

BROKEN WORLDS

Written by

Terry Luke Podnar

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. RAGING RIVER - LOS ANGELES, CA - DAY**

A raging river rushes as sounds (o.s.) of YELLING -- CRYING -- POUNDING FOOTSTEPS -- INTERMITTENT RUMBLING -- BLARING HORNS -- SCREAMING SIRENS -- BLASTING ALARMS are heard.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Los Angeles 2075"

The flowing river of water is undisturbed until THE FOOT of a MAN STEPS into the torrent.

**EXT. DOWNTOWN - LOS ANGELES, CA - DAY**

Reveal: The stream is actually ocean water gushing through a street in the middle of the city.

The Man underestimates the force of the water and is PULLED into it, DRAGGING him downstream. Helpless, he reaches for help.

Some frantic onlookers stop and try to help, but their outstretched hands do not reach the Man.

Meanwhile, the city streets are jammed with people IN COMPLETE PANDEMONIUM, fleeing from a RAPIDLY SURGING SURF right behind them. Dead bodies are carried by the surf.

**INT. DISTRICT AREA - LOS ANGELES, CA - DAY**

Cars are stuck in flooded streets -- buildings torn apart -- windows smashed -- debris floats and motionless heads bob on the surface of ocean water.

A dog cowers in the crevice of a building, witnessing the chaos.

Police cars, firetrucks, EMS ambulances, National Guard vehicles WEAVE IN AND OUT of people, flooded areas, fractured buildings. Military helicopters circle above in the gray sky.

**INT. VARIOUS VEHICLES - LOS ANGELES - DAY**

The EMERGENCY FIRST RESPONDERS -- POLICE, FIREFIGHTERS, PARAMEDICS, and NATIONAL GUARD -- communicate inside their vehicles by satellite radio.

**SERIES OF SHOTS - EMERGENCY RESPONDERS MANAGING THE DISASTER**

A Police Responder DRIVES THROUGH A CHAOTIC SCENE of people who are DISORIENTED and RUNNING in every direction. Policemen try to direct them to safety.

POLICE

We've got to evacuate these people!

A Firefighter Responder watches from his truck as Firefighters ASSIST PEOPLE underneath piles of rubble.

FIREFIGHTER

We need more help!

A National Guard Responder checks a message on the screen of his monitor.

NATIONAL GUARD

Oh my God, there's another wave coming!

FIREFIGHTER

How much time do we have?

NATIONAL GUARD

We don't! It's on our ass right now. Get out of there! Go inland!

FIREFIGHTER

We need more time!

The Paramedic Responder watches Paramedics tend to severely injured people, with others on stretchers.

PARAMEDIC

We can't leave them behind -- they'll die.

NATIONAL GUARD

If you stay, you'll die.

POLICE

(looks at monitor)

Oh no, it's headed right for us! Again!

**EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - LOS ANGELES - DAY**

A huge ocean wave begins to move forward, picking up speed, GROWING and FORMING and CLIMBING into a GIGANTIC WAVE until it PEAKS OVER 100 FEET HIGH, and for a split second, it stands still --

Then slowly it curls and DESCENDS VIOLENTLY DOWNWARD ON THE CITY...

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

A weather-beaten, two-bedroom house sits on a desert terrain.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Sixty Miles East"

It's enclosed by a tall wire fence that has seen better days and surrounds the house. Various gadgets line the fence, including sensors and security cameras.

Abandoned houses with broken windows, unhinged doors, facades punished by sand and wind are the only neighbors.

Strong, continuous winds kick up sand and drift horizontally.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

DEREK (30s), a dutiful but passive husband, looks disheveled. He sits on a chair alone.

On a couch across the room sits KIRA (30s), his red-haired, overbearing, overwhelmed wife.

Sweat seeps through their loose clothing in the sweltering room, but Kira's flash of beauty is something sweat and anger can't erase.

Next to Kira is ALANA (8), their precocious curly-haired child, hair almost matted.

They all stare vacantly at a newscast on TV.

The TV signal is weak, the transmission glitches. Air conditioner RUMBLES.

VARIOUS IMAGES ON TV show: Tortured faces infected by virus; deer lying lifeless in desert fields; grounded birds' feeble attempt to survive; bodies floating in flooded streets...

Alana, restless, walks to a window beside her dad and stares out.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(from TV)

...disasters have impacted more than half the world's population, spreading viral, bacterial and animal-borne diseases...

Alana sees a SCRAGGLY DOG through the window, circling outside the fence. Her eyes light up like it's Christmas morning --

ALANA

Mommy, there's a dog outside!

When Kira speaks, it takes every last ounce of energy she has left --

KIRA

Let it stay outside, honey.

ALANA

But--

DEREK

Listen to your mother, Alana, and don't get any ideas.

KIRA

Did you do your homework?

Alana sighs and rolls her eyes.

ALANA

Yeah.

DEREK

Are you sure? Because I'll check it later, so if--

ALANA

What else is there to do?  
(watches the dog)  
It looks sad. And lonesome. Can I just go pet it? I'll come right back.

DEREK

No. It's outside the fence. Leave it there.

KIRA

You don't want to get sick, do you?

ALANA

But it's so booooring in here.

Alana stoops down and looks empathetic into Alana's eyes.

KIRA

I know. We'll make dinner soon.

Derek looks from his daughter to his wife, who just stares out another window. She looks broken by the circumstances.

DEREK

Then I'll let you beat me at chess.

ALANA

Let you, old man?

He pretends to frown and looks at her to see her smirking. He reaches over and tousles her hair --

BZZZZZTTTHH -- the TV goes blank -- Kira jolts and stares at it like it's a personal attack --

KIRA

Damn! Derek, you said you fixed it.

DEREK  
I said I tried. I'm not a  
repairman.

KIRA  
Understatement of the year.

Alana turns toward her parents, uncomfortable, peers out the window again. Derek huffs and stands.

DEREK  
I'll check the transmitter.

He walks into the bedroom. Kira follows him. Alana notices her parents left the room. She sneaks out the front door.

**INT. BEDROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Derek stands above a transmitter with its best days long gone, confounded by the problem.

KIRA  
You don't know what the hell you're  
doing, do you?

Derek gives her a side-eye. She stands in the doorway, hands on hips with a look of disdain on her face.

DEREK  
I think I heard a knock at the  
door. Maybe it's a technician  
offering a helping hand.

KIRA  
You're an ass. Just fix it this  
time. It's the only way we know  
what the hell's going on out there.

She walks out. Derek looks back at the transmitter and lets out a long, heavy sigh, the weight of the world taking its toll on him.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Kira walks into the living room. She stands in front of the TV, waiting for it to come back on. The intense wind gusts shake the house.

The quiet of the room is broken by the alarm SCREECHING. Kira looks at a small security monitor in the corner of the room, showing outside, but no sign of anyone breaking in.

KIRA  
(to Alana)  
It's just wind, honey...

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

The fence around the house sways in the wind. There are holes cut through the wire of the entrance gate....

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Kira waits for an answer. None comes. She looks out the window. Alana isn't there. Kira searches around the rest of the rooms --

KIRA  
Alana. Alana? ALANA!

She runs down the hall --

**INT. BEDROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

And bursts into the room --

KIRA  
Alana's gone!

Derek looks at her in question. They lock eyes, and both their faces fill with fear.

DEREK  
The dog.

They sprint out of the room.

**EXT. PLAYGROUND - PARK - DAY**

Alana wanders the sand-covered road into an apocalyptic landscape. The sun is diluted by thick haze. Sand and dust sweep across the road in gusts of wind.

Alana places a pocket penknife back in her pocket. She shields her eyes from the flying debris, then ducks behind the cover of dying bushes.

After the gust, she enters a small, dilapidated playground dotted by a smidgen of brown grass. Rusty monkey bars. Broken teeter-totter. Tilted merry-go-round.

She spots a row of swings that appears weathered but intact. She feels something and turns to see a small boy, JAKE (8), standing next to her.

He's even sweatier than she is. She looks back at the swings.

ALANA  
Are they safe?

JAKE

I think so.

ALANA

Maybe they'll cool us down.

They step together and jump on the swings. Suddenly, they are carefree kids of yesteryear just enjoying the rush of a swing.

JAKE

What's your name?

ALANA

Alana.

JAKE

I'm Jake. Never seen you here before.

ALANA

I'm not supposed to be outside.

JAKE

Me neither. I wait 'til Mom has her nap and sneak out. She thinks I'm napping too. I hate naps.

ALANA

What about your dad?

JAKE

Don't got one.

A long moment of silence.

ALANA

Maybe we can play on the monkey bars next.

She looks at Jake, but he is focused on something else and stops swinging. Alana follows his gaze -- JAKE'S MOTHER (30s) stands there. She has a scolding look on her face.

JAKE'S MOTHER

Jake. I told you not to leave the house.

Jake jumps off and touches Alana's arm.

JAKE

I gotta go.

Jake rushes over to his mother. She grabs his wrist and yanks him along.

After a moment, Alana looks lonely and like it isn't fun anymore. She jumps off the swing.

**EXT. BUILDINGS - DESERT - DAY**

Kira and Derek sweat profusely from the exertion and heat as they frantically check inside abandoned houses and shops, calling her name --

DEREK

Why would you leave her alone when she just saw that dog?

KIRA

You're not seriously blaming me.

DEREK

You sure had the time to come into the bedroom and berate me.

KIRA

You're the one who gave her that penknife. She had to use that to get out.

DEREK

I gave it to her for protection.

KIRA

Oh, please, you think a penknife's going to scare anyone?

DEREK

God, you blame me for everything.

KIRA

There's a good reason for me to feel this way.

DEREK

This again...

She stops and glares at him.

KIRA

Maybe if you'd pay attention to your family instead of her, you'd have been able to fix things at home before you broke them.

DEREK

... It was a moment I--

Kira doesn't give him a chance to finish before she walks off. Derek sighs, deflated.

Derek has an epiphany --

DEREK (CONT'D)

That park. She begged to go to that park.

They rush into the woods.

**EXT. EDGE OF PLAYGROUND - PARK - DAY**

Alana walks away from the playground on cracked remnants of asphalt. She stops as she spots something up ahead -- the SCRAGGLY DOG.

The Dog approaches Alana. They stop, stare at each other. A momentary standoff.

The dog wags its tail, pants, and then comes up to her. She stoops to pet the dog, and it WHIMPERS as if human contact is very rare.

ALANA

Hi puppy. You a good boy? Wanna play?

She stops a small, broken branch blowing across the ground. She picks up the stick and throws it. The dog stares at her.

ALANA (CONT'D)

You don't wanna play? You're probably hungry... I'd give you something, but I don't have any food. You wanna maybe just walk?

Alana walks with the dog beside her.

KIRA (O.S.)

Alana!

DEREK (O.S.)

ALANA!

Alana pauses her steps as she sees her parents appear from the woods on the road ahead.

Her parents freeze when they SEE THE DOG at her side.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Oh, no...

KIRA

Alana! Get away from the dog -- Slowly. Come to us.

ALANA

He's good, Mom, he's a good boy. He's lonel--

The dog SNARLS AND GROWLS at the parents -- Alana is startled. Freezes, arms clenched tightly at her side.

Kira CLAPS HER HANDS.

KIRA  
Go! Go away. Shoo!

Derek STUMBLES on the cracked asphalt as he steps forward.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Derek. You'll spook the dog. Just stand still.

The dog menacingly raises its hackles, saliva dripping. Kira remains calm, flashing a halting gesture with her hand. She stares directly into the dog's eyes.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
No.

Her soft tone does nothing to calm the dog.

Her eyes glance at a piece of loose asphalt beside her -- looks to the dog -- he lifts a front paw -- spring-loads his back legs -- snarls -- and LUNGES AT KIRA --

Kira snatches up the asphalt -- SWINGS HER ARM AROUND just as the dog is about to pounce on her -- CRACK -- SMASHES the dog's nose -- the dog SQUEALS, scampers off.

Alana runs to her parents and jumps into her father's arms. The parents examine her.

DEREK  
Did it bite you?

ALANA  
No.

KIRA  
Did it lick you?

ALANA  
Don't know, maybe. I only pet him.

KIRA  
I told you not to go outside or near that dog.

ALANA  
I just wanted to play.

Alana begins to cry.

DEREK  
Hey, it's okay, you're safe now. We were just worried.

ALANA  
... I met a boy. He did the swings with me.

Kira and Derek share a long, worrisome moment of eye contact.

KIRA  
Did... he touch you?

ALANA  
I don't know.

She cries harder. Kira looks like she's about to shatter.

DEREK  
Let's go home.

Derek keeps her in his arms and turns to the way they came.

ALANA  
Did you fix the TV, Daddy?

Kira looks around for the boy, the dog -- nothing around them and no one is following them.

**EXT. CITY - LOS ANGELES, CA - DAY**

In stark contrast to the isolated desert, the city teems with death and chaos, dilapidated and on its knees.

In the distance, the ocean has risen halfway up the buildings, halfway through the city.

Even though workers are cleaning up the aftermath of the tsunami, the streets are still flooded.

**EXT. HELENA'S HOME - LOS ANGELES - DAY**

HELENA (30s) scans the aftermath and exhales vapor from an e-cigarette. She carries herself like royalty, exuding seductive beauty, indisputable power, and lethal venom.

TOR (30s), a brute who sends chills up your spine with just a glance, stands beside her. He fears no one, except Helena.

They overlook a burned-out, neglected city in ruins alongside the Pacific Ocean from the precipice of a mansion perched on reinforced stilts on the side of a mountain.

TOR  
Ever seen anything more beautiful?

His smile is devious.

HELENA  
Depends on one's perspective.

TOR  
From the perspective of a king.

She steels her jaw at him.

HELENA  
You mean a queen.

Tor looks at Helena, lasciviously taking in her body.

TOR  
Yes. Of course. But even queens  
don't live this well.

HELENA  
But most queens are mothers,  
something rare, and something I  
envy.

Abruptly, a descending incandescent needle-shaped object  
lights up the sky in front of them. It appears to hit the  
ground in the distance. But there is no noise.

TOR  
Did you see that? A meteor in broad  
daylight?

HELENA  
It's a meteorite, darling, it  
crashed to the ground.

TOR  
Didn't hear anything. Maybe a UFO.

The RUMBLE of a vehicle spins them around. On the driveway  
that curves toward the back of the home, a huge van pulls in.  
A motley-looking GANG OF MARAUDERS empties the van.

Tor walks from Helena to his savage henchman, LUKA (30s), who  
leads the Marauders.

TOR (CONT'D)  
Any problems?

LUKA  
A few squealers. Had to shut 'em  
up.

TOR  
And the Councilman?

Luka motions to a Marauder, who opens the sliding van door. A  
severely mutilated body wrapped in plastic falls to the  
ground.

Helena's disgusted by the sight --

HELENA  
What's this, Luka? Tor told you to  
pressure him, not to slice him to  
pieces.

LUKA

The boys just wanted to have some fun.

HELENA

Get that off my property before it makes a mess.

She walks away from the bloody scene to the balcony of the mansion and pours herself a drink.

Tor, enthralled, watches as Luka effortlessly picks up the floppy body in plastic and throws it over his shoulder.

LUKA

We'll give him a proper burial.

Tor scurries after Helena into the mansion.

Luka watches Tor with disdain and envy. Then walks toward the edge of the property and, without hesitation, tosses the body over the edge of the cliff. He gives the sign of the cross.

LUKA (CONT'D)

Sleep tight, Councilman.

**INT. BALCONY - HELENA'S HOME - DAY**

Tor joins Helena to watch the Marauders hop in the van.

HELENA

Your men are getting sloppy.

TOR

Maybe, but that rat won't be voting on police issues any time soon.

Tor looks to Helena for confirmation, but she's stone-faced.

HELENA

He won't be an asset, either.

TOR

I thought--

HELENA

You have to use your head to get ahead in this world. I got here by predicting opportunities in climate change -- investing in scarce resources -- and betting against the survival of supply chains and infrastructure...

(pauses and reflects)

We must think of the future.

A forlorn look washes over her face as she goes inside alone.

**INT. HALLWAY - HELENA'S HOME - DAY**

Helena walks down a long hallway. She slowly enters a room.

**INT. CHILD'S BEDROOM - DAY**

As Helena opens the door, a gentle wind from the door moves a dangling mobile above a crib, and CHIMES are heard.

Helena steps inside the pristine bedroom. She walks around a stuffed teddy bear rug, touches an oval-shaped mahogany crib, a matching bassinet, and a neutral-colored play-shelf...

She looks down at a table with a basket of toys and stuffed animals. She pulls out a wool lioness and caresses it close to her chest.

HELENA

I'm sorry you never got to see this room... and I'm sorry I lost you before we had a chance. Please forgive me, with all the money in the world, I couldn't save you.

(then)

I promise you'll have a sister or brother someday.

**INT. ABANDONED APARTMENT - CITY - DAY**

In a neglected, empty house in shambles, a man lying on a tattered mattress is JOLTED awake by a CRASHING SOUND.

The man, ORIN (20s), rouses, slowly processing his surroundings. He has piercing black eyes and pale skin.

Orin RUSHES to the window and notices TWO POLICE OFFICERS approaching the house. They're searching its perimeter, and about to enter.

Still waking up, he grabs a bag and heads down the hall to a back window, which he opens and climbs through --

**EXT. ABANDONED APARTMENT COMPLEX - CITY - DAY**

Orin looks down and around outside the window. The gap between buildings appears too wide and high.

He hears the door downstairs being broken into -- he has no choice but to jump.

Orin DASHES over the gap and LEAPS --

He LANDS and makes it with impressive agility, but he scratches his hand in the process. He winces as he escapes through a stairwell door.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT**

The MOANING wind POUNDS sand against the house. Dim flickering lights illuminate the CREAKING living room.

Kira and Derek watch TV.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(from TV)

...the lack of police funding,  
powerful gangs have emerged in the  
cities throughout the country...

Derek looks over his shoulder down the hall, then back to Kira. Kira watches him, seemingly frustrated.

KIRA

Why aren't you working today?

DEREK

Finished the data input gig for  
Carter Corp yesterday. Couldn't  
find anything else.

KIRA

Our rations are getting low.

DEREK

I know, Kira, but there isn't much  
call for an on-site manager when no  
one wants to leave their homes.

Kira closes her eyes and sighs... tries hard to hold it together.

KIRA

Have you ever thought about leaving  
this godforsaken place?

DEREK

And go where? At least we have a  
home here. Not many can say--

KIRA

You call this a home? There has to  
be a better place.

Kira's eyes widen when she sees Alana standing in the hall --  
A red rash has covered Alana's skin.

ALANA

I don't feel so good.

They run to her side. Kira checks her temperature with her hand.

KIRA

She's got a fever. Are you achy?

ALANA  
I'm sorry, I puked...

Derek hurries to a cabinet and pulls out face masks. Grabs a water bottle from a stash in the cupboard.

DEREK  
Don't be sorry, honey. We need to keep you hydrated. Here, we should put these on.

Derek hands the masks to Kira and Alana.

ALANA  
I don't want a mask.

DEREK  
Alana, we have to be careful--

ALANA  
I can't breathe through a mask.

KIRA  
What's the point, Derek? We're all in here together.

Derek hesitates, then relents. He puts the masks back in the cabinet.

Kira takes Alana's hand and leads her to her bedroom.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
You need to go back to bed. We'll give you something for your tummy.

**INT. ALANA'S BEDROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Derek sits in a chair, wearily watching Alana fitfully sleep. Her rash has visibly spread.

Derek stands up and moves to the living room, passing a few empty bottles of medicine sitting on the nightstand. A bucket rests against Alana's bed.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Kira stands at the window, still as a statue. Staring out.

KIRA  
You know she has to go to the hospital.

DEREK  
Maybe it'll pass. We can--

KIRA

It's not going to "pass". She needs treatment and medication. We have no choice.

DEREK

I don't know... The city and the gangs, and... they're dangerous. They say the hospitals are full.

KIRA

This is not the time to be afraid.

DEREK

I'm not afraid, Kira. She's a girl.

Kira nods, understanding what he means, but doesn't flinch.

DEREK (CONT'D)

There's a chance none of us'll come back...

Kira spins and beelines right past him --

KIRA

I'm not letting my child die of a virus. Grow some fucking balls.

Derek shrinks. He watches Kira leave the room, then looks outside through the same window and quivers.

He steps to a cabinet in the corner. Opens it, retrieves a handgun. His hands shake as he loads it with bullets. A bullet drops to the floor.

Derek stares at it in frustration. Deliberates for a moment, then picks it up, loads the gun, tucks it into his pocket.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Kira carries Alana to the back of their car and lays her down on the backseat. Derek sets the alarm system before looking at the house, anxious to leave it.

Kira catches him looking at the house, and they share a glance. Derek acquiesces, gets into the car.

The car disappears into the heat-induced wavy road.

**EXT./INT. DESERT - CAR - DAY**

Derek drives the sand-pocked EV on a desolate main street with Kira beside him. Alana lies uncomfortably in the back.

They veer around dead animals lying in the street. They view others in ditches and fields.

Some are emaciated, others bloated due to the heat. Trees are burned and ashen in the swirling sand.

DEREK  
You should have stayed home.

KIRA  
She needs me. You both do.

Kira notices a dead animal being picked apart by vultures.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
At least we're outlasting some animals.

**EXT./INT. CITY/CAR - DAY - (LATER)**

The sand morphs into broken asphalt and cement. They move toward the city that looms ahead --

They pass more forsaken, boarded-up buildings, from shops to office blocks to houses to apartment buildings.

The car goes by a scruffy HITCHHIKER who is followed by another, and another. They CRY for help as Derek passes them.

Their pleas take a toll on Derek --

DEREK  
Don't they know we need help too?

KIRA  
Keep your eyes on the road, Derek.

**EXT. PHARMACY - PARKING LOT - DAY**

They come across a pharmacy, pull into its lot.

**INT. CAR - PHARMACY - DAY**

Derek looks at Alana, asleep and hidden by a blanket.

DEREK  
Stay low and keep the doors locked.  
I'll be as quick as I can.

Kira nods.

**INT. PHARMACY - DAY**

Derek peruses the store. The shelves are nearly bare.

As he heads to the back, a pale man in a dark overcoat turns into the aisle right in front of him --

They lock eyes for a brief moment -- the pale man has piercing black eyes. It's Orin, who is picking out bandages from the shelf.

ORIN  
Apologies...

Orin moves around Derek, and Derek proceeds to the pharmacist, GERALD (50s).

DEREK  
My child needs... medication--

GERALD  
Meds? Where have you been? Mars?

DEREK  
We live... on the outskirts.

Orin stands near the end of an aisle. His ears perk up when he hears "outskirts".

GERALD  
You might as well be from Mars.  
We've been out of stock for months.

DEREK  
What about other pharmacies?

GERALD  
Out of stock. The black market's got all the meds now... I suppose you could go downtown. Cut a deal with Tor. If anyone has what you need, it's him.

ORIN (O.S.)  
(unique foreign accent)  
Don't listen to him.

Derek and Gerald turn to see Orin, only a few feet away.

GERALD  
Who the hell do you think you are?  
This is none of your damn business.

DEREK  
Who's Tor?

ORIN  
The parasite who pays this man to send people to be robbed and killed.

Orin looks at Gerald, and his glare is intense.

GERALD

You--you shouldn't make accusations like that.

ORIN

It's not an accusation if it's true.

GERALD

I don't have to put up with this. This is my store. You get the hell out or I'll have you thrown out.

DEREK

Hey, look, please calm down. I just need medication for my daughter.

(then)

How do I find this Tor?

GERALD

Daughter?

Gerald suddenly looks menacing at hearing Derek's child is a girl. Derek looks panicked, realizing his mistake.

DEREK

Son--My son.

Gerald appears unconvinced by Derek's backtracking.

ORIN

(to Derek)

Yes, Tor can get you meds, but you'll pay a high price... your life.

Derek is bewildered by Orin's knowledge and uncomfortable by Gerald's reaction. He backs away from the counter.

DEREK

I'll just... try a hospital.

Derek hurries to the door. Orin follows.

Gerald raises his wrist and speaks into a bracelet phone.

GERALD

Hello, Tor...

Orin catches up to Derek before he exits the front door.

ORIN

I wouldn't recommend a hospital either.

Derek is torn, gazing into Orin's oddly dark eyes, and decides to leave the store.

**INT. CAR - PHARMACY - DAY**

Derek jumps into the car. Kira sees his hands are empty.

KIRA  
Nothing?

DEREK  
He said they're out. And everyone  
else is, too.

KIRA  
Go to the hospital.

Derek looks back at the pharmacy. Orin stands in the doorway,  
just watching him.

DEREK  
That man warned me not to.

Kira looks to Orin. Something strange about him draws her in.  
She quickly shakes it off --

KIRA  
Well, it's not his daughter who's  
sick. So drive.

Derek studies Orin one last time, then puts the car in gear.

**EXT. HOSPITAL - CITY - DAY**

The hospital is an imposing building surrounded by forty-foot-  
high stone walls. Wire with razor blades is embedded on top  
of the wall.

A SECURITY GUARD (50s) stands at the entrance. DOZENS OF  
PEOPLE wait in a line in front of the hospital.

Derek pulls up to the entrance. He motions to the Guard. The  
Guard approaches the car.

**INT. CAR - HOSPITAL - DAY**

DEREK  
My son is seriously ill--

GUARD  
Save your breath. There aren't any  
vacancies. Hospital's full.

Derek looks past him.

DEREK  
Should I go to another city?

GUARD

You can, but it's all the same. You have to wait until someone dies and be the lucky one next in line.

The Guard peers in at the lump under a blanket in the backseat. Alana's not visible underneath it.

KIRA

Is there a waiting list?

The Guard gestures toward the waiting crowd.

GUARD

You can get in line, but I wouldn't stay there overnight. A lot of unsavory DPs come around.

DEREK

DPs?

GUARD

Displaced people.

DEREK

Oh. Got it. Thanks anyway.

**EXT. CAR - HOSPITAL - DAY**

Derek backs out, but has to suddenly stop when he nearly runs over Tor, who is standing behind the car. Luka and the Marauders approach the car from all sides.

Tor struts to the driver's door. Luka plants himself behind the car. The Guard sees what's happening and walks away.

**INT. CAR - HOSPITAL**

Kira and Derek become apprehensive.

KIRA

Derek...

Their faces flush with fear when Tor KNOCKS on the window.

Derek looks for a way out, but there are too many Marauders surrounding the car.

Tor motions for Derek to roll down the window. Kira senses extreme danger --

KIRA (CONT'D)

Derek, don't.

Tor offers a sick smile. He raises his voice and speaks through the glass --

TOR  
Where you goin'?

Tor leans to the back window and sees the blanket hiding Alana. He looks back at Derek and Kira.

KIRA  
We're leaving.

TOR  
You leave when I give you permission to leave.

Kira looks around to see Tor is accompanied by the MARAUDERS.

KIRA  
(under her breath)  
Derek, put the car in reverse and back out.

DEREK  
I'll call the guard.

KIRA  
He won't help. Drive. Now.

Derek looks in the rearview mirror. Luka waves at him.

DEREK  
Someone's behind us. I can't run over him.

KIRA  
Get the hell out of here, Derek.

DEREK  
I could kill the guy.

BOOM! BOOM! Luka POUNDS on the trunk of the car --

LUKA  
Come on, I'm in the mood to dance.

TOR  
Derek... Shut off the car.

Kira leans into Derek --

KIRA  
Do you know what they're going to do to us?

TOR  
Does your wife make all your decisions, Derek?

Luka pounds on the trunk again and HOWLS --

Alana wakes up from the commotion. She sits up, and the blanket slips off her.

ALANA  
Mommy, Daddy, what's happening?

TOR'S EYES LIGHT up when he sees Alana, confirming his suspicion.

DEREK  
Nothing. Go back to sleep.

TOR  
(through back window)  
Hello, little girl.

KIRA  
This is our only chance. I'm begging you.

DEREK  
What if the guy doesn't move?

KIRA  
RUN OVER HIM!

Derek struggles with the decision -- he's too weak to move --

HE TURNS THE CAR OFF. Kira is beside herself. Alana is confused.

LUKA  
Aww. I wanted you to try.

Tor opens the door. He leans in to Derek --

TOR  
Derek?

Derek looks at him.

TOR (CONT'D)  
Your wife was right... You should've left.

Derek and Kira shake in fear. Kira reaches over the seat and takes Alana's hand.

Tor RIPS Derek from the car. Kira JUMPS at the force, grips Alana's hand tighter.

Tor SLAMS Derek up against the car.

TOR (CONT'D)  
Here's the deal: whether you live or die, the woman and the kid are coming with me.

Tor offers a dark, sinister stare.

TOR (CONT'D)  
Now get in the car and leave alive.

Derek tries to puff himself up --

DEREK  
You are not taking my family from me.

Tor bristles at Derek's resistance. Pushes himself nose-to-nose with Derek --

TOR  
I know someone who wants a child, so she'll be well cared for. As for your old lady, I know some people who'll take care of her too, but in a different way. It's the only deal you're going to get.

ORIN (O.S.)  
That's one terrible deal.

Tor freezes, and his face turns red -- He can't believe he just heard someone confront him. He cranes his neck to the side to see Orin standing behind his men.

TOR  
And who the fuck are you?

ORIN  
Let the family go.

Tor's infuriated by Orin's defiance.

TOR  
Nobody gives me orders, especially DPs.

ORIN  
I'm not a Displaced Person.

Tor and his Marauders close in on Orin.

ORIN (CONT'D)  
I'm exactly where I need to be.

TOR  
Well, you're about a second from being in the ground.

ORIN  
Six against one, I don't like the odds.

One of the Marauders, RODDY (20s), makes a slight movement toward his gun -- With lightning precision -- ZZZP -- Orin FIRES A HIDDEN WEAPON underneath his overcoat--

Roddy SCREAMS IN PAIN, collapses and twitches, rendered motionless. Blood GUSHES from his nose, eyes and mouth onto the street. The gang stares in shock and rushes to him.

ORIN (CONT'D)

Five against one. Better.

Shaken by Orin's shooting skill and his hidden weapon, Tor looks at Orin, who doesn't even seem to be holding a weapon.

In the chaos, Orin quickly GRABS Derek--

ORIN (CONT'D)

(to Kira)

You. Quick. Drive--

Kira LEAPS from the passenger seat to the driver's seat as Orin SHOVES Derek into the backseat and jumps in beside him.

Kira desperately KICKS the car into gear. Tires SQUEALING.

TOR

Shoot him!

Tor and the Marauders pull up their guns and fire at the car -- MISSES -- as the car SWERVES away. The Marauders SCRAMBLE after it --

Luka runs after the car, reaches out, touches it and futilely SMACKS the trunk with his hand as it drives away -- however, he focuses on the license plate.

#### **INT. CAR - CITY - DAY**

Kira speeds down a street. Derek snaps out of his daze. Orin looks at Kira in the rearview mirror, catching her looking at him out of curiosity.

Orin sees Kira's red hair and the familiarity of her face -- something hits him -- mouth agape -- but he can't say a word.

They share a long moment of eye contact... until Orin turns his attention to Alana --

ORIN

Little lady. You're okay now.

DEREK

We can't thank you enough, um...

ORIN

Orin.

Alana perks up. She manages to speak --

ALANA  
Did you save us, Mr. Orin?

ORIN  
You are a precocious little one. I only... helped.

ALANA  
(coughs)  
What's pre-kosh-us?

ORIN  
It's a gift... It means you're special.

ALANA  
Why do you look and speak like that?

KIRA  
Alana, that's rude.

Orin smiles at Kira. Kira senses a certain gentleness in his smile, contrary to the man who just shot a person.

ORIN  
I'm not from this place.  
(to Kira)  
Turn off here.

Kira turns onto a side street where Orin points to an abandoned garage.

**INT. GARAGE - CITY - DAY**

After Kira pulls into the garage, Orin gets out and shuts the garage door before getting back into the car.

**INT. CAR - GARAGE - DAY**

ORIN  
Wait here. Ten minutes. Long enough for them to search the area but not to regroup.

Alana begins wheezing. Kira looks to her in worry.

KIRA  
We need to get medication for her quickly. Do you know of a pharmacy, or anyone, who might have some?

ORIN  
Yes.

DEREK

Who?

ORIN

I have what's needed.

Kira reaches across the car to him and lays her hand on his arm. She exudes desperation --

KIRA

We don't have a lot of money...

ORIN

There is no cost.

Kira looks dumbfounded at this. She recoils, wary, distancing herself from him. Derek shifts away from Orin.

DEREK

I'm... confused. Why are you helping us?

ORIN

So that you will help me.

Orin looks to Alana with a calming gaze. Kira reads it in an immoral way, and her instincts kick into gear--

KIRA

No!

ORIN

I would never take your child. I heard you live outside the city.

Kira shoots a look at Derek.

KIRA

Where did you hear that?

ORIN

I simply need a place to stay. With good people.

KIRA

You want to... stay with us?

ORIN

I believe it's a fair trade.

Quiet thoughts fill the air.

Kira almost nods until--

DEREK

Orin, please give us a moment.

Orin steps out of the car, away from the family.

Derek locks eyes with Kira.

DEREK (CONT'D)  
We don't know anything about him.

KIRA  
We know he saved us.

DEREK  
Kira... He killed a man without even hesitating. He's dangerous.

KIRA  
He didn't freeze when we needed him.

DEREK  
He risked his life to get into our home. He's after something, Kira.

KIRA  
You want to protect our family?

DEREK  
Of course I do.

KIRA  
Then let someone in who can.

The words are a blow to the gut. Derek takes it, silently.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
If he has the medication to help Alana, we have to take the chance.

Without waiting for Derek to consent, Kira waves Orin over.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
We accept.

ORIN  
Then we can't waste time.

Orin pulls out a pill from a small bottle and hands it to Kira. She examines it.

ORIN (CONT'D)  
Give her the pill.

Kira and Derek exchange a glance, a little hesitant.

ORIN (CONT'D)  
It's perfectly safe.

Kira goes for it and puts the pill in Alana's mouth.

DEREK

I have to warn you, we only have two bedrooms.

ORIN

I'll sleep outside.

KIRA

It's 120 degrees in the day and freezing at night. And there's wind and sand and animals...

ORIN

I've endured worse.

They study him, unsure of their decision.

ORIN (CONT'D)

We should move.

KIRA

OK. You sit up front. Derek, are you able to drive?

Derek nods. Orin walks around the car as Kira opens the door to the back. He slips past her, and their arms brush against each other.

She flips her red hair. Orin is transfixed by her red hair and face, striking him deeply, and his eyes linger...

## **BEGIN FLASHBACK**

### **INT. CLASSROOM - ANDROMEDA ACADEMY - DAY**

A free-spirited rarity, BRIEX (20s), sits in a seat next to Orin. Her red hair is exactly like Kira's, and her face resembles Kira's, and he can't take his eyes off them.

DR. GAGAN (O.S.)

Planet Earth is dying...

They're seated in a massive auditorium, packed with students in uniform. They form a continuous circle of vertically-tiered stations surrounding a revolving stage.

In front of each station is a crystalline partition equipped with an amplified communicator, allowing students to listen to and speak with the instructor.

ANDROID GUARDS are fixed at the entryways -- HALF HUMAN, HALF MACHINE -- They wear jagged black armor with hoods and carry silver metal HOOKS with radiating light blue tips.

Their faces possess the same movement and features as everyone else, except the Guards' expressions render them unapproachable.

Everyone in the classroom has black irises and speaks with an accent similar to Orin's, but they sport different-colored hair -- blues, yellows, and violets...

At the front, DR. GAGAN (40s), the instructor, wearing a distinctive red uniform, stands arrogantly behind a podium at the center of the swirling stage.

His right hand has a synthetic appearance and an unnatural flesh color.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)

From the glazed eyes I see in this room, I believe I need to reiterate why we must care, and deeply care, about a world 2.5 million light-years from our own...

He homes in on a YOUNG MAN whispering to a classmate.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)

Quiet, Neo-Telmar. There is no active participation in this class. No interaction. You are spectators.

ORIN

(still staring at Briex)  
Fine by me.

Briex giggles.

DR. GAGAN

Laughter is an interaction, Neo-Briex. You will, once again, see me after class.

Gagan turns his attention to an image of Earth behind him.

Briex playfully throws a scrunched wrapper from a vitality bar at Orin. It bounces softly off his head.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)

Earth is experiencing climate change that will inevitably lead to its own destruction. This will have a profound effect on its galaxy, the Milky Way. As Earth's nearest habitable neighbor, it could indeed have the same effect on our own galaxy, Andromeda.

Around the auditorium, students absorb the information by wearing sleek visors upon which alien script appears as Gagan speaks, translating his words into digital notes.

They take notes by holding a pen-shaped device adorned with tiny dials, deftly using the tip like a click pen. The tip burns an intricate symbol onto a work pad.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)

The universe is a delicately balanced machine, not a whorl of chaos. The Earth's demise would remove an essential cog.

Orin's eyes trace the curve of Briex's neck, the tilt of her head as she writes by hand, unlike her tech-reliant peers.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)

When you are dispatched to Earth, you will gather data on the human condition across cultures, politics and more. This data will help us assess the catastrophe and the nations' ability and willingness to resolve it. If anyone still deems that goal unworthy...

He gestures to the doorway.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)

The exit is behind you.

Not one student leaves.

**INT. HALLWAY - ANDROMEDA ACADEMY - DAY**

Orin leans against the wall, appearing nonchalant. He watches the classroom doorway, which is filled with vertical beams of undulating plasma.

Blurry shapes of exiting students can be seen approaching, then walking through the door, clearly appearing on the other side, continuing on their way.

Briex and Dr. Gagan emerge through the beams of the doorway, Dr. Gagan speaking low. Briex shakes her head, appearing annoyed, and walks away from Dr. Gagan.

She joins Orin.

ORIN

Did he try it again?

BRIEX

Dr. Gagan's determined, he really wants me to be his assistant.

ORIN

That's not all he wants.

BRIEX

Of course. It couldn't just be that I'm smart.

ORIN

You are smart. Smart enough to see through him.

BRIEX

I can see that he hates you.

ORIN

Thankfully, you have better taste.

She smirks as they head to the building exit hand-in-hand.

**EXT. ANDROMEDA METROPOLIS - DAY**

They step out of the imposing structure of the academy, which is a huge tower that stretches into the sky behind a 4D monolithic sign reading: "ACADEMY OF SPACE EXPLORATION".

It stands among a pulsing metropolis, full of light and movement.

Meteorites sporadically SHOOT across the sky, CRASHING and BOUNCING off a transparent light blue dome that shields and filters the entire metropolis below.

Blinking, flat, spinning satellites HOVER inside the dome.

The dome emits prismatic streaks of sunlight to the hemisphere-shaped structures that populate the metropolis.

Solar panels wrap around the exteriors of all structures. The panels reflect, absorb, and refract sunlight.

Passengers arrive and depart from pyramid-shaped taxis that WHIRL above the structures, maneuvering in all directions to find the shortest route between them.

A brilliant red government symbol of innumerable citizens forming an outstretched hand is emblazoned on the sides of the multiple military installations.

Orin and Briex pass students and others as they duck into openings of long air tunnels that carry passengers to various stops in front of other buildings. (FLASHBACK ENDS.)

**INT. CAR - GARAGE - DAY - (BACK TO PRESENT)**

Orin appears in another world inside the abandoned garage.

KIRA

Are you okay?

Orin shakes it off.

ORIN

Yes. Fine.

She smiles and slides into the car. Orin sits in the passenger seat, catching a leery look from Derek.

**EXT. HELENA'S HOME - NIGHT**

A strong wind swirls trash around Helena's lavish mansion overlooking the barren city.

**INT. BEDROOM - HELENA'S HOME - NIGHT**

Helena lies on her luxurious bed, smoking an e-cigarette and scrolling through an iPad that has alarmist headlines:

SCREEN: "MORE STORMS TEAR THROUGH WESTERN STATES -- G7 SUMMIT DESCENDS INTO CHAOS -- SCARCE RESOURCES THREATEN PEACE..."

KNOCK KNOCK. Helena looks up and sees Tor standing at the doorway. A seductive look crosses her face.

HELENA

Come in.

Tor eagerly rushes in to kiss her. She puts out her hand--

HELENA (CONT'D)

Take off your dirty clothes, get in bed and tell me the good news.

Tor removes his clothes to reveal a rock-hard body. He slips into bed with Helena and pulls her close to him. She lays a finger over his mouth before he can kiss her --

HELENA (CONT'D)

Tell me about my present first.

Tor looks nervous.

TOR

There were complications, Helena.

Helena leans away from him.

HELENA

What do you mean "complications"?

TOR

It's hard to explain...

HELENA

It's not that fucking hard. Do you have them or don't you?

TOR

This job was different. They got away by distracting us.

HELENA

Do you know how valuable they are? You messed up a chance to snatch a childbearing woman. She's worth more than gold. And children...

She pauses as she's about to choke up. She steels herself --

HELENA (CONT'D)

They're even more precious.

TOR

I know you want a child, but...

HELENA

But what, Tor?

TOR

Look around you. Nobody has what you have.

HELENA

I don't have what I want most.

Helena lays her hand across her lower stomach in reflex.

HELENA (CONT'D)

How was it different this time?

TOR

Some DP got in our way.

HELENA

A DP? A poor, disposable wanderer? Please tell me there was a gang of them.

TOR

Just one.

Helena offers a belittling laugh. Tor moves away from her.

TOR (CONT'D)

He had some fancy-ass gun, like a laser or something. He killed Roddy in a split second. We didn't even see the gun.

HELENA

He killed Roddy? And you didn't do anything about it? You're losing your touch, Tor. Get out of my bed.

Tor angrily climbs out of the bed and puts on his clothes.

TOR

I'll get you the kid and the woman,  
but don't treat me like one of your  
grunts.

Tor storms out while Helena goes back to her iPad.

**EXT. HELENA'S HOME - NIGHT**

Tor stomps out of the mansion and sees Luka waiting.

LUKA

How'd it go?

TOR

Fucking bitch. She takes it out on  
me because she can't have babies.  
Hell, no one can have babies.

LUKA

Well, women do have that biological  
clock ticking when--

TOR

What the fuck do you know about  
women, Luka?

LUKA

Hey, don't blame me. I'm just  
following orders. I'm not the  
leader. Who's in charge here?

Tor appears irked that Luka has laid down a challenge.

TOR

Don't get any fucking ideas,  
asshole... Get a hold of our cops.  
I got a job for them. Then we can  
nab our prey. It's time to hunt.

**INT. HOUSE - DESERT - NIGHT**

Kira and Derek stand at the door of Alana's room, looking in  
on her, asleep but restless.

Kira pulls the door to close, leaving it slightly ajar. She  
walks into the kitchen, and Derek follows her.

KIRA

Derek... How did they know we had a  
daughter?

Derek looks ashamed.

DEREK

The pharmacist wasn't gonna help. I thought if he knew the medication was for a child...

(off Kira's scowl)

I was just trying to help.

KIRA

That's always your excuse. "Just trying to help". So why do the results turn out the opposite?

DEREK

That's not fair. I get nervous and don't react the way I should, but you two matter the most to me.

KIRA

And that's supposed to comfort me? Like when they pulled Alana from my arms?

Derek looks crushed. The heavy tension in the air is broken when Kira spots --

Orin's standing inside the front door, watching.

ORIN

Sorry... I have a heightened sense of danger. I felt some... tension. I thought it may have been Alana. My apologies.

He moves to go back out--

KIRA

Wait. Stay. I'll make sweet tea.

Orin closes the door and enters the kitchen area.

ORIN

How is Alana?

DEREK

Her temperature seems to be out of the danger zone.

Kira readies supplies for the tea. She stops to look at Orin.

KIRA

Thanks to you.

Derek bristles at the backhanded insult. Eyes Orin--

DEREK

Orin... I've been wondering--

The alarm abruptly BLARES, set off by something or someone outside. They apprehensively look to each other.

Derek deliberately steps in front of Orin to look at the security monitor, where two uniformed POLICEMEN stand.

DEREK (CONT'D)

What do they want with us?

ORIN

They could have seen me come into the house.

Derek seizes the moment to prove himself --

DEREK

I'm going out.

He deactivates the alarm.

ORIN

Be vigilant.

Derek gives him a frustrated look, feeling patronized before opening the door.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - NIGHT**

On the front step, two uniformed policemen, OFFICER BARRETT (50s) and OFFICER REESE (40s), wait. Derek greets them --

DEREK

Officers. What can I do for you?

OFFICER BARRETT

Evening, sir. I'm Officer Barrett.  
(points to partner)  
Officer Reese. We're following up on a disturbance that happened outside St. Mary's Hospital.

DEREK

I didn't think you were policing this far out...

OFFICER REESE

We're stretched pretty thin, but still tryin' to do our best.

DEREK

We were the victims.

OFFICER BARRETT

We know, sir. We need your help to locate the thugs.

DEREK

Um, it was a street gang. They were threatening my family and me. One of them is called Tor.

The Officers share a look.

OFFICER BARRETT

We're aware of him. He's dangerous.

OFFICER REESE

Been investigating him for a while.

DEREK

And you haven't taken him in? He tried to take our child.

They share another look, nod. They appear concerned.

OFFICER BARRETT

New low even for him.

DEREK

Can't you arrest them?

OFFICER REESE

Well, sir, that's where we could use your help.

OFFICER BARRETT

We're having trouble making anything stick.

OFFICER REESE

A lot of people don't have the guts. You seem like a decent man. I'm thinking you do. If you could come with us to give a statement and testify against--

DEREK

I can't leave my family.

OFFICER BARRETT

What about protecting your family? Don't you want us to do that? This man isn't going to stop unless you help us.

OFFICER REESE

We can station a unit out here to protect them.

OFFICER BARRETT

They'll be safe.

Reese steps forward, his badge on full display.

OFFICER REESE

Let's make sure they stay that way.

Derek looks confused, torn, unsure what to do--

ORIN (O.S.)

Don't trust these men, Derek.

Orin approaches from behind, staring hard at the Officers.

Officer Reese lays his hand across the butt of his gun. Orin's eyes follow the hand. When Reese backs off, Orin looks back up into his eyes.

OFFICER REESE

We're trying to help.

ORIN

I don't see any badge numbers.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT**

Kira anxiously watches them in the security camera monitor.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - NIGHT**

The Officers look guilty, but play it off.

OFFICER REESE

We gave you a chance to do the right thing. Don't come crying to us if it ends badly for you.

The Officers leave, looking back at Orin.

DEREK

How would they know it was us at the hospital?

ORIN

They're on a payroll, and it isn't the state's...

(then)

I'll keep watch. You can go back inside. Keep an eye on Alana.

He pulls a pill from the bottle and hands it to Derek. Derek takes it.

ORIN (CONT'D)

Another pill in one hour.

Derek nods, appearing to trust Orin a little more, albeit begrudgingly.

Orin watches the officers carefully until they get in their car and drive off.

**BEGIN FLASHBACK**

**EXT. ANDROMEDA METROPOLIS - DAY**

Orin and Briex step out of the academy, which towers into the sky behind a 4D monolithic sign reading, "ACADEMY OF SPACE EXPLORATION."

They enter a pulsing metropolis, full of light and movement.

Meteorites sporadically SHOOT across the sky, BOUNCING off a transparent light blue dome, shielding and filtering the entire metropolis below.

Flat spinning satellites HOVER outside the dome.

The dome produces a constant HUMMING sound and casts prismatic streaks of sunlight onto the hemisphere-shaped structures that populate the area.

Solar panels completely wrap around the exteriors of the structures. The panels reflect and absorb rays of sunlight.

Passengers arrive and depart from pyramid-shaped taxis that WHIRL above the structures, maneuvering in all directions to find the shortest route between them.

A brilliant red government symbol of innumerable citizens forming an outstretched hand is emblazoned on all sides of the multiple military installations.

Orin and Briex pass students and others as they duck into the opening of a long air tunnel that carries passengers to various stops in front of other buildings. They opt to walk.

ORIN  
Dinner later?

BRIEX  
I have somewhere to be.

ORIN  
You always say that.

BRIEX  
It's always true.

ORIN  
Can I come?

She deliberates, then gives him a short shake of her head --

BRIEX  
I haven't figured you out yet.

ORIN  
I'm not complicated.

BRIEX  
That I have figured out.

ORIN  
Why the mystery?

Her eyes flit to the vigilant ANDROID SOLDIERS at the corner of the pathway.

BRIEX  
Telling is a dangerous act these days.

Orin follows her gaze. Looks bothered by the sight --

ORIN  
That's the real reason I signed up for the program. To one day go somewhere where we aren't listened to, watched every single second... and to meet beautiful girls.

BRIEX  
Crazy coincidence. I signed up to meet creeps.

**EXT. ANDROMEDA CITY STREET - NIGHT**

Orin and Briex stroll together until she stops at a poster encased in a translucent solid material that reads "ONE VISION, ONE COMMITMENT, ONE GOVERNMENT".

Orin notices a change in her mood as she glares at it.

He picks up a piece of metal on the ground and SMASHES the front of the encasement, but does not break it. He hits it repeatedly until the writing is indiscernible.

Briex smiles at him.

BRIEX  
OK.

ORIN  
OK what?

She takes his hand.

BRIEX  
You can come.

**EXT. ANDROMEDA DOWNTOWN - NIGHT**

Briex leads Orin toward a huge crowd. Collapsible banners opposing tyranny and advocating freedom of speech stick out above the horde -- An anti-government rally.

As they approach its perimeter--

SHAY (O.S.)

Briex!

A young, headstrong non-conformist, SHAY (20s), approaches.

SHAY (CONT'D)

You made it.

BRIEX

We did.

Shay eyes Orin suspiciously.

BRIEX (CONT'D)

He's with me.

(off him)

He's not an infiltrator, Shay.  
Doesn't have the brains for it.

SHAY

They're dragging people off the streets. Be careful who you trust--

A sudden CACOPHONY ahead as the rally explodes into action -- young people DEFACING photos -- TRASHING government property -- BURNING effigies of regime leaders.

Orin watches in inspired awe, turns to see Briex watching him.

ORIN

Is this a test?

She beams at him, the energy of the rally feeding the electricity between them. They gaze at each other. Orin brushes back her hair. Briex kisses him. He touches her face, caresses it, then --

BOOM! Android Soldiers MARCH in and DETONATE a chemical spray to break up the rally.

The protesters FIGHT AND YELL at the Soldiers. They become violent and throw rocks and loose debris from the street.

Soldiers BLUDGEON AND SHOCK protesters with their metallic hooks. HEAVE more chemical bombs into the choking crowd. Apprehend and beat hostile protesters.

Orin grabs Briex's hand and pulls her along, ducking in and out of protesters and the Soldiers. They are almost in the clear when--

A SOLDIER DARTS into their path. He rears back to club Orin when--

Orin SWINGS with all his might -- SMASHES the Soldier squarely in the face -- the Soldier staggers backward -- Orin grabs Briex, and they flee.

Briex's taken aback but the adrenaline gives her a rush. She kisses him again while running and they get lost in the smoke and the ferocious fighting behind them. (FLASHBACK ENDS.)

**INT. DRAWING ROOM - HELENA'S HOME - NIGHT - (BACK TO PRESENT)**

Helena, wearing a killer dress, and Tor, unusually dressed up, chat with GUESTS, drinking cocktails. Soft MUSIC plays.

One MALE GUEST (40s) admires the decor while speaking to Helena with Tor clinging to her side --

MALE GUEST

It appears that you've survived quite well, Helena. Consider yourself one of the lucky ones.

Helena absorbs his comment, feigns a smile.

HELENA

I believe one makes her own luck.

Through the French doors, Helena notices Luka and the two policemen waiting in the hallway.

Helena excuses herself and subtly pulls Tor with a lavish drink in hand to the hallway.

**INT. HALLWAY - HELENA'S HOME - NIGHT**

Helena and Tor meet the Officers and Luka. Officer Barrett shakes his head --

OFFICER BARRETT

No go. That DP zombie freak was there. Inside the house.

TOR

What? They let him into their home? Why would they share their rations or anything else with a drifter?

LUKA

Maybe because he saved their lives?

Tor fires daggers at Luka.

OFFICER REESE

He convinced them we weren't real policemen.

OFFICER BARRETT

He noticed the badges.

Helena deliberates over Orin's motive.

HELENA

Perhaps he wants the woman and child for himself...

OFFICER BARRETT

Whatever, he's got his hooks in 'em, whatever he's playing. Came across as a smart one to me. Devious. Keep that in mind if you still want the woman and the child.

OFFICER REESE

Somethin' about those freakish dark eyes.

The Officers look to Luka. He pulls out cash, pays both of them and walks them out.

HELENA

Fake policemen? That was your brilliant idea?

Tor looks embarrassed.

HELENA (CONT'D)

You're wasting time. You know what you have to do.

TOR

Consider it done.

Tor, feeling emasculated, flexes his jaw, clenching his teeth. He watches her return to the drawing room as Luka returns.

TOR (CONT'D)

Fucking tired of her belittling me.

LUKA

What do you want to do?

TOR

Make her happy. We'll take the wife, the kid, and take off that fucking DP's head.

They head down the hallway. Tor looks sour-faced at his drink and tosses it inside a large vase.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Ominous, rolling clouds darken the sky, and gusts pick up.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

As the walls GROAN, Kira is at the counter, readying a few rations.

Derek's entranced by the images of underwater marshlands encroaching on houses on TV --

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

... and if the sea level on the Chesapeake Bay continues its current path, 167,000 acres of marshland and three million people's homes will be destroyed...

Orin stands by the window, watching for Tor and his men.

KIRA

How long will it take to work?

(off him)

The medication.

ORIN

Her temperature's already down. I'd say two more doses should get her through the worst.

KIRA

(re the rations)

Will you join us?

ORIN

You have little enough as it is--

KIRA

Please. You're our guest.

A beat. He considers. Then smiles.

ORIN

I'd be honored.

BZZZZZTTT -- the television blacks out again. Kira looks at it, then at Derek and huffs --

KIRA

Didn't you just fix that thing?

DEREK  
It's these damn winds.

ORIN  
I can try to fix it if you don't  
mind. I've had some experience with  
electronics.

Derek gets up from his chair, a little jealous of Orin taking  
over duties he used to do.

DEREK  
Be my guest, since that's what you  
are.

Orin examines the back of the TV. He removes a wire and looks  
to Derek.

ORIN  
Do you have a heavier wire? I  
believe this one is too thin. Seems  
to be what's shorting out your TV.

DEREK  
A heavier wire? I think we might.

Derek searches a drawer of parts, finds a heavier wire, and  
hands it to Orin. Orin does some quick work with his hands  
and connects the wire to the TV.

The image on the TV returns. Derek frowns at Orin's easy  
success. Kira hides a smile.

**EXT. PHARMACY - DAY**

BADAR (40s), a burly man with black irises and a weapon and  
coat identical to Orin's, stands in front of the pharmacy  
from earlier.

He pulls up his weapon, without aiming, and BLASTS the front  
door apart. Through the falling debris, Badar heads inside.

**INT. PHARMACY - DAY**

Gerald, the pharmacist, cowers, terrified by the explosion.  
He watches Badar walk inside. Startled by Badar's appearance,  
Gerald steps back.

BADAR  
I'm looking for a man. He was just  
here. A tall, thin man. Black eyes,  
overcoat.

GERALD  
He's--He's never been here  
before...

BADAR  
Didn't think he was a regular.  
Which direction was he headed?

GERALD  
I didn't watch, I was on the pho...

Gerald stops speaking in mid-sentence as Badar walks menacingly toward him.

BADAR  
He was with someone.

GERALD  
He's a stranger too...

BADAR  
Where did he go?

GERALD  
I think he went to his car...

BADAR  
You just said you weren't watching.  
Where'd the tall man go?

GERALD  
I didn't pay attention...

BADAR  
You see, now I can't trust you.

Badar scans the bare shelves inside the pharmacy.

BADAR (CONT'D)  
You don't have much here, not  
enough to die for... except you  
lied to me.

Badar points the weapon directly in front of Gerald's face.

BADAR (CONT'D)  
Five seconds to get your story  
straight.

Gerald's quivering finger points in a direction.

Badar OBLITERATES Gerald's head.

BADAR (CONT'D)  
I hate liars.

Badar grabs a candy bar and leaves.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - NIGHT**

Wind picks up velocity, spraying sand against the house and throughout the desert. Some objects on the porch BANG loudly as they're tossed about.

**INT. ALANA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Alana sleeps, her breathing finding an easier rhythm. Orin looks down at his patient in silence.

He pulls out an odd device from his pocket. It's shaped like a pulse oximeter: a small set of metallic jaws suited for a fingertip. The chrome surface is covered in strange symbols.

An unnerving, CLICK -- WHOOSH, is heard as he presses it shut on his index tip, where a needle breaks his skin, injecting a substance into his bloodstream.

He retracts the needle--

DEREK (O.S.)

What are you doing?

Orin freezes, then turns to see Derek in the doorway, watching. Orin hurriedly returns the device to his pocket.

ORIN

I'm sorry, Derek, you were engaged.  
It was time for Alana's pill.

Derek watches Orin, wary.

DEREK

It's time to eat.

**INT. KITCHEN - HOUSE - NIGHT**

Derek directs Orin to a seat, takes one of his own. Meager rations are arranged on a small table. They wait a brief, uncomfortable moment with the TV droning in the background --

NEWSCASTER

... United Nations negotiations  
continue to stall today amidst  
growing accusations that multiple  
countries have misrepresented their  
emissions levels to receive  
international aid...

A strong rush of wind and sand hits Orin and Derek from behind as the door swings open--

Orin alertly swivels to see Kira struggling to carry an axe and a few chopped logs. Orin appears confused.

KIRA  
 (off him)  
 Temperature's supposed to drop.  
 Alana gets cold at night.

ORIN  
 Let me help you.

He moves to stand, but--

DEREK  
 I got it.

Derek steps in front of Orin, blocking his path to help.  
 Derek helps Kira set the logs by the fireplace.

Kira removes her protective clothing. They all sit. Pick at  
 their rations. She eyes the two men, senses the tension --

KIRA  
 What's going on?

DEREK  
 I'd like to know the same thing.

ORIN  
 I owe you both an apology. You were  
 out. Derek was engaged. Alana's  
 pill was due, so I--

DEREK  
 What did you inject?  
 (off him)  
 You pricked your finger with  
 something.

KIRA  
 Derek, you sound crazy. He's a  
 guest.

DEREK  
 He's a stranger.  
 (to Orin)  
 What was it? Are you an addict?

KIRA  
 Derek--

DEREK  
 (to Kira)  
 He was in our daughter's room,  
 injecting himself with something.

ORIN  
 I understand your suspicion. I have  
 a... condition, as you can see --

He gestures to his skin, his eyes.

ORIN (CONT'D)

I have to medicate before I eat.

KIRA

You're diabetic?

Orin wrestles with the question. He doesn't answer.

KIRA (CONT'D)

He's diabetic.

DEREK

(turns to Orin)

Okay, how do you have medication when no one else does?

ORIN

I--

KIRA

Derek, he saved Alana's life--

DEREK

To get into our home! Either there's something in here he wants, or something out there he's hiding from, and both of those are shady.

KIRA

Maybe he just needs a place to stay.

DEREK

And I let you convince me. Convince me we had no other choice but to let him in--

ORIN

Please. If my being here is going to cause conflict...

Orin stands, looks out the window at the whirling sands.

ORIN (CONT'D)

I have no problem being out there. I'll be gone by morning.

KIRA

No, just... Where did you get the pills?

ORIN

They were given to me by someone.

DEREK

A black market dealer.

ORIN

A friend.

DEREK

And where is this friend?

Orin smiles sadly.

ORIN

She's no longer with us.

KIRA

I'm sorry... We're sorry.

DEREK

But he was in Alana's room--

KIRA

Because you were in a trance in front of the fucking TV.

DEREK

How else are we gonna hear any new developments?

KIRA

There are no new developments!  
Everything's fucked. It was fucked yesterday. It's fucked today. It'll be fucked tomorrow. You'd rather watch it than actually do anything.

ORIN

Alana can hear you.

All eyes on him.

ORIN (CONT'D)

Sorry. Not my place.

Derek stands, still stinging from Kira's blow.

DEREK

I'll get Alana some water.

He vanishes from the room, leaving Orin and Kira in stony silence with the sound of the SAND BATTERING the house.

KIRA

Orin... we can't go on this way...

A beat.

ORIN

When human beings are put into tense situations they have no control over, they tend to take it out on those closest to them.

(MORE)

ORIN (CONT'D)

But he's not your enemy. This climate, that's your enemy.

KIRA

He's just not built for this.

ORIN

A good thing. Those men who tried to take Alana and you? They are suited to this apocalypse.

(then)

You should talk to Derek. No anger. No argument. Just talk. Embrace what time you have. I know if I had mine again, I'd... well...

She studies him for a long beat. His eyes scrutinize the outside, but he listens. Kira wearily stands up.

KIRA

He cheated on me. On us. Maybe I could have reconciled it in time, but I didn't have time. The world went to shit, and there wasn't space for my anger anymore.

ORIN

The TV, I can fix. This...

Kira laughs derisively. Orin turns and stares into her eyes --

ORIN (CONT'D)

I wish to cause you no more grief.

He moves to head outside.

KIRA

Orin... At least stay inside.

He nods a thank you.

**INT. KIRA AND DEREK'S BEDROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT**

Kira lies asleep. Derek stares at the ceiling. The wild winds and sand bend the walls and shake the house.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT**

Orin sits at the window like a sentry. His jacket hangs on the chair. He leans closer to the glass, seeing something through the impenetrable opacity of the whirling sands--

Then, in a flash, his EYES TURN BLACK. The darkness of his irises leaks into the whites until they're just pools of ink.

From Orin's POV, the sand and darkness lose their opacity, revealing previously invisible details in the landscape.

In the distance, he can now clearly make out a tiny speck of light edging closer--

DEREK (O.S.)

What are you?

Orin turns and freezes when he sees Derek holding his weapon, which Derek took from his jacket.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Your eyes. They're dilated by something. You're gonna tell me the truth, or I'll shoot.

ORIN

That weapon fires heat-seeking bio-slugs. It's calibrated to hit human body temperature. If you fire, it won't be me that falls.

DEREK

Are you saying you aren't human?

ORIN

Derek, please...

DEREK

KIRA!

(to Orin)

What did you give our daughter?

ORIN

You have seen it yourself. She's getting better.

Kira appears in the doorway. Orin instinctively turns his head, hiding his eyes from her view.

KIRA

Oh my God, Derek, what the fuck are you doing?

DEREK

Show her.

ORIN

Show her what?

DEREK

Your eyes.

KIRA

You've lost your mind.

ORIN  
No... He hasn't.

He turns slowly to Kira, revealing his ink-black eyes, triggering a terrified gasp from her.

She moves behind Derek.

KIRA  
Who are you?

Orin stares uncomfortably at Kira, unable to hide his eyes --

**BEGIN FLASHBACK**

**INT. CLASSROOM - ANDROMEDA ACADEMY - DAY**

A LARGE EYEBALL POPS UP and is projected behind Dr. Gagan.

DR. GAGAN  
In many ways, it's as if we are  
fated to journey to Earth, fated to  
save it.

The students listen intently to his lecture.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)  
Evolution has given us the ability  
to darken our eyes to block out the  
extreme light on our planet. This,  
in turn, gives us keen eyesight in  
the relative darkness of Earth.

He turns his eyes to the sunlit roof. They turn inky black.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)  
It's a fact we age more robustly  
than humans, allowing us time to  
observe them over generations.

Orin gets Briex's attention and rolls his black irises.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)  
And thanks to the work of our most  
astro-linguists and engineers, our  
neuro-cochlear implants can grant  
us fluency in almost one hundred of  
Earth's innumerable languages.

Briex makes a face at Orin. He chuckles.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)  
Care to share your thoughts with  
the class, Neo-Orin?

Orin shakes his head.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)  
 Are you under the impression that  
 this room is your forum?

The doctor strides directly toward Orin as he continues to speak, moving closer and closer -- in an escalating -- menacing -- intimidating approach --

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)  
 Climate change has created a chain  
 of events on Earth. The sustained  
 brightness is caused by the  
 intensity of the sun -- The  
 intensity of the sun is caused by  
 global warming -- Global warming is  
 caused by emissions -- Emissions  
 erode the atmosphere -- Causing a  
 desperate fight over scarce  
 resources -- Possibly resulting in  
 a nuclear war.

Gagan ends up face-to-face with Orin, hovering over him in a power position, forcing Orin to look him in the eye as Gagan clasps the partition with his right hand.

DR. GAGAN (CONT'D)  
 So, tell me, Neo-Orin, are your  
 vapid thoughts more important than  
 the threat of nuclear war and the  
 eradication of an entire sentient  
 species?

Orin does not blink. He stares down Dr. Gagan, who walks away, piqued.

Orin notices the doctor's right hand has left an indentation on the partition.

The room is dead silent until--

FIVE ANDROIDS MARCH through the door into the classroom and head directly to Shay. They JERK him out of his seat.

The students watch in silent horror as Shay is DRAGGED from his seat. Dr. Gagan watches on from the podium, unfazed.

SHAY  
 GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!

LEAD ANDROID  
 You are accused of dissident  
 activity. Please come peacefully.

Shay STRUGGLES and fights them at every step.

They TOSS him to the floor, ZAP him with their hooks, pulling an agonizing SCREAM from his mouth. No one dares step in.

SHAY  
 DON'T BE ANDROIDS! FIGHT AGAINST  
 TYRANNY! SPEAK OUT!

He manages to break free for the briefest second, his eyes locking forlornly with Briex's before he's dragged, kicking and screaming from the room.

Briex looks away, trying to hide her shame of not being able to help Shay. Tears well in her eyes.

Gagan continues his lesson as if the incident were routine.

DR. GAGAN  
 I hope no one else has lost sight  
 of our purpose or fallen prey to  
 "resistant" thinking.

He looks out over his students with barely concealed contempt. (FLASHBACK ENDS.)

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT - (BACK TO PRESENT)**

Orin's eyes are returning to normal. He looks sadly at Kira. Derek's hands shake as he keeps the weapon pointed at Orin.

KIRA  
 What's happening to your eyes?!

ORIN  
 I'm not of this place. But you must  
 believe me, I am here to help--

DEREK  
 Get out.

Orin flinches, as though hearing something we can't. His eyes gaze out the window.

ORIN  
 It's too late.

KIRA  
 What?

ORIN  
 Tor's here.

Orin holds out his hand --

ORIN (CONT'D)  
 The weapon, Derek.

KIRA  
 I didn't hear anything.

Alana interjects --

ALANA (O.S.)

Orin has a heightened sense of danger.

Alana has come out of her room. Kira rushes to protect her.

ALANA (CONT'D)

What's happening?

KIRA

You should be in bed, sweetheart.

Orin smiles at her.

ORIN

I'm glad to see you're better--

DEREK

I said get out.

ORIN

You are in danger. Your family is in danger. I can't stop what's coming empty-handed.

DEREK

You could be lying.

The FAINT SOUND OF A GROWLING ENGINE puts the question to rest. The realization hits the family. They are frightened.

ORIN

Derek... I will take care of them, and you will never see me again.

Derek finally relents and hands over the weapon.

ORIN (CONT'D)

Take Alana to her room. Barricade the door.

Orin moves toward the front door. He looks back for a moment at his two hosts -- Derek's fear etched into his face, Kira trying to mask her sadness over Orin's risk for them.

ORIN (CONT'D)

Thank you for your hospitality.

He vanishes into the night.

#### **EXT. DESERT - NIGHT**

In the pitch-black desert, Tor uses hand gestures to instruct his Marauders as they move out of the van.

The Marauders turn their backs to the wind and the sand thick in the air. They scatter to their positions, pistols in hand.

Luka ventures alone. He surveys the area, sees only darkness. The wind howls, and the dust makes it impossible to see.

There is an eerie silence as Luka inches towards the house's fence. Each step is a treacherous step.

His men scatter around the house, but they may as well be miles away, given the darkness.

Luka listens, steps lightly. Then -- ZZZP -- a SCREAM ECHOES out, followed by GUNFIRE. He's alarmed, lifts his gun.

Luka hears HEAVY STEPS MOVE in an undetectable direction through the howling wind. He looks in all directions. The footsteps come to a stop.

He hears a pistol FIRE. Then the unmistakable ZZZP of Orin's weapon -- and a SCREAM.

Luka squints and scans into the blustery murkiness when he hears Tor's voice CRACKLING through his bracelet phone.

TOR (V.O.)  
What's happening?

LUKA  
How the hell do I know?

Luka ends Tor's call. He makes a call himself. BERNIE (20s) picks up.

LUKA (CONT'D)  
Bernie, what's going on?

BERNIE  
I don't know. I can't see anyth--

ZZZP -- a SCREAM -- a GUNSHOT. Luka expresses alarm.

LUKA  
Fucking hell.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT**

Kira emerges from Alana's room to find Derek peering out the window. They hear a SCREAM and GUNSHOTS outside, but can't see anything.

DEREK  
She OK?

Kira nods deep in thought.

KIRA  
What do you think he is?

DEREK

I don't know.

(then)

Feels like the world's suddenly  
full of monsters.

KIRA

Maybe he really is here to help.

DEREK

I'm not sure what he's doing.

KIRA

Why else would he throw himself out  
there like that?

This gives Derek reason to pause --

DEREK

I hope you're right. But I'm not  
taking that chance.

He swallows hard and goes to the cabinet, pulls out the  
handgun, and loads it.

KIRA

What are you doing?

DEREK

I'm not leaving your safety up to  
luck or strangers again.

KIRA

No, Derek, no...

She puts a hand on his chest.

KIRA (CONT'D)

We need you here.

He looks into her pleading eyes, sees them soften.

KIRA (CONT'D)

I haven't been kind to you.

DEREK

I gave you no reason to. I betrayed  
you. And now I've put us in this  
situation.

KIRA

It's not your fault.

DEREK

I'm finally not afraid to admit it.  
No excuses. I'm sorry. But I can  
fix it. I can save us.

He kisses her, then steps to the door.

She blocks him from leaving--

KIRA  
Please. Derek. DEREK!

Her sudden gush of emotion pauses him.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
You have nothing to prove to me,  
OK? Nothing.

Derek smiles sadly.

DEREK  
We both know that's not true.

He shakes her off. Darts outside, leaving Kira alone.

She wraps herself in her arms and stares at the closed door.  
Tears trickle down her cheeks.

**EXT. DESERT - NIGHT**

Luka calls on his phone again. He's on edge, scrambling blindly in the darkness. There's no answer for a few moments, then finally someone picks up.

LUKA  
Darko, did you see anything? What  
the hell's happening?

ORIN (V.O.)  
(from phone)  
Darko can't talk right now.

Luka sees a silhouette of Orin hovering over Darko's dead body when a wall of sand clears out for a moment.

ORIN (V.O.)  
(from phone)  
And neither can his friends.

Luka quickly FIRES THREE SHOTS at the silhouette, but it disappears amidst a gust of dirt and sand.

He walks forward, rather blindly, and gets to Darko's body, barely making it out as sand covers it. But no sign of Orin.

Luka, petrified, realizes he's alone. He looks around, anticipating an attack at any moment.

**EXT. OTHER SIDE OF HOUSE - NIGHT**

Derek moves around the house surreptitiously, slipping out through a gap in the gate.

He wanders into the desert with his gun pointed. Wind and sand batter his vision and senses, making it hard for him to get his bearings.

As Derek steps further into the darkness -- a gun is pressed against his head. He freezes.

Luka holds the gun. His steely eyes study Derek, who quivers.

LUKA

Put the gun down, Derek. You know you're not gonna use it.

DEREK

I will if I have to.

LUKA

You'll be dead if you don't put it down now.

Derek reluctantly relents -- His hand drops. He loosens his grip on the gun, but does not drop it.

LUKA (CONT'D)

That's a good boy.

DEREK SWINGS AROUND and SMASHES LUKA IN THE FACE WITH THE GUN -- Luka FALLS DOWN hard -- Derek points the gun at Luka.

DEREK

Swear I'll kill you if you get up.

Luka LAUGHS as blood flows down his face. He brushes the sand off his clothes and looks up at Derek --

LUKA

If you had it in you, you'da done it already.

Luka spits blood.

DEREK

I'm warning you. Stay down.

Derek looks around blindly. He yells into the darkness --

DEREK (CONT'D)

Orin!

No response comes. He shouts louder.

DEREK (CONT'D)  
 ORIN! I HAVE ONE OF THEM. HE'S  
 DOWN!

Still no answer. Luka laughs again and starts to get up.

LUKA  
 Your old lady could do it, but you  
 don't have the balls.

DEREK  
 Get down on the ground!

Luka rises to his feet and stands glaring at Derek.

Derek FIRES -- Point-blank -- MISSES --

Luka reaches up -- GRABS his wrist holding the gun -- YANKS  
 Derek to the ground like a rag doll -- SLUGS him in the face  
 with his own gun, knocking out Derek.

LUKA  
 Amateur.

Luka throws Derek over his shoulder and hauls him away.

Orin walks to the place where he heard Derek's voice. He  
 surveys the landscape, observes drops of blood.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - NIGHT**

Kira frantically peers out the window, trying in vain to  
 figure out what she's hearing --

BANG -- She jumps at a sudden noise.

It emanated from the back door. She RUSHES to find --

ORIN, leaning in the doorway, claspng the side of his  
 abdomen. Blood seeps through his fingers from a gash.

He speaks, *but what comes out isn't English*. It's a  
 completely unrecognizable language.

Kira's aghast. She shrinks back from the door, frightened.

Orin's confused when Kira speaks. The intonation suggests an  
 emotional question, but her words are unintelligible.

He realizes what's wrong. He winces as he reaches a hand to  
 the back of his head. He traces it below his skull to the  
 highest vertebrae where the scar of an implant is located--

TAPS it with a knuckle.

Kira repeats her question, but it still doesn't register,  
 then again --

TAPS HARDER -- Orin hears --

KIRA  
Where's Derek--You've been shot!

Orin pauses, struggling to understand the English language.

ORIN  
... It's only a surface wound... I realize you have no reason to trust me... but please let me in.

KIRA  
Not until you tell me where he is!

ORIN  
Isn't he with you?

KIRA  
He went out there. He wanted to protect us...

Orin grimaces as he looks out at the sand.

ORIN  
There are only dead bodies out there, and he isn't one of them.

Kira is devastated.

KIRA  
I told him not to go...

ORIN  
I'll find him. Let me treat myself.  
I'll search for him.

Kira is in no shape to make a decision. She hesitates...

ORIN (CONT'D)  
What other choice do you have?

She steps aside, lets him in. His blood leaves a trickle trail on the floor as he sinks into a chair.

KIRA  
I'll get the first aid kit.

She rushes off.

He turns and looks out the window to monitor the Marauders as the dawn breaks. He sees the Marauders, but --

He sees something else that causes alarm --

On the horizon, at the top of a hill, the sunrise illuminates a man in a long jacket like his own.

Kira returns with the first aid kit, pulling his attention from the window for a brief moment. When he looks back, the figure is gone.

**EXT. DESERT - DAY**

Day breaks over the swirling sand around the van. Luka shoves Derek to the ground at Tor's feet. He's unconscious, with a deep gash above his eye.

Several surviving Marauders straggle to the vans and get in.

TOR  
Where're the others?

LUKA  
Face down in the sand.

Luka does the sign of the cross. Tor looks uneasy. An unsettling sense of fear grows on Tor's face --

TOR  
And the DP?

Luka shakes his head.

TOR (CONT'D)  
Fuck...

LUKA  
At least I caught something useful.

TOR  
Yeah, but the DP's still got the kid and the woman. And our guys just took a big hit.

LUKA  
We still have more guys back home.

TOR  
We don't need 'em. Change of plan --  
(re Derek)  
We're gonna use this sack of shit as a bargaining chip. We'll cut a deal: Him for the DP.

LUKA  
But we're here for the girls--

TOR  
Who'll have no protection after the DP gives himself up. Once he's off the board, we take 'em.

Tor heaves a long, large box from the van bed into the sand, kicks open the lid to reveal a cache of new assault rifles.

Luka beams, picks out a couple, and feels their heft.

TOR (CONT'D)  
No more half-measures.

Unnoticed by Tor and Luka, Derek has regained consciousness. He's been listening to their plan in horror.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Kira applies a makeshift dressing to the right side of Orin's bare abdomen. Her hands shake. She suddenly stops --

KIRA  
The wound, it's where your liver should be. Orin, that's fatal!

ORIN  
It is not a fatal wound.

KIRA  
Where are you from?

ORIN  
(a long beat)  
... Andromeda.

Kira loses it -- lets out an incredulous laugh.

KIRA  
Why not? Climate change's killing us; Derek's lost in the desert; a wild gang is after Alana and me; and now we have an Andromedan...

Orin remains stoic.

Kira sees his solemn reaction, and it dissolves into fear. She drops the bandages and moves away.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Jesus, you're insane.

ORIN  
No, no. Kira.

He stands, she shrinks. He takes both her hands, doesn't let her pull away, speaks calmly --

ORIN (CONT'D)  
Kira, your husband is missing. Panic is a luxury we can't afford. Now, think about what you've seen.

KIRA  
Let go.

ORIN

Look at me. Look at what I've done.  
Be honest with yourself. You know  
I'm telling you the truth.

Her eyes widen, mouth dropping --

KIRA

I saw you as a human aberration.  
And now, you're asking me to  
believe you're a--a... No!

He lets go. Her legs give, sinking onto the couch.

KIRA (CONT'D)

I let you in...

ORIN

And you were right to. Because I'm  
not here to harm you.

He kneels beside her. She turns away.

ORIN (CONT'D)

We were taught about your planet.  
We've watched your planet slip into  
crisis. We fear what it might do to  
our own. The lucky few of us get to  
come here to study, to learn...

She faces Orin and continues to listen.

ORIN (CONT'D)

It's when I see people like you,  
like Alana, like Derek, I see your  
strength and kindness, I see hope.

Kira stares in disbelief, fighting what she knows is true.

ORIN (CONT'D)

You don't believe me.

KIRA

I... don't know what I believe.

He smiles, gently.

ORIN

Well... That will suffice for now.

ALANA (O.S.)

What was all that noise? Was that  
shooting?

Alana's voice snaps Kira and Orin from their conversation.  
She stands in the doorway, wiping her eyes. She is looking a  
little better with more color in her face.

KIRA  
It's the wind blowing trees around,  
honey.

Alana notices Orin's wound. Orin covers it with his hand, a vain attempt to hide it.

ALANA  
What happened to Orin?

KIRA  
Orin had an accident. But all you  
need to worry about is getting  
better. You should be back in bed.

ALANA  
Where's Daddy?

KIRA  
He... went out for some supplies.  
He'll be back soon.

The van's HORN BLASTS OUTSIDE. It repeats, ear-splitting. Kira and Orin share a look -- a warning.

ALANA  
What's that?

KIRA  
Just someone driving by. Back to  
bed.

Alana, confused but skeptical, returns to her room. She closes the door. Kira simply stares after her.

ORIN  
She's a smart one. She knows  
something's wrong. You may have to  
be honest with her.

Kira nods and looks more broken by the minute.

Orin looks through the window after the BEEPING ceases, sees Luka approaching the fence, dragging Derek.

ORIN (CONT'D)  
Stay here.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Orin heads outside into the fierce wind and sand to meet Luka, who stands at the fence holding Derek, tied and gagged. Luka has a gun pointed at his head.

LUKA  
We need to speak to his old lady.  
About the fate of her husband.

Kira BOLTS out of the house.

KIRA  
What about my husband?

ORIN  
I said stay inside.

KIRA  
Not when it comes to my husband.

LUKA  
It's quite simple, we'll trade your husband for the DP. Or a bullet in good old Derek's head. Your choice.

Kira catches Derek's eye. He MOANS through his gag, trying to warn them of the deal, but he's unintelligible.

LUKA (CONT'D)  
Oh no, bad for you, Derek. Taking her a while, isn't it?

Kira looks to Orin, waiting for him to act. He doesn't.

LUKA (CONT'D)  
Take all the time you want, as long as it's daylight. By nightfall, it's gonna get ugly.

Luka drags Derek back toward the van. Kira turns to Orin.

KIRA  
I know I can't ask you to give up your life for someone you just met. But I can't let Derek die.

ORIN  
I wouldn't expect you. Or let you.  
(then)  
The man's right... It's going to get ugly.

KIRA  
We have until tonight...

Orin notices the barreling storm, the debris and sand blocking out the sun, blackening the desert skies...

ORIN  
I wouldn't count on that.

**BEGIN FLASHBACK**

**INT. BEDROOM - BRIEX'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Briex and Orin engage in torrid sex in Briex's tiny bedroom.

They reach a frenzied climax and lie together in each other's arms. In the afterglow, they nestle as one.

ORIN

Living on Earth will be hard at first, but worth it.

BRIEX

It's such a huge decision. Yes, the conditions here are horrible, but losing my friends and family makes my decision harder. I'll never see them again.

ORIN

There's nobody here to hold me back... except you.

She studies him for a moment.

BRIEX

You never talk about your family.

ORIN

They died.

BRIEX

Radicals?

Orin's face expresses bitterness and answers her question.

ORIN

They were laser-burned to death. I was forced to watch it to edify me.

BRIEX

I'm so sorry... Is that the real reason you accepted the mission?

ORIN

It's one of many reasons I wanted to go to Earth. I just needed a chance to escape this awful world -- Studying Earth gave me the chance.

BRIEX

The facts about climate change scare me, don't they scare you?

ORIN

Not as much as our future.

She turns to face Orin and kisses him.

BRIEX

If it doesn't work out, we can  
always come back, right?

Orin shakes his head at this.

ORIN

I don't know how you can feel that  
way. Look what happened to Shay. At  
least on Earth, there seems to be a  
semblance of freedom.

BRIEX

I do want change. I was just hoping  
it would be here. On our planet,  
our home...

ORIN

Briex, if you're having doubts, I  
don't think you should go.

BRIEX

I'm so confused. I don't want to  
stay here without you.

ORIN

If you stay, I'm not going either.

BRIEX

It's so unfair to you since you  
want to go so desperately.

ORIN

That was before I met you.

She stares directly into his eyes. Puts her hand on top of  
his. Then raises his hand and places it on her chest.

BRIEX

Here, we're not permitted to have  
hopes or dreams. On Earth, there's  
a chance we can build our hopes and  
dreams of the possible and the  
impossible.

ORIN

I'll build anything with you  
because I love you.

They hold onto each other as if it's the end of the world.

PING... PING -- from the apartment door makes them jump.

Briex hurriedly puts on some clothes.

BRIEX

Wait here.

Orin obeys until he hears the familiar voice, muffled through the bedroom door.

DR. GAGAN (O.S.)  
Good evening.

Orin slips out of bed and gets dressed himself.

BRIEX (O.S.)  
Dr. Gagan, what are you doing here?

DR. GAGAN (O.S.)  
I thought, perhaps, I could interest you in a dialogue at a place I know down the street.

BRIEX (O.S.)  
I told you I wasn't interested. This is highly unprofessional. And inappropriate.

DR. GAGAN (O.S.)  
Could I come in and have a chat?

BRIEX (O.S.)  
For a professor, you don't have a clue how to read a room. Goodnight.

DR. GAGAN (O.S.)  
It's Orin, isn't it? Poisoning you.

Now dressed, Orin, seething, steps out into --

**INT. LIVING SPACE - BRIEX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

He sees Gagan leaning against the doorframe. The doctor shifts uncomfortably as he sees Orin glaring.

ORIN  
You do a good enough job of it yourself, creeping up the doorsteps of female students late at night.

DR. GAGAN  
(to Briex)  
I see you have company. I'll see you in class tomorrow.

Dr. Gagan walks out. Briex closes the door and turns to Orin.

ORIN  
Is he stalking you now? Want me to report him?

BRIEX  
No. I can handle it myself.

Orin watches her failing to hide her fear, her body shaking as she walks away. (END FLASHBACK).

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY - (BACK TO PRESENT)**

Orin watches Kira just as he did Briex. She's fearfully gazing out the window...

The sun ascends above twisting sand, sky starting to redden.

Kira can't bear the tension or the silence. She switches on the TV, filling the room with a familiar voice --

NEWSCASTER

... New estimates reveal global temperatures will surpass the five-degree limit of the Paris Accord despite international efforts...

Kira sits in Derek's chair, watching TV, tearful and anguished. She appears to be on the verge of a breakdown.

ORIN

We need to stay strong.

KIRA

How? We can't just wait here.

Orin approaches Kira as she watches TV in a trance.

ORIN

I need to teach you how to use my weapon.

KIRA

(snaps out of it)  
What? Why?

ORIN

We don't know how this is going to go. I think it's safe to say lives will be lost. Let's make sure they aren't yours.

KIRA

I-I don't know anything about guns.

ORIN

It's a weapon, not a gun. And it's simple to use. Here, hold it, feel it.

Kira takes the weapon with trepidation.

KIRA

What if I have to aim?

ORIN

The weapon shoots heat-seeking,  
exploding slugs. You only have to  
point near the body to hit your  
target.

Kira takes aim at the wall, getting a feel for the weapon.

ORIN (CONT'D)

There. That's it.

He touches her to adjust her position. She initially recoils--

ORIN (CONT'D)

Sorry... Unavoidable.

Orin tries again. This time, Kira lets him.

An abrupt WARNING ALERT FLASHES on the TV. Kira puts down the  
weapon. They watch IMAGES OF A STORM appear on the screen --

An eerie yellow sky and blue moon overlook a town without  
lights.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

The National Weather Service has  
issued a severe sandstorm warning  
for the viewing area...

Footage captures a huge wall of sand and debris moving toward  
the city, creating near-zero visibility.

Wind and sand tear into houses and buildings. Wreckage flies.  
Visibility blurred. Sunlight obscured. Streets deserted.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Hurricane-force winds, widespread  
power outages, and property damage  
have been reported...

Kira and Orin watch with great interest.

KIRA

Unbelievable.

ORIN

Ironic.

KIRA

The storm?

ORIN

The one silver lining of climate  
change...

Kira appears confused.

ORIN (CONT'D)

The sandstorm provides a thick curtain to protect us when we need it most.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Outside the house, the wind BATTERS the fence, tearing down a large part of it. The sun grows larger and redder as it rises above the horizon.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Kira and Orin hear the fence breaking outside. Kira suddenly diverts her attention back to Orin.

KIRA

You said "Us"?

Orin puts his hand on Kira's shoulder. She seems to melt a bit at his touch. Alana walks out of her room.

ALANA

I can't sleep anymore. I've already read all my books. Can I stay out here?

KIRA

Looks like you're feeling better.

ALANA

Yeah. Now I'm getting sick of staying in my room all the time.

Orin chuckles at this. Kira looks at Orin and does the same.

ORIN

I don't believe you're contagious anymore, so it should be alright.

KIRA

We must be careful of the storm...

Alana looks out the window at the ROARING storm.

ALANA

Is Daddy still out there?

Kira takes Alana up in her arms.

KIRA

Don't worry, honey, Daddy can brave the storm. You better go to your room until it passes.

**EXT. DESERT - DAY**

The Marauders clad themselves in masks, scarves, jackets, and gloves to protect themselves from the storm. Tor drinks from a pint of whiskey.

Derek struggles in the back of the van, still tied and gagged.

Luka surveys the scene.

LUKA

I don't think this shit's gonna blow over.

TOR

Good. Gives us an advantage. They're shackled up in that house and nowhere to go. Besides...  
(loads his rifle)  
...they'll curl up like little balls after the first rounds cut through.

LUKA

What if you hit the girls?

TOR

I'm aiming at the roof.

LUKA

You want to rethink this? You can't see anything.

TOR

I can't go home empty-handed.

Tor jumps out of the van and heads toward the house. He aims the rifle and BLASTS ROUNDS across the rooftop --

Shingles EXPLODE, wood SHATTERS, and holes SCATTER the roof.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Debris FALLS from the ceiling above Orin and Kira, who hunker down behind the couch.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Tor YELLS over the storm toward the house --

TOR

YOU OWE TOR AN ANSWER, WOMAN.  
WHAT'S IT GONNA BE? IS THE FREAK  
GONNA SURRENDER OR FIGHT?

Tor waits for an answer that never comes. He trudges back to the convoy.

TOR (CONT'D)

Roll out, boys!

Luka sidles up to him.

LUKA

How are we gonna shoot an invisible man?

TOR

Just tell them to shoot anything they hear or that moves.

LUKA

It's gonna be like the wild, wild west out there.

TOR

If we kill one of our own, so be it. It'll be worth it to get the kid and the woman.

LUKA

Man, that's cold. You're a pussycat to Helena and fucking tiger to us.

Luka goes to instruct the gang. They pile out of the van, grab the rifles, and disperse in different directions.

#### **INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Orin wraps a makeshift scarf around his face, looking out a window. He sees a Marauder moving at the rear of the house. He heads to the back door.

KIRA

Wait, there's no place to hide in the desert.

ORIN

I don't need to hide.

Silently, Orin vanishes into the darkness. Kira moves to the kitchen, grabs a large knife and sits near the front door.

#### **EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Outside the door, Orin immediately SHOOTs the Marauder closing in. The Marauder SCREAMS in pain, FIRES A SHOT into the air involuntarily.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Kira flinches when she hears the gunshot from outside, dropping the knife to the floor.

She picks up the knife and moves to the security monitor -- the screen is a whiteout -- it has lost the feed.

**EXT./INT. VAN - DESERT - DAY**

Tor hears the ZAP, the SCREAM and the SHOT. He retreats to inside the van. Takes another swig. Derek spits out his gag --

DEREK  
You're scared.

Tor snarls at him and stuffs his gag back down his mouth.

TOR  
No wonder your old lady won't save  
your ass.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Two Marauders approach the house and peer through the windows.

Standing on top of the gunshot-riddled roof of the house, Orin spots them through the unforgiving wind.

He balances himself. Aims. FIRES -- ZZZP -- ZZZP -- they SCREAM IN AGONY as the lightning-fast shots kill them.

**EXT. DESERT - DAY**

Luka RUSHES back to the van in a panic. Tor opens the window.

LUKA  
They're dead! They're all fucking  
dead. We didn't even see the  
fucking guy.

Tor's face drops, realizing they are the last two alive.

TOR  
He can't be that fast.

Tor's eyes widen, and his attention is diverted.

TOR (CONT'D)  
What the fuck?

Tor faintly sees a blurry, thin figure approaching the van. Tor's bewildered.

TOR (CONT'D)  
Luka, who is that?

LUKA  
(turns)  
What? I don't see anything.

The figure has disappeared into a tornado of blinding sand.

LUKA (CONT'D)  
You'd better lay off the cuckoo  
juice.

TOR  
I swear I saw that freaky son-of-a-  
bitch!

LUKA  
Why didn't you fucking shoot him?  
All our guys are dead. Man, if  
you're that screwy, you should tuck  
tail and get out of here already.

TOR  
I can't. I promised Helena.

LUKA  
My God, you're a pussycat to Helena  
and fucking tiger to us.

Luka has had it with Tor and all of this.

LUKA (CONT'D)  
Fuck this shit. I'll kill the  
fucking DP myself.

He beelines straight to the house, rifle at his side. He  
shouts to be heard over the howling storm.

LUKA (CONT'D)  
I'M NOT HERE TO FIGHT, I'M HERE TO  
NEGOTIATE. I WANT TO SEE THE LADY  
OF THE HOUSE.

The wind is the only answer.

LUKA (CONT'D)  
WE'LL TRADE YOUR HUSBAND FOR THE  
STRANGER. IT'S A BETTER DEAL THAN  
BOTH OF THEM DYIN'. THE STRANGER IS  
NOTHING TO YOU. TAKE THE DEAL.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Facing the floor, Kira agonizes over the decision.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Luka senses something near him. He turns. Orin is there, his strange weapon up and aimed.

Luka lifts his rifle in a knee-jerk reaction -- A STANDOFF.

Luka surveys Orin's position. Breathes heavily. Luka's finger creeps near the trigger.

Orin is momentarily distracted by Kira opening the front door. Orin turns back to Luka --

In a split second -- Luka TWITCHES -- Orin anticipates -- LEAPS simultaneously as Luka FIRES -- barely evading Luka's BURST OF SHOTS --

Orin FIRES his weapon in MIDAIR -- EXPLODING THE SIDE OF LUKA'S FACE. Both hit the ground.

Orin picks himself up, unscathed. Orin takes Luka's rifle and tosses it to the front of the house. Kira emerges from the house to collect it.

**INT. VAN - DESERT - DAY**

Tor, watching it all happen, looks absolutely horrified.

TOR

Fuck!

(to Derek)

He got himself killed over a piece of shit like you.

Tor takes another swig. Clutches his rifle. Exits the van.

**EXT. VAN/HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

He jerks Derek out of the van and pushes him to the front of the house, holding Derek in front of himself as a shield.

Derek's trembling, straining to get free. Pinned down by plastic ties biting into his wrist, he twists repeatedly and manages to pull a thumb free of his restraints.

Kira recognizes Derek emerging through the sandstorm. Her heart sinks. Tears well up. Orin notices, then faces Tor --

ORIN

Derek is a good man. One of the human beings who doesn't hurt people and destroy their lives. But if I have to, I'll kill him and you to save the rest.

Kira puts her hand over her mouth in disbelief.

TOR  
I don't believe you.

ORIN  
If you make one move with that  
rifle, you won't live to find out.

Orin notices Tor is trembling. Tor pulls Derek directly in front of him. Orin senses Tor is losing his nerve. He acts as if the moment is slipping away from him --

ORIN (CONT'D)  
Maybe it's this crazy weather, but  
I'm feeling crazy myself...

Tor looks increasingly more nervous.

ORIN (CONT'D)  
I can see your fear, Tor. Put the  
gun down.  
(steps toward Tor)  
Even if you try to scatter all  
those bullets with that rifle,  
you'd miss me, and you'd die, like  
your good friend, Luka.

Tor glances at Luka's body lying flat in the sand, then back to Orin.

TOR  
I got another deal -- Derek's life  
for your gun. And I'm not leaving  
Derek alive without it.

Kira can't contain herself --

KIRA  
Please, Orin. Give him your gun.  
Nobody else has to die today.

Derek screams in vain to warn them, but he is muffled by the gag. He keeps squirming and nearly has one hand free.

ORIN  
I have a counteroffer too... I'll  
leave the weapon with Kira, you  
leave Derek behind, and I'll go  
with you peacefully. This family  
deserves to be happy. As happy as  
is possible on this planet.

Tor's eyes are jittery.

TOR  
Alright. Drop your gun and let her  
pick it up.

ORIN

Not going to happen. I'll give it  
to Kira. She can cover her husband  
and me until we leave.

He walks backward while facing and aiming the weapon at Tor.

Orin hands the weapon to Kira. She aims it at Tor.

He slowly walks back toward Tor.

Tor is tensed, muscles twitching with anticipation, ready to  
fire when--

DEREK BREAKS FREE. With every ounce of exhausted strength, he  
barges into Tor, knocking him off balance--

DEREK

It's a trap! Kira! Shoot him!

Kira takes too long, and Tor SPRAYS A ROUND OF BULLETS INTO  
DEREK'S BODY AND HEAD, JERKING vehemently and SPLATTERING  
Blood everywhere as he topples into the sand.

Kira SCREAMS in anguish and SQUEEZES the trigger --

ZZZP -- Tor FLIES BACKWARD WITH A SCREAM, firing a dozen  
rounds into heaven, dies instantly. Orin is stunned.

The blowing wind and sand begin to form another desert grave.

Nearby, a terrified Luka listens with his eyes open. He lies  
on the ground as still as he can.

Orin takes Tor's rifle and looks at Derek. Then at Kira.

Kira drops the weapon and rushes to Derek. She falls on top  
of him, crying hysterically. Orin stands there, uncertain of  
what to do.

Alana runs through the doorway. She beholds the aftermath of  
the gunfight. Tears stream down her face.

She dashes to Kira and her dead father, hugs both of them.

ALANA

Daddy! Daddy! What happened to  
Daddy?

KIRA

Daddy saved our lives, Baby. He  
saved us from some bad men.

Alana stares at Tor's corpse, mouth agape. She turns to Orin  
in confusion at this insane moment and fallout.

ALANA

Orin... did you kill the bad man?

ORIN

No Alana. Your mother did... she saved all of us. She was very brave. So was your father.

Orin leaves them to console each other, takes Tor's rifle and his weapon inside the house.

Luka watches the grieving family enter the house. He keeps a close eye on them, then carefully crawls away from the house toward the unmanned vans.

**INT. GREAT ROOM - HELENA'S HOME - NIGHT**

Helena entertains several GUESTS at her home. She spots Luka limping in the hallway. The side of his face is mutilated and bloody. His body is covered head to toe in dirt and sand.

Helena, shocked and embarrassed, composes herself. She turns to her guests and excuses herself.

She walks as if nothing is wrong until she reaches the --

**INT. HALLWAY**

HELENA

How dare you come here like this?  
Where's Tor? Did he screw up again?

LUKA

He's dead.

Helena takes this in, stunned. She looks regretful.

LUKA (CONT'D)

The stranger and the woman killed everyone.

HELENA

I sent a small army to that house,  
and two people killed them all?

He looks at the floor. She turns to a window, pensive.

HELENA (CONT'D)

Do you know what it means to be  
childless, Luka? I'll grow old and  
die... no one will mourn my death.

She walks off slowly, leaving Luka alone and wondering what to do next.

LUKA

What about me?

Helena continues to walk away.

**EXT. DESERT - NIGHT**

At sunset, the storm has subsided. A cross made out of slats from the house is planted in the sand beside Derek's grave.

Derek's name, date of birth, and death are scrawled on the cross. Kira and Alana stand at his grave, praying.

Orin stands off to the side while Kira and Alana sob and comfort each other.

ORIN

Do you want to say anything?

KIRA

I should have said it all sooner.

ALANA

I love you, Daddy.

KIRA

Go inside out of the heat. I'll be there in a moment.

Alana puts her head down as she walks back to the house. Kira stares at the gravesite.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Derek... I regret ever talking to you in the way that I did. I regret what this place did to us...

Then she takes a long look at the desert...

KIRA (CONT'D)

(to the desert)

You killed him. I hope you're happy.

The desert wind continues to blow mercilessly. Orin stares into the desert night as well. A different memory washes over him --

**BEGIN FLASHBACK****EXT. BRIEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY**

An excited Orin runs through the Andromedan landscape to Briex's apartment. He takes a glide to her apartment door.

Orin waves his hand past a button on the door -- PING. No answer. He waves again -- PING. Nothing.

ORIN

Briex? Bri?

He pushes the door, and his hand goes through the door -- the door is penetrable, left unsecured. He barges in.

**INT. BRIEX'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Orin freezes. His jaw drops. Briex lies on the floor, her neck is purple and twisted, eyes wide open, clothes torn.

ORIN

Bri! No! No! Bri!

Orin leans over her, weeps, caresses her. He picks her up and gently rests her on her sofa.

He pulls a blanket over her body, exposing only her face. He kisses her on the forehead.

Through tears, he spots a torn strand of material -- the red color of Dr. Gagan's uniform.

Then, he SEES A PHOTO -- BLOOD-STAINED. A candid shot of him and Briex at the anti-government rally...

Orin picks up the photo. His face grimaces with rage. He RIPS the photo into pieces -- SCREAMS -- clinches his fists. He storms out --

**EXT. ALLEY - SIDE DOOR OF ACADEMY - NIGHT**

Dr. Gagan, wearing an overcoat and hat, exits the academy into an alley. He's startled to see a menacing Orin emerging from the shadows.

Orin has a weapon dangling at his side.

Dr. Gagan retreats back inside the academy.

**INT. ACADEMY - NIGHT**

Dr. Gagan deliberates on what to do. He scrambles down a dark hallway.

**EXT. ALLEY - SIDE DOOR THE ACADEMY - NIGHT**

Orin reaches the door of the academy and grabs the door handle with one hand while holding the weapon with the other.

The door is locked. Orin BANGS on the door, seething.

From behind, the right hand of Dr. Gagan CLUTCHES ORIN BY THE NECK, his left hand GRABS THE BARREL of Orin's weapon.

Gagan's forearm bears deep scratches, as though from a struggle.

Orin's voice strains through the chokehold --

ORIN

You tried to blackmail her -- she  
still rejected you...

Gagan tightens his grip, squeezing the last word back into Orin's throat.

DR. GAGAN

Look where her path with you ended.

Orin STRUGGLES, but the clasp of Gagan's hand on his neck is like a vice, and Orin cannot move.

He winces in pain as Gagan's hand SINKS DEEPER into his neck.

Orin becomes wobbly, falls to his knees, but manages to use both hands to grab the barrel. They WRESTLE OVER THE WEAPON.

Gagan keeps the pressure on his lethal grip. His right arm begins to VIBRATE -- THE SOUND OF A CLUSTER OF ARTIFICIAL FIBERS SNAPS. Gagan's arm goes limp.

Using both hands to overpower Gagan, Orin twists his body to face Gagan.

Orin MUSCLES the barrel to Gagan's head--

SLIPS HIS FINGER TO THE TRIGGER--

SQUEEZES, and--

ZZZP -- BLOWS HIS HEAD OFF.

Orin, a bit disoriented, rubs his neck, now a deep red.

Orin slowly makes it to his feet, removes Gagan's overcoat, and tosses it aside.

Orin is stunned when he pulls off Gagan's shirt, revealing GAGAN'S ENTIRE ARM IS ARTIFICIAL. His invisible skin contains the artificial circuitry inside. The arm continues to move.

Orin points his weapon at Gagan's hand and ZZZP -- The hand falls to the ground.

He tears the shirt into strips, wraps them around his neck to make a brace, and covers the mark left by Gagan.

**INT. CORRIDOR - ANDROMEDA TRANSPORT STATION - NIGHT**

Through the windows, incandescent spacecrafts zoom, crisscrossing paths in the distant sky.

Orin is wearing Dr. Gagan's overcoat and hat and carrying two bags. Around his neck is the makeshift brace.

He enters a long tubular hallway to a section marked, "EMBARKING DISTRICT", passing throngs of other aliens.

Orin scrutinizes the aliens, then waits until they move on. He approaches the entrance to the Embarking District.

Orin moves to an area called IMAGER. A sign reads, "HAND RECOGNITION".

He scopes the area to ensure he's alone, opens one of the bags --

Inside the bag is Dr. Gagan's neural prosthetic hand that was cleanly blown off his arm.

The hand continues to move -- clenching into a fist, then opening.

Orin removes the hand from the bag as he looks over his shoulder, his own hands shaking.

He presses it against the imager, but the hand is still flexing and relaxing.

A yellow light appears, reading, "NO DETECTION. TRY AGAIN".

ORIN

Damn.

Orin looks around, waits until a group passes. He repeats the movement, pressing down hard on the hand to flatten it against the imager.

A blue light flashes, reading, "HAND RECOGNITION POSITIVE. ACCESS GRANTED".

A door allows him to proceed. Orin walks through it. He apprehensively stashes the hand back into the bag.

Orin searches for a refuse vacuum. He cannot locate one. Hesitates anxiously. He spots one at the entrance where a TRANSPORT GUARD (50s) stands.

He loiters in the embarking district until --

A small group of passengers approaches the spacecraft, preoccupying the Guard's attention.

Orin quickly and cautiously tosses the bag into the vacuum, which sucks it in. He proceeds --

**INT. SPACECRAFT - NIGHT**

Orin takes a few steps inside--

TRANSPORT GUARD (O.S.)

Inspection.

The Guard glances at his neck brace and nods.

TRANSPORT GUARD (CONT'D)  
Losing end of a fight?

ORIN  
Sort of.

Orin opens his bag, revealing medication, his weapon, and sundries. The Guard examines the items and pushes the bag toward Orin.

TRANSPORT GUARD  
Documents.

Orin hands Dr. Gagan's digital documents device to him. The Guard studies Orin's face.

TRANSPORT GUARD (CONT'D)  
You're early, doctor.

ORIN  
I finished my class sooner than expected.

TRANSPORT GUARD  
You look too young for a doctor.

ORIN  
My parents' genes. Thanks. I'll take the compliment.

Orin smiles convincingly. The Guard hands the device back.

TRANSPORT GUARD  
I wish I had your genes. Have a nice, long, long trip.

The Guard leaves. Orin breathes a sigh of relief, finds a module, and sits.

OTHER PASSENGERS file in. Orin pushes his hat down.

**EXT. ANDROMEDA TRAJECTOR - NIGHT**

The spacecraft SHOOTS out of the Trajector into the sky.

**EXT. OUTER SPACE - NIGHT**

An incandescent, needle-shaped spacecraft passes through the galaxy.

**INT. PORTHOLE - SPACECRAFT - DAY**

Orin peers out through the porthole. The spacecraft is moving toward planet Earth in the distance. (END FLASHBACK.)

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY - (BACK TO PRESENT)**

Orin peers out the window. He sees a figure in the distance, the figure from before in the long coat. The windblown sand makes it hard to see clearly.

Kira sits at the table, still processing what Orin has revealed. Alana watches a children's TV show.

KIRA

Do you really think we're safe now?

ORIN

I don't believe they'll come back.

Orin is fixated on the phantom figure in the distance, which is seemingly getting closer. Kira notices Orin's gaze.

KIRA

You're waiting for someone. Aren't you?

Orin turns to Kira.

KIRA (CONT'D)

Looking out the window seems to make you tense. Orin, who is it?

He waits, nervous.

ORIN

I don't know. All I'm sure of is he'll know who I am before I know who he is.

**EXT. SUV - DESERT - DAY**

A modern SUV in pristine condition sits idle on a desolate road, the lone silhouette in the featureless landscape.

**INT. SUV - DAY**

Helena sits in the driver's seat, inhaling vapor from an e-cigarette. She holds it, gazing across the sand at Derek and Kira's home in the distance. Exhales the vapor.

She snatches a semi-automatic pistol from the passenger seat, steps out of the car, and heads toward the house.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Orin looks at Alana for a moment. She numbly watches her show -- a BULLETIN interrupts the children's show.

ALANA  
Aww. Come on...

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)  
(from TV)  
... The strength of the sandstorm has not weakened, and is moving due west toward downtown Los Angeles...

ALANA  
Not again.

Alana shuts off the TV. Orin and Kira look over at her. Alana wanders down the hall to her bedroom.

ALANA (CONT'D)  
I'll stick to my old books again.

Orin and Kira smile at Alana as she disappears. So do their smiles.

KIRA  
What life is this for her? She needs friends, games to play, swing sets... fun...

ORIN  
She's resilient.

KIRA  
How do you have so much calmness about the future? So much confidence, while we get worked up about the smallest of things?

He looks at her as she takes his hand. He doesn't resist.

ORIN  
An outsider can do or say something more effectively, simply because you're too close to a loved one.  
(then)  
I was a very different person before I came here. I lost a dear friend. She was the most beautiful person I have ever met.

Orin gets a bit lost in her eyes. He smiles warmly.

ORIN (CONT'D)  
She was very much like you.

His smile fades. He chokes up, showing emotion in front of her for the first time. Takes a moment. Kira keeps holding his hand and then squeezes it. He searches her eyes.

ORIN (CONT'D)

I know what it feels like to lose someone you love. I can feel the same seething in you.

Kira finally pulls her hand away. Composes herself. She studies Orin for a moment.

A BANG BANG at the door jars them. Orin appears concerned.

They look to each other. He stands to move to the door, but something stops him. He looks back and sees her hand gripping his arm tightly.

KIRA

You're not here. Just me and my daughter.

Kira picks up the rifle on the floor and walks to the door. She swings it open with the rifle pointed, revealing --

BADAR. He puts his hands up.

BADAR

Whoa. Whoa.

KIRA

What do you want?

BADAR

I'm just looking for a man. His name is Orin. His eyes are very much like mine.

KIRA

Well, I'm the only one here, so move on.

She shifts the rifle in her hand to remind Badar of it.

BADAR

If you do see a man like the one I describe...

He definitely picks up on her rage, takes a step back, and hands still up.

ALANA (O.S.)

Mommy?

Badar looks over Kira's shoulder at Alana. They make eye contact --

ALANA (CONT'D)  
He has eyes like Orin.

He looks back at Kira. Tilts his head --

WHAM! ORIN KICKS THE DOOR SHUT FROM BEHIND--

WHAM! BADAR IMMEDIATELY SMASHES THE DOOR BACK OPEN, sending splinters flying from the shattered door into Kira --

She falls back, dropping the rifle. Kira rolls to Alana and pulls her under her.

Badar BARGES inside -- weapon drawn -- points it at Orin.

Orin, caught off guard, fails to aim his weapon.

BADAR  
You flinch, you die.

Badar smiles. Orin's stone-faced. Kira and Alana in shock. Badar observes Orin holding the weapon.

BADAR (CONT'D)  
Drop it! I've got a trigger finger ready to blast you into oblivion. Don't try testing it.

Orin lets the weapon fall to the floor. Badar kicks it to the other side of the room.

BADAR (CONT'D)  
You were smart to move from place to place to avoid me, but you can't slip away this time.

Off to the side, Kira protects Alana with her body as Alana cries. Kira spots her gun on the floor, unnoticed by Badar.

BADAR (CONT'D)  
We are supposed to be observers, not defenders, Orin. But you never paid much attention to rules, or I wouldn't be here.

ORIN  
The government rules were broken before I broke them.

BADAR  
And killing a federal educator? You shouldn't even be on this planet.

Badar eyes the dressing on Orin's abdomen. Blood begins to seep through it.

BADAR (CONT'D)  
And looks like you're still at it.

ORIN

You do the same, but with a permit.

BADAR

Alright, I'll give you one last chance to leave with me.

ORIN

I'd rather die here than go back to that place.

Badar stares into Orin's eyes.

BADAR

As you wish...

Badar raises his weapon to Orin's head, aims and --

BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM!

Badar is SUCKER-PUNCHED by a close-range BARRAGE OF BULLETS to his body. SPARKS FLY in all directions--

The bullets BOUNCE off Badar but TEAR through his clothes --

Revealing the dented, jagged black armor of an ANDROID--

Badar FALLS backward and DROPS his mangled weapon.

KIRA IS ON HER KNEES HOLDING A SMOKING ASSAULT RIFLE.

Badar LIFTS his head, shocking Kira.

Badar ZEROS IN on the rifle.

Kira pushes Alana out of harm's way.

Badar stands and approaches Kira.

Orin TACKLES Badar, but Badar SWATS him away like a fly.

As Badar heads toward Kira, Orin WRAPS his arms around Badar's ankles, who TRIPS and FALLS--

Orin JUMPS on top of Badar, wraps his arms around his waist.

Unmoved, Badar CARRIES Orin as he CRAWLS INEXORABLY toward Kira on his hands and knees --

Kira is frozen by panic. She recoils as the menacing Badar gets closer and closer--

ORIN

In the face! Shoot him in the face!

Kira raises the rifle--

Badar's outstretched hand NEARLY REACHES her--

TOUCHES THE BARREL of the rifle--

KIRA SQUEEZES THE TRIGGER--

**EXT. DESERT - DAY**

BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM-BAM ECHOES over the vast expanse. Helena lies prone in the sand, arms over her head in fear of the gunfire, twitching at each shot.

Then silence. After a few moments, Helena braves a look up at the house and sees only stillness.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Badar's face is a pulverized mess from the gunshots. He rises to his feet, lunges at Orin, then collapses to the floor.

Orin, covered in splashes of blood from Badar's face, collapses too, but from exhaustion.

Kira drops the rifle and turns back to Alana, who is scared. Kira cradles her daughter tight. Alana stops crying.

Orin moves to them on his knees. He embraces them timidly.

After a breather, Orin manages to stand --

ORIN

Gather all the things you can fit  
into the car. I'll wait outside  
until you're ready to go.

KIRA

Why? It's over.

ORIN

This house has been good to you.  
It's protected you through  
difficult times. But it's no longer  
safe here. We have to move. That  
is... if you want me around.

KIRA

I want you around.

ORIN

Another agent might come after me.

KIRA

And he'll end up like Badar.

They share a smile. Kira brushes her daughter's hair off her tear-streamed face.

KIRA (CONT'D)

It'll be okay, sweetie. We have each other.

ALANA

And Orin?

KIRA

And Orin.

He offers a soft smile.

ALANA

I wish Daddy could have come with us.

KIRA

Me too, sweetie, me too.

She hugs Alana. Orin watches and then leaves.

**EXT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

The car is packed, and Orin helps Kira and Alana move the last of their things into it. Orin closes the trunk.

HELENA (O.S.)

Are you alright?

They all turn to see Helena standing inside the broken fence. In their scramble to leave in a hurry, they didn't notice her approach. Helena seems genuinely compassionate.

KIRA

Can we help you?

HELENA

I was just passing, and I heard gunshots.

ORIN

And you walked toward them?

HELENA

I thought maybe someone was hurt.  
(noticing Orin's wound)  
God, you're hurt.

Helena creeps toward them. They back off, suspicious. She subtly grips the pistol behind her back.

ORIN

I'm fine. You should move on.

HELENA

I have medicine...

She's still inching closer. Orin locks eyes with Helena.

ORIN  
What do you want?

HELENA  
So many things...

Orin senses danger --

ORIN  
(to Kira and Alana)  
Get in the house.

Kira and Alana oblige. Helena quickly draws the gun and FIRES. Orin doubles over, grabs his stomach, blood gushes --

KIRA/ALANA  
Orin!

They run back to Orin -- Helena's pistol jams -- They pull Orin into the house and close the door.

Helena tosses the pistol aside and rushes back to her SUV to retrieve another semi-automatic pistol.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - HOUSE - DAY**

Alana and Kira move Orin against a wall. They duck down as a wave of bullets RICOCHETS off the house.

A loud CREAKING NOISE is heard as the house shifts from the force of the wind. Kira and Alana take cover on the floor. Orin, bleeding heavily, reaches for his weapon.

ORIN  
(wincing)  
I only have a few shots left.

Kira crawls to the kitchen and snatches dishcloths off the counter, then crawls back to Orin.

She applies the dishcloths to Orin's stomach to stop the hemorrhaging.

ORIN (CONT'D)  
Alana, get my bag.

A section of the ceiling collapses, CRASHING to the floor. Orin instinctively aims his weapon, then retracts it.

Alana worms her way to Orin's bag and snatches it.

She crawls back and hands the bag to Orin, who retrieves a strange bottle of ointment. He applies it ever so gently to the wound. He writhes in pain.

ALANA  
Will that heal the wound?

Orin pauses to look at Alana. He tries to smile.

ORIN  
You are very precocious.

Orin grips his weapon and stands defiantly, albeit wobbly.

**EXT./INT. HOUSE - DESERT - DAY**

Helena stalks the house tentatively, moving from window to window to find Orin. She stops when she sees Orin with his back to her.

Orin HEARS her and JUMPS behind a partition. POW--POW--POW -- She SHATTERS the partition. Orin is unscathed but clutches his stomach and grimaces.

He quickly returns the shot -- ZZZP -- His aim is hindered by the injury -- He misses wildly. Helena hurries away.

Kira and Alana continue to duck down, huddled together. They scoot to the center of the room.

Orin remains standing, using a post for support. He searches through the windows for Helena.

KIRA  
Orin! Get down!

ORIN  
And do what? Wait for her to kill me -- She wants you.

There is a CRASH in the house. Orin swings around and aims his weapon at the sound. But it's just another part of the ceiling falling down.

HELENA (O.S.)  
He's right.

Orin turns around, and Helena is standing behind Kira and Alana, pointing her gun at him. There's a large gap in the wall behind Helena, through which she had snuck.

Without warning, Orin quickly lifts up his weapon and PULLS the trigger -- CLICK -- SILENCE FOLLOWS.

Helena realizes Orin has run out of ammo. She takes her time and aims carefully and --

BAM! A BULLET SMACKS INTO ORIN'S CHEST.

KIRA  
Oh no! No! Orin.

Alana tries to make a DASH for it, but Helena GRABS her and pulls Alana to her side. Helena stoops down to cradle her.

Alana tries to wriggle free from Helena's grasp, but she holds her tight.

HELENA

Sometimes you have to send a woman to do a man's job. Isn't that right?

Kira tries to reach for Alana. Helena shows her the gun.

HELENA (CONT'D)

That... thing, whatever he is. He doesn't want to help you. His kind only want something for themselves.

KIRA

And you're different?

HELENA

I'm thinking about the future of humanity as a whole. That's pretty unselfish, wouldn't you say?

Kira realizes fighting back is futile. Resigned, she stands up, steps away, then disappears behind Helena and Alana.

HELENA (CONT'D)

And what a world we will make.

She leans into Alana's ear. Alana recoils from her.

HELENA (CONT'D)

We're going to make the future together--

CHHHUUUUUKKK!

Helena's face suddenly FREEZES. EYES BULGE. MOUTH AGAPE. She begins to tremble. Her hand releases the gun, dropping it to the floor.

She slumps forward to reveal Kira standing behind her with the AXE PLANTED INTO HER BACK.

Alana extricates herself from Helena, picks up her gun, and runs it to her mother. Alana glares at Helena.

Helena, spluttering and still in shock, picks up her head, shaking --

HELENA (CONT'D)

I would have given you the world...

Helena slumps forward. Her shaking ceases.

Alana makes her way over to Orin, who is lying on the floor, writhing in pain. She leans over and tends to him.

ORIN  
(voice is weak)  
I knew you'd be our savior.

Alana hugs Orin as Kira watches them. Orin doesn't know how to respond or what to do. Slowly, Orin wraps his arms around Alana. Kira joins them.

KIRA  
Oh my God. She shot you in the heart! We have to get you to the hospital.

ORIN  
My heart is not where yours is.

Orin manages a smile as Kira and Alana keep hugging him.

**INT. CAR - DESERT - DAY**

Kira and Alana gingerly lay Orin in the backseat. Alana sits next to him. Kira sits in the front seat, starts up the car.

**EXT. CAR - HOUSE - DAY**

The car pulls away from the house, leaving a once safe home behind, and will soon be yet another lost in the sand.

**EXT. HELENA'S HOME - DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - DAY**

The sandstorm gains strength and batters Helena's mansion, perched on the cliff on reinforced stilts, on the side of a mountain.

The stilts bend by hurricane winds until they buckle and the mansion SLIDES DOWN THE MOUNTAIN and CRASHES DOWN upon the ruined city below.

**SUPERIMPOSE: "Three Weeks Later"**

**EXT. EMERGENCY SHELTER - DAY**

Desert shelters are crammed with temporary tents, structures, and victims who have been transplanted due to the effects of climate change.

**INT. TENT - SHELTER - DAY**

Orin, Kira, and Alana share a large, tattered tent with a family of four, each family having its own living space. Both families are playing a board game when Orin stands.

ORIN

I should get our rations before they close the kitchen.

Orin looks to the other family.

ORIN (CONT'D)

Do you want me to get yours?

The father of the family, EMILE (40s), an unshaven, soft-spoken man, speaks for the family.

EMILE

Thanks, we already had ours.

ORIN

(to Kira and Alana)

I'll be right back.

The families acknowledge him, and he walks off into the crowd. Kira watches him leave.

**EXT. PATHWAY - SHELTER - DAY**

Orin winds his way through a congested sandy pathway. He gets bumped around like a pinball trying to make his way to the kitchen.

As someone pushes Orin sideways, he observes a PERSON walking alongside him, staring.

Orin stops, the Person stops. Orin and the Person study each other. Orin believes the person looks familiar.

ORIN

Shay?

They walk toward each other and meet in the middle of the path.

SHAY

I heard you killed Badar.

ORIN

Are you here to kill me?

**INT. TENT - SHELTER - DAY**

Kira looks worried. Alana picks up on her worry, but keeps quiet.

KIRA  
Orin should have been back by now.

EMILE  
Maybe there's a long line. I  
wouldn't worry.

KIRA  
You don't understand, someone's  
looking for him.

Kira turns to Emile's Hispanic wife, MARIA (40s).

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Maria, will you keep an eye on  
Alana? She likes to wander off.

MARIA  
I won't let her wander off.

Kira exits the tent in a hurry.

**EXT. PATHWAY - SHELTER - DAY**

Kira takes off down the pathway among the horde. She watches both sides of the path to look for Orin.

Every step she takes, she becomes more and more concerned. Her steps get longer, faster. She gets aggravated by people bumping her.

She begins to panic and nearly cries. She screams inside her head until --

A hand from the crowd touches her. She whirls around. It's Orin. An expression of relief overcomes her.

She seizes his neck and hangs on as she will never let go. He reciprocates -- but lets go of her.

KIRA  
What happened?

ORIN  
What are you doing here?

KIRA  
I was so afraid another alien found  
you!

ORIN  
Another one did.

Orin steps aside, and behind him stands Shay.

She stares in disbelief. They exchange gazes. She sees Orin's distinctive features in Shay.

And Shay studies her face and red hair, recognizing her resemblance to Briex --

**INSERT - BRIEX'S FACE**

Briex smiles as the wind blows her red hair across her face.

**BACK TO SCENE**

Kira doesn't know whether to be afraid or befriend him.

ORIN  
His name is Shay.

KIRA  
What's happening here?

ORIN  
Let's go back to camp.

Kira is completely befuddled, but frightened.

**EXT. TENT - SHELTER - DAY**

Outside the tent, Orin, Kira and Alana gather together. The family observes from inside the tent, but minds their own business. Shay is standing apart at a short distance.

ORIN  
I'm going back home.

Kira is thunderstruck, nonplussed. Alana is afraid of the prospect of Orin leaving.

ALANA  
(points to Shay)  
Is he taking you away?

ORIN  
No, he's a friend.

KIRA  
(tearing up)  
Orin, this is your home.

ORIN  
It's not my world.

ALANA  
Are you going away like Daddy?

ORIN  
No Alana, my world needs me.

KIRA  
But we need you more.

ORIN

I can't fight climate change here on Earth, but in some small way, I can protect you by trying to change it in my world. It's the only way.

KIRA

Is it worth it to take such a great risk? For what?

ORIN

Our scientists have found a way to neutralize emissions that cause the effects of climate change. Their technology can alter the future of Earth.

KIRA

But you're wanted for murder. If you stay, you'll be safe. You don't know what'll happen when you go home.

ORIN

Our government is desperate for information. They're granting amnesty to fugitives on Earth in exchange for the data we collected. They want our experiences, views, observations...

(then)

They will share the technology with Earth.

KIRA

And you trust them?

ORIN

Shay is a fugitive. He escaped as I did. I trust him.

(then)

He showed me the documentation.

KIRA

(sobbing)

I don't care about documentation, I don't care about what could happen, I care about now. Maybe we'll have some perfect world in five, ten, 1000 years from now, but I have to say this -- it'll mean nothing if we don't have you in our world and leave us with a lifetime of heartache.

Kira tries to hide her crying from Alana; however, Alana is deeply affected. She is crying too --

ALANA

Orin, please don't go. Who's going to take care of you?

ORIN

You've done enough and I don't want to go. But try to understand, I'm trying to make things better for you in the time to come.

Kira picks up a bottle of water and a meal box, wiping her tears. She hands it to Orin.

KIRA

It'll be a long ride home.

Orin takes it, turns around to avoid being hugged, and faces Shay. Kira and Alana hug him from behind anyway.

ORIN

It's time to go.

Shay finds it hard to watch and holds his head down.

Orin REVERSES his direction to face Kira and Alana. He holds Alana close to his waist and wraps his arm around Kira, holding her tightly to his body, eyes gazing at each other.

ORIN (CONT'D)

I'll find a way back.

They reluctantly release each other. Orin and Shay walk away, leaving a heartbroken mother and child behind.

**EXT. PATHWAY - SHELTER - NIGHT**

After Orin has gone, Kira and Alana stroll along the path, grief-stricken, then --

A brilliant light casts across the entire shelter. They watch an incandescent, needle-shaped object illuminates the sky. Alana looks up in wonder.

ALANA

Mom, look, a shooting star.

The ascending object races across the sky, away from the Earth. Kira follows its path, but the object does not burn out.

KIRA

Orin's right... You are very precocious.

FADE OUT.

THE END