



BLACK. A scroll unfurls, with unintelligible hieroglyphics drawn on it. A voiceover is heard, in accented, second-language English, telling us about how there was once “a world in decline...” but that a prophecy had foretold that “someday, someone” would change everything and “... like a grain of sand in an oyster makes a pearl, something beautiful was about to be created from tragedy... and once it appeared, this world would never be the same...” Then --

BAM! -- we are inside an out-of-control space cruiser. If we had a moment to look around, we would see it is a huge, ark-like, human transport, but right now all we can make out is smoke and panic. Multiple alarms sound. Despite its gigantic size, the ship is tumbling end-over-end inside a “wormhole” surrounded by a crazy kaleidoscope of swirling imagery.

But there is ONE MAN... young, in his 20's. His name is **EN**. En and an Older Crewman frantically scramble up a twisting passageway toward an escape pod. There are only a few other Crew Members on this deck, and they are all panicking but then --

The ship roars out of the wormhole, intact, managing to miraculously right itself. Inside, the Older Crewman is relieved. Then new alarms sound. The ship cleared the wormhole only to be caught in the orbit of a nearby planet. The gravitational pull draws the ship inexorably closer, tearing at the joints and seams. Just as the Older Crewman pushes En inside the

escape pod, the huge ship breaks apart around them. The sound is unbelievable, and then En and the pod are ejected into the silence of space. En breathes hard, staring out the porthole as the gigantic ship disintegrates. It was his entire world, his home. And now it's gone...

The escape pod hurtles down through the planet's cloudy atmosphere, on fire. Inside, En hangs on tight, managing to pull on his "survival mask" while struggling to deploy steerable kites, which finally pop out, slowing his pod's descent. But the kites are damaged and En is still dropping fast. He braces himself as he crash lands, the pod bursts open, and he sails out onto the branch of a cliff-hugging tree where he snags, and hangs, barely conscious. Above him in the sky, the remains of the huge ark ship shower down as tremendous balls of fire -- meteorites.

Silence. Then En's eyes flutter. He still dangles from the tree, upside down, gently swinging, but now butterfly-like creatures alight on him, all over his body. He shoos them away, only to slip and plummet branch-to-branch to the forest floor, landing on the huge leaves of a plant, which promptly close on him, trapping him. After a muffled moment of panic, he bursts out, breathing hard. The plant seems "disappointed," but then there's a whistling sound and the escape pod drops from above -- SKLURTCH -- smashing the hungry plant flat. En leaps back, now noticing his survival mask has a gaping hole in the glass. He panics all over again, his eyes cross, and he collapses like a puppet with its strings cut. He is out cold.

BLACK. The voice of a child speaks, soft, as if in a dream... *"He has arrived."*

Now the TITLE... "EN"

Back with En, he is still unconscious as a cute, mouse-looking creature (with weird, alien-looking floppy ears) sniffs at him. Other creatures emerge from the forest, curious. Tiny, odd birds with too many wings flit down, and all these creatures gather around En as if he were some haggard, ship-wrecked Snow White. Suddenly, his eyes open and they all take off, spooked. En sits up, and looks around. This world is exotic and nothing like anything on Earth, yet somehow it all feels familiar and appealing. The colors are rich and vibrant. Even the air smells good. En has gone from Hell to a Paradise, and now as time passes...

En explores. He tastes water from a stream, decides it's safe and drinks deep, only to see bizarre bug-eyed creatures staring up at him from under the surface. He retreats. Elsewhere he tries bizarre fruits and berries -- some sweet, others bitter -- until he notices that "something" has eaten all the berries from one bush. He moves on, and the next time we see him, he's made a spear for protection. As he grows more comfortable, he swims and climbs, discovering new sights and sounds and textures. Days pass, and his stubble grows. He seems more confident now, but he is still alone. One afternoon, when odd thumping noises surround him, he runs away, scared. He is clearly an uninvited guest in this strange world...

One evening, as rains pours down, En struggles to find shelter, but then slips on a hillside and slides out of control down the muddy slopes until, at the bottom, he slams into something solid. It is a wall, rising straight up for 30 feet. En feels the smooth surface, confused but desperately curious, until something clicks, and a door slides opens. Wtf? En

steps inside to see a domed roof curving over him, with an oculus in the middle. “Bee-hive” looking structures hang from the roof. Despite the fact that they slowly undulate up and down and glow from within as if they were alive, these things are artificial. They, along with this huge domed building, were made by someone intelligent. Then BAM -- En is hit on the head.

He drops to the ground, knocked out cold.

Later, En awakes, sitting up. He is at the edge of this interior “village,” tied to a post, his hands behind him, surrounded by DOZENS OF ALIEN “PEOPLE,” all staring. They are short, maybe chest-high to En (or eye level as En sits), halfway between man and monkey. Their clothing is minimal, they wear body paint and jewelry. Still, they’re rather attractive. One of En’s “guards” -- a friendly little fellow we will learn is called **SIMO** -- risks giving En some water. En says “thank you” out loud, and everyone backs up, scared. The other guard calls over the one who seems to be the Chief. He stares at En, then motions for En to be tied down tighter.

That evening, En is still tied to the post. Simo still guards him as “children” gather to peer at him. En growls, and they run away, shrieking, but then return. He growls again, more playfully, and now they laugh. Simo enjoys what En is doing, even if he is not supposed to.

Later, while everyone is asleep (including Simo, who is supposed to on watch), En awakes to see something skittering across the floor -- a scorpion-like creature that sparkles like a jewel. It approaches Simo, raising its stinger, and En stretches out a foot to smash it dead. Simo jumps up, yelling, and everyone rushes to the hut, thinking En is escaping. Simo figures out what happened and simply points to the dead scorpion. The Chief makes a decision and --

A few weeks later, En is free and part of the community. He looks like a Villager now, with a new hair style, wearing native clothes and jewelry. Simo is no longer his “guard,” but his pal, and as En tries to help with chores, Simo teaches En his click-whisper language while En teaches him English. Once, when he and Simo are hauling in firewood, a “teen” runs in and quickly kisses En on the nose, then runs back to her friends, giggling, perhaps having won a bet. He and Simo exchange a universally-understood shrug, “kids.”

One night, around the communal campfire, En describes his true home, Earth, as Simo translates. A tray of fruit is brought to the circle, and one of them is very strange, blue and white and gelatin-like. Suddenly En sees a “vision” inside the fruit -- the pale face of a child, the face we saw in the cocoon. En gasps and drops it, then feels embarrassed and continues to describe the wonders of Earth. The image dissolves into a new location and --

-- now En’s voice, speaking English, comes from the mouth of that same pale child. His name is **PENTU**, and he lies very still, eyes open, as if in a trance. His bed rests inside a large translucent “cocoon,” surrounded by hanging fabric that constantly swirls and billows. Shadowy images play off the folds, telling the story of En’s arrival on the planet. A group of richly-clothed people are kept away from him behind a screen, but all stare, amazed by the projected story of the strange looking figure who we know as En. The noble folk offer are there to gold and riches to have their prayers answered, and they take the “signs” to mean even greater offerings are now required. Watching over all of this (and quite pleased that the nobles are increasing their sacrifice) is a tall and powerful-looking female, Pentu’s mother, Queen **PTAHSHEPSES**.

She asks loudly in their language (subtitled), “But what are these images? What does this mean?” An old male in an ornate robe, a shaman, leads her away from this cavernous space, down long corridors until they reach a sealed room. Inside, that illuminated manuscript from the opening foretells of the “someone” who will “someday” come. The recent meteor shower is the key to the prophecy. The Queen feigns shock. Why, the Prince is the “someone,” but then she laughs that off, revealing she thinks nothing of the sort. But she’s intrigued... Can this “someone” give her the power she seeks from a missing “element,” a buried treasure that she has torn up half the planet to find? The shaman does not know, but Ptahshepses is already demanding the “someone” be found and brought to her, so she summons her lieutenant, **OLYAN**. Sadly, the Shaman, who now knows too much, cannot be left alive. Good-bye...

Later, outside the City walls, the sun beats down as the sturdy Olyan leads a HUNTING PARTY riding mounted creatures that appear to be something between a horse and a rhinoceros, a “hors-oceros.” They exit the city, searching for the stranger of the prophecy, En...

Under the same sun, away from the Village, En stares down at some gently flowing water, where he again sees a reflection, not of himself, but of the Prince, Pentu. Again, he is stunned, what does it mean? Suddenly a youngster splashes in the river, and the reflection disappears. En and Simo have brought the children up from the village to play in a waterfall, which flows near an abandoned mining rig. Simo explains that the Queen Ptahshepses has dug up much of the forest looking for some sort of treasure. Now the children stop playing and go quiet, and En and Simo realize they are all staring back to the Village, where smoke rises. The Village is burning. Parents arrive, frantic to find their children and to tell En the Village was attacked, and En needs to run. Run, why? Because of them! They point to Olyan and the Hunting Party, closing in. En and Simo take off! The Hunting Party gives chase, and it’s a fast scramble through the jungle until Olyan realizes they have lost the Stranger. Olyan and the Hunting Party try and follow the trail of En and Simo, passing one of those Venus-flytrap plants. But when they’re gone... En and Simo force their way out of the closed leaves, safe.

Simo quickly takes En up in a tree for some genuine safety, where En feels bad about the Village having been destroyed by City Dwellers looking for him. Simo tells him not to worry. His people always look out for each other. He knows En would do the same for him. But now what? Where to go? They’ll decide tomorrow. They go to sleep, and En has a dream...

In the dream, a child appears in the distance, walking towards En. We recognize him as the Prince, Pentu, but he’s unknown to En. As he draws near, Pentu hands En an iridescent blue pearl, nearly the size of that fruit from the other night. En takes it, puzzled. Then a feminine hand moves in and caresses En’s cheek. A snake slithers along the woman’s arm and wraps itself around En’s neck. It tightens, starting to choke the life from him and --

En wakes up, upset. Simo wonders what happened. A dream? No, a nightmare. But now En is awake, and he and Simo hit the trail. Simo needs to get to a Distribution Center to receive his “daily dose.” En is supposed to follow but lags behind. Simo sees he is back along the trail, crouched, watching ants push dirt into a spherical shape, like a ball or...a planet. En sees it as a sign he will return to his true home, Earth. But then the ants carry away the dirt and

En snaps clear. Oddly, he is sure of which way they will go now. He points deeper into the forest. Simo knows determination when he sees it, so they will go “En’s way,” but first --

Simo takes En to that Distribution Center, a structure that looks like something between an oversized tree fort and a distribution warehouse. It’s where the “daily doses” are given out, per the orders of Ptahshepses, who wants to make sure all her people are kept healthy. Since the place is a source of food, it is surrounded by annoying tiny monkey things, *monkeetes*, that pester everyone who approaches, looking for scraps and handouts. Simo tells En that to bring in an outsider, especially an outsider *from another planet*, would not go over well in the Center, so En stays back as Simo head in, shooing away the pesky monkeetes as he goes.

Once Simo’s inside, En hunkers down, frustrated. He shoves a hand in his pocket and finds... a pearl, exactly like the one the child gave him in his dream. En is stunned, but then a smoke-filled bubble floats down in front of him, almost like an “emoji” that seems to say “hellooooo” before it pops. En looks up to see someone in the trees above him, a creature we haven’t seen before, not a Villager and not a City Dweller. He says he is simply “a friend.” The Friend sends down another smoky emoji, this time a “smiley face.” Then he sends a “handshake.” The Friend gets across that he can help En find what he seeks. He can help En get back home, if En wants. Of course En wants that, and as he leaves his hiding spot --

In the Palace, we flash to Pentu, who concentrates as, on the billowing fabric above him, projected images of En and the Friend walk together through the forest. Pentu is concerned. This time his mother is not with him. In fact, Ptahshepses is --

Inside a “tomb room.” She is alone, talking to the mummified corpse of the king, years dead, but still in his royal finery. She misses him terribly, but then we realize she is not talking to the king, but rather to the corpse beside the king, his equally dead but still robust looking “right hand man.” Clearly something went on between this Rasputin and the Queen, something heated and illicit that perhaps even led to the death of both the king and Rasputin. Meanwhile --

Simo emerges from the Distribution Center, trying to ignore the monkeetes. Then he stops. En is not where he left him. Frantic, Simo follows En’s “trail” through the brush as --

Up ahead, the Friend entertains En with more smoky emoji. They are laughing now, the best of pals, that is until the Friend leads En into a clearing and steps away from him. En sees the outline of a circle in the dirt, muttering “uh oh” before a round cage is hauled up around him, trapping him. Olyan, the Head of the Hunting Party, steps out from the brush to pay the Friend his reward. The Friend “salutes” En, and then walks off, laughing.

It’s later now, and in the trees above, Simo arrives. He has finally found En, who is still trapped below. Olyan is taunting him, threatening (in his own language) that En will end up in her majesty’s taxidermy collection, a “stuffed fool.” As Simo frantically tries to plot an escape, *monkeetes* start to annoy him. The pests are everywhere, even eating the food of the Hunting Party below, who clearly chose the wrong spot to camp for the night. But Simo makes a move and stealthily clambers down to free En, as the monkeetes follow and continue to grab at him -- they can smell his “daily dose” in his pocket and when he refuses to give it up to them they promptly bite him -- Simo shrieks -- and now the Hunting Party looks up and so --

In the Palace, Ptahshepses is eating alone when she is told “the news.” She smiles.

Moments later, she is with Pentu, telling him the stranger has been caught, and will be brought to the Castle, where he can give her what she demands. We realize Ptahshepses is looking for the Stranger to deliver to her the “power” she seeks, and is not interested in the plight of Pentu at all and, in fact, might even enjoy his misery. “Soon it will all be over, my dear,” she says, and then leaves Pentu to close his eyes and concentrate hard until, on the billowing fabric above him, an image of a bright light appears, like a star, moving closer as --

The same bright light appears in the night sky. Simo and En, both in the cage now, look up, transfixed. They need a miracle, and now here it is. The Hunting Party is just as transfixed, staring up at the “star,” and En realizes this is their chance to escape. He lures the monkeetes closer with Simo’s “dose,” as dozens and then hundreds of the little things climb onto the cage, reaching their paws inside. Their weight pulls the cage down, until finally the cable snaps and the Hunting Party whirls as the cage hits the ground and the monkeetes scatter, bowling the soldiers over as they escape. En and Simo are still trapped in the spherical cage, which starts rolling away down the hill. The Hunting Party scrambles to their mounts and give chase.

Down the hill, En and Simo roll faster and faster until they strike a tree and the cage breaks open. They’re free! Dazed, but free. And here comes the Hunting Party. Then, En hears animal shrieks and footfalls from the jungle behind them, and here comes a thundering herd! Simo pulls En down into a hole, and the beasts run over them, driving back the Hunting Party. Once the herd passes, En and Simo stick their heads up to discover what the animals were running from -- a second herd of even bigger creatures is running from the forest, fleeing the frightening star in the sky, stomping right over the top of En and Simo in their hidey hole, nearly squashing them. Once these beasts are gone, En and Simo climb out, breathing hard.

In the Palace, Ptahshepses is interrupted again, this time to be told that Olyan and the Hunting Party have failed. Moments later, she storms into Pentu’s chamber to see the image of the star on the billowing fabric. She realizes Pentu has been helping the stranger and is furious. “I gave you life, however frail yours might be, and I can take it away. In fact, I already have. You and the rest of those miserable creatures.” She has not only kept Pentu weak with some sort of poison, but she has kept the entire population under her control -- that’s what the “daily doses” are for, to inhibit the people, not to strengthen them. She still controls everyone and everything, everywhere. Always has, always will. Pentu is left alone, despondent.

That night, En and Simo are alone in the dark, still shocked by the close call they had earlier that day. Simo is pissed at how the day went, and can’t do this anymore. He wants to go back to his home. But En knows he needs Simo, and to keep him here he reveals a secret, the source of his pain -- he was abandoned by his parents, placed on the Ark as a baby, destined to grow up and work and grow old and die aboard the ship. He wants to go to Earth and find them. Simo looks at En, curious. “You mean back to Earth.” En looks caught, and reveals an even bigger secret -- he has no memory of Earth. He only has stories of the planet he calls home, he is a fraud. Simo takes that in, and feels badly for En, but agrees to help him get back to the “home he’s never been to.” But En has to figure out how where he is taking them, where are they going? En promises to solve it, tomorrow. Now, they will go to sleep.

Meanwhile, in the Palace, Ptahshepses returns to Pentu, thrilled with a new realization -- she knows Pentu was leading the stranger to the "power" she seeks. She also knows if Pentu was sending information to the stranger, the stranger was sending info back to Pentu, even if he didn't know it. So, "the answer" Ptahshepses seeks is in Pentu now. No need to capture the stranger anymore, the Hunting Party will simply hunt him down and kill him. As for Pentu, he recoils, realizing his mother is going to make his night quite miserable...

The next day, before dawn, En awakes. Simo is no longer in the tree with him and he feels abandoned for a moment, until Simo whispers to him from higher up in the tree. En climb ups to where Simo proudly points to a far away tiny red light winking on and off in the pre-dawn sky. Is that not the goal? Yes! En is thrilled, says Simo is a genius. They'll go there now. But then -- they both see the forest "moving" below. The trees and bushes sway as something crashes through the brush. The Hunting Party. Darn. How will they get down and get away?

In the Palace, Ptahshepses has arrived with the Shaman and the court at Pentu's cocoon. He looks weak and ragged from last night's "interrogation" from his mother. The Queen snaps for a servant to bring over a tray with the Prince's "medication." It is time for the Prince's daily treatment. The Queen measures a cup, then brings it to Pentu's lips as --

On the branch of that tree, En and Simo freeze. They hear growling coming closer as horrific "panther-hounds" are led this way. Simo gasps, and the Hunting Party freezes. Everyone stares up at En and Simo, who back up, but stumble into a huge nest built on this low branch, ten feet across and ten feet off the ground. They tumble over the eggs, and En rolls out the other side and drops, landing on the head of a panther-hound, stunning the beast. The panther-hound recovers and is about to chomp on En as -- BAM -- Simo drops an egg on the hound's head, dazing him all over again. Now Simo reaches down and hauls En up, just as the hound recovers a second time and leaps after En, the huge jaws clamping on empty air.

Then there's a mighty wind as a giant pissed-off mama BIRD rises up behind the nest, wings flapping. She takes to the sky, and En and Simo wrap their arms around the bird's legs and ride her into the air, hanging on tight as mama flies away! From the air, they see Olyan below give a command. A bow is raised by a soldier and --

An arrow flies past En and Simo. Uh oh. Another arrow sails by. Two more. Then one hits the huge bird, which falters, and drops quickly to the earth. En and Simo jump off, say their thanks to their wounded "ride," and now the chase is really on.

En and Simo sprint for their lives, pursued hard by Olyan and his soldiers, who ride their hors-oceruses alongside the ferocious panther-hounds, all hot on En and Simo's tail. En and Simo cannot go as fast as the soldiers, who are about to overtake them when En and Simo enter a thick forest. Simo leaps up to a branch and grabs it, swinging branch to branch, (brachiating it's called) until he stops and looks back to see... En is struggling. The soldiers are just about to catch him, the hounds are about to bite, it really doesn't look good, but then --

At that very moment, in the castle, Pentu knocks away the cup and starts to shake. Ptahshepses backs away, as he rises up into the air, levitating. On the fabric around Pentu, images appear of animals running and leaping... cheetahs, gazelles... What is happening? Ptahshepses doesn't know what to make of this as --

In the forest, now En starts to move faster. He leaps for a branch, grabs it, swings and grabs another. He's moving like Simo now, swinging brilliantly fast through the low branches of the trees, as if he is evolving before our eyes. Simo cheers on his friend, amazed, and as En reaches him, they high five and whoop, then turn to continue and run hard just as --

The ground ends, just drops away. En and Simo fall... down... down... a terrifying 50 meter plunge to the water of this gaping cenote. They land with two tremendous splashes as --

Pentu drops back to his bed, motionless. The fabric tears from the ceiling and drops on top of him. The lights and images are gone. His mother moves in close, gasping. Is he dead?

Meanwhile, En and Simo climb out of the water, glad to be alive. Then En realizes there is no escape from down here and, angry, he heaves a stone into the shadows, where it clangs against something metal. A door. En goes to it, pulls it open and he and Simo enter a dark tunnel, lined with white square tiles. There's a sign on the wall, with a faded arrow on it, pointing down a flight of stair. En descends. Simo follows, wary. Finally, they reach a huge, round, steel door. A vault door. Rusted and rotting, it doesn't take much to pull it off its hinges and it lands with a tremendous clang. En steps into the vault, where he has to shield his eyes. Surrounding him is floor-to-ceiling shelving, filled with gleaming GOLD INGOTS. It is an overwhelming vision, yet there's something mundane in the center of the room -- a table, with a small, rusty box on it.

In the Palace, Ptahshepses stares at her son. He is dead, it seems.

Back with En, he sees a hole in the box. He takes the pearl from his pocket and drops it in. Suddenly a ray of light shoots out and the box starts to vibrate. A sound comes from inside, very faint and crackling but En recognizes it as a voice. A human voice that speaks in English...

“... this message has been recorded for any human lives in this world that, in the future, will be able to my voice.... whoever you are, please, listen carefully to what follows...”

In the Palace, suddenly the Prince's eyes snap open and he starts to speak in, but his mother's voice, telling the story of how she betrayed her husband (Pentu's father) with an affair and always felt weak and withered Pentu was her punishment. Ptahshepses tries to stop Pentu, but then, with a deranged sneer, she finishes the story herself -- yes, she loved someone else, yes, Pentu is not even the king's son. Yes, his frailty is the curse she bears. So. What.

But then Pentu stands. Ptahshepses shouts for the guards to take him away... but no one moves. Instead, they all stare at Ptahshepses, anger rising. Then someone boos her.

Then another. Now, everyone is booing her. Ptahshepses goes white. The huge chamber doors swing open, and Ptahshepses understands exile is her only option. Trying to maintain her dignity, she walks out and disappears into the darkness of the castle...

Back in the gold room, the ray of light coming out of the box is gone. So is the voice. The message is over. En is stoic. He looks older now. Then he stands and walks out of the Vault Room, followed by Simo, who doesn't understand what is going on. They pass an ancient, faded sign, “Federal Reserve, City Of New York“...

Above ground, En stares out over the landscape. He is at peace now, radiant in his knowledge. He knows his parents sent him away to save him. He looks to Simo, "I am home."

In the palace, days later... En and Simo kneel in front of Pentu, who is on his throne, looking healthier. He smiles and gives En a warm and appreciative hug, then nods to the shaman, who carries over a robe, richly ornamented. Pentu drapes En's shoulders with a cascade of gold. Then, Pentu gestures for En to follow him. "I have one last surprise for you."

In his chamber, Pentu shuts his eyes, and the billowing fabric starts to vibrate and glow, the brilliant blur of light forming the shapes of a man and woman... En's parents. His mother smiles at En, who gasps, overcome, as she steps down off the fabric into the room, surrounded by a halo of light. Even Pentu is moved as En's mother walks to her son, touching his cheek.

En reaches to embrace her, but she grows brighter and brighter until she is only light. There is nothing to hug. Then she and En's father disappear, and it is again dark

Later, as the sun sets, En sits alone at a desk, his back to us. There is a knock at the door, and Simo enters. En turns to look at him, and his face is now mixed with Pentu's as if they were merging into one. Perhaps as they once were, but definitely as they *will forever be*...

BLACK.

We end back in the vault, still filled with all that gold. One of those floppy eared mice scurries across the floor, with a blade of grass in its mouth. It goes to a gap between two of the gold ingots and places the grass... the beginnings of a nest. And on that hopeful image...

FINAL BLACK.