thanks for coming out to this, Leni.

LENI

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

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

STARMAN

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

LENI

Oh, quit it. Maybe that's how many people want you to stick around a little longer. Besides, people are late all the time. I wouldn't speak so soon if I were you.

STARMAN

Yeah, I guess. But we're getting old, Len. Can't stomach many more debts trying to make it. Maybe I should've just done it as a hobby, especially since everything's becoming AI now.

LENI

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

DOOMER

(offscreen)

Starman! Mic check!

STARMAN

Gotta go. See you after the show.

LENI

Love you.

They kiss and STARMAN rushes off to the stage. LENI sighs. She is then joined by ORPHEUS, a 33-year-old medium-build man with brown hair and grey eyes and JAGUAR, a 34-year-old man with a bulky build and deep tanned skin with long messy brown hair.

JAGUAR

Man... I feel responsible for this.

ORPHEUS

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

JAGUAR

Was it, though?

ORPHEUS looks away.

LENI

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

ORPHEUS

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

EXT. STAGE.

DOOMER, IESU, ERIK RHODES and STARMAN are standing on the stage, instruments ready. ERIK RHODES is tuning his violin. DOOMER looks up at the darkening sky.

DOOMER

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

IESU

Count on you to pump everyone up, Doomer.

ERIK RHODES

Honestly, it's just as well. This violin is why I didn't eat for almost a week. The last thing I want is for it to get wet, outside, in front of literally no one at all.

STARMAN

Guys, c'mon. I know we've pretty much decided what comes after and this whole thing sucks, but can we please just have this show?

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

ERIK RHODES

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

DOOMER

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

IESU

I hate to say it but yeah. Think I'm out, too. Was good while it lasted.

STARMAN

You guys...

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

IESU

Hey, who ordered the spotlight?

STARMAN

Not me...

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

STARMAN

Hey, what the--?

IESU, DOOMER and ERIK RHODES also begin to levitate and then shoot up inside the pillar of light, DOOMER dropping his paradiddles and STARMAN his microphone, IESU his bass guitar and ERIK RHODES his violin and bow, all screaming.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SPACESHIP.

STARMAN, IESU, DOOMER and ERIK RHODES are all in a heap on the floor of the spaceship. ERIK RHODES gets up first as he looks around, panicked. STARMAN pinches himself and IESU and DOOMER both rush towards opposite ends of the spaceship to look out of the windows. LOR SALVIATOR, a 7-foot tall humanoid alien with purple skin and a bald head wearing robes not unlike a wizard's, appears from the cockpit.

LOR SALVIATOR
Greetings, gentlemen of Elpis!

STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES all turn to look at LOR SALVIATOR, panicked, DOOMER poised to attack with cigarettes between his fingers like Wolverine's claws.

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

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

LOR SALVIATOR
Ah, dear me, you're absolutely right, Mr Rhodes. How rude of me. I'm known as Lor Salviator, but you can call me Lor. I'm originally from the planet Elpis, though I'm really something of a collector of planets, you can say.

ERIK RHODES
Elpis...

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

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

LOR SALVIATOR
I understand that this is all very strange to you. But you must understand, gentlemen... You have been mistaken this whole time about your popularity. For you see... here you are deeply loved, you have touched our hearts and souls, so much so that you're the only reason we haven't continued our wars against each other. You are simply unpopular on your home planet.

STARMAN
On Earth? So you're saying...

ERIK RHODES
I'm popular with aliens?!

DOOMER

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

IESU

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

LOR SALVIATOR

That's right. I wanted to prove to you that you shouldn't give up. I just had to be a little more forceful about it, sadly. Why, my previous methods just weren't working, they were much too subtle! I never knew you had such a thing as spam emails or that humans forget their dreams almost immediately upon waking! Not to mention your newspapers are now practically useless, so full of lies and other distractions.

STARMAN

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

LOR SALVIATOR

You are on my spaceship and right now we are currently passing what you call the Asteroid Belt. We don't have a moment's delay, you see; I have taken the liberty of announcing a galaxy-wide tour for you and you are on in five seconds.

DOOMER

Five seconds?!

LOR SALVIATOR

Hold on, now, take a deep breath if you have to...

LOR SALVIATOR turns to press some buttons and the spaceship quakes and speeds forward. STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES yelp as they fall over.

EXT. ON STAGE. ELPIS. NIGHT.

STARMAN shields his eyes and a large AUDIENCE of tens of thousands of attendees cheers. The stadium is held inside a giant mountain and in the distance is an expansive forest. The band is all equipped with much flashier instruments, ERIK RHODES in particular holding a pure white violin. LOR SALVIATOR steps up holding a microphone.

LOR SALVIATOR

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

He gestures for the band to begin. IESU exchanges a look
with STARMAN while DOOMER begins playing the drums. They
play "Seven Seals" and AUDIENCE cheers so loudly their music
can't be easily heard. ERIK RHODES plays a solo as the
cheering continues and the song ends.

STARMAN

Jesus Christ...

IESU

You're telling me...

AUDIENCE

Encore! Encore! Encore!

STARMAN looks to IESU and with a shrug, they begin a new
song, "Crows," to more thunderous applause.

PAN SHOT OF MILLIONS IN THE AUDIENCE, ENOUGH TO COVER A CITY
THE SIZE OF NEW YORK.

They finish their song and take a bow to continued applause,
shielding their eyes from flash photography going off just
like what major celebrities get from paparazzi. LOR
SALVIATOR takes the microphone.

LOR SALVIATOR

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you
very much for coming out to Elpis's
first show on their galaxy-wide
tour. We look forward to having you
at the next one!

The audience cheers again and STARMAN does a half bow, IESU
waves, DOOMER stands still and ERIK RHODES raises both arms,
revelling in the attention. LOR SALVIATOR turns to DOOMER.

LOR SALVIATOR

I know you are overwhelmed and no
doubt exhausted from your journey
but I have it on good authority
that a certain someone wants your
audience.

DOOMER

What?

LOR SALVIATOR

Please, I will take you to her
right away.

STARMAN

Her?

LOR SALVIATOR nods and a big spotlight shines on the band and within a blink they yelp as they get sucked up.

FADE TO BLACK

DARKNESS

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1
(offscreen)
We have confirmed visuals.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 2
(offscreen)
So he's made his move after all...

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1
(offscreen)
And here I thought Mulligan was losing it.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 2
(offscreen)
Yeah... So did I.

EXT. STAGE - NIGHT

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

LENI
Come on, why aren't you picking up?

The voice on the line cuts straight to voicemail and Leni sighs.

LENI
Of course your phone dies...

She looks at the gathered crowd, all of them murmuring, XIMENA watching her. LENI checks her phone's time and it reads 9:54 p.m.

LENI
Everyone's been waiting for you for over an hour already... Where did you go?

She turns around and JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are before her.

LENI
Nicky, Oscar! I really don't know what to do, they were here and now I can't reach them. I've been calling and calling. Can't track Tommy or Immanuel or Doomer. It's so weird, it's like they've just disappeared!

ORPHEUS

That's definitely not like them...
Still, I guess we can step up and
do something in the meantime. These
people didn't show up just to miss
the show. Leave it to Jag and I.
Give them a taste of the old Elpis.
They'll owe us for this.

LENI

Thank you so much.

ORPHEUS and JAGUAR leave to go onstage. JAGUAR picks up the second bass guitar and ORPHEUS the guitar, tapping the microphones.

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

LENI

Seriously though... What happened to you?

Meanwhile, ORPHEUS and JAGUAR wrap up their song to decent applause. ORPHEUS clears his throat.

ORPHEUS

How's everyone doing tonight?

The AUDIENCE cheers.

ORPHEUS

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

JAGUAR

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

The AUDIENCE gives confused applause while ORPHEUS and JAGUAR start with another song. Meanwhile LENI looks out at a blink-and-you'll-miss-it flash in the sky.

EXT. MOON. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE.

Title card: Moon

Disoriented, the band all shake their heads as they find themselves teleported, ERIK RHODES is visibly annoyed while DOOMER is still a little stunned. They are on the light side

of the moon, specifically Mare Serenitatis. IESU blinks as he sees a moon jellyfish "swimming" in the air, and soon joined by many others. LOR SALVIATOR ushers them towards a massive crystal castle surrounded by a similarly crystalline moat, and PRINCESS ALMAS, early 20s with long flowing silver hair and wearing a pure white wedding dress adorned with sapphires and aquamarine, clasps her hands as she turns towards DOOMER from the entrance. ERIK RHODES looks excited to see her until she runs clean past him and holds DOOMER'S hands, resulting in him looking quite affronted.

LOR SALVIATOR

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

DOOMER

P-Princess?

PRINCESS ALMAS

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

DOOMER

Likewise...

PRINCESS ALMAS

Oh! How rude of me, please come inside. You must be hungry. I hope you like what I've arranged for you.

She leads the way, still holding DOOMER'S hand. Everyone follows them inside.

EXT. STAGE. EARTH.

ORPHEUS and JAGUAR are playing "Elysia," a keyboard and acoustic guitar medly on their respective instruments and the audience is rapt. ORPHEUS especially appears to have an aura around him as he plays that like space dust spreads across the audience, and a few of them wipe away tears.

JAGUAR looks out at LENI, whose face we can't see but instead we see her silhouette, showing she's alone in the crowd. When they're finished, they earn a raucous applause that's almost as impressive as what Elpis got on the titular planet. ORPHEUS takes a bow while JAGUAR reluctantly follows.

ORPHEUS

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

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

JAGUAR

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

ORPHEUS

Hell if I know, especially Erik.

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

JAGUAR

Len... Nothing at all?

She shakes her head, her face pale.

LENI

It's weird... Orpheus, when you played, I almost forgot they weren't there with you. I swear I could've seen them on stage, all of you together again, just like the old days. But then I snapped out of it the moment you stopped playing.

ORPHEUS

Damn... Sorry, Len.

LENI

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

JAGUAR

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

LENI

Yeah... I guess so.

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

CAMERA ZOOMS OUT AND PANS UP TO THE MOON.

INT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE.

The castle interior is bright silver, with long blue carpets connecting rooms down the hallway. Above their heads is a massive diamond chandelier. PRINCESS ALMAS leads them down the main hallway to the dining hall which bears a massive crystal table laden with diamond plates and cutlery, overlooked by a painting of her with QUEEN MORVARID, a woman inwho looks like her only in her sixties or seventies.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Please, relax and make yourselves at home. Sir Doomer, if you don't mind sitting opposite me?

DOOMER

Uh, sure, but...

LOR SALVIATOR

Allow me. You will sit there.

He gestures to the chair opposite him, pulling it out for PRINCESS ALMAS to sit first. IESU and STARMAN sit beside DOOMER, while ERIK RHODES looks around, awestruck.

ERIK RHODES

Could I have something like this...?

IESU

Hey. Erik Rhodes. Stop gawking at everything.

ERIK RHODES

Shut up, Iesu.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Oh, it's all right, if anything I'm flattered you like it. It's nothing compared to Lor Salviator's many palaces.

LOR SALVIATOR

Oh, Your Highness, that's too kind.

ERIK RHODES sits down beside IESU, mouth agape at LOR SALVIATOR.

ERIK RHODES

How are you so rich that you have fancier digs than an actual princess?

IESU

Sorry about him, Your Highness.

PRINCESS ALMAS

No, no. It shows how well you all get along, it's always been such a lovely sight. But I've often wondered why Sir Doomer doesn't speak much.

DOOMER

Not much to say, really.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm sure that's not true. They say the quieter the voice, the louder the mind. Perhaps you just need to weave your thoughts and give them shape.

DOOMER

"Weave my thoughts and give them shape," huh... Never thought about it that way.

ROYAL MAIDS enter bearing trays of sandwiches and pitchers of water, each one for individual members of the band.

DOOMER keeps looking at PRINCESS ALMAS as the others tentatively start eating.

DOOMER

So why are you interested in me, exactly? I'm not that interesting of a guy.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I've always found the silent types more interesting. No offense to everyone, of course.

IESU

None taken.

PRINCESS ALMAS

You see, I've long wondered about coming to Earth myself to see you. But then Sir Salviator told me this plan and I thought to myself, why not have you here myself? I just hope it's to your liking.

DOOMER

You've wanted to come down to Earth? To see... Me?

PRINCESS ALMAS

Well, yes. I see Earth all the time, and I always look forward to when your satellites show me your activities.

IESU

(whispering to STARMAN
behind DOOMER'S back)
That's kinda creepy...

STARMAN

(whispering back to IESU)
You already know we're being watched all the time. It's not that surprising if that's how aliens caught wind of us.

IESU

(whispering back)

Dude, you know that's not the point!

PRINCESS ALMAS

But please, relax and enjoy your meal. Sir Salviator said you will be on a galaxy-wide tour.

STARMAN

Yeah, about that... We can't do it.

PRINCESS ALMAS

No?

STARMAN

We're very flattered but we can't stay here.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Why not?

STARMAN

Forgive me, Your Highness, but it's pretty obvious we don't belong here. We're humans, we should be on Earth.

PRINCESS ALMAS

But then how do you explain your kind's proclivity to colonise the planet you call Mars, or seek out "Earth-like planets" no matter how far away? Or even your landing here during the space race?

IESU

She's got a point there, Starman.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, speak for yourself, I don't wanna continue being unappreciated back home.

DOOMER

And I must've done something right if I got a literal princess interested in me.

STARMAN

Come on, guys, you're not saying you don't wanna go home at all?

IESU

Of course I wanna go back home, but who would believe us if we tell them what happened?

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm afraid Sir Iesu has a point.
You said yourself that humans are
greatly skeptical of us.

Silence. No one barring DOOMER and PRINCESS ALMAS looks at each other. STARMAN slumps in his chair, aghast.

STARMAN

So, what? This is it? We can't go
home and I can't see Leni again?
This is what it means to make it?

ERIK RHODES

Are you naive or what? I've always
been ready for this. It's the price
of fame.

LOR SALVIATOR

Well said, Mr Rhodes.

IESU

Don't encourage him.

PRINCESS ALMAS

So does this mean... What we all
watched earlier really was your
last show? There will be no tour?

IESU

We never agreed to coming here, let
alone doing a tour.

LOR SALVIATOR

Well, that's quite unfortunate. You
would really limit yourselves like
that, when you're the only humans
ever to be so popular in the galaxy
and even be de facto peace
ambassadors. You would honestly
balk at that?

ERIK RHODES

Most popular humans... In the
galaxy... I knew all those hours I
spent practicing instead of eating
and sleeping would be worth
something!

DOOMER

I for one don't really want to go
back. There's nothing waiting for
me there besides manmade horrors
beyond my comprehension so this is
perfect.

STARMAN

I can't believe you guys... At
least you haven't lost it, Iesu.

They all awkwardly eat, not meeting each other's eyes. LOR SALVIATOR clears his throat after ten seconds.

LOR SALVIATOR

I don't suppose now is a good time to mention that you have someone who wants very much to see you, Sir Iesu.

IESU

Me? What, do I also have a princess?

LOR SALVIATOR

No, this one is actually more personal to you.

IESU

Huh?

LOR SALVIATOR

You shall see soon enough. But you are tired.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes, I insist you all rest here, unless of course you'd rather go with Sir Salviator?

STARMAN

No, no... We'll stay here. And I'm sorry for how I acted before.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Not at all. I did say to make yourselves at home. Besides... I would like to speak more to Sir Doomer.

ERIK RHODES

I have no idea what you see in him when I'm right here...

DOOMER reaches behind IESU and smacks ERIK RHODES upside the head.

DOOMER

She literally said she likes guys who don't talk so much. And all you do is talk about yourself.

ERIK RHODES

I do not!

PRINCESS ALMAS

You just did, but I'm sure you'll find someone who adores that about you.

DOOMER chuckles, and then laughs. ERIK RHODES looks at him like he's lost his mind which makes STARMAN and IESU also look at a prolonged shot of him laughing. Finally, DOOMER stops laughing, holding his sides.

ERIK RHODES

Geez, of course the hardest I've ever seen you laugh is at my expense...

DOOMER bursts out laughing again, and this time STARMAN and IESU join in, much to ERIK RHODES' annoyance, though for just a moment he's stifling a smile of his own. PRINCESS ALMAS smiles warmly at DOOMER.

FADE IN:

INT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE, GUEST BEDROOM.

STARMAN is practically sinking into the puffy white covers and pillows of a king-size bed and struggles to get out. A semi-circular window shows the Earth in roughly the same size as the moon were the positions reversed.

He meets ERIK RHODES at the conjoined room with equally luxurious settings, who is laying down on a chaise lounge.

ERIK RHODES

Can't sleep either, huh?

STARMAN shakes his head as he sits on the other side of the chaise lounge, forcing ERIK RHODES to sit up.

ERIK RHODES

It's funny, isn't it? You hear all the time about how small people feel thinking about how big outer space is, and I think I get it now. Hell, this makes me want to write a bunch of songs.

STARMAN

Good for you, man.

ERIK RHODES

What, you really don't get any ideas looking at the Earth from the moon? Nothing that inspires you, makes you go "this is the best idea I've ever had in my life"? Nothing that makes you wonder what else is out here for us to see, that we can't even imagine?

STARMAN

No, I just look at the Earth and wish I was still there.

ERIK RHODES rolls his eyes and sighs. STARMAN then gets up and leaves, and IESU enters right then, looking confused as he passes, and ERIK RHODES returns a dismissive look.

EXT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE.

DOOMER is sitting beside PRINCESS ALMAS on a stone bench overlooking the biggest moon jellyfish "pond," with several smaller ones in sight, all of them with jellyfish "swimming" in midair.

DOOMER

I like your... Jellyfish farm.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Thank you, it's my hobby alongside listening to your music. Sometimes you also see rabbits here. They make medicine and delicious mochi.

DOOMER

So you were saying that you wanted to come down to Earth?

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes, but I don't want to leave the jellyfish alone.

DOOMER

At least you have something to keep you here.

PRINCESS ALMAS

It's more than the jellyfish, I'm afraid. But do you really have no one to go back to?

DOOMER

Nah. Just these guys. And we're probably not gonna go back, seeing as we've got this tour we gotta do all over the galaxy.

PRINCESS ALMAS

How awful... I'm sorry for being so selfish and calling you out here.

DOOMER

It's fine. It's not often you get to say you literally went to the moon for a girl.

He gives PRINCESS ALMAS a sidelong glance here, and she blushes. Then she stands up.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Anyhow, I won't keep you much longer, you really must be tired.

DOOMER

All right. Doesn't look like it's night here, though, all things considered.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes, our version of night is when the Earth eclipses the sun. It lasts for two weeks of your time.

DOOMER

That's a long sleep.

DISTANT SHOT OF DOOMER GETTING UP AND FOLLOWING PRINCESS ALMAS BACK TO THE CASTLE.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK

EXT. POLICE STATION. DAYTIME.

Meanwhile, back on Earth, JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are with LENI at a bench outside of the police station. LENI is silent and beside herself with worry. JAGUAR is standing just a little close to her, and furtively stealing glances. ORPHEUS, meanwhile, is scrolling on his phone, frowning.

Once again we see XIMENA creeping in the background, careful otherwise to remain hidden.

ORPHEUS

Goddammit, the usual suspects are highjacking the algorithm to draw attention to their own stuff. Damn bots.

LENI

Hopefully the police will be more useful.

ORPHEUS

We can hope. You know how things are.

JAGUAR

Yeah, Prez keeps banging on about the wrong words at the wrong time from the wrong people.

LENI slumps back in the bench. JAGUAR pauses as if regretting what he said.

ORPHEUS

Hey, Len, why don't we go back home? We did all we could. Someone should call if they hear anything.

LENI

I guess so. But just excuse me a moment.

Before he could respond, LENI practically leaps up and exits out of the frame.

JAGUAR

So...

ORPHEUS

Yeah. I actually got a strike for spamming, if you can believe it. My account's now suspended for a week.

JAGUAR

You're kidding.

ORPHEUS

Yup. I've seen things that would make the devil nauseous but I'm the one creating a negative online experience for everyone because I'm asking people to help find missing persons. I swear I'll never understand.

JAGUAR shakes his head in support. He keeps eyeing the spot where LENI walked towards but makes no move to follow.

FADE IN:

EXT. SIRIUS - DAYTIME

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

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

LOR SALVIATOR

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

IESU

You don't mean...

LOR SALVIATOR

Oh! Here he comes now.

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

IESU

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

AKIRA barks and kisses IESU some more. IESU gushes.

IESU

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

DOOMER

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

LOR SALVIATOR

All dogs eventually take residence on Sirius.

IESU slowly gets up, AKIRA in his arms.

ERIK RHODES

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

LOR SALVIATOR

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

IESU

Seriously...

STARMAN

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

LOR SALVIATOR

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

IESU is silent, still holding AKIRA. STARMAN, DOOMER, and ERIK RHODES also look at him with concerned expressions on their faces.

IESU

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

ERIK RHODES

What? You're out?

STARMAN

So now not only do you not wanna go home, but you want to stay here on a planet full of dogs. Well damn, that's that. It's over. We've lost you forever.

LOR SALVIATOR

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

DOOMER

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

LOR SALVIATOR

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

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

IESU

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

AKIRA barks, licking IESU'S face. He chuckles.

IESU

Sorry, you guys. You're right, this isn't fair. I'm still in. As long as we come back here again.

LOR SALVIATOR

Of course, Sir Iesu. Look, here's Hachiko himself, right along with Laika.

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

IESU

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

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

IESU

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

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed he has. Never once missed a single show.

IESU

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

LOR SALVIATOR
My pleasure, sir Iesu.

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

AKIRA barks as IESU reluctantly joins everyone heading back to the spaceship.

SLOW FADE TO BLACK

EXT. ELPIS. STAGE.

Title card: Elpis

STARMAN, IESU, DOOMER, and ERIK RHODES are playing "Hera" to thunderous applause from thousands of fans in attendance, with several banners being held up. They are all stone-faced except for ERIK RHODES who bows theatrically with a beatific smile on his face.

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

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

STARMAN takes the microphone again.

STARMAN
Now this next one, is a really special one I've never played before. Goes out to someone I love a lot... Here's "Eleanore."

He plays the opening riff of "Eleanore", a gentle melody. The crowd cheers. Focus on STARMAN'S face as he closes his eyes. He slowly stops playing and doesn't sing. He then falls forward and the crowd catches him, so he is very languidly crowdsurfing. LOR SALVIATOR appears on the stage.

IESU
What the hell was that?

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

They cheer again and STARMAN is carried back onto the stage, helped up by IESU and they all bow as the stage lights dim. They make their way back to the spaceship but ERIK RHODES is stopped by three young ELPIAN GROUPIES who like LOR SALVIATOR are tall with purple skin and wearing elegant

robes.

ELPIAN GROUPIE 1
Oh, Erik Rhodes! In the flesh!

ERIK RHODES
Yeah, it's me.

She gushes and then nearly faints. ERIK RHODES smiles warmly at them.

ELPIAN GROUPIE 2
You're our favourite! Please, can you stay a little longer?

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

He begins to reluctantly leave and more groupies muscle in in front of each other and a wide shot shows that the growing crowd is at least ten people deep and every single one of them wants to reach out and touch ERIK RHODES, and they scream at each other to get out of the way. ERIK RHODES, pulled back inside the ship, actually looks a little bewildered.

ERIK RHODES
Man... I'm all for this but look, they're tearing each other apart. Over me!

IESU
And somehow we're peace ambassadors, too... I don't get it.

Just before the ship door closes IESU catches sight of a young POOR ELPIAN who is still quite tall at five-foot-nine, wearing what looks like a burlap sack, looking up at him. IESU seems to want to talk to him but the spaceship roars to life and takes off, and more and more POOR ELPIANS are visible standing opposite the ELPIAN GROUPIES who are fighting with each other.

CROSSFADE:

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is cozy and lived-in, with different rock band posters and photographs lining every available stretch of wall. The television turns on by itself, as we hear but don't see DOOMER, IESU, and DOOMER, whose voices sound like recordings, gradually rousing ORPHEUS and JAGUAR awake who were asleep on the couch.

DOOMER

(offscreen)

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

IESU

(offscreen)

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

DOOMER

(offscreen)

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

IESU

(offscreen, shuddering)

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

ERIK RHODES

(offscreen)

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

ORPHEUS

(rubbing his eye)

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

JAGUAR

(yawning)

I was just gonna ask you the same
thing.

LENI enters the living room, rubbing her eye, languid from
just having been awakened. They all jolt fully awake upon
seeing STARMAN on screen.

STARMAN

Leni--wait, what are you guys doing
there?

JAGUAR looks away ever-so-slightly. LENI huddles closer to
the television.

LENI

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

STARMAN

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

LENI

But how are you talking to me from the TV?

STARMAN

It's uh... A long story.

LENI

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

STARMAN

You're totally not gonna believe it.

LENI

(laughing)

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

STARMAN is silent and looks sheepish. ORPHEUS and JAGUAR laugh, too.

ORPHEUS

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

IESU, DOOMER, and ERIK RHODES push STARMAN to the side of the screen to peer at them, too.

JAGUAR

Immanuel! Is that really you?

IESU

Yeah, it's me. It's really all of us. We're, uh... Man, how do you even say this without sounding insane...

ERIK RHODES

We're touring on Elpis. The planet.

ORPHEUS

Be serious, there's no planet called Elpis.

STARMAN

We are serious. We actually were abducted by an alien--no offense, Lor.

JAGUAR

Who's Lor?

LOR SALVIATOR appears onscreen, spooking LENI, ORPHEUS and JAGUAR.

LOR SALVIATOR

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

JAGUAR

Woah! That is some insane stage makeup!

LOR SALVIATOR

It is an honour to make your acquaintance, sirs Jaguar and Orpheus. It's too bad I didn't reach you before you quit the band. Such a shame you had irreconcilable differences.

ORPHEUS

Erik, what's he talking about?

STARMAN

This is the long story I was talking about. But look, Leni... We have a galaxy-wide tour and apparently if we back out the universe will go to war with itself because somehow we're the most popular music group ever, and our existence is keeping the peace. We're neutral, I guess, since we're humans and not... well, aliens. God, that sounds wrong, I'm so sorry, Lor.

LOR SALVIATOR

None taken, I assure you. We are all aliens to someone.

Beat.

ORPHEUS

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

STARMAN

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

ORPHEUS

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

ERIK RHODES pushes STARMAN aside on the screen.

ERIK RHODES

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

IESU

(facepalming)

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

ORPHEUS

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

ERIK RHODES

You cope harder, you with your god-given talent didn't become a hit with aliens. Admit it, Nicky, you lost. Nobody even knows who the hell you are, meanwhile I'm a galactic superstar.

ORPHEUS

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

ERIK RHODES

Says the guy who's NOT a galactic superstar.

DOOMER

Shut up, Rhodes. Both of you. I know this sounds batshit but it's true. We can hardly believe it ourselves but we've seen it. We've seen Elpis and the crowd we've drawn was insane. It's... Humbling, honestly. Space is so big, you have no idea.

LENI clears her throat, and STARMAN once again takes the central position on the screen.

LENI

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

STARMAN

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

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

STARMAN

Wait, Leni!

She can be heard running away and finally slamming the bedroom door as everyone else exchanges looks.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SPACESHIP

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

STARMAN

I don't know how I expected her to react. Must've been really shocked.

IESU

I mean, duh, you broke news no one would ever seriously expect to get. It's not even like you could've dropped it the normal way.

STARMAN

Even so...

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

STARMAN

That's it. I have to go back. Leni... She's not okay. Lor!

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

LOR SALVIATOR

Isn't it marvellous, Sir Starman? Such a wonderful start to your galaxy-wide tour, and you'll only get better and better once you get used to larger audiences. I daresay

(MORE)

LOR SALVIATOR (cont'd)
before long you'll be known on
every corner of the universe.

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

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

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

LOR SALVIATOR
It's a wonderful thing to be
needed.

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

Now LOR SALVIATOR turns to face him, cutting him off.

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

STARMAN
Yeah...?

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

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

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

Beat. STARMAN looks away in defeat, and LOR SALVIATOR'S
expression softens.

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

STARMAN
Come on... We're not actually the
most popular band in the galaxy, or
(MORE)

STARMAN (cont'd)
 peace ambassadors or whatever you
 said.

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

STARMAN
 I never said that.

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

Beat.

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

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

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

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

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

IESU, DOOMER, and ERIK RHODES all exchange looks.

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

STARMAN
 The hell do you mean it's my fault?

DOOMER

You wanted the band to succeed more than any of us. We didn't have to do that farewell show. Hell, we didn't even have to get together in the first place. But you insisted, somehow we caught Lor's attention and next thing you know, we're here. This is all because of you.

ERIK RHODES

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

IESU

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

STARMAN slumps in his seat, thoroughly defeated. LOR SALVIATOR approaches behind him.

STARMAN

Shit... You're right. This is all because of me. If I knew it would come to this...

ERIK RHODES

What would you do, not talk to any of us? Never get into music? Just... Stay in a small town in the middle of nowhere for the rest of our lives? Come on, man. Get real for a second. You know that's not what you'd do. You're the reason we're all friends anyway.

IESU and DOOMER nod. ERIK RHODES slowly eyes each of them as if wondering if he should say what he says next.

ERIK RHODES

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

IESU and DOOMER facepalm and groan.

STARMAN

Okay, WHAT did you just say, Rhodes?

ERIK RHODES

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

ERIK RHODES (cont'd)
 sound suffered, you were spending more time with her than practicing with us. We were covering for you the entire time, Jaguar and Nicky got sick of it. Kept saying we should give you the axe. Well, guess what? Telling your own cousin he's getting it instead isn't as easy as you'd think.

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

STARMAN
 I had no idea.

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

ERIK RHODES
 Hey, keeping this under wraps any longer is bad for me. I'd rather say it now to knock some sense into him than when we're actually fighting. Besides, neither of them can sing or play the guitar like you can. I had to be realistic, the choice was obvious.

STARMAN
 Wow. I never thought of it that way. I'm sorry, you guys. I guess you're right, I'm gonna have to really pull my weight. But damn... I can't just forget about Leni.

ERIK RHODES
 Well, I hate to break it to you, but you gotta at least try to shut up about wanting to go home. You can't have it both ways and this time you're definitely outnumbered. You gotta choose, do you want Elpis to succeed or not?

Silence descends upon the group, and LOR SALVIATOR returns to the cockpit.

FADE IN:

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME

It is late morning, the curtains are drawn so natural sunlight is filtered. "Starman" by David Bowie is playing on an old radio. LENI is laying on the couch in a t-shirt and shorts, staring at the ceiling with the radio beside her.

She is haggard from bad sleep and her hair is a mess. Her phone shows nothing but outgoing calls to STARMAN. She tries to reach him one more time, once again to no avail.

A knock then sounds on her door. She very reluctantly gets up and goes to answer it and the bright sunlight makes her flinch as XIMENA, becomes visible, blonde hair tied into a ponytail and tanned skin wearing a pink jacket and white tank top and pale blue denim hot pants. She is holding a bag of fast food from Burger Planet and looks almost messianic when doing so.

LENI

Can I... help you?

XIMENA

Hi, Leni.

LENI

Hi..?

XIMENA

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

LENI

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

XIMENA

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

LENI

Well, neither can I. I didn't get
any leads from the missing persons
report I filed, either.

XIMENA sizes LENI up, also glances inside the apartment over LENI'S shoulders.

LENI

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

LENI tries to close the door but XIMENA grabs hold of it.

XIMENA

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

LENI

Well... Yeah, obviously.

XIMENA

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

Beat.

LENI

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

XIMENA

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

She presents the bag of fast food.

XIMENA

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

LENI

...Thanks?

XIMENA

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

LENI

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

XIMENA thrusts the bag into LENI'S hands.

XIMENA

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

LENI

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

XIMENA

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

LENI makes the most priceless face imaginable before backing away.

XIMENA

Oh yeah, he's got so many. I mean they all do. But no doubt you

(MORE)

XIMENA (cont'd)
 already knew about that, huh, since
 you caught one a couple years ago
 at the Johnny Valentine's. Too bad
 I didn't get to her first, so
 that's on me. I got her eventually,
 though, so you don't have to worry
 about her anymore.

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

XIMENA
 (cheerfully)
 Oh, don't worry, I'll be back. You
 shouldn't be alone right now.

LENI
 ...Right, okay, bye now.

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

With a look of resignation she goes to the kitchen and sits
 down, unpacking the food. With some hesitation she takes a
 bite, and as more seconds pass by her eyes begin to water
 until she stops. After more seconds her phone rings, which
 she ignores. Finally she gets up and grabs it, but doesn't
 check it.

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

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

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

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

FADE TO BLACK

DARKNESS

Once again we see complete darkness, followed by the sounds
 of many keys being typed on. From there the outline of LOR
 SALVIATOR'S face shows up in green outline, followed by his
 personal details complete with flashing cursor just like in

MS-DOS:

NAME: Lor Salviator

ORIGIN: MG-1813544

LINEAGE: Elpis

GROSS WORTH: calculating...

system cannot compute.

ASSETS: calculating...

too many results.

STATUS: At large

FADE IN:

EXT. CHANGGIES. EVENING.

Title card: Changgies

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

Instead, STARMAN, IESU, DOOMER, and ERIK RHODES are surrounded by CHANGGIANS, who are all statuesque Amazonian women with long flowing hair and wearing clothing not unlike barbarians. Every single one of them is gushing over the guys, but special attention is given to ERIK RHODES who is having a much easier time accepting this than the others. He is autographing some helmets.

ERIK RHODES

Aaaand that's you, thank you so much.

CHANGGIAN 1

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

ERIK RHODES

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

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

CHANGGIAN 2

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

LOR SALVIATOR

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

IESU

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

Before anyone can object, he leaves the group and keeps walking until he sees a small encampment of REFUGEES, no taller than five feet and with pink skin and black eyes. Their encampment is comprised of a broken down spaceship no bigger than a king size bed, and they are gathered around a metal pot with what looks like broth boiling inside. One of them, who appears to be a young boy, looks up from his spot and nudges another child who looks like his older sister. They both jump up and run to Iesu and chatter at him in an unintelligible alien language.

IESU

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

The children chatter excitedly at him and even start pulling him towards their circle, and their parents even clear the way for him and their older brother sits him down while their older sister gives him a bowl of the broth. Before the mother can practically force it down his throat IESU takes a tentative sip from the edge of the bowl. He looks confused as his forehead begins sweating and with it his chest heaving, and then he looks like his very mind has been blown.

IESU

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

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

IESU

Oh, no, thank you. Please.

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

IESU

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

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

IESU

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

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

IESU

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

He looks at LOR SALVIATOR in the distance talking to other
CHANGGIANS, and for a brief moment narrows his eyes before
turning his attention back to the REFUGEES.

FADE TO BLACK

DARKNESS

Once again we see complete darkness. From it comes the label
"RECORDING 102" dated 10 seconds ago. The quality is defined
enough to know it's a recording. SECRET SERVICE AGENT 4's
smoking a cigarette can be heard.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 3

So is it true that there are aliens
on Earth?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 4

There's more than you'd think. No
one's supposed to know.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 5

I still can't believe there's this
alien out there who owns planets.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1

Don't mention him around Mulligan.
You won't hear the end of it.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 2

A galactic empire... It's no
wonder. You don't just let one like
that go unnoticed. That's the
ultimate Goliath, and how else will
you prove everyone wrong?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 4

Failing upwards, indeed... No
wonder it's such a sore spot. Next
thing you know the sky won't be the
limit.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1

Didn't you know? It never was.

The recording reaches the end of its stated runtime. A new
one, titled "Recording 265" emerges, dated two seconds ago.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 6
I got a visual of a planet that's
all fortress. It's insanely
radioactive, though.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 7
What the hell is out there?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 5
I found a planet that was a giant
hydrogen bomb. It was the size of
Saturn.

All of them shudder.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 6
At least those aren't anywhere near
us.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 5
Not yet, you mean.

The recording ends. A third recording appears, titled
"Recording 472" and it is marked as live.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 6
"Nice try, Fed..." Dammit.

FADE IN:

INT. ZYGOMA

Title card: Lor Salviator's mansion, Zygoma

DOOMER is conversing with PRINCESS ALMAS on what appears to
be a large television screen in a huge living room the size
of a football field, with mauve walls and reddish furniture.
Meanwhile IESU passes by in the background, walking like
he's in a spy movie, though every bit of opulence he sees
mystifies him. STARMAN sees him at another point in the long
hallway holding a bottle of Sucker Punch.

STARMAN
What are you doing?

IESU
Just looking around. This is such a
weird place.

STARMAN
I mean, you know rich people and
their tastes.

IESU
It's not just that. This place is
like a maze. Wouldn't surprise me
if there isn't even a single bare
inch on this planet.

STARMAN

Yeah, it's really something.

He follows IESU as he inspects more of the decorations and rooms with no one else in them. IESU looks over everything inside like he's searching for the slightest oddity.

STARMAN

Hey, so like... Are you looking for something here? You look like you're in a spy flick.

IESU

It's just weird. I can't get over how pristine this place is. I'm not sure I like the implications.

STARMAN

You're the only one who thinks that, man. You don't know his life.

IESU

Exactly, that's why all this abundance bugs me.

STARMAN sighs and shakes his head as IESU continues inspecting the room.

STARMAN

Hey, look, Iesu... Stop that for a second. I wanna talk to you about something.

IESU doesn't stop right away. When he does he faces STARMAN.

STARMAN

Look... I've been thinking about what Erik said. About wanting Elpis to succeed or not. Is... Is it bad that I can't easily answer that?

IESU

I mean, you would have to give up a lot in this case. We all would.

STARMAN

At the same time we worked really hard for it. Lost two band members. This is our big chance to make it all count, eh?

IESU

Well, yeah.

Beat.

STARMAN

Okay, I'm gonna think on it some more. Don't go poking around too much here, it's still his house.

He leaves him, and IESU follows.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

XIMENA is typing away at her laptop while LENI sits beside her, not quite rapt but also not as out of it as before. She can't see that behind her through the window stars are moving. JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are outside smoking on the balcony but neither one pays attention to the stars either.

THE MESSAGE IN STARS READS: HE LOVES YOU, LENI

ORPHEUS

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

JAGUAR

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

Beat.

JAGUAR

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

ORPHEUS

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

JAGUAR

Right... Right, totally.

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

XIMENA

How bizarre... I hacked into lots of phones and cameras and police databases, nothing's turning up. It's like they just vanished into thin air or got written out of existence altogether. They're not anywhere in the world as far as I can tell.

LENI

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

XIMENA

Wait, were you about to break up?

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

LENI

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

XIMENA

Uh-huh.

LENI

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

LENI pauses, thinking, XIMENA hugs her, which she doesn't fight.

XIMENA

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

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

JAGUAR

Um, so... Any luck?

XIMENA

No... I saw a transmission that seemed kinda promising but the connection was really bad. Went offline the moment I clicked and I couldn't find it again. Honestly felt like I imagined it.

ORPHEUS

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

LENI

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

No one talks for several seconds.

LENI

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

JAGUAR and ORPHEUS exchange looks.

JAGUAR

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

LENI

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

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

LENI

All his stuff is here, all of our memories in this apartment... And he's not here. What the hell is even the point? If I have to go through that everytime I go to sleep I'd rather just never wake up.

Once again JAGUAR looks about ready to speak up until XIMENA interjects.

XIMENA

Oh, pull yourself together, woman! We are finding Starman, no, we are finding Elpis come hell or high water! Now, Jaguar's right, get some sleep. The fact that you'd even say that is proof that you've been up too long.

JAGUAR

Yeah, Len... I--We'll be here, so you're not alone. Now go. Sleep well.

LENI reluctantly leaves them with a half-hearted wave as JAGUAR pushes her towards her bedroom door and practically shuts it behind her. Meanwhile, XIMENA eyes JAGUAR who tries to look nonchalant. Her intense staring finally makes him break.

JAGUAR

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

XIMENA

Uh-huh. What isn't?

JAGUAR

...whatever you're thinking.

XIMENA

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

JAGUAR sighs.

JAGUAR

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

XIMENA

That's nice and honourable of you.

JAGUAR

(looking away)

You don't have to put it that way.

XIMENA

What? I love a good love triangle
as much as anyone else. Especially
one I can tell has been a thing for
years. But I can't be disloyal as
Starman's biggest fan and Leni's
friend, so I have to root for him
over you.

JAGUAR makes the most priceless face imaginable, and ORPHEUS
pats JAGUAR'S shoulder as XIMENA resumes typing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STUDIO.

Title card: Seven years ago

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

JAGUAR

Look, I don't know about this.

LENI

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

ERIK RHODES

You're here for the audition?

LENI

Yeah, he is. Plays really good
guitar.

ERIK RHODES

Hmm, all right.

LENI

Go on, show him.

JAGUAR sighs as he takes his case from her and begins
donning his acoustic guitar. He plays "Stairway to Heaven"

but abruptly stops after the first three seconds.

JAGUAR

Sorry, sorry. I'll do it again.

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

ERIK RHODES

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

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

LENI

Hey, you! What's your name?

IESU

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

JAGUAR

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

ERIK RHODES

Alright, well, the others should be here soon.

LENI

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

IESU

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

LENI

You sure?

IESU

Yeah! Akira can really use the socialisation.

ORPHEUS, 26 here, enters with DOOMER, also 26, behind him. DOOMER wordlessly heads straight for the drumset while ORPHEUS sets up his keyboard. All the while LENI is playing with AKIRA. Then STARMAN, also 26, enters and zeroes in on LENI.

ORPHEUS

At last, the elusive leader shows up.

STARMAN

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

ORPHEUS

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

STARMAN

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

LENI

L-likewise.

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

STARMAN

Anyway, sorry. Oscar?

JAGUAR

Yeah. I play the guitar.

STARMAN

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

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

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, you definitely work better that the other three.

IESU

Good stuff, Oscar.

ERIK RHODES

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

ORPHEUS

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

ERIK RHODES

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

ORPHEUS

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

IESU

"Christmas competition?"

ERIK RHODES

Screw the Christmas competition!
It's rigged anyway!

ORPHEUS

Says the guy who loses every single
time.

ERIK RHODES

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

ORPHEUS

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

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

STARMAN

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

IESU

Jesus.

ERIK RHODES then sighs, breaking his silence first.

ERIK RHODES

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

ORPHEUS rolls his eyes but STARMAN gives him a thumbs up.

STARMAN

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

IESU

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

Everyone turns to look at DOOMER, who shrugs.

DOOMER

I'm gonna be Doomer.

IESU

Doomer? Yeah, that fits.

JAGUAR

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

ORPHEUS

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

ERIK RHODES

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

LENI smiles wide and claps as JAGUAR looks back on her and smiles, too, while STARMAN'S own gaze on her lingers.

INT. JOHNNY VALENTINE'S HOMESTYLE RESTAURANT.

Title card: Six years ago

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

IESU

Uh, Oscar? You good?

JAGUAR

(still aggressively cutting his steak)

I'm fine.

IESU

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

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

ORPHEUS

You are really not taking it well.

JAGUAR

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

ORPHEUS

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

JAGUAR

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

ORPHEUS

I mean... Maybe? If that's how you
wanna see it? But look, just
because he's being a load, doesn't
mean you can be one, too. He can
say all he wants that he's serious
about making it, but you and I, we
don't make that kind of noise.

JAGUAR

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

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

JAGUAR

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

He closes his phone.

ORPHEUS

Pancakes, huh?

JAGUAR

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

ORPHEUS

Huh. Sounds kinda serious.

JAGUAR

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

ORPHEUS

Sure, just pay me back later.

JAGUAR then gets up and leaves the restaurant.

CUT TO:

INT. ICHIGO ICHIE'S SOUFFLÉ PANCAKE CAFÉ.

JAGUAR enters Ichigo Ichie's Soufflé Pancake Café, which has a bright and cheery colour scheme predominantly of orange, cream, and pink, where the employees are dressed in cute uniforms bringing to mind fruit fairies.

LENI waves him over to a small two-person table and he sits opposite her.

LENI

Hey, Oscar. Thanks for coming out to see me.

JAGUAR

No worries. What's up?

LENI

Well...

LENI fidgets, blushing.

LENI

Tommy asked me to move in!

JAGUAR

...Oh.

LENI

Yeah! Can you believe it?

JAGUAR

...Yeah, actually.

LENI

Do you think it's too soon?

JAGUAR

Uh, not really. It's been two years.

LENI

I'm so nervous, though... I don't even have brothers, so I've never lived with a guy before.

JAGUAR

I guess that would be a bit of an adjustment for you, eh.

LENI

Yeah, like... What do I do? We're gonna be sharing a room and everything. Such a crazy thought!

JAGUAR

Well, Len, if you're not ready for that, don't do it.

LENI

He was so happy, though...

Beat.

JAGUAR

So you asked me over to tell me that, huh...

LENI

Yeah, I mean, you're my best friend. You know everything about me. Who else am I gonna tell?

JAGUAR

Maybe a girl, for one...

LENI

Aww Oscar. You're better than any girl. Girls have no idea how guys think or what they expect.

JAGUAR's face says "look who's talking..."

LENI

So will you hear me out? I'll treat you to pancakes and whatever else you want.

The pause is just long enough to not be suspicious to LENI. JAGUAR sighs and forces a smile.

JAGUAR

...yeah, sure, why not.

LENI

Oh my gosh, you're the best!

JAGUAR nods while LENI smiles and waves over a waitress.

EXT. BACKSTAGE. OLYANA.

Title card: Olyana

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

STARMAN, meanwhile, is surrounded by OLYANANS who are roughly the same height and have green skin and their heads are covered in what look like floral hats acting as hair, and even their clothing looks like they're made of oversize flowers. He is halfheartedly signing autographs.

OLYANAN 1

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

STARMAN

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

OLYANAN 2

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

STARMAN

You really love us, huh...

OLYANAN 3

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

STARMAN

They did?

OLYANAN 4

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

STARMAN

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

The OLYANANS smile at him and STARMAN himself smiles and has renewed energy as he signs autographs and soon excuses himself to join DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES on the stage. The AUDIENCE cheers as STARMAN picks up his guitar and takes the microphone and begins playing the starting notes of "Flipside."

STARMAN

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

The audience cheers loudly as the song continues.

EXT. STAGE. KLELLIA.

Title card: Klellia

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

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

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

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

He picks up three of them and the surrounding KLELLIANS pick up and ferry over the remaining four. They are all carried over to the stage islet where IESU is pulled up by ERIK RHODES most prominently, and DOOMER takes the REFUGEES from him while STARMAN take the rest.

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

IESU

How about something just for you
guys?

The REFUGEES cheer and IESU sits down and plays a short song for them on his bass guitar which still elicits applause from the audience at large as well as the REFUGEES. IESU is then pounced on by them and he laughs as they cuddle up to him just like cats would do.

Later, after the show, DOOMER is relaxing on the islet while IESU and ERIK RHODES are swimming with the KLELLIANS, and STARMAN himself swims up to the islet and climbs upon it.

STARMAN

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

DOOMER

I'd say so, yeah.

STARMAN

So things are probably getting serious.

DOOMER

More or less. Why?

STARMAN hesitates.

DOOMER

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

STARMAN smirks but you can tell that stung a little.

DOOMER

And you're having fun right now, aren't you? We couldn't do this back on Earth, worrying about everything and nothing. Being plugged into the workings of the world. It's all so far away now, it's nice.

STARMAN

That's true.

DOOMER

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

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

STARMAN

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

Before DOOMER can respond, STARMAN jumps back into the water and resumes swimming. Shortly after he leaves, ERIK RHODES and IESU join him on the islet.

DOOMER

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

IESU

Yeah, eh.

ERIK RHODES

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

They murmur in agreement as STARMAN swims.

INT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE.

PRINCESS ALMAS is now in front of her mirror, which has a small marble sink underneath it. It is filled with silver water and bright pink water lilies with two green lily pads. She washes her face with the water and holds her hands in prayer once again. Her reflection in the mirror fades as it becomes silver just like the water.

Inside the mirror we see LENI wearing STARMAN'S clothes, looking around at outer space. Her body language is defensive, she doesn't take a single step, especially as it's like she's standing rather than floating. PRINCESS ALMAS then appears beside her, taking her hand.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Please, do not be afraid. You seem lost, I only wish to help you.

LENI

Wow, I thought angels saying "be not afraid" was just a meme.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm afraid I do not understand. But at the same time I very much do understand your feelings.

LENI

Of course, I guess you and I have a lot in common, eh.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Why yes, absolutely! Just as you love Sir Starman, I admire Sir Doomer.

LENI

(laughing)

Doomer would land someone like you, he looks like a depressed groom, I guess. It makes too much sense.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm... sorry, I still don't understand what you're saying. But my dear, I've noticed you're quite sad and I wish to help assuage you, however limited I am in my position. Please, allow me to take you to him.

Outside of the mirror, PRINCESS ALMAS prays more, this time you can vaguely hear her mumbling. Inside the mirror, in LENI'S dream, a sled being led by silver wolves pulls up, and PRINCESS ALMAS escorts her onto it.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Now please hold on, they haven't been out for a long run in a while, so they're awfully excited.

She rouses them to begin running and LENI holds on tight. They pass several constellations quickly, and a faraway shot reveals that they have become a comet thanks to the shimmering lunar diamond dust that PRINCESS ALMAS'S gown, train, and hair give off. LENI, now accustomed to the speed, looks around and is visibly relaxed.

LENI

Man, space is a lot smaller than you'd think, going this fast. It's just like driving to another town.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I suppose that is true... I can't leave the moon in my true body, though.

LENI

Why not? Are you a ghost?

PRINCESS ALMAS

...I suppose that's one way of looking at me in this form.

LENI

Hey, it's fine with me if you're a ghost. I just thought you'd be stuck in one place forever, either because you wanted to be or it was just the nature of ghosts.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm afraid I wouldn't know. But my true body is bound to the moon, as its princess.

LENI

What'll happen if you try to leave?

PRINCESS ALMAS hesitates.

LENI

Nevermind, it's probably none of my business.

PRINCESS ALMAS

If I left... Earth would have no defence against anything.

LENI

Oh right... The moon absorbs meteors and stuff.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Exactly. Serene as the moon is, it absorbs all the impacts so the earth does not have to.

LENI

So you're really the soul of the moon, huh? If you leave it's like it dies.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes... So you understand, then, my position, and my love for Sir Doomer.

LENI

Yeah... I do. By the way, are we there yet?

PRINCESS ALMAS notices then that LENI is becoming transparent, and she jumps to touch her, only for the mirror to show that LENI is awakening in her bed. PRINCESS ALMAS then sighs as she closes her prayer and opens her eyes.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I do so hate being limited here...

She smiles sadly as she closes her eyes. We then see QUEEN MORVARID, a tall woman in her 60s/70s wearing a simpler white gown with her silver hair falling in waves, approaching PRINCESS ALMAS.

QUEEN MORVARID

Daughter, were you looking at Earth once again?

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes, Mother.

QUEEN MORVARID

You do know you have a duty and cannot be dreaming all the while. You have your studies to attend to.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes, Mother.

QUEEN MORVARID

Come along now, make haste.

PRINCESS ALMAS sighs and follows her out of the frame.

INT. LENI AND STARMAN'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

LENI rubs her eyes and lets out a big yawn as she slowly sits up in her bed.

LENI

Damn... What a cruel dream...

She pauses, and the sound of the TV from the living room is barely audible. She walks over to see that JAGUAR, ORPHEUS, and XIMENA are watching the news.

REPORTER

We have just received word about unusual electromagnetic activity from the Mulligan Nebula, which is 57.4 billion light-years away from Earth. Researchers are looking into what this means, if there are signs of life. They describe the waves as sounding like music, albeit heavily distorted. Speaking of Mulligan, the President has announced that social media platforms that fail to comply with increasing restrictions will face heavier fines up to and including seizure of assets...

JAGUAR

(under his breath)

Tch. What a joke.

ORPHEUS

Music, huh? That's kinda neat.

XIMENA

I'd love to hear music from another world.

ORPHEUS

Music from another world, huh... Jag, you and I should make that, eh? Forget about reuniting with those guys?

JAGUAR

You might be right, huh... We moved on for a reason, after all.

XIMENA

I was gonna say, what was the real reason you left?

JAGUAR

Eh... It's kinda personal.

ORPHEUS

Yeah, we... Would rather not talk about it.

XIMENA

You know I'm not gonna tell anyone.

ORPHEUS

Sure, but you've only now convinced us you're not just a stalker.

XIMENA

All right, fair enough. But that's exciting, I get to be present when your new duo is born!

JAGUAR

Yeah, there's that at least, huh.
Nice to know we already got a fan.

No one even notices LENI is among them, and so she goes back to her room. After softly closing the door she slumps down. She thinks quietly to herself.

LENI

'Moved on for a reason,' huh...

She thinks again, then gets back up and her entrance this time is more bombastic and catches the others' attention.

LENI

Hey, Ximena. How good of a hacker did you say you were?

XIMENA

Well, I--

LENI

Can you hack into space telescopes?

XIMENA

Space... Telescopes? You mean satellites?

JAGUAR and ORPHEUS exchange looks, even subtly hinting for LENI to call it off.

JAGUAR

Uh, Len, I don't think you can actually do that.

ORPHEUS

Yeah, I mean... Cool dream, though?

XIMENA

I mean... I could potentially hack into the feed...

LENI

Then do it.

XIMENA

...Why, though?

LENI pauses, blushing. Finally she clears her throat and regains composure.

LENI

I... Wanna see something. On the moon.

XIMENA

...the moon?

LENI

Yeah. Can you do it?

XIMENA

I mean... I guess, let's try.

ORPHEUS and JAGUAR exchange looks again as LENI sits beside XIMENA as she opens her laptop back up and types away. JAGUAR nudges LENI and pulls her to the side.

JAGUAR

(whispering)

Um, Len... What are you doing?

LENI

I just wanna see something.

JAGUAR

Well... Can you maybe not let her in on it? She, uh... Doesn't look like someone you should tell this kind of secret to.

LENI

What secret?

JAGUAR hesitates, searching her eyes. Then he places his hands on her shoulders.

JAGUAR

Leni... That Starman's not on Earth anymore. That he's somewhere in outer space, and probably won't be back for a long time.

There is a silence as ORPHEUS, having eavesdropped, sighs as he joins them. LENI'S shoulders visibly relax as she smiles sadly.

LENI

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

XIMENA

What did you call me?

LENI

We're not talking about you. Guys... Let's talk in my room, okay. Give Ximena some room to work.

ORPHEUS

She might get suspicious, though.
At this point we're gonna have to
tell her.

JAGUAR

I guess you're right. Hey, you.
Fangirl.

XIMENA sits up.

JAGUAR

You're definitely not gonna tell
anyone about this?

XIMENA

Cross my heart.

LENI

Okay, well... The reason I wanted
you to look into the moon is
because, well... I had a dream and
it got me kinda curious. It's just
to kind of put it out of my mind
more than anything else.

XIMENA

Okay, so...

LENI

I... Wanted to see if there really
is life on the moon. I saw a really
beautiful princess and I just
wondered.

JAGUAR

Hey, wait a minute.

XIMENA

You want me... Starman's stalker...
To hack a satellite feed to see if
there's a princess on the moon?

They all pause to stare at LENI.

LENI

...Yeah. That.

XIMENA

...have you been taking your meds,
girl?

LENI

Just... Trust me. Please?

XIMENA

...okay, since you were nice enough
to let me into your house.

She gets back to work. JAGUAR and ORPHEUS exchange a brief glance.

JAGUAR

Okay, first of all, bravo for thinking on your feet, but...

LENI

I meant it. I dreamed that the moon princess knew about them. So, well... I know saying it's grasping at straws is a massive understatement, but...

ORPHEUS

Well, if we talked to the actual alien that abducted them, I guess a moon princess isn't too hard to swallow. It's not like any leads here will get us anywhere.

JAGUAR

Okay, but how are we gonna reunite with them? We don't have a spaceship lying around and I don't think she's gonna be any help there.

LENI

Sure, she could. Just... I dunno, guys. I'll take anything I can get at this point.

JAGUAR

Leni...

XIMENA

Okay, guys, I have a visual.

They hurry over to XIMENA'S laptop, and on the screen PRINCESS ALMAS'S castle is just barely visible, complete with her pet jellyfish. A silver moon rabbit with dark-grey eyes pops up on the screen and sniffs the camera and scampers off.

ORPHEUS

Well, I'll be damned.

JAGUAR

Wow... This is actually on the moon? Looks like a film set or something, even an art exhibition.

XIMENA

Yeah, it doesn't look real, eh? But I triple- and even quadruple-checked, this is on the moon. This whole time there was a

(MORE)

XIMENA (cont'd)
civilization--no, life--on the
moon. Guess it's no wonder they
didn't want us to know.

LENI
That's one way to look at it, I
guess. But we can't contact anyone
there this way...

XIMENA
I'm really not sure I understand
your thought process, Leni. In fact
I won't lie, I'm a little bit
creeped out.

ORPHEUS
Yeah, uh, sorry about her. But
thanks for your help, we'll be in
touch, yeah? If anything new comes
up.

XIMENA looks dubiously at them and sighs as she packs up her
laptop and looks at LENI with concern before giving her the
"I'm watching you" gesture. LENI smiles nervously as she
sees XIMENA out.

Once she closes the front door she sighs as she sits down on
the couch, JAGUAR and ORPHEUS sitting on either side of her.

LENI
What even is my life right now...

JAGUAR
Not just yours. What the hell was
that?

LENI
I don't even know. But look,
guys... If Starman and the
rest--sorry, Orpheus--really have
been abducted by aliens... Can we
even really do anything?

JAGUAR
...no.

LENI
I guess this really is the end of
Elpis.

ORPHEUS
I mean... Elpis as we know it,
sure. Definitely.

LENI
So... What does this mean for me?
Should I move on, too? I have to...
Right?

No one answers.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JOHNNY VALENTINE'S SWEETSHOP.

Title card: Seven years ago

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

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

LENI

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

STARMAN

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

LENI blushes something amazing.

LENI

R-really?

Now STARMAN looks embarrassed.

STARMAN

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

LENI

Oh wow. Seriously?

STARMAN

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

LENI blushes again.

LENI

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

STARMAN

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

LENI

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

STARMAN

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

LENI

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

Beat.

LENI

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

STARMAN also pauses, and they both giggle.

INT. STUDIO.

Title card: Four years ago

Still in flashback, this time DOOMER, IESU, ERIK RHODES, JAGUAR, and ORPHEUS, are practicing a general tune but give up when ORPHEUS expresses frustration.

ORPHEUS

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

JAGUAR

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

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, I'll have to talk to him.

ORPHEUS

No, Erik, you gotta actually make a decision this time. I know he's your best friend but think for a second. He's always late and every time he shows up, he's worse than last time. How does he expect Elpis to flourish when he won't put in the work?

ERIK RHODES

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

ORPHEUS

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

ERIK RHODES

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

ORPHEUS

Well, excuse me for wanting to go back to what worked. In case you haven't noticed, less and less people are coming to our shows and buying the CDs. Starman's voice and guitar is turning them all away. It's obvious he's weighing us all down!

IESU

Hey...

IESU motions to the doorway but neither ERIK RHODES nor ORPHEUS look that way.

ORPHEUS

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

Pause. ERIK RHODES gives a small shake of his head and pinches the bridge of his nose as he sighs.

ERIK RHODES

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

ORPHEUS

Thank you! About goddamn time you saw some sense.

ERIK RHODES

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

IESU

Hey, Rhodes...

ERIK RHODES

No, Iesu. He's got a point. I should've done this a lot sooner. I hate to say it, but I let my emotions get in the way for a long time and we've all suffered for it.

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

ERIK RHODES

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

Pause. ORPHEUS'S expression flits between several different emotions at once, until finally he exclaims:

ORPHEUS

Wait, WHAT?

DOOMER

Oh my God, he finally did it.

JAGUAR

He "finally" did it?

ORPHEUS

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

ERIK RHODES

Look, if you're gonna be the guy who can't reel his own ego in and be a part of the team, then obviously you can't be here. Go and do your own thing, you keep messing with our sound, stealing the spotlight like we're just your backup anyway. If anything, you're driving audiences away because they can't tell if they should be listening to us or watching you.

ORPHEUS is speechless, and for a while no one says anything. Finally, though, JAGUAR looks at the doorway where IESU initially hinted at and sighs.

JAGUAR

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

ERIK RHODES

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

IESU

Rhodes...

ERIK RHODES

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

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

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

JAGUAR
 Sorry you had to hear all that,
 Len.

LENI breathes gently, shaking ever-so-slightly.

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

LENI doesn't answer. JAGUAR moves to touch her shoulder but ultimately doesn't.

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

LENI
 Tommy's sick, you know.

JAGUAR
 Huh?

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

On the inner side of the doorway, IESU and DOOMER listen in, ORPHEUS on the other side parallel to JAGUAR.

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

JAGUAR
 Leni...

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

JAGUAR looks away.

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

LENI
 Oh. Okay.

JAGUAR now furtively looks at her and nobody says anything.

INT. PARVA SEIBEL

Title card: Lor Salviator's mansion, Parva Seibel

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

IESU is seated in front of a large half-oval window overlooking an even larger multicoloured garden that spans at least one hill and a marble fountain, with a clear starry sky above. Just within the line of sight is a small brown planet acting as a satellite. ERIK RHODES joins him but he doesn't bring a chair to sit down.

ERIK RHODES

Imagine seeing something like this back home, huh?

IESU

Yeah... All this space just for you.

ERIK RHODES

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

IESU

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

ERIK RHODES

I think it's more than a dozen.

IESU

Yeah, you wouldn't get it.

ERIK RHODES

Hmph.

ERIK RHODES leans against the wall beside the window.

IESU

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

ERIK RHODES

Responsible how?

IESU

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

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, so?

IESU

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

ERIK RHODES

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

IESU

Of course you are...

ERIK RHODES

Hey, you're the one who asked. I never said my way was the right way, just that it's mine. Clearly it's not yours.

IESU

Yeah... Clearly.

ERIK RHODES

Whatever, man.

ERIK RHODES leaves and IESU sighs, once again looking up towards the smaller brown planet. LOR SALVIATOR comes in and stands in ERIK RHODES's spot.

LOR SALVIATOR

Is something on your mind, Sir Iesu?

IESU

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

LOR SALVIATOR

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

IESU makes a bashful expression.

LOR SALVIATOR

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

IESU

Is it that planet not too far from here?

LOR SALVIATOR

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

SIDE WIPE TO:

EXT. YUEYUE.

IESU stands in the middle of a barren wasteland, where a highly advanced society once stood. Only the base foundations of buildings remain, the debris splattered about as if it had been bombed, and even the sky is a very unflattering shade of brown. A weak breeze is audible. He looks absolutely crestfallen and even falls to his knees and hands.

IESU

What happened to this place..?

LOR SALVIATOR

This was once a very prosperous kingdom. Its peoples were peaceful and wished only to live their lives, unfortunately their plentiful resources made them a prime target for pillagers. So in a final act of defiance they torched their homeworld and themselves along with it. It truly is a tragedy, they had such a beautiful planet, not unlike yours.

IESU

Not unlike... ours?

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

IESU

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

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

LOR SALVIATOR

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

IESU

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

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed.

IESU

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

He gets up to face LOR SALVIATOR.

IESU

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

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed there are, Sir Iesu.

IESU

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

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed there are.

IESU regards LOR SALVIATOR pointedly, as if about to ask a
heavy question but deliberates if he should.

IESU

Lor... don't you feel any sort of
greater responsibility? Not like
guilt or anything, but... Well, I
guess there's no point beating
around the bush. I've been
wondering about how you have so
many planets, and if, well... You
actually have something to do with
it.

Pause. IESU looks like he regrets it, while LOR SALVIATOR
looks on kindly.

LOR SALVIATOR

It's no wonder you are so loved by
the downtrodden of the galaxy, Sir
Iesu. To answer your question, my
family did indeed acquire wealth
through what you would no doubt
call shameful means, but it is
still my inheritance and only I can
do with it as I wish. I cannot heal
the wounds of those who have
suffered on my own with my
resources. All it will do is enable
another great tragedy in the
future. But you, Sir Iesu, and your
fellow bandmates, can and will heal
many with your art. It will
naturally not be instantaneous but
you have indeed contributed so much
more than you realise, and I simply

(MORE)

LOR SALVIATOR (cont'd)
wish to help you. This is why I
have decided to give you your tour
across the galaxy.

IESU
I see... Sorry, Lor.

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

IESU
Yeah, it has... But I still think I
should be doing a lot more than
just playing music. In fact... Is
it true that aliens think we as
humans are total idiots? I mean we
have all these problems we can't
solve and we're killing the planet,
seeking out new ones to exploit...
We say we want world peace but have
no idea what that even means...

LOR SALVIATOR
I haven't asked anyone that myself
nor have I seen it. Honestly, I
never cared to find out something
so trivial and I daresay no one
else ever stops to think about it.
But I certainly don't think that
about you.

IESU
Right... Guess that sorta thing
really doesn't matter ultimately,
huh. You know, that's actually good
to know. We talk about it all the
time on Earth. We both want and
don't want to know whether or not
you're out here, if you will attack
us, laugh at us... Guess it is
pretty stupid, but that's what we
are. And maybe that's all right
after all.

Finally IESU smiles.

IESU
Thank you, Lor. Let's go back.

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

LOR SALVIATOR smiles and ushers him back to the spaceship.

INT. MAGNA SEIBEL.

Title card: Magna Seibel

A massive crowd stands before a magnificent stage not unlike that of an opera, complete with larger-than-life statues acting as frames. ERIK RHODES pokes his head out from behind the curtains. IESU is tuning his bass guitar while STARMAN does stretches.

ERIK RHODES

Wow. This is actually the biggest crowd yet. There's gotta be at least a billion of 'em.

IESU

Don't tell me you're nervous about that.

ERIK RHODES returns to them, cracking his neck.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, right. I actually got a real good feeling about this one.

IESU

Honestly... Me too.

STARMAN

Alright, let's get this started.

They stand as the curtains get drawn and the thunderous applause knocks them back a little. IESU starts the opening riff of "Empty Glass."

STARMAN

"Three cheers for you and I, to the beautiful nothing within everything..."

The instrumentals intersperse with that of the song "Blur."

STARMAN

"This is the fifth bottle I've drowned in today..."

The third song is the last verse of "Black Veil."

STARMAN

"Black roses, roses roses..."

He plays the last guitar note and strikes a pose which he holds as the crowd cheers.

A CLOSEUP OF HIS FACE WITH AN UNREADABLE EXPRESSION.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME

XIMENA is visible first, staring at LENI who has a determined expression on her face.

LENI

Okay, look... The guys want me to keep this hush-hush, but we actually do know where they are.

XIMENA looks betrayed at first but nonetheless her attention is piqued here.

XIMENA

You do? Well, then, what are we waiting for?

LENI

That's the thing, though. They're in outer space.

XIMENA looks at her incredulously.

LENI

You have to believe me. You saw for yourself that there's a castle on the moon, right? So why is it so crazy to believe that they're not on Earth anymore and touring in outer space?

Silence passes between them for a couple seconds.

LENI

Okay, come on. You're in this with me whether you like it or not, in fact you involved yourself. It's too late to back out now.

XIMENA

Well... You got a point there.

LENI

So you'll do it? You'll help?

XIMENA seems to think carefully about her response and a big smile breaks across her face.

XIMENA

Hell yeah, girl! I knew sulky didn't suit you, guess you were just shocked. Okay, let's do it!

LENI claps as XIMENA sets up her laptop and gets to work. LENI sits beside her and huddles close as XIMENA gets more and more focused.

XIMENA

Damn... We don't have a lot of reach. Do you have a radio?

LENI

Yeah, just hang on a sec.

LENI runs to grab the mini radio in her room and hurries back with it. She turns it on as XIMENA fiddles with the tune knob and puts the antenna up as high as it'll go. Finally she gets a grainy transmission that features the band playing "Seven Seals." Both of them gasp.

XIMENA

Man, they must be like billions of light-years away. This sounds like a recording of a recording of a recording.

LENI

But we're getting somewhere, right? Maybe... What if we get a satellite radio or something?

XIMENA

We could... Yeah, actually. Leave that to me.

TIME CUT:

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME

JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are setting up a massive satellite dish on the balcony while LENI and XIMENA, now wearing a tinfoil hat, are adjusting the mini radio to the same feed. They happen upon the correct frequency when a very grainy rendition of "Hera" plays, and after listening to it for a few seconds they both wince.

XIMENA

God... I'm so happy to hear their music again but man, that's not their best work. No offence.

LENI

None taken, it really isn't.

ORPHEUS

(offscreen)

What the hell is Erik doing? He's embarrassing us all over the galaxy!

JAGUAR

(offscreen)

Yeah, that's... Beneath him.

They finish setting up the satellite dish and LENI hooks it up to the mini radio. The signal remains grainy until they

angle the dish to the far left of the balcony where it becomes clearer, and "Hera" ends.

STARMAN

(offscreen, via
transmission)

Now this next one, is a really special one I've never played before. Goes out to someone I love a lot... Here's "Eleanore."

The recording plays the botched opening of "Eleanore" and JAGUAR visibly responds with shock, then a quiet flash of anger as ORPHEUS gives him a quick sidelong glance until he realises.

ORPHEUS

(whispering)

Hey, isn't that the one--

JAGUAR

(growling, like a jaguar)

That absolute bastard... Is it bad that I wish he was right here, in front of me, so I could throw him into space myself? See just how far he can go?

ORPHEUS

Only a little bit, but calm down, maybe.

JAGUAR

Bet he thought it would be the perfect crime... Stealing my song, passing it off as his own...

ORPHEUS

You gonna tell Leni?

JAGUAR pauses, looking at LENI through the window, and his expression softens into one of resignation. ORPHEUS claps his shoulder in reassurance as they resume moving the satellite dish.

XIMENA gushes, and LENI listens intently until the end of the botched opening.

LOR SALVIATOR

(offscreen, via
transmission)

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

LENI

What? That's it?

XIMENA

Maybe... Stage fright? Or even
guilt that you couldn't hear it
first?

LENI

You think so?

XIMENA

Sure. Ahhh man, that's frustrating!
But let me see if I can pinpoint
the origin of that transmission. We
can keep it online and see if we
can hear them again.

LENI

It's too bad we can't talk to them,
though.

XIMENA types up a storm while JAGUAR and ORPHEUS exchange
looks.

XIMENA

Okay... Yeah, I think I lost them.
I'm just getting signals I can't
really understand.

LENI

Okay, guys, try moving the dish
again. They uh...are touring, heh.

XIMENA shoots LENI a look of betrayal before shaking her
head and waiting as JAGUAR and ORPHEUS once again go outside
to move the dish. LENI huddles closer to XIMENA as they
watch the computer program for activity as static plays on
the radio.

XIMENA

No good... They're just too far
away. We need something way more
powerful. Like a government
satellite, or the LHC.

LENI

Why don't you hack into it?

XIMENA

Girl... The whole point of doing
stalking right is that you don't
leave any trace you were there.
Even with FOIA the government
doesn't like you snooping in on
them, the hypocrites. The fact that
you even know this is happening is
something they'll lock you away
for. Maybe they're even listening
in right now.

LENI

...yeah, you're right. But we can't let that stop us, can we? We have to reach them. I have something I need to tell Starman, and I can't wait for him to be back to hear it.

XIMENA

Leni...

JAGUAR

(offscreen)

Hey, guys? Did you get anything yet?

LENI

No, come back inside. We need to hatch a plan.

JAGUAR and ORPHEUS re-enter the living room and take their seats on the floor. JAGUAR very gradually calms down, something XIMENA seems to notice, while ORPHEUS very subtly discourages her addressing.

JAGUAR

So, what are we doing?

LENI

We're gonna reach them. The only way I know how.

JAGUAR

Which is..?

LENI

We're gonna use the government satellite, the one that's been trying to reach alien civilization since forever. It's the only way, we have to page them, get them to talk to us again.

JAGUAR

Uh, Len?

LENI

No buts. You know there's no other way. Not unless... I dunno, we use the moon princess.

JAGUAR shakes his head and places both hands on LENI'S shoulders, making her look at him, very clearly trying to hold it together.

JAGUAR

Leni... Just stop, okay? You're losing it. I know it's hard for you, but they're gone--he's gone.

(MORE)

JAGUAR (cont'd)

I'm sorry, but this isn't some movie where you're gonna break all the rules of time and space to get him back.

Everyone is silent as they look at him, and LENI is especially frozen in time by his words as she slowly nods, her body slumping as she accepts his words. XIMENA, meanwhile, watches them.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Title card: Two days ago

Begin flashback. XIMENA is at her laptop but not typing. She has headphones on and is leaning in to see on the screen a grainy transmission of STARMAN and ERIK RHODES inside LOR SALVIATOR'S mansion on Parva Seibel. She is absolutely rapt.

STARMAN

God, I hate this. Feels like I jinxed everything. I think it's safe to say we're gonna lose both of them in due time.

ERIK RHODES

Well, yeah. That much is a given. One falls in love, the other finds his calling. It happens. Just this time it's on a much bigger scale.

STARMAN

It's just gonna be you and I left, huh...

XIMENA

(to herself)

Ooh, that's real juicy.

STARMAN

I keep thinking about what you said. About being away from Leni.

Now XIMENA sits up and leans forward.

STARMAN

I think you were right. I don't deserve someone like her. I never really did.

Beat.

STARMAN

I mean, I put her through a lot, but this time...

ERIK RHODES

Well, yeah, even she's gotta take a step back and think. But look, you worked hard. We all did. I think she'd want you to chase your dream. Even if you gotta do it without her.

XIMENA covers her mouth with her fingertips.

STARMAN

So no matter what, I can't have it both ways, huh... It really is just like you said.

XIMENA watches, affected by the grainy shot of STARMAN himself looking quite affected emotionally by the realisation.

XIMENA

(to herself)

My God... I had no idea it was that bad. I feel so wrong for this.

STARMAN

The longer we're out here... The harder it is to go back home. We're never gonna be the same again, Leni and I. And he's right there for her, while I'm out here... It's gotta be karma. I stole from him.

She then stifles what looks like a gag as she cuts the transmission feed. She then sees LENI going to the kitchen for a drink and JAGUAR passed out on the couch. When LENI leaves, XIMENA approaches JAGUAR and reaches her hand out to touch his shoulder but changes her mind at the last second. ORPHEUS, meanwhile, watches from the doorway and she sees him and stands, motioning for him to come closer.

XIMENA

(whispering)

Don't tell Leni or Jaguar, but... I think I saw something I shouldn't have.

ORPHEUS

Really? What did you see?

XIMENA hesitates.

XIMENA

Well... I guess I heard it more than I saw it. But I managed to hack a couple satellite feeds and I think I heard a private conversation that I guess isn't so private anymore.

ORPHEUS

Oh?

XIMENA

Yeah... But God, it's given me such a crisis. I feel kinda dirty, this isn't something you should know if you're not directly involved.

ORPHEUS

Okay...?

XIMENA

Ahh geez... I shouldn't have even told you, but still. Had to tell somebody.

ORPHEUS

Uh... Thanks, I guess?

XIMENA

Damn... Just, damn...

ORPHEUS simply looks on, exasperated.

BACK TO:

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME

Back to the previous scene. XIMENA watches both JAGUAR and LENI intently, though it's clear she's holding back emotions. She then notices a blinking alert on her laptop and turns her attention to that.

LENI

You're right... God, but I didn't think it would go like this.

JAGUAR

Does anyone ever think it would actually go like this?

LENI

I guess I was ignoring all kinds of signs... Things got so bad that this is a sign I can't ignore anymore.

JAGUAR

Leni...

XIMENA

Guys...

FADE TO BLACK

DARKNESS

Once again, we see nothing but darkness, accompanied by the sound of keyboards typing, as well as something else beeping in the background.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 6
You know... Really starting to think we went overboard on the microplastics.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 7
It's a little late to ask for forgiveness for that one.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 5
Well... Why don't we help them out a little?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 4
Hey, think I found something useful. Check this out.

More typing is heard from one keyboard, and then the sound of more and more keys clacking is heard.

FADE IN:

INT. STUDIO.

Title card: Three years ago

JAGUAR, aged 31 here, is playing the notes of "Eleanore" on the acoustic guitar, eyes closed as he feels the music. ORPHEUS, 31 here, meanwhile, is petting AKIRA who is laying down beside him on the couch. When he finishes playing, ORPHEUS claps.

ORPHEUS
Nice! I can see that becoming a real hit.

JAGUAR
I dunno... It's kinda personal, not really one you want everyone to hear. I didn't even know you were there.

ORPHEUS
Well, that's just how it goes. Still... Wish I came up with that song.

JAGUAR
Heh, thanks, man. Still... No way in hell is this one leaving this room.

ORPHEUS

That's a shame, but it's your song,
so I respect that.

The camera slowly zooms out, and STARMAN, 31, is seen outside of the slightly ajar studio door, having listened in. He shuts his eyes, but opens them again when ERIK RHODES, also 31, enters. He gets a phone call and leaves the frame just as ORPHEUS comes out first, and he and ERIK RHODES pause when they see one another.

ERIK RHODES

Nicky.

ORPHEUS

Erik.

ERIK RHODES

Sorry you got that song of yours
plagiarised.

ORPHEUS

Yeah, well. It's what I get for
being a succesful artist. Ain't
like I don't also have bills to
pay.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah... I had to get a new violin
after my last one bit the dust,
that really hurt the funds.

ORPHEUS

Well, for what it's worth,
Grandpa's gonna come to the rescue
with Christmas money.

ERIK RHODES

That's true, he always does.

JAGUAR then comes out as well with AKIRA on a leash, and ERIK RHODES pets him. Soon after they are joined by IESU and DOOMER, respectively 30 and 31. IESU looks rather haggard.

ERIK RHODES

Hey, Akira. You're looking good
today. Feeling better?

IESU

Yeah, he's doing better today, but
his vet bills are through the roof.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, eh?

He pauses to look at AKIRA for about three seconds.

ERIK RHODES

Hey, why don't you come over to the house tonight? After your shift. I'll split my Christmas money with you.

IESU

Aw no, it's fine.

ERIK RHODES

C'mon, it's Christmas. I want to. It's for Akira.

IESU, embarrassed, nonetheless looks at AKIRA and nods. ERIK RHODES grins and they go towards their instruments to begin practicing.

EXT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE.

PRINCESS ALMAS's mirror shows LENI, XIMENA, JAGUAR, and ORPHEUS. PRINCESS ALMAS looks up from her tomes and hurries over.

LENI

Oh my God, it worked! Ximena, how'd you do that?

XIMENA

I... Don't know.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Miss Leni! I'm so glad to see you!

LENI

Look, there's no time to waste. I gotta ask you something. Can you... Put us through to Tommy and everyone? I... Got something I need to tell them.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I can certainly try, but it will be difficult given how far away they are. It would be easier if you were up here.

LENI slumps, and JAGUAR very gingerly embraces her, which PRINCESS ALMAS notices she doesn't fight. PRINCESS ALMAS reaches for LENI'S face and it looks like she is actually touching it.

PRINCESS ALMAS

My dear... I will do my best. I can't stand to watch you make that face.

She then retrieves her hands and holds them in a prayer position.

ORPHEUS

Hey, I think it's working, whatever she's doing!

XIMENA

Woah... That's really, really far.

LENI

I'm gonna do it. I'm gonna tell him.

We then see what looks like hyperspace getting closer and closer to Magna Seibel.

SMASH CUT TO:

DARKNESS

Three hard knocks sound on the front door of STARMAN and LENI'S apartment, followed by the sound of the door being kicked in, followed quickly by heavy and fast footsteps. Said footsteps disperse as the hushed panic of LENI, JAGUAR, ORPHEUS and XIMENA are heard.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1

Hands up! We have it on good authority that you have all been engaging in illegal activity.

XIMENA

Do you have a warrant? You're trespassing on private property!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 2

You have the right to remain silent while you are being transferred.

Sounds of each of them being arrested and escorted away, and we see the tinfoil hat falling.

INT. SPACESHIP.

LOR SALVIATOR is piloting when he gets a message alert on the mainframe. He presses the button to accept the message and sees PRINCESS ALMAS on the side screen.

LOR SALVIATOR

Your highness, how lovely to hear from you again.

PRINCESS ALMAS

You as well, Sir Salviator. The reason I'm contacting you is that Sir Starman's partner--

STARMAN immediately bolts towards the cockpit, out of breath.

STARMAN

Leni's contacting? But how?

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes, I was saying. Miss Leni attempted to reach me but when I checked my satellite messengers... I'm afraid I have some bad news, I hope you will forgive me, Sir Starman.

STARMAN

Why? What happened?

PRINCESS ALMAS hesitates and bursts into tears.

PRINCESS ALMAS

It's all my fault... I only wanted to help her...

DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES approach the cockpit behind STARMAN, DOOMER gently pushes through so he is now in front of him.

ERIK RHODES

What happened? Is she all right?

DOOMER

Princess... What happened?

PRINCESS ALMAS sniffs and dabs her eye with a pure white handkerchief before speaking.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I was surprised to see it myself. I saw her face in my mirror and the next thing I knew I couldn't reach her.

IESU

You don't mean...?

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm afraid so.

STARMAN

No... How? How did it happen?

PRINCESS ALMAS

My satellites reported... That shortly after she contacted me... Your government...

STARMAN

No... They took her out?

PRINCESS ALMAS

Yes...

IESU
My God... But why?

PRINCESS ALMAS weeps.

LOR SALVIATOR
There is no need to be alarmed,
gentlemen, allow me to try reaching
your apartment again, Sir Starman.

He quickly types and a second screen pops up and immediately after STARMAN'S living room is visible. STARMAN shoves forward and bangs his fists on the dashboard.

STARMAN
Leni! Can you hear me? Leni!
Goddammit... Lor, we have to go
back. Please! She can't be gone. If
she is... It's my fault, not yours,
Princess.

PRINCESS ALMAS
But your show... It must go on...

STARMAN
How can it go on like this?
Princess, please. It's not your
fault.

No one says anything for a few seconds. PRINCESS ALMAS sniffs and composes herself.

PRINCESS ALMAS
Right. I'm going to do it, there's
no other way.

DOOMER
What are you talking about? What
are you going to do?

PRINCESS ALMAS
I am going to broker a negotiation.
My soul in exchange for her.

IESU
...what?

PRINCESS ALMAS
I am deeply worried for her as well
as remorseful. I am representative
of Earth's guardian, at the very
least you have to let me do this
for you... Even though it will be
the last thing I ever do for you.

DOOMER
The last thing? Princess, you...

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm very happy to have finally met you in person, Sir Doomer. Maybe in another life... We will be more than this.

DOOMER

Wait!

PRINCESS ALMAS

Goodbye.

Her transmission cuts off. STARMAN and DOOMER are both frozen in shock, meanwhile IESU and ERIK RHODES exchange looks.

IESU

Hey... Lor... If Princess Almas said what we think she said... Does that mean Earth is in danger?

LOR SALVIATOR

I... I'm afraid so. My, but this is a problem.

IESU

So do something! Take us back! Earth... Might become another Yueyue without the moon. And Leni... What the hell did they do to her?

ERIK RHODES

She was right, though. The show must go on.

IESU

What?

ERIK RHODES

Think about it. She said the government was involved. Not only that but Lor said we're peace ambassadors, not just a music band. We have to think about the bigger picture here. If we go back now it'll cause an even bigger mess.

IESU

Shit... You're right.

ERIK RHODES

Of course I am. I don't know why you didn't figure it out yourself.

LOR SALVIATOR

Well said, Mr Rhodes. In that case, please make your way to your show
(MORE)

LOR SALVIATOR (cont'd)
 while I monitor the situation.
 Indeed the show must go on.

FADE IN:

EXT. STAGE. MAGNA SEIBEL

Return to the scene where the concert left off, where STARMAN'S face is unreadable. The applause is still going until he clears his throat and takes the microphone.

STARMAN
 This next one... Is for someone
 back home, maybe you all know her.
 I couldn't play it last time but I
 will now. Here's "Eleanore."

The audience cheers again as the beginning of "Eleanore" begins, and this time STARMAN is determined.

STARMAN
 "In darkest day, brightest night,
 you made it all make sense for the
 first time..."

IESU and ERIK RHODES nod as they play. DOOMER is nowhere to be seen. STARMAN, IESU and ERIK RHODES all act aware of his absence but like it's not unusual.

STARMAN
 "I'd walk all over the universe
 with you..."

STARMAN puts on a stoic face just then as IESU and ERIK RHODES continue playing.

STARMAN
 "So grab your shoes, c'mon let's
 go, Eleanore!"

The crowd goes absolutely wild as STARMAN plays his guitar.

INT. SPACESHIP.

LOR SALVIATOR is dialing something on his dashboard and we then see a screen show a regal silhouette. He looks somber.

LOR SALVIATOR
 Greetings, Your Majesty. Yes...you
 already know. I'm on my way, you
 shan't wait much longer.

He cuts the transmission and continues driving the spaceship into hyperspace as DOOMER sits beside him, holding onto his seat with white knuckles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ICHIGO ICHIE'S SOUFFLÉ PANCAKE CAFÉ.

Title card: Two years ago

LENI, 30 here, and JAGUAR, 32, are seated at their usual table at Ichigo Ichie's, and both of them look awkward, not fully able to look at one another. A WAITRESS comes and sets down their orders before them, a stack of strawberry soufflé pancakes for Leni and a simpler stack of flatter pancakes with mixed fruits for JAGUAR, and cups of red tea for both of them. LENI fidgets before speaking first.

LENI

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

JAGUAR doesn't answer. LENI gives a nervous smile.

LENI

How is everything with you? I'm sorry I've just been so busy. Elpis... Well, they've been working really hard, and I have to help out. Be the cheerleader, you know? Especially since, well... Things aren't going all that great.

Still JAGUAR doesn't respond.

LENI

Oscar... Are you mad at me?

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

JAGUAR

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

LENI

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

JAGUAR

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

LENI

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

JAGUAR

(bemused)

Oh yeah?

LENI

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

JAGUAR

(now more genuine)

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

LENI

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

JAGUAR

Are you sure? That sounds pretty scary.

LENI

(laughing uneasily)

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

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

LENI

I mean, obviously I'm not excusing it, but you know what I mean, right? Things are gonna happen. Tommy was pretty shaken up, too, so I have to show it wasn't quite that bad. I have to keep morale up, you know? Otherwise, well... I'll just get in the way, and nobody needs that. Besides, it was just a one-off, it's not like that happens all the time.

JAGUAR

Len...

LENI

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

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

FADE TO BLACK

DARKNESS

Once again we see nothing but black, though this time there is a small light that slowly shines bright and even seems to pulsate as the music fades out of focus.

An astral projection of PRINCESS ALMAS reaching out to the viewer is visible, and the next shot shows that she is now visible on several monitors within the secret service headquarters.

INT. SECRET SERVICE HEADQUARTERS.

The room is quite large and every monitor and the larger command screen all feature PRINCESS ALMAS holding her hands in a prayer position, spooking everyone in the room.

PRINCESS ALMAS

This is a message to you who are in charge of Earth. I implore you as the representative of Earth's guardian satellite the moon. Release my friend from your clutches.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 3

Alert President Mulligan! Right now!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 4

The system's going haywire!

Pandemonium increases as the computers start to fry and shut down. Meanwhile PRINCESS ALMAS's projection on the monitors also starts fizzling out as she quickly grows more fatigued.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm sorry... Leni... I tried...
Can't hold this form any longer...

She closes her eyes and appears to collapse.

EXT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

The spaceship has just landed on the moon, and as the door opens, LOR SALVIATOR places a hand on DOOMER'S shoulder.

LOR SALVIATOR

Best of luck to you, Sir Doomer.

DOOMER

Thank you for doing this, Lor.
Don't wait up for me.

LOR SALVIATOR

As you wish.

DOOMER then marches out of the spaceship as LOR SALVIATOR remains standing, and as soon as his feet reach the moon's

terrain DOOMER runs, practically floating towards the castle.

He enters and searches all over for the mirror room, and happens upon PRINCESS ALMAS asleep on a magestic crystal bed, holding a bouquet of moonflowers. DOOMER kneels at her bedside.

DOOMER

No... Are you gone?

She doesn't answer.

DOOMER

Princess... Please, answer me.

Out of frame, QUEEN MORVARID, enters the room. DOOMER looks up and stands, while she calmly smiles and motions for him to kneel.

QUEEN MORVARID

We see, you're the one Almas has been pining for all this time.

DOOMER

I'm sorry, I--

QUEEN MORVARID

Oh, dear, you don't need to worry. She's been a fool her whole life.

DOOMER

Then...

QUEEN MORVARID

You must pardon us, we didn't even give you a proper introduction. We are Queen Morvarid, the mother of Princess Almas.

DOOMER

I'm... They call me Doomer.

QUEEN MORVARID

Doomer. Interesting name indeed. Now tell us, what could have prompted Almas to do this, do you think?

DOOMER

Um... I don't know, honestly.

QUEEN MORVARID

She wants to go to Earth more than anything else. She wants to see the world you grew up in, where you would only look up at the moon by happenstance than with any real intention. Can you imagine!

DOOMER

No, not really.

QUEEN MORVARID

As we understand the situation, she has gotten involved with your friend. And now she wishes to sacrifice herself.

DOOMER

Listen, Your Highness. No, you're a queen, I guess it's Your Majesty. Anyway, she said that this is the last thing she would ever do. She sounded so sure.

QUEEN MORVARID

As fools often are. Really, she's much too dramatic. Willing to give up her soul just because she is bound to the world of her birth. Suffice it to say, it is partly your fault she is so determined.

DOOMER

Oh. Uh... Yeah, sorry about that, I guess. But you have to understand, Your Majesty, most of us never leave the earth. I mean, we can't, so...

QUEEN MORVARID

But you see how you share this sin with her?

DOOMER

I do. And really, if I could... I'd take her place, as The Man in the Moon, I guess I would be. It's sad but it sounds like she wanted to be free, and I can't really fault her for that. It's what any of us want, ultimately. It's why we landed here in 1969, and keep trying to find new Earths. But I guess I'm not really helping the situation here, huh?

QUEEN MORVARID

You would take her place, you say? Having known more freedom than you thought possible... You would choose to imprison yourself? For, dare we say, love?

Beat. DOOMER'S eyes shine with tears as he pauses.

DOOMER

Yeah... I would. She gave me her love... So I should give her her freedom. In exchange for mine.

DOOMER then smiles through his tears. QUEEN MORVARID seems to contemplate his words and finally she nods.

QUEEN MORVARID

Very well, your answer pleases us.

DOOMER gulps.

INT. OFFICE.

LENI, XIMENA, JAGUAR and ORPHEUS are seated close together in a federal office facing a wide desk, not restrained in their chairs but looking otherwise unsettled.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN, a woman in her late 60s-early 70s sits opposite the desk with a smart suit on and her hands folded, expression unreadable.

The room itself is clean yet austere, with cream walls with wooden crown moldings and official documents encased in frames. XIMENA grabs LENI'S hand tightly.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

So. You four have had quite the ambition. I must say I'm quite impressed by you all.

None of them respond.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

You have uncovered something truly remarkable. Life across the galaxy! And they have shown interest in us! But also kidnapped our citizens. It's no wonder your search and rescue efforts weren't bearing fruit, how could they? So that is where your country comes in. To help you.

JAGUAR and ORPHEUS exchange looks.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

The Mulligan Nebula... We will of course unify all space programmes and get your friends back, come hell or high water. Rest assured that we are all in this together.

XIMENA and LENI exchange furtive looks and hold hands tighter.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Now, if that would be all.

LENI

Um, actually, ma'am... I was wondering if you could hear us out first. Before you go and look for them right away.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Rest assured, I will personally see to it that this mission succeeds.

LENI

I understand, ma'am, but please... Can we use the communications systems and reach out to them? It's just... What we want most right now is to talk to them.

For just a moment, PRESIDENT MULLIGAN seems to react to the last sentence with empathy but nonetheless straightens her posture.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

This is classified now, you know.

LENI

...I know. But please, ma'am.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Rest assured, I will personally see to it that this mission succeeds.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN smiles slowly, though it doesn't reach her eyes.

INT. JOHNNY VALENTINE'S HOMESTYLE RESTAURANT.

LENI, XIMENA, JAGUAR, and ORPHEUS are seated in a booth with various half-eaten entrees and appetisers spread on the table. "Back to You" by Bryan Adams plays on the sound system.

LENI

Gosh... To think, this probably could've been avoided if they weren't popular outside of Earth. What kind of karma is this? I just wanted the band to be as loved as they are by us. Now we're gonna go to war with aliens? Do we even have a chance?

JAGUAR

I mean... That Lor Salviator guy seemed pretty nice.

ORPHEUS

Yeah, but it's those types you gotta watch out for. For all we
(MORE)

ORPHEUS (cont'd)
 know he has bases all over the
 galaxy and can easily make short
 work of us.

LENI
 Dammit... If only I didn't act that
 way when they contacted us. I
 should've told him then. But
 instead I just turned around...

JAGUAR
 Leni...

XIMENA embraces her. JAGUAR seems to want to reach out to
 her but does not. ORPHEUS meanwhile opens his phone and
 after typing something in he scrolls.

ORPHEUS
 Man... They're already saying the
 draft is starting. Poor bastards
 have no idea what they're in for.

JAGUAR
 Hey, do you think they're gonna
 send us up there, too?

ORPHEUS
 Wouldn't surprise me. It's the
 government. Prez did say "we're all
 in this together."

Everyone is silent as they continue eating, very slowly.
 XIMENA is pensive while ORPHEUS keeps scrolling on his
 phone.

INT. RIGIL ANTAREA.

Title Card: Lor Salviator's Mansion, Rigil Antarea

LOR SALVIATOR'S Rigil Antarea mansion has green hues on the
 walls, as well as a massive marble fountain lined with
 potted plants in statue holders, a mesh of nature and art.

Strange purple fish not unlike carps swim in the fountain
 and serene music plays. IESU sits by the fountain hunched
 over the edge of it watching the purple fish. ERIK RHODES
 strolls by and sits on the edge on the other side.

ERIK RHODES
 You've been here for like three
 hours.

IESU
 Yeah, well. Been thinking. We've
 come a really long way, in both
 senses.

ERIK RHODES

We have, yeah.

IESU

Do you think if and when we go back to Earth, we're gonna remember any of this? And if we do... We're just never gonna be the same?

ERIK RHODES

Wouldn't surprise me. We're already not the same anymore.

IESU

Yeah... You're right.

ERIK RHODES

So... What? Are you saying you don't want to go home? Having too much fun out here, finally?

IESU shrugs.

ERIK RHODES

I know what you mean, though. It's gonna be one hell of an adjustment now that we know what's out here. I'd be pissed if I couldn't remember any of it.

IESU

(chuckling)

Yeah, you totally would. Your ego would never recover.

ERIK RHODES scoffs, but has a smile on his face showing he's not annoyed or offended at the remark. He shakes his head.

Meanwhile, in the living room, LOR SALVIATOR is having a cup of tea when he gets an alert on a small tabletop screen of an incoming transmission. He puts the cup down and accepts it, showing the face of PRESIDENT MULLIGAN on the screen.

LOR SALVIATOR

Well, isn't this a surprise. It's nice to finally see you, President Mulligan.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

I see our attempt to reach you has been successful.

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed, it's not often that happens. What can I do for you?

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

We have reasonable intelligence that you have four of our citizens in your unlawful possession.

LOR SALVIATOR

You must pardon me, Madam President, but I do not follow your laws. I do not live on Earth.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Then your refusal to comply is grounds for war.

Beat. LOR SALVIATOR stifles a laugh.

LOR SALVIATOR

Madam President. Surely we can reach an agreement before you jump directly into your last resort?

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

We have a due diligence to our citizenry and will do what we must to retrieve them. If you surrender now we will not attack you.

LOR SALVIATOR

I have full intention to return your citizens. But there is something we must all do first.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Then you leave us no choice. On behalf of humanity I declare war on you.

LOR SALVIATOR sighs and drinks his tea.

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm sorry to be a bad sport, but you will not survive such a war. You know that, right? Your weapons are outdated and your machinery can't even reliably carry your men to the moon. All you are adept at is hunting your own brethren down. It's not a sin to dream of higher capabilities but don't let's be reckless, Madam President.

STARMAN rushes behind LOR SALVIATOR and gasps upon seeing PRESIDENT MULLIGAN'S face. He clears his throat. IESU and ERIK RHODES appear behind him.

STARMAN

He's right. We are not harmed and are being treated well. Please
(MORE)

STARMAN (cont'd)
don't declare war on the galaxy for
us.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN
I knew it, he is keeping you
hostage.

LOR SALVIATOR
On the contrary, Madam President,
they are peace ambassadors
currently engaged in very important
work.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN
Important work, is it? Have you all
seen his assets?

IESU
We've been to his planets, yeah.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN
Then you confirm that they are rich
in resources, enough to sustain
hundreds if not thousands of
Earth-like civilizations?

IESU
(whispering)
Hundreds of thousands...

LOR SALVIATOR
I see you have been paying close
attention to me. I must say, I'm
flattered.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN
You also have antimatter weapons at
your disposal, do you not?

STARMAN
Hey, come on. You're just
escalating!

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN
I'm disappointed to learn that you
have taken his side. This is
treason of the highest order.

ERIK RHODES
Traitors? Us? God dammit, there's
no reasoning with her.

LOR SALVIATOR
Then that concludes this
conversation, Madam President.
Thank you.

He turns off the transmission.

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm afraid we are in a rather fine mess, gentlemen. And it is my fault, ultimately.

STARMAN

Lor... Try calling Leni again.

LOR SALVIATOR dials on his keyboard and the transmission goes through, once again showing STARMAN and LENI'S living room. LENI enters the room via the front door, looking distraught.

STARMAN

Leni! It's me!

This shakes her out of her stupor and she runs over, ORPHEUS and JAGUAR following close behind.

LENI

Babe! Oh my God, I'm so sorry!

STARMAN

Why?

LENI

It's because I couldn't talk to you last time. I'm such an idiot.

STARMAN

Hey, hey, no. It's fine, I'm not upset about that. Look, we'll fix this. I'll do everything I can to come back home to you soon.

LENI

That's what I wanted to talk to you about. I wanted to tell you what I couldn't that night.

She pauses, right fist over her heart as she casts a quick glance over to JAGUAR, who is between ORPHEUS and XIMENA. STARMAN has a similarly wistful expression on his face when she looks back at him for a long five seconds. Then she gives a quick little shake of her head and forces a smile.

LENI

I'm proud of you, babe. You worked so hard for this, and you made it. I told you people still love melodic rock.

STARMAN

Leni...

LENI

I'm glad I got to tell you, I'm sorry I choked last time.

STARMAN

No, no, I don't blame you. I would, too. But, uh... You know that we can't come home for a while yet, we gotta deal with this war now. I don't know how long that'll take.

Both of them are momentarily silent, and the resulting air is heavy with unsaid words. LOR SALVIATOR clears his throat.

LOR SALVIATOR

It is indeed lamentable but nonetheless Elpis are peace ambassadors. I'm sure we will come to a viable solution with minimal delay. In fact I daresay Sir Doomer will be instrumental in that regard.

JAGUAR

Hey, yeah... Where is Doomer?

IESU

On the moon.

LENI

He is?! Then he's with the princess, right?

LOR SALVIATOR

Yes, however...

ORPHEUS

However?

LOR SALVIATOR

You will soon see for yourselves.

ORPHEUS

Oh, come on! That's such a cop out!

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm afraid that's all I can reveal. I know it pains you but you will simply have to wait and see. In the meantime, I will have to put the tour on hold so we can come up with a solution. No one wants a war, especially one as futile as this one.

ORPHEUS

Yeah... I mean it's no contest, right? Prez is just embarrassing us all at this point, right?

LOR SALVIATOR

Not to put too fine of a point on it, but... Yes. Nonetheless I at least accept responsibility. Miss Leni, please in turn accept my apologies. You have suffered much.

LENI

Mr Lor...

LOR SALVIATOR

You and I had the same wish, for Elpis to reach their fullest potential. It is unfortunate that while they helped avoid many a galactic war, now we have this to deal with. The last thing I would want is for my idols to witness disaster among their own people, especially if I had a hand in it. So I hope you can forgive me, Miss Leni, everyone. I truly am remorseful. Now, this is where we have our part to play as peace ambassadors. Gentlemen, please get ready. As for you three... Please do not be alarmed for what you are about to witness.

ORPHEUS

You are seriously scaring me. But all right.

STARMAN

Leni... I love you. I'm really sorry to be away like this. Can only imagine how scared you are.

LENI

Scared out of my mind, yeah. But at least I'm not alone. Do what you must. I believe in you, and I love you.

The transmission cuts off, and LENI'S expression is unreadable as XIMENA hugs her and shoots JAGUAR a look. ORPHEUS, meanwhile, claps a hand on his shoulder, while JAGUAR himself has an unreadable expression on his face.

EXT. EARTH - NIGHT

Little by little stars peek out, and we pan up to the full moon. The mare and craters shift to create DOOMER'S face except now he is much handsomer than usual. People who happen to be outside watching the sky express surprise and shock. LENI, JAGUAR, ORPHEUS and XIMENA are out at the balcony.

JAGUAR

Jesus Christ... No wonder he didn't wanna tell us.

ORPHEUS

So I think it's safe to say Doomer becoming The Man in the Moon wasn't on any of our bingo cards.

LENI

No kidding... But he really looks different now. In fact... The moon princess said she loved him. If she could reach me in my dreams... Is she why he's so handsome now?

XIMENA

Either that or he always was and we never knew.

DOOMER

Hey, people of Earth. I'd say "be not afraid" but you all know how that goes. Listen, there's too much to explain for now, but really, don't worry. We will do our best to keep you all safe, Princess Almas and I. We won't let you all be sacrificed in this space war. And no... You're not dreaming this. Even if it is something straight out of a movie.

ORPHEUS

Jesus... When did he get so cool? To say all that with a straight face...

JAGUAR

Hey, look... What're those?

The stars appear to be coming down but as they get closer they turn out to be PRINCESS ALMAS'S moon jellyfish and they glow anywhere from baby blue to chartreuse, even magenta. They get closer and closer to LENI, JAGUAR, ORPHEUS, and XIMENA.

DOOMER

Again, don't worry. They won't hurt you. You'll just go to sleep until this is all over.

Right then, one jellyfish stings ORPHEUS, who rather than wincing, yawns.

ORPHEUS

Goddammit Doomer... I wanted to see this.

The same jellyfish then stings JAGUAR who also starts showing signs of drowsiness.

JAGUAR

Yeah... What the hell, man. Not cool.

They trudge their way back inside and only make it a foot indoors before they collapse. LENI and XIMENA rush inside before the jellyfish can get them and shut the door immediately after pulling JAGUAR inside.

The jellyfish tries in vain to penetrate the glass door.

XIMENA meanwhile scrambles to get her phone plugged in and video recording. But before LENI and XIMENA breathe a sigh of relief five more jellyfish appear inside the apartment and one stings XIMENA from behind, making her collapse onto the couch.

LENI ducks under them and tries to barricade herself in the bedroom but alas, she is also stung by a moon jellyfish just before she reaches her bed. She falls forward, asleep.

Meanwhile the moon jellyfish float, slowly covering the entire neighbourhood as more and more people fall asleep after getting stung.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN is seated at her desk and two SECRET SERVICE AGENTS stand before her, both men in their 40s with buff builds wearing crisp black suits, their posture rigid.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 1

Ma'am! Everyone in the city has dropped like flies asleep. The jellyfish are overwhelming the city and we have reports that they're spreading to the surrounding areas.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

So he has indeed taken us up on our declaration of war. Deploy Operation Sunrise.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 2

Operation Sunrise, ma'am?

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Yes, Operation Sunrise. Now chop-chop!

The SECRET SERVICE AGENTS quickly exchange glances before running off. Meanwhile PRESIDENT MULLIGAN picks up her phone and hits the speed-dial.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

You know what to do. Don't
disappoint me this time.

She hangs up and stands, marching out of her office to another room full of computers and security screens showing different scenes from around the world, all of them with bystanders asleep in the streets at various times of day and positions, all the while with jellyfish roaming in search of targets. The visible windows in this room show jellyfish locked outside, trying in vain to enter. There is no one else in the room. PRESIDENT MULLIGAN then goes towards the dashboard with the big red button. She types in a code and closes her eyes.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Come on, you knew this was coming.
It's just a little sooner than
you'd like, that's all... This is
what they do all the time... Only
in your case you're fighting an
alien threat... This is your
moment, Mully, don't flake now!

She takes a deep breath, presses the big red button.

INT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE.

DOOMER has undergone a whole body makeover; his face is clean-shaven, his head without a touque so his brown hair is meticulously clean and free-flowing to his ears, and his eyes seem to shine brighter and his skin has a faint tan to it. He is wearing brilliant white armour adorned with gold accents, complete with a deep blue cape. He wears a crown shaped like all the phases of the moon overlapping each other on his head.

He stands before PRINCESS ALMAS'S mirror and sees a projectile coming out of Earth gradually hurtling towards the moon. He sighs.

DOOMER

Wow, you're actually doing it.

Meanwhile PRINCESS ALMAS watches him with an enthralled expression on her face and QUEEN MORVARID stands beside her and places a hand on her shoulder.

QUEEN MORVARID

We are impressed indeed.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I knew you would be.

QUEEN MORVARID

We forgive your earlier
foolishness, daughter.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Thank you, Mother. I've found my own Endymion.

PRINCESS ALMAS looks longingly at DOOMER who is still watching the mirror. Sure enough, a rocket comes into view right as it begins disintegrating upon entering the stratosphere, some of it floating in outer space.

Another rocket follows it several seconds later, only to also disintegrate shortly after coming into view. However, it is when a larger missile passes by coming closer into view without disintegrating that alarms him.

But soon after, it is intercepted by QUEEN MORVARID raising a hand and a glittering lunar halo incinerates the approaching missiles safely out of orbit.

SHE REPEATS THIS ACTION LIKE A DANCE AS MORE ROCKETS APPROACH THE MOON, PRINCESS ALMAS JOINING HER.

INT. SPACESHIP.

The spaceship lands on the moon. LOR SALVIATOR is grim-faced as are STARMAN, IESU, and ERIK RHODES.

LOR SALVIATOR

I am truly remiss it has come to this, gentlemen. I wanted so much for you to have your tour in peace and show you the very best of the galaxy.

IESU

Yeah, well. We still appreciate everything you've done. And we'd be shitty peace ambassadors if we let our own planet do this to itself.

LOR SALVIATOR

Truer words have never been spoken, Sir Iesu. Now, here we are. It is safe to disembark.

He dials the code to open the door and STARMAN, IESU, and ERIK RHODES stand like soldiers armed with their instruments. They march and a matching motif, specifically the beat from "The British Grenadiers" is actually heard on the drums as they walk on the moon. DOOMER is already there at his drumset playing it.

DOOMER

Sorry, I've always wanted to do that.

STARMAN, IESU, and ERIK RHODES take their positions where the moon jellyfish garden once was. IESU crosses himself and prays.

STARMAN

Well, this is it, guys. The moment we've all been waiting for. Let's make this the best show on the whole tour.

ERIK RHODES

Don't have to tell me twice.

FOCUS ON STARMAN AS HE SHUTS HIS EYES AND HIS HEARTBEAT IS AUDIBLE.

DOOMER taps his paradiddles four times and STARMAN opens his eyes as he strums the opening riff of "Apocalypse."

STARMAN

Hey, Earth! This is for you!

DOOMER goes hard on the drums and more missiles like the last one are seen leaving Earth, and the halo around the moon glows brighter and extends to the Earth itself. The missiles fail to penetrate the halo and they detonate upon impact.

STARMAN

"Explosions in the sky, as I look down on Earth..."

One particular missile detonating matches cut to what appears to fireworks on Earth.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Said explosions in the sky punctuate "Apocalypse" and so loud is the music that little by little it rouses LENI, XIMENA, JAGUAR, and ORPHEUS awake. LENI rejoins the other three in the living room and together they tentatively go back to the balcony.

All around the moon is explosions that look like fireworks.

LENI wipes tears of joy from her eyes. JAGUAR and ORPHEUS nod along to the song while XIMENA records it on her phone.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN is hurriedly pounding the big red button with her fist, and after a particularly hard whack it breaks, and by this point she is shaking and foaming at the mouth.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Dammit! Not a single hit!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 7

Madam?

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

How could he take them... How could they turn against me?

She then composes herself and dials another code.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

No, it can't end like this. It didn't even start!

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 7

Uh, Madam.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

What?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT 7 then points to the big screen and we see several spaceships and their fleets approaching Earth's orbit, completely surrounding it so the only other visible entity is the moon. PRESIDENT MULLIGAN blanches and falters, and SECRET SERVICE AGENT 7 catches her before she falls.

EXT. PRINCESS ALMAS'S CASTLE.

STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES wrap up "Apocalypse" as more and more rockets detonate around the lunar halo and LOR SALVIATOR and PRINCESS ALMAS clap. LOR SALVIATOR receives a transmission on his watch and accepts it, and it is from PRESIDENT MULLIGAN.

LOR SALVIATOR

Ah, Madam President. Just in time, did you enjoy the show?

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

What show? You mean the psychological warfare you just inflicted upon my people in addition to calling your legion upon Earth? You play dirty, don't you?

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm afraid I haven't the faintest idea what you mean.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Call off your forces this instant!

LOR SALVIATOR

I really don't know what you mean, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

We surrender! Is that what you want to hear?

LOR SALVIATOR

Well... Quite honestly, yes, that's a relief.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN then hunches over and looks weighed down by her own humiliation, meanwhile LOR SALVIATOR looks at STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES as they convene around him and shrugs.

LOR SALVIATOR

You know, Madam President... I do hope you enjoyed the show. Perhaps an encore is in order? I feel like you're missing a golden opportunity, personally.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

Are these your terms?

LOR SALVIATOR

Hmmm... I suppose they would be, yes.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

I can't come back from this.

LOR SALVIATOR

I'm sure that's not true, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

No, you don't understand! It wasn't supposed to be like this.

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed, it wasn't, but what's done is done. Even peace requires war in order to happen.

IESU

That's why we're dedicated to our role. We hope to keep this peace going as long as we can, and if you or anyone else threatens it, ma'am, well... I'm ready to fight.

ERIK RHODES

Me, too.

STARMAN

And me.

DOOMER

And me.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

I see... So that's why he chose you.

LOR SALVIATOR

Indeed, as well as the fact that I love their music. It's a shame that to you it's but a tool.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

I suppose you're right... I don't care much for anything as subversive as music.

ERIK RHODES

(muttering)

Well, that explains a lot.

LOR SALVIATOR

Nevertheless, Madam President, you are Earth's head of state and Elpis has a tour to continue. I personally invite you to partake in this current leg of the tour. As my guest.

STARMAN

Yeah, Madam. We'd like it if you give us a listen, even if you decide you don't like our sound. It's just that, well... We never got a real chance until now.

DOOMER

Yeah. You owe us that much if you didn't even give us any choice in voting for you.

PRESIDENT MULLIGAN

I suppose you're right. Your terms are acceptable... I guess.

LOR SALVIATOR clasps his hands in satisfaction and turns to face the band.

LOR SALVIATOR

Gentlemen... What are you waiting for? Your audience awaits, the show must go on!

STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES all exchange glances and nod, going back to their positions and starting "Seven Seals."

MONTAGE OF THEIR AUDIENCE ACROSS ALL THE DIFFERENT PLANETS CURRENTLY TOURED, ENDING WITH ONE OF LENI, JAGUAR AND ORPHEUS ON THE BALCONY CHEERING WITH BEER, WHILE XIMENA SMIRKS TO HERSELF AS SHE TYPES SOMETHING ON HER LAPTOP SHOWING SHE WAS IN CHARGE OF HACKING THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE MAINFRAME AND DISPLAYING THE SPACESHIP FLEETS.

INT. SPACESHIP.

STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES are lounging in the break room, each enjoying a can of Sucker Punch soda. Each of them are wearing very elaborate clothes complete with brilliant sashes, DOOMER still has on his lunar crown. ERIK RHODES is laying his whole body down on a couch and looking quite satisfied with himself. LOR SALVIATOR looks at all of them fondly, if forlornly as he joins them.

LOR SALVIATOR

Well, gentlemen. That one hiccup notwithstanding, I'd say this tour was a resounding success.

STARMAN

Thank you, Lor. I think it's safe to say we all had a blast.

IESU

But, uh... Are you gonna wipe our memories when we go home? So we all think it was just a crazy dream? Because that would be terrible writing.

LOR SALVIATOR

No, no, I couldn't possibly. I fully intend to schedule another tour for you, to make up for the shortness of this one. It wouldn't be proper for you to be amnesiacs for that.

STARMAN

Fair. So we're finally going home?

LOR SALVIATOR

Most certainly. On that token, Princess Almas and Sir Doomer belong equally to Earth and the moon now.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, I don't think our fans would have just let you sacrifice yourself. It's bad for ratings.

LOR SALVIATOR

On the contrary, his action made you all much more popular. I suspect your next tour's turnout will be even better than this one.

ERIK RHODES

Even better than this one...

LOR SALVIATOR

Not only that, Sir Starman, but your conversation with Miss Leni was broadcast all over the galaxy which has made both you and her also more popular.

STARMAN

Really...

LOR SALVIATOR

And of course Sir Iesu, your commitment to keeping the peace across the galaxy has made you more popular as well.

IESU

Wow...

ERIK RHODES

Good job, guys. Could not have asked for a better team.

They each clink their cans of Sucker Punch.

LOR SALVIATOR

But before we go back to Earth, there is one more place we have to stop at first.

STARMAN

Where's that?

LOR SALVIATOR

I did promise Sir Iesu a return trip to Sirius.

IESU

All right!

ERIK RHODES

Hell yeah, I'll take it.

DOOMER and STARMAN chuckle as they all clink their cans of Sucker Punch again.

LOR SALVIATOR

I think also some downtime is in order, too.

A MONTAGE OF THE BAND ON SIRIUS WITH THE DOGS, AS WELL AS SWIMMING ON KLELLIA AND HAVING BEER WITH THE CHANGGIANS WHEREIN IESU IS RIDING A WAR ELEPHANT. IT ENDS WITH THE SPACESHIP FLYING TOWARDS EARTH.

FADE IN:

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME

LENI blinks, completely mesmerised in the kitchen. Across her sits PRINCESS ALMAS, this time not wearing her princess regalia but rather Elpis merch including a band shirt and cap with her hair dyed alternately pink, blue, green, and purple.

PRINCESS ALMAS

Well? What do you think? Do I look like an Earth girl?

LENI

Yeah... You definitely do.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I'm so glad! Humans are indeed so kind, I had such a good time with Miss Ximena. It's a shame you couldn't join us, Miss Leni.

LENI

Nah, it's fine. I never thought I'd get actual paparazzi after me.

PRINCESS ALMAS

True, they were rather unpleasant. Nevertheless, it's so nice to not have to project myself to meet you. And the moon does look rather lovely so far away. I do almost miss it.

LENI

You talk as if you're never going back.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I suppose I do... Mother did always say I was silly, but I do rather love Earth. There's so much to discover, so much to experience.

LENI

(snickering)

I'm sorry, that just sounds so hilarious coming from you. But I guess you're right.

PRINCESS ALMAS

You know, I would love it if you and I could travel the world together when the band is out again.

LENI

Yeah, that would be fun. But uh... You and Doomer are married now,

(MORE)

LENI (cont'd)
 right? I don't think you wanna be
 away from him too long.

PRINCESS ALMAS
 Oh don't worry, it's a dream of
 mine and he of course supports it.
 Besides, I have so much I want to
 talk to you about. I've never had a
 real friend before.

LENI
 Really? Wow, yeah, I guess living
 on the moon you would be pretty
 lonely. You did say that once
 before, right?

PRINCESS ALMAS
 Indeed. So it's decided, then, that
 you and I will travel the world.

LENI
 I guess so, yeah. Looking forward
 to it.

They smile at each other. LENI'S cellphone rings with a text
 from XIMENA reading "it's time." LENI gets up with PRINCESS
 ALMAS close behind and they exit the apartment to go
 outside.

EXT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT - DAYTIME

They meet XIMENA, JAGUAR, and ORPHEUS among a massive crowd
 of PAPPARAZI and FANS armed with phone cameras and recording
 equipment and stand close together as little by little LOR
 SALVIATOR'S spaceship comes into view coming down to Earth.

But it does not land, instead it hovers and the spotlight
 shines as STARMAN, DOOMER, IESU, and ERIK RHODES come into
 view within it decked out in all their newfound finery.
 Everyone rushes towards them and laughs.

STARMAN
 Hey, Leni. We're back.

LENI
 Babe! Welcome home!

ORPHEUS
 Man, you look just like galactic
 superstars now.

ERIK RHODES
 Well, duh. We kinda gotta look the
 part. I'm surprised you didn't tune
 in, we made sure you could watch
 the awards shows on TV.

ORPHEUS

Well look at you, all big shot.

JAGUAR

Hey, so... Not sure if the timing is off, but... There is something we wanted to talk to you about. But more to the point...

He grabs hold of STARMAN and pulls him aside, out of everyone's view, his face full of quiet fury.

STARMAN

Uh... What's up?

JAGUAR continues quietly glaring at him, and STARMAN doesn't speak immediately.

STARMAN

Look... Thanks for being there for Leni. I know it hasn't been easy for her. But uh... I guess you heard the song, huh.

He looks to JAGUAR'S fist, which is shaking.

STARMAN

(trying not to sound scared)

Look, I get that this isn't what you want to hear, but it's a good song, and it was a shame to just never play it.

JAGUAR'S fist shakes more, and STARMAN stammers.

STARMAN

Okay... I'm sorry. Really. But let's keep this between us, all right? For her sake.

JAGUAR sighs, and stops making a fist. STARMAN looks relieved, if still rather frightened.

JAGUAR

Fine. For Leni's sake.

STARMAN laughs nervously and follows JAGUAR out of the frame.

INT. STARMAN AND LENI'S APARTMENT.

They all reconvene in the living room, this time with LOR SALVIATOR as well. He sits relatively central to them all and LENI, XIMENA, ORPHEUS, and JAGUAR cannot help checking him out.

LOR SALVIATOR

I am most pleased to hear that Elpis will be returning to their original lineup. This will indeed make you even more popular across the galaxy.

ERIK RHODES

You just won't be as cool as me though, Nicky.

ORPHEUS sticks his tongue out at him.

LOR SALVIATOR

In any case, gentlemen, well done on your tour. Brief as it was. I will keep in touch, in the meantime please continue with making music. Your popularity on Earth has naturally risen. I somewhat fear for your safety... Should you ever decide you need a getaway, you are welcome to stay at any one of my planets. You as well, Miss Leni. My staff will be more than happy to receive you.

STARMAN

Thanks, Lor. But maybe let us enjoy being back home for a while, and don't just suddenly abduct us again?

LOR SALVIATOR

Of course, of course. Now then, everyone, thank you for having me and putting on such a wonderful show. I'll keep in touch and let you know when the next tour begins. Take care.

He rises and bows deeply, then dials something on his wristwatch and teleports out of the apartment. PRINCESS ALMAS also stands hand in hand with DOOMER.

PRINCESS ALMAS

I would also love to remain and chat but Sir Doomer and I have some affairs to attend to on the moon. We will be in touch, though, and of course you are all welcome to visit us.

XIMENA

Honeymooning on the moon... Doesn't get much better than that, huh?

DOOMER

No, it really doesn't. Plus the moon is pretty cool anyway.

IESU

See ya later, Doomer.

DOOMER hugs everyone, XIMENA included, and PRINCESS ALMAS curtseys as she holds her hand in prayer while linking arms with DOOMER and they teleport away.

ERIK RHODES

Yeah, guess we better go, too. He's got a ton of catching up to do if he's gonna tour with us again.

ORPHEUS

I'm still not giving you the name Orpheus.

ERIK RHODES

That's fine. My real name is cooler, anyway. But yeah, see you around.

ERIK RHODES and ORPHEUS wave as they leave through the front door.

IESU

Yeah, guess we gotta go, too.

JAGUAR

I still can't believe there's an actual dog planet.

STARMAN

Yeah, there is. It's just as awesome as you think.

JAGUAR

You'd better take me there next tour.

IESU

Of course. Bet Akira would be glad to see you again.

JAGUAR gushes.

IESU

Anyway, see ya Starman, Leni. Nice to meet you, Ximena.

He and JAGUAR also leave through the front door, and XIMENA eyes both LENI and STARMAN with a big smile on her face.

LENI

What?

XIMENA

I'm sorry, it's just crazy how I finally get to meet you, it's really hitting me how I'm in your house. Oh! Before I forget, give me your phone.

STARMAN

...why?

XIMENA

Just give it. I have to take out the keylogger and all the spyware I put on it.

STARMAN

You did what?

LENI

Hey, at least she's taking it out.

XIMENA

Yeah, it's on your phone now.

LENI

Hah, good one.

XIMENA doesn't laugh as STARMAN begrudgingly gives her his phone and she dials something on it and hands it back to him with a smile. LENI raises her eyebrows when she realises it.

LENI

Ximena, you didn't bug my phone... Right?

XIMENA

I'll leave you guys alone. You got so much catching up to do.

LENI

Wait! Ximena!

XIMENA

(in a singsongy voice)
Bye-bye.

XIMENA then waves and smiles as she also leaves them and LENI is about to run after her when STARMAN grabs her by the hand so XIMENA closes the door behind her. LENI then sighs and chuckles as she and STARMAN embrace.

STARMAN

Hey. Missed me much?

LENI

Of course. I'm almost scared I'm dreaming.

STARMAN

Me too. Touring the galaxy even at
half capacity takes a lot out of
you.

LENI

I can only imagine. Welcome home,
babe.

They kiss.

POST
CREDITS

EXT. OUTER SPACE

There is a large warship moving forward at a leisurely pace,
with a deep red paintjob and black sails bearing what looks
like a roaring panther head outlined in white with glowing
golden eyes, all the while "Apocalypse" is reprised in a
more foreboding instrumental.

Title Card: To Be Continued