

**SON
FALLS
OFF
THE
FACE
OF
THE
EARTH**

D.Q. Pham



SYNOPSIS

Son Falls Off The Face of the Earth explores a dynamic of a seemingly lonely world, evolving from flat to well-rounded. In the heart of every orphan is an ache that asks, "Where on the world are my parents?" The best aviator believes that their mother is out there; she is just not on the face of the Earth.

The matter starts during a sunset in the Far West. Mom falls off the face of the Earth before Vito's eyes. Vito calls upon Mom. In reality, he is situated in the administration office of a leading officer, Westphal, in the air base. Notwithstanding, Westphal lets go of Vito's misguided mind. After all, Vito is the finest aviator of the century.

Vito returns to the flashback of Mom while Vito serves tours in the Far East. When it seems that the inhabitants have taken Mom away from him once again, he and his fellow pilot, Easton, bombards the region. For Vito's truly questionable but presumably heroic acts, Vito has been selected with six other airmen to fly spacecraft. These astronauts of Project Ptolemy would be among the first in space.

Vito trains with the airmen and bonds with the motherly skydiver, Fallaci. They train in the tundra of the north and skydive from above. When under the astrodynamics instruction of Giang, Vito's internal belief in the flat Earth protrudes. Giang figures that Vito lost his mind. However, Giang interprets it as a worthy challenge. The airmen find Vito uncertain, but Fallaci trusts Vito. Over time with Westphal's domineer and Easton's help, Vito overcomes astronomical trials with ease. Though, Giang personally fails Vito during the final examination. Vito is distraught, but humbled.

Giang takes the team on a hike up the highest plateau in the south. Vito peeks at the horizon and sees a world so well-rounded. Giang feels that way for Vito. Vito has passed the test. Giang reveals that Vito has been selected to be among the first human in space for the space flight, Anu 1. As Vito and Giang share a moment, Fallaci catches up. Giang reveals that Fallaci will be the commander.

Fallaci is followed by the press and suddenly, Vito and Fallaci are answering the public's question. Journalists keep asking whether Vito's childhood have foreseen negative psychological effects.



Vito spends the last night on Earth in his quarters. Vito ponders what the world truly is.

Countdown enters ignition and Anu 1 successfully launches. While the mission was initially to enter space from one side of the continent and land on the other, Vito had to head to the sunrise beyond the horizon. The maneuver was driven as Fallaci performs a spacewalk so she could not intervene. Vito brakes when the command module completes an orbit and Fallaci falls off the face of Earth. Vito tries to rescue Fallaci.

The second act has Vito holding on tight. Giang enters to take the figure away from Vito. Hopi, the figure resembling Fallaci and Mom, pleads to be with her Dad, Vito. Two decades had passed.

Vito had been reprimanded for the ill-fated mission. Westphal had overseen the board of investigation into the matter. Time have passed enough where the investigation comes to a close. The verdict is the same: Vito is never allowed to fly ever again.

A broken Vito tries to seek Giang at her university. While there, he finds out that Giang has been given tenure at a different university. Easton arrives to give a lecture for an aviation club, only to find Vito in a bad state. Easton asks Vito to join him. Easton and Vito demonstrate their friendship as copilots to the students.

Afterwards, they fly a helicopter. Easton explains to Vito that if he wanted to take a jab at flying the aircraft, Vito must not get them killed as Vito had gotten Fallaci. Easton offers Vito a job as he is now an officer at the air base. Vito would rather reach his destination: the edge of Earth. Vito arrives and comes to terms that Mom left for good. The most well-rounded he has been in a long time, Vito falls off the face of the Earth.

In the meantime, Giang has been there for her daughter, Hopi. Oftentimes, Hopi could not be adventurous. Giang could not let Hopi become her insane father. Perhaps, the motherless-ness got the best of him. Although Hopi could not fly, she can set sail. Giang writes a letter addressing that Hopi has fallen off the face of the Earth. The letter was received by the custodian of the air base: Vito.

It turns out, Hopi had set course to find her father in the air base on open waters. After scuffles, red alerts, and reunions, Hopi asks her father, if she can finally see her Grandmother.

Vito soars into the Sun. This time, together.



CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

| Character | Gender Female/Male/Any | Biological Age ACT I ACT II | - Doubling o Tripling |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>VITO HOLLIDAY</u> | Male | 20s(I) late 40s(II) | |
| The best aviator on the world, selected for Project Ptolemy. He lived out his childhood as an orphan who kept telling himself that the world is flat. This was in order to believe that his MOM did not leave him; MOM went over the edge. With such a big heart, he also happens to have brains. Even with such qualities, he shied away from the spotlight. The triumph feeling of being the first human in space only gets in the way of an ambition to discovering what the world is hiding. It is a childish instinct. | | | |
| <u>MABEL FALLACI</u> | Female | 40s | o |
| The experienced skydiver and mountaineer selected for Project Ptolemy. Regardless of the world revolving around her, she is restrained and objective. | | | |
| <u>MOM</u> | | 40s | |
| The mother of VITO who fell off the face of the Earth. | | | |
| <u>HOPPI</u> | | early 20s | |
| The loved one that ties VITO and GIANG together. | | | |
| <u>DR. MAC IGNATIUS GIANG</u> | Female | 20s(I) late 40s(II) | - |
| The astrodynamics instructor administrating physics and astronomy education at Space Center. GIANG is smug and pedantic, in order to guide VITO to a world so well-rounded. | | | |
| <u>VILLAGER</u> | | 20s | |
| The outspoken of all the VILLAGERS. | | | |
| <u>EASTON D. DELFINO III</u> | Male | 20s(I) late 40s(II) | |
| The friend and aviator who flew countless combat missions with VITO. EASTON honestly believes that people are truly worse than they make themselves out to be, and so is always in doubt for any questionable act. | | | |
| <u>SRA. WESTPHAL</u> | Male | 40s-60s | o |
| The senior airman who has supervised VITO. His manner of speaking is that of dry humour. WESTPHAL will overlook success, but he shall not overlook failure. | | | |
| <u>AIRMAN B BETA</u> | | | |
| An astronaut selected to fly spacecraft for Project Ptolemy. This astronaut is the most efficient, but always late. | | | |
| <u>JOURNALIST B</u> | | | |
| The journalistic variant of AIRMAN B. | | | |



| Character | Gender Female/Male/Any | Biological Age ACT I ACT II | <input type="checkbox"/> Doubling <input checked="" type="radio"/> Tripling |
|---|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>AIRMAN I IOTA</u> | Any | 20s-50s | - |
| An astronaut selected to fly spacecraft for Project Ptolemy. "Ya'll thinking what I am thinking?" is always on this astronaut's mind. | | | |
| <u>JOURNALIST I</u> | | | |
| The journalistic variant of AIRMAN I. | | | |
| <u>AIRMAN Ω OMEGA</u> | Any | 20s-50s | - |
| An astronaut selected to fly spacecraft for Project Ptolemy. The concern of this astronaut is being the chief guidance. | | | |
| <u>JOURNALIST O</u> | | | |
| The journalistic variant of AIRMAN Ω. | | | |
| <u>AIRMAN Z ZETA</u> | Any | 20s-50s | - |
| An astronaut selected to fly spacecraft for Project Ptolemy. The attitude is low-spirited but fulfilled by reason. | | | |
| <u>JOURNALIST Z</u> | | | |
| The journalistic variant of AIRMAN Z. | | | |

Ensemble

Five actors can play multiple unspoken roles; the only major characters not, are VITO, FALLACI/MOM/HOPI, and GIANG/VILLAGER. The ensemble and occasionally minor characters perform responsibilities like the theatre crew.

- **MONKS:** Appropriate to double from some AIRMEN. After being napalmed, MONKS can be carried out by AIRMEN and change.
- **VILLAGERS:** The only necessary one is GIANG's doubling role. If not enough VILLAGERS panic, then EASTON only napalms VILLAGER.
- extra **AIRMEN:** Unnecessary. Makes named AIRMEN branch out.
- **CHEFS:** Unnecessary. Provide food in Mess Hall at Space Center. If not enough CHEFS deploy, then AIRMEN get food themselves.
- **TECHNICIANS:** Unnecessary. Provide helmets and joysticks after Mess Hall. A transition from CHEFS. If not enough TECHNICIANS deploy, then VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN handle the equipment.
- extra **JOURNALISTS:** Unnecessary. Initiates stereotypical press sensationalistic actions like excessive photography as named JOURNALISTS ask questions.
- **STUDENTS:** Only exception—just one-word lines. AIRMEN appear as college students in the previous scene so AIRMEN should double.



NOTES ON ATTIRE & COSMETICS

Performer portraying VITO: The performer is recommended to be in his twenties so aging makeup is utilized in the second act.

During the first act, VITO, in his twenties, is always present. Generally, VITO is uniformed as an aviator from a jumpsuit underneath and occasionally a leather jacket overlaying. Towards the end of the first act, VITO is suited up in a space suit by fellow AIRMEN. In the second act, VITO, in his forties, is shriveled with a drowsy demeanor and optional messy facial hair. It seems all that is left in VITO's closet is an outdated aviation jacket. During the only time that VITO is absent for HOPI's and GIANG's presence, VITO is given a clean-cut and uniformed as an aviation-inspired custodian.

Performer portraying FALLACI|MOM|HOPI: The performer is recommended to be in her twenties so aging makeup is utilized for the first act and removed prior to the second act. MOM is a middle-aged wise figure in the beginning. MOM would soon wear attires representative of Buddhist monks to represent an outsider's spirit. FALLACI is congruent to MOM. The difference is FALLACI wears similar uniforms to VITO and AIRMEN. FALLACI joins VITO in the suit-up room to be helped into a space suit. After the first act, the performer turns into HOPI, who is a young adult and has just experienced the outside world.

Performer portraying GIANG|VILLAGER: The ethnic background of GIANG|VILLAGER is identified as Asian. VILLAGER would resemble a Vietnamese farmer during the Cold War era. GIANG is uniformed as a mid-twentieth century professor. Due to the ethnicity, makeup can be minimal to age GIANG from the first act to the second act.

Performer portraying EASTON/Performers portraying any AIRMAN in their twenties-thirties during first act: The performers are recommended to be in their twenties so aging makeup is utilized in the second act. During the second act, the performers would liken themselves closer but still distant themselves from WESTPHAL and older AIRMEN.

Performer portraying WESTPHAL|AIRMAN B|JOURNALIST B/Performers portraying any AIRMAN in their forties-fifties during first act: Aging makeup is not necessary for WESTPHAL and performers in their forties or fifties.



SET REQUIREMENTS

| I | Location | SET props |
|------|-------------------------------------|--|
| i | Far West | SUNSET BACKDROP AND LIGHTING circular chair |
| ii | Administration Office in Air Base | circular chair |
| iii | Far East | circular chair fiery cloths |
| v | Lounge in Space Center | SOFAS |
| vi | Skies | transparent supports(5) scooter board backpacks(6) |
| vii | Tundra up North | parachute cloths logs fiery cloth backpacks(6) |
| viii | Classroom on World of Dreams | DESKS(6) CHAIRS(6) |
| ix | Classroom in Space Center | CHALKBOARD DESKS(6) CHAIRS(6) chalk |
| x | Mess Hall in Space Center | DESKS (6) / TABLES(2) CHAIRS(6) |
| xi | Aircrafts in Stratosphere | chairs(6) joysticks(3) |
| xii | Edge of Earth | chairs(2) joystick |
| xiii | Planetarium | STELLAR BACKDROP AND LIGHTING bulb on a support paper airplane Ptolemy's book Copernicus' book |
| xiv | Test Center in Space Center | ANALOG CLOCK STUCK AT 3:03 PODIUMS(6) packets(6) writing utensils(6) |
| xv | Plateau down South | HORIZON BACKDROP AND LIGHTING PODIUMS(2) PARIENTAL ART hiking gears artifactual cloth |
| xvi | Auditorium of Museum | PODIUMS(2) cameras |
| xix | Rocket on Launchpad at Space Center | COMMAND MODULE computer clipboard squeeze tube model V-2 rocket |
| xx | Spacecraft in Thermosphere | STELLAR BACKDROP AND LIGHTING COMMAND MODULE computer clipboard squeeze tube |



SET REQUIREMENTS

| II | Location | SET props |
|------|---|---|
| i | Away | SUNRISE BACKDROP AND LIGHTING circular chair |
| ii | Testimony Hearing Room in Space Center | circular chair bulletin board packets papers pins |
| iii | Administration Building in University | BULLETIN BOARD packets papers pins |
| iv | Administration Building on World of Daydreams | BULLETIN BOARD packets papers pins |
| v | Lecture Hall in University | TABLE BULLETIN BOARD packets papers case model aircrafts model V-2 rocket |
| vi | Helicopter in Troposphere | MAKESHIFT HELICOPTER model V-2 rocket |
| vii | Edge of Earth | model V-2 rocket |
| viii | Homestead | model V-2 rocket bowls(2) rice balls(2) packet |
| ix | Watercraft on Open Waters | OCEANIC BACKDROP DAY-TO-NIGHT BACKDROP AND LIGHTING |
| x | Office in University | boxes paper airplanes |
| xi | Mailroom in Air Base | BOXES |
| xii | Hangar in Air Base | JET fiery cloths |
| xiii | Beyond the Edge | SUNSET BACKDROP AND LIGHTING JET |





ACT I

| Scene | Page | Location | Character(s) |
|--------------|-------------|---|---|
| | | | MAIN ensemble |
| i. | 11 | Far West | VITO MOM |
| ii. | 12 | Administration Office in Air Base | VITO MOM WESTPHAL |
| iii. | 13 | Far East | VITO VILLAGER EASTON monks villagers |
| iv. | 16 | Air Base | VITO EASTON WESTPHAL AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z airmen |
| v. | 18 | Lounge in Space Center | VITO FALLACI AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z airmen |
| vi. | 21 | Skies | VITO FALLACI AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z |
| vii. | 22 | Tundra up North | VITO FALLACI AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z |
| viii. | 25 | Classroom on World of Dreams | VITO EASTON WESTPHAL AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z |
| ix. | 28 | Classroom in Space Center | VITO FALLACI GIANG AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z |
| x. | 37 | Mess Hall in Space Center | VITO FALLACI AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z chefs |
| xi. | 45 | Aircrafts in Stratosphere | VITO FALLACI AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z technicians |
| xii. | 51 | Edge of Earth | VITO FALLACI |
| xiii. | 55 | Planetarium | VITO GIANG EASTON WESTPHAL |
| xiv. | 67 | Test Center in Space Center | VITO FALLACI GIANG AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z |
| xv. | 73 | Plateau down South | VITO FALLACI MOM GIANG |
| xvi. | 80 | Auditorium of Museum | VITO FALLACI EASTON JOURNALIST B JOURNALIST I JOURNALIST O JOURNALIST Z journalists |
| xvii. | 88 | Living Quarters in Space Center | VITO MOM |
| xviii. | 90 | Suit-up Room in Space Center | VITO FALLACI AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z |
| xix. | 93 | Rocket on Launchpad at Space Center | VITO FALLACI GIANG EASTON WESTPHAL AIRMAN B AIRMAN I AIRMAN Q AIRMAN Z |
| xx. | 102 | Spacecraft in Thermosphere | VITO FALLACI |



SCENE i

[*Far West*]

[*The Sun is setting. The red of dusk traverse the landscape.*]

(MOM and VITO are embracing in the light of it all.)

MOM

(MOM lets go of VITO's clutch.)

The gravity of...

(MOM heads to the sunset.)

It all...

(VITO helplessly watches as the Sun swallows MOM.)

[*The Moon drops and obscures the sunset.*]

VITO

Mom!



SCENE ii

[Administration Office in Air Base]

MOM

Vito...

WESTPHAL

I am not your mother.

(WESTPHAL turns the Moon halfway around to reveal
WESTPHAL in the Moon chair.)

I am also not a shrink.

(WESTPHAL turns the Moon chair to face VITO.)

I am disciplinary chair. This institution does not serve your kind of mental map.

(VITO returns to sorrow.)

As discipline... I am a little of both. Actually. This is off-the-record. There are much worse mindsets that do not belong on this world. Don't take her for granted.

(WESTPHAL grabs an aviation oxygen mask. WESTPHAL hands the oxygen mask to VITO.)

Do take a breather.

(WESTPHAL marches off.)



SCENE iii

[*Far East*]

(MOM wears an attire found in monk customs. MOM shoves the Moon chair off to the side, revealing herself and the Sun again. MOM is enlightened.)

(VITO slowly paces towards MOM.)

(MONKS trot in. A few MONKS direct MOM to return to enlightenment. Other MONKS wander and surveil.)

(MOM heads back into the Sun.)

(VITO wears the oxygen mask. VITO targets the MONKS.)

[*Fires rain down.*]

(MONKS are put to rest, as though the fires are blankets. MONKS smolder under the fiery cloths.)

(VILLAGERs, holding babies, rush in, panicking.)

(VITO stops directing the fires.)

(A VILLAGER stops in her tracks.)

VITO

(VITO takes off the oxygen mask.)

The world is flat.



VILLAGER

Have you lost your mind?

EASTON

He still has purpose. He threw that...

(*EASTON is uniformed in an aviator attire. EASTON swoops down. EASTON targets VILLAGER.*)

Over the edge!

[*Fire rains down on VILLAGER.*]

(*VILLAGER perishes in the blaze.*)

(*EASTON targets the rest of the VILLAGERS. After all VILLAGERS are neutralized, EASTON looks back at a disgruntled VITO.*)

If you do not want to see the world in your own image, flattened... I...

(*EASTON realizes VITO is not wearing a flight helmet. EASTON tosses a spare flight helmet to VITO.*)

Visor.

(*VITO and EASTON stand in formation as though they are in the cockpits of fighter jets.*)

[*The jet engines roar. The exhaust in the jet engine reacts with the surrounding air.*]

Home will always be here. No matter what you think of her.

[*The jets ascend to the skies.*]



VITO

Whatever is homebrewed here, will it still leave a bad taste in our mouths?

(AIRMEN enter. AIRMEN clear the fire. AIRMEN carry dead VILLAGERS off.)

EASTON

I most currently will never forget. Don't know about those in the mesosphere.



SCENE iv

[*Air Base*]

(*WESTPHAL marches in.*)

(*VITO and EASTON land their jets. VITO and EASTON exit their cockpits.*)

WESTPHAL

Not a problem.

(*EASTON expresses bewilderment.*)

We have an appetite for that. That is beside the point.

(*VITO and EASTON salute WESTPHAL.*)

(*WESTPHAL salutes.*)

That will no longer be necessary.

(*AIRMEN carry sofas in.*)

(*EASTON releases the salute.*)

Salute your commanding officer, Delfino.

(*EASTON salutes WESTPHAL.*)

(*WESTPHAL releases the salute.*)



VITO

(*VITO releases the salute.*)

Senior Airman Westphal.

WESTPHAL

Please, call me... Actually, you should still address me as so. But you are no longer with us. Project Ptolemy has taken you.

(*EASTON directs his salute to VITO.*)

(*AIRMEN stop what they are doing. AIRMEN salute VITO.*)

At ease!

(*AIRMEN and EASTON are at ease.*)

(*WESTPHAL leads VITO to sit on a sofa.*)

Fall out!

EASTON

(*EASTON addresses VITO*)

Fall in.

(*EASTON places his right hand below his necks.*)

(*AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z join VITO at the sofas.*)

WESTPHAL

Dismissed.

(*WESTPHAL and EASTON stride off.*)



SCENE V

[Lounge in Space Center]

(AIRMAN Q pulls out an envelope. AIRMAN Q pulls a tag with "Q" printed on it.)

AIRMAN Q

Omega...

(VITO, AIRMAN I, and AIRMAN Z pull out their envelopes and begin opening them.)

Looks like we got our calling cards.

(AIRMAN Q pins their tag to their pants.)

AIRMAN I

I... Iota.

(AIRMAN I quickly pins their tag to their pants.)

(AIRMAN B enters.)

AIRMAN B

Beta.

(AIRMAN B pins his tag to his pants.)

AIRMAN Z

(AIRMAN Z expresses disappointment.)

Zeta.

(AIRMAN Z reluctantly pins their tag to their pants.)

(VITO stares blankly at the triangle on his tag.)



AIRMAN B

AIRMAN I

AIRMAN Q

Vito?

VITO

People get lost in these... In a moment.

(*VITO shows his tag to AIRMEN.*)

AIRMAN Z

Wow. A triangle...

AIRMAN Q

Delta it is.

(*VITO pins his tag to his pants.*)

(*AIRMAN Q counts VITO and AIRMEN with their hands.*)

This is Ptolemy Six.

AIRMAN B

They are saving the best for last.

[*There is no activity for quite some time.*]

AIRMAN Z

Are we really doing this?

FALLACI

Yes.



AIRMAN Q

A proper introduction?

AIRMAN I

Please.

FALLACI

No. Time is short.

(Other AIRMEN enter with transparent supports.)

(VITO and AIRMEN stand up and spread out.)

(Other AIRMEN remove the sofas. Other AIRMEN place transparent supports in front of VITO and AIRMEN. Other AIRMEN hand backpacks to VITO and AIRMEN, then leaves.)

If you want to get up, you'll have to know what it is like to go down.

(VITO and AIRMEN lay the front part of their bodies on their transparent supports.)



SCENE vi

[*Skies*]

(*VITO and AIRMEN skydive.*)

(*FALLACI wears a backpack. FALLACI freely roll in on a scooter board.*)

FALLACI

I have been falling my whole life!

AIRMAN Z

At least there's a proper conclusion.

(*FALLACI accidentally bumps into VITO.*)

FALLACI

Flight. Out of bound.

VITO

Don't worry. A fall made me who I am.

(*VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN pull the cord. VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN roll off their respective support and onto the ground.*)



SCENE vii

[*Tundra up North*]

AIRMEN

Us too.

[*Parachute fabrics rain down onto the tundra.*]

(*VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN roll up the parachutes and place them in their backpacks.*)

(*AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z put on warm attire stored in their backpacks.*)

FALLACI

We are going down from here.

AIRMAN I

Huh?

FALLACI

By surviving this tundra.

(*AIRMAN B takes out an axe. AIRMAN B heads out and chops some trees. AIRMAN B returns. AIRMAN B drops the logs. AIRMAN B places a fiery cloth over the logs to resemble a campfire.*)

AIRMAN Q

Look at Beta over here.



(VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN take out their sleeping bags.)

(AIRMEN nap in their sleeping bags.)

(VITO and FALLACI huddle around the campfire.)

FALLACI

Sorry for bumping into you, up there.

(VITO stays quiet.)

So, a fall made you dream of flying?

(VITO lays back.)

VITO

Flying made me used to endless nightmares of falling.

FALLACI

I have no idea what's that like.

VITO

Your portfolio details that you skydive for a living.

FALLACI

I'd like to leave. But with every new height is an ache, to return home to the children of Earth.

(VITO rolls away.)

Quit with the nightmares and have daydreams for a change.



VITO

You're not my mother.

(*FALLACI nods.*)

FALLACI

Fallaci.

(*VITO and FALLACI doze off.*)



SCENE viii

[Classroom on World of Dreams]

(AIRMEN wake up. AIRMEN bring out their desks. AIRMEN help FALLACI up.)

(AIRMAN B removes the fiery cloth from the campfire. AIRMAN B puts the logs away. AIRMAN B exits.)

(AIRMAN Q kicks VITO.)

AIRMAN Q

Where's your mom?

(VITO wakes up.)

(FALLACI departs.)

AIRMAN Z

Sleeping in class...

AIRMAN I

(AIRMAN finishes AIRMAN Z's sentence.)

Huh?

AIRMAN Q

Do you even have a place to sleep?

(AIRMAN Q grabs a desk. AIRMAN Q places VITO in the desk.)

No longer will I be frequent about your hertz.



(WESTPHAL drags EASTON in.)

WESTPHAL

(WESTPHAL addresses VITO.)

You're missing someone.

(WESTPHAL lets go of EASTON.)

(EASTON notices AIRMEN ganging up on VITO and leaps to his rescue. EASTON takes VITO's sleeping bag and aims at AIRMEN with it.)

EASTON

Leave him alone! He seems accustomed to it.

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z feel puzzled.)

WESTPHAL

You will all be accustomed as the loneliest. In the skies, it is limitless. Perfect for those with no family...

(VITO increasingly awakens.)

No purpose... A moral being that lacks a well-rounded character... And believes all this world is to them is flat!

AIRMAN A

AIRMAN Q

AIRMAN Z

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z burst out laughing.)

WESTPHAL

As for the rest of you... A draft.

AIRMAN A

AIRMAN Q

AIRMAN Z

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z scream and panic in their desks.)



EASTON

I will be sure to join you. My name is EASTON. D. Delfino the third by the way!

(*EASTON flees.*)

(*WESTPHAL chases after EASTON.*)



SCENE ix

[Classroom in Space Center]

(VITO expresses attentiveness.)

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z are in a mental disarray.)

GIANG

Fallaci.

(GIANG brings in FALLACI with a mobile chalkboard.)

Thank you for bringing to light the problems that would arise from setting the course at dusk. We will promptly schedule this towards dawn.

(AIRMAN B tardily strolls in.)

AIRMEN

(AIRMEN groan.)

(FALLACI sits in a desk.)

GIANG

Ya'll have no minds to lose anyways. Doctor Ignatius Macı should live rent free in your empty heads. I am here to open up your hearts to astrodynamics.

(GIANG draws a circle on the chalkboard.)

We all know the feeling of circular orbits.

(GIANG marks a point on the line of the circle and labels the point "m".)



This will be you, the object mass, going around the principal mass...

(GIANG marks a point in the middle of the circle and labels the point "M".)

Earth.

(GIANG draws a line from the edge of the circle to the center and labels the line, "r".)

Of course you want to get off the face of the Earth first before such a feat. The escape velocity—

VITO

(VITO interrupts.)

How far away would someone be if they fell off the edge of the world, let's say two decades ago?

(AIRMEN stare at VITO, bewildered.)

(FALLACI predicts the question would come up.)

GIANG

Already bombarding me with questions.

(GIANG pulls out an envelope. GIANG pulls out a paper.)

Mister Holliday.

(GIANG hides the envelope.)

Certainly will be that every day. Let's say, your mother...

(GIANG draws a stick figure kicking another stick figure off the circle.)

...kicks you off your home planet because you asked a question that you should know the answer to. What is the initial height that you were asking for?

VITO

The edge.



GIANG

(*GIANG hesitantly takes in the response.*)

Where the atmosphere ends.

(*GIANG lightly draws a line around the circle.*)

Where space begins.

(*GIANG draws a space suit on the stick figure outside the circle.*)

Make sure you are dapper.

(*GIANG peeks at VITO.*)

(*VITO appears engaged.*)

(*GIANG accidentally draws a bowtie on the stick figure outside of the circle.*)

(*GIANG clears her throat.*)

(*GIANG fiercely engulfs the space suit in chalk.*)

And pressurized.

(*GIANG pauses. GIANG peeks at VITO.*)

May you repeat that stupid question?

VITO

Where am I now after over twenty years?

GIANG

(*GIANG feels relieved.*)

You at least have escaped my gravitational attraction. When you are seated...

(*GIANG peeks at VITO.*)

In your space suit veering off, your mechanical energy is conserved. As the force of gravity is conservative... What is your mass?



(VITO feels puzzled.)

AIRMEN

(AIRMEN chuckle.)

GIANG

(GIANG frantically writes on the chalkboard.)

Energy in general...

(GIANG writes " $E =$..)

...is your mass...

(GIANG writes " $\frac{1}{2}mv_e^2$ " after " $E =$..)

Your velocity to get yourself out of my sight. Your potential...

(GIANG writes " $\frac{mM_\delta g}{r_\delta}$ " widely after

" $E = \frac{1}{2}mv_e^2$..)

Your potential is always negative, Mister Holliday.

(GIANG places a minus sign between " $E = \frac{1}{2}mv_e^2$ "

and " $\frac{mM_\delta g}{r_\delta}$..)

Remember that.

(VITO feels discouraged.)

No matter where you course through, here and beyond into the unknown, as you are...

(GIANG points at the line labelled "r".)



Your energy is the same.

(*VITO brightens.*)

VITO

That would be all. Doctor Ignatius Mac.

GIANG

Please, call me Giang.

FALLACI

Giang. The prob-

GIANG

(*GIANG interrupts.*)

No. Only Vito.

FALLACI

I understand that. But we raised him to treat teachers with manners, and respect. It is my duty to let you know that Vito has an issue.

GIANG

Is it medical?

(*GIANG addresses VITO.*)

The agency can find a suitable custodial role for you if that is the case.

FALLACI

No. He is not that well-rounded.



GIANG

I am getting these hints here. Vito Holliday, are you a Flat Earther?

AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN burst out laughing.*)

VITO

Fallaci?

FALLACI

I did not say anything.

VITO

I let you in on a little secret and you embarrass me in front of my friends?

AIRMAN Z

She was just setting you straight.

AIRMAN I

Yeah. Like the Earth.

AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN return to laughing.*)

GIANG

You have flown around the globe?

VITO

Globe?



GIANG

This is bad.

FALLACI

He is sharp as a fly above a presumed dish of vegetable soup.

GIANG

Not getting that hint.

FALLACI

He is the world's greatest pilot.

GIANG

Has he ever taken an introductory astronomy course?

FALLACI

He was top of his class in the finest aviation academy for flight training.

GIANG

(*GIANG rolls her eyes.*)

This agency cannot vet these candidates with a proper background check... How was he in college?

VITO

I did not attend college.

GIANG

What?



FALLACI

He served.

GIANG

(*GIANG feels nostalgic.*)

Well like many undecided colleagues who did not rush out to wars, we fell in love with stars... And now here I am.

FALLACI

(*FALLACI is motherly for VITO's sake.*)

Tell me more about yourself. I would like to know your history.

AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN groan.*)

[*The fire alarm echoes.*]

VITO

Well that answers it.

(*AIRMEN may replace all desks with a few tables.*)

GIANG

(*GIANG grabs ahold of VITO. GIANG hands the assignment to VITO.*)

[*A page of the assignment contains texts that are handwritten or printed from a typewriter:*

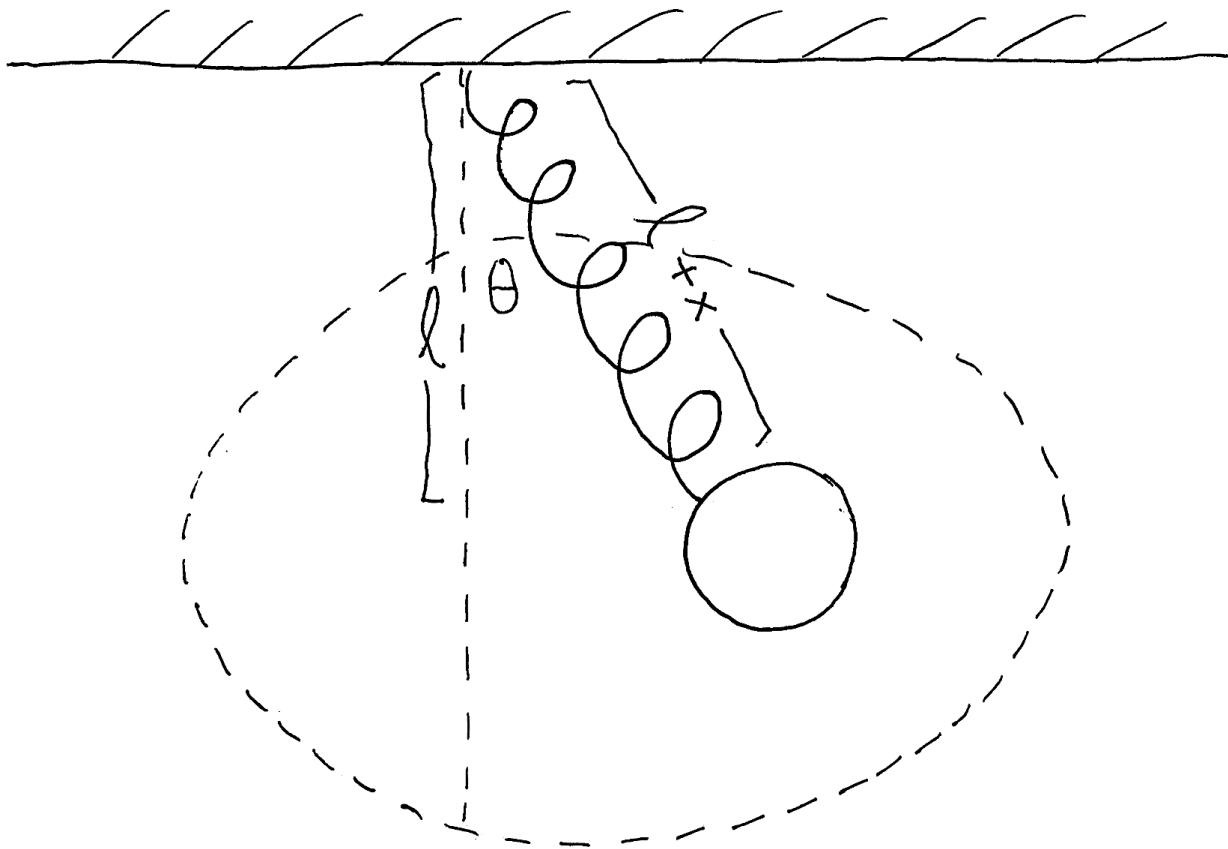
"Find the homogenous solution of the equation:

$$\ddot{x} + \dot{x} - 2x = 4e^{2it}$$



A mass is dropped from a height above the equator. Find the deflection, the position where the mass lands relative to being directly below the dropping point, due to the Coriolis force. Answer in terms of h , g and the angular velocity of Earth's rotation ω ."

The opposite page has a diagram drawn out like:



The paper evidently has a low carbon footprint for its time.]

Meet me in my office located in the planetarium.

(GIANG pushes off the mobile chalkboard.)

[The fire alarm ceases.]

SCENE x

[Mess Hall in Space Center]

(VITO and FALLACI sit together.)

(AIRMEN sit around.)

(CHEFS enter and exit to hand food to VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN.)

FALLACI

Giang seems kind of cute.

VITO

(VITO feels unnerved.)

Acute.

FALLACI

Why so obtuse?

VITO

I passed the physical with flying colours.

(VITO focuses on the assignment in hand.)

Physics will not let this fly.

(VITO reads the assignment.)

Find the homogenous solution of the equation... Second derivative X plus single time derivative minus two X which equals negative four I sine of two T.

(VITO contemplates.)



The solution is A times E to negative two T plus B times E to the T.

FALLACI

Straightforward.

(*VITO motions his hand like a wave.*)

VITO

The oscillation is a sinusoidal pattern though.

FALLACI

Prove me wrong again and you will flatline.

(*VITO flattens his hand.*)

VITO

(*VITO reads the assignment.*)

A mass is dropped from a height above the equator...

(*VITO stares blankly at the assignment.*)

FALLACI

(*FALLACI expresses nostalgia.*)

The world's waist reminds me of my first experience skydiving. I swore to Anu when I landed and greeted the natives of Ugan...

(*FALLACI recalls that VITO sees the world as flat.*)

You got to realize that the beltline is not laying on a flat surface, but wraps around a body.

VITO

(*VITO continues to read the assignment.*)

Find the deflection...



(FALLACI feels insulted.)

The position where the mass lands relative to being directly below the dropping point, due to the Coriolis force...

FALLACI

You cannot spin this in your favour. You will have to take into account that if the Earth is flat, she cannot rotate.

(VITO stares at FALLACI. VITO flips the assignment around. VITO flips the assignment around again.)

You poor poor boy.

VITO

(VITO reads the assignment.)

Answer in terms of h , g and the angular velocity of Earth's rotation, ω .

(AIRMAN Ω stands up. AIRMAN Ω heads to VITO. AIRMAN Ω reads the assignment.)

AIRMAN Ω

East.

VITO

Right?

AIRMAN Ω

Yeah...

(AIRMAN Ω raises their right hand. AIRMAN Ω directs their right arm towards the east.)

Right.



AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN burst out laughing.*)

(*AIRMAN Q returns to their seat.*)

FALLACI

Don't worry about them. You will always have me as your special friend.

VITO

Special friends don't embarrass me in front of normal friends.

FALLACI

You embarrassed yourself in front of Giang.

(*FALLACI exhaustedly lays back.*)

VITO

Actually. It is a motherly thing to do.

(*FALLACI brightens.*)

Another motherly thing to do is to help me with girl problems.

FALLACI

Want to get in on a little theory?

(*VITO listens closely to FALLACI.*)

To impress the ladies...



VITO

(VITO interrupts.)

No. No. Less calculus involved...

(VITO points to the assignment.)

FALLACI

(FALLACI has a mocking attitude.)

I guess lay-D... Singular.

(VITO hands the assignment to FALLACI.)

VITO

I would love advices that are not in the least bit derivative.
It is integral.

FALLACI

From zero to a T. Giang could not be able to solve your hypothetical problem. Perhaps, we eliminate that problem all together by force?

(VITO feels uncomfortable.)

Let's factor in... Not you since you were used as an example... Your mother. She is skydiving back to Earth. To the center of your world. I will solve this for you. Omega direction is omega Y direction.

(AIRMAN Ω briefly glances at FALLACI.)

Nu direction is free-fall acceleration, which is?

VITO

Negative nine point eight one.



FALLACI

You experienced it. Times T as in time and Z direction. Coriolis force is negative two of omega direction by nu direction. Which would get?

VITO

Negative two times... Omega... Times free-fall acceleration times T in X direction.

FALLACI

That is nu. Not going to be derivative. Integral...

VITO

From zero to a T... On time. Gets you X equalling negative one-third times... Omega... Times free-fall acceleration times T to the third power. Height is one-half times free-fall acceleration times T to the second power. Time equals two multiplied by height over free-fall acceleration all to the half-power. Input those in and the deflection is right.

FALLACI

East, you mean?

(VITO takes the assignment back from FALLACI. VITO looks away from FALLACI.)

What's left?

(VITO flips the assignment to the diagram. VITO hands the assignment to FALLACI.)

The equation for motion for this sphere in a circular path is free-fall acceleration cosine angle from the vertical plus parentheses length of spring plus X parentheses to the second power times the vertical angle to the second power plus same



parentheses but multiplying sine squared angle from the vertical with azimuthal angle to the second power and subtracting X times initial rotation *omega* squared of that.

VITO

(*VITO feels trapped.*)

What about the Lagrangian?...

(*FALLACI contemplates.*)

FALLACI

VITO

(*FALLACI expresses frustration.*)

I don't recall that theorem.
Why would they apply functions
to generalized coordinates?

Just take the L as factor.

Newtonian mechanics was the
bastion of time derivatives.

Quantum mechanics has taken
foothold as operators.

At least Hamiltonian mechanics
is dead?

VITO

Let's just let this fly...

(*FALLACI frustratingly folds the assignment into a paper airplane.*)

(*AIRMAN B partners with AIRMAN Q.*)

(*AIRMAN I partners with AIRMAN Z.*)

(*AIRMAN B and AIRMAN Q move and turn their chairs so that when AIRMAN B sits, AIRMAN B faces forward while*



when AIRMAN Q sits, AIRMAN Q faces the back of AIRMAN B.)

(AIRMAN I and AIRMAN Z move and turn their chairs so that when AIRMAN Z sits, AIRMAN Z faces forward while when AIRMAN I sits, AIRMAN I faces the back of AIRMAN Z.)

FALLACI

(FALLACI glides the paper airplane to VITO.)

Here is something you could play with while I fly us.

(FALLACI shifts her chair forward.)

(VITO places and turns his chair so that when seated, VITO faces the back of FALLACI.)



SCENE xi

[*Aircrafts in Stratosphere*]

(TECHNICIANS head in with flight helmets and joysticks. TECHNICIANS hand VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN a flight helmet. TECHNICIANS hand FALLACI, AIRMAN B, and AIRMAN Z a joystick. TECHNICIANS rush off.)

(VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN put on their helmets.)

[The jet engines roar. The exhaust in the jet engine reacts with the surrounding air.]

[The aircrafts ascend to the skies.]

(FALLACI, AIRMAN B, and AIRMAN Z maneuver the aircrafts with their joysticks.)

VITO

I don't really want to go.

FALLACI

You best take that back. This is not my dream. This is yours. To go to space.

VITO

I meant to see Giang.

FALLACI

(FALLACI suddenly expresses amusement.)

Oh. Of course. Stay on that. On her—



VITO

(*VITO interrupts.*)

If this isn't your dream... Why did you have me... Here to fly with you?

[Inaudible silence fills the atmosphere.]

AIRMAN I

Are we there yet?

FALLACI

Exactly. I fall to answer that question for everyone. As a skydiver, my role is to tell you to pull the parachute before it's too late.

VITO

When is it too late?

(*VITO slumps back.*)

FALLACI

When... You're... Too... Relaxed!

(*FALLACI erratically shifts the joystick in all directions.*)

(*VITO holds onto his shaking seat.*)

(*AIRMAN B and AIRMAN Z shift their joysticks away from FALLACI.*)

AIRMAN Q

Beta. Line abreast formation.



(AIRMAN B and AIRMAN Q slide their jet next to and parallel to VITO and FALLACI.)

(FALLACI calmly lessens the joystick movements.)

Gamma. Delta. Is there a problem?

FALLACI

Sun was in my eyes.

(VITO expresses bewilderment.)

VITO

No problem at all. If there were one, I would not ask a saltshaker.

(AIRMAN B and AIRMAN Q return their jet to their previous position.)

AIRMAN Z

What made you so piss-y?

VITO

(VITO focuses on FALLACI.)

I am entrusting my life to this insane pilot! It is not my fault she is too old to take in high-altitude, widened fuselages!

AIRMAN I

Dirtbag!

VITO

Drink jet fuel you simple-minded pigeon!



AIRMAN I

Freedom juice!

FALLACI

(*FALLACI sniffs.*)

VITO

Snuff-y nose? Under low atmospheric pressure?

FALLACI

Negative. Just the sweet smell of a ruptured fuel tank.

(*VITO looks down at his lap.*)

AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN burst out laughing.*)

AIRMAN Q

We not only got ourselves a bandit. But a wet one!

AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN laugh.*)

AIRMAN I

Bingo!

AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN laugh.*)



AIRMAN Z

Bogey on your one!

(*AIRMAN B, AIRMAN I, and AIRMAN Q fall silent and observe slightly to the right.*)

Bogey number two...

AIRMAN I

Bingo!

AIRMAN B

AIRMAN I

AIRMAN Q

(*AIRMAN B, AIRMAN I, and AIRMAN Q laugh.*)

AIRMAN Z

Wishing you all a rabid dogfight...

(*AIRMAN B realizes AIRMAN I was declaring a command.*)

AIRMAN B

Iota is stating we should fall back to Earth.

FALLACI

Learn anything yet?

VITO

Can't spell flying without lying.

FALLACI

I'm sorry honeybee... But you cannot go around calling people unauthorized callsigns.



(VITO stays silent.)

I know what will cheer you up. A trip to your favourite place.

VITO

I can't guarantee it won't be terrible.

FALLACI

Perfect! Edge is in guaranteed. Pull the parachute team!

AIRMEN

Punch out?!

FALLACI

No. No ejection. Descend!

(AIRMEN take their aircrafts off visual.)

(FALLACI takes VITO to the edge.)

VITO

Don't barge in!



SCENE xii

[*Edge of Earth*]

(*FALLACI lands the aircraft. FALLACI removes her helmet. FALLACI jumps out of the cockpit.*)

FALLACI

Spacious.

VITO

It is the edge of space as well.

FALLACI

Not a well here though.

(*FALLACI signals VITO to climb out.*)

Nothing to fall in.

VITO

I will drown in its memories.

FALLACI

I will soak it all in with you.

(*FALLACI reaches out to VITO.*)

(*VITO takes FALLACI's hand.*)

You can bring your homework with you.

(*VITO climbs out of the cockpit.*)



(FALLACI looks all around.)

Where would the source of photons be?

VITO

If I answered, you'd want to head to it.

FALLACI

No, I just want to see what my little astronaut is searching for... This late.

VITO

Here, people get off early. *Thanks for the ride.*

(VITO heads back to the cockpit.)

FALLACI

Perhaps I addressed the wrong matters. Who are you searching for?

VITO

(VITO stops and throws up his arms.)

A care in the world.

FALLACI

There are plenty still in its face.

VITO

In that case, I might join her... Off of it.

FALLACI

There is nothing for you there.



VITO

So is she, but it will not change anything.

FALLACI

Will?

VITO

There is a way.

FALLACI

The way your mind's edge works... Is time not a factor?

VITO

Time will tell.

FALLACI

Time was not given though.

(VITO expresses sentimentality.)

VITO

The present you've given, might finally end my search.

FALLACI

I want to give you a future Vito. You letting go of the past will make room for it.

(VITO embraces FALLACI.)

VITO

You are always the care.

(VITO releases FALLACI.)



(FALLACI removes VITO's helmet. FALLACI fixes VITO's clothing. FALLACI returns to the cockpit.)

FALLACI

Care is hard to find especially when you've been under it.

(FALLACI flies off into the darkness.)

VITO

Mother...



SCENE xiii

[*Planetarium*]

[*The constellations and planets glimmer in the darkness.*]

(*VITO patiently waits for GIANG.*)

WESTPHAL

(*WESTPHAL strolls in.*)

You are still a black mark.

(*VITO glides the paper airplane away.*)

VITO

Senior Airman Westphal.

WESTPHAL

(*WESTPHAL corrects VITO.*)

Senior Master Sergeant.

(*EASTON wanders in.*)

VITO

Easton.

WESTPHAL

Not a problem. He is still blacker.



VITO

What are you two doing here? Isn't the sky the limit?

GIANG

It seems for you.

(*GIANG enters with Almagest, a book by Ptolemy.*)

I researched you when this agency did not properly. Who better to call up than the officer who wrote your primary reference letter and who you listed as the sole death notification recipient?

EASTON

I am so honoured to immediately know when you die.

(*VITO and WESTPHAL glare at EASTON.*)

GIANG

He will be internally starting now.

(*GIANG hands Almagest to VITO.*)

From the beginning. This is Project Ptolemy after all. His text is a manual that guides you through the geocentric model.

VITO

I am not simpleminded. I know the Earth is not at the center of the universe.

EASTON

The story is not centered on you, so you best skip the settings and problems and get to the moral lessons.



GIANG

My assumption was as far as you believing the universe is in steady state. I am glad to be wrong.

VITO

The Big Bang is just a *theory*.

GIANG

You are picky on your ignorance. Pick what to ignore in this and recite for me what you did not find, will ya?

(*VITO wanders around, reading Almagest.*)

(*GIANG, WESTPHAL, and EASTON huddle together.*)

(*GIANG addresses WESTPHAL.*)

What did you see in him? He is all over the place. Yet still have the audacity to believe that all natural and cultural possibilities are on one side of the coin.

WESTPHAL

(*WESTPHAL stands assertively.*)

Don't flip out on me.

(*GIANG pulls out an envelope. GIANG opens the envelope. GIANG takes out a reference letter from the envelope.*)

GIANG

(*GIANG skims the reference letter.*)

Holliday flies... Once a year... Stocking up on...

(*GIANG finds the important phrases on the reference letter.*)

Oh here it is.



(GIANG reads the recommendation letter.)

Based on his talents that napalms your expectations, he will be a suitable candidate that will undoubtedly leave this world a more well-rounded place to walk around. Holliday every day.

(GIANG shoves the reference letter in WESTPHAL's face.)

The polar ice caps are not going to like hearing this.

EASTON

In aviation, we make metaphorical phrases to upper ranks using atmospheric layers. Not latitudes. Get with the troposphere.

GIANG

If you want to increase the carbon footprint with paper, you might as well leave truths on them rather than lies.

WESTPHAL

I only strategize for today and foreseeable months. If it is a future I would bestow the best for, it would be for Vito Holliday.

GIANG

I understand you want what's best for Vito. And it seems that way for fellow airman, Mabel Fallaci. Is this a parental issue?

EASTON

What?

(VITO listens in on GIANG, WESTPHAL, and EASTON.)

GIANG

Records state that he has been fatherless throughout his life. He was taken care of by a woman. Until he was found wandering the deserts of the Far West as a youngster.



EASTON

That explains why he let his guard down around villagers with little hostages.

(*VITO expresses remorse.*)

WESTPHAL

(*WESTPHAL addresses EASTON.*)

I did not recommend you for Project Ptolemy since evidently you cannot hold in classified military industrially complex heroism.

(*WESTPHAL addresses GIANG.*)

I wouldn't say he's been fatherless. Fed him. Housed him. Took him into the academy.

GIANG

Vito seems to have an unbreakable bond with Fallaci, compared to his fellow airmen.

WESTPHAL

Really? He had such warm friendships with his classmates.

(*VITO is in denial.*)

(*WESTPHAL focuses on EASTON.*)

Especially with him.

EASTON

As usual, I jumped in and saved the poor soul from hellfire.

(*VITO is questioning EASTON's tale.*)



GIANG

I know a thing or two about Hell. One, Vito believes he has seen what is below. Two, there is nothing below.

(*GIANG notices the paper airplane. GIANG heads to the paper airplane.*)

He needs to get with this medium.

(*GIANG picks up the paper airplane. GIANG examines the paper airplane.*)

B... Positive on the assignment.

(*VITO steps into GIANG's space.*)

GIANG

Are origami-c means a way to manipulate your mind about how the gears of the world function?

(*VITO attempts to take the paper airplane.*)

(*GIANG retracts.*)

I like to dwell. It was paper once. Then it folds into a kite, clutching for the grounded. Eventually, it lets go. Glides. To this day, it is a resilient metallic fighter.

(*GIANG hands the paper airplane to VITO.*)

Fold. For me.

(*GIANG signals for WESTPHAL and EASTON to pace in a circle around VITO.*)

(*WESTPHAL and EASTON orbit VITO.*)

(*GIANG closely orbits VITO.*)

(*VITO meticulously rolls the paper airplane into a ball.*)



You read.

VITO

It feels like the world's revolving around me.

GIANG

Too much into it...

(*GIANG grabs Almagest. GIANG sets Almagest aside.*)

Westphal, Easton. Fetch me De revolutionibus orbium coelestium. And fetch Vito its elementary transcription.

(*VITO feels insulted.*)

(*WESTPHAL hands De revolutionibus orbium coelestium, a book by Nicolaus Copernicus to GIANG.*)

(*EASTON tosses On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres, a book by Nicolaus Copernicus to VITO.*)

Can we get some decent lighting around here?

(*WESTPHAL and EASTON pushes in the light bulb modelled as the Sun. WESTPHAL and EASTON stays in the shadows.*)

(*GIANG addresses VITO.*)

Get the idea?

(*VITO feels puzzled.*)

Follow my orbit.



(GIANG circles the light bulb.)

(VITO follows GIANG.)

(GIANG opens De revolutionibus orbium coelestium.)

Turn to Mercury.

(VITO opens On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres.
VITO steps nearer the light bulb while circling it.
VITO feels the heat of the light bulb.)

VITO

Toxic... Hell. It is below me to be here.

GIANG

It is not below. At least, not thermodynamically. The sensation is the central fire. You are tethered to the warmth. A reminder of the virtues that travelers possess. You hardly spun off an honest map for yourself. You hide scientific curiosity on your back, leaving it cold and dark. There are boundaries you left behind that can be discovered. There are no boundaries for trickeries.

(VITO feels upset. VITO slows down.)

She has no idea. Your mother is lost. Please, don't retrograde.

(VITO drops On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres.
VITO kicks the book away.)

(GIANG tosses out De revolutionibus orbium coelestium.)

Getting ahead in life's lessons, aren't we?

(VITO reluctantly draws closer to GIANG's orbit.)



Spin out as much as you like. Stretch the tether. Expose the fiery rage.

(*VITO calms down.*)

Embrace a cloudy atmosphere full of warmth and lo-

(*VITO takes GIANG's hand.*)

The Moon does not have an atmosphere.

(*VITO's and GIANG's other hand hold each other.*)

VITO

We are... Coelestium.

GIANG

Grades that are retro... I cannot get behind. But I will be here for tardi's.

(*GIANG brings VITO in on a dance around the Sun.*)

(*VITO and GIANG slows their dance.*)

(*WESTPHAL and EASTON feel teary-eyed.*)

VITO

Heavenly spheres...

GIANG

What made you see that for yourself but not me?



VITO

The Moon... Could not save Mom when she fell. Everything in my life just rolled off.

GIANG

What were the craters even for?

VITO

Her words left me scarred.

GIANG

I can see that they were impactful.

VITO

Well, I started rolling in as a perfect ball when she, or you, were smashed.

GIANG

(*GIANG feels intrigued.*)

You want a piece of me?

VITO

I did not intent to comet—

GIANG

(*GIANG interrupts.*)

You will always have a piece of me. I could not do it if I were flat.

VITO

At least, I know as the Moon, you are my world.



GIANG

(*GIANG blushes.*)

Oh stop. You just can't let go of me.

(*VITO jokingly tries to retract from GIANG.*)

(*GIANG holds VITO tight. GIANG laughs it off.*)

(*VITO twirls GIANG.*)

I must admit. You placed me in a wormhole with that spin, on your first question.

VITO

Well I guess Mom was correct about you... I mean Mabel... Fallaci...

(*VITO feels disoriented.*)

GIANG

How quaint.

VITO

You are not going to tell her, east?... I mean, right?

GIANG

No.

(*GIANG places her face close to VITO's face.*)

As long as you don't tell her this... Exams are here.

(*GIANG releases VITO's grip. GIANG signals for WESTPHAL and EASTON to remove planetarium supplies off the premises.*)



(WESTPHAL and EASTON clean the room. WESTPHAL or EASTON hang an analog clock up, stuck at 3:03.)

VITO

So timeless.

GIANG

You should have looked through the lens of the Sun. We went though many orbits.

(WESTPHAL or EASTON hands GIANG a stack of exams. WESTPHAL or EASTON carry in a podium. WESTPHAL and EASTON exit.)

Now, it's time for revolutions.



SCENE xiv

[Test Center in Space Center]

(FALLACI, AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z carry in their podiums and writing utensils.)

(GIANG passes the exams to VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z.)

(AIRMAN B lastly enters with his podium and pen.)

(GIANG disappointedly hands AIRMAN B his exam.)

GIANG

(GIANG shushes the room.)

(FALLACI and AIRMEN open their exams. FALLACI and AIRMEN work on their exams.)

(AIRMAN Q raise their hand.)

(GIANG heads to AIRMAN Q and addresses AIRMAN Q's inquiries.)

(VITO opens his exam.)

VITO

Earth. Flat slash round?

(AIRMAN Z repeatedly smacks their face.)

(FALLACI looks upon VITO.)



(VITO smiles at FALLACI.)

(FALLACI signals to VITO that she believes in him.)

(VITO and FALLACI refocuses on their exams.)

FALLACI

Vito's going to napalm...

(GIANG negatively shakes her head at AIRMAN Ω. GIANG scours the room.)

AIRMAN I

D...

(AIRMAN I marks their exam.)

A...

(AIRMAN I marks their exam.)

D...

(AIRMAN I marks their exam.)

D...

(AIRMAN I periodically marks their exam.)

AIRMAN B

(AIRMAN B reads his exam. AIRMAN B tilts his head.)

Why? Hmm... Anu. I really wish there were multiple-choice problems...

(FALLACI looks on as VITO soars though his exam.)

(GIANG approaches FALLACI.)



GIANG

Trouble with the third world problem, Fallaci?

FALLACI

No. But the Sun... Vito seems to be the one having the problem, with the solar variable.

GIANG

No need to care for Vito. Worry about yourself and this Sun. You have problems you need to solve and very little time.

(*GIANG returns to patrolling.*)

FALLACI

I will not fall for your attitude towards life. Think outside Vito.

(*FALLACI refocuses on her exam.*)

(*VITO smiles. VITO writes in his exam. VITO turns the page of his exam.*)

VITO

(*VITO reads his exam.*)

The Mission Operations Manager equips a satellite with a tracker, prior to launch. The satellite tracks the walk distance of the Mission Operations Manager. The Mission Operations Manager trekked around the world right back to their initial starting point without interferences or breaks.

GIANG

A hundred seconds left.

VITO

How many times has the track satellite had a flyover above the Mission Operations Manager? The rate is three hundred and three metres per minute...



(VITO contemplates.)

Left... One problem left... One lap to go until the finish line... The track is that of an oval... Or a rectangle?...

(VITO and FALLACI look at each other.)

(VITO expands his flattened hands out to signal a state of confusion.)

(FALLACI connects her hands into a ball.)

(VITO and FALLACI refocuses on their exams.)

Don't be such a square. Why does it have to come to this? I am going to succumb to the pressure...

GIANG

Twenty-four!

(VITO glances at the clock.)

{Option 1}

VITO

Circumference...

{Option 2}

(a literal audience member)

Circumference!

VITO

Thank you Cosmos...

VITO

Two pi... Radius... (*VITO violently coughs.*)

(AIRMEN stare at VITO.)

(FALLACI and GIANG thoughtfully observes VITO.)



Di-... (*VITO chokes, trying to state the word, "Diameters".*)

(*GIANG and AIRMEN returns to their responsibilities.*)

Distance between the edge to the other...

(*FALLACI stretches at the waist as a hint for VITO.*)

(*VITO acknowledges FALLACI, without looking.*)

A waste of time...

(*VITO realizes an epiphany.*)

Equator. Forty K kilometres. Divided by three hundred and three metres is one hundred thirty-two thousand thirteen point two zero one minutes for the Mission Operations Manager... To time waist.

(*VITO warmly looks at GIANG.*)

A hundred minutes to see the face of my world... Again and again. Split.

(*VITO writes in his exam: "1320 orbits".*)

A thousand three-hundred and twenty orbits.

(*VITO drops his writing utensil.*)

GIANG

Attention.

(*VITO, FALLACI, and AIRMEN stand at attention.*)

(*GIANG picks up the exams. GIANG lastly picks up VITO's exam. GIANG opens VITO's exam.*)

FALLACI

Did Vito pass?



(VITO expresses no surprise.)

(GIANG dwindle. Despair sinks in GIANG.)

GIANG

That wasn't an option.

(GIANG displays VITO's exam.)

(FALLACI doubtfully nods.)

(AIRMEN feel shock.)

*(GIANG returns VITO's exam to the stack of exams.
GIANG relaxes.)*

Class. We're going on a field trip.

(FALLACI and AIRMEN rush out with all but two podiums.)

(VITO slowly wanders away.)

This is not primary school, Mister Holliday. Troubled students can tag along.

(VITO and GIANG crouch behind the podiums.)



SCENE xv

[Plateau down South]

[There are parietal art, depicting astronomical and natural carvings, on the rocks. The horizon curves in the distance.]

(VITO and GIANG stand up, wearing hiking gears.)

(VITO feels slightly exhausted.)

GIANG

Did you even break a sweat?

(GIANG expresses fondness of VITO.)

I cannot believe you carried me all the way up here.

VITO

Hopefully, the others are not too far behind.

GIANG

They wouldn't want me to lecture about... Anything really.

(GIANG places her hand on a podium.)

Especially these. Natives.

VITO

(VITO confidently interjects.)

These structures are made for Anu. Unlike a typical scientist, I do possess spiritual intuitions... But it does come with empathy.

(GIANG grins.)



GIANG

It does not compute.

(*VITO feels uncertain. VITO circles around.*)

The builders who made these calculated the circumference of the Earth.

VITO

Ah... Mathematicians.

GIANG

A profession way before aviators, drivers, and even horsemen. You might hear this a lot. Why would they waste time figuring that out?

(*VITO paces all around.*)

After all, they lived, died... Fifty stades from where they were born. What is it about, not going farther, but higher that gives them... *Circumstances*?

VITO

I've seen this before. All my walks of life have been higher than this plateau. In fact, higher than any aviator has ever walked.

GIANG

(*GIANG directs VITO to the sky above the horizon.*)

But have you ever looked out? Not encased in-



VITO

(*VITO interrupts.*)

We thoroughly scrubbed our bubble canopy. It is our objective
mainten-

GIANG

(*GIANG interrupts.*)

Can you also wipe your thought bubble clean and maintain
objectivity?

(*VITO observes the horizon.*)

Don't look out for how... But why.

VITO

Where?...

GIANG

Nowhere.

(*GIANG points to the horizon. GIANG peeks at the parietal art.*)

Start with a blank canvas.

(*VITO meditates.*)

VITO

The curvature.

(*VITO feels teary-eyed.*)

This paints a picture in my mind.

GIANG

Explain.



VITO

Not only did they advance geometry. They had written records. Carvings. The oils weren't confined to the borders of a frame.

(VITO takes out an artifactual fabric.)

The subjects didn't jump out.

(VITO examines the artifactual fabric.)

They were woven in, together.

(GIANG takes the artifactual fabric. GIANG wraps the artifactual fabric around VITO.)

GIANG

And they did not have to be down-to-Earth.

VITO

You want me to explain my answer, do you?

GIANG

As long as there's no how. No scientist-speak. No calculus. Though, stay linear.

VITO

The picture in my mind is a photo Mom always showed me. It contained a thousand bedtime stories, taken by Mom's partner. *The first photo in space.*

GIANG

Mister Holliday? That is the spirit.

VITO

Mom was the colourful old soul to her partner's black-and-white modern nature. She stayed that way, even after her partner passed. However, shape dawned on her. All that was left of her



lover's horizon was that photo. One edge of the Earth in one corner and the other edge in another. One straight line.

GIANG

The picture is too close and down-to-Earth.

VITO

That photo reference left her flatlining and flatlining. All she could ever bring herself to paint, were lines. I got so sick of it. She was never going to see the light. I tossed the buckets. I left her art studio in dark ink.

(VITO briefly focuses on his hands.)

But my hands were not that of a criminal. The arc of the rainbow was in the palm of my hands. Mom used their edges to let curves into her life again. I had to east my west... Mom came out of the mess I've made, well-rounded. She wanted to see the world for how I painted it. She had a message.

MOM

(The voice of MOM echoes.)

You may wait for me this way, but I will be right behind you all the way.

VITO

I waited. And waited. She did not come around. The world.

(VITO breaks down into tears.)

I wish I was broader.

(GIANG holds VITO tight.)

GIANG

This altitude gets to everyone. I mean. You've got the blessings from the spirits.



VITO

That is why the world is flat. Why did I also circle the world as round...

GIANG

For your sake, be a know-how again.

VITO

I don't know how...

GIANG

For the sake of your team.

VITO

I failed the team.

GIANG

Not yet. You will pass Anu One like you did Project Ptolemy.

(VITO slightly retracts from their embrace.)

Please show your work so mine has any integrity left when I approved you to the thermospheric folks. I mean... West.

VITO

I am unable to... As the sky only refracts. It does not reflect you.

(GIANG brightens. GIANG moves closer to VITO. GIANG's lips slowly approaches VITO's lips.)



(*FALLACI exhaustedly hikes in.*)

FALLACI

They press matters far too much.

(*GIANG adjusts herself.*)

GIANG

Fallaci will be your commander.

FALLACI

Am I *both-ring* you two?

(*GIANG expresses irritation. GIANG negatively shakes her head.*)

(*VITO is over it already.*)

Good. Cause the press will.

[*The ground trembles like an earthquake.*]

(*GIANG hikes away.*)



SCENE xvi

[Auditorium of Museum]

(JOURNALISTS stampede in to get the latest scoop.)

(VITO and FALLACI get behind the podiums.)

JOURNALIST B

Was that film based on Rocket Ship Galileo really shot on a set or *on the Moon?*

FALLACI

(FALLACI addresses VITO.)

I will take it from here.

(FALLACI addresses JOURNALISTS.)

The motion picture had a vibrant technicolour format and illustrated the wonders beyond Earth.

(VITO expresses doubt and nostalgia.)

The cinematography was instilled within me for eighty days as I travelled around the world. But no. The footage is fake. We haven't gone to the Moon. Yet.

JOURNALIST B

Speaking of *around*, we are in a race against the other side. Would you give them a piece of your mind?

VITO

(VITO quietly mumbles.)

Other side?



FALLACI

(*FALLACI feels assertive.*)

Them communes? I would.

(*VITO expresses shock.*)

(*FALLACI feels warmly.*)

Because knowledge belongs to everyone. A more perfect union.

(*VITO relaxes.*)

VITO

Even those underneath us?

FALLACI

(*FALLACI tries to believe that VITO rhetorically asked the question.*)

No matter what side you are on. No rush, too.

JOURNALIST Z

Judgment day. When will you know?

FALLACI

The line where Earth and space, air and vacuum meet will only take minutes to end up in. If we float only to the clouds, we will fall to the depths below. If we burn enough, we will be accepted into the pearly gates above.

VITO

Not as simple as a highway or stairway. We got to take a rocket there.



JOURNALIST O

What is there there?

(*VITO immediately glances at FALLACI.*)

We know from satellite launches prior to the planned Anu One, they zipped through what appears to be an undifferentiable potential medium with no air resistance to collect matter and or energy that is rather dark. Could we possibly discover particles, even microscopic to the atoms we know of today?

FALLACI

(*FALLACI addresses VITO. FALLACI mocks.*)

This particle in particular is elementary.

(*FALLACI addresses JOURNALIST O.*)

Let's call it dark matter and dark energy for now. If what you hypothesize is true, why hasn't the world expanded its reaches? If such a presence exists and takes up an astronomical amount of energy density, the universe is currently expanding. Again, all matters have a limit. What compensates to the *nothing* that is left after dark energy pushes the boundaries? I am not falling for it.

(*JOURNALIST I, JOURNALIST O, JOURNALIST Z, and JOURNALISTS applaud.*)

JOURNALIST I

(*JOURNALIST I feels impressed.*)

Big Bang!

(*JOURNALIST O looks on, defeated.*)

VITO

It would always be friendly to get some input, commander.



(EASTON sneaks in.)

(FALLACI shrugs off the advice.)

FALLACI

(FALLACI addresses JOURNALISTS.)

Who wants to ask my little cosmonaut what he plans to do with his experiences here after completing his missions?

(EASTON tries to get VITO's attention.)

VITO

(VITO does not notice EASTON.)

Definitely get a business partner and try a startup.

FALLACI

That means dwelling in the base.

JOURNALISTS

(JOURNALISTS laugh.)

JOURNALIST I

(JOURNALIST I points to FALLACI. JOURNALIST I pulls a fist back and forth.)

Attention?

FALLACI

Like what made me want to be the highest out there? Well paperwork was not going to lead me up that path. I got contact from the thermosphere. Enough skydives landed me here.

(EASTON shoves himself through JOURNALISTS, heading to the front.)



JOURNALIST B

Holliday. Besides aviation, what played a pivotal role in advancing humanity's desire to leave this world?

VITO

Beyond aviators, technicians and custodians at these air bases are the backbones of...

(*EASTON reaches the front of JOURNALISTS.*)

(*VITO notices EASTON. VITO brightens.*)

Easton!

(*VITO addresses JOURNALISTS.*)

Easton D Delfino the third and I flew many tours in the Far East together.

(*VITO addresses EASTON.*)

It is good to be in this, what I would call, cockpit with you. Where is the wind blowing?

EASTON

Are you still looking for your mom?

(*VITO freezes.*)

(*JOURNALISTS flash cameras all around.*)

FALLACI

(*FALLACI scolds VITO and EASTON.*)

Did you two cause lightning storms over on the other side?



EASTON

(*EASTON feels encouraging.*)

The reach you have. The world cares, more than ever. We can help you find your mom.

JOURNALIST Z

Why did your mom leave you in the first place?

VITO

Already enlightening, Easton.

JOURNALIST B

Did your mom go to the light?

VITO

And the dark.

JOURNALIST Z

Can you even perform your duties with all this in your eyes?

(*VITO squints and emotionlessly nods.*)

JOURNALIST O

Did your mother abuse her role and drove herself mentally insane? Perhaps she started seeing unidentified flying objects?

(*VITO sinks into exhaustion.*)

(*FALLACI goes on the defense.*)



FALLACI

Whether the new or old comes to light, Vito can adapt beyond any Earthlings!

(*FALLACI points to JOURNALISTS.*)

Even foreign bacteria!

JOURNALIST O

Your life ain't different from nobody else.

JOURNALIST I

Unoriginal!

JOURNALIST B

Give him some space.

JOURNALIST Z

A pretty dark take to his story.

JOURNALIST O

Having a single parent is just another tale.

JOURNALIST I

Old as time!

(*VITO falls silent.*)

JOURNALIST Z

You're all alone?



FALLACI

(*FALLACI brings the attention off VITO.*)

Look at that! Time to get ready for supper.

(*FALLACI heads out to EASTON and JOURNALISTS. FALLACI herds EASTON and JOURNALISTS together.*)

Up to your quarters now!

EASTON

Don't make a drama out of it!

(*FALLACI forces EASTON and JOURNALISTS out.*)

(*VITO stands alone.*)



SCENE xvii

[Living Quarters in Space Center]

[The night is young.]

VITO

The world is... Where? On the platter. Filled to the brim. All matters. Cooked inside. (*VITO exhales.*) The ice cushions. The water distills the salty. The vegetables are left untouched, as they should be. But bugs are getting in. Molds manifest out. Maybe it is best to dish them out. The world is... (*VITO inhales.*) Best served...

[The military siren briefly goes off.]

Supper is ready. The world is...

(*VITO stares up.*)

A journey no one has made before...

MOM

(The voice of MOM resonates from above.)

Am I no one to you?

[Moonlight brightens VITO.]

(*VITO blindly collapses.*)

VITO

Moon?



MOM

Baby steps Vito. Inch-by-inch. One step at a time.

VITO

Meter-by-meter. I want to win. I want to win you back.

MOM

You lost me there, honeybee.

[Moonlight dies down.]

Just eat your vegetables, Vito.



SCENE xviii

[*Suit-up Room in Space Center*]

(*FALLACI is uniformed in much of her space suit.*)

FALLACI

Contact lost.

(*FALLACI loudly bangs the door.*)

[*Lights flicker on.*]

How we gonna get into space if you can't hear sirens between two rooms?

(*FALLACI strolls in.*)

(*VITO sits up.*)

Suit up. It is Sunday. We are going to be late for research.

(*AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z rush in, with garments of a space suit.*)

(*AIRMAN B heads in to uniform FALLACI with the final garments to her space suit.*)

(*AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z help VITO suit up.*)

AIRMAN Q

Don't worry Vito. We have all the time in the world.



AIRMAN I

Not on.

AIRMAN Z

That one Iota... Was pretty dark.

AIRMAN Q

Says the edgy one.

AIRMAN Z

(*AIRMAN Z focuses on VITO.*)

No one knows more about edge than flatty here.

AIRMAN Q

He's going to see beauties, scars of the world before all of us.

AIRMAN Z

I am just talking like an aviator.

(*AIRMAN Z addresses VITO.*)

That phase of yours was in your younger years. Time sure does fly...

(*AIRMAN Z looks away.*)

Like a winged snail.

(*VITO and FALLACI are fully uniformed in their space suits.*)

FALLACI

We are headed for launch. Will you subsequent Anu's make yourselves useful and deal with the pressing matters?



(AIRMEN rush out with the podiums.)

AIRMAN I

Slugfest!

FALLACI

(FALLACI addresses VITO.)

Let's take a breather.

(VITO and FALLACI look away as AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z enter and engineer in a rocket.)

The world may be close, but we'll miss a lot.



SCENE xix

[Rocket on Launchpad at Space Center]

[The rocket is built like the command module, with seats facing directly upwards.]

(EASTON excitedly walks in with a model V-2 rocket.)

(VITO looks at FALLACI as though she lied. VITO approaches EASTON.)

VITO

Easton... We have a problem.

EASTON

(EASTON feels remorse.)

Only I did. I've had bad tastes.

(EASTON feels assured.)

The new generation, who will live to grow up into parents, don't.

(EASTON hands the model V-2 rocket to VITO.)

I remind them so I will never forget.

WESTPHAL

Forget what?

(VITO drops the model V-2 rocket.)

(WESTPHAL steps in. WESTPHAL stares at the rocket.)

What a majestic missile...



(EASTON nods in confirmation. EASTON picks up the model V-2 rocket.)

(VITO salutes WESTPHAL.)

(WESTPHAL salutes VITO.)

VITO

Senior Master Sergeant.

(EASTON places the model V-2 rocket into VITO's free hand.)

WESTPHAL

(WESTPHAL corrects VITO.)

Chief Master Sergeant.

(VITO releases the salute.)

(WESTPHAL and VITO shake hands.)

You're going to be king riding on it.

(GIANG has an extended belly. GIANG heads in.)

FALLACI

(FALLACI feels intrigued at GIANG.)

Strange...

(VITO orbits GIANG.)



Love?

(*VITO and GIANG embrace. VITO's and GIANG's lip approach each other.*)

EASTON

(*EASTON pulls out a marker.*)

Before you dock and berth, may you autograph this? For the kids.

(*EASTON hands the marker to VITO.*)

(*VITO examines the model V-2 rocket.*)

VITO

Happens... I am named after this... This was the rocket that took the first space photos. I was named in her honour by Mom...

(*VITO falls silent.*)

(*EASTON realizes he hurt VITO again.*)

(*VITO hands the model V-2 rocket to EASTON.*)

(*GIANG extends her arms for VITO.*)

(*VITO ignores GIANG. VITO signals for FALLACI to enter the rocket.*)

(*FALLACI understands she is commander, so she was having none of it. FALLACI signals for VITO to enter the rocket alone.*)

FALLACI

Wait under the stars.

(*VITO sits in the rocket.*)



(*FALLACI addresses EASTON.*)

He'll be grounded when we return. That is when you two stop playing games.

(*FALLACI addresses GIANG.*)

I am sorry for all the pain that my command pilot will cause you.

(*GIANG lovingly acknowledges VITO's complexity.*)

He has a time out to deal with only himself and I. He will not take for granted this gravitational attraction.

{*Option I*}

FALLACI

(*FALLACI addresses AIRMAN I.*)

Iota. Second favourite.

AIRMAN Q

Congrats.

AIRMAN Z

Congrats.

{*Option Q*}

FALLACI

(*FALLACI addresses AIRMAN Q.*)

Omega. You're my second favourite.

(*AIRMAN Q turns to AIRMAN I and AIRMAN Z.*)



AIRMAN Q

You hear that airheads?!

{*Option Z*}

FALLACI

Zeta. You're my second favourite.

(AIRMAN Z feels teary-eyed.)

AIRMAN Z

I did not do anything to deserve this. I am nothing.

(AIRMAN I and AIRMAN Q comfort AIRMAN Z.)

FALLACI

(FALLACI addresses AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z.)

I thought I told you all to deal with pressing matters...

AIRMAN Q

Beta is currently speaking to the press on your behalf.

FALLACI

I meant pressing buttons and pulling levers at the Mission Control Center.

AIRMAN I

Countdown!

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z rush off, fighting for the countdown.)



WESTPHAL

You will make a fine commander, Mabel Fallaci.

FALLACI

You're too kind.

WESTPHAL

I appreciate that as a shrinking mother.

(*WESTPHAL instructs EASTON to leave.*)

(*FALLACI amusingly stays put.*)

(*WESTPHAL and EASTON depart.*)

(*FALLACI heads into the rocket. FALLACI buckles VITO in.*)

(*VITO embarrassingly looks on. VITO secretly expresses appreciation*)

(*FALLACI closes the hatch.*)

(*FALLACI sits. FALLACI buckles herself in.*)

(*GIANG clutches her belly. GIANG strolls away.*)

[*Fogs surround the rocket.*]

GIANG

(*GIANG speaks over the intercom.*)

Godspeed. Anu One.



(*AIRMEN speak over the intercom.*)

AIRMAN Q

Ten. Nine. Eight.

AIRMAN Z

(*AIRMAN Z sniffls.*) Seven. Six. Five.

AIRMAN Q

Four.

Three.

AIRMAN T

Ignition!

AIRMAN B

Two. One.

AIRMEN

Zero.

[*Blackout.*]

[*The rocket lifts off.*]

(*VITO and FALLACI transmit to Mission Control.*)

FALLACI

Mission Control. The clock is operating. We're underway.

VITO

We're programming in roll, Mission Control. Bumps along about here... No flat surface for smooth sailing...



[A heavy object plummets.]

Mission Control. Backup clock is taking over.

[Water impacts the side of the rocket.]

FALLACI

Mission Control. Coming into high Q a little bit. A little contrail went by the window or something there.

[The rocket deaccelerates.]

VITO

We're smoothing out some now, getting out of the vibration area. Feels good, through max Q and smoothing out real fine.

FALLACI

Cabin pressure coming down by six point 0.

VITO

Flight very smooth now. Sky looking very dark outside.

FALLACI

Cabin pressure holding at five point 0.

VITO

Have had some oscillations, but they seem to be damping out now. Flight path was straightforward.

(VITO addresses FALLACI.)

Hear that?



FALLACI

Reading you loud and clear. Confirmed staging.



SCENE xx

[*Spacecraft in Thermosphere*]

(VITO and FALLACI switches on the lights in the command module. VITO and FALLACI are now seated upright.)

[Various objects float in weightlessness, as though the objects are strung up or propped up.]

(FALLACI unbuckles herself.)

FALLACI

All systems are go.

(FALLACI blissfully drifts around.)

(VITO stays put.)

(FALLACI leans into VITO.)

You want me to help you take your first soar?

(VITO stays silent.)

Do you read?

(FALLACI pulls a clipboard, with a list, off a hook.)

We're going to perform weightless experiments.

(FALLACI reads the list on the clipboard.)

Ingest ice cream supplement.

(FALLACI pulls out a squeeze tube. FALLACI twists the cap open. FALLACI smells the squeeze tube. FALLACI smells foulness. FALLACI directs the squeeze tube to VITO's mouth.)



(VITO swats away the squeeze tube.)

Nourishment for introspection. You won't stretch out to be a viable test subject if you don't experiment with food. In the time we are here, calcium intakes may direct osteoblasts to replace weak bones. Plus, you have some debris on your nasolabial folds.

(FALLACI wipes VITO's cheek.)

(VITO pushes FALLACI away.)

VITO

Commander. You're embarrassing me in front of Earth!

FALLACI

(FALLACI expresses excitement.)
Your first words in space!

(FALLACI transmit to Mission Control.)

Mark that, Mission Control.

(FALLACI expresses frustration.)

They missed it... Blast. They cannot get anything to work.

(FALLACI addresses VITO.)

Well, are you going to get to work?

(FALLACI unbuckles VITO.)

VITO

Is life's mission already to get out of the cabin?

FALLACI

No. Just make sure you log data correctly, so I don't have to debug errors with you in front of the space administration conference.

(FALLACI passionately turns to the space outside the command module.)



Leave it to me to do the spacewalk...

VITO

You workshopped these mission objectives recently. Team Anu Seven is scheduled to take up the mantle. Team Anu Eleven will deal with the Moonwalk. Zeta was looking forward to that errand.

FALLACI

The annals of history would not matter if you don't become history.

(VITO blocks the hatch.)

I will be present.

(FALLACI nudges VITO off the hatch.)

I am way past that.

(FALLACI opens the hatch)

The future is here.

(FALLACI levels with VITO.)

You have the cabin to yourself. Watch it while I explore. There are leftover pizza pastes stored in the pouches. Dial M C C if any emergency landing procedures arise. No parties that will make undisclosed settlements from this, alright?

(FALLACI soars out into space. FALLACI tethers herself to the command module.)

(VITO closes the hatch.)

(FALLACI taps the hatch window.)

If an extraterrestrial comes by and attaches him, herself, or themselves, switch off the lights and crouch.. After maneuvering the command module towards the void and initiating the self-destruct sequence.



(VITO respects FALLACI's leadership.)

Vito... You are my star.

(FALLACI drifts out into space.)

(VITO types on the command module's computer.)

(FALLACI drifts around space.)

[A distant star increasingly twinkles, as the light of a supernova reaches the eyes of the world.]

(FALLACI intently observes the star.)

(VITO shifts his attention away from logging to FALLACI.)

[Numerous fainter stars brighten in the darkness.]

(VITO timidly opens the hatch.)

(FALLACI glances at VITO, then back at the stars.)

[The Sun barely peaks over the horizon. The sunlight engulfs the distant stars.]

(VITO deeply contemplates at the sight of the Sun.)

(FALLACI turns to VITO. FALLACI feels ready.)

Let's go home.



(VITO forcefully shuts the hatch.)

(FALLACI tries to open the hatch.)

Cabin pressure... Is soaring!

(FALLACI repeatedly strikes the hatch.)

VITO

I pushed you off this world... I can help you back on!

(VITO flies the command module.)

(FALLACI drifts away, with the tether locking her to the command module.)

FALLACI

(FALLACI transmits to Mission Control.)

Anu One is on course. Anu One is simultaneously beyond and behind the objective.

(FALLACI tries to drag herself closer to the command module.)

Four minutes ago, Mission Control.

[The Sun rises beyond the horizon and out of sight above.]

Do you have a blip of tracking data?

(FALLACI panics. FALLACI repeatedly impacts the command module. FALLACI mumbles.)

None of this, without inviting me in...

(FALLACI tries to pull herself together.)

I am not going towards the light, just yet! Mark that!

(FALLACI grows fearful.)

Mission Control, a bad data point?!



(FALLACI untethers herself. FALLACI pulls herself to the rendezvous window. FALLACI addresses VITO.)

Vito! Now is not the time for a hundred-minute burn. Save it for when the agency jettisons you back to the Far East!

(VITO defiantly accelerates the command module.)

[The atmosphere rapidly darkens.]

In this oxidized household, I am the Mission Operations Manager!

[The atmosphere slowly brightens.]

Listen to your commander young man!

[The Sun returns to the horizon.]

(FALLACI feels blinded by the sunlight.)

Sun!

(VITO tears up. VITO halts the command module.)

(FALLACI flings out beyond the command module, as inertia would dictate.)

(VITO recklessly opens the hatch. VITO soars out of the command module.)

(FALLACI brutally spirals. FALLACI pummels against magnitudes of g-force. FALLACI is close to, if not already in, the state of g-LOC.)



(VITO grabs ahold of FALLACI.)

VITO

Under my watch, no mo-ms will fall.

[The backup clock plummets.]

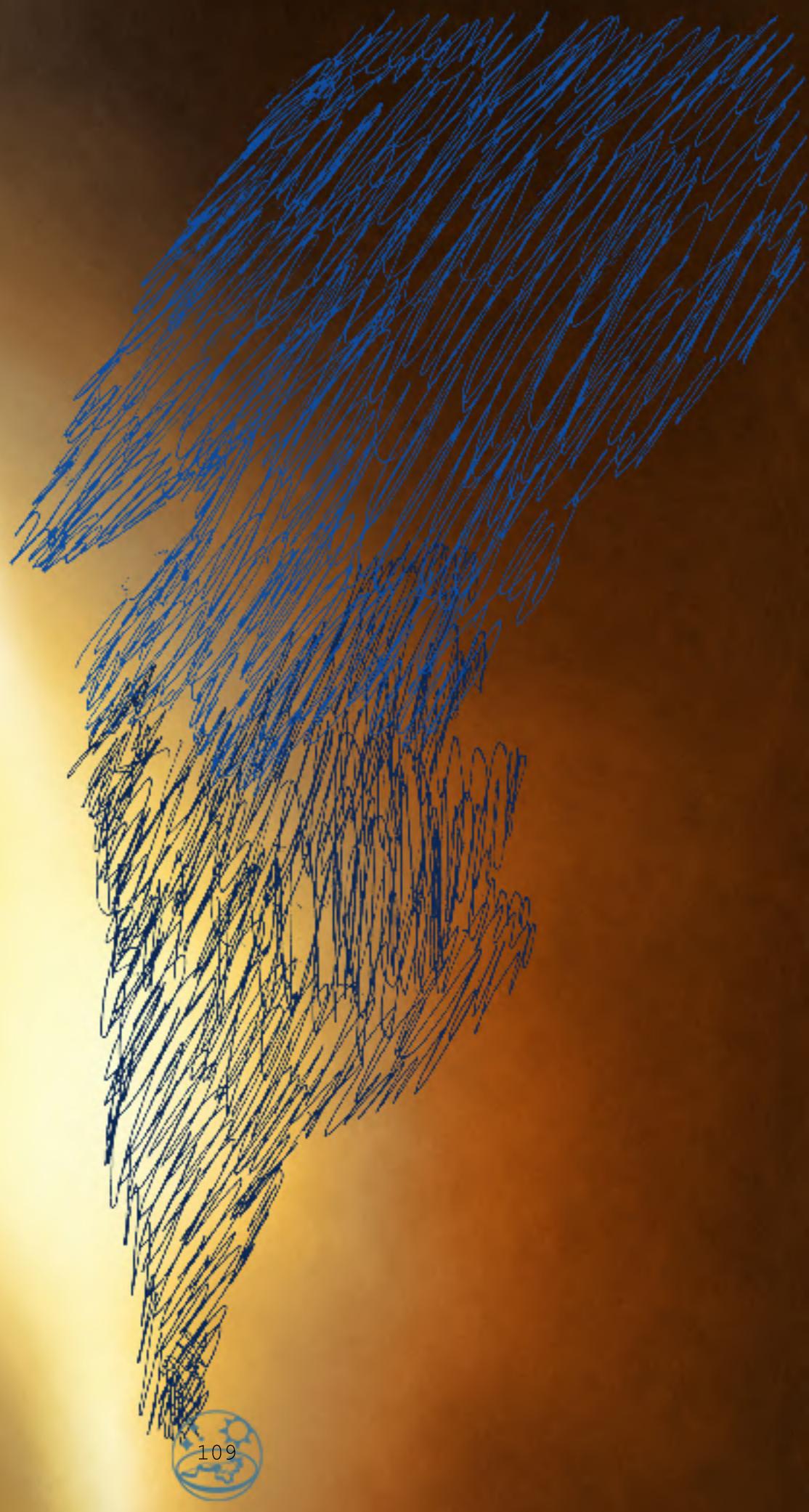
(VITO holds onto FALLACI for dear life.)

The world is really...

[Blackout.]

[End of Act.]





ACT II

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SCENE i

[Away]

[The Sun rises.]

(VITO is no longer a young man. VITO is uniformed in a standardized military attire. VITO tightly holds onto HOPI.)

HOPI

(HOPI speaks as though she is MOM.)

You may wait for me this way, but I will be right behind you all the way.

(GIANG is an older woman. GIANG enters. GIANG snatches HOPI away from VITO's grasp.)

(VITO helplessly watches as GIANG walks out to the Sun with HOPI.)

[The Moon rises. The Moon blocks out the sunrise with GIANG and HOPI.]

(HOPI speaks as herself.)

Dad!



SCENE ii

[*Testimony Hearing Room in Space Center*]

WESTPHAL

Mister Holliday.

(*WESTPHAL turns the Moon chair to face VITO.*)

I was your judge and jury. Two decades instituted into you, mentally. I do not think we need to revisit this.

(*AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z solemnly and somberly march in. AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z hand some paperwork to WESTPHAL. AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z form a line.*)

(*AIRMAN Q shakes VITO's hand.*)

(*AIRMAN I taps VITO on the shoulder.*)

(*AIRMAN Z nods at VITO.*)

(*VITO expresses sorrow.*)

(*AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z gather around WESTPHAL. AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z hang up bulletin boards. AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z pin up papers.*)

Our mercy is off-the-record. The verdict is still the same. You will never get your wings back.

(*WESTPHAL stands.*)

Space... Dismissed.



(WESTPHAL takes off.)

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z carry the Moon chair off.)



SCENE iii

[Administration Building in University]

(VITO heads to the bulletin boards.)

VITO

(VITO tearfully cries out.)

Giang! Giang! Giang!

(VITO rips a paper off the bulletin board. VITO reads the paper.)

You are welcome to celebrate with Dr. Mac Ignatius Giang on her new tenure. There will be mooncakes served at the end of this decade.

(VITO tosses the paper away. VITO lets gravity take him, sliding against the bulletin boards' support.)

I'm too late...

(VITO dazes off.)



SCENE iv

[Administration Building on World of Dreams]

AIRMAN I

Got worms?

AIRMAN Z

He's an early bird alright...

(*AIRMEN* are uniformed as college students. *AIRMEN* stroll in.)

(*AIRMAN Q* approaches the pinned and stabled sign-up sheets. *AIRMAN Q* takes the writing utensil attached to the sign-up sheets and prepares to write.)

(*AIRMAN B* stops *AIRMAN Q*.)

AIRMAN B

(*AIRMAN B* focuses on VITO.)

He should have the honours.

AIRMAN Q

(*AIRMAN Q* addresses VITO.)

Are you here for this project?

VITO

What project would want me?

AIRMAN B

You were just on it.



AIRMAN Z

We were here to make our moms proud. I guess.

AIRMAN B

You were up there...

(*AIRMAN B points up.*)

To make us all proud.

(*AIRMAN I rips the sign-up sheets and writing utensil off the bulletin board. AIRMAN I hands the sign-up sheets and writing utensil to VITO.*)

AIRMAN I

Sign!

(*VITO signs his name on the sign-up sheets. VITO closely examines the sign-up sheets.*)

AIRMEN

(*AIRMEN chuckle*)

(*AIRMEN dash off.*)

VITO

Why is Easton's name personally printed on here?



SCENE V

[*Lecture Hall in University*]

EASTON

Vito?

(*EASTON carries a case with model aircrafts. EASTON tiptoes in.*)

(*VITO continues to daze.*)

VITO

I am so glad you can join Project Ptolemy.

EASTON

(*EASTON shrugs.*)

What? That. No. I went with you to initially sign up. But you know they could not let me in. *Burnt too many of the innocence...* And hid my guilt pretty poorly. But who's poor and guilty now?

VITO

You can never leave your squawks in the canopy...

EASTON

Always aim high so no one comes close...

(*VITO extends his arm to EASTON.*)

EASTON

(*EASTON helps VITO up.*)

There... You go.



VITO

You came close...

EASTON

To what? To *post-trauma*?

(*VITO feels unamused.*)

Look. Whatever you have here.

(*EASTON grabs the sign-up sheets.*)

Whether it would be an audition, a tryout, or a mailing list of Submarine Monthly... Anu forbid. Your service can help you make it into any space. Unlike those quarantined in only the safety of...

(*EASTON examines the sign-up sheets. EASTON feels dumb.*)

This space is mine.

(*EASTON flips through pages to reveal multiple written names.*)

A lot of air.

(*EASTON goes and grabs a table.*)

Would you care to join me on another tour to stoke the flames in the hearts of many again?

(*VITO feels uneasy.*)

(*EASTON lays the model aircrafts from the case onto the table.*)

(*EASTON and VITO neatly line up the model aircrafts.*)

(*STUDENTS quickly pour in.*)



The wind's still blowing...

(*EASTON addresses STUDENTS.*)

Thank you to the aviation club for a smooth landing. And providing me a list of those interested in my Jet Weekly magazine publication. If anyone would like their coffee tables high, the sheet is here.

(*EASTON sets the sign-up sheets on the table.*)

I also flew in my partner.

STUDENTS

Aww...

EASTON

He's the left to my right wing.

STUDENTS

Eh...

EASTON

(*EASTON addresses VITO.*)

Quit conserving energy. Let your callsign out.

(*VITO erratically contemplates.*)

VITO

Delta.

(*STUDENTS pause.*)

STUDENTS

Triangle?



VITO

The shape that everyone loses themselves to...

(EASTON picks up a few model aircrafts.)

EASTON

Such as these...

(EASTON forgets the names of the model aircrafts.)

Model um...

VITO

Those who took them were modelled children.

EASTON

Yes. Perfect metaphor. They were bright, but distracted.

VITO

They had to go to the light.

STUDENTS

(STUDENTS feel gloomy.)

Hmm...

(EASTON picks up different model aircrafts.)

EASTON

It was like a siren song.

VITO

Do you hear that?



STUDENTS

Yes.

STUDENTS

No.

(*EASTON carefully sets down the model aircrafts.*)

VITO

Those lullabies.

STUDENTS

Horizon?

VITO

Beyond.

STUDENTS

Yes.

(*VITO takes solace.*)

EASTON

(*EASTON make propellers with his fingers.*)

Whoosh. Whoosh. Whoosh. I will revive an activity that you all will have credence in. I need you all to assemble a helicopter!

STUDENTS

Scale?

EASTON

All your budget. Production size.



(MOST STUDENTS work on assembling the helicopter, removing the table, and placing the model aircrafts in the case.)

Regularly drink some clear water!

(EASTON addresses VITO.)

Delta?! I do not think highly of your service.

(Few STUDENTS, with the model V-2 rocket and a marker, approach VITO.)

(EASTON notices the model V-2 rocket.)

No. No. No such carrier allowed here.

(A STUDENT hands the case to EASTON.)

EASTON

(EASTON addresses a STUDENT. EASTON whispers.)

Thank you.

(EASTON addresses VITO.)

I'm sorry. I gifted them the model the last time I presented. My unworthy autograph is there.

VITO

These students were present when everything to their lives went out of their reach. They are a gift. I am over it.

(STUDENTS hand the model V-2 rocket and marker to VITO.)

(VITO signs the model V-2 rocket. VITO hands the model V-2 rocket and marker back to STUDENTS.)



(STUDENTS examine the model V-2 rocket. STUDENTS tremble and drop the model V-2 rocket. STUDENTS distance themselves from VITO.)

(EASTON leans to VITO.)

You should have charged them for your branding obviously...

(STUDENTS ditch the helicopter in whatever state the aircraft is in. STUDENTS depart.)

Need a ride, partner?

(EASTON heads to the helicopter. EASTON tosses the case into the helicopter.)

(VITO picks up the model V-2 rocket. VITO follows EASTON.)

(EASTON sits in the pilot seat of the cockpit.)

(VITO sits in the passenger seat of the cockpit.)



SCENE vi

[Helicopter in Troposphere]

[The rotors on the helicopter buzz.]

EASTON

A product of the education system...

VITO

I have been believing in a hivemind.

EASTON

Perhaps it should stay private. Like where we used to go.

(VITO negatively shakes his head.)

Mind I ask why you were at the university?

(VITO grins.)

I never kept my mouth shut.

(VITO holds his breath.)

As for you, you kept *everything in your life* hidden in your cemented hive.

(VITO passionately tears up.)



VITO

I am here... Because I want to pollinate the land with you again.

(*EASTON looks on, bewildered.*)

EASTON

I used to put it that way...

VITO

What is your proclamation, queen bee?

(*EASTON stays silent.*)

Let me be king for a moment.

EASTON

The last time you chauffeured for a queen bee, she ended up squashed.

(*VITO depressingly sits back.*)

Bees passed their memories onto the larvae. The public remembers. Pollinate?... We annihilate. I'm a wasp. Confined to a small base. Where else can I go? I am only thankful that I am less of a target than you. A hornet. I took down spiders. You took down the bear. I burnt a fraction of the forest. You incinerated half the population of space. Where else could you go, hornet? No hiveminds to share.

(*EASTON comforts VITO.*)

You'll always be a wasp to me. And I will accept you as so. Your stingers were voluntarily clipped a long time ago. I let all the toxin in me run out from all the burns I have given. Unfortunately, the troposphere and above cannot surgically plant your wings again. But my wings have never been better. We have an option for you.



VITO

(VITO taps the model V-2 rocket against his hand.)

It would be failure.

EASTON

Not an... You would never say that. I definitely remember you seeing the importance of every worker bee. You've changed.

VITO

I choose the second option.

EASTON

Are you going to finally answer, where to?

VITO

(VITO leans his head.)

The edge of the world...

EASTON

That's the Vito I know.

(VITO and EASTON look on.)

[The helicopter lands.]

(VITO and EASTON exit the helicopter.)

(EASTON yells out to STUDENTS.)

Clean up! Leave the world better than how you found it.



(STUDENTS enter from all around. STUDENTS take apart the helicopter.)

[The helicopter buzzes off.]

(STUDENTS walk out.)

(EASTON grabs the case.)

That applies to you too, Vito.

(EASTON departs.)



SCENE vii

[*Edge of Earth*]

(VITO looks back.)

VITO

That is right. For your own sake.

(VITO faces forward.)

If you want to be left alone. Better buzz off!

(VITO expresses guilt to the world.)

I've been eating the vegetables and their flowers that I was supposed to pollinate. I was supposed to provide honey to my world... I'm the bug. Molded to manifest... With childish instincts. With voices in my head.

(VITO stares up.)

You were only physically here for a short time. I have got to clip the antennas out too! You've cooked my insides! You left to get me ready for suf-fring! I've lost you Mom! I've lost you... Mom. You were a one.

(VITO deepens his pain.)

I had finally found the world. It's time, this cold world dishes me out.

(VITO holds the model V-2 rocket high.)

A journey a no one has made before.

(VITO threw the model V-2 rocket on the ground.)

[*A brief sound of an active thruster from a rocket launch blasts.*]

(VITO falls, lifeless. VITO exhales a lasting breath.)

The... World... Is...

(VITO closes his eyes.)



Round...

(VITO drifts away.)



SCENE viii

[Homestead]

(*HOPPI* rushes in. *HOPPI* holds the model V-2 rocket close.)

HOPPI

Dad!

(*HOPPI* lays down.)

GIANG

(*GIANG* exhaustedly enters.)

You are too old to play with dolls.

HOPPI

They're models!

(*GIANG* shrugs. *GIANG* sentimentally takes the model V-2 rocket. *GIANG* lightly soars it out.)

V two!

GIANG

Is this really happening again?

HOPPI

Again?

(*GIANG* walks off.)

No, no, no! I understand.



GIANG

I am just going to make you something. And no, you do not understand.

(*GIANG returns with papers.*)

HOPI

It is another *basic* Lagrangian problem?

GIANG

Of course not...

(*GIANG walks out. GIANG carry in two bowls with a rice ball in each bowl.*)

Much more basic.

(*HOPI sits up.*)

(*GIANG sits. GIANG places a bowl for HOPI.*)

A sphere rolls in a circular-

HOPI

(*HOPI interrupts.*)

I don't know basics. Please return to complexity.

GIANG

This is your father and I. Long before you came to Earth.

(*GIANG takes the rice ball from HOPI's bowl and places the rice ball in with the other rice ball in GIANG's bowl.*)

Two solids and too uniform.

(*GIANG leans the bowl towards HOPI. GIANG slowly turns the bowl to have the two rice balls circling the interior. GIANG loses track of time.*)



(HOPI stops GIANG's bowl, smooshing one of the rice balls in the process.)

HOPI

I get it.

GIANG

You get Grandma?

(GIANG turns the bowl, showing the movements of the rice ball and rice figure to be unsettling. GIANG twists the bowl quicker and all its contents fly out.)

(HOPI calms down GIANG.)

HOPI

I think that is brave.

GIANG

Me dealing with an amorphous ball for the better part of my life?

HOPI

No. What Grandma did.

GIANG

(GIANG feels flustered.)

Does Vito seem to make everyone want to run off?

HOPI

It is not Dad's fault.

(GIANG embraces HOPI.)



GIANG

Hopi. Is this how you feel about me?

HOPI

No. Just the whole wide world.

(GIANG pushes off HOPI.)

GIANG

Don't tell me this runs in the family?

HOPI

Technically flies, mom.

GIANG

Don't call me mom. Call me your lifelong astrodynamics teacher, because I failed you.

(GIANG weeps.)

I will accept anything that you have to reveal to me at this point.

HOPI

No, doctor mom. I am well aware the Earth is round.

(GIANG retracts her weeps.)

So, I should be space commander and not Dad. But somehow, he made a complete orbit while believing the Earth was flat. How did he do it?

(GIANG takes the bowls off. GIANG grabs VITO's exam packet.)



I thought you threw all of Dad's old stuffs away.

GIANG

They were actually just dumb old books that he read while we were on *dates*.

(*GIANG hands VITO's exam packet to HOPI.*)

(*HOPI examines VITO's exam packet.*)

HOPI

(*HOPI expresses astonishment.*)

Was Dad a philosophy major in college? I wouldn't be surprised. Philosophers talk, but tell people nothing.

GIANG

No. He never went to college.

HOPI

I am beyond impressed. Dad is a genius.

(*HOPI flips a page in VITO's exam packet. HOPI feels stupefy.*)

GIANG

He would never have made it through.

HOPI

The numerical answers seem correct. But he drew all the diagrams in a horizontal oval. Even if it were a joke, the instructor would fail anyone.

GIANG

Oh, the instructor was a joke. Therefore, the instructor was not just anyone.



(GIANG turns the page in VITO's exam packet for HOPI.)

HOPI

(HOPI feels dumbfounded.)

You worked for the space agency?!

(GIANG nods.)

How come you've never told me?

GIANG

The agency was top-secret, but disorganized. I just assumed that eventually names would be released, more hiring of not really the finest people on this planet, the lunar film set design would be billboard—

HOPI

(HOPI interrupts.)

If a space program like that were to commence... Wait, the agency was about to fake the Moon landing?

(GIANG expresses nervousness.)

GIANG

Like I said I am a joke and who best to make jokes.

HOPI

Dad really screwed the whole world up huh. I cannot believe you let him slide.

GIANG

Well I wouldn't have you.



HOPI

(HOPI pauses.)

You're not the world mom. I love you, but the Moon doesn't just revolve around you. You passed him so you can raise your status.

GIANG

Before my poor phrasing with the Moon landing earlier, I kept our relationship orbiting, with a three-day distance. Weekends when Project Ptolemy were scheduled for flying practices. I admit, a conflict of interest.

HOPI

Dad explained that he got all those medals on one of his suits because he flew the best while in conflict. Perhaps, you should see him, so the trauma does not seep through his skull.

(GIANG slightly breaks down.)

GIANG

Everyone he dropped napalms on, hearing their burning pleas, looked like me.

(GIANG slightly calms down.)

Look. All this stem from one thing. He cannot let go of his mom.

(HOPI embraces GIANG.)

HOPI

I am where my Dad isn't. I promise you I will do what Dad has never done.

(HOPI lets go of GIANG.)

(GIANG walks off with VITO's exam packet.)



SCENE ix

[*Watercraft on Open Waters*]

[*The terrain is relative to the edge of Earth.*]

HOPI

I am way over the edge. I am going to get her.

(*HOPI pulls out an envelope. HOPI pulls out a map from the envelope. HOPI examines the map.*)

Far... The air base is between the Far West and the Far East... I've gone way too far...

(*HOPI looks over the edge..*)

Well almost.

(*HOPI rolls the map and envelope into a ball. HOPI tosses the map and envelope off..*)

Hope the fallen understands that landmasses in each of the four corners are off scale.

(*HOPI takes steps back and prepares to run..*)

Here goes... Please don't be nothing... Please be a differentiable potential.

(*HOPI dashes and leaps. HOPI lands on what sounds like a watercraft on open waters..*)

Matters that are solid, liquid... (*HOPI inhales..*) Gas. Matters are dark ahead, but...

(*HOPI looks back..*)

Light travels much quicker.

(*HOPI stares up..*)

And in the darkness is a light that comes in many shapes. When she's above, the waves are memorable. When she's below, the waves are relaxing. My expectations can never sink!

(*HOPI observes the distance..*)

Oh, Hubble me. Is that an ice sheet? If that's the case, that means I'm going around in circles.



(HOPI circles around.)

Oh nope. That's just an iceberg to the right, ahead... Therefore, on the left would be the delivery drop point, the island where packages end up for the *will* of many sons and daughters serving out there.

(HOPI observes.)

I'm not too far from where the two edges meet.

(HOPI departs.)



SCENE X

[Office in University]

(STUDENTS carry in boxes full of mostly mailing supplies and some office supplies.)

(A STUDENT curiously opens one of the boxes. A STUDENT pulls out a paper airplane. A STUDENT glides the paper airplane outwards.)

(GIANG limps in. GIANG picks up the paper airplane.)

GIANG

(GIANG wipes her eyes.)

You all are supposed to keep the sentiments in the presents. Not let the past wander back to me.

(GIANG grows hurtful.)

Out of my office. You all have a future ahead of you. Do it for your moms!

(STUDENTS depart.)

(GIANG examines the paper airplane.)

Oh Hopi... Always twisting your homework into a dimensional plane of existence...

(GIANG rolls the paper airplane into a ball.)

I hope you're on this dimension...

(GIANG rotates the paper ball. GIANG tosses the paper ball off.)

(STUDENTS are uniformed in a custodian attire. STUDENTS march in from where the paper ball ended up.)



(A STUDENT carries a box full of paper airplanes.)

The future pays... Flat rates...

(A STUDENT dumps the paper airplanes out of the box.)

(GIANG increasingly tenses up. GIANG kneels.)

(GIANG closely examines a paper airplane.)

Elementary...

(GIANG rolls the paper airplane into a ball. GIANG sets the paper ball down. GIANG closely examines another paper airplane)

Camp...

(GIANG rolls the paper airplane into a ball. GIANG sets the paper ball down. GIANG closely examines another paper airplane. GIANG swipes at all the paper airplanes.)

Scattering through potential...

(GIANG rolls the paper airplane into a ball. GIANG sets the paper ball down. GIANG closely examines another paper airplane)

High energy...

(GIANG rolls the paper airplane into a ball. GIANG sets the paper ball down. GIANG closely examines another paper airplane)

Trajectory from potential.

(GIANG unsteadily throws the paper airplane.)

(A STUDENT directs other STUDENT's to remove the boxes, for GIANG's sake.)

(GIANG closely examines another paper airplane.)

Oscillator with delta function for-



(GIANG forcibly smashes the paper airplane.)

(STUDENTS remove all the paper airplanes and all the boxes, but one paper airplane and one box.)

Critical damping... There is a given impulse...

(GIANG tries to calm down. GIANG sits up.)

And with it... No net change in position.

(GIANG examines the paper airplane.)

I should have been on edge.

(GIANG drops the paper airplane. GIANG expresses an epiphany.)

Coriolis...

(GIANG picks up the paper airplane. GIANG unwraps the paper airplane.)

I know who will always be. The transient force.

(GIANG pulls out a writing utensil, and envelope from the remaining box. GIANG quickly writes a letter on the uncrumpled paper and stores it in the envelope. GIANG closes the envelope. GIANG places the envelope on the box.)

Good thing I hoard much more than information.

(GIANG looks out. GIANG points.)

Custodian! Your future is here. Please let her arrive.

(GIANG departs.)



SCENE xi

[Mailroom in Air Base]

(WESTPHAL strolls in. WESTPHAL picks up the envelope. WESTPHAL examines the envelope.)

(VITO appears clean-cut. VITO is uniformed in a custodian attire. VITO slyly heads in from where GIANG pointed earlier. VITO carries the box out, unseen.)

WESTPHAL

(WESTPHAL shouts.)

This is for you.

(VITO discreetly returns to retrieve the envelope.)

Mister... (WESTPHAL disappointedly sighs.)

(WESTPHAL marches out.)

VITO

(VITO reads the envelope.)

To. The very edges of Earth... From... Your world.

(VITO openly raises his head.)

My world.

(VITO lets out a tear-jerking smile.)

Giang.

(VITO opens the envelope. VITO pulls out the letter. VITO reads the letter. VITO visibly expresses increasing anxiety.)

Not again.



WESTPHAL

(*WESTPHAL projects.*)

There is a shipment of a retired jet heading here. We will take her apart for scrap metal. Be ready for it!

(*VITO hides the letter and envelope.*)



SCENE xii

[*Hangar in Air Base*]

[The jet is on wheels or frictionless. Fiery cloths hide all around the jet.]

(AIRMEN drag or push the jet in. AIRMEN proceed to tap or shake hands with VITO. AIRMEN march off together.)

(VITO crawls into the cockpit of the jet. VITO gets situated in the jet. VITO relives some cherished moments.)

VITO

Again. This time. To get her.

EASTON

Let's work the problem, Vito.

(EASTON treads in.)

Let's not make things worse by flying. You promised, Vito.

VITO

There is lying in flying.

EASTON

Not all miss is in promise.

(EASTON throws a fiery cloth at VITO.)

(VITO dodges the fiery cloth. VITO smirks.)

You've missed your chance! I gave you one here!



VITO

One hundred percent. You gave me a hundred percent, EASTON. There are zero problems. Yet, I still did them all wrong.

(*EASTON calms.*)

(*VITO focuses on the fiery cloth.*)

Now give a hundred percent to righting it.

(*VITO and EASTON rushes to the fiery cloth. VITO and EASTON remove their outer jackets. VITO and EASTON beat the flames out of the fiery cloth. VITO and EASTON cover the fiery cloth with their jackets.*)

(*EASTON feels exhausted.*)

EASTON

You... Have... A purpose...

VITO

Home will always be here...

(*Footsteps echo.*)

EASTON

If someone is going to fire you, it should be me.

VITO

You already have.

(*VITO hides the mess in the cockpit of the jet.*)

(*HOPPI is uniformed in an aviator attire. HOPPI conceals herself in a cluster of AIRMEN.*)



(AIRMEN and HOPI enter, huddled together.)

(AIRMEN frequently sniff the air.)

(EASTON intently observes AIRMEN and HOPI.)

EASTON

I am wrong about one more thing... There is a Ms. Project Ptolemy.

(EASTON looks back at VITO. EASTON mentally counts.)

Back at six? It has been so long?

(EASTON approaches HOPI.)

Are you in the clear?

(HOPI stops in her tracks.)

(AIRMEN leave together, without noticing.)

Do you have clearance?

HOPI

(HOPI feels demonstrative.)

So, we're on a rice ball, floating on a big bowl of water. There is a lot of friction between us currently.

(VITO slides and hides behind the jet. VITO listens in on HOPI and EASTON.)

EASTON

And there is an inverse relationship between the force of friction and clearance. To help out a friend, I had rough sessions with a bright astro... Physics instructor, whatever. Something less vacuous.



HOPI

Dynamics? Um. That is what you seem like-

EASTON

(*EASTON interrupts.*)

Thermally. Yes. I just tried lighting that same friend up.

HOPI

I shouldn't question your character... I know a thing or two about raising Hell.

(*EASTON expresses an epiphany. EASTON steps back.*)

With enormous pressure and the feel of heat, this rice ball is expansive and gives clearance. Also, you lowered friction.

(*HOPI dashes away.*)

EASTON

That... Condescension...

(*EASTON rushes off.*)

(*VITO comes out from behind the jet.*)

VITO

(*VITO whispers.*)

On Anu's green Earth...

EASTON

I must call Giang!

(*EASTON is thrown on his back.*)

[The alarms set off. Red alert flashes.]



(WESTPHAL tramps in, towering above EASTON.)

WESTPHAL

We have a security breach. No contacts are made until we rain fire on our problems!

(AIRMAN I and AIRMAN Q rush in and rush out from various directions.)

(WESTPHAL heads up to VITO.)

(EASTON stands up.)

(AIRMAN Z reluctantly enters.)

(EASTON signals for AIRMAN Z to approach EASTON.)

(AIRMAN Z strolls to EASTON.)

WESTPHAL

Clean this up when we are full, Mister Holliday.

(WESTPHAL rushes off.)

EASTON

Break into Westphal's office. Contact Professor Giang Ignatius Mac that I will be flying her here promptly.

AIRMAN Z

(AIRMAN Z rushes off.)

Finally! Some action in this program.

(EASTON sprints off.)



(HOPI cunningly hides in the cockpit of the jet.)

(VITO feels uncertain. VITO extends his arm to the jet, in order to look away from the jet.)

MOM

(The voice of MOM resonates.)

Let me go...

VITO

I have!

MOM

I have not come around since dropping off you.

VITO

You've never plan it!

MOM

What keeps going forward, will.

VITO

Around. Round. I believe that more than ever.

MOM

Show your work.

(VITO turns around. VITO notices that HOPI is hiding.)

I will be right behind you, all the way. Thank you for letting go of me enough, to give me a grandkid.



(VITO's gaze and HOPI's gaze meet.)

(HOPI ardently waves.)

(VITO tearfully acknowledges HOPI.)

(GIANG rush in to embrace VITO.)

MOM - HOPI

(MOM feels like a mother-in-law while HOPI feels like a daughter. The feelings are mutually merged.)

The bane of my existence...

(HOPI returns to hiding.)

VITO

You are now teaching the top guns of academics. How outdated are the boundaries of Snell's law?

GIANG

Typical. You have no idea. I did some self-refraction. The letters in your paper gliders are timeless. There is nothing more that this universe needs than for us to be written back in our general form as two variables with a narrow angle of incidence.

(HOPI cringes.)

VITO

(VITO looks on as the red alert flashes.)

There are a lot of variables that should be here on this world with us. Years of erosion carved these well-rounded subjects. Their wavelengths expanded into a flatline in my wake.



GIANG

Reflect off the past, Vito. Be here for our daughter. Quit just living on the edge.

(*VITO shakes in GIANG's grip.*)

Hopi is over the edge. She just needs to come back around. As extraordinary as it is to orbit the world, drive her farther than any father on this planet. Be an extraordinary father.

(*GIANG releases VITO.*)

Fall off the face of the Earth.

(*HOPI comes out of hiding.*)

HOPI

Dad!

[The red alert abruptly ends.]

Are we going to see Grandma?

(*HOPI extends her hand.*)

(*VITO looks back at GIANG.*)

[The sunset rises.]

(*GIANG nods an approval.*)

(*EASTON is uniformed in an aviator attire. EASTON carries a flight helmet.*)



(WESTPHAL and EASTON rush in.)

EASTON

I swear... That post-trauma was making you speak to Anu again.

(VITO grabs EASTON's flight helmet.)

VITO

Going to stoke some flames.

(VITO heads to HOPI.)

(EASTON reaches for VITO.)

(WESTPHAL stops EASTON.)

WESTPHAL

Let Vito fly.

(VITO takes HOPI's hand.)

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z maneuver in from all around. AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z surround VITO and HOPI.)

WESTPHAL

Attention!

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z stand at attention. AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z stop chasing HOPI.)

EASTON

Thermosphere ain't going to like this.



(VITO hands the flight helmet to HOPI. VITO straps into the cockpit with HOPI.)

(HOPI puts on the flight helmet.)

WESTPHAL

Not a problem. I have nowhere higher to soar.

EASTON

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air...

WESTPHAL

Correct. I don't like titles, Delfino.

(AIRMAN I, AIRMAN Q, and AIRMAN Z turn the jet towards the sunset.)

Fall out!

(WESTPHAL and AIRMEN march off.)

EASTON

Fall off, Vito. Fall off.

(EASTON rotates his right arm counterclockwise to him. EASTON points to the rising sunset with his left arm.)

[The jet engine starts.]

(EASTON departs.)



SCENE xiii

[*Beyond the Edge*]

(*VITO flies the jet towards the Sun.*)

(*GIANG looks on the horizon.*)

VITO

My mom. You know I orbited past ahead of Earth, to get her.

HOPI

Dad. We're going to present the face of the world. Together.

VITO

The world truly is...

(*VITO and HOPI fall off the face of the Earth.*)

[*The Sun settles down.*]

[*End of Play.*]

