

JUNIOR'S FARM ©

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER - DAY - STOCK

The immense Saturn Rocket with the shuttle Discovery attached to it dominates the launch pad.

SUPER: "Kennedy Space Center, April 24, 1990. Launch of Shuttle Discovery with the Hubble Space Telescope"

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
(over P.A. system)
We are go for main engine start...

Flames begin to appear at the bottom of the Saturn Rocket.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
(over P.A. system)
T-minus 6...5...4...3...2...1...

Huge white plumes of smoke erupt from the base of the rocket. Intense flames slowly lift it from the launch pad.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
(over P.A. system)
And - Lift off... of the space
shuttle Discovery.

O.S. CHEERS and APPLAUSE.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
(over P.A. system)
With the Hubble Space Telescope,
our window on the universe!

The rocket continues skyward.

EXT. SPACE - STOCK

The space shuttle Discovery, motionless in the vastness of space. The Hubble Space Telescope is attached to the craft.

NASA MISSION CONTROL
(intercom)
Discovery. Houston. Just wanted
to let you know that the ground is
currently configured for HST main
bus final calibration correction.
We're go for EVA whenever you are.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER
(intercom)
Roger, Houston.

An airlock door opens at the side of the shuttle. An astronaut in a bulky white space suit, attached by a safety tether, backs out of the spacecraft.

EXT. ASTRONAUT IN SPACE

As the astronaut turns around, his features are revealed through the high impact plastic of his helmet.

The astronaut is MATT "JUNIOR" HAYES, mid-30s. His eyes widen.

INSERT - ALIEN SPACECRAFT

A cigar-shaped spacecraft whisks past.

BACK TO SCENE

Junior freezes. The reflection of the alien spacecraft quickly flashes across his helmet.

JUNIOR
(intercom)
Something is not right... Did you see that? Charles? Steven?

Dead air. Indistinct RADIO CHATTER. A long pause.

SHUTTLE COMMANDER
(intercom)
Uh... We saw nothing, Junior.

Junior remains frozen, transfixed, mouth agape.

NASA MISSION CONTROL
(intercom)
Ah, Discovery? Houston... Junior? Please respond... Please respond, Junior?

No reaction from Junior.

INT. NASA MEETING ROOM - DAY

A long table. Only Junior visible. Wears a suit and tie.

SUPER: "Four years later, 1994"

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
This is serious, Matt.

JUNIOR
I told you. Call me Junior.

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
Sure, Junior, or Matt, or Mr. Hayes, whatever name you want us to use. You have caused quite a distraction with your behavior the last couple of years.

JUNIOR
What behavior?

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
With that book of yours, of course.

JUNIOR
Hey! I wrote it because it was the truth. It's what I saw.

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
Which no one else saw?

JUNIOR
No one else had the guts to say they saw it.

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
A UFO. An alien spaceship. Didn't you realize what this might do to your reputation?

Junior slams his fist on the table.

JUNIOR
My reputation?! Ever since that day, I've been called 'The Trouble With Hubble Astronaut'. And, it wasn't my fault.

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
Of course not. It was a flaw in the mirror. NASA issued a statement on that matter. And, it was fixed a few months ago.

JUNIOR
Yeah. It was fixed. But, my reputation wasn't fixed. I'm still 'The Trouble With Hubble Astronaut'!

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
That isn't our fault, either.

JUNIOR
I've been the butt of jokes from late night talk shows for years. First, it was Johnny Carson. Then, Letterman. Jay Leno. Conan -

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
Not our problem, Junior! But, what is our problem is you writing a book about space aliens. And, including hairbrained conspiracy theories about NASA and the government suppressing the existence of these - hoaxes!

JUNIOR
Hoaxes?!

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
 This isn't getting us anywhere...
 NASA has decided it would be better
 for all of us if you - volunteer to
 retire.

JUNIOR
 What?! Retire?! I'm only
 thirty-six!

NASA ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
 That's our decision, Mr. Hayes -
 Junior. We're through here.

Junior brings both hands up to the side of his head and nods
 from side-to-side.

EXT. CRYONICS LABORATORY - DAY

A long, tan, four-story building. An outdoor parking lot
 adjoins it.

SUPER: "Cryonics Laboratory, April 3rd, 2051, Ohio -
 Fifty-seven years later"

INT. JUNIOR'S RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

A hospital room, with a bed, various medical equipment, and
 a stuffed chair.

Junior, dressed in a blue patient gown, lies in the bed,
 eyes closed. He seems to be the same age as in 1994. His
 eyes flutter, then open.

He stares at DOCTOR EDITH MCKENZIE, mid-30s, who wears a
 white lab coat and stands at the foot of the bed. McKenzie
 smiles at him.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE
 Welcome back, Mr. Hayes.

Junior's eyes focus.

JUNIOR
 Call me Junior.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE
 Alright - Junior. Do you know
 where you are?

Junior tries to get up. The doctor restrains him.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE
 Hold on, hold on. Sit back, you're
 still pretty weak.

JUNIOR
 This a hospital?

McKenzie purses her lips. Hesitates.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Well, kind of... I've done this many times, but I'm never quite sure of the right words to use.

JUNIOR

Give it to me, Doc. I'm a big boy... You are a doctor, right?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

I'm Doctor McKenzie. You're in a recovery room, at the Cryonics Laboratory, outside of Cleveland.

Junior gulps, stunned.

JUNIOR

Cryonics? What - year is this?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

You've been frozen in cryonic sleep for a long time, Junior.

JUNIOR

What year?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

This is the year 2051.

Junior draws a hand across his forehead.

JUNIOR

(in shock)

I've been - dead... How long?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

You suffered a fatal heart attack in 2015. You were fifty-seven.

JUNIOR

Give me a mirror.

McKenzie reaches into her pocket, produces a small mirror, and hands it to Junior.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

That's one of the first requests everyone makes.

JUNIOR

Yeah, I'll bet.

Junior examines himself in the mirror. Raises his eyebrows.

JUNIOR

I... I don't look fifty-seven.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Let me explain. In 2028, an age regression procedure was developed. We started to bring people back three years later. Age regression takes a week of injections. everyone looks about thirty-five.

JUNIOR

Forever?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Until they die.

JUNIOR

So, this isn't immortality?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

No. And, there's a downside. Once this was made available, a lot of people opted to have it done. But, a few years later, some of them developed - Gorham-Stout disease, or GSD.

JUNIOR

That doesn't sound good.

The doctor paces about the room.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

It's a bone disease, that spreads to the lungs or spine. Fatal in ten years, give or take a year.

JUNIOR

So, I could get this? This GSD?

The doctor stops pacing and faces Junior.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

You could get it anytime. It's a chance we took, once we began to revive patients twenty years ago. There's no cure. Yet.

JUNIOR

Wait a second! When I signed up for cryopreservation, I didn't agree to this!

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Maybe you should have read your contract with us more carefully. It gives permission to do whatever provides you with the best chance of surviving resuscitation.

JUNIOR

Damn!

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

How could we bring someone back at ninety and have any reasonable confidence they'd survive?

JUNIOR

I wasn't ninety!

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

When we used nanotechnology to repair the body, we decided to include age regression injections, if the patient were forty or older.

Junior blows air through his cheeks.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Mr. Hayes... Junior... You're alive now. No afib. No high blood pressure. You might not get GSD for a century. In the last twenty years, only about ten percent have contracted it.

JUNIOR

Oh. Well, that's not bad.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

But, eventually, you'll get it. You'll still have ten or so good years. Symptoms only appear a year before death. Sometimes less.

Junior sighs.

JUNIOR

(resigned)

I guess I'll have to deal with it. But, I've still got a million more questions, Doc.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Of course you do. The Cryonics Laboratory has a team of - I suppose you'd call them - guides.

JUNIOR

Guides?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

People who've been frozen, gone through cryopreservation and been resuscitated. Integrated back into society. They've volunteered to help others do the same.

JUNIOR

They'll answer my questions?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Your guide is outside, waiting.
She's very anxious to speak with
you. Will you see her now?

JUNIOR

Yes. Please.

McKenzie goes out the door and closes it. Junior sighs again. Finger combs his hair and sits up straight.

The door opens and EMILY DEGROFF, mid-30s, scurries into the room. Junior jerks back in surprise, eyes wide-open.

EMILY

Hi, Dad.

Junior freezes for a beat.

JUNIOR

Emily!

Junior tries to raise himself out of the bed, but Emily goes to him and hugs him tightly. She starts to cry.

JUNIOR

Don't cry, sweetheart. It's a
happy time. We're together again.

Emily pulls herself away from Junior. Wipes her eyes.

JUNIOR

You look the same.

EMILY

Dad. I died five years after you
did, in 2020.

JUNIOR

What?

EMILY

They called it a pandemic.
Millions died, all over the world.

JUNIOR

My Lord. You were - what? Forty?

EMILY

Forty-one. When you went into
cryonics, I signed up too.

JUNIOR

They did - age regression on you?

Emily nods.

EMILY

I'm here for my three month
checkup. They examine you after
three months, six months, a year.
After that, you see your own doctor
once a year.

JUNIOR

Are you ok?

Emily smiles and gives him a 'thumbs up'.

EMILY

Clean bill of health.

Junior thinks for a moment.

JUNIOR

What about Josh? And Sophie?

Emily sits on the chair and hangs her head.

EMILY

My kids - your grandkids. Are
older than me. Forty-five and
forty-six. They wouldn't take the
injections. They disowned me,
don't want anything to do with me.
They feel the same way about you.

JUNIOR

I don't understand. Why?

O.S. CHANTS reverberate through the window and startle
Junior. Emily gets up, goes to the window, and looks out.

EMILY

That.

She takes a tiny, black metal object out of her pocket. It
measures about two inches by one inch and resembles a
computer flash drive.

EMILY

(into device)

Live coverage. Protest. Cryonics
Laboratory, Ohio.

Emily holds the device at arm's length. An IMAGE POPS UP
above the device, eight inches wide and five inches high.

Junior's mouth opens. He's wide-eyed, astonished.

JUNIOR

Oh, my God!

EMILY

It's how they watch tv now, Dad.
We call it an I-Comm.

Junior stares at the small image and squints.

EMILY
 (into device)
 Enlarge to wall size. Project onto
 opaque surface.

The IMAGE projects onto a blank spot on the wall and increases to the size of a widescreen television.

INSERT - IMAGE ON WALL

NANCY VERDUGO, an attractive Hispanic in her late 20s, wears a quilted jacket and pantsuit and holds a microphone. She interviews RUTHIE BROCK, mid-70s, with white hair, a winter coat over a black T-shirt and denim bib overalls. O.S. CHANTS of "Sickles get out", "Jesus hates gressers", and "Frosted flakes must go" ring out.

RUTHIE
 Because it's against God's laws,
 dearie. Simple as that. Only God
 can give life, any fool knows that.

VERDUGO
 What do you hope to accomplish by
 these protests?

RUTHIE
 What I'm fixin' to accomplish is
 drivin' these here devils out of
 our community, out of our state,
 out of our country! It ain't right
 to have none of these sickles
 around! They're an affront to
 humanity and any decent Christian!

NOAH and HERMAN, early-20s, poke into the interview. Noah tall and thin, Herman shorter, more muscular.

NOAH
 Hey, you're that Verdugo gal.

HERMAN
 Read yer bible, folks! Toss these
 frosted flakes out of Ohio!

Ruthie pushes the two men away.

RUTHIE
 Get the hell out of here! She's
 talkin' to me!

Noah and Herman move out of sight. Verdugo raises her eyebrows and gives Ruthie an awkward glance.

RUTHIE
 My boys, my grandsons.

VERDUGO

I see. But, don't these people have the right to -

RUTHIE

They don't got no rights. They ain't alive except for the devil's meddlin'!

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Who the hell are these bastards?!

VERDUGO

You're here, specifically, to protest the reanimation of former astronaut Matt 'Junior' Hayes?

RUTHIE

Yeah, the 'Trouble With Hubble Astronaut'. I remember that blasphemous spawn of Satan.

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Turn it off! Turn it off!

EMILY (O.S.)

End transmission.

BACK TO SCENE

The image shrinks to its original size, then disappears. Emily stuffs the I-Comm in her pocket. Walks toward Junior.

JUNIOR

That name follows me beyond the grave. What's it mean, sickles?

EMILY

That's what they call us. Sickles. You know, popsicles. Momsickles. Frosted flakes, too.

JUNIOR

How many of us are there?

EMILY

About a thousand. Mostly here in the U.S. Enough for them to hate. They're mostly religious fundamentalists. And, they've got a problem with age regressers, too. They call us 'gressers'.

JUNIOR

And, they call themselves Christians? What kind of world have we come back to?

EMILY

They're in the minority. But,
they're loud.

JUNIOR

How did they know about me?

EMILY

Doctor McKenzie figures there's a
mole in the laboratory.

JUNIOR

Sweet Jesus.

EMILY

So, that's why you'll never see
your grandkids, I'm afraid.

Junior frowns and shakes his head. Emily touches his cheek.

EMILY

First things first. You'll stay
here for a week, get your strength
going, start your arrangements.
Where to stay, things you need to
buy, stuff like that.

JUNIOR

I've still got a lot of questions.

EMILY

When I got out, I got an apartment
in Cleveland. You could stay with
me, or get your own place, decide
what to do.

JUNIOR

What kind of place can I afford?
Prices must have gone sky high
since 2015.

EMILY

Well, that's the good news.

She smiles broadly.

EMILY

Your picked a good company to
manage your trust. You're a
wealthy man. A VERY wealthy man.

She digs into her pocket and pulls out a silver-colored
I-Comm. Hands it to Junior.

EMILY

It's your I-Comm. Speak into it.
Say "New User". It'll set you up.
You'll see your bank account.

JUNIOR
Exactly how rich am I?

EMILY
Oh - About ten million.

Junior raises his eyebrows. She laughs.

EXT. CRYONICS LABORATORY - DAY

A thin layer of snow covers the grounds of the laboratory building.

INT. JUNIOR'S RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Now in shirt and pants, Junior strides the length of the room, up and down. Pauses every few seconds to stretch out his arms, do deep knee bends, and other exercises.

The silver I-Comm Emily left with him lies on the nightstand. An IMAGE of the planet Mars projects on the blank wall.

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)
Scientists and the rest of the world finally figured out, instead of attempting to terraform Mars for colonization, it would be much more practical and cost effective if they devoted their time and efforts to improving earth.

JUNIOR
Yeah. Duh!...

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)
However, special interest groups began to send expeditions to Mars, to mine the rich deposits of uranium and thorium.

JUNIOR
Greedy bastards.

Junior stops his exercise routine. Stares at the image.

JUNIOR
Sports! How did the Cleveland Browns and Cleveland Indians do since 2015?

The image switches to baseball. Images shift when Junior's questions change.

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Cleveland Browns went on an amazing winning streak, capturing five Super Bowls in a row, from 2037 through 2041.

JUNIOR

Yay, Browns!

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

However, the Cleveland Indians were not so fortunate. After changing their name from 'Indians' to 'Guardians' in 2022 -

JUNIOR

What? The what?!

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Guardians have failed to make the major league baseball playoffs ever since, and have finished in last place in the Central Division for the past eleven years.

JUNIOR

The name jinxed 'em!... Okay, how about the water shortage? Did they do anything about that?

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

With the Colorado River, the Ogallala Aquifer, lakes and wells drying up, and widespread drought, the U.S. took drastic measures in 2040, built dozens of desalination plants on the West Coast.

JUNIOR

Well, that's progress.

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

However, ocean levels, which had been rising due to global warming, have begun to drop. Some scientists warn, that if it continues, the planet might experience another Ice Age.

JUNIOR

Humans never know when to quit, do they? Solve one problem, another one pops up.! That's enough... Do family farms still exist?

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

Nearly all of the tillable land in the U.S. has been acquired by huge, corporate farming syndicates. Family farms have disappeared.

JUNIOR

Damn.

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)

In the past few years, some individuals managed to purchase smaller land parcels and turned them into micro-farms, with minimal crops and livestock.

JUNIOR

Huh...

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Late afternoon on a blustery day.

A red, electric car pulls to the side of the road. Emily and Junior get out. They wear winter coats.

Junior wanders onto the property. Barren. Not one blade of grass. A long rock formation butts up against one end, with a few trees and dense bushes which grow in one corner.

Junior surveys the land. Emily joins him.

EMILY

This is the place you're interested in? I don't get it.

JUNIOR

You never met your great granddad. When I was a kid, I spent a lot of summers on his farm. Some of the happiest days of my life.

EMILY

So, that's your plan? Live your second life as - a farmer?

JUNIOR

Emily, I was never real comfortable living in the city. I'd like a more peaceful lifestyle. Simple.

EMILY

A micro-farm? Why here? What's the attraction? Is it that cheap?

JUNIOR

No, in fact, it's listed five times more than it should be. Doesn't make a lot of sense. I want to find out why.

EMILY

I'll tell you why. The owner is probably insane.

He looks around, takes a deep breath. Emily shivers.

EMILY

Brrr. It's like an icebox here.

JUNIOR

There's something about this place.

EMILY

It's like a desert... Someone's headed this way. Walking a cat.

They observe OLIVER EASTERBROOK, a tall man with long, jet black hair and rugged countenance. He wears a leather coat over sweatshirt and jeans. On the other end of a leash, he leads an aged, decrepit cat, with tiny bells on its collar.

Oliver reaches them. He has American Indian features.

OLIVER

You folks lost? Car trouble?

EMILY

I wish.

JUNIOR

Actually - I'm thinking of buying this land.

OLIVER

Here? Why? Nothing grows here.

EMILY

Exactly.

She and Oliver exchange awkward smiles. Junior stares at the cat on the leash.

OLIVER

I was just walking Willie.

Emily bends down and pets the friendly cat.

OLIVER

Poor fellow's old. Half-blind. Lost his sense of smell. If he gets loose, the bells on his collar help me keep track of him.

From the opposite end of the land, LISA ABERNATHY, a mid-30s, beautiful redhead approaches them.

LISA

Oliver. Who are your friends?

JUNIOR

We just met. I'm Junior. This is Emily.

They all nod to each other.

LISA

Lisa Abernathy. I saw your car pull over. I'm just across the road there.

Lisa sees Emily shiver.

LISA

Oh, you poor thing. You must be freezing out here.

EMILY

Kind of.

LISA

Well, c'mon, strangers. I just put the coffee pot on.

Lisa immediately leads the others across the barren field.

OLIVER

Friendly, isn't she?

Emily follows behind Lisa. Junior hesitates, until Oliver motions for him to join the women.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Junior, Emily, Oliver, and Lisa relax at a kitchen table. Sip coffee from cups. Willie the cat rests at Oliver's feet.

LISA

(to Junior and Emily)

How long you guy's been married?

JUNIOR

No, no, no. Emily's my daughter.

Oliver leans forward and grins at Emily.

OLIVER

Really?

LISA

You're an age regresser?

JUNIOR

Both of us. At least, you don't call us gressers.

LISA

Takes one to know one.

EMILY

We're frosted flakes, too.

JUNIOR

New sickles.

LISA

I hate that word. It's nasty.

OLIVER

You're serious about starting a farm out here?

JUNIOR

Micro-farm. Thought I could get a couple of dairy cows, a bull. Some chickens. Maybe a few sheep.

OLIVER

That's not the place for you. In the old days, there was an anthrax outbreak there. Soil's no good. It's contaminated.

JUNIOR

But, there's not much land for sale in these parts.

LISA

Corporate farms bought up all the good land decades ago.

JUNIOR

Right size. Four and half acres. I could scrape off the dirt layer. Get some topsoil, cover it over.

OLIVER

Waste of money.

JUNIOR

With God's help, I could make it work.

Emily gazes around the kitchen. Points to a framed photo of Lisa and a young boy, which sits on top of a storage shelf.

EMILY

Is he your son?

Lisa's shoulders slump. Her eyes moisten.

LISA

He was. We lost Tommy eleven years ago. He was just ten when he disappeared. We never found him.

EMILY

I'm so sorry.

LISA

I never gave up, never stopped looking, trying to find him. My husband divorced me because of it. I still hope. It's stupid, but -

JUNIOR

It's not stupid. It's natural to
feel that way.

Tears flow down Lisa's cheek. Emily comforts her.

OLIVER

Why don't we all go out somewhere?
There's a bar about five miles down
the road. It's old school. I
think we could all use a drink.

EXT. DEW DROP INN - NIGHT

Past sunset. A modest establishment just off the dirt road,
with two entrances. A neon sign flashes "Dew Drop Inn".

INT. DEW DROP INN LOUNGE - NIGHT

A handful of tables with wooden chairs, where a few PATRONS
sit, eat, and drink. A small platform stage.

In one corner, an archway to another room, where a WAITRESS
comes through with a tray of cocktails and bottles of beer.

MUSIC from the 1970s comes from an old-fashioned jukebox.

Junior, Emily, Oliver, and Lisa unwind at a table and sip
their beverages.

OLIVER

Too bad it's not the weekend.
Sometimes they have a band. Open
mike. Karaoke, too.

JUNIOR

Your name's Oliver Easterbrook?
Sounds Native American.

OLIVER

I'm a proud member of the Seneca
tribe. We moved here from New York
before the Revolutionary War. Then
in 1830, they stole our lands and
forced us to move to Oklahoma.

EMILY

You moved back to Ohio later?

OLIVER

No. My family stayed. Settled in
Cleveland. Managed to blend in.

JUNIOR

Okay, your people have been here a
long time. But, I still think that
anthrax story is bull. You just
don't want another neighbor.

Oliver laughs.

OLIVER

Go ahead, buy it. I'll even help you run it. But, I warned you.

EMILY

I need to visit the little girls' room. Lisa?

The two get up and go through the archway. Oliver watches them disappear into the next room. Leans into Junior.

OLIVER

I didn't want to tell you when the ladies were around. But, that piece of land is cursed. Unholy. My people know these things.

JUNIOR

C'mon.

OLIVER

I'm serious. It'll bring you nothing but tragedy and heartbreak.

JUNIOR

I suppose your grandfather told you stories about evil spirits and demons? Sorry, I believe in God, not superstition.

Oliver reaches across the table and grasps Junior's arm.

JUNIOR

Hey, take it easy.

OLIVER

Don't do it, man.

JUNIOR

When someone tells me it can't be done, or shouldn't be done, that's when I dig in my heels and do it.

Ruthie, Noah, and Herman burst through the adjoining room, beer bottles in their hands. Drunk. Very loud. With boisterous laughter.

JUNIOR

Dear Lord.

The three stagger to a table and plop down. Junior turns his back to them.

OLIVER

What's the matter?

Junior steals a glance at Ruthie and the two men.

OLIVER

You know them?

JUNIOR

Not their names, but they might
know my face. We got to leave.

Oliver and Junior get up. Junior tosses money on the table. Oliver blocks him from being seen by Ruthie's group.

They get to the archway, intercept Emily and Lisa, and guide them back into the adjoining room.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Transformed. Ranch-level house with a wraparound porch. A small barn. Dark soil replaces the barren ground. Grass sprouts poke through.

A shiny silver electric car in a driveway.

A sturdy split rail fence extends around most of the property. On one side of the barn, a wire fence pen, with a smaller wooden fenced-in area on the other side.

Junior and Oliver sit on a bottom rail. Both whittle. Willie the cat has his leash tied around the top rail.

JUNIOR

You know, I'm starting to feel like
a real farmer.

OLIVER

Really? Did you build the house?
The barn? Put up the fencing?
Spread the topsoil?

JUNIOR

Well. I made some calls. Told
them where to drop the house, barn.
Where I wanted the fence put.

OLIVER

Uh huh.

Oliver lowers his eyes and grins at Junior.

Junior examines his carving. Shaped like a cigarette. Glances at Oliver's work, a buffalo head.

JUNIOR

Nice. Mine looks like a baseball
bat... Oliver. What'd you think
when the Indians changed their name
to the Guardians?

OLIVER

It happened way before my time.
But, it didn't seem to improve the
ballclub any, far as I can see.

They both laugh.

JUNIOR

Look. The grass grows. Told you
I'd make it work. I'll plant some
corn later, in May. Myself.

OLIVER

You buying a tractor?

JUNIOR

Yeah. I went to the Old School
Store you told me about. That
place sells everything, from the
fifties to the millennium.

OLIVER

They're making money on you age
regressers, for sure. When you
moving in?

JUNIOR

Next week.

Junior points at the clump of trees and bushes in a corner.

JUNIOR

What about that corner? Only place
that ever had anything growing.

Oliver freezes and stiffens for a moment.

OLIVER

Just trees and stuff around a bunch
of rocks. I wouldn't pay any
attention to it... Aren't you late
for that lunch with Lisa?

JUNIOR

Oh, yeah. You don't mind, do you?

OLIVER

Lisa and me are just friends. I'm
glad she's got someone to keep her
company.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Junior at the kitchen table. He wears a bright blue wool
cap. Lisa removes prepared food from a microwave.

She places two dishes of nondescript food on the table.
Sits opposite Junior, who utters a silent prayer and makes
the sign of the cross. They begin to eat.

JUNIOR

Thanks for the cap, Lisa. It's beautiful. You did a great job.

LISA

Mom taught me to knit... So, what do you think of this 2051 food?

JUNIOR

Good. But, I miss meat.

LISA

Me too. It's so hard to get. And, damn expensive.

JUNIOR

I made friends with some guys at a corporate farm. They'll sell me some yearling livestock. If I get a steer, could have beef by fall. Or if it's a bull, two years.

LISA

Get sheep, and save me some wool. I'll knit you a sweater.

JUNIOR

We'll see.

Lisa glances at the framed photo of her son. She sighs.

JUNIOR

You really miss him.

Lisa rises, picks up the photo from the kitchen shelf and hugs it. Gently places it back on the shelf.

LISA

He was the light of my life. My hubby wanted me to put it out of my head, but I couldn't do it. That's the main reason we split up.

Tears come to her eyes. Junior gets up from the table and hugs her.

When they part, Junior wipes away a tear from her cheek. She snuffles. Touches the back of Junior's neck.

They hug again. Junior gives her a quick kiss. Lisa forces a smile. Gazes into his eyes.

She grabs Junior. Gives him a long, deep, passionate kiss.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Mid-morning. More additions and changes to the farm. Pigs in a pen. A chicken coop. Two cows and a bull graze on tall grass, along with four lambs.

A small stand of corn next to the split rail fence reaches knee-high height.

Junior drives a tractor out of the barn. It tows a small cart with a bag of feed. He maneuvers it inside the wire fence pen on the side of the barn.

He stops alongside a small feeding trough. Goes around to the cart, drags the feed bag off and onto the ground.

A rooster struts out of the chicken coop, followed by Lisa, who carries a bucket of eggs.

Junior takes a pocket knife and slits open the bag. Grabs a shovel from the cart. Scoops out feed and dumps it into the trough bin.

LISA

Hens did a good job this morning.

Junior stops his work and shuffles to Lisa. They kiss.

JUNIOR

You don't have to do my chores.

LISA

I don't mind. I'll make us an omelet for lunch.

JUNIOR

Give me time to finish feeding the cattle, then I'll be right in.

They kiss again. Lisa makes her way toward the house. Junior returns to the pen. Finishes shoveling the feed into the trough.

Junior returns the tractor and cart into the barn. The two cows wander through the gate pen, toward the trough bin.

After a few beats, Junior comes out of the barn. Sees the cows feeding. The bull remains in the field, grazing.

JUNIOR

Come on, big fella. Feeding time.

He claps his hands and motions for the bull to enter the animal pen. The bull looks up, but ignores him.

JUNIOR

Stubborn, huh?

He jogs to the bull and whacks it on the backside.

JUNIOR

Get goin'!

The bull snorts. Faces Junior. Paws the ground.

JUNIOR

Oh no.

The bull lowers his head, rounds his shoulders forward, and advances toward Junior.

JUNIOR

Oh, crap.

Junior backs away slowly. The bull stops and paws the ground again. Then, breaks into a trot.

Junior turns and runs. The bull pursues him.

The chase continues. Junior dashes toward the corner, where trees and bushes grow. No escape.

Junior backs against a tree, sweat pours down his brow.

The bull comes to a halt, a few feet from Junior.

A tense beat. The bull lopez away and wanders into the animal pen. Joins the cows and eats grain from the trough.

Junior's eyes widen, eyebrows raise, and jaw drops.

He turns to stare at the clump of trees and bushes. Wipes the sweat from his face with a handkerchief.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY - LATER

Junior carries a lamb in his arms. Stops at the tree. The lamb issues a high-pitched bleat to show its displeasure.

JUNIOR

Take it easy, this isn't gonna hurt you. I hope.

He lowers the lamb to the ground and holds it in place, hands on the animal's backside.

He pushes the lamb and urges it toward the tree and bushes.

The lamb bleats loudly. Digs its back hooves into the ground and attempts to back off.

Junior continues to push, but the lamb panics and resists.

He lets go. The little animal whirls around and scampers off in the opposite direction.

Junior tries to penetrate through the trees and bushes, but thick brambles and thorns prevent him.

He stares at the growth. Furrows his eyebrows and squints.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A modest room with a large couch. Two stuffed chairs. A rocking chair. Books on a shelf. In a corner of the room, a dining table with folding chairs around it.

Junior rests at the dining table, a coffee mug beside him.

He pulls out the silver I-comm device that Emily gave him. Holds it in front of him and points it at a blank wall.

JUNIOR
 (into device)
 Okay, let's try - paranormal trees
 and bushes. Enlarge on wall.

The I-Comm flashes a PAGE of text on the wall.

INSERT - IMAGE ON WALL

The title of the page reads: "Spooky Shrubs And Paranormal Plants". The page scrolls down, passing text, and stops at: "Number #1 - Elder (Sambucus nigra)" along with a photo of a plant and text underneath it.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
 (reads)
 "Elder. Sambucus nigra. It was
 believed that if you planted elder
 close to your house, it would keep
 the devil away."

BACK TO SCENE

Junior points his finger at the image and drags it downward. The page scrolls down.

JUNIOR
 (reads)
 "Hawthorn was a powerful
 supernatural force for good or evil
 and has been associated with
 sacrifice and protection."

He scoffs.

JUNIOR
 That doesn't tell me anything.

Junior shakes his head and takes a sip from the mug.

JUNIOR
 (to device)
 Why animals avoid trees or bushes.

A different page projects on the wall.

JUNIOR
(reads)
"Why didn't plants evolve to stop
animals from eating their leaves?"

He frowns.

JUNIOR
(into device)
Shut off.

The image disappears. Junior glares at the I-Comm device.

JUNIOR
(sarcastic)
You're a terrific help. Thank you
very much.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Mid-morning. Junior wears a protective helmet and heavy-duty gloves. Uses a chainsaw to cut through one of the trees in the mysterious corner of the field.

The tree crashes onto the ground with a thud.

Junior wipes his brow, catches his breath, then moves on to another tree in the area.

The chainsaw wails and reverberates throughout the field. The blade sticks. Junior struggles to extract it.

JUNIOR
C'mon!

He manages to wriggle the blade loose. Breathes a sigh of relief.

JUNIOR
Whew! Ok, stupid - crosscut.
Crosscut!

He begins again, with more success.

Oliver, without Willie, sprints toward Junior.

The chainsaw cuts through the tree. It tumbles to the ground, in Oliver's direction.

Junior turns and sees the tree fall toward Oliver.

JUNIOR
Look out!

Oliver dodges the tree at the last moment. It thumps to the ground and misses him by a foot. Junior shuts off the chainsaw.

OLIVER
That was close.

JUNIOR
You okay?

Oliver nods.

JUNIOR
What the hell are you doing?

OLIVER
I'll ask you the same thing. What
do you think you're doing?

JUNIOR
Looks like I'm cutting down some
trees. Later, I'll probably cut
down some bushes.

OLIVER
Uh huh. Why?

JUNIOR
Look up there, Oliver.

Junior gestures to a flock of birds. They fly over the field, but take a sharp turn when they are above the clump of trees and bushes.

JUNIOR
See that?

OLIVER
Uh, see what? I don't get it.

JUNIOR
The birds. They won't fly over
this place.

OLIVER
Huh? How much you had to drink
today, buddy?

JUNIOR
I'm telling you. No living
creature will come near this area.

Oliver forces a laugh.

OLIVER
You're kidding?

JUNIOR
I'm not kidding, and I'm sober as a
judge. There's something weird
about this space.

OLIVER

The bushes have pricklers, that's why animals stay away. You should too.

JUNIOR

I'm gonna clear out this stuff and find out what the hell's goin' on.

Oliver's expression turns serious.

OLIVER

Listen to me for a second, will ya?

Junior puts the chainsaw down, takes off the helmet, and concentrates on Oliver.

JUNIOR

You have my undivided attention.

Oliver takes a deep breath. Puts a hand on Junior's shoulder.

OLIVER

I know I told you this land is cursed.

JUNIOR

You also said nothing would grow on it. Anthrax. Now, look.

OLIVER

Yeah, the anthrax was just a story.

Junior throws Oliver's hand off his shoulder.

JUNIOR

So, you lied to me. What's the real story? What's your beef about this land?

OLIVER

I'm sorry. It's not the land that's cursed.

He points at the clump of felled trees and the bushes.

OLIVER

It's that. That spot.

JUNIOR

Okay, now you've got a different tall tale.

OLIVER

I'm trying to protect you, man. Through the years, strange things happen there.

JUNIOR
Like what? What have you actually
seen?

Oliver's head sags.

OLIVER
Me? Nothing.

JUNIOR
Ha!

OLIVER
But, my family lived next door for
three generations. My grandpa saw
things, heard things. Dad, too.

JUNIOR
What things?

OLIVER
My uncle was nosing around there
with my dad, when they were kids.
There was a humming sound. Grandpa
ran across the road, told them to
get away. It was too late. My
uncle turned deaf.

Junior knits his brows and emits a whistle.

OLIVER
Grandpa saw something freaky come
out of there.

JUNIOR
What?

OLIVER
Wouldn't say. Said it disappeared.

JUNIOR
Hmmp.

OLIVER
Those trees you just cut down. How
tall would you say they were?

JUNIOR
I don't know. Taller than me,
maybe seven, eight feet.

OLIVER
Those are poplar trees. They can
last a hundred years. They've been
on that spot since before grandpa's
day. They grow fast, four, five
feet a year. So, they should be a
hundred feet tall or more, right?

JUNIOR

You told me nothing grows on this land.

OLIVER

Overfarming. Overcultivating. The soil degraded. It was neglected.

JUNIOR

Maybe that's why the trees stopped growing?

Oliver shakes his head 'no'.

JUNIOR

Oliver. Say all those oddball things are true. That doesn't mean it's cursed. Or haunted. Or evil. Maybe there's something there that could be beneficial? Who knows?

OLIVER

Why take the chance?

JUNIOR

Why not? You can try and stop me, but I'm gonna find out what's so mysterious about it.

OLIVER

I won't stop you. But, if you don't mind, I'll stick around. Just to make sure you don't get into trouble.

Junior shrugs his shoulders.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Emily's red electric car moves down the rural road.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

The auto pulls into Junior's driveway. Emily gets out. The chainsaw wails in the distance.

Emily proceeds to the corner of the field. One lone tree remains on the ground. Others are in sections, in a cart attached to the tractor.

Clippings from bushes drape over the chunks of trees.

Junior runs the chainsaw. Slices the fallen tree into two pieces. He and Oliver lift them into the cart.

EMILY

What's going on?

OLIVER
Just a little deforestation.

Emily chuckles.

EMILY
You really need to free up this
tiny piece of land?

JUNIOR
Every little bit helps.

EMILY
I brought lunch. How about a
timeout?

Junior wipes his brow with a handkerchief.

JUNIOR
Let me haul this stuff into the
barn first.

OLIVER
(to Emily)
Need any help with lunch?

EMILY
I can always use help in the
kitchen, thanks.

Oliver goes off with Emily. Junior hops onto the tractor,
starts it, and drives toward the barn.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Junior and Oliver at the dining table. Emily grabs plates
with crumbs on them and heads into another room.

OLIVER
Great meal, Emily.

She turns, gives Oliver a broad smile, then continues into
the next room.

JUNIOR
(to Oliver)
Now what? I can't chainsaw any
more of those bramblebushes.
They'll cut up my face.

OLIVER
Got a match?

Oliver gets up from the table. Before Junior responds,
Oliver heads for the adjoining room.

OLIVER
Let me give you a hand, Emily.

EMILY (O.S.)

Okay!

Oliver enters the other room. After a beat, Emily giggles, O.S. Junior raises an eyebrow.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

A rake and shovel lie near the partially-cleared corner.

Emily observes Junior and Oliver, who gather fragments of sawdust, bushes, tree leaves, and small branches.

They toss the leavings under what remains of the cutback bushes. Junior takes out a lighter. Oliver indicates where to put the flame.

EMILY

Just what are you boys up to?

OLIVER

Controlled burn. Stand back.

Everyone retreats. The bush remnants burn. Black smoke rises from the blaze.

Junior and Oliver admire their handiwork. The bushes burn to the ground. More smoke.

The smoke changes its pattern. Pulls backward. Retreats further into the remaining overgrowth.

JUNIOR

What the hell?

EMILY

Well, that's - odd.

The smoke disappears. Sucked into the bowels of the mysterious zone.

Oliver picks up the shovel. Tosses it to Junior and grabs the rake.

EMILY

Careful.

The two men clear away what's left of the burned-out area and grunt as they work.

They expose a large hole in a rock formation. A huge boulder covers all but a small opening.

JUNIOR

Oh my Lord.

EMILY

What's that?

They gawk at each other, eyes wide and mouths open.

Junior approaches the boulder. Attempts to squeeze through the exposed opening of the hole. He's too big and gives up.

JUNIOR
Can't get through.

Oliver raises an eyebrow.

OLIVER
Well, don't look at me. I'm bigger than you.

The men gaze at Emily.

EMILY
No way.

Junior turns to Oliver.

JUNIOR
Help me move this thing.

OLIVER
Now, wait a second. Let's think about this.

EMILY
I agree.

JUNIOR
What's to think about?

Oliver hesitates.

JUNIOR
If you don't want to help me, I can always use the tractor.

Oliver raises and lowers his shoulders and exhales. He comes to Junior's aid. The two push, strain and grunt. The boulder moves at a snail's pace.

EMILY
One of you guys is gonna wind up in the hospital.

JUNIOR
Cut it out, Emily.

They manage to roll the boulder away and expose the rest of the hole.

Junior pokes his head through for a moment, then pulls out.

JUNIOR
Pretty dark in there.

Junior prepares to enter the hole. Oliver grabs him.

OLIVER
You sure you want to go in there?

EMILY
Yeah, Dad.

JUNIOR
Excuse me. I was an astronaut. I
walked in outer space. I think I
can handle this.

Oliver backs off. Junior sticks his head into the hole.

OLIVER
That's one small step for man.

Emily giggles. Junior turns. Glares at Oliver, who laughs.

JUNIOR
Funny guy.

Junior continues into the hole and disappears.

EMILY
What do you think you're gonna find
in there? Captain Kidd's treasure?

Inside the hole, An eerie HUM emanates. It increases in
volume.

EMILY
Oh, no.

Junior runs out of the hole, mouth open and both hands over
his ears.

He bumps into Oliver and drops to his knees.

JUNIOR
Crap!

EMILY
Dad!

Oliver examines Junior. Looks at his ears.

OLIVER
You okay?

A beat. Junior nods.

JUNIOR
I know what I need. A quick trip
to a drugstore.

EMILY

I know what you both need. A long stay at the loony bin.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY - LATER

Oliver and Junior stand near the hole. A flashlight hangs from one of Junior's jean belt loops. Emily watches, a few feet away.

Junior pulls a small, clear, plastic case from his pocket. It contains several orange foam cylinders, about the size of bullets and pointed at one end.

Junior hands two of the foam cylinders to Oliver, who tilts his head, puzzled.

EMILY

This is nuts.

JUNIOR

Shhh.

Junior demonstrates, rolls a cylinder between his fingers and compresses it. Inserts it in an ear. Holds it there for a second with his index finger.

JUNIOR

I was on the swim team at Purdue.

Junior seals up his other ear. Oliver copies the procedure.

Emily grabs the earplugs case from Junior.

JUNIOR

(yells)

You're not coming in with us!

EMILY

(yells)

Oh yes, I am! And, you can quit yelling, Dad!

Junior tries to shoo her away, but she stuffs two plugs in her ears, then follows him and Oliver through the hole.

INT. CAVE - DAY

The trio shuffles through the hole, into a tall cave.

Junior's flashlight illuminates the rocky cavern.

The same eerie HUM reverberates. The cave vibrates.

Ears protected, Junior and Oliver nod to each other. Emily looks around. The trio advances.

Junior listens to the muffled HUM. Imitates the tone, at the same pitch.

JUNIOR
(hums)

Hmmm.

The HUM dies down. Silence. Junior stops the group.
Removes an earplug. Listens. No hum.

Junior takes out the other earplug. Gestures to Oliver and
Emily to do the same.

JUNIOR
(yells)
It's alright! Take 'em out!

Emily and Oliver hesitate.

JUNIOR
(yells)
I said - It's alright!

Emily rips out her earplugs.

EMILY
And, I already said, you don't have
to yell!

Junior and Emily stare at each other. Both laugh.

Oliver removes his earplugs.

OLIVER
How come it stopped?

JUNIOR
I made the same sound, and it quit.
Amazing.

Junior scans the cave walls with the flashlight.

JUNIOR
Hey! Look at that.

The flashlight reveals odd symbols scrawled on a wall.
Emily gasps. Everyone freezes.

OLIVER
Those aren't hieroglyphs, are they?

JUNIOR
This isn't Egypt. And, they're not
hieroglyphs.

Emily backs away. She stumbles on loose stones, slips,
falls backward, and screams.

JUNIOR
Emily!

Junior focuses the light beam on Emily, as she plummets off a steep cliff.

Oliver dives after Emily. Manages to grab onto her shirtsleeve.

Emily hangs over the steep precipice. Her feet dangle.

JUNIOR
Don't let go!

Junior attempts to assist Oliver.

EMILY
Help!

OLIVER
I got ya!

Oliver drags Emily from the cliff and back onto the cave floor. They exchange looks. Emily catches her breath.

JUNIOR AND OLIVER
Are you alright?

All three stare at each other for a moment, then laugh.

JUNIOR
That's enough excitement for today.

He grasps Emily around her waist.

JUNIOR
And, that's the end of your spelunking, young lady.

They turn around and walk back to the entrance.

JUNIOR
(hums)
Hmmm.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

The trio exits the cave through the hole.

JUNIOR
(to the other two)
Not a word of this to anyone.

EMILY
Are you kidding? I'm already trying to forget about it. That place smelled funky.

She turns to Oliver and smiles.

EMILY
Thank you for saving my life.

Oliver returns the smile. Emily gives him a kiss on the cheek and hugs him.

She scampers off. Junior grins at Oliver.

JUNIOR
(in a high-pitch voice)
My hero.

Oliver scoffs. Gives Junior a friendly punch on the shoulder.

OLIVER
Look what I found on the floor of
that cave.

He shows Junior two arrowheads.

Junior takes one and examines it.

JUNIOR
Arrowhead.

OLIVER
Seneca arrowhead.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - NIGHT

A single light from the farmhouse.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Junior and Lisa recline on the couch. They watch the IMAGE of a rock concert on the blank wall.

LISA
Can you believe Mick Jagger is
still touring?

JUNIOR
How old is he now?

LISA
I heard he's a hundred and seven.
Of course, he looks better than
when we last saw him.

JUNIOR
Damn gressers.

They both laugh, then kiss.

LISA
Junior. How come you bought all
those lanterns?

JUNIOR
You never know when there's a power
blackout, sweetie.

She scoffs at this remark.

LISA

I know you and Oliver are up to something. But, I'll let you fellas alone, so you can have your little private playtime.

Junior laughs. Puts his arm around Lisa. Then, stares off into space and contemplates.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Strategic placement of portable lanterns illuminates the entire cave.

Oliver watches Junior edge toward the steep cliff.

OLIVER

Careful, man.

Junior shines a lantern down the cliffside.

JUNIOR

Can't see bottom. I wonder how deep this goes?

He picks up a small rock. Drops it over the cliff. Listens. No noise.

JUNIOR

Come over here.

Oliver inches toward Junior, who finds a bigger rock, leans over the cliff, and drops it. Several seconds later, dead silence.

OLIVER

That sucker is deep.

JUNIOR

You smell that?

Oliver creeps closer. Hangs his head over the cliff.

JUNIOR

Emily smelled it. Take a deep breath.

Oliver's nose sucks in a sizeable amount of air.

JUNIOR

Well?

OLIVER

By golly, it's soy sauce. This must go right through the earth, into China.

He erupts with loud laughter. Junior scowls.

JUNIOR
You know what it smells like, wise
guy. That's sulphur.

Oliver thinks for a moment.

OLIVER
I get it. You think that's a
gateway to Hell.

Junior frowns.

JUNIOR
Don't talk blasphemy.

OLIVER
Can't you take a joke? There's an
underground spring down there.
That's the rotten eggs smell.

Junior purses his lips and grimaces.

OLIVER
You're taking this stuff way too
serious, Junior.

JUNIOR
Oh, yeah? You know what else?
Ever been in a cave that doesn't
have an echo?

Oliver thinks a moment.

JUNIOR
Right?

OLIVER
Yeah, never noticed it before.
But, caves have weird properties -

JUNIOR
Weird properties? You got wall
markings nobody's ever seen before,
I investigated that. Then, there's
a sound that can bust your
eardrums. A cliff without a
bottom. Sulphur. And no echo.

OLIVER
I'm not a scientist, but there's
got to be a logical explanation for
all of this.

JUNIOR
I'm a scientist. At least, I was.
And, none of this makes sense.

OLIVER
I told you it was unholy.

JUNIOR
So, which is it? Science or
superstition?

OLIVER
Okay, that's it! Do whatever you
want. Bring in NASA, bring in the
F.B.I. I'm out of it!

JUNIOR
You think I want to bring the
government into this? Don't you
remember what NASA did to me? I'm
the 'Trouble With Hubble
Astronaut'.

The two men calm down.

JUNIOR
Maybe I should pray. Ask God.

OLIVER
Let's get out of here first.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Oliver and Junior come out of the cave.

JUNIOR
I wonder where I can buy a drone?

Oliver covers his eyes with both hands.

OLIVER
Sheesh.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Junior at the cliff. A drone aircraft on the edge.

Junior programs his I-Comm.

JUNIOR
(into device)
Enable visual of drone camera.

An small IMAGE appears above the device. Junior moves his
finger over the image to operate the drone.

The drone rises, then descends down the cliff.

INSERT - DRONE CAMERA AERIAL VIEW

As the drone drops further and further, the image resembles
a spiral galaxy.

It reaches a platform that juts out from the cliff face. Stops. A small human skeleton lies on the platform.

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Sweet Jesus.

EXT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Oliver and Junior on the couch. Junior points the I-Comm at the wall. The device projects a large view of VIDEO onto a blank area.

INSERT - DRONE VIDEO

Video footage of the small skeleton on the platform of the cliff face.

OLIVER

Oh, no.

BACK TO SCENE

The wall image disappears. Oliver's eyelids droop, his eyes stare downward, and his shoulders sag.

JUNIOR

Too small for an adult.

OLIVER

How big is it?

JUNIOR

The drone measurement says it's about fifty-five inches. Around four-and-a-half feet. Sounds like a kid.

OLIVER

Could be a midget?

Junior raises his eyebrows and puts his hands on his hips.

JUNIOR

Hmmph.

OLIVER

Tommy?

Junior nods.

OLIVER

Don't tell Lisa.

JUNIOR

Why not? Don't you think she'd want to know?

Oliver shakes his head 'no'.

OLIVER

Let her keep her hope, Junior.
It's all she's got left.

EXT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Junior and Lisa sit at the kitchen table.

JUNIOR

Lisa. How would you feel if you
knew, absolutely knew, that Tommy
was dead?

Lisa thinks for a moment.

LISA

I think I'd want to die.

She glares at him.

LISA

Why would you even say that?

JUNIOR

I thought it might be a relief.

LISA

It would take away all my dreams.

He tries to comfort her, but Lisa turns away from him.

LISA

I think you'd better leave.

Junior gets up from the table and walks away.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Junior walks toward his farmhouse. Oliver leads Willie the
cat on a leash and interrupts Junior.

OLIVER

Got that drone handy?

JUNIOR

What for?

OLIVER

Just get it.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY - LATER

Junior carries the aircraft drone in his arms. Oliver leads
him to a spot on the field. Six deep impressions now appear
on the grass.

JUNIOR

What's this?

Oliver points at the drone.

OLIVER

Use it.

Junior sets the drone down. Takes out his I-Comm.

JUNIOR

(into device)

Enable visual drone camera.

An small IMAGE appears above the device. Junior steers the drone, moves a finger over the image.

The drone rises above the grass depressions.

INSERT - DRONE CAMERA AERIAL VIEW

Six crop circles. Similar to the cave wall markings.

BACK TO SCENE

The drone descends to the ground.

OLIVER

So, what are those?

JUNIOR

Crop circles. This your handiwork?

OLIVER

Why would I do that?

JUNIOR

To scare me?

Oliver blows air from his cheeks and walks away. Throws his hands in the air in exasperation.

Willie breaks from Oliver's grasp. Stumbles toward the cave. His leash drags behind him.

OLIVER

Willie! Stop!

The animal lumbers to the cave opening. Enters the cave.

OLIVER

Help me!

They run to the cave. The familiar HUM sounds, O.S.

They hear an O.S. SCREAM of the cat and stop.

OLIVER

No! No!

The SCREAM becomes more and more faint.

The men dash inside the cave.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
(hums)

Hmmm.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Lanterns still illuminate the interior. Oliver and Junior stand at the cliff edge.

Oliver bends down and picks up something. One of the little bells from Willie's collar.

OLIVER
He went over the cliff.

JUNIOR
That's impossible. No animal goes near here.

OLIVER
He was old, Junior. Couldn't smell. Couldn't hear.

He tears up.

OLIVER
I got to get out of here. Seal this up - please?

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Junior uses a rake to wipe out the traces of the crop circles. Hears a faint bell ring. Stops his work and turns to see Willie the cat. The animal's leash trails behind.

JUNIOR
Willie! Willie! You're alive!

He approaches the feline. Willie's eyes flash bright red. He snarls at Junior and bares his claws.

JUNIOR
What's wrong with you? Come here!

Willie lashes out and claws at Junior's jeans. Hisses. Dashes off at tremendous speed.

Junior watches the cat disappear. Scratches his head.

JUNIOR
He's gone feral.

EXT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Junior leans forward on the couch. Uses the I-Comm to project a webpage onto the wall.

INSERT - IMAGE ON WALL

The top of the page reads: "Locomotive Search Engine", with the icon of an old-time railroad steam engine.

On the search bar: "Paranormal Events Cherry Creek Ohio". The page scrolls down.

Search result headings include: "Public Ghost Hunt, Cleveland", "Sips And Seances - Haunted Ohio Tour", and "I Saw Bigfoot At The Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame".

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Oh, for Pete's sake... So, how about aliens?

New entry on search bar: "Aliens Cherry Creek Ohio".

New heading: "UFO Lights Over Wayne County, Ohio"

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Now, we're getting somewhere.

A new page appears. Title at top declares: "Mysterious Lights Explained - Air Force Night Maneuvers"

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Oh, crap.

EXT. VEHICLE CHARGING STATION - DAY

Junior's silver electric car pulls into the vehicle charging station. It resembles a gas station, but individual charge ports replace gas pumps.

Two repair bays with cars on hydraulic lifts. Ruthie's grandsons, Noah and Herman, work at each bay.

Six empty individual charger stations. Junior parks his vehicle at one.

He sees Ruthie Brock, dressed in overalls, move toward him.

JUNIOR

Oh, no. That's Ruthie Brock?

Before she reaches him, Junior grabs a baseball cap on the passenger seat. Pulls it over his head and tilts the bill down to partially hide his face. Gets out of his car.

RUTHIE

Charge her up, Mister?

JUNIOR

Please.

He hands her a credit card. She inserts it into a slot of the charging machine. Pushes buttons to progress through the steps to charge the vehicle.

RUTH

It'll just take ten minutes,
dearie, okay?

JUNIOR

Sure.

Ruthie plugs the connector into the car's charge port.

Junior turns his back on Ruthie. Stares at the empty charge stations.

RUTHIE

Yeah. Not too much business
nowadays. Mostly repairs. People
use them home chargers a lot.

JUNIOR

Uh huh.

RUTHIE

And, there's more and more solar
cars now. Close to fifteen
percent.

JUNIOR

Get many gas-powered cars?

RUTHIE

Once in a while. Usually from
those damn gressers.

JUNIOR

Look, the real reason I came here
is - you're Ruthie Brock. You
owned some land in Cherry Creek?

Ruthie stiffens. Crosses her arms tightly and clenches her fists. Her attitude changes from friendly to antagonistic.

RUTHIE

How the hell you know that?

JUNIOR

I bought it.

RUTHIE

You? What the devil for?

JUNIOR

I started a micro-farm. Why'd you
list it so expensive?

Ruthie gnashes her teeth and points at him.

RUTHIE

So no fool like you would buy it!

JUNIOR

I don't get it, Mrs. Brock.

RUTHIE

Then, I'll explain it to you, dumb ass! To get a tax break on a piece of tillable land where you don't grow no crops, you gotta put it up for sale.

JUNIOR

But, why - ?

RUTHIE

Why didn't I grow nothin' on it? 'Cause nothing grows on it. Why didn't I sell it to that big ass corporate farm? 'Cause I promised my granddad.

Ruthie attempts to look at Junior's face, but he continues to turn away from her.

RUTHIE

In his will, it said I should never sell that one tiny bit of land.

JUNIOR

Why?

RUTHIE

I never questioned it. He was a mite superstitious. Just said there was somethin' wrong with it. So, I took him at his word. And, I gave him my word.

JUNIOR

You remember anything strange happening there?

RUTHIE

Strange? Strange?! What the hell you mean, strange?!

JUNIOR

Something paranormal?

RUTHIE

Paranormal?! You mean, like Bigfoot, or little green men showin' up?! What kind of stupid numbskull are ya? I'll bet you're one of them goddamn gressers I hate, ain't ya?

JUNIOR

Why do you hate us?

RUTHIE

Ha! I'll tell ya a story, moron.
My son married this dame. She
talked him into havin' this gresser
thing done. Well, a year later, he
gets the GSD. Two more years, this
dumb broad gets it. Both dead in a
dozen years. Left two kids,
fourteen and fifteen. And, guess
who had to raise them retards?
Yours truly!

Noah and Herman, both covered in dirt and grease over work
uniforms, come out of the repair bays and join Ruthie.

NOAH

What's the matter, Grandma?

HERMAN

This guy givin' you a hard time?

The wiry Ruthie shoves both of the boys.

HERMAN

Hey!

RUTHIE

I don't need no help from you
blockheads! Get yer lazy asses
back to work. Git!

She stomps her foot at them. The young men jerk back.
Return to the repair bays.

The charging machine beeps. Ruthie removes Junior's credit
card from the slot. Glances at it. Her mouth widens.

RUTHIE

Holy hell! Matt Hayes! You're
that astronaut. The 'Trouble With
Hubble' guy! A frosted flake!

Junior turns and faces her. Grabs the credit card.

JUNIOR

I came back to life after
thirty-six years and heard you
whining and protesting about it!

RUTHIE

You don't deserve to live again!
You're a godless heathen!

JUNIOR

I believe in God, Ruthie. I'm more
Christian than you are.

RUTHIE

Blasphemer! You're gonna hear me protest again! Now, I know where you live! You damn gresser!

JUNIOR

You show up on my property, you better well duck, lady! I'll buy myself a gun!

RUTHIE

Don't you dare threaten me, you sacrilegious beast! Now, take your popsickle, frosted flakes car and get the hell out!

Junior stares at her for a moment.

RUTHIE

(yells)

Noah! Herman! Escort this a-hole out of my place of business!

Noah and Herman spring out of the repair bays. Herman carries a large wrench.

JUNIOR

(to Ruthie)

Thanks for the charge, Ruthie!

Junior jumps into his car.

RUTHIE

Eat shit!

Junior's car starts and squeals out of the charging station. Ruthie shakes a fist at him. Noah and Herman reach her, and she pushes them away.

EXT. CRYONICS LABORATORY - DAY

Clouds roll across the sky and cast shadows on the four-story structure.

INT. JUNIOR'S RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Identical to the first hospital room. Junior relaxes on the stuffed chair, in a hospital gown. Knock at the door.

The door cracks open. Doctor McKenzie peeks in and enters.

JUNIOR

Doctor McKenzie. Nice to see you.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Mister Hayes.

JUNIOR

Call me Junior.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Oh, right, I forgot. But, in this case, I feel I should call you Mister Hayes.

Junior stiffens. McKenzie bites her lip.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

I'm sorry. I'm afraid you have Gorham-Stout disease.

Junior's shoulders sag. He sighs.

JUNIOR

After three months?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

It happens.

JUNIOR

Do another test.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

We ran the test three times. With the same result.

Junior forces a weak smile.

JUNIOR

So, I've got ten years.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Ten good years. More or less. Your daughter's down the hall. She wants to see you.

JUNIOR

How is she?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

I don't think it's my place to tell you that.

JUNIOR

So, you didn't tell her about me?

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

That's between you and Emily. Why don't you get dressed? I'll send her over in fifteen minutes.

JUNIOR

Send her in now.

DOCTOR MCKENZIE

Alright.

McKenzie exits. Once the door shuts, Junior clenches his teeth and bangs the wall with his fist.

He looks upward and grimaces. Then, regains his composure.
A knock on the door. Junior rises up from the chair.

JUNIOR
Come in, Emily.

Junior exhales. Puts a smile on his face.

Emily enters, with a broad smile.

JUNIOR
How was your six-month checkup?

Emily gives the 'thumbs up' sign.

EMILY
Clean bill of health. How was your
three-month checkup?

Junior returns the 'thumbs up'.

JUNIOR
Clean bill of health.

Emily hugs him. He rolls his eyes. She doesn't notice.

EMILY
Let's go celebrate. You pick the
place, lunch is on me.

JUNIOR
Not today. I want to go to Mass.

EMILY
Oh, I see, to give thanks. I'll go
with you, then.

JUNIOR
Sweetheart, I'd rather go alone.

He kisses her on the forehead.

EMILY
Alright. What about dinner
tomorrow? At that bar near you?

JUNIOR
The Dew Drop Inn? Sure.

EMILY
I'll ask Oliver.

JUNIOR
Oliver?

EMILY
Well, we've been kind of - seeing
each other.

JUNIOR

Oh? I'm glad. But, I'm not sure he wants to hang out with me right now. He's kind of pissed off.

EMILY

Yeah, he said something about his cat dying. Maybe Lisa will go?

JUNIOR

Uh, I don't think so. She's a little pissed at me, too.

EMILY

You're real popular lately. So, let's make it a father and daughter night? I'll meet you there tomorrow. About eight?

JUNIOR

Sounds like a plan.

EXT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Junior sways back and forth on the rocking chair. Points the I-Comm and projects a live IMAGE on the wall.

INSERT - NANCY VERDUGO

VERDUGO

Alright, Mister - X. I respect your privacy. I can't see you, I can't trace your location. What's your story?

INTERCUT - LIVING ROOM/INSERT

JUNIOR

Something that defies the laws of science. Could be the most important paranormal behavior your viewers will ever see.

VERDUGO

Can you be more specific?

JUNIOR

You'll have to see it to truly believe it.

VERDUGO

How do I know this isn't some sort of hoax, Mister X?

JUNIOR

When I identify myself, you'll know, Miss Verdugo.

VERDUGO

I'm afraid I need more information.

JUNIOR

Okay... I've discovered - a cave.
No living animal will approach it.
It has symbols on a wall, either an
alien or ancient culture. And,
there's a cliff, which seems to
have a bottomless pit.

VERDUGO

Huh. Anything else?

JUNIOR

The cave has no echo. And, when
you go inside, it makes a sound
that could kill you.

VERDUGO

That's certainly interesting.
What's the next step?

JUNIOR

I plan to engineer a way to repel
down the cliff face. I want the
media to document it.

VERDUGO

Why would you want to do something
that sounds so dangerous, Mister X?

JUNIOR

Ah, let's just say, I have a
reputation I want to restore.

VERDUGO

Uh huh. When will this happen?

JUNIOR

When I have the apparatus in place.
If it works, and it's safe, I'll
contact you.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Junior packs various things in a backpack.

The final item. A body harness.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Morning. Junior wears the backpack. Leads a cow out of the
barn. The other cow follows. They wander into the pasture.

A high-pitched WHIRRING sound makes the cattle, lambs, pigs,
and chickens bellow and squawk.

A few feet from Junior, the air SHIMMERS. The phenomenon resembles a wave-like effect.

Two beings MATERIALIZE out of thin air. MUSTAFA KUMAR, a tall man, mid-30s, with Indian or Pakistani features, and BOBBY KUMAR, a seventeen-year-old caucasian.

Junior stands transfixed, unable to move.

Mustafa takes a step toward Junior and smiles. His speech does not have a foreign accent.

MUSTAFA

Hello, Junior. I'm Mustafa Kumar,
this is Bobby. Whazzup?

JUNIOR

Something - is not right.

Junior's eyes roll back into his head. His body stiffens. He faints and collapses onto the ground.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Junior lies prone on the couch. Mustafa and Bobby stand over him.

Junior's eyes open. They smile at him.

MUSTAFA

Feeling better?

Junior tries to rise up from the couch, then grabs his head in pain and sinks back.

JUNIOR

Oh, my head.

MUSTAFA

Just temporary. Rest for fifteen
minutes or so. Then, you'll be
right as your brain.

BOBBY

That's rain. Right as rain.

MUSTAFA

Rain? Really?

Bobby nods.

JUNIOR

What happened?

BOBBY

You fainted.

JUNIOR

Fainted? No, no, that's impossible, I never faint.

MUSTAFA

Don't be ashamed. Happens to almost everybody. I've done this six times, only two didn't faint.

BOBBY

What happened to them?

MUSTAFA

Oh, they freaked out and went completely insane. So, Junior here is lucky he fainted.

JUNIOR

Who are you?

MUSTAFA

Don't you remember? I introduced us a few hours ago. I'm Mustafa Kumar. This is my son, Bobby.

BOBBY

Adopted son.

JUNIOR

Wait a minute, wait a minute! What are you doing here?

MUSTAFA

Well, that's simple. But complicated. It may take some time for your mind to fully process it.

JUNIOR

Try me.

Mustafa turns to Bobby.

MUSTAFA

This is always the hardest part. My son, Bobby, is human. I'm not.

Junior attempts to get up from the couch again, but his head pain forces him back again.

MUSTAFA

First, I may need to convince you who, actually - what I am.

BOBBY

He's from another planet.

MUSTAFA

Bobby. I'll handle this.

Junior chuckles.

JUNIOR

Okay, what's the gag?

MUSTAFA

This guy could be a tough nut to crack. Might take a while. Let's back up. We're from the future.

Junior rolls his eyes.

JUNIOR

Who sent you jokers? Was it Oliver? My daughter? That reporter, Nancy Verdugo?

MUSTAFA

We appeared from nowhere. Shouldn't that tell you something?

Junior thinks for a moment.

JUNIOR

Yeah, I remember... You must be some kind of magician.

MUSTAFA

Magician?

JUNIOR

Yeah. David Copperfield made the Statue Of Liberty disappear, why couldn't you do the opposite? And, you're a lot smaller than the Statue Of Liberty. Show me. Make yourselves disappear.

MUSTAFA

We can't do that. Not for a couple of days. We'll need to stay here for a bit.

JUNIOR

Stay here?! What the hell - !

MUSTAFA

We could use the barn, but Bobby and I could bunk in your spare bedroom, if you don't mind.

BOBBY

In the same bed? That hasn't happened since I was eight.

JUNIOR

You two better get out of my house, or I'll call the police!

MUSTAFA

Now, Junior, don't get yourself into the up door.

BOBBY

That's incorrect, father. It should be 'in an uproar'.

MUSTAFA

Uproar.

Junior forces himself out of the couch. Puts up his fists.

JUNIOR

I'll throw you both out of here, if I have to!

Bobby laughs. Mustafa motions with his hand. Junior freezes in place.

MUSTAFA

Sorry, I can't let you get violent. I'm sworn not to intentionally harm humans, but I can defend myself if there's no alternative.

Mustafa waves his hand. Junior staggers backward.

JUNIOR

It's hypnosis. Some sort of mind control.

MUSTAFA

That's better than in the Middle Ages, when they called me a witch. Let's all sit down calmly. Ask me any questions you want.

Junior sinks down onto a stuffed chair. Mustafa and Bobby plant themselves on the couch.

JUNIOR

So, you're an alien? From outer space? From the future?

He points at Bobby.

JUNIOR

What are you doing with him?

BOBBY

Hey!

MUSTAFA

That's alright, Bobby. First, Bobby and I live in London, so I need to blend in, be inconspicuous.

Bobby nods.

MUSTAFA

Second, in order to time travel, I need to have a human accompany me. My actual alien body can't take the pressure of dual positive singularities and a standard offset Tipler sinusoid. Having a human with me balances those differences.

JUNIOR

This isn't your real body, then? So, why do you look like you're from India, or Pakistan?

MUSTAFA

You know how many people from India live in London, nowadays?

Bobby laughs.

MUSTAFA

I've had many identities since I was sent here on earth. Adopted many sons.

JUNIOR

You've time traveled before?

MUSTAFA

Didn't I already mention it? Six times since - 101 B.C.

BOBBY

This is my first time.

JUNIOR

Sweet Jesus. You're ancient.

MUSTAFA

Time is relative, as Einstein said. On my planet, people live the equivalent of four-thousand earth years. Time means little to us.

JUNIOR

Uh huh. And, why'd your people send you here? To enslave us?

MUSTAFA

We're sort of - your caretakers.

JUNIOR

We? Caretakers?

MUSTAFA

Three of us. We divvied up the earth. I got Europe, North America, a bit of Northern Africa.

Junior laughs hard.

MUSTAFA

The other two got South America and Asia. And the rest of Africa and Australia.

JUNIOR

Ha. And, what about Antarctica?

MUSTAFA

Face it. Not much going on there... See, people on our planet like to explore, they're really very curious. They like to help.

JUNIOR

And, what do you do, you three caretakers?

MUSTAFA

We - observe. And, do other things. Report back to our world. Every few hundred years, we step in. Try to stop you from messing up the earth too much.

Junior snorts in derision.

JUNIOR

Why didn't you stop World War One, or World War Two?

Mustafa scoffs.

MUSTAFA

Ever watch the show "Star Trek"? The first one, not the sequels. You know, the prime directive?

JUNIOR

You took your rules from a tv show?

MUSTAFA

Way before. Our superiors forbid us from directly interfering with earthlings. We try to change your behavior. It usually works.

JUNIOR

Okay, okay. Put aside the sci-fi stuff. Exactly what year do you claim to come from?

Mustafa draws a deep breath.

MUSTAFA

The year 3002.

Junior chuckles.

JUNIOR

A thousand years from now? So, I suppose you know who's gonna win the ballgame today, between Cleveland and the Rangers?

Mustafa looks upward, squints his eyes.

MUSTAFA

Rangers win, seven-to-six.

JUNIOR

We'll see. How about medicine in the - thirty-first century? Is there a cure for cancer?

MUSTAFA

Oh, of course. But, they still can't stop the common cold.

JUNIOR

And, flying cars?

Mustafa gives out with a hearty laugh.

MUSTAFA

Hell no. You never heard of teleportation?

Junior raises an eyebrow.

MUSTAFA

There were flying cars at the end of your century. After a few years, They were banned. Lots of accidents. Terrible accidents.

JUNIOR

Oh, man. What a load of crap. I wonder what lunatic asylum you two escaped from? It's getting late. I need to do some chores. Let's go outside, Klaatu.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Junior, Mustafa, and Bobby come out of the farmhouse. They approach the barn.

Pigs squeal and huddle in a corner of the pigpen.

Chickens squawk inside the coop.

The two cows, the bull, and the lambs grazing nearby scamper away from them.

JUNIOR
Animals don't seem to like you.

MUSTAFA
See?

JUNIOR
Neither do I. That doesn't mean anything.

MUSTAFA
Hmm, how can I convince you?

Mustafa reaches inside the barn. Produces a gallon jug with some liquid left inside. He takes off the cap.

MUSTAFA
What's this?

JUNIOR
Methomyl. Leftover insecticide.

MUSTAFA
Looks yummy.

Mustafa pours the liquid into his mouth and gulps it down.

JUNIOR
That's poison, it'll kill ya!

Mustafa empties the contents. Smacks his lips.

MUSTAFA
Not so great. But, I've tasted worse stuff.

JUNIOR
You've gotta get to a hospital!

MUSTAFA
No, no, no. No harm done.

Junior rushes to Mustafa. Looks him over.

BOBBY
It can't hurt him. He's not human.

JUNIOR
Another trick. You switched it.

Mustafa whispers to Bobby. The teenager dashes into the barn. Comes out with a rifle.

JUNIOR
Careful with that, it's loaded.

BOBBY
Shall I do it, father?

Mustafa walks to Bobby and stops a foot away from him.

MUSTAFA
Fire away, son.

JUNIOR
Stop!

BANG! Bobby fires the rifle directly at Mustafa's chest. Mustafa doesn't react. Junior grabs the weapon.

MUSTAFA
Check it out.

Junior sniffs it and examines the firing chamber.

JUNIOR
Well, there's a shell missing.

MUSTAFA
Convinced yet?

Junior winces.

JUNIOR
More magic.

Mustafa strides to the chicken coop. Enters.

The rooster bursts out of the coop.

Chickens squawk and growl.

A second later, Mustafa emerges with a full bucket of eggs. Shows them to Junior.

MUSTAFA
That's magic too?

He motions for Bobby to join him. The two stand together. Mustafa exhibits the egg bucket.

MUSTAFA
(to Junior)
Go ahead. Take a photo of us.

Junior pulls out the I-Comm. Aims at the pair.

JUNIOR
(into device)
Record still image.

MUSTAFA
Okay, Let's see what you got.

Mustafa moves next to Junior.

JUNIOR
 (into device)
 Project last still image.

INSERT - PHOTO IMAGE

The photo reveals Bobby and the bucket of eggs in mid-air.
 But no Mustafa.

JUNIOR
 (to Mustafa)
 What are you, a vampire?

Bobby delivers a robust belly laugh.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mustafa, Bobby, and Junior watch video on the wall.

INSERT - VIDEO ON WALL

A baseball game.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
 Two outs. Guardians are gonna win.

MUSTAFA (O.S.)
 Winning run at the plate. Next
 pitch - homerun.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
 Ha! Reynolds hasn't hit a homer
 the whole season.

CRACK! Home run.

BACK TO SCENE

MUSTAFA
 Seven to six, Rangers win.

JUNIOR
 You're either an alien, or the most
 incredible magician I've ever met.
 Why are you here? You got
 something to do with that cave?

MUSTAFA
 What cave?

Bobby laughs.

MUSTAFA
 We'll get to that later.

JUNIOR
 Later? It is later. I've got to
 meet my daughter for dinner.

MUSTAFA
Food? Oh, goody.

BOBBY
I'm hungry, father.

JUNIOR
You two aren't going.

EXT. DEW DROP INN - NIGHT

Junior's silver car parks next to Emily's red vehicle.

INT. DEW DROP INN LOUNGE - NIGHT

Tables half-full with CUSTOMERS. A microphone at the small platform stage. A GUITARIST plays a country song.

Emily waits at a table. Junior enters with Mustafa and Bobby. He hugs Emily. She stares at the other two.

EMILY
Thought it was just going to be us
two tonight?

JUNIOR
Sorry about that. Emily, this is -
Mustafa reaches across Junior and takes Emily's hand.

MUSTAFA
Mustafa. My son, Bobby.

BOBBY
Adopted son.

MUSTAFA
I knew your father when he was at
NASA, years ago.

Junior whirls around, faces Mustafa. The alien winks at Bobby and grins.

EMILY
You're a cryonics patient too?

MUSTAFA
Who isn't?

He laughs. Everyone sits.

The Guitarist finishes the song. Polite applause from the patrons.

GUITARIST
Yeah, open mike night at the Dew
Drop Inn. Who wants to be first?

Mustafa springs to his feet.

BOBBY

Oh, no.

The others watch Mustafa go to the stage platform, grab the Guitarist's guitar, and sit on the stool in front of the microphone. The Guitarist salutes Mustafa and leaves.

JUNIOR

This oughta be interesting.

Mustafa begins to play.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"Can I make it any plainer? Don't you think it would be saner? If we didn't have to shoot each other? We've had holy wars and killing, over which God got top billing. Here is my evaluation - brother."

BOBBY

Oh, boy.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"I don't believe in guns and God, and prayin' to a saint. I don't believe in guns and God, and wishin' things that ain't. And if my world is filled with strife, I won't wait for an afterlife. I don't believe in guns and God. I try to use restraint."

Murmurs from the crowd. Emily glares at Junior.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"I don't believe in guns and God, does that make me a freak? I don't believe in guns and God, or some computer geek. I may be strange, I may be weird. Of all drug charges I've been cleared. I don't believe in guns and God. It doesn't make me weak."

EMILY

(to Junior)

Who is this maniac?

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"Now, dig down deep and please donate, into the collection plate. Buy your way to heaven's glory. Everything is hunky-dory."

JUNIOR

(to Bobby)

Tell me there's not a second verse.

BOBBY

Afraid so.

Angry mutters from the customers grow louder.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"I don't believe in guns and God,
I'm not a Communist. I don't
believe in guns and God, so take me
off your list. But, if you try to
rob me of, my liberty, my life, my
love. I don't believe in guns and
God. But, I can use my fist."

Ruthie, Noah, and Herman come from the other room, drinks in hand. The three glower at Mustafa. Junior notices them.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"I don't believe in guns and God,
or takin' human life. I don't
believe in guns and God, and I'm no
Barney Fife. But, if you break
into my house, I'll show you who's
a man or mouse. I don't believe in
guns and God. I'll stab you with a
knife."

Emily bolts up from her chair.

EMILY

(to Junior)

I'm out of here. I'll talk to you
later, about your choice of
friends.

She storms out of the room. Bobby looks at Junior and shrugs his shoulders.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"So, grab your bullets, don't
delay. Come and join the N.R.A.
If your neighbor's a fanatic, shoot
him with your automatic."

The Guitarist goes to Ruthie, whispers and points to Junior's table. Junior freezes.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"I don't believe in guns and God,
religion's bribery."

JUNIOR

This gets worse and worse.

MUSTAFA

(sings)

"I don't believe in guns and God, I do good deeds for free. I need no threat of punishment. It's nice to be benevolent. I don't believe in guns and God. I practice decency."

Mustafa finishes. The crowd greets him with loud boos. He raises his arms, flashes double 'peace' signs, and blows kisses to them.

RUTHIE

You hippy freak blood poisoner!

Mustafa blows a kiss to Ruthie. Sits next to Junior.

JUNIOR

What the hell was that? Are you nuts, or what?!

BOBBY

He thinks he's a songwriter.

MUSTAFA

What happened to Emily?

Ruthie wags a finger at Mustafa.

JUNIOR

Let's try to get out of here in one piece. C'mon!

MUSTAFA

What? No dinner?

Junior gets up. Mustafa hesitates, then he and Bobby leave the table and follow Junior out the door.

EXT. DEW DROP INN - NIGHT

Mustafa, Bobby, and Junior make their way toward Junior's car. Ruthie and the two grandsons follow.

RUTHIE

Hey! 'Trouble With Hubble' boy!
Where ya think you're goin'?

HERMAN

You're gettin' an ass kickin'!

NOAH

I'm gonna kick more than yer ass!

JUNIOR

Look, boys, it was just a harmless song. Let's not get carried away.

HERMAN

Exactly. That's what's gonna happen to all of you. You're gonna get carried away.

MUSTAFA

Is that so?

Noah swings a roundhouse right hand at Mustafa. The alien dodges it with ease. Waves his hand in Noah's direction, a foot from his chin.

A loud SMACK, but nothing touches Noah. He crumples in a heap, as though struck by a punch.

HERMAN

Why, you -

The bullish Herman charges at Mustafa, who makes a motion like a bullfighter. Herman smashes into a garbage can.

RUTHIE

Jesus! He's so fast, I didn't see the punches comin'!

Ruthie turns and runs. Mustafa sweeps both hands, like a baseball umpire giving the 'safe' sign. Ruthie is ten feet away from Mustafa, but she slips and slides face-first into the wall of the building.

All three assailants lie unconscious.

Junior stares, dumbfounded. Mustafa claps his hands.

BOBBY

(to Junior)

He's got skills, huh?

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mustafa and Bobby relax in the stuffed chairs. Junior paces about the room.

JUNIOR

You convinced me. You must be from another planet.

MUSTAFA

At last.

JUNIOR

It's about that cave, right? And, the cliff without a bottom?

MUSTAFA

Maybe. Go ahead, ask me some other questions first.

Junior stops. Looks Mustafa straight in the eye.

JUNIOR

How does time travel work?

MUSTAFA

That's above your pay grade.

JUNIOR

Exactly what does that mean?

MUSTAFA

It means, I can tell you certain things about the future. But, for your own good, and the good of earthlings, some things you shouldn't know. Not now.

JUNIOR

Give me a hint.

MUSTAFA

What would you say, if I told you it was a simple operation, and it mostly uses mirrors?

JUNIOR

Really?

Mustafa raises his arms and extends his palms outward.

MUSTAFA

(vague)

Well...

Junior looks at Bobby, who mimics Mustafa.

JUNIOR

If you were from 3002, you'd speak different. Not sound like you're from 2051. Or earlier.

MUSTAFA

I can draw on my brain and vast knowledge to speak in the language or vernacular of any place or time period. Poor Bobby had to school himself for a month before we came here.

JUNIOR

How far can you go into the future?

MUSTAFA

Future travel? Not possible. Only into the past, then return.

JUNIOR

Hmm... And, what's your favorite time period?

MUSTAFA

I suppose - it was the first century I came here.

BOBBY

He knew Cleopatra.

MUSTAFA

Bobby!

Bobby covers his mouth with his hands.

MUSTAFA

I did enjoy the 1960s. You could turn on, tune in, and hop out.

BOBBY

Uh uh. Drop out, not hop out.

MUSTAFA

Drop out?

BOBBY

Yes, father.

JUNIOR

That's another thing. You say you're so smart, but you get simple expressions wrong. Explain that.

MUSTAFA

Sure. Since my brain is far more developed than a human brain, it contains a tremendous amount of information. So, it prioritizes it. The less important information is more difficult for me to process and recall.

Junior stares long and hard at Mustafa.

JUNIOR

And, what do you really look like?

Bobby squirms in his chair.

JUNIOR

(to Bobby)

Do you know?

MUSTAFA

He won't tell you. And, if I revealed my true appearance, you couldn't handle it, believe me.

JUNIOR

I've been to space, I can take it.

Mustafa glances around the room. His eyes fall on the shelves, filled with books.

MUSTAFA

You've got quite a collection of books there, Junior. Science. And science fiction.

JUNIOR

Yeah, I bought them at the Old School Store. Had to special order a few of them.

MUSTAFA

I see a copy of "Childhood's End", by Arthur Clarke.

JUNIOR

Yeah, it's one of my favorites.

MUSTAFA

How about the part when the alien Karellen showed his true identity?

Junior thinks for a moment. Glances at the book shelves, then back at Mustafa, who grins.

JUNIOR

No.

Junior rushes to the book shelves, takes out a book, and opens it. Skims through the pages.

JUNIOR

It can't be.

Junior stops at a page. Mustafa giggles.

JUNIOR

(reads)

"There was no mistake. The leathery wings, the little horns, the barbed tail. All were there. The most terrible of all legends had come to life, out of the unknown past."

He shoves the book in front of Mustafa's face.

JUNIOR

This?

INSERT - BOOK ILLUSTRATION

A space alien walks down a spaceship gangway. A child sits on each arm and smiles. The alien is the classic embodiment of the devil. Bright red. Complete with horns, wings and cloven hooves.

BACK TO SCENE

JUNIOR

That's how you look? Like the devil? Lucifer?

Mustafa raises his arms and extends his palms outward.

MUSTAFA

(vague)

Well...

JUNIOR

Sweet Jesus.

Junior makes the sign of the cross.

MUSTAFA

Jesus won't help you. Or God.

JUNIOR

I'd expect a comment like that, after that stupid song you did.

MUSTAFA

I wrote it.

JUNIOR

I suppose nobody in 3002 believes in God?

MUSTAFA

Odds are against it.

JUNIOR

What's the percentage?

MUSTAFA

Oh, about - seventy-five to twenty-five. Something like that. Nobody's ever proved there was a God. No real evidence.

JUNIOR

I'll bet nobody proved there wasn't a God, either.

MUSTAFA

You're a scientist. You know that you don't prove a negative.

JUNIOR
So, you're saying, there's no God?

MUSTAFA
You might as well call me God.

JUNIOR
You have the nerve to say that to me? Somebody who was raised Catholic? Somebody who believes in something?

MUSTAFA
They don't call it blind faith for nothing, pal.

JUNIOR
I'm not your pal!

A knock on the door. Junior scowls at Mustafa.

JUNIOR
You shut the hell up.

Junior opens the door. Lisa carries a basket in her arms. Sees Mustafa and Bobby.

LISA
Oh. You've still got company. I saw your lights on.

She hands him the basket.

LISA
I baked you a pie.

JUNIOR
Thanks. Come in. Please.

Lisa hesitates, then follows Junior into the room.

LISA
Emily phoned me. She's kind of upset with you.

JUNIOR
That's been my pattern the last few days. You, Oliver, Emily -

LISA
No, everything's okay between us. I just overreacted.

JUNIOR
You sure?

She smiles at Junior, takes his free hand, and squeezes it.

JUNIOR

These are my - house guests.
Mustafa and his son, Bobby.

BOBBY

Adopted son.

MUSTAFA

Are you ever going to stop saying
that?

JUNIOR

We were just having a little debate
about religion and God.

LISA

(to Mustafa)

Judging from what I already know
about Junior, and what Emily said
about your performance tonight, I'd
guess you're against it, and
Junior's for it.

MUSTAFA

No comment. Junior told me to shut
the hell up.

Junior sets the basket with the pie on the dining table.

BOBBY

Oh, boy - pie!

Bobby grabs the pie out of the basket. Digs his bare hands
into the pastry and pulls out a huge piece. Starts to
gobble the pie at lightning speed.

MUSTAFA

He's hungry.

Lisa's eyes widen and mouth opens. Junior frowns and shakes
his head. Mustafa watches Bobby wolf down the piece of pie.

MUSTAFA

Junior hustled us out of that place
before we could eat. I'm so
hungry, I could eat a whore.

BOBBY

Horse!

MUSTAFA

Horse. You got a fork I can use,
Junior?

JUNIOR

Hmph.

MUSTAFA

(to Bobby)

Or... Penthouse Forum? We pretend we ordered a pie, but - oh dear - we don't have money to pay the delivery lady. Now, we've got to figure out some other kind of -

Bobby raises an eyebrow.

MUSTAFA

(clears throat)

- remuneration.

Lisa frowns and glares at Mustafa, then at Junior.

LISA

(sarcastic)

Enjoy yourselves.

She turns and storms to the door. Mustafa laughs.

LISA

(to Junior)

I'll talk to you later.

Lisa flings open the door and leaves. Junior glowers at both Mustafa and Bobby.

MUSTAFA

She's quite the babe, Junior. You really love her, don't you?

Junior fumes with anger.

JUNIOR

Alright! I've been patient with you two! Gone along with your twenty questions game, without getting the one answer I want! Now, you insult my girlfriend! I don't care if you hurt me, torture me, kill me! I want to know why you are here, what you want, and what it will take for you to leave!

Mustafa stares at Junior for several seconds.

MUSTAFA

I told you. I can't hurt an earthling unless I have to defend myself. But, if you'll give me a fork and a night's sleep, I promise I'll tell you everything, tomorrow.

Junior hesitates. Marches toward a doorway.

JUNIOR

I'll get your damn fork.

Junior enters another room. Mustafa turns to Bobby.

MUSTAFA

See what you can get if you ask
politely?

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lisa uses a feather duster around the kitchen shelves to wipe various items, pots, pans, cookbooks, and other culinary items.

She pauses in her work. Picks up the photo of herself and ten-year-old Tommy. Takes slow, deliberate, gentle strokes to clean it. Sighs. Replaces the photo back on the shelf.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mustafa and Bobby relax on the couch and watch a television program projected on the blank wall.

Junior comes in from another room. He wears a robe. Yawns.

JUNIOR

What are you idiots watching at the
crack of dawn? Cartoons?

He takes a look at the image on the wall.

JUNIOR

I don't believe it. "The Andy
Griffith Show"?

BOBBY

It's one of the good ones.

MUSTAFA

I told you I like the sixties.
Even those old, corny comedies.

JUNIOR

Did you take my I-Comm?! Are you a
thief too?!

MUSTAFA

Take it easy, keep your shit on.

BOBBY

Shirt on.

MUSTAFA

Are you sure? It's shirt?

BOBBY

Of course.

MUSTAFA

(to Junior)

Let me show you how we watch tv.

The IMAGE disappears. Mustafa holds both hands up.

MUSTAFA

Look, no hands.

JUNIOR

I don't get it. Where's your I-Comm?

MUSTAFA

Junior, I'm so very, very disappointed in you. You really don't think your dinky device lasted until 3002, do you?

BOBBY

He's a little dense, isn't he?

MUSTAFA

I suppose it's not all his fault.

Mustafa points to his head.

MUSTAFA

It comes from here, Junior. From the brain. You swallow a pill. Nanoparticles travel to the frontal lobe. All you have to do is think what you want, and it comes up.

Junior puts his hands on his hips in amazement.

MUSTAFA

But, enough of that. I promised to answer all your questions. Get dressed. And, close up that robe, it's quite disgusting.

EXT. JUNIOR'S FARM - DAY

Mustafa and Bobby wait outside the chicken coop. Junior comes out and holds an empty bucket.

JUNIOR

My chickens stopped laying eggs. The pigs are huddled in a corner. Cattle won't graze.

MUSTAFA

When we leave, everything will return to normal in a few hours.

JUNIOR

When's that gonna be? Soon?

MUSTAFA

We have to be at the exact coordinates where we appeared.

JUNIOR

Or what?

MUSTAFA

You see, too much exposure to time travel and our bodies start to degenerate... Well, come on, follow me. Vamoose!

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Mustafa leads Junior and Bobby to the cave entrance.

MUSTAFA

This is the place.

JUNIOR

So, it is all about this cave? Those symbols on the wall, what do they mean?

MUSTAFA

That's not a question I'm prepared to answer. Some of them match the crop circles I made.

JUNIOR

That was your doing? Why in the world did you do that?

MUSTAFA

Same reason I brought that cat back to life. I hoped those things would be warnings to you.

JUNIOR

You did that with the cat, too? All those things were warnings?

BOBBY

Or, maybe they were just jokes?

JUNIOR

But, the cat came back a wild animal. Feral.

MUSTAFA

It's a dumb cat. Puny brain. It couldn't fully comprehend what was happening. So, it freaked out.

JUNIOR

What happens if a human being falls off that cliff? It's happened before, right?

MUSTAFA

Basically, once a living thing falls down there, unless it's recovered in a day or two, it's usually lost forever. You nearly lost Emily that way.

JUNIOR

What were you trying to warn me about?

MUSTAFA

Okay, here goes... I'm asking you not to mess around with this. Don't try to bounce down the face of the cliff like a circus performer. But, most important. Don't tell anybody else about this. Especially that newscaster dame.

JUNIOR

Emily and my neighbor already know about this.

MUSTAFA

They're not going to blab to anyone. Both of them want you to forget about it.

JUNIOR

You can't just threaten or force me to keep away from it?

MUSTAFA

I told you, I am forbidden to interfere that way. You have to do it yourself. Voluntarily.

JUNIOR

Uh huh. And, exactly why should I forget about it? What is it about that cave? And, the cliff?

Mustafa takes a deep breath. Sits on one of the short tree stumps. Bobby watches Junior pace around.

JUNIOR

Tell me.

MUSTAFA

Well, I can tell you this. It's not the doorway to hell. What do you think it is?

JUNIOR

I don't know. A portal? A time portal, or a portal to another dimension? Like a wormhole? Or a black hole?

Mustafa purses his lips and forces a laugh.

JUNIOR

C'mon! Tell me!

MUSTAFA

Do you believe in reincarnation?
Ghosts?

Junior stops pacing.

JUNIOR

What does that have to do with - ?

MUSTAFA

You want to know or not?

JUNIOR

Of course I do.

MUSTAFA

What would you think if I told you
one of my duties involved the
spirits of dead humans?

JUNIOR

Spirits? That sounds pretty
religious to me, Mustafa. Don't
you really mean - souls?

MUSTAFA

Call them what you want. Would it
surprise you to know there are
three of these - portals, all
around the world?

JUNIOR

One each, for you and your two -
cohorts, I suppose?

MUSTAFA

And, what if my two cohorts and I
were to use these portals to take
human spirits and transfer them to
other humans, at the moment of
their conception?

Junior thinks for a moment, then bursts out laughing.

JUNIOR

That is the biggest load of crap
I've heard in a long, long time.
And, where do the ghosts come in?

MUSTAFA

What do you think might happen if
somehow a spirit doesn't get
accepted by an embryo?

JUNIOR

Let me guess. It becomes a ghost,
huh?

Junior scoffs.

JUNIOR

What happens if I don't, you know,
volunteer to leave it alone?

MUSTAFA

I can't tell you that.

JUNIOR

You can't tell me that?! You can't
tell me that?! You liar!

MUSTAFA

I am not allowed to lie.

BOBBY

He can tell you a half-truth,
though.

MUSTAFA

Shut up, Bobby!

JUNIOR

What happens?!

No response from Mustafa. Junior turns and begins to walk
away from Mustafa and Bobby in disgust.

MUSTAFA

Stop!

Mustafa goes up to Junior.

MUSTAFA

If you don't leave this cave alone,
something bad happens. To the
earth.

JUNIOR

You were on earth in 2051. You
wouldn't have to travel back in
time to try and stop me.

MUSTAFA

If you go through with your plan,
what do you think will happen? The
government will get involved.
They'll bring the military here,
scientists here. This place will
be under extensive study for a
thousand years. But, in 3002, they
discover something. And, they'll
do something that could jeopardize
the entire planet.

JUNIOR

Suppose everything you say is a big, fat lie? Suppose this place has something that will benefit mankind?

MUSTAFA

Is that what you really think?

JUNIOR

Here's what I think. Since 1990, I've been 'The Trouble With Hubble Astronaut'. I've been labelled a nut. I come back from the dead. Everyone still calls me 'The Trouble With Hubble' guy. My reputation is still in the toilet. But -

MUSTAFA

But?

JUNIOR

But, if I reveal this cave, or cliff, or - portal, all the name calling disappears. Everyone will believe I saw a UFO on that day... Maybe it was your ship?

BOBBY

Nice guess, Junior.

MUSTAFA

Shut up, Bobby! Junior, it wasn't my spacecraft. And, if you explore the cave, it won't happen the way you think it will.

JUNIOR

Why do you even care what happens to our world?

MUSTAFA

You want to know why we care about you earthlings? Because you have the ability to love. That's something our planet doesn't have. We don't understand it. But, we do admire you for it.

JUNIOR

Another crock! I'm not buying it, Mustafa!

BOBBY

Father, we're running out of time.

Mustafa glares at the teenager. Takes a deep breath.

MUSTAFA

Alright, Junior. I'll make a deal with you.

JUNIOR

What kind of deal could you offer that would -

MUSTAFA

I'll give you the cure.

Junior's body stiffens.

JUNIOR

Cure?

MUSTAFA

With everything I know about you, you think I don't know you have Gorham-Stout disease?

Junior stares hard at Mustafa.

JUNIOR

There's a cure?

MUSTAFA

In 3002, there is... You won't have ten years left, you'll have - decades.

JUNIOR

Decades, huh?

MUSTAFA

Of course. People in your time are living way past a hundred. With your age regression treatment, you could easily live another hundred-and-fifty years.

JUNIOR

You'll do that, if I - give up the cave idea?

MUSTAFA

Definitely.

Junior thinks for a moment.

JUNIOR

But, I'd still be 'The Trouble With Hubble Astronaut', for all those years. People will point at me. Laugh at me.

MUSTAFA

You still don't get it. Sure, people say they've seen UFOs. But, they weren't part of a NASA blunder. You were their scapegoat. Then, you attach yourself to goofballs with their hairbrained conspiracy theories, like a flat earth. Didn't matter it wasn't your fault with Hubble. What's the saying about printing a legend?

BOBBY

Ah... When fiction becomes a legend, print the legend.

MUSTAFA

Right. So, even if you expose this cave, this cliff, this portal, it won't make a difference. It won't erase you as the 'Trouble With Hubble' guy.

JUNIOR

Suppose you're wrong?

MUSTAFA

Then, you've got a decision to make, don't you? Think about it. Think long and hard, Junior. I need your answer by next morning. That's when we must leave.

JUNIOR

Tomorrow?

BOBBY

A stitch in time saves mine.

MUSTAFA

That's nine, Bobby. A stitch in time saves nine!

BOBBY

That doesn't make any sense. Nine? Nine what?

MUSTAFA

It's a sewing reference, Bobby!

JUNIOR

Shut up, both of you!

Mustafa and Bobby put an abrupt end to their debate. Gaze at Junior.

JUNIOR

I'll think about it. I'll let you know by morning.

INT. LISA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lisa uses a rolling pin to spread and thin out a hunk of dough on the kitchen counter. Next to her, a pie with the fruit filling exposed.

She drapes the rolled dough over the pie filling.

A knock on the door. Lisa keeps her attention focused on her work and doesn't look up.

LISA

Come in.

Junior enters. Lisa sees him and smiles.

LISA

I'm making another pie for you. I figured your hungry guests didn't leave much for you.

JUNIOR

That's great, thanks.

LISA

Let me finish.

Junior watches Lisa put the last touches on the pie crust. She opens the oven door, shoves the pie inside, and closes the door.

LISA

It'll be ready soon... Are your house visitors still there?

JUNIOR

No, they left this morning.

LISA

Good. Thank God.

She goes to Junior. They kiss.

JUNIOR

But, I have another guest.

LISA

Oh, brother.

JUNIOR

I think you'd like to meet this one. He's right outside.

Lisa hesitates, then sighs.

LISA

Okay, bring him in.

Junior goes to the door, opens it, and escorts TOMMY, Lisa's missing ten-year-old son into the kitchen.

Lisa gasps, puts her hands to her chest.

TOMMY

Mom!

LISA

Tommy!

They run to each other and embrace for several moments. Junior beams with a broad smile.

LISA

How - ? You're the same age when you disappeared! I don't understand.

She hugs him again. Looks to Junior for an explanation.

LISA

It's impossible!

Lisa holds Tommy at arm's length and stares at the boy.

LISA

But, it's true!

She kisses Tommy.

TOMMY

I'm back home, Mom.

LISA

But - how? Where were you, all this time?

TOMMY

I was lost, Mom. And, this man found me.

LISA

This is too incredible. Am I dreaming?

JUNIOR

It's not a dream, Lisa. Your dream just came true.

LISA

You did this? How?

JUNIOR

Well - let's just say, I made a trade.

She runs to Junior and kisses him. Returns to Tommy, hugs and kisses the youngster.

Junior folds his arms together. Leans against the wall.

JUNIOR

I'll leave you guys alone for a while.

She hugs and kisses Junior. Turns her attention back to Tommy. Tears come to her eyes.

Junior opens the door and leaves.

INT. OLIVER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The same size as Junior's living room. No dining table, but two couches, a rocking chair, two stuffed chairs, a coffee table, and a few paintings on the walls.

Oliver opens the front door to reveal Junior.

EMILY (O.S.)

Who is it?

OLIVER

Your father.

Emily hurries in from another room.

EMILY

Hi, Dad.

JUNIOR

Hi. Didn't realize you were here.

EMILY

I was just ready to visit you, to show you something.

JUNIOR

Oh?

Emily extends her left hand and reveals a sparkling diamond ring on her ring finger. She flashes it back and forth and radiates a broad grin.

EMILY

We're engaged.

JUNIOR

And, I'm - flabbergasted!
Congratulations!

He hugs Lisa. Shakes Oliver's hand.

JUNIOR

Fantastic. I guess I've got an early wedding present for you.

EMILY

Really? What is it?

JUNIOR

Hold on.

He disappears through the front door for a few seconds. Reappears with a wicker basket in his arms. A tiny black kitten lies inside.

EMILY

Oh, my goodness!

OLIVER

Junior!

Junior places the basket on the floor. The kitten hops out and jumps into Oliver's arms.

OLIVER

Oh!

Oliver cuddles the kitten. Gives a broad smile.

JUNIOR

I got him at the Old School Store. Picked out the friendliest one I could find.

OLIVER

He's gorgeous.

EMILY

What's his name?

JUNIOR

(to Oliver)
You tell me.

OLIVER

Why - Willie, of course. This is so thoughtful of you, Junior. If there's anything I can do - ?

JUNIOR

As a matter of fact, there is a favor I want to ask.

OLIVER

Anything.

JUNIOR

How about helping me push that boulder back into place?

A smile creeps over Oliver's face.

OLIVER

I'm happy to help you.

Junior gives Oliver a big hug.

JUNIOR
Thanks, buddy.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Back in place, the huge boulder fully covers the entrance hole to the cave.

The tractor with the cart contains potted plants and bushes, starter trees in buckets, and sacks of planting soil.

Several new plants, bushes, and small trees have already been planted around the cave entrance.

Junior hums a happy tune. Digs a hole with a shovel. Takes a bush out of a pot and transplants it in front of the large boulder.

He pauses, admires his work. Pulls a handkerchief from his pocket and wipes sweat from his face. Smiles.

JUNIOR
(to himself)
I've still got ten good years.

He takes a deep breath and exhales. Goes to the cart and grabs a bucket with a starter tree in it.

Junior selects another bare area around the cave entrance. Places the bucket on the ground. Grabs the shovel and begins to dig another hole.

INT. JUNIOR'S LIVING ROOM -DAY

Junior removes his sweaty, dirty shirt. Tosses it on the floor. Grabs a clean T-shirt from the couch and pulls it over his head.

He heads toward another room, but a high-pitched BEEP stops him. He reaches into his pocket and takes out his I-Comm device. The beep continues, and a light blinks from it.

JUNIOR
(into device)
Receive message and project.

An IMAGE POPS UP above the device.

INSERT - I-COMM IMAGE

The words "Thank You" appear and cover the entire scope of the image.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
What the heck is this?

MUSTAFA (V.O.)
Greetings, Junior.

"Thank You" DISSOLVES into a static shot of Mustafa.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
Oh, no. Sweet Jesus.

MUSTAFA (V.O.)
It's me, Mustafa.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
(sarcastic)
No kidding.

MUSTAFA (V.O.)
Just a message I've recorded for you. I wanted to thank you for going along with our wishes. And, therefore, saving the planet.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
Yeah. I'll bet.

MUSTAFA (V.O.)
As I told you, my people don't understand love. But, they do understand honor and self-sacrifice. I might get into trouble for doing this, but I left you something.

JUNIOR (O.S.)
Another song, I suppose?

MUSTAFA (V.O.)
It's in a small vial. Right next to your copy of "Childhood's End".

BACK TO SCENE

Junior goes to the book shelves. Sees a vial with blue liquid inside, next to a book and picks it up.

MUSTAFA (V.O.)
Don't bother trying any reverse engineering. It's designed specifically for your DNA. Kind of tastes like pineapple juice...
Long life to you, partner.

JUNIOR
Well, I'll be damned.

Junior gives a broad smile.

INSERT - I-COMM IMAGE

The same static shot of Mustafa.

MUSTAFA (V.O.)
I had it with me all the time.

JUNIOR (O.S.)

You son of a -

MUSTAFA (V.O.)

And, you were curious about what my actual alien body looks like. If you promise not to reveal this secret to anyone, I will satisfy your curiosity. Promise?

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Go ahead.

MUSTAFA (V.O.)

You're a man of honor, so I'm assuming you'll keep this to yourself.

JUNIOR (O.S.)

Of course.

MUSTAFA (V.O.)

Remember, I can't really lie to an earthling. Don't freak out too much. Are you ready?

JUNIOR (O.S.)

I'm prepared.

BACK TO SCENE

Junior gasps. Staggers backward.

INSERT - I-COMM IMAGE

Another still image reveals a creature with some of the facial features of Mustafa, in a peaceful expression.

The alien wears a white robe. Much of his body appears humanlike. With some notable exceptions.

Mustafa sports long hair, wings, and a halo.

The physical archetypal representation of an angel.

FADE OUT.

THE END