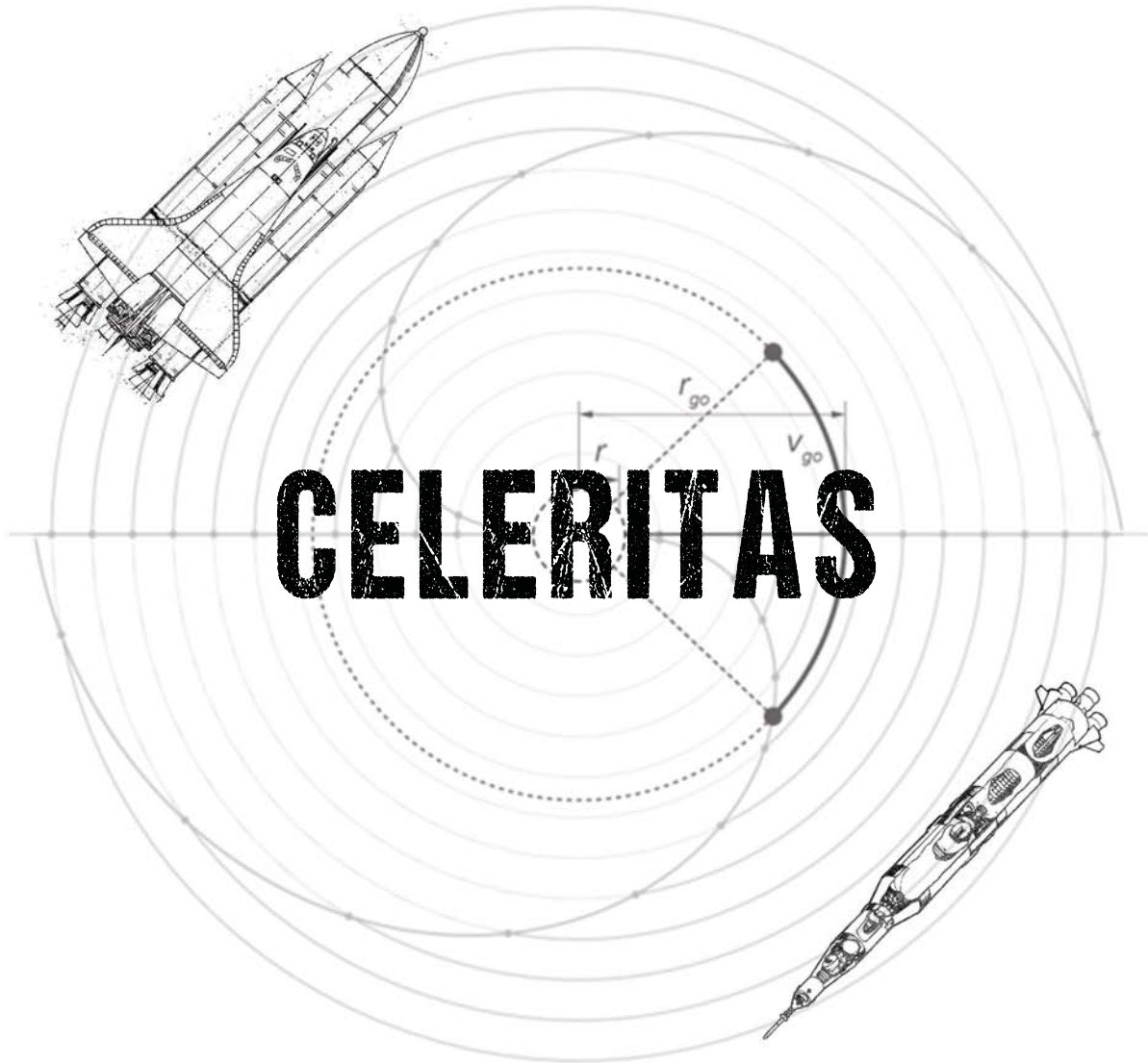


VERVE



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**Celeritas** (n), from the Latin, meaning "swiftness" or "speed," is the origin for the symbol  $c$ , the universal notation for the speed of light in a vacuum, as seen in Albert Einstein's famous equation  $E = mc^2$ . The speed of light in a vacuum is defined as 299,792,458 meters per second.

*When you sit on a hot cinder, a second seems like an hour.  
When you are courting a nice girl, an hour seems like a second.  
That's Relativity.*

*- Albert Einstein*

FADE IN:

An ANALOGUE CHRONOMETER: its hours, minutes, seconds, even milliseconds, are all FROZEN IN TIME as we float backwards.

The millisecond dial begins to move. CLICK. The tiny movement of the gear echoes in slow motion. 21 becomes 22. CLICK. 23. CLICK. 24. CLICK, CLICK, CLICK... The dial speeds up. Seconds gather on the dial nearby.

Our vision shakes as we pull farther back, revealing...

**INT. JANUS 2 COCKPIT**

The chronometer continues to flip on the dash of a one-man SHUTTLE. The other dials spin wildly. Alarms blink and beep.

Through the cockpit window, we can see EARTH: a small blue orb floating in the vast black of space.

**EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS**

Earth's curving atmosphere glows. We see what appears to be a COMET zooming past the LUNAR SURFACE towards Earth.

We follow its descent into the atmosphere. The "comet" is revealed to be a SHUTTLE of mid-20th century design. On the side of the shuttle is written: JANUS 2.

**INT. JANUS 2 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

Strapped to the pilot's chair is PAUL HAWKINS (27), a handsome "All American" boy, outfitted in an Apollo-style spacesuit and helmet; he clutches the armrests for dear life.

Paul forces his eyes open: the control panel shakes beyond comprehension. He struggles against the inertia to extend his finger towards a large, blinking BUTTON. He PRESSES it.

**EXT. EARTH'S UPPER ATMOSPHERE - CONTINUOUS**

JANUS 2 stops accelerating; its tail of light disappears. And yet, the shuttle shoots through the atmosphere at high speed.

**INTERCUT: INT/EXT. COCKPIT/ATMOSPHERE**

Paul takes hold of the center JOYSTICK and pulls back. The shuttle enters the Earth's lower atmosphere, nose tilted up;

*its heat-shielded belly BURNS RED HOT. Paul speaks into his helmet microphone.*

PAUL  
Houston, this is Janus 2. Do you read?

*Clouds whiz past as Janus 2 continues its rapid decent.*

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Houston, this is Commander Hawkins. Do you copy?

*From the cockpit window, the GULF OF MEXICO grows larger.*

*On the DASHBOARD: a 1960's POLAROID PHOTOGRAPH is wedged between the dials. MAGGIE (25), a beautiful red-headed girl, smiles up at us, frozen in time.*

*Paul gazes at the Polaroid longingly. In his vision, PARTICLES OF LIGHT dance around her face. Paul TAKES THE PHOTO, bringing it up to his helmet. Suddenly, he jolts.*

*A PARACHUTE ejects from the shuttle. Its sheet catches the wind and TEARS, useless. The craft continues to plummet.*

*Paul hits another BUTTON on the console. A pair of SECONDARY CHUTES are ejected; they hold. The clouds clear; blue ocean fills his view. Paul shuts his eyes and braces.*

*JANUS 2 CRASHES into the waves with an explosive spray.*

SMASH CUT TO:

**INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY (1969)**

POP! A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE is uncorked; bubbles overflow.

**LANCASTER, CALIFORNIA 1969.** The living room of a stylish ranch home. WALTER CRONKITE'S VOICE mixes with upbeat MUSIC.

Paul, hair slicked back and shirt tucked, shakes CHAMPAGNE SUDS from his hand. He pours the Champagne into FLUTES.

PAUL  
Come on, we're gonna miss it!  
Bruce, take the needle off that thing, will ya?

BRUCE (28), a burly airman, complete with crew cut and bomber jacket, lifts the needle off the turntable. The guests crowd around a BLACK-AND-WHITE TELEVISION. SHIRLEY (24), a big-haired, tipsy brunette, takes her seat.

SHIRLEY

Come on, Paul! You gotta set the mood!

PAUL

It's space, Shirley, not American Bandstand. Gather round! Get your champagne ready!

NORMAN HAWKINS (27), Paul's **IDENTICAL TWIN BROTHER**, enters. Norman's appearance is noticeably more scruffy than Paul's, with his chin-length shaggy hair and five o'clock shadow.

Norman takes a sip of his beer as he hangs towards the back. BILLY (25), skinny and freckle-faced, bumps into him.

BILLY

Oh, hey, Norm! Few years, we'll be watchin' yer brother up there, huh?

Norman smiles halfheartedly. Billy squeezes to the front. Everyone looks towards the screen.

Just then, Norman sees the red-haired MAGGIE (25) across the room. He recognizes her from somewhere. Maggie catches Norman staring; he quickly turns back to the broadcast.

WALTER CRONKITE (ON TV)

So there's a foot on the moon, stepping down on the moon.

PAUL

Shh! Shh! It's starting!

In the frame of the small set, we watch the CBS coverage of the LUNAR LANDING. One can make out the outline of the lunar module followed by a fuzzy NEIL ARMSTRONG descending.

NEIL ARMSTRONG (ON TV)

I'm at the foot of the ladder. The L.M. foot beds are only depressed in the surface about 1 or 2 inches.

Norman grows more and more captivated by the broadcast.

NEIL ARMSTRONG (CONT'D)

Although the surface appears to be very, very fine-grained as you get close to it, it's almost like a powder down there.

WALTER CRONKITE

Well, look at those pictures.

NEIL ARMSTRONG  
I'm going to step off the L.M. now.

PAUL  
Son-of-a-bitch...

NEIL ARMSTRONG  
That's one small step for man...  
One giant leap for mankind.

The crowd CHEERS and applauds over Cronkite's commentary.

WALTER CRONKITE  
Armstrong is on the moon - Neil  
Armstrong, 38-year-old American,  
standing on the surface of the  
moon, on this July 20th, 19 hundred  
and 69.

**INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

The celebration continues. Norman wanders the living room.  
He's stopped by Bruce's clap on the shoulder.

BRUCE  
Don't see you round the base  
anymore, Norm. Figured you'd gone  
up north, turned hippie.

NORMAN  
(passing him)  
It's tempting.

Maggie wanders the perimeter of the dance floor, sipping a  
COCKTAIL. Norman slips by her, accidentally bumping her arm.  
Maggie drops her glass; it SHATTERS.

MAGGIE  
Oh!

NORMAN  
Shit! Sorry-

MAGGIE  
It's okay.

NORMAN  
No, it's my fault.

Norman avoids eye contact as he pats his shirt dry. Maggie  
sees Norman clearly for the first time.

MAGGIE  
Norman?

NORMAN  
Yeah?

MAGGIE  
It's Maggie.

NORMAN  
Maggie. Wow, you... you grew up.

MAGGIE  
(chuckling)  
Yeah, I did.

Beat. Norman starts to reach down.

NORMAN  
Uh, here, let me get-

MAGGIE  
Oh, I can do that-

NORMAN  
It's fine. Lemme just-

Norman's RIGHT PALM is sliced by a glass shard.

NORMAN (CONT'D)  
Ah!

MAGGIE  
Oh my God, you're bleeding!

NORMAN  
It's nothing.

MAGGIE  
Here, let me see.

Maggie and Norman step off to the side, into...

### **THE KITCHENETTE**

Maggie wets a NAPKIN at the sink and begins to clean the cut.

NORMAN  
Never thought I'd see you back in  
Lancaster.



MAGGIE

Makes two of us. Still, it feels like home. Thought you'd be long gone by now.

NORMAN

"You can take the boy out of the farm..."

MAGGIE

You're no farm boy.

NORMAN

It's home. Anyway, it's where I'm needed.

MAGGIE

Paul told me about your Dad. I'm sorry.

NORMAN

(beat)

So what are you doing back?

MAGGIE

I'm studying to be an architect.

NORMAN

Really!

MAGGIE

Down in Palmdale.

(beat)

Go ahead, say it.

NORMAN

What?

MAGGIE

You were going to say "Women can't build houses."

NORMAN

Wouldn't say that. My mother built our farm from the ground up. Course the barn sorta leans to the left-

Maggie presses down on the wound.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

Ouch!

MAGGIE

Sorry.

Maggie wraps the napkin tightly around Norman's hand.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

All done.

NORMAN

Thanks.

MAGGIE

What about you?

NORMAN

Hm? Oh, I, uh, specialize in aerial pesticide application.

(beat)

Basically crop dusting.

(beat)

I like being outdoors.

Maggie nods with polite interest. The FAST SONG ENDS and a SLOW SONG begins. Both stand in silence.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

So... Would you... Do you want to-

A drunk Paul enters with TWO BEERS; He hands one to Norman.

PAUL

You were looking a little dry over here, Norm.

(sees his hand)

What happened?

MAGGIE

I threw a bottle at him.

Paul cozies up to Maggie. Norman tries not to notice.

PAUL

Some things never change. You know, Norman was a test pilot too, back in the day.

MAGGIE

Really?

PAUL

Mm! Pretty cocky one too.

NORMAN

You weren't so humble yourself.

PAUL

Did flyboy here tell you about the time he almost broke Mach 7?

Maggie gives Norman a chiding look.

MAGGIE

He didn't.

NORMAN

Almost. Key word.

PAUL

First off, Norman worships Robert White. Day White broke Mach 6, Norman decides he wants to enlist.

NORMAN

Woulda been drafted anyway.

PAUL

After our second tour, we get transferred to Edwards. 'Year in, Norm gets behind an X-15-2-

NORMAN

(correcting)

A2-

PAUL

Makes it to Mach 5 and starts barrel rolling! Drops 100,000 feet! Shoulda blacked out in seconds, but this son-of-a-bitch pulls out of it, not a scratch on 'im!

NORMAN

I got lucky.

PAUL

Bullshit. You had talent.

NORMAN

So did Mike Adams.

PAUL

(suddenly somber)

Yeah, well... Mike didn't have the bird you did.

NORMAN

Right.

Norman takes a sip of beer. Awkward silence.

MAGGIE  
I'm going to get another drink.

PAUL  
I got it-

MAGGIE  
No, I'll get it.

Maggie crosses to where the punch bowl is set up. The eyes of the two brothers follow her. Paul snaps out of it.

PAUL  
So. How's Mom?

NORMAN  
Same. She's lonely.

PAUL  
She's got you.  
(beat)  
You know if you need anything-

NORMAN  
We're okay. Thanks. Any word from NASA?

PAUL  
Checkin' the mailbox every day.  
They woulda' snatched you up in a heartbeat, you'd uh stuck around.

NORMAN  
'Think I'll stick to dustin' crops.

PAUL  
Right! Dad's ol' Tiger Moth. That clunker still flying straight?

NORMAN  
It's flying...

Norman exits. Paul ogles Maggie across the room. He takes a generous sip of his beer and joins her.

#### **INT. 1957 CHEVY PICKUP - LATER**

Norman drives home from the party, the countryside of Southern California silhouetted in the light of a full moon.

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - YARD - LATER**

The door of his rusted Chevy creeks as it's slammed shut. Norman walks across the dirt yard, towards a large BARN, long since worn by time and termites. He tugs at the doors.

**INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS**

Norman turns on a hanging bulb, revealing...

A rusted 1940s TIGER MOTH BI-PLANE; its yellow wings and dented propellers peek out from underneath a canvas tarp. Norman smiles at the plane like an old friend. He adjusts the TARP to cover the wingspan before shutting the light.

**INT. FARMHOUSE - ENTRYWAY**

Norman enters the Victorian farmhouse, careful not to make a sound. He walks past an archway, gazing into...

**THE FRONT PARLOR**

He sees his mother, EVELYN HAWKINS (55), asleep in her apron on the settee; her straw-grey hair is twisted in a bun.

Norman notes the LEATHER PHOTO ALBUM opened across her chest, as if she fell asleep looking through it. He tiptoes to her, carefully sliding the album from her hands. He re-opens it.

INSERT: SEPIA PHOTOS from the 1930s, all are of a young, smiling couple: EVELYN (20s) and her husband MITCH (30s).

Norman closes the album and rests it on the side table. He then takes off his JACKET and lays it on his mother's shoulders. She stirs, but doesn't wake.

**INT. PAUL'S CONVERTIBLE - SAME TIME**

Paul drives through mid-century suburbia, Maggie beside him.

PAUL

50 miles up is the cut off. You break 50, you get your astronaut's wings. View's not bad either.

MAGGIE

Must make you feel so thin up there. I like feeling the earth under my feet.

PAUL

It's different when you're in a cockpit. You're in control. It's like... You know when you're falling in a dream, but you know you're dreaming so you're not scared? That's a bird for me. It's knowing you have wings.

MAGGIE

So you never get scared?

PAUL

Every time. Part of the thrill.

Maggie chuckles, shaking her head.

**EXT. MAGGIE'S PARENT'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Paul parks in front of a dark ranch home.

MAGGIE

Thanks for the ride home.

PAUL

No problem.

MAGGIE

We should land on the moon more often. 'Makes a great party.

Paul gazes at Maggie's lips. He leans in to kiss her. Maggie does the same. Paul pushes forward...

BREEEEEEEEER! Paul removes his weight from the steering wheel; the car HORN stops beeping. Maggie laughs. Paul covers his face, embarrassed.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

If my mother wasn't up before...

PAUL

Sorry.

MAGGIE

It's alright. Well... G'night.

PAUL

G'night.

Maggie exits the car; she saunters down the path, slightly tipsy. Paul sits in his car, hypnotized.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
When can I see you again?

Maggie swings around; she makes a phone with her fingers.

MAGGIE  
Call me when we get to Mars!

Paul gives her a thumbs up. Maggie enters her house.

**INT. JANUS 2 COCKPIT - DAY (PRESENT)**

PAUL'S POV:

*Flashes of light and muddled sound. We hear a man's HEAVY BREATHING along with SEAGULLS and OCEAN WAVES...*

*DAYLIGHT leaks in from the cockpit window, fading in and out as the waves wash over the glass. The COCKPIT HATCH is forced open, letting in the surf. A MEXICAN FISHERMAN peers into the hatchway.*

FISHERMAN  
*Es un hombre. Yo pienso que es  
Americano.*

Paul's vision BLURS TO BLACK.

**EXT. GULF OF MEXICO - DAY (PRESENT)**

PAUL'S POV: *Unseen hands drag Paul back, lifting him out of the shuttle.*

*From the deck of a FISHING BOAT, we see JANUS 2 in the distance being tossed up and down in the current. It's kept afloat by inflatable buoys encircling the craft.*

His vision BLURS TO BLACK.

**INT. A BRIGHT ROOM (PRESENT)**

*Darkness. BREATHING reverberates into an oxygen mask.*

PAUL'S POV: *His vision is fuzzy, blinded by the fluorescent lights. As the room comes into focus, we see we are in a BODY-SIZED INCUBATOR.*

*Shadows orbit the outside of the glass. One shadow, MARCUS, leans closer; it's voice is distant.*

MARCUS  
Commander Hawkins?

*Paul's vision begins to fade...*

MARCUS (CONT'D)  
Commander-

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - JOHNSON SPACE CENTER - DAY (PRESENT)**

A HEART MONITOR BEEPS. *Paul's eyes flicker open.*

*Paul's skin is pale; there are blisters on his face. He is lying in a hospital bed, dressed in a johnny. He has a nasal cannula and an I.V.; electrodes are taped to his chest.*

*The room is windowless. Though he's surrounded by medical equipment, it resembles a cell more than a hospital.*

*AGENT MARCUS (40s) of Homeland Security sits beside the bed. He wears a dark suit and a smirk that only top security clearance supplies.*

MARCUS  
Good morning.

*Paul stares at Marcus, expressionless and very weak.*

MARCUS (CONT'D)  
You've come a long way.

PAUL  
Where am I?

MARCUS  
NASA Headquarters.

PAUL  
Kennedy?

MARCUS  
Houston.

*Paul tries to lift his body. He can't.*

PAUL  
I can't move.

MARCUS  
You had the Bends. We put you in a recompression chamber. You should regain feeling in your limbs soon.  
(MORE)



MARCUS (CONT'D)

(beat)  
Do you know your name?

PAUL  
Hawkins.

MARCUS  
Know your first name, Hawkins?

*Paul hesitates. Finally...*

PAUL  
Paul.

MARCUS  
Good. Who's the president of the  
United States, Paul?

PAUL  
Donald Duck.

MARCUS  
(chuckles)  
That's funny. You're funny, Paul.  
Specially for a "spaceman."

PAUL  
And your English is pretty good for  
a Russian.

MARCUS  
I'm not Russian.

PAUL  
Sure as hell not NASA.

MARCUS  
You're right. I'm not.

*Paul's head pounds. He struggles to keep his eyes open.  
Finally, Marcus pats the mattress beside him.*

MARCUS (CONT'D)  
Get some rest, Paul.

*As we follow Marcus out, we notice the TWO-WAY MIRROR on the  
opposite wall. The door shuts; we hear the LOCK TURN. Paul  
stares at the ceiling, weak and disoriented.*

**INT. HAWKIN'S FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (1969)**

Morning sunlight shimmers through the lace curtains. Evelyn  
Hawkins washes dishes at the sink, her back to the stairwell.

Norman descends and enters, hung-over, his RIGHT HAND still bandaged. He attempts to smooth the wrinkles out of his SHIRT. Evelyn scrubs the same dish over and over.

NORMAN

Ma?

EVELYN

(not looking up)

Mm?

NORMAN

Headin' up to the hardware store.

Evelyn snaps out of her daze; she turns to him.

EVELYN

Norman! You're up early. Sit down;  
I'll make you some toast.

NORMAN

It's alright. I'm not hungry.

Evelyn notices her son's WRINKLED SHIRT. It saddens her.

EVELYN

Is that your father's?

NORMAN

I didn't have a clean shirt. Sorry,  
I shouldn't of-

EVELYN

No! You look smart.

Evelyn tugs at the shirt. Norman lifts his arms, obediently.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

I wish you'd let me iron it.

NORMAN

'Gonna get wrinkled soon enough.

EVELYN

Your father was the same. How he  
ever got through basic without  
pressin' his shirts is beyond me.

Norman chuckles. Evelyn looks up at her son's face. She reaches out, tenderly holding his cheek.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

Oh, Norman. My handsome boy... Wish you'd let me take some sheers to that mop of yours.

NORMAN

Yer worse than my Drill Sergeant.

EVELYN

I should hope so. He only had to teach you to stand up straight; I'm the one that raised ya.

NORMAN

I'm not in the air force anymore.

EVELYN

But it's still in you. You can walk around in your wrinkled shirts, trying to look ordinary. You're still a hero.

Norman cracks a smile; deep down, he doesn't believe her.

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY (PRESENT DAY)**

*Paul looks improved: the blisters on his face have healed. However, the electrodes on his chest and the beeping heart monitor reminds us of his condition.*

*Marcus stares at Paul with a smile, waiting for an answer.*

MARCUS

*Commander Hawkins.*

PAUL

*Mm?*

MARCUS

*We were discussing your ship. Can you describe it to me?*

PAUL

*Want me to paint you a picture?*

MARCUS

*If you think it'll help.*

PAUL

*Lockheed U-2 "Dragon Lady." Single engine, leather interior... Or maybe I crashed in a flying saucer.*

*Marcus' patience is running thin. Still he smiles. He rises, fishing into his jacket pocket.*

MARCUS

*There's something you might want.  
It was on you when they fished you  
out.*

*Marcus drops MAGGIE'S POLAROID PICTURE on Paul's lap.*

MARCUS (CONT'D)

*Look familiar?*

*She does, though Paul tries to hide it.*

MARCUS (CONT'D)

*Keep it. Call it a sign of good  
faith. Maybe it'll jog your  
memory.*

*Marcus exits, locking the door. Only then does Paul reach out to Maggie's photo; he smiles sadly.*

**EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON (1969)**

*The California countryside. A gold autumn sun flashes between the bare trees lining a dirt road.*

*Maggie sits on the handlebars of PAUL'S BIKE as it races forward. She shrieks with fear and excitement.*

MAGGIE

*(smiling)*

*Paul! Slow down!*

PAUL

*Can't! We need to increase speed!  
Reach escape velocity!*

MAGGIE

*You're gonna crash!*

PAUL

*Trust me!*

MAGGIE

*Ahhh!*

PAUL

*Woohoo!*

**EXT. HILLSIDE - LATER**

The dry grass of hillside glows gold in the sun. Paul's bike leans against a nearby tree. Maggie sits on a blanket as Paul looks through the viewfinder of a 1960s POLAROID CAMERA.

MAGGIE

The sun's in my eyes.

PAUL

Just one more second. Smile!

Maggie resists at first; finally she smiles. Paul presses the shutter. The camera buzzes as the POLAROID FILM prints. He drops down by Maggie; she cozies up to him. Paul holds up the Polaroid: its still gray.

PAUL (CONT'D)

And now we wait.

Both lie on the grass, gazing up the blue sky. They see the ghostly face of a DAYLIGHT MOON.

MAGGIE

I've always loved how you can see the moon during the day... Do you think we'll ever live there?

PAUL

Sure! See that dark spot.

MAGGIE

Where?

PAUL

The little one right there, 'looks like an eye patch. I got a time share in that exact crater.

MAGGIE

(hits him)

Oh hush.

PAUL

How 'bout it though? You could design the house.

MAGGIE

Maybe the moon's my only option. No firm wants to hire a woman, not on this planet anyway.

PAUL  
 You know, if you married a  
 millionaire, you could start your  
 own firm.

MAGGIE  
 Guess that rules you out then.

PAUL  
 I'm serious! I hear astronauts  
 make a pretty penny.

MAGGIE  
 Don't make promises you can't keep.

Paul looks at Maggie, building up his courage.

PAUL  
 I love you.

Maggie turns to Paul: it's the first time he's said it.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
 I know we've only been goin' steady  
 a month now, but, if there's anyone  
 I'd buy the moon for, it'd be you.

MAGGIE  
 I love you too.

Paul pulls Maggie close. They KISS. Maggie glances down at  
 the POLAROID PICTURE.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
 Paul, look!

Slowly, Maggie's features develop on the film; we see the  
 Polaroid from the Janus 2 dashboard taking shape.

PAUL  
 See what a little light can do.

**INT. SIDE ROOM - JOHNSON SPACE CENTER - (PRESENT)**

*The room is dark, save the light coming from Paul's cell,  
 which we can see through a mirrored glass window.*

*Marcus peruses the contents of an AGED MANILA FOLDER, labeled  
 "JANUS PROJECT: CLASSIFIED." He is joined by EDISON (30s),  
 an anxious "lab rat" with wire-rimmed spectacles.*

EDISON

*If the second kidney fails, he won't last without dialysis. It's the Arrhythmia that worries me. Fluid in the lungs, third degree burns. If I didn't know better, I'd say he'd been struck by lightning.*

MARCUS

*This all we got on Janus?*

EDISON

*All we could dig up. Project's been cold a while now.*

*Marcus flips through another FOLDER, labeled "C.C. PAUL HAWKINS" and stamped "K.I.A." Inside, at the top, is clipped a PHOTOGRAPH OF PAUL in his Air Force uniform.*

*Meanwhile, Edison stares at Paul in awe.*

EDISON (CONT'D)

*He's not possible. He should be flat as a pancake!*

MARCUS

*What about his shuttle?*

EDISON

*Whatever's left of it's still floating in the Gulf. The fishermen were reluctant to talk about it.*

MARCUS

*Which means it's scrap or for sale on the internet. Message Archives for the blueprints.*

EDISON

*What about him? We gonna wait until he finds the Statue of Liberty buried on a beach?*

MARCUS

*This is strictly "need to know."*

EDISON

*Meaning?*

MARCUS

*Meaning If we need something, we'll tell him.*

**INT. BARN - DAY (1969)**

Norman tinkers under the hood of the TIGER MOTH. We hear a RACHET CRANKING an unseen nut. Norman rises, wiping his brow. He wipes the grease from his hands with a rag.

Evelyn enters.

EVELYN  
Find the problem?

NORMAN  
Cam shaft was off. You know if Dad kept any spares?

EVELYN  
There's a shoe box full of junk in the cellar, 'you wanna go digging.

NORMAN  
I'd rather grind one from scratch.

EVELYN  
You'd be lucky to find anything down there. Mind you, I tried sorting through it. Just got to be too much. Mitch never threw anything away; always afraid he might need it down the road.

NORMAN  
I could throw it out if you want?

EVELYN  
You think that's what I want you doin' with your time: rummaging through someone else's trash? I'll get to it. And if I don't... Well, then you can toss it all. 'Least I won't be around to mind.

NORMAN  
Don't talk like that.

EVELYN  
I'll talk how I want. Don't patronize me.

NORMAN  
Sorry.

Norman turns his attention to the engine. He pulls on the rusted cam shaft, trying to wrench it from it's casing.



EVELYN

What are you doin', Norman?

NORMAN

Told you: cam shaft's jammed.

EVELYN

You know, I thought coming home was the best for you. You were so lost after your father died.

NORMAN

Dad would have wanted me here.

EVELYN

Don't get me wrong, Norman: he lived for you boys. But it don't mean he didn't live for himself. The farm was his dream, but you're not gonna keep his memory alive by tendin' to it. You keep it by livin'. Your brother knows that. Bout the only thing sets you apart.

NORMAN

Not the only thing.

**INT. X-15 COCKPIT - DAY (1969)**

Paul sits in the cockpit of an X-15 as it flies through the air. His oxygen mask can't hide his beaming smile.

PAUL

Wooooooooohoo!

**EXT. SKY OVER DESERT - CONTINUOUS**

The X-15 zooms past: it's a slick, bullet shaped craft with short wings, like a dart.

PAUL (V.O.)

Mach 5 point 3. 47 miles and climbing.

GROUND CONTROL (ON RADIO)

Looking good from here, Hawkins, over. 52, do you have a visual?

**INT. B-52 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

Bruce, the pilot of the NB-52, a bomber-like aircraft, looks out his cockpit window at the X-15.

BRUCE  
 Roger, Control, I have visual.  
 Paul, your ascent's looking a  
 little steep.

**INTERCUT: INT. X-15 COCKPIT / B-52 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

Paul grips the wheel, pulling up. He ignores Bruce.

PAUL  
 Mach 5 point 5. 48 Miles.

BRUCE  
 Paul, don't you get cocky, tryin'  
 to earn them wings.

PAUL  
 50 miles, Bruce. She can do it.

BRUCE  
 'Ain't the one I'm worried about.

The X-15 begins to shake. Paul holds fast to the wheel.

PAUL  
 Mach 5 point 6. 5 point 7. 5 point-

The X-15 jerks violently.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
 Son-of-a-bitch!

The X-15 begins to spiral, plummeting towards the desert. Bruce strains to see Paul's plane from his cockpit.

BRUCE  
 Hawkins! Paul, do you read!

Paul does somersaults.

BRUCE (CONT'D)  
 Control, he's spinning out!

Paul pulls on the wheel. The X-15 pulls up and levels out. He leans back, breathing heavily into his mask.

BRUCE (CONT'D)  
 Paul! Paul, do you copy!

PAUL  
I'm good. Altitude leveling off at  
40 miles. Starting descent.

GROUND CONTROL (ON RADIO)  
Roger that, X-15.

Both planes head back to back.

BRUCE  
Jesus, Hawkins! You scared the shit  
out of me!

PAUL  
I guess heaven can wait.

BRUCE  
You wanna get to heaven, do it on  
your own time, stop risking a  
perfectly good bird!

PAUL  
Who says you gotta die to get to  
heaven?

The X-15 cuts through the clouds, followed by the B-52. We  
see the CALIFORNIA DESERT, like a sea of sand below them.

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY (PRESENT DAY)**

*Paul sits up in bed. He stares at the singed, crumpled  
POLAROID OF MAGGIE. Paul's hands begin to shake. The  
Polaroid slips from his grasp. He stares at his trembling  
hands: something feels different. They begin to GLOW.  
Particles of light orbit his hands. He wiggles his fingers;  
the particles spark. It captivates and terrifies him.*

*The DOOR UNLOCKS; Paul is startled. Marcus enters; he's  
holding a FOLDER and some MAGAZINES underarm.*

*Paul glances back at his hands; everything is BACK TO NORMAL.*

MARCUS  
Look at you. You'll be running the  
Marathon in no time.

*Paul stares at Marcus coldly.*

MARCUS (CONT'D)  
I brought you some reading  
material.

Marcus casually tosses the MAGAZINES on Norman's lap, including a 1967 "Sports Illustrated" Swimsuit Edition and a December 1966 POST with the glaring headline "Are Flying Saucers Real?" Paul flips through them.

PAUL  
You should renew your  
subscriptions.

MARCUS  
Why do you say that?

PAUL  
(holds up the magazine)  
This Swimsuit Edition's from 1967.

Paul throws the magazines aside.

MARCUS  
If you want something else-

PAUL  
I wanna speak to Gene Krantz.

Marcus thinks about his answer carefully.

MARCUS  
Director Krantz is not available at  
this time.

PAUL  
Fine, get Dick Nixon on the phone.

MARCUS  
You really think I can do that?

PAUL  
You put a man on the moon. Can't  
make a simple phone call?

MARCUS  
Let me explain something,  
Commander-

PAUL  
Start with why I'm a prisoner.

MARCUS  
You're under quarantine. For your  
own protection-

PAUL  
Bullshit... Who are you? Really.

*Marcus considers this.*

*MARCUS*  
*You're dead.*

*Paul turns pale: he could actually believe it.*

*MARCUS (CONT'D)*  
*Officially. Your family, everyone*  
*you knew: they think you blew up.*  
*But we know better, don't we.*  
*(beat)*  
*I'm not asking for much, Paul.*  
*Just answers. Only one other man*  
*made the trip you did, and he*  
*didn't make it past atmo. So my*  
*question is, how did you?*

*PAUL*  
*I want to see my family.*

*MARCUS*  
*That's not a good idea.*

*PAUL*  
*You got two options: either I walk*  
*out that door or my family walks*  
*in. Till then, all you get is my*  
*name, rank, and serial number.*  
*That answer your question?*

**INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY - (1969)**

Maggie sits at a desk taking notes, surrounded by fellow Palmdale University architecture STUDENTS. At the head of the class, a drowsy PROFESSOR (50s) writes on the board.

*PROFESSOR*  
*Fallingwater was designed by Frank*  
*Lloyd Wright in 1935, just*  
*southeast of Pittsburgh.*

Norman peaks in the WINDOW of the classroom door, searching for Maggie. Spotting her, he waves.

*PROFESSOR (CONT'D)*  
*It was commissioned by Edgar*  
*Kaufmann Senior, prompted by his*  
*son Edgar Junior, Wright's protege.*

Maggie spots Norman in the doorway, along with most of her class. She glares at him: "What are you doing here!"

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
 You'll notice, on first glance,  
 that the plot size is doubled by  
 the use of *cantilevers*...

Norman smiles, then he gets an idea. He mimes for her to  
 "Hold on." He disappears from view.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
 C.A.N.T.I.L.E.V.E.R.S.

Norman reappears in the window. He knocks on the glass.  
 This time, the whole class turns; the Professor is oblivious.

PROFESSOR (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
 This allowed the expansion of the  
 structure, not possible with the  
 use of traditional foundations.

Maggie glares at him: "What!" Norman presses a piece of  
 SCRAP PAPER up against the glass, undoubtedly stolen from a  
 nearby bulletin board. It reads: "I MADE YOU A HOUSE."

The rest of the class turns to Maggie, who tries to make  
 herself as small as possible. Norman then puts up another  
 PAPER, on which: a crude, child-like DRAWING OF A HOUSE.  
 Maggie stifles a laugh.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
 Note the T-shaped beams which have  
 been integrated into the concrete.

FEMALE STUDENT  
 (whispering)  
 Who is that guy?

MAGGIE  
 (smiling)  
 I have no idea.

EXT. PALMDALE UNIVERSITY - CAMPUS QUAD - DAY (1969)

Maggie walks with Norman, books in her arms.

MAGGIE  
 Does Paul know you're here?

NORMAN  
 We're not attached at the hip, you  
 know. I mean, we were, but they  
 did this surgery-

MAGGIE

I'm serious.

NORMAN

I was in the area. Thought I'd swing by, walk you home... For old times sake.

MAGGIE

Thought you were done trying to protect me.

NORMAN

Not yet.

**EXT. EDWARD'S AIR FORCE BASE - TARMAC - DAY (1969)**

Paul, still in his flight suit, walks across the runway, helmet in hand. Bruce, also in his suit, walks beside him. In the distance, we can see planes towed into a hangars.

PAUL

I tell ya: 'I ever get behind the wheel of Apollo, I'm takin' that thing straight to Mars. Forget the Lunar pit-stop.

As Bruce chuckles, a ROOKIE PILOT (20s) runs to meet them.

ROOKIE PILOT

Hawkins! General wants to see you in his office!

Paul's face lights up. He gives Bruce a smile: "This is it!"

**INT. EDWARD'S AIR FORCE BASE - GENERAL'S OFFICE - LATER**

Paul, still in his flight suit, stands at attention in front of a desk. His expression is empty as his heart sinks.

The GENERAL (60s), a grey haired veteran with grizzled features, sits behind the desk.

GENERAL

I wanted to break the news to you personally. I know how much this meant to you.

PAUL

(eyes forward)  
Thank you, Sir.

## GENERAL

Ten years ago, having steel balls was enough. Now you need a doctorate to go with them. Still, you're young. Not like the universe is going anywhere.

Paul is silent.

**EXT. MAGGIE'S PARENT'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Sunset: the street lamps begin to light as the world is washed in deep blue.

Maggie is silhouetted in the warm light of the doorway. She turns to look back at Norman, standing by the gate. She waves before entering the house. Norman waves back. He then slips his hands into his pockets and walks home.

As he does, he passes an ABANDONED HOME with a lawn gone to seed. On the fence surrounding it, a rusted "BEWARE OF DOG" SIGN dangles from a nail. Norman lazily HITS IT: the sign swings, CREAKING. He continues walking, past a JUNKYARD.

**INT. BAR - SAME TIME**

Paul sits alone at the counter, gripping a ROCKS GLASS. He takes a shot of his whiskey, sucking the dry taste off his tongue. He ignores the drunken laughter of the patrons.

**INT. HAWKIN'S FARM - BARN - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Norman puts a TARP over the TIGER MOTH. Suddenly, there's a CLANKING NOISE from outside, followed by muffled CURSING. Norman grabs a CROW BAR leaning against the wall. He pushes the barn door open and looks out.

Paul drunkenly stumbles around the yard, holding a half-empty BOTTLE OF WHISKEY. He angrily kicks a tin can across the dirt. Norman sighs and tosses the crow bar aside.

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - YARD - CONTINUOUS**

Paul notes Norman walking towards him. He spreads his arms wide, welcoming the ridicule.

PAUL

The prodigal twin returns!



NORMAN  
What are you doing here?

PAUL  
Man can't visit his brother?

NORMAN  
It's three in the morning.

PAUL  
Have a drink with me.

NORMAN  
Looks like you've had enough for  
both of us.

PAUL  
That's funny! You're funny, Norm.

NORMAN  
Just keep it down; you'll wake mom.

Paul looks towards the farm house.

PAUL  
Used to think Dad gave us a gift,  
givin' us wings. All he did was  
spoil being on the ground-

NORMAN  
What are you talking about?

We see the discovery on Norman's face.

NORMAN (CONT'D)  
You heard from NASA, didn't you?

Paul doesn't answer; he takes a swig from his bottle.

NORMAN (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry.

PAUL  
No you're not.

NORMAN  
'Scuse me?

PAUL  
You know, when we went into the  
service, I used to think I was  
following you. Like that 2 minute  
head-start you had at birth just  
stuck-

NORMAN  
Will you shut up-

PAUL  
Funny thing is, you left! For once  
we had different lives! Now I'm  
right back where I started: Green  
frickin Acres!

NORMAN  
And that's my fault?

PAUL  
Just once, Norman, just one  
Goddamned day, I'd like to feel I  
ain't beholdin' to you.

NORMAN  
I didn't quit for your ego! I quit  
because Mom needed me!

PAUL  
You quit 'cause you're a coward.

Norman PUNCHES Paul across the face. Paul retaliates by  
tackling him to the ground. They scuffle in the dirt.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
G'off!

NORMAN  
Make me.

PAUL  
I'll kick your ass!

NORMAN  
You're out of practice.

PAUL  
So's your right hook!

NORMAN  
I was holdin' back!

PAUL  
Bullshit!

Paul drunkenly tries to punch Norman, but Norman gets the  
upper hand. He pins him to the dirt.

NORMAN  
You gonna say "uncle?"

PAUL  
Screw you!

NORMAN  
(pressing down)  
What's that?

PAUL  
Gah! Dammit! Uncle! Hippie Son-of-a-bitch...

Norman releases his brother. Paul sits up, massaging his jaw. He reaches for the spilt bottle of whiskey.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
'Waste of good bourbon.

He tosses the empty bottle aside.

NORMAN  
What were you gonna do: drink yourself into space?

PAUL  
Better than being earthbound and sober.

NORMAN  
Can't argue with that.

Norman smiles at his brother. Soon they're laughing together. Norman rises, extending a hand to his brother.

NORMAN (CONT'D)  
Come on. Beer's on me.

Norman lifts Paul to his feet. They head to the house.

PAUL  
You really clocked me good.

NORMAN  
Well, you're an idiot.

PAUL  
'Least I remember how to shave.

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - FIELD - LATER**

Paul and Norman sit on the hood of the rusted CHEVY PICKUP, drinking BEER and watching the SUNRISE.

PAUL

Remember those Western Double Features? We used to buy one ticket and sneak the other in.

NORMAN

Yeah. Till you messed it up.

PAUL

Dad was already on to us.

NORMAN

There was Mom thinkin' we just liked wearing matching outfits.

PAUL

Old man knew better.

(beat)

I miss him.

NORMAN

Yeah. Me too.

PAUL

Sometimes I see his face in other people. Just strangers walkin by. I look again and it's just some old man who looks like him. I don't know why, but, it always gets my hopes up.

Paul gazes at the MOON as it fades into the dawn.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I always imagined that's what the moon looked like: the desert in a black and white Western. Grey sands. Maybe a tumbleweed. Sometimes I wish I could just take a bird up there and see it with my own eyes, you know? Stead of looking out through a fish bowl, breathin' from a dryer hose.

NORMAN

You could always smoke the shit they're peddlin' behind the grocer.

PAUL

Hippie.

NORMAN

Square.

They each take a swig. Paul's tongue loosens.

PAUL

I'm gonna ask Maggie to marry me.

Norman shoots a look at Paul.

PAUL (CONT'D)

I know you think I'm taking it too fast, but, seeing as I won't be "boldly going where no man's gone before"... I just don't see the point of waiting. I love her.

(looks to Norman)

Be my best man? Make sure I don't do anything stupid?

NORMAN

'Full time job.

PAUL

(chuckles)

Yeah, it is. It would mean a lot.

NORMAN

'Course.

Paul smiles at his brother, lifting his beer bottle up. Norman takes the cue and CLINKS his bottle against Paul's.

A golden sunrise floods the field.

PAUL

Tell you what, though... you don't get this view from space.

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY (PRESENT DAY)**

*Paul stares into the keyhole of his "cell" door. He wields a MAKE-SHIFT LOCK PICK made out of a mattress spring.*

*Paul hears voices from the room next door; He quickly gets back into bed. Marcus enters, PAUL HAWKIN'S FILE in his hand. He leaves the door open behind him.*

PAUL

More magazines, Comrade?

MARCUS

(beat)

There's someone here to see you.

A RED-HAIRED WOMAN (60s) with a familiar face enters; Paul freezes. Though her grey roots betray her age, her hair is dyed ginger. She smiles with tearful eyes.

WOMAN  
Hello, Paul.

Paul's breathing quickens: he knows her voice.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Do you know who I am?

PAUL  
Should I?

The woman looks to Marcus. He nods. She approaches the bed.

WOMAN  
I wanted to be the one to tell you.  
You've been gone a very long time-

PAUL  
Who are you?

WOMAN  
Don't you recognize me?

PAUL  
(lying)  
No.

MAGGIE  
I'm Maggie. I'm your Maggie.

PAUL  
You're lying.

MARCUS (O.C.)  
It's a new century, Commander.  
You've been gone almost 50 years.

Paul's eyes remain fixed on the red-haired woman.

PAUL  
(under his breath)  
No.

MARCUS  
Paul-

PAUL  
NO!

Paul launches himself from the bed. He shoves Marcus down before ripping the I.V. from his arm. Paul takes one last look at the red-haired woman, before running out of his cell.

Marcus watches from the floor. He makes no move to stop him. Instead, he calmly presses a PANIC BUTTON on the wall.

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Paul runs down a sterile, brightly lit hall. He makes for a set of double doors at the end.

**INT. LAB - CONTINUOUS**

Paul bursts in to a hangar-sized LAB with various sorts of aeronautic equipment. The startled TECHNICIANS, all in white full-body suits. Paul exits back through the doors.

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Paul turns down another hall. A group of MEN in suits and lab coats spot him and begin pursuit. Paul backtracks.

He turns the corner, spotting a door to the STAIRWELL with a SIGN labeling the current floor as "B5," a basement level.

**INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS**

Paul runs up the stairs. His body can't handle the climb. He begins to feel faint, taking a moment to catch his breath. Finally, he pushes through a door labeled "GROUND LEVEL."

**INT. JOHNSON SPACE CENTER - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS**

Paul runs into the lobby. He freezes in the SEA OF PEOPLE:

All are wearing 21ST CENTURY clothing. A WOMAN (30s) walks by talking on her cellphone. A MAN (40s) passes with a computer underarm. To Paul, it looks like a futuristic spaceport.

The MEN pursuing Paul burst into the lobby.

Paul spots the main entrance on the other side of the security turnstiles. He makes a break for it. As he does, a pudgy SECURITY GUARD (50s) blocks him.

Paul is trapped and growing weaker. He begins to stagger.

The lobby SPINS around him. The same LIGHTS Paul saw around his finger tips seem to be popping in his peripheral. He strains to focus on the people surrounding him.

As Paul's vision begins to blur, we can make out Marcus emerging from his pursuers.

MARCUS

Easy, Hawkins...

Paul collapses to his knees. Through the haze, he sees a YOUNG RED-HAIRED WOMAN running towards him. It's Maggie, as she was in 1969. She crouches beside him; her voice echoes.

MAGGIE

Paul?

PAUL

(barely audible)  
Maggie.

Paul passes out.

FADE TO BLACK.

**INT. DINER - DAY (1969)**

Windswept soil hangs in the air of this desert dive, kicked up by lazy ceiling fans. A seasoned WAITRESS (50s), puffs on the cigarette, as she polishes a glass behind the bar.

Paul sits at the counter in his flight jacket, a cup of coffee in front of him. He turns a small JEWELRY BOX in his hands. Finally, he opens it: a DIAMOND RING shines inside.

Paul pockets the box. He takes one last sip of his coffee, tossing a dollar bill on the counter. He's about to turn when TWO MEN IN TRENCH COATS flank him.

MAN

Captain Hawkins?

Paul looks up.

**INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER**

Paul is shown in to the room by an aid, who closes the door behind him. He stands awkwardly by the door.

MEN seated at the table turn to look at Paul: RAMIREZ (29) a stocky Latino man, and GARNER (29), Black-Irish and stone-faced. Both are in Air Force Uniforms.



However, Paul's eyes are drawn to the man closest to him: WEST (31), short and cocky, sporting a weathered flight jacket. He chews a toothpick between his teeth.

At the head of the table, standing in front of an empty blackboard, is GENE KRANTZ (36), broad shouldered with a crew-cut. He wears a vest over a shirt and tie.

Next to him stands CHARLES "CHUCK" ROSEN (32), a baby-faced engineer with curly-hair and thick rimmed glasses.

KRANTZ  
(smiling)  
Take a seat, Captain.

Paul does so, warily. West winks at him, still chewing on his toothpick. Krantz puts his hands in his pockets.

KRANTZ (CONT'D)  
Well, now that we're all present and accounted for, let's begin. My name is Gene Krantz. I'm Director of Operations at NASA. This is Chuck Rosen, he's an engineer in our aeronautics lab.

Chuck nods, shyly.

KRANTZ (CONT'D)  
As you may have heard, we have a reputation for shooting men into space. You each come from different backgrounds, but you all have one thing in common... wings. You're pilots. More than that: you're test pilots. You boys shot through the sound barrier like it was tissue paper. Now we're aiming to break a few more laws of nature. And to do that, we need you.  
(beat)  
I'm only gonna say this once... this is a top secret operation with a time factor. You want answers, you say yes. You sign an official secrets act, pack a toothbrush, and come back with a set of astronaut's wings. You want out? There's the door.

Paul looks around. No one stirs. West grins.

WEST  
So, what laws are we talkin' here?

Krantz shoots West a look before stepping aside.

KRANTZ

Chuck?

Chuck steps forward. He clears his throat nervously.

CHUCK

186,000 miles.

RAMIREZ

Per hour?

CHUCK

Per second.

PAUL

The speed of light.

The other pilots eye at Paul. Chuck nods and proceeds to write " $E = mc^2$ " on the blackboard; he circles the "C".

CHUCK

Celeritas. The "C" in Einstein's Relativity Equation. If the universe had a speed limit, that would be it.

GARNER

We're going to break Light-Speed?

CHUCK

You can't break it. That's impossible. But you can come close.

RAMIREZ

This is a joke, right? We can't even break Mach 7, now you wanna break Light-Speed?

PAUL

They do it all the time on Star Trek?

West chuckles; he's the only one. Chuck ignores them and takes out a set of drawings, laying them on the table.

CHUCK

We've received word the Soviets are working on a ship that can travel at point 6 C. That's a little over half the Speed of Light.

(MORE)

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Our plan is to launch a prototype from orbit within the year.

GARNER

Sorry, Sir, did you say from orbit?

CHUCK

The technology only works in a vacuum. Air-resistance isn't a factor in space.

WEST

This "tin can" you want us to fly... What's it run on?

CHUCK

Sorry?

WEST

I mean, at that speed, anything we got in our tank's gonna boil, along with the blood in our veins. How do you plan on fueling this thing?

KRANTZ

Well, with the hot air you're packing, West, I figure that'll at least get us to Neptune.

Chuck draws a crude ROCKET on the blackboard behind him.

CHUCK

Traditional propulsion relies on hydrogen and oxygen: positive mass creating positive momentum. The fuel burns, propelling the ship forward.

Chuck draws an arrow going out from the nose of the ship.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

What we've developed uses negative mass. The drive displaces matter around the ship like a ballast.

Chuck draws a series of arrows radiating out from the back and the front of the craft.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

You only need a rocket to break orbit. Once in space, the ship polarizes: positive mass at the front, negative mass at the back.

(MORE)

CHUCK (CONT'D)  
 With gravity at the wheel, one  
 could accelerate indefinitely.  
 Theoretically.

GARNER  
Theoretically?

CHUCK  
 (meekly)  
 Well, we haven't tested it.

RAMIREZ  
 So it's some kind of "space slide?"

KRANTZ  
 It's a Diametric Drive. And it's  
 something the Russians don't have.  
 (beat)  
 Who wants to take her for a spin?

Paul raises his hand.

KRANTZ (CONT'D)  
 Captain Hawkins?

PAUL  
 You said this thing could fly  
 forever. Where are we flying to?

**EXT. SPACE**

*DARKNESS -- pops of LIGHT explode as they zoom past us --  
 PLANETS grow larger before swerving to avoid us -- the very  
 GASSES and PARTICLES of space whizzing by, like a cosmic  
 blizzard -- our vision blinded by LIGHT and ELECTRICITY.*

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY (PRESENT DAY)**

*Paul wakes in his hospital bed. He's heavily sedated.*

*The red-headed woman sits by his bedside. Paul stares at her.  
 Though the years have worn her, he recognizes her.*

PAUL  
 (groggily)  
 Hi.

**OLD MAGGIE** smiles with relief.

OLD MAGGIE  
 Hi.

PAUL  
So it is you.

OLD MAGGIE  
You haven't changed.

PAUL  
Neither have you.

MAGGIE  
Don't start.

PAUL  
It's true: you're still a red head.

Maggie chokes back tears.

MAGGIE  
We thought you were dead. When I  
got the call, I didn't believe-

Paul reaches out, taking Maggie's left hand. Then he notices the WEDDING BANG on her finger; he stares at it, heartbroken.

PAUL  
Where's my brother?

**INT. SIDE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

OLD NORMAN (70s) stands in a dark room. His face is wrinkled and his hair white. He looks through the mirrored glass at Paul; it's like staring at a reflection of his younger self.

Marcus steps up beside him.

MARCUS  
Norman Hawkins?

Old Norman doesn't respond at first.

OLD NORMAN  
Mm? Yes?

MARCUS  
(extending a hand)  
Agent Marcus. We spoke on the  
phone.

OLD NORMAN  
Oh. Right.

Old Norman shakes his hand warily. Marcus turns his attention to the Recovery Room behind the glass.

MARCUS

Strange, isn't it? Like looking back in time. I understand it's difficult seeing your brother after all these years, and in this... "condition."

OLD NORMAN

So what happens now?

MARCUS

That's up to him. Paul's been reluctant to talk to us.

OLD NORMAN

Guess you'll have to postpone the press conference.

MARCUS

Mr. Hawkins, this can never get out to the press.

OLD NORMAN

My brother's a hero. He broke light-speed-

MARCUS

-Using top secret technology from a project that has been collecting dust for decades. A project with an equally mysterious Soviet counterpart. We need to know what we're dealing with.

OLD NORMAN

You can't keep him here forever. People are going to notice.

MARCUS

Mr. Hawkins... your brother was declared dead 50 years ago. Who's going to notice?

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY (PRESENT DAY)**

The door opens; Paul and Old Maggie look up.

Old Norman lingers by the door. He carries a LEATHER ALBUM under his arm and a flat VELVET BOX.

Paul stares at him, as if he himself has seen a ghost. Old Maggie looks back and forth between them.

OLD MAGGIE  
I'll leave you two.

*She shoots Paul a reassuring gaze before exiting.*

*Silence. Neither speaks. Neither can find the words. Old Norman clears his throat nervously.*

OLD NORMAN  
You look good.

PAUL  
You too.

OLD NORMAN  
I got old.

PAUL  
That was the plan.  
(beat)  
You had me declared dead?

OLD NORMAN  
It was out of our hands. They lost  
contact after you broke orbit.  
Still, it was for the best.

PAUL  
(snickers)  
For you?

OLD NORMAN  
(beat)  
For Mom.

*Paul looks ashamed.*

PAUL  
What did you tell her?

OLD NORMAN  
The truth. What she could  
understand anyway. Mom was fading  
even before you left.

PAUL  
(tearing up)  
How long after did she...?

OLD NORMAN  
2 years. She was stubborn till the  
end; 'still believed you might come  
back. Guess she was right.

*Beat. Old Norman starts to fumble in his pockets.*

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
I brought you something.

*He takes out the VELVET BOX and hands it to Paul. He opens it: inside is a set of SILVER ASTRONAUT WINGS.*

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
They're yours.

PAUL  
Thank you.

OLD NORMAN  
You earned 'em.

*Old Norman remembers he's holding the ALBUM.*

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
I, uh, brought this too. Thought you might want to catch up.

*Paul takes it: it's the same ALBUM his mother cherished.*

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
Well then.  
(he extends his hand)  
Welcome home.

*Paul takes his brothers hand, gripping it tight. Suddenly, Old Norman pulls him in close. They EMBRACE tightly.*

**INT. SIDE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

*Old Maggie watches from behind the mirror. She looks down at the wedding band on her finger, paired with a DIAMOND RING.*

**INT. DINER - DAY (1969)**

*MUSIC plays on a nearby Jukebox. Maggie sits across from Paul in a booth. Paul stares vacantly into his coke.*

MAGGIE  
Hey. Earth to Hawkins?

PAUL  
Hm?

MAGGIE  
Lost you for a sec there.



PAUL  
Sorry... Busy day.

MAGGIE  
Want me to get behind the bar so  
you can spill all your secrets?

Paul laughs. Under the table: he turns the RING BOX in his hands. Paul thinks hard for a moment, taking deep breaths.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
Paul, what's wrong?

Paul looks into Maggie's eyes: it's not fair for her. He shoves the box deep into his pocket.

PAUL  
NASA accepted my application.

MAGGIE  
Oh my God. Paul! That's amazing!  
When do you start?

PAUL  
I report to training next week.

MAGGIE  
Next week? But that means... are  
you leaving for Houston?

Paul stares into his coke. Maggie has her answer.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
I see. Well... Congratulations.

PAUL  
Thanks.

Silence.

MAGGIE  
Your mother will be so proud.

Maggie hides her pain with a smile; it breaks Paul's heart.

PAUL  
I thought you could come with me.

MAGGIE  
To Houston?

PAUL  
Well, I'd take you to Mars, but I  
think they'd object.

MAGGIE

I can't move to Texas. I've got classes in the fall.

PAUL

So drop out.

MAGGIE

You want me to give up. Now.

PAUL

I'm not asking you to give up, just... put it on hold for a little. Just until I come back.

MAGGIE

(laughs)

"Come back?" Jesus, Paul, you're acting like they're gonna send you up in the next shuttle-

(Off Paul's look)

They're not sending you up in the next shuttle... Are they? Paul?

PAUL

Maggie, this program... it's my dream. But it won't wait for me. I don't want to do this without you-

MAGGIE

What are you asking me?

PAUL

Do you love me?

MAGGIE

Yes.

PAUL

Then come with me.

Paul reaches back into his pocket. He pulls out the box, revealing the DIAMOND RING inside. Maggie is shocked.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Marry me, Maggie.

Maggie stares at the ring, excitement mingling with doubt.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)**

*A gaudy Houston motel room. Old Maggie and Old Norman sit in silence on a flowery bedspread, a gap between them.*

OLD MAGGIE  
They're bluffing.

OLD NORMAN  
I don't think they are.

OLD MAGGIE  
He's your brother. You owe him everything-

OLD NORMAN  
What would you have me do! Dig a tunnel to his cell, break him out!

*Old Maggie rises in a huff; she paces as she thinks.*

OLD MAGGIE  
What did they say? What exactly did they say?

OLD NORMAN  
They said, "he's sick, he needs care"-

OLD MAGGIE  
Then why isn't he in a hospital? What are they planning to do, cart him off to- to... Area 51? What?

OLD NORMAN  
You're overreacting.

OLD MAGGIE  
I don't trust them. He didn't, and neither should you.

*Old Maggie leans on the DESK behind her; trying to calm herself. Old Norman plays the reunion back in his mind.*

OLD NORMAN  
He looked different. His face... I looked at him and, at first, it was as if no time had passed. But when I looked in his eyes... It's like his soul aged 50 years without him.

OLD MAGGIE  
We've all grown old. Some of us do a better job hiding it.

OLD NORMAN  
I don't want to hide anymore. I don't want to lie.

*OLD MAGGIE*  
*It's too late for that.*

*Old Maggie goes into the BATHROOM. We hear her SLAM the door as we remain on Old Norman, contemplating her words.*

**INT. HAWKIN'S FARMHOUSE - ENTRYWAY - DAY (1969)**

Norman enters, sweaty and exhausted. He hears his mother talking excitedly in the parlor.

EVELYN (O.C.)  
You'll be sure to write. And  
reverse the charges when you call.

PAUL (O.C.)  
Ma, I can pay for long distance...

**FRONT PARLOR - CONTINUOUS**

Norman turns the corner. He sees Paul, looking oddly chipper, sitting beside his mother.

EVELYN  
(happily)  
Norman!

Though confused, he welcomes his mother's embrace.

EVELYN (CONT'D)  
Paul just came to tell us the news!

Norman eyes his brother suspiciously.

NORMAN  
Which part?

EVELYN  
Your brother's going to be an  
astronaut! Oh goodness, did I  
spoil it? He said he told you.

Norman shoots Paul a look. Paul glares back: "Play along."

NORMAN  
Yeah. Yeah, he did.

EVELYN  
(to Paul)  
If only your father could have held  
on just a few more years.

Evelyn holds Paul's face in her hands, beaming ear-to-ear.

EVELYN (CONT'D)

I am so proud of you.

Paul embraces his mother, but throws an apprehensive glance in Norman's directing. Norman stares back coldly.

**INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER**

Paul walks into the barn. He frowns at his father's old Tiger Moth: it's more pathetic than he remembers.

Norman SLAMS the door of the Barn and corners Paul.

NORMAN

What did you do?

PAUL

Now just, hold on a second-

NORMAN

You told me you didn't get into the Space Program.

PAUL

I didn't.

NORMAN

Then what?

PAUL

(hesitates)

I can't talk about.

NORMAN

You "can't talk about it?"

Paul stands firm.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

So you're involved in some "secret project," is that it?

PAUL

I'm not saying anything.

NORMAN

Well, you better start saying something-

PAUL

Look, what do you want from me!  
Jesus, Norman, you're acting like  
some shit-for-brains-civilian! You  
know what we do! We couldn't tell  
Dad you broke Mach 6 for months in  
case the Ruskies tapped the phones!

NORMAN

So you're a spy now! What!?

Paul remains silent. Norman is exasperated.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

Does Maggie know?

PAUL

She's knows I'm going to Houston.

NORMAN

And you're gonna, what? Just leave  
her? After all that poetry you  
spouted about love-

PAUL

She's coming with me. We're  
engaged.

The dagger already sinking into Norman's gut is twisted.

NORMAN

Engaged. Wow. Congrats.

PAUL

Thanks... Don't say anything to Ma.  
We wanted to tell her together.

NORMAN

Course. So when do you, you know...

PAUL

Launch?

NORMAN

Get married.

PAUL

We haven't set a date. Not like  
they don't got churches in Texas.

NORMAN

You're sure you know what you're  
doing?

PAUL

Do we ever? Either of us? We've been leaping without a net since we were kids. I'm not gonna stop now.

NORMAN

'Cept now you have Maggie to think of.

PAUL

I am thinking of her. I'm thinking about you too. I know why you quit the airforce, Norman, and it wasn't cowardice. You've flown to hell and back, seen things I can't even imagine. Thing is, you keep seein' them. Every time you get in that cockpit. No matter what's on the horizon, that burning jungle pops right back in. But we've seen beauty too! Now I have a chance to see the universe! To remember that beauty for the rest of my life. Isn't that worth dying for?

Silence. Norman's expression has softened.

NORMAN

Just promise me one thing. Promise me you'll live to remember it.

PAUL

I promise.

Norman takes in the image of his brother, looking more a man than his own reflection ever gave him credit for.

NORMAN

Well then. "One small step for man..."

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT)**

*Paul lays in bed, flipping through the yellowed pages of the FAMILY ALBUM. At first, he recognizes them...*

**INSERT:**

1. *Their father, MITCH (30s) in WWII Airforce attire, smiling in the cockpit of a fighter, 1944.*

2. *Two twins, perfect Paul and shaggy-haired Norman, playing with a Lionel Train wrapped around a Christmas tree, 1947.*

3. MITCH (40s) washing his brand new Chevy Pickup, the twin boys covered in mud from the hose.

4. Brash Paul and shy Norman, both looking clean-cut in their AIR FORCE UNIFORMS, posing in front of the field, 1963.

Paul TURNS THE PAGES. The pages shift to COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS as the years roll on, past his memory...

**INSERT:**

5. Norman and Maggie on their wedding day, 1971.

6. Maggie in a hospital gown holds a newborn bundled in a white blanket; Norman holds his child's tiny hand, 1973.

7. Maggie, in a skirt-suit and a hard hat, standing in front of the frame of a house, blue prints in hand, 1975.

8. A summer picnic: Norman, with sideburns and a beer gut, and Maggie with feathered long hair and bell-bottoms. They pose arms wrapped around each other, 1977.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT)**

Old Norman sits at the desk, the lamp light shadowing every wrinkle. In the background, we see the sleeping Old Maggie.

On the desk is a discarded WALLET SIZED PHOTO of Old Maggie and Old Norman. A square has been cut out around his face; the RAZOR BLADE responsible rests beside it.

Old Norman's BIFOCALS slip down his nose as he carefully glues his CUT-OUT HEAD onto a NASA ID BADGE.

**INT. JOHNSON SPACE CENTER - LOBBY - DAY (PRESENT)**

Old Norman enters the lobby with a TOUR GROUP carrying a DUFFLE BAG. The duffle goes through the X-Ray scanner without a hitch. Old Norman thanks the guard as he takes it.

Old Norman wanders around the lobby, trying his best to look casual. Soon, he sneaks away down a hallway. We see a sign for the RESTROOM with an arrow pointing down the hall.

**INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Old Norman is now dressed in a LAB COAT. He has traded the duffle for a CLIPBOARD as he walks around the Lower Level. He turns his face from TWO TECHNICIANS as they pass him.



Old Norman turns the corner. He approaches Paul's room, which has a GUARD (30s). He smiles and flashes his FAKE ID.

OLD NORMAN  
Checking his vitals.

The guard nods. He unlocks the door with a set of keys on a chain. Old Norman nods "thanks" and enters. The guard closes the door and LOCKS IT.

**INT. RECOVERY ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Paul sits up in his bed, flipping through MAGAZINES. He hears the handle being jiggled. He grabs a nearby BEDPAN.

Old Norman enters, quickly shutting the door behind him. Paul brandishes his bedpan like a weapon. Old Norman turns and is startled; he throws his hands up in surrender.

OLD NORMAN  
Whoa whoa! It's me!

PAUL  
Sorry. Still getting used to, you know... the wrinkles.

OLD NORMAN  
Yeah. Me too.

Paul throws the bedpan aside. Old Norman reaches under his shirt and pulls out SPARE CLOTHING he stuffed there.

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
We don't have much time.

PAUL  
What are you doing?

OLD NORMAN  
Jailbreak. What does it look like?  
Put these on.

Paul catches the T-SHIRT and JEANS tossed to him. He unfolds the T-shirt: it's got "NASA" slapped across the front.

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
(off Paul's look)  
I had to improvise.

**INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

The guard continues to stand beside the door. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. The guard unlocks the door. Old Norman peeks out.

OLD NORMAN

Oh good, you're still here! Uh...  
he seems to have collapsed onto the  
floor. Blood sugar thing. Can you  
help me get him back into bed?

The guard nods. Old Norman holds the door for him.

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)

Thanks you so much. Just there...

As the guard enters, Old Norman raises the BEDPAN high.  
CLANG! THUD. He knocks the guard unconscious.

**INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Both brothers exit the Recovery Room: Old Norman, in his lab coat, followed by Paul, dressed in the T-shirt and jeans. Paul checks behind him to see they aren't being followed.

PAUL

So what's the plan now?

OLD NORMAN

Walk out the front door.

PAUL

How are we supposed to get past  
security?

OLD NORMAN

It's NASA, not the Death Star!

Old Norman keeps walking. Paul is even more confused.

PAUL

The what?!

**INT. JOHNSON SPACE CENTER - LOBBY**

Old Norman and Paul enter the lobby. Old Norman takes off his lab coat and throws it in a waste bin. He notes the cameras that surround the lobby. He takes out 2 BASEBALL CAPS from his back pockets.

OLD NORMAN

Cover your face.

Both put on the hats, also courtesy of the NASA Gift Shop. For a moment, we catch a glimpse of the black and white SECURITY FOOTAGE: their faces are obscured by the caps.

The two brothers blend in with the crowd. Paul glances behind him. His eyes widen.

PAUL

Shit.

He taps his brother on the shoulder: Old Norman turns: Shit!

Behind them is Marcus and THREE AGENTS, scanning the crowd. Old Norman looks towards the door. GUARDS stand at the entrance: all talking on radios, scanning the crowd.

Old Norman sees their salvation on the wall.

OLD NORMAN

Remember how I got us out of detention?

PAUL

Which time?

OLD NORMAN

Just plug your ears.

Old Norman goes to a FIRE ALARM. He looks harmlessly around the lobby as his hand finds the lever; he pulls down...

REEEE! REEEE! REEEE!

The FIRE ALARM SOUNDS. Clueless tourists and school children are herded towards the exits. Among them, Old Norman and Paul. They are joined by workers from the building.

Marcus tries to search over the heads of the mob, but it's useless. We see him shout curses from a distance.

**EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER**

Old Norman and Paul hurry across the lot, away from the crowds. They look back: no one's chasing them... yet.

Suddenly, a SEDAN cuts them off. Old Maggie rolls down the driver-side window sporting a smug smile.

OLD MAGGIE

Need a lift?

Paul glares at his brother.

PAUL  
You got Maggie involved?

OLD NORMAN  
It's her car.

PAUL  
She could go to prison!

OLD MAGGIE  
Come on, flyboys! I'm not getting  
any younger!

Old Norman gives Paul a shrug. Paul gives in, climbing into the backseat; Old Norman takes shotgun. Old Maggie FLOORS IT.

**INT. SEDAN - LATER THAT DAY**

We are on INTERSTATE 10, moving west through Texas. Old Maggie drives the first leg. Paul looks out the window of the backseat, gazing at the "alien world" around him...

Dealerships packed with "futuristic" looking cars-- Giant Shopping Centers lit like the Vegas Strip -- Gas Stations with "\$4 a Gallon" posted on their marque.

**INT. SEDAN - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Old Norman drives. Paul stares out the front-passenger window. He then glances at the REARVIEW MIRROR. Old Maggie is sleeping serenely in the backseat. She is beautiful.

Old Norman notices Paul staring at his wife in the mirror. He decides not to say anything, but innocently CLEARS HIS THROAT. Paul quickly turns his gaze to the road.

PAUL  
So where are we headed?

OLD NORMAN  
Somewhere safe. My daughter has a cottage on Manchester Beach. 'Should be empty this time of year.

PAUL  
You have a daughter?

OLD NORMAN  
Yeah.

Silence. Old Norman continues to glance over.

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
How long was it for you?

PAUL  
I don't know how long they kept me-

OLD NORMAN  
I meant the flight. How long?

Paul hesitates. Then, as matter-of-factly as possible...

PAUL  
3 hours-

OLD NORMAN  
3 hours!

Paul glares at his brother: it's a sore subject.

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
Jesus... So what now?

PAUL  
I thought you had a plan.

OLD NORMAN  
Yeah, but after that. You got the rest of your life ahead of ya.

PAUL  
Don't know. I mean, do you even need pilots anymore, or do robots do everything for you.

OLD NORMAN  
World hasn't changed as much as you think.

PAUL  
Speak for yourself.  
(beat)  
Thanks. For busting me out.

OLD NORMAN  
Still not even, though, are we.

Silence. After a moment, Paul starts to laugh.

OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)  
What? What is it?

PAUL  
The first time I saw you: I thought you were Dad's ghost.

*Old Norman joins Paul in laughter.*

*PAUL (CONT'D)*  
*'Figured I'd finally cracked. I never realized how much we looked like him until now. 'Guess I have that to look forward to.*

*OLD NORMAN*  
*That and high blood pressure.*

*PAUL*  
*You really did get old, didn't you?*

*Old Norman shrugs: "Whatcha gonna do?"*

*PAUL (CONT'D)*  
*Guess they can tell us apart now.*

*OLD NORMAN*  
*That's an understatement.*

*PAUL*  
 (beat)  
*Can I ask you question?*

*OLD NORMAN*  
*Shoot.*

*PAUL*  
*Are The Beatles still together?*

**INT. G-FORCE SIMULATOR - DAY (1969)**

**MONTAGE:**

1. RAMIREZ screams, eyes shut tight, as he's whipped around the centrifuge in a small pod. 10-Gs press against him.
2. The simulator shakes violently as GARNER turns green.
3. WEST's turn; his cheeks jiggle back. He howls excitedly.
4. PAUL's skull feels cemented against the headrest. He grits his teeth against the pressure.

**END OF MONTAGE.**

**INT. OUTSIDE JANUS SIMULATOR - DAY (1969)**

NASA MANNED SPACECRAFT CENTER in Houston, Texas. A hanger-like room inside the main complex. In the center of the room is a metal cylinder: the JANUS SIMULATOR.

**INT. JANUS SIMULATOR - CONTINUOUS**

Paul, in a flight suit and helmet, sits in a fake JANUS COCKPIT. He casually flips three switches at eye level.

PAUL  
(into headset)  
Houston, this is Janus 2.  
Preparing for separation.

**INT. CONTROL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS**

Chuck sits at a console, wearing a headset. Gene Krantz looks over his shoulder, holding half-a-headset to his ear. They are joined by two plain-clothes TECHNICIANS (30s), each controlling the simulation on their computers.

CHUCK  
(into microphone)  
Roger, Janus 2. You are a go.

**INTERCUT: INT. JANUS SIMULATOR / CONTROL BOOTH - CONTINUOUS**

Paul dresses a button on the dash. An INDICATOR LIGHT flashes and turns off.

PAUL  
Boosters offline and ejected.  
Prepping the Diametric Drive.

Gene gives Chuck a significant glance. Chuck nods; he points to one of the technicians who types into his computer.

CHUCK  
Uh... Roger that, Janus. Be sure  
to check your course heading before  
initiating. Over?

PAUL  
Roger that.  
(mumbling)  
'Ain't my first rodeo.

Paul presses a BUTTON marked with a PLUS SIGN.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Positive Field generating.

A LIGHT above the negative button BEEPS and FLASHES RED.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
I've got a warning light on the  
Negative Drive.

CHUCK  
Roger, Janus 1. Check your AFD,  
for me, will you?

Paul scowls: "What the hell?"

PAUL  
You wanna elaborate on that?

CHUCK  
Your Asymmetric Field. Can you  
give me a differential?

Paul searches the panel.

PAUL  
(mumbling)  
Dummy-dashboard doesn't make a lick  
of sense...

He finds a DIAL labeled AFD. He squints to read it.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
'K, I got "point 4" and holding.

CHUCK  
You need a factor of 1 before  
punching it. Recommend abort,  
Janus. Over?

Suddenly, the warning light on the Negative Drive SHORTS OUT.

PAUL  
Hold it, Houston, I got an all  
clear on the drive. I'm gonna  
attempt to compensate.

CHUCK  
Uh, negative, Janus. Suggest  
initiating re-entry sequence.

Paul flips the NEGATIVE DRIVE switch.

PAUL  
Negative Drive up and running.



Chuck rubs his temple: this isn't a good start.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
AFD now up to point 7... point  
8... Approaching full Factor 1.

CHUCK  
Janus, you are not clear, repeat  
not clear for D-Drive! Over?

Chuck looks up at Gene: "Seriously?" The Flight Director just shrugs. Paul looks at the AFD DIAL. It passes FACTOR 1.

PAUL  
Factor 1 point 1. 1 point 2.  
Punching it.

Paul pushes the IGNITION BUTTON on the console. ALARMS sound around him; the cockpit FLASHES RED. The simulation is over. We hear the controls powering down. Paul leans back.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Shit.

**INT. CONTROL BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER**

Chuck removes his headset. He glares at Gene.

CHUCK  
Well, you wanted test pilots.

GENE  
He's just getting a feel for her.

CHUCK  
They teach them to follow orders at  
Edwards?

GENE  
You're asking them to shoot into  
space with nothing but your  
bullshit and their balls to back  
'em. You don't need "yes men,"  
Chuck. You need heroes.

Gene exits; Chuck looks out towards the simulator and Paul.

**INT. OUTSIDE JANUS SIMULATOR - MOMENTS LATER**

Paul exits the simulator, carrying his helmet. He passes Garner on the way for his session.

GARNER

Smooth steerin', Hawkins. 'Dented her straight out of the lot.

PAUL

Hilarious, Garner.

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - DAY (1969)**

Norman flies the TIGER MOTH over a field, DUSTING CROPS, but he seems distracted from his task.

Norman grips the steering and PUSHES DOWN. The plane goes into a dive. The pitch of the engine gets higher and higher. He PULLS UP: The plane swoops up easily.

He isn't content. He climbs higher and higher, glancing at the field below. He DIVES AGAIN, this time it's sharper. The engine whines on the descent -- faster and faster --

REEEUUUUUUR! The plane PULLS UP once more, this time with more difficulty. Norman smiles: It's just like old times.

Norman DIVES a third time. The sight of the ground zooming closer and closer seems to hypnotize Norman. Suddenly, he realizes he's gone too far. He wrenches the steering back.

The plane PULLS UP, just in time, but not without straining the engine. It begins to SPUTTER.

Norman quickly brings her down. It's a rough landing, the vibrations rattling every bolt of the rusted craft.

Norman breathes heavily, the adrenaline still pumping through his veins. He looks to heaven: "What am I doing?"

**EXT. GAS STATION - INTERSTATE 10 - DAY (PRESENT)**

*We hear a car door SLAM. Paul, asleep in the back seat of the sedan, his forehead against the window, wakes with a start. He looks up. Old Norman's looking down from outside.*

OLD NORMAN

*Pit stop.*

**INT. GAS STATION MINI MART - DAY**

*The bell above the door CHIMES as Paul enters. He looks around at the shelves of junk food and magazines. He picks up the cover of a modern SPORTS ILLUSTRATED. The bathing beauty on the cover stares lustfully back.*

Old Maggie peeks around the aisle. Paul catches her looking and quickly puts the magazine back on the rack.

OLD MAGGIE  
You'll be glad to know women  
haven't changed in 50 years.

She continues on; Paul looks back at the magazine.

PAUL  
(mumbles)  
Not sure about that.

Meanwhile, Old Norman heads towards the back. He peruses the Snack Food and selects a few BAGS OF CHIPS.

Old Norman turns to look at the FRIDGE. He pulls out a liter of COLA. He's about to shut the door when he spots something better. He trades the soda for a SIX-PACK OF BEER.

**EXT. GAS STATION - LATER**

Paul walks across the pavement, looking up at the clouds. He shuts his eyes, relishes the sunshine and wind on his face. He sways, and his eyes shoot open: he's dizzy.

Paul's vision doubles as he staggers towards the car. LIGHTS floats around him, bouncing off each surface only to collect on others. The particles GLOW. There's a BLINDING FLASH-

**EXT. GAS STATION - (PRESENT)**

Old Maggie exits the store with a PLASTIC BAG of supplies. She fishes for her keys in her purse. She looks up.

OLD MAGGIE  
Oh my God...

Old Maggie starts running. We see her bend down before a collapsed Paul. Old Norman exits the Mini Mart, carrying a BAG. He runs over; Old Maggie cradles Paul's head.

OLD MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
He's not breathing!

Old Norman kneels; he checks Paul's pulse.

OLD NORMAN  
Lay him flat... Now, Maggie!

Old Maggie lays Paul's head gently on the pavement. Old Norman performs CPR on his brother.

*OLD NORMAN (CONT'D)*  
*Don't do this. Not again. Wake*  
*up... Wake up!*

**INT. FARMHOUSE - NORMAN'S BEDROOM - DAY (1969)**

Norman's eyes open. He's in the same TWIN BED he slept in growing up, bundled under the same spaceman comforter. Norman turns to his brother's twin bed: vacant, its comforter perfectly tucked in. It hasn't been slept-in in years.

**INT. FARMHOUSE - BATHROOM - LATER**

Norman brushes his teeth. He then runs the water, splashing it on his face. Norman looks in the MIRROR: his hair has grown more unruly. His stubble is now a beard.

**INT. FARMHOUSE - ENTRYWAY - LATER**

Norman lazily walks down the stairs. He freezes when he hears the sound of WOMEN LAUGHING. He continues into...

**THE KITCHEN**

Maggie and Evelyn are seated at kitchen table sharing a POT OF COFFEE. TWO PLATES filled with crumbs are all that's left of their slices of pie. Maggie sees Norman and smiles.

MAGGIE  
 Mornin, Ace.

EVELYN  
 If it is still mornin. This boy  
 could sleep till sundown. There's  
 still coffee if you're interested.  
 Maggie made the pot herself.

NORMAN  
 (suddenly)  
 I thought you were in Houston.

MAGGIE  
 (self-conscious)  
 Not yet. Still a few things left  
 to settle.

EVELYN  
 Not to mention a wedding to plan.  
 Have you and Paul set a date?

MAGGIE

Uh, no. No, we haven't.

EVELYN

I always liked the spring: warms the heart after a long winter.

MAGGIE

I'm sure that'd be lovely, but Paul hasn't mentioned the wedding.

Beat.

NORMAN

I'm sure he's just busy.

MAGGIE

Right.

EVELYN

Paul always was absent minded. Head in the clouds, even as a boy. Norman was the sharp one, and the most romantic.

NORMAN

Ma...

EVELYN

Course knownin' him now, you wouldn't believe it. Who was that girl you were sweet on, back in grammar school?

NORMAN

I don't remember-

EVELYN

The one with the pigtails, used to live by the scrap yard. See, there was this noisy ole bulldog chained up by the fence. Poor child was so afraid of that mut, she'd walk the long way round just to avoid him. That is till Norman started walkin' with her.

NORMAN

It wasn't that out of the way.

EVELYN

Made you late for supper more 'n once. Still, he walked her home everyday. My little gentleman.

Norman glances at Maggie, obviously embarrassed. Maggie has a knowing smile on her face.

**INT. HAWKIN'S FARM - BARN - LATER THAT DAY**

Norman opens the barn door, the dust lifting into the newfound sunlight. Maggie waves it away as she enters.

MAGGIE

Well you were right about one thing: it does lean a little.

NORMAN

'Waiting for it to come crashing down. Posts must be rotten.

MAGGIE

They look solid enough. It's the foundation. It's slipping out from under the sills. You should brace the frame; buy it some time.

NORMAN

You talk like it's living?

MAGGIE

Buildings aren't just piles of wood. They breathe. Barns like this have memories. When they are loved, they stand. When they're neglected, they die. Till all that's left is the bones.

Maggie takes in the barn, imagining it's lonely skeleton. Her sadness touches Norman.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

So, don't give up on her yet.

NORMAN

I won't.

Maggie and Norman gaze at each other. Maggie lifts the tarp covering the TIGER MOTH BI-PLANE.

MAGGIE

She's beautiful.

NORMAN

It's a Tiger Moth. My Dad bought it after the war. He taught me how to fly in this plane; Paul too.

MAGGIE

I'm surprised Paul didn't strap a rocket to it's hull.

NORMAN

Trust me, he tried.

MAGGIE

Did you always want to fly planes?

NORMAN

Geese actually. Canadian Geese.  
Had a saddle all picked out-

MAGGIE

You know what I mean.

NORMAN

Guess it's in our blood.

MAGGIE

(beat)  
So.

NORMAN

So?

MAGGIE

You still got it?

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - LATER THAT DAY**

Maggie sits in the FRONT SEAT of Norman's TIGER MOTH BI-PLANE as Norman flies. Her red hair whips furiously behind her.

The PLANE swoops low, over WHEAT FIELDS and ORANGE GROVES and DESERTS. Maggie closes her eyes, letting the wind whip through her hair, her cheeks feeling the warmth of the sun

Norman watches Maggie from the cockpit behind her. She's beaming. For a moment, they share the same freedom.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

(to Norman)  
Paul told me about Vietnam.

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - YARD - LATER THAT DAY**

Parked in front of the barn, both Maggie and Norman sit on the tail-end of the plane.

MAGGIE

He said they split you up.

NORMAN

Didn't want the bad eggs in one basket.

MAGGIE

Paul admires you. He says you were a great pilot. Better than him.

NORMAN

Wasn't setting the bar very high.

MAGGIE

(laughing)

I'll tell him you said that!

NORMAN

Be my guest.

MAGGIE

So why did you quit?

NORMAN

(beat)

Remember Mike Adams?

MAGGIE

Your pilot friend?

NORMAN

'67: Adams was tryin' to break sub-orbit, get his astronaut wings. Son-of-a-bitch made it too. Thing is, he lost control on re-entry. Started spinning... They found his wreck in the Mojave.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry.

NORMAN

Back in Vietnam, I saw men tailspin into the jungle. Saw them liberated after months in bamboo cages. But it was our duty to keep flying. To protect the troops on the ground. But when we lost Adams, when I saw his wife and kids at the funeral- What did he die for? I couldn't understand it. In war, we knew what we were fighting for. But out in the desert...

(MORE)



NORMAN (CONT'D)

What's the point of flying into the sun if you're gonna come crashing down?

MAGGIE

Because someday we won't fall. Someday we'll reach it. Look at all that you've done, that Paul will do! We don't all have wings of wax.

Norman turns. His eyes search her face for judgment; there is none. He leans in. At first Maggie, doesn't pull back. Their lips are almost touching when Maggie recoils.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Don't.

Norman pulls back quickly.

NORMAN

I'm sorry, I shouldn't have-

MAGGIE

It's alright.

Norman retreats towards the barn.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Norman, wait!

He turns.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

It's not that I don't care. I'm getting married.

NORMAN

I truly hope so.

MAGGIE

What do you mean?

NORMAN

Look, I love my brother. I do. But he has one passion. One thing that matters most, and it's up there. Think you can compete with that?

MAGGIE

You think I can't? Paul: he has dreams. They might not mean anything to you, but they mean everything to him.

(MORE)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

And I love him for that, not in spite of it. Maybe that's what you can't understand.

Maggie starts to walk away.

NORMAN

(calling after)

I'm trying to protect you.

MAGGIE

I'm not that little girl anymore, Norman. I don't need you to walk me home.

Maggie exits into the farmhouse. Norman remains.

**INT. BAR - NIGHT (1969)**

Paul and West sit at the counter, nursing beers. They are surrounded by PATRONS in cowboy hats. COUNTRY MUSIC plays on the jukebox. Paul's mood hasn't improved.

WEST

Ever been to Bien Hao?

PAUL

I was stationed further south. My brother flew reconnaissance there.

WEST

Brass had me flying Douglas A-1s. Two weeks in: got shredded by anti-aircraft. Bastards put at least a dozen holes in my hull. One musta clipped the fuel line, cause I was raining gasoline all over Vietnam. Thought for sure I was gonna have to ditch 'fore I reached base. Said my prayers and everything. Turns out I had enough.

(cheers his beer and sips)

What about you? You ever thought you weren't gonna make it?

PAUL

When I was 8 I had this pain in my gut. Turns out my appendix was ready to pop. Just before they rolled me into surgery, I told my brother he could have my comic books. I figured, "What the hell. Might as well be put to good use."

WEST

You mean to say 2 tours and 5 years at Edwards and you never thought you were a goner?

PAUL

Guess I got it out of my system. Something in me told me I'd come back. Maybe not in one piece.

WEST

Yeah, well: something goes screwy at light speed, 'won't be much left to bury, never mind walk away with.

PAUL

Thought's crossed my mind.

WEST

I guess danger's relative.

This stirs something in Paul's memory.

PAUL

What did you say?

WEST

Danger. It's relative. Why, what'd you think I said?

Paul's eyes widen in realization.

**EXT. NASA PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

Chuck walks to his car, fishing the keys out of his briefcase. He looks up and sees Paul, leaning on his convertible, hands in his pockets. He's been waiting.

PAUL

Einstein's Theory of Relativity.

Chuck stands his ground as Paul walks over.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Read it back when I was fixin' to be a Spaceman. Surprised it didn't occur to me before. There was this thing called "Time Dilation." A man travels at the speed of light. Time stops. But not on Earth. On earth, the clock's still ticking. Sound about right?

CHUCK  
That's the theory.

PAUL  
And just exactly how long will  
Janus' maiden voyage be? Earth  
Standard Time.

CHUCK  
If Einstein's correct: 4 years.

PAUL  
4 years.

Chuck nods. Paul controls his anger with a smirk.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Were you planning on telling us  
this little fact?

CHUCK  
The particular risks would have  
been explained eventually.

PAUL  
Eventually!

CHUCK  
Come on, Hawkins. You've given  
your whole life to your country.  
You're saying 4 years isn't worth  
seeing the universe?

PAUL  
I'm saying it would have been nice  
to read the fine print, 'stead of  
selling my soul to some four-eyed  
pencil-pusher! What exactly is  
your endgame? You wanna be able to  
launch nukes at light speed? What?

CHUCK  
How long do you think it takes to  
get to Jupiter's moons?

PAUL  
Never really thought about it.

CHUCK  
6 years, as Apollo flies. Janus? 6  
hours at a fraction of the power.

PAUL  
So that's what this is about:  
colonization?

CHUCK  
Why else would Neil Armstrong bring  
a flag to the moon? Space is the  
new frontier, Commander. You  
really want to sit this one out?

Chuck exits.

**INT. NASA LOCKER ROOMS - NIGHT**

A solitary bulb illuminates the locker room after-hours. West sits silently on the bench, wringing his hands, his head bowed in thought. It's the most serious we've ever seen him.

Paul stands over him, leaning against the lockers.

WEST  
4 years?

Paul nods.

WEST (CONT'D)  
Jesus...  
(chuckles)  
Here I was thinking it'd be a milk  
run. Guess I'm more like my old  
man than I thought.

PAUL  
It won't feel the same, for you.

WEST  
That's what I'm afraid of.

PAUL  
I'm sorry, West.

WEST  
(shrugs)  
Don't got any family. Not livin'  
anyway. Someone's gonna be "Lost  
in Space," might as well be me.  
Maybe I'll meet a nice Martian  
girl, settle down.

Paul chuckles.

WEST (CONT'D)  
What about you? You staying?

PAUL  
 (beat)  
 I don't know.

WEST  
 Guess we don't have much of a  
 choice anyway.

PAUL  
 There's always a choice.

**INT. CAR - NIGHT (PRESENT)**

*The orange glow of highway lamps travel in lines over Paul's face. He awakens in the backseat of Old Maggie's Sedan.*

*Old Maggie rides shotgun as Old Norman drives.*

OLD MAGGIE  
 (hushed)  
 He's worse! He needs a hospital!

OLD NORMAN  
 We can't take him to the E.R.!  
 They'll find him in two seconds.

OLD MAGGIE  
 Then where are we going?

OLD NORMAN  
 (beat)  
 To an old friend.

**EXT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - FRONT STOOP - DAY (PRESENT DAY)**

*Old Chuck (70s) opens his front door. He peers through his signature thick-framed glasses at Old Norman.*

OLD NORMAN  
 Chuck Rosen?

OLD CHUCK  
 (sighs)  
 Look, I'm Jewish and diabetic. Take  
 your Jesus and your Thin Mints next  
 door.

*Old Chuck starts to close the door; Old Norman stops him.*

OLD NORMAN  
 Why did Armstrong bring a flag to  
 the moon?

OLD CHUCK  
What did you say?

OLD NORMAN  
50 years ago, you invented a ship,  
one that could break light speed.

OLD CHUCK  
How did you know that?

Old Maggie approaches, supporting a half-conscious Paul. Old Chuck stares at him; his eyes widen with recognition.

OLD CHUCK (CONT'D)  
Son-of-a-bitch...

**INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Paul rests on the couch as Old Maggie keeps vigil beside him. We hear Old Norman and Old Chuck talking in...

**THE KITCHEN**

They stand opposite each other, speaking in whispers.

OLD CHUCK  
I don't understand what you want  
from me!

OLD NORMAN  
It's your machine; you understand  
what happened more than anybody.

OLD CHUCK  
I'm an engineer. I'm not a doctor.  
You expect me to patch him up with  
duct tape?

OLD NORMAN  
You invented time travel.  
Improvise.

**INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER**

Old Chuck enters from the kitchen, followed by Old Norman. Old Maggie moves aside as the engineer leans over Paul. First he takes his pulse. Then he puts his ear to his chest.

OLD CHUCK

Heartbeats irregular. I can hear wheezing: might be pneumonia, pulmonary edema, I can't tell...

OLD MAGGIE

Can you help him?

OLD CHUCK

I told you. I'm not a doctor. Best bet is to take him to the E.R.

OLD NORMAN

We can't. The Feds can't know where he is. You said the Drive minimized G-Forces on the body-

OLD CHUCK

There's more than just G-Forces up there! Accelerate too fast or too close to the sun- he's lucky he didn't vaporize.

OLD MAGGIE

So what do we do?

OLD CHUCK

I know you think you did the right thing: breaking him out. But I'll be honest... he doesn't look good.

Old Norman looks at Old Maggie: how her eyes are fixed only on Paul. He turns to Old Chuck, eyes pleading.

OLD NORMAN

Please. He's my brother.

OLD CHUCK

(sighs)

I'll get a compress, see if we can't get his fever down. You can stay here as long as you need.

Old Norman nods "thanks." Chuck exits. Old Maggie sees a PAPER sticking out of Paul's pocket. She takes it out to discover her salvaged POLAROID PICTURE. Old Norman sees Maggie heartbroken by the photo; overwhelmed, he exits.

#### **INT. VAN - DAY (1969)**

Paul gazes down at MAGGIE'S POLAROID as the van cuts across the NEVADA DESERT. West, Garner, and Ramirez sit beside him, looking out over the desert.



The van slows as it approaches a long chain-link fence. Paul pockets Maggie's photo and looks at the gate.

A GUARD emerges from his booth, his hand on his sidearm. He motions for them to stop. We see a rusted sign on the fence: "NELLIS BOMBING AND GUNNERY RANGE, RESTRICTED AREA, NO TRESPASSING BEYOND THIS POINT."

**EXT. AREA 51 - CONTINUOUS**

The afternoon sun bounces off the desert like a mirror.

Paul, West, Ramirez, and Garner are joined by Krantz and Chuck. Lieutenant CECILIA CAPELLO (30s), a beautiful, stone-faced brunette in military dress, emerges from a HANGAR.

CAPELLO

Gentlemen! Welcome to Area 51. I'm Lieutenant Capello; I'll be your military liaison during the launch.

West grins behind his aviator sunglasses.

WEST

You got any UFO's in that hanger?

CAPELLO

If by that you mean stealth aircraft that can fly Mach 6, drop a bomb on Moscow, then take your mother to dinner all while invisible to RADAR...

(smiles)

I'm afraid I'm not at liberty to comment.

West nearly swallows his toothpick.

CAPELLO (CONT'D)

This way to the Janus facilities.

Capello leads them into the hanger. West leans towards Paul.

WEST

I think I'm in love.

**INT. AREA 51 - JANUS HANGAR - CONTINUOUS**

Capello leads the JANUS TEAM through a large airplane hanger which is empty save for...

THREE JANUS SPACE CRAFT, shiny and fresh off the assembly line, are revealed. They are miniature compared to other shuttles. The JANUS INSIGNIA is on the side: the god himself, his two heads looking to the past and the future.

Chuck steps forward.

CHUCK

Janus 1, 2 and 3... 4 will be ready for launch next month.

Chuck points under the hull to a series of clamps.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

The craft will break Atmo using conventional rockets, secured here. After the boosters are jettisoned, the Diametric Drive will take you the rest of the way. Janus 1 is scheduled to launch in 48 hours.

GARNER

'Pulled the short straw on that one, West.

WEST

Don't worry. I'll send you a postcard from Jupiter.

KRANTZ

Try to get some sleep. We'll be monitoring the launch from Houston.

Krantz claps West on the shoulder.

KRANTZ (CONT'D)

See you in a few years, Commander.

West SALUTES him. Krantz returns it. He exits.

Paul walks over to Janus 1. It's the most beautiful bird he's ever seen. West stands next to him.

WEST

Whatdya think, Mister Spock?

PAUL

I think she's beautiful.

WEST

Eh, woulda' looked better in red. Hey, you think they got aliens stowed in a freezer somewhere?

**INT. AREA 51 - JANUS HANGAR - DAY (PRESENT)**

44 years later, Marcus and Edison stand in the SAME HANGAR. Over the years, it's become cluttered with scrap metal.

In the sea of junk and failed prototypes sits a small craft covered by a dusty tarp. Edison removes it, revealing a rusted **JANUS 3**, the insignia on the side all but faded.

EDISON

This is the third of the series. The first disintegrated on an emergency re-entry. One casualty. There was supposed to be a fourth shuttle but they scrapped it after Hawkins went missing. Spoke with the guy who does the inventory: he said didn't even know it was here.

MARCUS

You're telling me the United States government had time-travel in an Area 51 bunker... and forgot?

EDISON

(nervously)

Well, it... didn't work. I mean, we know it works now, but before...

MARCUS

Send it to the lab. And find me someone who actually knows what it does.

EDISON

Yes, sir.

Marcus walks away, taking out his cell phone.

MARCUS

(on phone)

Cynthia? I need a list of everyone on NASA's payroll: 1965 to 1975.

Edison replaces the tarp on the craft.

**INT. FARMHOUSE - CELLAR - DAY (1969)**

Norman turns on a hanging bulb, revealing a DIRT CELLAR lined with dusty mason jars, cardboard boxes, and forgotten tools.

Norman wipes the dust off a large CARDBOARD BOX and opens it. We first see a MODEL AIRPLANE made from a kit. Norman lifts it gingerly and smiles. He places it to the side.

Norman reaches deep into the box, throwing unwanted articles aside. Finally, he pulls up his father's faded WORLD WAR II UNIFORM. He touches the TARNISHED WINGS on the jacket's breast pocket. They offer little comfort. What now?

**EXT. AREA 51 - LAUNCH PAD - DAY (1969)**

We see a launch pad similar to the one at Cape Canaveral. JANUS 1 has been strapped to two booster rockets.

**INT. AREA 51 - LAB - SAME TIME**

West is helped by a male TECHNICIAN (50s) to secure the latches of pressurized suit. Paul and Capello stands by.

WEST

Suit's cutting off my circulation.  
4 years in this, you can forget  
children.

CAPELLO

Try redirecting your blood flow  
elsewhere... like your head.

WEST

(coyly)

What about the heart?

CAPELLO

Ask me again in 4 years.

WEST

Yer lookin a little down in the  
mouth there, Paulie.

PAUL

Just jealous you get to go first.

WEST

You know, when I got back from  
Vietnam, nothing was where I left  
it. My family. My girl. Everyone  
had moved on. Time waits for no  
man... Do me a favor, Lieutenant?  
If the world changes while I'm  
gone, will you leave something for  
me. Just something to tell me what  
I missed. Think you can do that?

CAPELLO  
Of course, Commander.

WEST  
Thanks.

A technician approaches, holding up West's helmet.

TECHNICIAN  
It's time.

West takes his helmet and rises.

WEST  
Back in a sec!

West winks at Capello and exits.

**EXT. AREA 51 - LAUNCH PAD - LATER**

We see steam accumulating in the bowels the launchpad.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
(over radio)  
Launch in T minus 7 minutes.

**INT. JANUS 1 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

A Technician tightens the straps across West's chest, securing him in the cockpit.

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT - CONTINUOUS**

Paul exits his convertible, having driven up a hill. He watches the launchpad from a distance.

**INT. MISSION CONTROL (HOUSTON) - CONTINUOUS**

Gene Krantz, sporting a brand new vest, sits at his post as NASA engineers monitor the launch progress.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
(over radio)  
4 minutes and counting. We have a go for ignition.

**INT. JANUS 1 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

The technician gives West the thumbs up. West returns it.

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT - CONTINUOUS**

Paul sees smoke billowing from the launch pad.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
 (over radio)  
 13, 12, 11, 10, 9... We have  
 Ignition Sequence start.

**EXT. AREA 51 - LAUNCH PAD - CONTINUOUS**

Flames and smoke engulf the launch pad.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
 (over radio)  
 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0-

JANUS 1 starts rising.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Lift off. We have lift off, Janus  
 1 has cleared the tower.

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT - MOMENTS LATER**

Paul shields his eyes from the sun, watching JANUS 1's path into the clouds.

**INT. JANUS 1 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

The cockpit shakes violently. West tries to focus on the control panel. 7 million pounds of thrust press on the craft.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
 Janus 1, prepare for booster  
 separation.

The blue sky turns dark. After a moment, he can see the pinpricks of stars. West smiles at the sight.

WEST  
 "Well, will you look at that  
 picture."

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! We hear a warning alarm. West's smile fades. He turns to a flashing orange light on his console.

WEST (CONT'D)  
 Houston, I got an Alarm.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
Copy, Janus 1.

The shuttle starts to shake more violently.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Booster Separation seems to be  
disabled. Initiate override.

Two more WARNING LIGHTS BLINK on the console.

WEST  
Hey, something's wrong here.  
Houston, are you reading-

BANG!

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT - CONTINUOUS**

An EXPLOSION in mid-air; the sound fills the desert like THUNDER. Flaming debris falls to the ground.

**INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)**

*Paul wanders the living room. He's halfway through scanning the titles on Chuck's bookshelf when he spots an IPOD DOCK on a middle shelf. He cocks his head: What the hell is that?*

*Paul peers closer at the IPOD sticking out of the top. The CENTER BUTTON looks friendly; he PRESSES IT. The screen comes alive, along with the speaker. MUSIC suddenly fills the room. Paul presses the PAUSE button.*

*Old Maggie steps in from the other room. She watches as Paul plays with the IPOD'S FORWARD and BACKWARD ARROWS. The songs switch from bad to worse. He presses OFF.*

OLD MAGGIE  
How are you feeling?

PAUL  
Better. Thanks.

*Paul motions to the IPOD.*

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Somebody shrunk his turntable.

OLD MAGGIE  
It's an iPod. Here.

*Old Maggie takes it. She clicks through the songs.*

PAUL

You figure something so simple as a record player would be the same.

OLD MAGGIE

People still own records. They just don't play them.

Finally, she selects the perfect one. She replaces the iPod: LEAVIN' ON A JET PLANE sung by the Mamas and the Papas plays.

OLD MAGGIE (CONT'D)

There.

Old Maggie sways with the music, leading Paul away from the shelves. She takes his hands and Paul begins to dance.

OLD MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Remember how to dance?

PAUL

Not sure I knew to begin with.

OLD MAGGIE

Never too late to learn.

They DANCE. The music begins to ECHO in Paul's head. FLASH. Paul is disoriented. FLASH. He breaks away from Maggie.

MAGGIE

What is it?

STARS rush across Paul's vision; it's as if he's in the cockpit once more, accelerating at light-speed. He falls to his knees. Old Maggie shuts off the music and rushes to him.

OLD MAGGIE

Hey! You with me?

Paul steadies himself; the fit has passed.

PAUL

It's coming back. Not all at once, just bits and pieces. Everything felt wrong, even my own heartbeat. The faster I went the slower the world moved. I can't explain-

OLD MAGGIE

You don't have to.

PAUL

I could see the universe, Mags. Every particle in every second.

(MORE)



PAUL (CONT'D)

*I flew with them. Then I came crashing down. Thing is: it didn't feel like crashing. At first it felt like waking. That moment when you wake up from a dream and you can still remember it. Now I see things when I'm awake. Things I'm not supposed to.*

OLD MAGGIE

*It'll be okay. You'll forget.*

PAUL

*Strange thing is: I don't want to. The things I saw, all the light and darkness... it was beautiful.*

*By the door, just around the corner, Old Norman stands out of sight. He's heard everything.*

**INT. MAGGIE'S PARENT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY (1969)**

Maggie, already in her coat, rushes to pack the last few items. MAGGIE'S MOTHER calls from the other room.

MAGGIE'S MOTHER (O.S.)

Do you need your parka?

MAGGIE

(calling off)

It's Texas, mother, not the Arctic!

The DOORBELL RINGS, making her even more frazzled.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

The taxi's here!

Maggie goes over to the door, she opens it wide. Paul stands on the stoop, dressed in a BLACK SUIT. He looks like he drove all night to get there. Maggie smiles.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Paul! I thought you were in Nevada-... Paul, what's wrong?

**INT. MAGGIE'S PARENT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER**

Maggie sits on the couch; Paul sits in front of her. She refuses to look at him.

MAGGIE

You asked me to marry you.

PAUL

I know.

MAGGIE

How could you? Did you think you could trick me into waiting-

PAUL

I wouldn't do that. You know I wouldn't.

MAGGIE

(beat)

I was prepared. I knew the risks of being an astronaut's wife and I was ready, because it was part of you. But keeping me in the dark, proposing when you knew, you knew you were leaving-

PAUL

I couldn't lose you!

MAGGIE

So you lied to me?

PAUL

I made a promise. 4 years and we can start over, start a family!

MAGGIE

How will I know you're coming back? Will I even know I'm a widow?

PAUL

I'm sorry.

MAGGIE

Then don't go. Please. Stay.

PAUL

Janus 2 launches in a week.

MAGGIE

Then let it launch without you.

PAUL

If I do that, I'll regret it for the rest of my life.

MAGGIE

So you would risk everything?

PAUL

I'm sorry.

Maggie storms off, slamming her BEDROOM DOOR behind her.  
Paul buries his face in his hands.

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FAMILY FARM - YARD - DAY (1969)**

Sunset. Norman polishes the TIGER MOTH as a car drives into the yard. It parks and Maggie emerges; she's been weeping.

**INT. BARN - NIGHT**

Maggie and Norman sit in silence. Norman is just only beginning to grapple with the news himself.

MAGGIE

Did you know?

NORMAN

No.

Silence.

MAGGIE

The strange thing is... I would wait a lifetime for him. It still doesn't change what he did. He chose to leave. You were right. Only one thing matters to him. Why is Earth not enough? Why were we not enough?

NORMAN

He'll come back, Maggie.

MAGGIE

Would you? If it meant waking up every day knowing what you gave up. You already gave up and you hate yourself!

NORMAN

I didn't have what he has.

MAGGIE

A chance to escape-

NORMAN

You. If there is one thing that could erase all regret, it's knowing that every wrong turn, every tailspin, has lead to you. I could never regret that path, no matter what I'd sacrificed. Paul will come back, not because he chose Earth, because there is nothing more beautiful than what you are! You're wings, Maggie.

Maggie gazes at Norman. She takes his head in her hand and KISSES HIM. It's both pain and bliss for Norman. Norman pulls away, out of breath, still holding her cheek.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

I'm not Paul.

MAGGIE

I know.

Maggie KISSES HIM AGAIN. This time, Norman pulls her in. The kiss builds in passion. Maggie lies back, pulling Norman down. He moves on top of her and THEY BEGIN TO MAKE LOVE.

**INT. BARN - THE NEXT MORNING**

Morning light leaks in through the barn's slats. Maggie sleeps soundly beside Norman. He watches her sleep, stroking her hair. He KISSES HER FOREHEAD before rising from the hay.

**INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (1969)**

We hear porcelain CLINKING and the sound of Evelyn HUMMING "AS TIME GOES" BY from Casablanca. Norman enters quietly, watching from the door. His mother stands at the sink.

EVELYN

Da dee da da da dum... a kiss is just a kiss... a smile is just a smile... la de deda dada da dum... as time goes by...

NORMAN

Ma?

EVELYN

(turns)  
Paul?

NORMAN

It's Norman.

EVELYN

What are you doing here? I thought you were shipping out.

NORMAN

Mom, are you okay?

EVELYN

I'm so glad you come home one last time. It will do your father good.

NORMAN

Dad's dead, Ma. Last winter.

She doesn't hear him. He goes to him, fixing his shirt.

EVELYN

It's killing him, you know. Don't get me wrong, he's proud of you, but, seeing you goin' off to war... makes him think he should have fought harder in the last one. As if he could keep it from you.

NORMAN

Ma, please don't-

EVELYN

Oh, I know. I shouldn't have mentioned it. He wouldn't want me to. I just can't bear to see another one of my boy's broken... not after what happened to Norman. They took his spirit.

Norman fights back tears.

NORMAN

Norm's okay. Honest.

EVELYN

You look after your brother, Paul. He's your blood, more n' anybody on this earth. You are one soul.

NORMAN

I will, Mamma.

She pats Norman lovingly on the cheek; she frowns.

EVELYN

Oh, Paul. My brave, Paul... You need a shave.

Norman smiles at his mother; he nods.

**THE CELLAR**

Norman turns on the hanging bulb. He then re-opens his father's dusty CARDBOARD BOX. Norman puts his father's WWII uniform aside and digs deep, recovering a LONG WOODEN BOX. He opens it. Inside is an antique SHAVING KIT with a STRAIGHT RAZOR: his fathers. He shuts the box.

**EXT. NEVADA DESERT - ESTABLISHING (1969)**

Creedence Clearwater's "BAD MOON RISING" plays inside a beat up WINNEBAGO nestled beneath a rare crop of trees.

**INT. PAUL'S WINNEBAGO - NEVADA DESERT - NIGHT**

Paul WASHES HIS DISHES, listening to the radio propped by the sink. There's a KNOCK at the door. Paul shuts off the music. ANOTHER KNOCK. Paul's heart skips; he runs to the door.

**EXT. PAUL'S WINNEBAGO - CONTINUOUS**

Paul opens the RV door.

PAUL

Maggie-

Norman stands there instead, holding a SIX-PACK OF BEER.

NORMAN

The prodigal twin returns.

PAUL

How'd you find me?

NORMAN

Heard a rumor 'bout a crazy man campin in the hills.

PAUL

They told you at the barracks.

NORMAN

Never said where I heard it... You got a bottle opener?

**EXT. PAUL'S WINNEBAGO - LATER**

Norman and Paul sit drinking BEER on Paul's convertible.

NORMAN  
When do you leave?

PAUL  
Tomorrow.

NORMAN  
You left without saying goodbye.

PAUL  
I thought if I told you, you'd...

NORMAN  
Kill you?

PAUL  
Try to stop me, but that'd do it.

NORMAN  
You're lucky I'm a pacifist now.

PAUL  
(chuckles)  
Hippie.

NORMAN  
Square.

They each take a sip.

PAUL  
Kinda wish I did let you talk me  
out of it.

NORMAN  
Having second thoughts?

PAUL  
Doesn't matter. Maggie won't take  
me back. Even if she did, and I  
walk away, they'll never give me  
another chance.

(beat)  
You understand why I have to do  
this. I have a duty. To the  
program, to West. If Janus fails,  
then his death means nothing!  
Someone has to try-

NORMAN  
I understand.

PAUL  
Good. Least somebody does.  
(beat)  
I'm the best pilot they got, Norm.  
Wish to God I wasn't. It's our job:  
to beat the odds. What kind of  
pilot would I be if I bailed out?  
What kind of man?

NORMAN  
(beat)  
Paul, I'm gonna ask you a question,  
and I want you to be honest.

PAUL  
(chuckles)  
That why you brought the beer?  
Trying to liquor me up?

NORMAN  
Do you love Maggie?

Paul glares at Norman.

PAUL  
You know I do.

NORMAN  
Wanna grow old with her?

PAUL  
Yes.

NORMAN  
Would you do anything for her?

PAUL  
Yes.

Norman looks into his beer bottle, nodding.

NORMAN  
Okay, then.

Norman takes his BEER BOTTLE and HITS PAUL HARD ON THE HEAD.  
CRASH -- THUD -- Paul falls to the dirt.

***INT. POLICE STATION - HALLWAY (PRESENT)***

*Marcus paces, a cellphone grafted to his ear.*



MARCUS

(on phone)

Yes, sir... Yes, I understand...  
We've contacted the daughter but...  
Some story about her father going  
AWOL, "off his pills," that sort of  
thing... Yes sir.

We see Edison down the hall, running to him. He goes to speak; Marcus lifts a finger.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

I'll let you know as soon as she  
does-... Yes-... G'night, sir.  
(he hangs up)  
Dick... What is it?

EDISON

Paul Hawkins got his Appendix out  
in 1950.

MARCUS

So?

EDISON

I looked over the ultrasound when  
they brought him in: Two busted  
kidneys and one healthy appendix.

MARCUS

So either he grew one in space, or  
our pilot's not Paul Hawkins.

Edison nods, relishing in Marcus' discovery.

#### INT. PAUL'S WINNEBAGO - NIGHT (1969)

##### MONTAGE:

1. Norman lays Paul gently on the bed in the back of the RV.
2. Norman looks into a small mirror hung over the kitchen sink and splashes water on his face. He then lathers his chin and SHAVES HIS BEARD using his FATHER'S SHAVING KIT.
3. Norman runs his mop-head under the tap. He cuts his long hair with SCISSORS. The long strands fall into the basin.
4. Norman combs his wet hair back and parts it neatly to the side; more and more, he's beginning to resemble Paul.
5. Norman puts on Paul's uniform buttoning the tan-colored shirt all the way up.

He puts on the suit jacket and pins Paul's officer credentials and aviator's wings to his lapel. It doesn't feel like a disguise: it feels like removing one.

6. Now fully transformed into Paul, Norman takes up a folder stamped JANUS PROJECT. He goes to check on his brother, still unconscious in his bed. He's about to exit the trailer when he spots MAGGIE'S POLAROID taped to the RV dash.

END MONTAGE

**INT. CHUCKS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Paul sleeps on the couch; Old Maggie lays a cold compress on his brow. She glances down at Paul's RIGHT HAND. Old Maggie gingerly turns his hand over.

Across his right palm is a **SLENDER SCAR**. She looks up at the man she gave it to: **NORMAN**, lying on the couch. He wakes.

OLD MAGGIE

'Mornin, Ace... Here, drink this.

Old Maggie holds a CUP OF WATER to Norman's lips; he drinks.

OLD MAGGIE (CONT'D)

How do you feel?

NORMAN

Like I got hit by a planet.

OLD MAGGIE

To be fair, you hit it first.

Old Maggie caresses Norman's scar.

OLD MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Thought it would have faded by now.

NORMAN

Guess you made an impression.

**INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (PRESENT)**

**OLD PAUL** (formerly Old Norman) stares out the kitchen window. He watches sunlight dancing off the spray of a backyard sprinkler. Old Chuck approaches.

OLD CHUCK

Do you know why I chose "Janus?"

(beat)

(MORE)

OLD CHUCK (CONT'D)  
*The Romans called him the god of beginnings. One face looking to the past, the other looking forward.*

OLD PAUL  
*Sounds two-faced.*

OLD CHUCK  
*I suppose it is. Oddly fitting.*  
 (beat)  
*I attended your funeral.*

*Old Paul cringes: he knows.*

OLD CHUCK (CONT'D)  
*Why did you do it? Bury yourself.*

OLD PAUL  
*He took my place. So I took his.*

OLD CHUCK  
*It's desertion-*

OLD PAUL  
*Why do you think I stayed quiet!?*  
*God, you don't think I wanted to lie every day: to my friends? To my daughter?*  
 (beat)  
*I thought when he came back, everything would go back to normal. But he didn't. We failed him.*

OLD CHUCK  
*Your brother saved your life. Perhaps failure is relative.*

OLD MAGGIE (O.C.)  
 (from the living room)  
 Paul!

*Old Chuck and Old Paul race into...*

### **THE LIVING ROOM**

*Norman is nowhere to be seen. Old Maggie is at the window; Old Paul and Old Chuck join her.*

OLD MAGGIE  
*Someone just pulled into the driveway.*

*A BLACK SUV pulls into the driveway. Agent Marcus gets out.*

OLD PAUL  
It's the Feds.

Before Old Chuck can get a word in, Old Paul grabs him by the shirt collar, pressing him against the wall.

OLD MAGGIE  
Paul-

OLD PAUL  
What did you do!?

OLD CHUCK  
Are you insane!

OLD PAUL  
You hid us only so you could turn us in, is that it?

OLD CHUCK  
I didn't call the Feds!

OLD PAUL  
Then how did they find us?

OLD CHUCK  
Janus was my project. They're here for answers, same as you.

OLD PAUL  
Then they'll be disappointed.

OLD MAGGIE  
Paul, let him go. Now!

Old Paul finally releases Old Chuck.

OLD MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
We have to get Norman out of here.

OLD PAUL  
The suits blocked our exit. We have to hide.

OLD CHUCK  
And when they find Norman in the broom closet, what then?

NORMAN (O.C.)  
Then I go with them.

Everyone turns to Norman, standing weakly behind them.

OLD MAGGIE

No.

NORMAN

You've done all you can for me.

OLD MAGGIE

We can still run. Paul, tell him-

NORMAN

I'm dying, Maggie. I've been dying since I got back. Let me go.

The DOORBELL RINGS. Norman glares at Old Paul. For a moment, we think Old Paul's convinced, until he turns to Old Chuck.

OLD PAUL

Where's your car?

**INT. PAUL'S WINNEBAGO - DAY (1969)**

Paul awakens disoriented. He massages the back of his head as he sits up and looks around. Feeling something strange on his scalp, he looks at his fingers: there's blood from last night. It begins to come back to him.

PAUL

Norman?

No answer. Paul teeters as he rises from the bed. Soon the trailer, and his situation, comes into focus.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Norman!?

**EXT. PAUL'S WINNEBAGO - CONTINUOUS**

Paul rushes outside. The desert sun is blinding; Paul shields his eyes searches the lot. His CONVERTIBLE is gone.

Paul gets into Norman's beat-up CHEVY; the keys are still in the ignition. Paul tries to start it.

PAUL

Come on... come on...

The engine turns over again and again. It won't start. Paul hits the wheel angrily. He glances something in the passenger seat: NORMAN'S WALLET. Paul opens it, revealing Norman's DRIVER'S LICENSE. He stares at his brother's face. And then he understands.

**EXT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - FRONT STOOP - MOMENTS LATER**

Chuck peeks out the door; he makes his voice sound frail.

OLD CHUCK  
Can I help you?

Marcus stands at the bottom of the stoop. Two more AGENTS stand by a BLACK SUV is parked behind MAGGIE'S CAR.

MARCUS  
Charles Rosen?

OLD CHUCK  
Yes?

Marcus flashes his HOMELAND SECURITY BADGE.

MARCUS  
Agent Marcus. Homeland Security.  
Mind if we come in?

OLD CHUCK  
I guess. Oh, just watch where you  
step coming up the path. Dang  
septic tank's been actin' up.

Chuck goes inside. Marcus plugs his nose and follows. The two AGENTS exchange a look before tip-toeing across the yard.

**EXT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS**

Old Maggie and Old Paul support Norman between them as they descend the back porch.

OLD PAUL  
You got 'im?

MAGGIE  
Yes.

OLD PAUL  
Are you sure, cause I'm getting all  
the weight over here-

OLD MAGGIE  
I'm fine, Paul, don't patronize me!

NORMAN  
You guys lasted fifty years-

OLD MAGGIE  
Shut up, Norman!

OLD PAUL  
Shut up, Norman!

*They hobble towards CHUCK'S OLDSMOBILE parked by the shed.*

**INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

*Old Chuck and Marcus sit across from each other.*

OLD CHUCK  
*Can I interest you in a caramel,  
 Agent Marcus?*

MARCUS  
*Uh, no, thank you.*

CHUCK  
*They's sugar free.*

MARCUS  
*If we could just get to the matter  
 at hand, Mr. Rosen-*

CHUCK  
*Doctor.*

MARCUS  
*Sorry?*

CHUCK  
*It's Doctor Rosen; Professor too.  
 You should add that to my file!*

**EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS**

*Old Maggie and Old Paul help Norman into the passenger seat  
 of Chuck's car. Norman grips his gut in pain.*

OLD PAUL  
*Drive straight to Victoria's house.  
 Don't stop for anything.*

OLD MAGGIE  
*Where are you going?*

*Old Paul doesn't answer.*

NORMAN  
*Paul, whatever you're thinking,  
 don't.*

OLD PAUL  
*I'll take our car, lead 'im in the  
 opposite direction. It'll buy you  
 enough time to get to the coast.*

NORMAN

No.

OLD PAUL

You made your choice, Norm, now  
this one's mine.

OLD MAGGIE

What if they catch you?

OLD PAUL

Then they'll have their man. I'm  
Paul Hawkins, aren't I?

Beat. Old Maggie KISSES Old Paul. She hands over her keys.

OLD MAGGIE

Not a scratch.

OLD PAUL

Yes, ma'am.

Old Paul goes to Norman; they embrace tightly.

NORMAN

This is the stupidest thing you've  
ever done.

OLD PAUL

You should talk.

(beat)

Take care of, Maggie.

Norman nods. Old Paul looks one last time at his wife before  
heading towards the front yard.

**INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Chuck sucks loudly on a caramel candy.

MARCUS

So you see, now that NASA's  
switching gears, we're doing a  
little inventory, so to speak.  
Nothing you need to be concerned  
about. However, we would like to  
go over your work on the Janus  
Project... for posterity's sake.

CHUCK

Oh, well, that's certainly  
thoughtful of you.



*Silence. Chuck just smiles.*

MARCUS

So did you have anything to add...?

CHUCK

*Sorry, what was the question?*

MARCUS

Let me put it another way: is the aircraft you developed in any way a threat to national security, past, present, or future.

CHUCK

*Agent Marcus... when I was your age, we were strapping 400 thousand gallons of liquid hydrogen onto the backs of Americans and lighting a match, just to walk on the moon. If you think a man like that is a threat, you're missing the point.*

*A CAR ENGINE is heard in the front driveway. One of the AGENTS peeks through the blinds.*

AGENT

*Sir, someone's in the car outside.*

**EXT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS**

*Old Paul is driving Old Maggie's car. He looks in his REARVIEW MIRROR: The BLACK SUV is blocking his way.*

OLD PAUL

*Here goes nothin.*

*Old Paul puts the car in REVERSE and RAMS into the SUV, pushing it back a few feet.*

OLD PAUL (CONT'D)

*Sorry, Maggie.*

*Old Paul drives forward, reverses, and RAMS it again.*

**INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

*The Agents at the window take out their HANDGUNS and head outside. Marcus goes with them.*

OLD CHUCK

Find what you were lookin' for?

Marcus glares at Old Chuck before exiting out to...

**EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Old Paul backs into the SUV one more time, pushing it off to the side enough to clear a path for him. The Agents and Marcus emerge SHOOTING at his car. BULLETS pelt the windshield. Old Paul DUCKS.

OLD PAUL  
Son-of-a-bitch!

Old Paul SLAMS ON THE GAS, backing into the road. He SPEEDS OFF. The Agents scamper to their beat-up SUV, Marcus barking orders. They screech out of the driveway in pursuit.

**INT. OLDSMOBILE - CONTINUOUS**

Old Maggie and Norman watch as Old Paul drives past, followed by the SUV. When the sirens fade, Old Maggie drives out from their hiding spot, turning in the opposite direction.

**INT. AREA 51 - HALLWAY - DAY (1969)**

Norman wanders the hall in Paul's uniform, trying to find where to report. Lieutenant Capello sees him wandering.

CAPELLO  
Commander!

NORMAN  
(turns)  
Yes?

CAPELLO  
Shouldn't you be at the lab by now?

NORMAN  
I was just stretching my legs.

Capello doubts that; still, she turns to leave him.

NORMAN (CONT'D)  
Don't suppose you could point me in the right direction.

CAPELLO  
Down that hall, to the left.

NORMAN  
 Right! I mean, left. Of course.  
 Thank you.

Norman starts off; Capello watches him suspiciously.

CAPELLO  
 Hawkins.

Norman turns: shit.

NORMAN  
 Yeah?

CAPELLO  
 I'm sorry about West. He was a  
 brave man.

Norman nods; Capello SALUTES him and continues down the hall.

**INT. OLDSMOBILE - DAY (PRESENT)**

*Old Maggie drives Chuck's Oldsmobile down a deserted country road, nervously checking the rearview for the black van. Norman's in a cold sweat; she notices him falling forward.*

OLD MAGGIE  
 Norman? Can you hear me? Norman!

**EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS**

*SCREECH! Old Maggie breaks quickly in the middle of the road. She opens the door to the passenger side and climbs inside.*

OLD MAGGIE  
 Norman! Norman, wake up!

*Norman's eyes open slightly.*

NORMAN  
 Home.

OLD MAGGIE  
 We're almost there.

NORMAN  
 (shaking his head)  
Home.

*Then Old Maggie understands.*

OLD MAGGIE

*The farm isn't there anymore. Paul had to sell it when your mother passed. Do you understand?*

NORMAN

*(fading)*

*Please.*

*Old Maggie looks back down the road: she feels helpless.*

OLD MAGGIE

*Okay... Okay... Hold on.*

*She gets back in the car and does a fast U-Turn.*

**INT. AREA 51 - LAB (1969)**

Norman is zipped into his FLIGHT SUIT. Unfamiliar faces of the Janus Project clap him on the shoulder and wish him well.

**INT. AREA 51 - HALLWAY - LATER**

Norman, in his flight suit, is paraded down the hall by technicians. Lieutenant Capello watches from the sidelines.

**INT. AREA 51 - LAUNCH PAD - LATER**

Steam rises around Norman as he walks the GANGPLANK.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)

*(over radio)*

*Launch in 5 minutes.*

**INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)**

*Old Paul sits in a cement brick room at a metal table, his hands HANDCUFFED in front of him.*

*Marcus enters. He sits himself across from Old Paul and slaps TWO MANILA FOLDERS on the table. He leans back with a smug smile. He then lifts his shirt, revealing his RIGHT ABDOMEN.*

MARCUS

*I'll show you mine if you show me yours...*

*Marcus who waits patiently. Finally, Old Paul lifts his shirt: an APPENDECTOMY SCAR stretches across his abdomen.*

Marcus opens the folder, stamped: CAPTAIN NORMAN HAWKINS:  
HONORABLY DISCHARGED.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Now, Norman Hawkins still has his  
appendix. Then again, you're not  
Norman Hawkins, are you?

Old Paul remains silent.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Let's try this again.  
(motions to himself)  
Agent Daniel Marcus...

He motions to Old Paul.

OLD PAUL

Commander Paul Hawkins, United  
States Airforce.

MARCUS

Seems you've come back from the  
dead twice this week, Commander.

OLD PAUL

You wanted Paul Hawkins, you got  
him. Ask me your questions.

MARCUS

Let's start with where's Norman?

OLD PAUL

Why? So you can lock him up?

MARCUS

He impersonated an officer.

OLD PAUL

My brother taught me everything I  
know. You ask me: I've been  
impersonating him my whole life.

(beat)

Now you can charge me with  
desertion. Lock me up. Hell, you  
can slap a rocket to my ass and  
make me finish what I started. But  
I'm askin' you... let my brother  
die in peace.

Marcus stares back at Paul, touched. He glances down at  
NORMAN'S FILE PHOTO in front of him, conflicted.

**EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - YARD - DAY (PRESENT)**

A "WILL BUILD TO SUIT TENANT" sign stands in front of dried up field of weeds and dust. The FARMHOUSE itself has been demolished. The OLD BARN is a lean-to of rotted wood, beside it: a rusted PLANE PROPELLER.

Old Maggie parks the Oldsmobile up to where the driveway once was. She helps Norman out of the car; he looks around.

MAGGIE

I told you. It's gone.

NORMAN

Still holds memories.

Norman gets out of the car. Old Maggie watches him wander the yard from the drivers seat before finally joining him. She follows Norman as he wanders the yard.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

The house was there. My Dad bought it with his G.I. Loan... That pine over there: it was a sapling I brought home from school. Paul's didn't make it through the winter... Dad used to wash his car there, where the ground slopes down. Seems steeper than I-

Norman stumbles. Old Maggie rushes to him, guiding his fall. Norman's head rests on Old Maggie's lap.

NORMAN (CONT'D)

I'm alright... I'm alright...

OLD MAGGIE

We have to get you to a hospital.

NORMAN

No. I'm where I want to be.  
(gazing up)  
Moon's out already. You know from here, it really is... beautiful.

**INT. JANUS 2 COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

A TECHNICIAN tightens the straps across Norman's chest. As they do, Norman looks out the cockpit window. He sees a DAYLIGHT MOON in the late afternoon sky. The technician taps Norman on the shoulder, startling him. He gives Norman a thumbs up. Norman returns it.

The Technician closes the hatch behind him. Norman wedges MAGGIE'S POLAROID next to a large GREEN BUTTON.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
 (over radio)  
 T minus 11, 10, 9... We have  
 Ignition Sequence. 7, 6...

**EXT. NAVADA DESERT - CONTINUOUS**

Paul parks Norman's Chevy on the same hill where he watched West. This time, he's frantic as he exits the car, shielding his eyes from the sunrise, desperate to make out the shuttle. In the distance, smoke billows around the launch pad.

**INT. MISSION CONTROL (HOUSTON)- CONTINUOUS**

Gene Krantz, in a NEW VEST, stands behind rows of NASA technicians. A nervous Chuck Rosen sits at his station.

CHUCK  
 Come on, Hawkins.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)  
 (over radio)  
 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0... Lift off.

**INTERCUT: INT. MISSION CONTROL/ JANUS 2 COCKPIT**

BOOM! The cockpit shakes; Norman is pressed into his seat.

Gene Krantz and Chuck watch their monitors nervously.

GROUND CONTROL (V.O.)  
 We have lift off. Janus 2 has  
 cleared the tower.

The FLAMES outside the cockpit window extinguish revealing: DARKNESS. Black nothing dotted with millions upon millions of stars.

Norman takes a moment to gaze at the EARTH below him, glowing blue in a sea of black. Finally he presses a BUTTON; the BOOSTERS DETACH and FLOAT AWAY.

CHUCK  
 Janus 2. Do you copy?

NORMAN  
 I'm here.

CHUCK  
Everything looks good from here.

NORMAN  
Makes two of us.

CHUCK  
(smiles)  
No regrets then?

Norman thinks; he smiles.

NORMAN  
No regrets.

CHUCK  
Can you confirm Positive Field  
generation?

Norman scans the dashboard, not sure what he's looking for.

CHUCK (CONT'D)  
Paul, do you read? What's your  
differential?

Norman finds a dial labeled DIFFERENTIAL.

NORMAN  
Differential's Point 9. Over.

Chuck turns to Krantz. Krantz nods.

CHUCK  
Janus 2... Your call, Hawkins.

Norman takes one last look at Maggie's picture.

***EXT. HAWKIN'S FARM - YARD (PRESENT)***

Old Maggie cradles Norman. In his vision, the setting  
sunlight glows behind her. He DIES smiling up at her.

***INT. JANUS 2 COCKPIT (1969)***

Beside the cockpit Polaroid is a large GREEN BUTTON.  
Norman's GLOVED HAND reaches out. HE PRESSES IT.

CUT TO BLACK.

**THE END**