

THE MIRROR SPECIES

Written by

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EXT. GREEN BANK RADIO TELESCOPE - NIGHT

A radio telescope antenna soars in the night sky among the deserted green fields of West Virginia.

"Starman by David Bowie" plays from a radio.

SUPER:

"GREEN BANK RADIO TELESCOPE, 2052"

INT. TELESCOPE CONTROL ROOM - SAME

A small office lit only by the myriad of screens scattered on desks and walls. They show various dark sky photos and radio waves.

DR. JOSEPH MOORE (40s) - curly blond hair, nerdy - is sitting at the desk in front of a computer. He hums the song coming from the radio on his desk.

JOSEPH

(hums)

*There's a starman waiting in the
sky. He'd like to come and meet us.
But he thinks he'd blow our minds.*

He quickly types on the keyboard. Multiple windows open on his monitor.

He TURNS OFF THE RADIO. *Starman by David Bowie* stops. He wears a couple of headphones.

Joseph sits still carefully listening.

We hear some background noise through his headphones...then MUSIC. Jazz music.

He takes the headphones off, looks around him and checks the radio is still off. Then wears the headphones again.

Still the same music.

Joseph switches to another screen and types again on the keyboard. He zooms into a portion of sky.

He stares - jaw dropped - at the screen showing a planetary system. We can't see the name.

EXT. NASA HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

It's midnight in Washington. Silence in the streets. Just a few cars parked outside the NASA headquarters.

The NASA logo illuminated by the moonlight.

INT. NASA ASTROBIOLOGY DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

A messy office with space-themed posters everywhere.

A hand slips inside a packet of chips...the hand of DR. KYLE RICHARDSON (30's), a young black guy with a casual outfit and a "Bazinga!" t-shirt.

He spins on his chair and SIGHS.

KYLE

These night shifts are wearing me
out, man.

Behind him at the opposite desk there is DR. CHRISTOPHER PRICE (40's), a middle-aged man with a more serious look than Richard's one.

CHRIS

You're telling me.

Kyle BOUNCES a Jupiter-like rubber ball against the wall.

Chris refreshes a web page on his computer again and again.
Suddenly something APPEARS.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Here it is.

Kyle LAUNCHES the rubber ball away and SLIDES to Chris with the chair. They both stare at the screen.

Chris keeps scrolling the page until the end. We read: *Failed*.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Shit.

KYLE

How's that possible?

CHRIS

I don't know. It was all perfect.

KYLE

A leak in the bio-dome shell?

CHRIS

We would have known before.

KYLE

Wrong environmental parameters?

CHRIS

I checked them personally.

KYLE

There must be something.

Chris sighs.

CHRIS
Five out of seven failed harvests.

KYLE
At this rate we will never even
satisfy the request.

CHRIS
My turn is over anyway. I'm
leaving. You mind?

KYLE
Don't worry. I'll be out in half an
hour.

Chris takes his jacket from the chair and his bag.

CHRIS
See you tomorrow.

KYLE
'night.

INT. NASA HEADQUARTERS - LATER

Chris walks down a corridor. From the other side a woman and an
Air Force Major walk down in the opposite direction arguing.

The woman is TESS STEWART (30's), a young woman with short hair.
She wears the uniform.

Chris walks past them and greets with a nod.

TESS AND THE MAJOR

TESS
I sent the transfer request over a
month ago. I expected an answer.

MAJOR
You can't understand.

Tess stops and blocks the way to the Major.

TESS
What I can't understand?

MAJOR
We are short of pilots and personnel.
We can't afford to send a precious
resource like you to Mars.

TESS

It's always a bureaucratic question.
You said that the colony is the next
step for mankind. If I'm so precious
like you say tell me why I'm not
there.

The Major looks at Tess with an expression of compassion.

MAJOR

I'm sorry. The administration has a
very specific plan. And in that plan
you don't go to Mars. At least for
now.

The Major goes around her and walks away.

Tess stands there. She SIGHS and PUNCHES the wall.

TESS

(to herself)

Fuck.

INT. CHRIS HOUSE - LATER

Chris opens the door and walks in. He puts the keys on the
table, down the bag, and walks into the

LIVING ROOM

JULIA (40's), his wife, sleeps on the sofa. Chris moves her
slightly to wake her up.

CHRIS

Jules?

Julia opens her eyes.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Hey, good morning.

JULIA

What time is it?

CHRIS

About one in the morning.

JULIA

You always come home so late.

CHRIS

I'm sorry. The work--

JULIA

--I know. I know.

CHRIS
Is Halley awake?

JULIA
You know she doesn't go to sleep
without dad's goodnight.

INT. HALLEY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

HALLEY (8), Chris' daughter, reads a book in her bed with the
lamp on the bedside table. Chris walks in.

HALLEY
Dad!

CHRIS
Hey my love!

Chris runs towards her and hugs her.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
How are you? What are you reading?

Halley shows him the book cover: *The Solar System*.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Wow! Just like your dad.

She chuckles.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Do you know what dad and uncle Kyle
did at work today?

Halley shakes her head: no.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
We helped some scientists planting
plants in space. On the space station!

HALLEY
Really?

CHRIS
Yes. And those plants will feed many
many people.

HALLEY
(hugs him)
You are a hero!

Chris chuckles - hesitant.

CHRIS
Yes...your hero...

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

A small space-themed coffee shop. Kyle enters and sits next to a girl at the counter.

KYLE

Hey.

The girl walks away. Kyle sighs and orders a beer.

TESS (O.S.)

Unlucky night?

Tess comes out and sits next to him.

KYLE

Like every night.

TESS

I get you.

She gestures the bartender a beer for her.

Kyle chuckles.

KYLE

You're not my type anyway.

TESS

Calm down, Django. I'm not flirting.

Kyle looks at her. Dazed.

TESS (CONT'D)

Sorry. Tough day.

KYLE

Wanna talk?

TESS

Just...problems at work.

The bartender brings the two beers on alien head shape mugs.

Kyle looks at her. Tess hesitates.

TESS (CONT'D)

I asked for a transfer to the colony.

KYLE

You work at NASA too?

TESS

Tactical astronaut.

KYLE

Astrophysicist.

Tess nods.

KYLE (CONT'D)

So how does it feel to think of leaving Earth?

TESS

I don't know. I won't leave it unfortunately.

KYLE

Unfortunately?

TESS

The further I move away from the scum which is humanity, the better.

KYLE

Sounds a little bit pessimistic.

TESS

Just a bit.

KYLE

Do you know that there people on Mars too?

TESS

About fifty. Well selected. They might still be dickheads. But well selected.

INT. CHRIS AND JULIA BEDROOM - LATER

Chris and Julia sleeps together. Suddenly Chris' phone RINGS. He slowly wakes up and answers.

CHRIS

Hello?

JOSEPH (V.O.)

Chris! Where are you?

CHRIS

Sleeping in my bed.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

You need to come here. Now.

CHRIS

W-wait Joseph. That's you? Where are you?

JOSEPH (V.O.)

Green Bank.

CHRIS
You on the night shift too huh?

JOSEPH (V.O.)
No bullshit Chris.

Julia wakes up too clearly irritated.

CHRIS
What happened?

JOSEPH (V.O.)
I can't explain over the phone. Come
here as soon as possible.

CHRIS
Give me a reason to.

JOSEPH (V.O.)
SETI.

Joseph hangs up.

Chris looks at the phone. It's about 3:00 P.M.

JULIA
What's going on?

Chris gets up and gets dressed.

CHRIS
It was Joseph. From the telescope. I
have to go there.

JULIA
Now?

CHRIS
It's really really important.

Julia sighs.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
I'll come back as soon as possible.
(kisses her)
I love you, bye.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

Kyle and Tess laughs together. Kyle's phone rings.

KYLE
Hold on.
(answers)
Hello?

INTERCUT CAR/COFFEE SHOP

CHRIS
It's me. Get dressed.

KYLE
I'm already dressed. What's going on?

CHRIS
Perfect. I'll pick you up in fifteen minutes.

KYLE
Pick me up?

CHRIS
We're gonna make a nice trip to Green Bank.

KYLE
At three in the morning.

CHRIS
No time to explain.

KYLE
Well I'm at the coffee--

CHRIS
I know.

Chris hangs up.

BACK TO THE COFFEE SHOP

KYLE
(to himself)
How did he know?

TESS
What's going on?

KYLE
My colleague needs me.

TESS
Now? Must have found aliens.

KYLE
I hope so. Enjoy the beer.

Tess lifts the beer as if to toast.

TESS
Count on it.

INT. GREEN BANK RADIO TELESCOPE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Chris and Kyle walk down a corridor at a rapid pace.

KYLE

Hope it's important to be here at four
in the morning.

CHRIS

Years ago Joseph and I worked at SETI.
Search for--

KYLE

--Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence. I
know what it is.

CHRIS

What it was. The SETI Institute was
closed after eighty years of activity.
With dying Earth and starving people
no one was interested in looking for
aliens.

KYLE

And?

CHRIS

We never really gave up. We have
always believed in it. So we agreed
that if one of us found evidence of
extra-terrestrial intelligence he
would have to use the word SETI and
the other would be forced to listen.

KYLE

Like a secret word.

CHRIS

Exactly.

KYLE

I bet he used it.

CHRIS

He did.

Chris turns the corner and SMASHES a door into the

TELESCOPE CONTROL ROOM

Chris and Kyle walk in. Joseph, still sitting at his desk, turns
to them.

JOSEPH

Chris! Come here.

On the main screen various radio waves.

CHRIS
What did you find?

JOSEPH
Listen.

Joseph hits the space bar on his keyboard. The jazz music he heard earlier ECHOES through the room.

KYLE
Is this a jok--

Chris gestures with his hand to shut up. Kyle does.

Chris listen carefully to the audio more and more times.

CHRIS
An echo of our telecommunications?

JOSEPH
Negative. I checked over and over again. I also made it check by my team.

Joseph points to a group of young asian nerdy scientist in a corner of the room. They wave at them.

CHRIS
Where does it come from?

JOSEPH
Here comes the best.

Joseph types on the keyboard. A map of the sky appears on the screen, zooming in on the Centaurus constellation. Another zoom on a star system.

A large text appears in the corner: *Proxima Centauri*.

Everyone stares at it. Chris' face is a mixture of fear and excitement.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Do you think it's a coincidence?

Chris' eyes can't stop jumping from a part to another of the screen.

INT. NASA HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

Two NASA administrators and an high-ranking Air Force officer pace down the corridor.

The one at the center is RANDY GOMEZ, NASA administrator, elegantly dressed. At his right WAYNE TURNER, NASA deputy administrator.

At his left Major ELIZABETH SANDERS (50s), Air Force Major. A serious and resolute person. A true patriot.

INT. NASA CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Chris, Kyle and Benjamin sit at the table.

Randy, Wayne and Sanders open the door and walk in.

RANDY

I hope this early-morning and totally unexpected meeting is worth it.

They sits at the table in front of them. Sanders and Wayne remain silent. Chris looks at them intimidated.

CHRIS

Thank you for your time. I'm Dr. Christopher Price. These are my colleagues Dr. Kyle Richardson and Dr. Joseph Moore--

RANDY

--Tell us the reason of this meeting Dr. Price. Fast.

CHRIS

Dr. Moore was doing his routine work at Green Bank last night when he got a strange signal. And--

KYLE

--We found aliens.

A deep silence falls in the room. The three look at Kyle.

Chris GLARES at him.

KYLE (CONT'D)

(to Chris)

I just explained it in a simple way. We don't have much time.

RANDY

You what?

WAYNE

(to Randy)

Spoiler. It wasn't worth it.

CHRIS

It's not as trivial as it sounds.

WAYNE

It seems so.

JOSEPH
We have detected a human signal
outside of Earth.

RANDY
What kind of signal?

KYLE
Music.

Wayne laughs.

SANDERS
Telecommunications' eco. Beginner's
mistake.

CHRIS
We have already checked several times.
That signal comes from Proxima
Centauri. That's why we're here.

RANDY
Let's assume you are right.

Chris's phone VIBRATES. A call from Julia. He ignores it.

RANDY (CONT'D)
What do you want us to do?

CHRIS
Investigate.

RANDY
How? Visiting them?

CHRIS
Actually a diplomatic and scientific
expedition would be useful to--

RANDY
--It's a waste of time.

Randy gets up. Wayne and Sanders get up too.

RANDY (CONT'D)
This meeting is over. Have a good day.

They all walk towards the exit. Chris wants to say something to
stop them, he doesn't know what.

His hands shake. He violently PUNCHES the desk.

CHRIS
DEATH!

Randy, Wayne and Sanders stop and turn to him.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Earth is dying. People are dying. This is what we'll go into as a species if we don't find a way to survive.

RANDY

I'm aware Dr. Price. We are already achieving big results--

CHRIS

--but not enough! Not enough. You may not even know the names and faces of those who work for you but I am an astrobiologist here. I know the last crops have failed.

SANDERS

And running against hypothetical aliens could save us?

CHRIS

Maybe.

SANDERS

Or maybe kill us.

KYLE

Classic military argument.

SANDERS

I'm just protecting my planet.

RANDY

Stop!

Everyone falls silent. Randy ponders.

RANDY (CONT'D)

All right. You'll have your mission.

Chris looks at Kyle in amazement.

RANDY (CONT'D)

But Major Sanders will be in charge.

CHRIS

What?

SANDERS

What?

RANDY

(to Chris)

And you will have scientific responsibility for the mission.

CHRIS

I don't want a military to lead my diplomatic expedition.

SANDERS

I don't want to waste my time running
around the galaxy behind them.

RANDY

No arguments. I decided. Your careers
are at stake.

Randy and Wayne walks out of the room. Sanders and Chris look at
each other - both with a look of disapproval.

KYLE

It could have been worse.

INT. CHRIS HOUSE - DAY

Julia sits on a stool painting a colorful painting about their
family. Chris hugs her from behind.

CHRIS

It's beautiful.

Julia continues to paint.

JULIA

Thank you.

Chris sighs and sits next to her.

CHRIS

I know you're upset. But work takes me
a lot of--

JULIA

--Time. You say that every day.

Julia puts down the marker and stands up.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Will things ever change?

CHRIS

I actually have to give you some news
but you won't like them.

Julia deeply look at him in his eyes.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I'm leaving. For space.

She sighs. She's about to cry.

JULIA

In the end that's where you've always
wanted to be.

CHRIS

Jules. Please. Don't say that.

JULIA

It's the truth. You have always cared more about your job than us. And it continues to be so.

CHRIS

I do what I can--

JULIA

--You don't.

They both remain silent on the verge of tears.

JULIA (CONT'D)

At least tell me why.

CHRIS

We have detected a signal that may be of extra-terrestrial origin. Getting in touch with another civilization could be the salvation of mankind.

JULIA

The salvation of mankind.

CHRIS

Jules my job is about that. I need to leave Halley a place to live. I need to go up there among the stars. Do you understand that?

JULIA

(in tears)

No. But I hope to understand it one day.

EXT. CHRIS HOUSE - LATER

Chris loads the last few bags into his car. Kyle helps him.

CHRIS

I take the last one.

Julia comes out and walks over to Kyle. She tries to hide her mood behind a smile.

JULIA

Hey Kye.

KYLE

Jules! Nice to see you. How's your work?

JULIA
Well...colorful.

They both laughs. Julia turns serious quickly.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Please tell me Chris will be safe up there.

KYLE
The best astronauts and Air Force officers will be with him.

Chris arrives to load the last bag.

JULIA
(to Kyle)
I'll feel safer if you'll be there.

KYLE
Well I...I don't think...I mean...I'm just an astrophysicist so...I don't think I can go with them.

CHRIS
Oh yes you can. And you will. You are my right hand. Am I leaving for Proxima Centauri with you on the ground? No.

KYLE
What? No no no. Sorry Jules but there's no way they can take me into space.

EXT. NASA LAUNCH RUNWAY - DAY

A small modern shuttle is stationary on the runway, waiting for take off. The engines smokes. Hot and ready to go.

KYLE (O.S.)
Why do I always get involved in these things?

INT. SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

Chris and Kyle sit nearby. Some seats further Major Sanders is very relaxed.

CHRIS
Because you like them.

KYLE
No. Kyle likes to keep his ass on ground.

BOARD COMPUTER (V.O.)
Preparation stage complete. Fifteen
seconds to the launch. Fifteen,
fourteen...

The countdown continues in the background.

CHRIS
Too late to complain. Buckle up.

KYLE
Did I ever tell you I have air
sickness?

CHRIS
That's why there are like five vomit
bags under your seat.

KYLE
Thanks God.

The countdown goes on: ten, nine, eight.

Kyle desperately searches for the bags but can't find them.

KYLE (CONT'D)
There's nothing here.

CHRIS
Sure? Maybe it was the wrong seat.
This is number eight?

Kyle looks at him in fear. The countdown goes on: six, five...

KYLE
This is number four.

CHRIS
My fault.

BOARD COMPUTER (V.O.)
Two. One. Liftoff.

EXT. NASA LAUNCH RUNWAY - SAME

The engines ignite with a LOUD ROAR and a CLOUD OF SMOKES and
FLAMES. The shuttle accelerates.

KYLE (O.S.)
I don't wanna dieeee!

The shuttle leaves the runway in no time and takes off towards
the clouds.

EXT. EARTH'S ORBIT - LATER

The shuttle gently floats in space, heading for the Orbital Station. Through the window we see

INSIDE THE SHUTTLE

Kyle's head in a vomit bag.

CHRIS

Nice joke.

KYLE

Does it seem like I'm laugh--

He has another retch.

CHRIS

Luckily I got the bags out quickly.

BACK TO OUTSIDE

As the shuttle approach the Orbital station we see some empty gray bio-domes.

INT. ORBITAL STATION CORRIDOR - LATER

Chris and Kyle stand in front of a large window that overlook the outside space and the Earth.

CHRIS

It's dying.

Kyle, deep in thought, is surprised by Chris.

KYLE

What?

CHRIS

The Earth. The planet that has made our home for so long is dying.

Kyle nods. Back looking outside.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

And those who can do something are over there procrastinating. Living their lives as if nothing had happened.

KYLE

You mean Gomez? He's the NASA administrator but knows little about aeronautics and space. He's a facade politician like everyone else.

CHRIS

A facade politician with great power
over the fate of mankind.

KYLE

Chris. You know that if this mission
goes wrong it would be grounds for
dismissal. And an excuse for the
unnecessary spending of funds. The
Council would be on Gomez's side. It
doesn't matter if he's wrong or not.

CHRIS

I know. But if I have to choose
between risking the fate of humanity
and Halley and risking my job, I
prefer the latter.

TESS (O.S.)

Hello again, Django.

Chris and Kyle turns to Tess, who stands behind them.

KYLE

Tess?

CHRIS

Do you know her?

KYLE

(to Tess)

What are you doing here?

TESS

I've been called on a strange trip for
Proxima Centauri. I suspected you were
in too. Nice destination anyway.

KYLE

You're in the team too?

TESS

The mission is classified. No official
documents, no preparation meeting. I
asked to come to inform you. Follow
me.

INT. ORBITAL STATION HANGAR - LATER

The Prosperity spaceship is docked at the hangar. A brand new,
not too modern ship.

Chris admires it.

CHRIS

What a gem.

SANDERS (O.S.)

For sure.

Chris turns around. Sanders stands behind him.

SANDERS (CONT'D)

It cost the government quite a bit.

A beat. Sanders joins him in admiring the ship.

CHRIS

Major.

SANDERS

Doctor.

CHRIS

Permission to ask a question?

She understands the provocation.

SANDERS

Granted.

CHRIS

The name Prosperity. Why?

SANDERS

The first human ship to leave the solar system. If this is not a sign of prosperity, I don't know what it is.

CHRIS

Or maybe some nerdy Star Trek fan like me has a hand in it.

SANDERS

(chuckles)

Maybe.

They both remain silent, looking at the ship.

SANDERS (CONT'D)

We got off on the wrong foot.

CHRIS

Agree.

SANDERS

I just want to protect my loved ones at my best.

CHRIS

And I just want to save my loved ones at my best.

SANDERS

Such similar goals.

CHRIS
And still so different.

SANDERS
I don't want to be an obstacle to your mission Chris. But don't think I'll break the rules or my duties.

CHRIS
I don't expect anything else from you, Major.

Sanders nods smiling. Chris too.

INT. PROSPERITY COMMAND BRIDGE - LATER

Chris, Kyle, and Sanders arrive on the Prosperity's command bridge.

A man sits on the captain's chair. He's JASON MARTINEZ (50s), highly decorated NASA astronaut, tall and muscular, a calm and rational person but too old fashioned.

TESS
This is Jason Martinez. The Prosperity captain in charge for the mission.

Jason greets them with a nod. They do the same.

KYLE
(whispers)
Man of many words.

SANDERS
(to Jason)
Captain.

JASON
Major.

SANDERS
Ready for departure?

JASON
Warp drive hot and ready.

SANDERS
Head for the outer Solar System. Don't spare horsepower.

Jason types on his controls. He ponders.

JASON
Major, what's the meaning of this mission?

SANDERS

Excuse me?

JASON

We are going in search of aliens for real?

SANDERS

I realize it may seem...controversial. But I trust the administration and their decisions. If there's a hope of saving us out there, it's worth risking. Let's see how high this rocket can fly.

Tess checks somethings on her monitors. Chris arrives.

CHRIS

I'm curious. What do you think about...

Chris points to Jason with his eyes. Tess looks at him confused.

TESS

What?

Chris continues to point to Jason.

CHRIS

(whispers)

The captain.

TESS

You mean Mr. Nasa Macho?

He nods: yes.

TESS (CONT'D)

Highly decorated NASA astronaut. More than fifty missions in space including five to Mars and something like a thousand hours of training.

CHRIS

A true workaholic.

TESS

Isn't that the person you want by your side when life support breaks and kills us all?

CHRIS

Has anyone ever told you that you are an incurable optimist?

TESS

Every day.

Jason sits still on the captain chair looking at the myriad of screens in front of him.

Kyle arrives.

KYLE
Captain.

JASON
(without looking away)
Doctor Richardson.

KYLE
You know my name!

JASON
Dr. Kyle Richardson. Graduated in
Astronomy and Astrophysics from
CALTECH. Astrophysicist at NASA.
You were hired thanks to your
brilliant work on gravitational
waves years ago. Now you are Dr.
Price's right hand.

KYLE
Seems you know me better than my
mother.

JASON
I always study my crew before a
mission to know who I have to deal
with.

KYLE
Uh...so precise.

JASON
We wander into space inside a
spaceship weighing about one
hundred thousand tons and powered
by some sort of nuclear reactor. We
MUST be precise.

KYLE
So what's your idea of me, captain?

Jason turns, looking at him for the first time.

JASON
Do you really want an answer?

EXT. SOLAR SYSTEM OUTER SPACE - LATER

The Prosperity passes close to Mars, heading for the outer
Solar System.

INT. PROSPERITY CREW QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Tess looks at Mars outside the ship window.

Kyle lays on his bed listening to music.

KYLE

Why are you in such a hurry?

TESS

What?

KYLE

Why such in a hurry to leave Earth?

Tess grabs a photo from her wall and lends it to Kyle. It's a photo of her and her husband with a spacesuit.

TESS

Tyler. My husband.

KYLE

He was an astronaut too?

TESS

No. We were both special agents. I have always thought humanity is scum, few exceptions. As special agents we could catch the worst of that scum. Until one day he got a bullet in the wrong place.

KYLE

I'm sorry.

Kyle gives the photo back to Tess.

TESS

After that I resigned. I went through an empty period and then joined NASA to honor his passion for space.

KYLE

So being on Earth remind you of him.

TESS

This planet gave me more problems than anything else. I just want to leave.

Kyle nods.

KYLE

Well I don't think I'm the best person to talk about this. I've never even found my soul mate.

TESS

Soul mate?

Tess chuckles.

KYLE

Don't you believe in soul mates?

TESS

No. Do you?

KYLE

Actually...me neighter.

TESS

You suffered a lot.

KYLE

Is it noticeable that much? I've lost count of the times I've been rejected.

TESS

Rejection is not bad. It means that person was not for you.

KYLE

What if I was sure that person was for me?

TESS

I don't know. I don't want to tell you that sooner or later you will end up together. I hate expectations.

KYLE

Sometimes it's wise to keep our expectations low. That way we're never disappointed.

TESS

Very wise but...listen. I don't regret my time with Tyler. But trust me. It's better to be alone. Love ultimately brings only pain.

KYLE

Doesn't seem a nice thing to say.

TESS

I know. But that's the way I see it right now.

KYLE

Love brings a lot, both good and bad.

(MORE)

KYLE (CONT'D)

It's up to us to decide whether
it's worth going through everything
for a person.

TESS

I didn't make you so philosophical.

KYLE

You are the philosophical one here.

A BEEP indicates that the ship's loudspeakers have been
turned on.

JASON (V.O.)

(through speakers)

We just got out of the inner solar
system. All in your places. Ready
for the jump.

INT. PROSPERITY COMMAND BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

Everyone settles on the command bridge seats, fastening their
seat belts.

JASON

Whenever you want, major.

SANDERS

Let's go.

Jason activates the warp drive. We hear a BUZZZZZ increasingly
stronger.

The ship JUMPS into an hyperspace tunnel.

LIGHTS and FLASHES everywhere. The ship SHAKES violently as
it heads at light speed for Proxima Centauri.

EXT. PROXIMA CENTAURI OUTER SPACE

Proxima Centauri. A red dwarf star. Three planets orbiting
around it.

Suddenly the Prosperity JUMPS OUT of hyperspace.

INT. PROSPERITY COMMAND BRIDGE

The team is SHAKEN by the violent turbulences. Everyone but
Jason. He remains focused and lucid.

Various alarms ECHO across the command bridge. Lights flash
everywhere.

JASON

Exit from hyperspace!

KYLE
We have arrived?

JASON
Engine cooling start!

KYLE
We have arrived? Someone answer!

The alarms slowly go off one by one. The vibrations decrease.

A ray of light enters from one of the portholes, lightning the team's faces.

JASON
Welcome to Proxima Centauri.

Everyone breathes a sigh of relief.

KYLE
Do you know that Italian proverb,
Captain? Who goes slowly, goes
safely and goes far.

Chris unfastens his belt.

CHRIS
We needed to go fast this time.

He looks out of a porthole. The vastness of space and the Proxima Centauri star.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Look at that.

Kyle and Tess join him.

KYLE
The first humans to see this star.

TESS
It's very poor compared to our sun.

CHRIS
It's a class M5 red dwarf. Much
smaller and colder.

SANDERS
Surely fascinating but don't get
distracted. We're here for a
reason.

CHRIS
Come on, Major. Relax. Enjoy this
show for a minute.

Sanders hesitates. Then she approaches the porthole and looks outside with them.

The star's red light hits her eyes. She slightly smiles.

JASON (O.S.)
Major, you have to look at this.

Jason frames the Proxima B planet on the ship's main screen.

Everyone turns to Jason, shocked by what they see. Proxima B is IDENTICAL to the Earth. Continents, oceans, atmosphere. An exact copy.

SANDERS
What am I looking at?

JASON
Proxima B.

KYLE
This is the Earth.

JASON
Wrong. This is a live image of Proxima B. Just captured by our long-range cameras.

Everyone look at it confused.

KYLE
(to Tess)
You wanted to escape from Earth. And here it is again. Four light years away.

Tess looks at the screen, speechless.

SANDERS (O.S.)
What do you mean by "it's an exact copy"?

INT. PROSPERITY LABORATORY - LATER

Chris uses the laboratory big touch screen computer to analyze the planet.

CHRIS
Mass. Atmosphere composition. Continents. Oceans. Lakes. Cities. It's a one-to-one reproduction of our planet.

KYLE
We all agree that this is impossible, right?

CHRIS
But it's there. We can see it.

SANDERS

There must be an explanation.

CHRIS

There is no natural phenomenon that can explain it.

TESS

What's the probability for two planets to form the same exact way?

KYLE

Four light years from Earth with totally different stellar dynamics? Close to zero.

TESS

But not zero.

KYLE

It's not a coincidence that that signal is coming from right here. And what about the cities?

SANDERS

(to Chris)

I want a deeper analysis.

CHRIS

We'll have to disembark for that.

JASON

Wait a minute. Land on an alien planet?

CHRIS

Do we have a shuttle?

JASON

You are craz--

CHRIS

--do we have a shuttle, captain?

Jason looks at Sanders. She nods: yes.

JASON

Prosperity has a small hangar. There is a shuttle you could use. It's a bit scruffy, the paint is almost gone but it works fine.

CHRIS

(to Sanders)

At your orders.

Sanders looks at the holographic representation of Proxima B that floats above the table. She ponders.

SANDERS

Chris, Tess and Doctor Richardson
with me. Let's see what's down
there.

Chris nods. Kyle, Tess and him get prepared.

SANDERS (CONT'D)

(to Jason)

Stay in orbit and keep in touch.
This is an order.

Jason nods.

Sanders looks outside at Proxima B.

EXT. PROXIMA B ATMOSPHERE - DAY

The little shuttle WHIZZES through the stratosphere.

A lot of clouds cover the troposphere below.

INT. SHUTTLE - SAME

Tess pilots the shuttle with great skill and fluency.

SANDERS

Don't relax too much, commander. We
must assume we are in hostile
territory.

CHRIS

Where do we land?

TESS

According to the radar we are near
Washington.

KYLE

Let's go somewhere else. I've been
dreaming of taking a vacation to
Los Angeles for a lifetime.

CHRIS

Kyle.

KYLE

I was just suggest--

VOOOOOM! An aircraft WHIZZES past them at full speed. The
shuttle TREMBLES.

KYLE (CONT'D)

What the hell was that?!

TESS
I don't know.

A disturbed voice comes out from the radio. Tess makes some adjustments to hear better.

PILOT (V.O.)
(through radio)
Unidentified aircraft. This is the
United States Air Force. Identify
yourself.

Two military Air Force jets flank the shuttle.

TESS
Intercepted by our own colleagues.
Interesting.

Sanders picks up the radio.

SANDERS
This is Major Sanders. Vehicle
identification SSH-1301.

PILOT
(through radio)
Negative. Major Sanders is on the
ground and Shuttle 1301 doesn't
exist. Tell us another one.

TESS
Wait. I know this voice. He's
commander Daniel Hughes.

SANDERS
Didn't he die a year ago?

One of the pilots fires a warning missile that almost hit the shuttle. The shuttle TREMBLES dangerously.

TESS
He seems alive and well to me.

SANDERS
Evasive maneuvers!

INTERCUT OUTSIDE/INSIDE THE SHUTTLE

Tess firmly GRIPS the shuttle stick and begins a series of evasive maneuvers to outrun the jets.

The shuttle ACCELERATES and SWOOPS towards the planet. The jets accelerate too and chase it at full speed.

The three aircraft enter the troposphere in a chase through the clouds.

The military jets reach the shuttle and realign themselves alongside it, side by side, squeezing it in a vise.

PILOT
(through radio)
Last warning!

CHRIS
Tess?

Tess stares straight in front of her. Speechless.

The shuttle continues to swoop towards the ground which is getting closer and closer.

KYLE
Tess!

SWOOM! Tess reverses the engines thrust. The shuttle suddenly STOPS in midair as the military jets continue towards the ground.

PILOT
(through radio)
Shit!

Then she SPINS the shuttle around on itself and CRANKS UP the engines in the opposite direction, sowing the jets.

INT. SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

Tess breathes a sigh of relief, then suddenly cheers.

TESS
YESS! THIS IS WHAT I CALL FLYING!

SANDERS
I'd prefer to tell me next time
what you want to do, commander.

TESS
Noted.

EXT. WASHINGTON AREA (PROXIMA B) - DAY

A dense forest of trees far from the city. The shuttle lands among the trees lifting a bunch of leaves all over the area.

INT. SHUTTLE - SAME

Tess turns off the engines and all electronic equipment.

TESS
Turn everything off. I hope they
haven't tracked us so far.

KYLE

What's the plan?

SANDERS

Tess and Kyle, take a recon tour of the city. Report anything unusual and contact us by radio if you need help.

CHRIS

What about us?

SANDERS

Time to go back to NASA.

EXT. NASA HEADQUARTERS (PROXIMA B) - DAY

Chris and Sanders walk around the NASA campus.

SANDERS

If you look at this planet it looks like the Earth. But some details made me think. Like the satellites.

CHRIS

Satellites?

SANDERS

There were no satellites in orbit.

Chris ponders.

CHRIS

How can they be like us without satellites?

SANDERS

Exactly. How they can reproduce our reality without things of the reality itself? For example, look.

Sanders stops walking and points to the "sun" in the sky.

SANDERS (CONT'D)

The star is a red dwarf. Why it looks like our sun from here?

CHRIS

I didn't notice it.

SANDERS

There's something wrong.

CHRIS

How much advanced an alien species could be to build this?

SANDERS
You mean build like a simulation?

CHRIS
This is where you were going to.

An Air Force commander exits one of the buildings and notices Sanders. He greets her with a nod.

COMMANDER
Major! I thought you were at the control center.

SANDERS
I had other business nearby.

COMMANDER
Well, the new uniform is beautiful.
Have a nice day!

The commander walks away. Sanders and Chris look at her uniform.

CHRIS
New uniform?

SANDERS
I think we're attracting too much attention.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. (PROXIMA B) - DAY

Tess and Kyle walk down a busy street. A lot of car traffic. People walking up and down the sidewalk. Just like the Earth.

TESS
Can you believe it?

KYLE
It's like we stepped into a parallel universe.

TESS
These aliens are just copying us like this. Where's the originality?

KYLE
Maybe this is just a way for them to communicate with us and understand our way of life.

TESS
Come on, let's find something that will make the Major happy.

KYLE

Maybe we'll find some clues in that 80s themed coffee shop.

TESS

Oh great, more coffee. That's just what I need.

KYLE

Can we check it out?

TESS

Fine, but make it quick. We don't have all day.

KYLE

These themed coffee shops have the best atmosphere.

TESS

Oh joy. Another one of your hipster obsessions.

KYLE

Seriously. The retro decor is so cool.

TESS

Whatever. Let's just get this over with.

INT. 80'S COFFEE SHOP (PROXIMA B) - MOMENTS LATER

The two enter the coffee shop. A sound of 80s music plays in the background.

Kyle smiles from ear to ear as he looks around at the vintage posters and furniture. Tess rolls her eyes.

KYLE

This place is amazing! Look at all the cool stuff they have.

TESS

It's just a coffee shop.

KYLE

You have to appreciate the nostalgia.

TESS

I'm so thrilled to be in a coffee shop that looks like it's been stuck in the past for the past thirty years.

KYLE

Come on. You need to loosen up and enjoy the little things in life.

TESS

I'm sure the little things in life like an outdated coffee shop are going to bring me great joy.

The two continue to explore the coffee shop.

Kyle approaches the counter to order a coffee while Tess stands nearby - impatient. The barista, SARAH (30s), a young girl with curly hairs, greets Kyle with a smile.

SARAH

Hi, what can I get you today?

Kyle turns to her and freezes. He stares at her spellbound by her brown eyes illuminated by sunlight outside.

Then he quickly comes back to reality.

KYLE

(nervously)

Uh, j-just a black coffee please.

SARAH

Sure thing!

She starts making the coffee.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I haven't seen you around here before. New in town?

KYLE

We're just passing through. Actually I l-live in Georgetown. I'm Kyle.

SARAH

Sarah. Nice to meet you. Do you want your name on the cup?

KYLE

Yeah. Espresso.

SARAH

I asked for your name. Not for the type of coffee.

KYLE

Oh, s-sorry...Kyle. My name is Kyle.

SARAH
Okay Kyle, your coffee is on the way.

Kyle waits for his coffee. He doesn't know what to say.

KYLE
You seem good at your job.

SARAH
Thank you! What about you?

KYLE
I'm an astronomer.

TESS
(from the distance)
Can we please just get our coffee and go?

Sarah chuckles.

SARAH
Your wife?

KYLE
W-what? No, no, just a colleague.

SARAH
(hands over the coffee)
Here you go, Kyle. It was nice meeting you. Maybe I'll see you around town.

Kyle looks at her for a while.

KYLE
Yeah. I hope so.

Then he heads for the exit. As he's about to leave he notices that Sarah has drawn a little heart on the cup of coffee.

He turns to her. Sarah waves at him from the distance smiling.

INT. NASA HEADQUARTERS (PROXIMA B) - DAY

Chris and Sanders take up positions around a corner down a corridor. A little further on they see the Satellite Control Room.

CHRIS
Here it is!

SANDERS
(whispers)
Calm down.

Chris runs towards the entrance but Sanders grabs his arm and carries him back around the corner just in time to not be seen by...his clone. Chris.

SANDERS (CONT'D)

Shit.

Sanders closes his eyes and leans against the wall with a sigh of relief. He reopens them and...Chris is gone. Neither him, nor his clone.

She looks around. His eyes go back to the control room. She looks at it and heads towards the door of the

SATELLITE CONTROL ROOM

The room is almost empty. Just a few employees scattered here and there intent on working.

Sanders looks around and takes a seat at one of the computers.

EXT. CHRIS HOUSE (PROXIMA B) - LATER

The Chris clone approaches his house. The same house of Chris on the Earth. Chris looks at him in the distance. Then he crosses the street to follow him.

He hides between the bushes outside. Through the window he sees his clone and Julia kissing and hugging in the living room. They're happy.

Chris smiles and looks at the watch on his wrist. There's a photo of him, Julia and Halley behind the hands. His expression turns sad.

He looks up again. They're gone. He sneaks to the

BACK OF THE HOUSE

and silently moves between the foliage to reach the door on the back. He opens it and enters the kitchen.

Chris looks around and admires the house he has not seen for a long time.

JULIA CLONE (O.S.)

Chris.

He turns. Julia stands at the entrance of the kitchen.

CHRIS

Jules.

JULIA CLONE

I saw you ten seconds ago. What are you doing here?

Chris is speechless.

CHRIS
You-You are so beautiful.

JULIA CLONE
What?

Chris approaches her but...his clone enters the kitchen.
Chris looks at him. His face turns PALE.

CHRIS CLONE
Jules. Who's ther--

The clone notices Chris. His face turns pale too.

CHRIS CLONE (CONT'D)
Wait.

Julia is petrified too.

CHRIS CLONE (CONT'D)
Who are you?

CHRIS
This was not supposed to happen.

CHRIS CLONE
Who the hell are you?!

JULIA CLONE
Chris...

CHRIS CLONE
What are you doing in my house?

CHRIS
It's a long story...I-I'm not
supposed to be here.

CHRIS CLONE
You can swear it.

The Chris clone takes a baseball bat from a shelf and waves
it against Chris.

CHRIS CLONE (CONT'D)
You have five seconds to explain
this. Five.

CHRIS
Wait.

CHRIS CLONE
Four.

CHRIS
I can't--

CHRIS CLONE
--three.

CHRIS
You can't understand.

CHRIS CLONE
Two.

CHRIS
(covers himself with his
arms)
I'm from another planet!

The Chris clone stops.

CHRIS CLONE
What?

INT. SATELLITE CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

Sanders sits at the computer checking the NASA system.

A distinguished voice comes out from her radio.

JASON (V.O.)
Major. Jason here. Copy.

Sanders takes out the radio, stealthy.

SANDERS
Sanders here.

JASON (V.O.)
I have strange readings here.

SANDERS
What do you mean?

JASON
A fluctuation in the magnetic field
of the planet.

SANDERS
What's the entity?

JASON (V.O.)
Important.

SANDERS
Cause?

JASON (V.O.)
I don't know, Major. You guys are
down there. You have to tell me.

Sanders ponders...

SANDERS

Chris...

INT. CHRIS HOUSE (PROXIMA B) - SAME TIME

The Chris clone still holds the baseball bat.

CHRIS

I come from Earth. Planet Earth.
This is another planet.

CHRIS CLONE

This is planet Earth.

CHRIS

Look at this.

Chris gives his watch to Julia. The Chris clone and her look at the watch and the photo.

JULIA CLONE

That's Halley.

CHRIS CLONE

How's that possible?

CHRIS

I told you.

A beat.

CHRIS CLONE

So if you're from Earth. What about us?

CHRIS

We just arrived and we are trying to underst--

The Chris clone figure suddenly STARTS GLITCHING. His figure starts to warp and distort, while strange noises fill the air.

Julia starts to glitch too.

Chris falls to the ground stunned and runs out of the house.

EXT. NASA HEADQUARTERS (PROXIMA B) - MOMENTS LATER

Sanders PUSHES the door and RUNS out of the NASA headquarters. She picks up the radio.

SANDERS

Sanders to everyone.

INTERCUT RADIO SANDERS/JASON/KYLE AND TESS

SANDERS (CONT'D)

Chris is going after himself.

TESS

What?

SANDERS

Jason detected distortions in the planet magnetic field.

KYLE

So?

SANDERS

I think he broke the simulation.

JASON

Simulation? What are you guys talking about?

KYLE

The entire planet is a simulation. Chris met himself and this is destroying it.

SANDERS

We have to find Chris. Now.

KYLE

Copy.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. (PROXIMA B) - SAME TIME

Kyle and Tess run through a parking lot.

TESS

Kyle! Come here! We must be stealth.

KYLE

No. We have to find Chris as soon as possible.

Kyle notices an HOVERBIKE parked in the distance. He runs towards it.

TESS

Are you crazy?

Kyle reaches the hoverbike, climbs it and turns it on. We hear an ACUTE SOUND coming from the electric engine. The hoverbike starts floating.

KYLE

I always wanted one of these.

TESS

This is a very bad idea. Even for me.

KYLE

May be a bad idea. But also a fast idea. Come on.

Tess hesitates, then climbs the hoverbike too. Two futuristic motorcycle helmets materializes on their heads.

Kyle PUSHES the accelerator lever. The hoverbike WHIZZES away at maximum speed and uses a car parked nearby as a launching pad - flying away.

They fly all over the parking lot and land DRIFTING on the street.

KYLE (CONT'D)

YEEESSS!

-- ROCK MUSIC IN THE BACKGROUND

Kyle and Tess speed through the Washington streets with the hoverbike, dodging cars and people.

TESS

We have company!

Kyle looks behind them. A floating police patrol car chases them at full speed with SIREN and LIGHTS on.

Kyle accelerates. As they proceed through the city more police cars join the chase.

KYLE

We need to reach Chris' house!

TESS

We have to sow them first! We cannot lead them to him!

KYLE

Really?!

Kyle makes a close turn towards an alley, making a police car crash onto the traffic. The other cars follow him.

TESS

They're too many!

A policeman overlooks the car window with a rifle, aims at them and FIRES. A trident electric bullet HOOKS to the hoverbike and generates an electric discharge that puts it out of use.

The hoverbikes stops floating and violently HITS the terrain, sliding on the asphalt and knocking Tess and Kyle out.

They FALL to the ground. Four police cars surround them.

POLICEMAN #1
End of the race!

Another policeman arrives, takes Kyle by the arms violently pushing him to the ground and arrests him.

KYLE
It's really all the same!

INT. PROSPERITY COMMAND BRIDGE - LATER

Jason nervously walks up and down the command bridge. He picks up the radio.

JASON
Major Sanders, do you hear me?

He waits...no answers.

JASON (CONT'D)
Anyone on the ground, can you receive me?

Still no answers.

Jason throws the radio away. Then his eyes fall on a lever on the cockpit: "ATMOSPHERIC FLY MODE".

EXT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - LATER

The landscape totally changed. No more Washington or green hills. Only a DEVASTATED GRAY land. Incinerated trees everywhere. No trace of life.

The red dwarf Proxima Centauri lights the sky with a tiny red light.

In the distance, the Chancellor's Palace. A tall building BLACK AS PITCH. The red light reflection of the star is almost zero.

An armored van stops outside the palace. Four armed guards pull Chris, Tess, Kyle and Sanders out of the back.

INT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - THRONE ROOM - LATER

They enter a big room even more black than the outside.

Chris, Tess, Kyle and Sanders look around with hoad eyes. The four guards throw them on the ground.

They look up and at the center of the room they see...the THRONE. A throne made of oxidian slabs that stands on the rest of the room.

On the trone the Proxima B's CHANCELLOR sits still.

CHANCELLOR

Well well well. We have guests.

Sanders is weak, but she's the first to get up from the ground.

SANDERS

I am Major Elizabeth Sanders.
United States Air Force. From
planet Earth--

One of the guards HITS her in the back with his rifle, knocking her back to the ground.

GUARD #1

Nobody speaks without Chancellor's
consent here.

Sanders GROANS in pain on the ground.

CHANCELLOR

I want to know why four brats like
you from planet Earth have come all
the way here to poke their noses
into my business.

CHRIS

With all due respect. You have been
poking your nose into our business.
And not a little.

CHANCELLOR

Excuse me?

CHRIS

We know about the simulation.
Everything.

The Chancellor chuckles.

CHANCELLOR

Actually...I didn't expect this
farce to remain under wraps
forever.

(pause)

You know I could kill you right
now. But I think I owe you at least
some explanations first.

The Chancellor stands up.

CHANCELLOR (CONT'D)

Long ago my people lived in prosperity. The standard of living was high. The lands were green. Healthy. It was quite good. Then, one day, a violent solar flare hit the planet full and blew away much of its magnetic field. In an instant our civilization found itself centuries behind. Dead, wounded. What were once happy green lands turned gray and desolate.

KYLE

Then what happened?

CHANCELLOR

Over time the population halved. Someone died on the spot from the catastrophe. Others for the consequences. Starvation. I have seen my fellows die before my eyes. Nobody knew what to do. Scientists had already announced extinction.

TESS

Let me guess. Then you came along and saved everyone.

CHANCELLOR

I was specialized in interplanetary science. One of the most respected scientists at the time. And I refused to believe in the end of our civilization. So I locked myself away to look for a solution. And then I found out about your existence. And I created this.

The Chancellor projects a holographic image of a giant antenna above the throne.

CHRIS

A reality doubler.

CHANCELLOR

You are not so stupid in the end.

SANDERS

With such a level of detail.

CHANCELLOR

We have powerful telescopes and antennas. Everything detected from your Earth passes by this and is added to this reality. Unfortunately, information takes some time to get here.

(MORE)

CHANCELLOR (CONT'D)

As you may have noticed this reality a couple of Earth years behind yours.

CHRIS

You think you saved them? Trapping them in a reality that doesn't belong to them?

CHANCELLOR

Why waste time rebuilding a civilization from scratch...when I can replicate an existing one?

TESS

Son of a bitc--

A guard HITS Tess on the back. She groans in pain.

The Chancellor chuckles.

SANDERS

You prefer to let your people live in illusion...

CHANCELLOR

Yes! If that means saving them!

CHRIS

This is not saving them. It's deceiving them.

CHANCELLOR

You come here as if you are the leader. You tell me how to govern my people. Why don't you look in the mirror?

(points to the ground)

This mirror.

CHRIS

I remind you that you used us as a model.

CHANCELLOR

As a starting model. My plan does not end there. When we have reached the right capabilities we'll take off. We'll invade the earth. Your Earth. And at that point I won't need a reality doubler because that reality will be mine.

A warning siren RUMBLES through the room.

GUARD #1
(looks at a pad)
Chancellor! Unknown object detected
in the atmosphere.

CHANCELLOR
Ah. Your friend. I was waiting for
him. Prepare the cannon.

SANDERS
No!

GUARD #1
Wait. They're two. No, three. Sir,
they are multiplying.

The Chancellor looks at the monitor - stunned.

EXT. PROXIMA B STRATOSPHERE - SAME TIME

The Prosperity starship EMERGES from the gray clouds. A fleet
of repair drones emerge from the ship's lower hangar and fly
in different directions.

INT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

The Chancellor looks at the radar showing an increasing
number of flying objects.

CHANCELLOR
Fire!

EXT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

A cannon emerges from the palace's roof and starts shooting
against the Prosperity and its drones.

Some drones are hit. Others survive and proceed to the
palace. Prosperity takes a few hits but continues on its way
to the palace.

INT. PROSPERITY COMMAND BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Jason sits at the captain chair piloting the ship.

He quickly types on a monitor that shows one of the drones
armed with a bomb.

EXT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

The drone with the bomb separates from his drone friends and
lands on the roof, rolling for a few meters, then...BOOOOOM!

A big explosion on the roof BLOW OUT the cannon by blowing a hole in the palace.

INT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

The explosion BREAKS through the ceiling. A cloud of dust invades the room. Everyone falls to the ground.

We hear a STRONG ROAR of engines...then through the dust a BRIGHT BLUE LIGHT...the Prosperity.

A metal ladder descends through the dust to the ground.

Chris, Tess, Kyle and Sanders, one at a time, climb the ladders. While the others climb, Sanders takes one of the rifles and shoots three of the four guards.

Then she climbs too.

EXT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

The Prosperity retracts the ladder and flies away through the clouds.

TESS (O.S.)
What's the plan?

INT. PROSPERITY COMMAND BRIDGE - LATER

The Prosperity orbits around Proxima B, hidden among a field of asteroids.

Tess and the rest of the team stand around an holographic reproduction of Proxima B.

SANDERS
Jason. Show the strange readings
you had earlier.

Jason makes a gesture and an holographic window pops up.

JASON
Fluctuations in the planet's
magnetic field.

SANDERS
Jason detected them in the exact
moment Chris met himself.

They all look at each other.

TESS
Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

CHRIS

Some sorth of Granfather paradox.

KYLE

When you met yourself you made the other Chris aware of the reality.

SANDERS

Aware of the illusion. He created a flaw in their reality.

CHRIS

Actually he started glitching. It was...strange. Like he was transforming. Julia too.

SANDERS

They were returning to their original form. Did you see them?

CHRIS

No. I ran away.

KYLE

Your encounter changed them. And resulted in a change of the planet's magnetic field. The planet's distortion field weakened.

TESS

We found the weak point.

SANDERS

All we have to do is to go down over thee and meet ourselves. Make them aware of the illusion.

INT. PROSPERITY CREW QUARTERS - LATER

Kyle enters the room. He notices Jason bent over his bed. Clearly in a bad mood.

KYLE

Captain.

Jason immediately gets up.

JASON

Yes?

KYLE

The shuttle is ready.

JASON

Thanks. I'll reach you soon.

A beat.

KYLE
Everything okay?

Jason sighs. He can't hide it.

JASON
I don't want to go down on the
surface.

KYLE
(chuckles)
Fear of meeting yourself?

Jason sighs again. Kyle's expression becomes serious.

KYLE (CONT'D)
No. It's not. It's something else.

JASON
My daughter. We lost her two years
ago. Two years, four months and
seven days to be precise.

Kyle makes a quick calculation in his head.

KYLE
Hurricane Charlie.

JASON
The thought of seeing her again.

Jason is on the verge of tears. Kyle sits next to him.

KYLE
See it as an opportunity. Is there
something you wanted to tell her
for all this time?

JASON
A lot.

KYLE
Here we go. Go tell her.

JASON
I can't.

KYLE
Why not?

JASON
I just realized I spent almost my
entire life at work. I've been
always too busy to pass time with
her. With them.

KYLE
And now you feel guilty.

JASON
I don't know what to do.

Kyle poses a hand on his shoulder.

KYLE
I may not know much about love or family. But you have been bring this burden for too long. It's the opportunity to freene. Captain.

Jason looks up at him. He nods: yes. And slightly smiles.

EXT. PROXIMA B STRATOSPHERE - LATER

The Prosperity flies SILENT through the clouds.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP (PROXIMA B) - LATER

Kyle arrives at his usual coffe shop he used to go to since he arrived at Washington.

He steals an hat and a pair of sunglasses to a passerby and enters the shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP (PROXIMA B) - CONTINUOUS

Kyle enters the coffee shop. He immediately notices his clone sitting at the counter with a girl.

Kyle hesitates. A lot of memories re-emerge from the past. Bad memories. He takes breath and approaches the counter.

He sits next to him and orders a beer with a gesture.

KYLE CLONE
(to the girl)
So how's it going?

GIRL
Fine, thanks.

There's an embarassing silence between the two. Kyle is embarassed as much as his clone.

Kyle gets up and "accidentally" bumps into his clone spilling beer on his pants.

KYLE CLONE
Hey dude! Look where you go!

KYLE
(with disguised voice)
Sorry man, sorry.

The Kyle clone goes to the bathroom. Kyle looks around him and after a few seconds he follows him.

-- INTO THE BAR BATHROOM

His clone is washing up himself. Kyle enters taking off hats and glasses.

He takes his clone by the shirt and throw him against the wall.

KYLE CLONE

Hey dude, what's the problem?

KYLE

Listen to me, very carefully Kyle.

His clone takes a moment to look at him. He recognizes himself.

KYLE CLONE

WAIT. You are me?

KYLE

Listen. You have to go back home.
Now.

KYLE CLONE

Why? I'm drinking a beer with that beautiful girl. You saw her.

KYLE

Leave her. Forget her. She's surely beautiful but she will make you suffer.

KYLE CLONE

How do you know? Wait. Don't tell me you're some kind of guardian angel from the future. Did you come with a time machine?

KYLE

No bullshit Kyle. I just know.
Trust me.

KYLE CLONE

Why are you telling me this?

KYLE

Because this is fake. This entire world is fake. You live in a reality created from mine. From my planet.

His clone takes a moment to ponderate. That's a lot to assimilate.

KYLE CLONE
I feel weird. What's happening?

Suddenly he starts to GLITCH. Kyle takes his hands off him, wears his sunglasses again and leaves.

His clone GLITCHES more and more, slowly returning to a humanoid but not human form. An alien from Proxima B.

EXT. WASHINGTON CEMETERY - LATER

Tess walks between the myriad of graves of the cemetery. Suddenly she notices someone in the distance. A woman.

She gets closer and notices she's her. Her clone sits in front of her husband grave. An astronaut helmet lays near it.

Tess hesitates - she's about to leave. This is too much for her. But then changes idea. She gets strength and goes on.

TESS
Tess Stewart?

TESS CLONE
Leave me alone. Whoever you are.

TESS
I know how you feel right now,
Tess.

TESS CLONE
You don't.

Tess chuckles.

TESS
Trust me. I do.

Her clone suddenly raises her head. She recognized the voice. She dries his tears trying not to get noticed, then slowly gets up and turns.

TESS CLONE
Tess.

TESS
Tess.

TESS CLONE
How's that possible?

TESS
Didn't expect such a light
reaction.

TESS CLONE
You don't know so much yourself
then.

TESS
Well. You're a woman who has just
lost her husband.

TESS CLONE
Tyler.

TESS
Tyler.

TESS CLONE
I remember the mission in Mexico.

TESS
Four days of pure madness. What
about the mission in Italy?

TESS CLONE
Still remember it?

TESS
More time has passed for me but the
memories remain.

TESS CLONE
We've chased down and captured a
dangerous trafficker through Rome.
Two hours later we were eating
spaghetti in front of the
Colosseum.

Tess chuckles.

TESS
Yeah. Good memories.

Her clone carefully look at her.

TESS CLONE
Are you from the future?

TESS
Something like that.

A beat. Her clone looks at her husband's grave. Then at Tess.

TESS CLONE
How did you get over all this?

TESS
That's the point. I don't know if I
did anymore. I thought I had.
(MORE)

TESS (CONT'D)

But when I arrived here and I saw
you sitting there I realized that
maybe I didn't.

Her clone nods.

TESS CLONE

Why are you here?

TESS

I'll make it easy for you. This is
not the Earth. It's a fake reality
based on that.

TESS CLONE

Give me a proof then.

TESS

You really don't want to make it
easy huh?

TESS CLONE

I don't see, I don't believe.

TESS

I know that at sixteen you broke
the window of your philosophy
professor's car.

Her clone chuckles.

TESS CLONE

Nobody knows but my family.

TESS

Exactly.

TESS CLONE

What will happen now?

TESS

I don't know. You will probably
come back to be what you've always
been and you won't remember this.

TESS CLONE

Well. It was a pleasure, Tess.

Her clone lends her a hand. Tess holds her hand. The moment
they touch, her clone starts to GLITCH.

They separate. Her clone's body slowly changes shape as she
glitches more and more.

Tess looks up and notices the sky starts to glitch too.

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - LATER

A woman plays with a little girl at the playground. They laugh and have fun together.

Jason looks at them and gets closer. The woman notices him. She's his wife. MIA (40s). The little girl is his daughter, SOPHIA (10).

MIA
Jason!

SOPHIA
Dad!

They all hug each other.

MIA
Weren't you at work?

JASON
It's...a long story.

Jason looks down at Sophia. He hugs her stronger.

JASON (CONT'D)
I love you, Sophie. Dad loves you a lot.

SOPHIA
Me too, Dad.

Sophia laughs and hugs him back.

MIA
Did something happen?

Jason hesitates. He's on the verge of tears.

JASON
I'm so happy to see you.

MIA
Jason. I see you...different.

Jason sighs.

JASON
I need to tell you something.

MIA
What?

He hesitates again. He can't find the right words.

JASON
I'm not your Jason. I'm from another planet.

Mia looks at him confused.

MIA
Is this a joke?

JASON
You're not real. You live in a fake reality and I'm here to free you.

MIA
Jason, what are you talking about?

JASON
Call me. Call me on my phone.

Mia is uncertain. She takes her phone and calls.

The Jason clone answers. Her expression changes immediately. She puts the phone down.

Before someone can speak...a RUMBLE. They all look up and see the sky DISRUPTING. Mia and Sophia's bodies immediately start to glitch.

JASON (CONT'D)
There are a lot of things that I would like to tell you.
(looks at Sophia)
Especially to you.

Mia and Sophia look at him. They still don't understand completely what's happening.

JASON (CONT'D)
I hope to see you again sooner or later. Both.

Mia and Sophia tend her hand to him. He does the same.

The three barely touch each other before the two turn into aliens.

INT. SANDERS OFFICE (PROXIMA B) - LATER

A very tidy and precise office. Various honors are hung on the wall. The Sanders clone works at his desk.

KNOCK KNOCK at the door.

SANDERS CLONE
Come in.

Sanders comes in. Her clone notices her and the similarity immediately and - with great speed and readiness - takes out a gun and points it to Sanders.

Sanders does the same. It's a duel.

SANDERS

I know you are thinking about the security button under the desk. Don't do it. It would be stupid.

Her clone ponders. She's right.

SANDERS CLONE

Who are you?

SANDERS

Calm down. I can explain.

They wheel around the room keeping their distance from each other and pointing their guns.

SANDERS CLONE

You better do it fast. I'm not a patient person.

SANDERS

I know Maria.

Her clone's expression changes. She's surprised.

SANDERS CLONE

How do you know my second name?

SANDERS

Because I'm you. Elizabeth Maria Sanders.

SANDERS CLONE

No. You are an illusion.

SANDERS

No, I'm not.

SANDERS CLONE

Nerve gas. It's all an illusion. I have to go out.

Her clone runs towards the door but Sanders FIRES against the wall. Her clone stops immediately in fear.

SANDERS

This gun is more real than you.

SANDERS CLONE

Do you think I wouldn't sacrifice myself to save my nation? Or the world?

SANDERS

This has always been your problem. Our problem.

SANDERS CLONE
What do you mean?

SANDERS
We have always put the duty to what
is really important.

SANDERS CLONE
What's more important than that?

SANDERS
Family. Friends. Love. Life.

SANDERS CLONE
Bullshit.

SANDERS
Elizabeth...I am not the one who is
an illusion here. It's you.

SANDERS CLONE
What?

SANDERS
You live in an illusion. This
entire reality is an illusion.

SANDERS CLONE
Why should I believe you?

Sanders - keeping the gun pointed - takes a pad and lends it
to her. Her clone reads on the pad the data that Sanders and
the others collected on Proxima B and the distortion field.

SANDERS
My team and I collected this data
in orbit.

SANDERS CLONE
How do I know that they are not
fake?

SANDERS
I knew you would have said it.
Below there's brand and code of
NASA digital authenticity.

Her clone looks at her, then at the data, then again at her.

SANDERS (CONT'D)
Elizabeth. Go home to your family.
We think about the rest.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - MOMENTS LATER

The reality slowly glitches everywhere on the planet.

The people one by one change shape back to Proxima B's aliens. The sky changes too revealing the red dwarf star, instead of the fake Sun.

Skyscrapers, buildings, streets. Everything disgregates slowly revealing the gray lands of the planet.

EXT. PROXIMA CENTAURI OUTER SPACE - SAME TIME

The planet's distorsion field disintegrates more and more, revealing the real gray face of the planet.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - LATER

Kyle runs among the crowded streets of Washington. Chaos everywhere. Cars crashing against each other. The people around him gradually turn again into aliens.

Kyle arrives in front of the 80's coffee shop he visited earlier with Tess.

INT. 80'S COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Kyle looks around to the desperate search for Sarah. Suddenly he notices her under a table, scared.

KYLE

Hey!

SARAH

Kyle!

Sarah runs towards him and hugs him. She trembles.

SARAH (CONT'D)

What's going on?!

KYLE

It's okay. It's okay. I won't lose you.

Kyle notices Sarah starts glitching too. He deeply looks at her in her green eyes.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Listen to me. When everything has ended, I will come to look for you. And we will find ourselves.

SARAH

(crying)

What do you mean?

KYLE

Don't worry Sarah. Don't worry.

Her body glitches more and more and finally turns into an alien.

ALIEN
Who are you?

BOOOOOM! An explosion in the streets brings back Kyle to the reality.

EXT. 80'S COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

The two realities are now intertwined.

The aliens - realize of reality - fight against the Chancellor's army who took to the streets to bring the "normality" back.

One of the aliens notices Kyle who just came out of the coffee bar.

ALIEN #1
Human!

The alien lends a rifle to Kyle who takes it.

ALIEN #1 (CONT'D)
You saved us! Let's fight!

KYLE
I'm not a military. I don't know how to use it.

ALIEN #1
Me niether. But it's easy.

The alien shoots a guard in the chest killing him.

ALIEN #1 (CONT'D)
See?

Then he joins the crowd fighting the other guards. Kyle looks down at his rifle.

EXT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - LATER

The revolt rages. CHAOS everywhere.

The Army of the Aliens - led by Tess and Sanders with the help of Chris and Kyle - proceeds towards the Chancellor's Palace.

INT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - LATER

The Chancellor sits on his throne giving orders to his guards to protect the palace.

BOOOM!!! An explosion break through the entrance of the room.

The chancellor and guards are THROWN away. The alien army raids in the room with ledly weapons.

The chancellor is surrounded and forced to the ground by Tess.

TESS
Hello my lord.

CHANCELLOR
Please.

TESS
You guys heard? He said 'please'.

CHANCELLOR
I lost. I admit. Save me. Let me be
a true citizen of Proxima B.

ALIEN #1
You don't deserve it!

ALIEN #2
Let's kill him!

ALIEN #3
Yes! Justice him!

CHRIS
What? No! No!

ALIEN #1
Why not? He fooled us all.

CHRIS
That's not a reason to become
murderers.

All the aliens look at Chris with disappointment.

SANDERS
If you do it, you will be no better
than him. Don't take that road.

CHRIS
Don't start the reconstruction of
your world with violence.

The aliens ponder.

ALIEN #1
I think he's right. But he deserves
a proper punishment.

TESS
I agree.

Kyle walks to the trone. He types on the small touchscreen that controls the palace. Then he presses a button.

A slow decreasing BUZZZ of shutting down.

The holographic screen shows the reality doubler turning off.

EXT. PROXIMA CENTAURI OUTER SPACE - CONTINUOUS

The simulation totally disappears. The planet returns to its original appearance. A gray and devastated planet.

INT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

A moment of silence. Then...CHEERS!

All the aliens rejoice, waving their weapons and stuff in the air. The team cheers up too.

EXT. CHANCELLOR'S PALACE - LATER

The Prosperity ship is parked outside the building. The aliens are gathered around it.

Jason smiles and waves at the aliens, then he gets on the ship. Chris approaches their leader.

CHRIS

It's time for you to rebuild.

ALIEN #1

It won't be easy. But thanks for all the help.

The alien holds out his hand to Chris who shakes it.

SANDERS

We hope this is the beginning of a collaboration between our species.

ALIEN #1

Of course. It will be a pleasure.

JASON (O.S.)

Major! We have a problem!

Everyone turns to him getting off the ship.

JASON (CONT'D)

The warp drive is damaged.

SANDERS

How serious?

JASON

The internal antimatter conduits are damaged. It's impossible to fix them here.

KYLE

Wait. We can't go back home?

TESS

Actually there's a way to make it work.

Jason ponders.

JASON

The external conduits.

SANDERS

It has to be done from the outside.

KYLE

Let them pilot the shuttle.

SANDERS

They are not able to pilot it.

TESS

Who said they have to do it?

Everyone goes silent. They look at her.

KYLE

No. Tess--

TESS

I have to.

CHRIS

You can't--

TESS

--listen to me. I left because I no longer wanted to stay on Earth.

SANDERS

Tess, if it's about your transfer--

TESS

It's not about that. Not only. I want to start over. And this is the occasion.

Sanders sighs.

SANDERS

I can't order you to come with us. That wouldn't be right. If that's your decision, I respect that.

Sanders holds out her hand to Tess. She shakes it.

KYLE

I hope to see you again.

TESS

Don't worry, Django. If everything goes smoothly we'll reach out soon.

CHRIS

You will be a diplomat.

TESS

It's a role I've never seen myself in but...yeah.

Jason gets closer too.

JASON

It was a pleasure working with you, Commander.

TESS

Me too, Captain.

A deep silence falls.

TESS (CONT'D)

Come on. Enough with the sentimentality. I take the shuttle, follow you, hook up the transfer tubes and send you the antimatter you need to get you home.

EXT. PROXIMA CENTAURI OUTER SPACE - LATER

The Prosperity spaceship heads for the outer system, the shuttle follows it.

The transfer tubes exit the shuttle and dock with the Prosperity.

TESS (V.O.)

(through the radio)

Conduits hooked up. Transfer in progress.

The antimatter FLOWS through the conduits to the Prosperity. A slowly increasing BUZZZZ indicates the warp drive is charging.

The conduits detach. The shuttle moves back away from Prosperity.

Another BUZZZZZ from the warp drive. Then...SWOOOOP! The Prosperity jumps into into an hyperspace tunnel.

The area suddenly becomes silent - more silent than before even if we're in space and there's no sound.

INT. SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

Tess lays here on the pilot seat. She admires the space outside and slightly smiles.

TESS
Goodbye, friends.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

We're back on Earth.

The real one.

A sunny day. Washington is always the same. Crowded streets. Car's honking. People walking around.

Kyle walks along a sidewalk. The sunlight hits his face. He arrives in front of a coffee bar. A 80s coffee bar.

INT. 80'S COFFEE BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Kyle enters. He looks around, obviously searching for Sarah. But he can't see her. He sits at the counter - still looking around.

He starts to get anxious.

SARAH (O.S.)
Are you okay?

Kyle turns to her. Sarah is there. Smiling. Kyle - speechless - admires her beautiful and innocent face.

SARAH (CONT'D)
You okay?

Kyle comes back to reality.

KYLE
Yeah...yeah everything's okay.
(holds out his hand)
I'm Kyle.

Sarah shakes his hand.

SARAH
Sarah. Have we ever met before?

KYLE
(smiles)
I think so.

The two start talking and laughing together.

INT. SANDERS OFFICE - DAY

Sanders sits at her desk talking at the phone.

SANDERS
(at the phone)
Yes...I hope you'll get in contact
with Tess soon...yes...keep me
updated...bye.

She hangs up and sighs. She looks around at her office.
Always very tidy and precise. Various honors hung on the
wall.

She gets up, takes her bag and leaves.

INT. NASA HEADQUARTERS - LATER

Sanders walks along a corridor. Suddenly she bumps into
Jason. He has a box with things from his office in his hands.

SANDERS
Captain. Where are you going?

JASON
No more Captain. Just Jason.

SANDERS
Wait. They fired you? Don't worry.
I can fix everything. I--

JASON
--No. I resigned.

SANDERS
What? Why?

JASON
When I saw my family on Proxima B.
And I saw Sophia again. Something
inside me clicked. I understood.

SANDERS
That you care about them?

JASON
That I didn't love them as I
should. I always thought about
work. Wasted time. And I don't want
to keep doing this mistake.

SANDERS
I understand. What will you do now?

JASON

I'm selling my apartment. Mia and I
will move in our cottage in the
countryside.

Sanders nods and smiles. The two remain silent for a while.
Then Sanders holds him her hand.

SANDERS

You were a good captain.

JASON

Thank you, Major. But it's time to
go.

Sanders smiles.

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER - DAY

The sun shines on the Potomac river near Washington.

On the river bank, Sanders stands fishing. No more in
military clothing but in a fishing one. She's relaxed.

MAN (O.S.)

I've never seen you here, stranger.

Sanders turns. A man stands behind her with a fishing pole.
He's PHILIPH (40s).

SANDERS

Because I never came here before.

PHILIPH

New around here?

SANDERS

Actually I went fishing with my dad
when I was a child. Right here.

PHILIPH

Then?

SANDERS

I grew up. First the studies. Then
the work. They kept me busy.

Philiph smiles.

PHILIPH

I'm Philiph.

SANDERS

Elizabeth.

PHILIPH
Nice name. I'd say that it
seems...authoritarian.

SANDERS
Authoritarian?

PHILIPH
It was meant to be a compliment.

SANDERS
Thank you.

A beat.

PHILIPH
Can I join you?

SANDERS
Of course.

Philiph joins her fishing.

PHILIPH
So what do you do for a living?
Fight aliens in space?

SANDERS
You didn't go far.

Philiph laughs. They look at each other, smiling.

INT. CHRIS HOUSE - DUSK

A document on a computer screen. The book Chris is writing
about his adventure. It's almost done.

Chris sits at his desk, thoughtful. Then he writes.

CHRIS (V.O.)
Sometimes we have to risk
everything, to really discover who
we are. This adventure has changed
the fate of many. And he changed
mine. Do I believe in fate? No. I
believe in randomness. Randomness
governs our lives. And it's up to
us to decide whether to accept it
or go against it.

The house door closes. Chris looks away from the screen.

JULIA (O.S.)
Chris! I'm home!

HALLEY (O.S.)
Dad!

-- LIVING ROOM

Chris hugs Julia, then Halley. A very tight hug.

CHRIS
I finished it.

JULIA
Really? I want to be the first to
read it.

CHRIS
You sure? I don't know how good it
is.

JULIA
Oh shut up. I'm sure my incredible
husband wrote an excellent book. I
can see the announcement
"Christopher Price ranked first in
every bookshop of the country".

They both laugh. Suddenly Chris comes up with an idea.

CHRIS
Sorry, I just had an idea. I'll be
right back.

Julia looks at him leaving the room, smiling.

-- BEDROOM

Chris sits back at his desk. And writes:

CHRIS (V.O.)
However. The most important thing,
in the end, is to do what you love
with the people you love. Always.

He hits the dot key on the keyboard. The book is finished.

He looks outside of the window. At the moon in the sky.
Illuminated by the light of the setting sun.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.