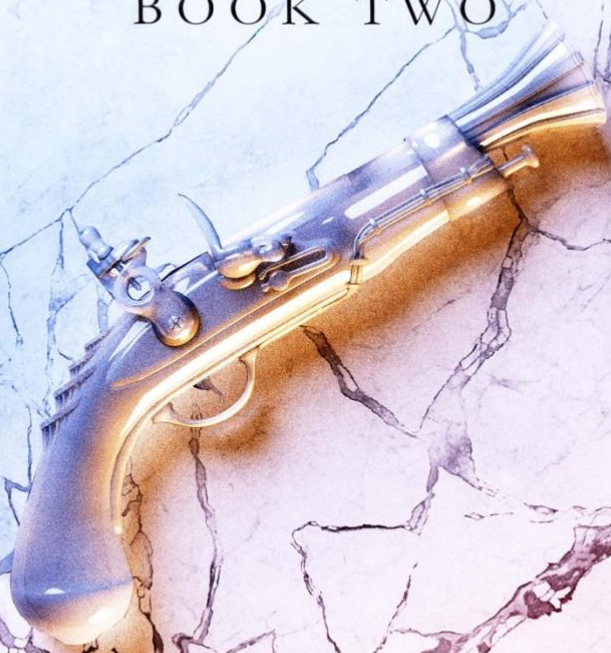


the
INFINIT UNIVERSE
BOOK TWO



MANIFEST

a film by

DANIEL M. ROSS

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DESTINY WAS CREATED **EQUAL**

CHAPTER ONE

CRESCENDO

BLACK SCREEN. The dark ether of infinity scales leagues beyond, taunting even the most terrifying portrait of the vast unknown. A curtain of shadow remains a solitary companion before an ever-expanding obscurity...

A dissonant wailing trembles through the air, sung by the screaming of multitudes—intensifying by every second.

KRICK-A-AMM! The vengeful crack of an earthquake splits across an invisible horizon, as an innumerable chorus of souls plead amid a crumbling catastrophe...*the earth is folding.*

...*WHUUVVMMM!!* A violent tide devours the rising mayhem, smothering all noise by every crashing wave.

WWRRRRBBRMMM!! As another thunderous wall of water asserts its lethal dominance...

...Silence.

A PAIR OF EYES OPEN.

Gleaming in the brilliance of midday, and chasing through a bluster of wind...a blue horizon *shimmers* across their pupils.



I N F I N I T

P R E S E N T S

MUSIC: [*Roll Away Your Stone, Mumford & Sons*](#). The delicate twangs of a four-string banjo punctuate an uncanny lightheartedness to the darkness abound. A melody rings out, amid the blackness...*a song*.



A F I L M B Y

DANIEL M. ROSS

EXT. CLIFFSIDE VISTA – DAWN

A crystalline azure of endless breadth shimmers just beyond a cliffside rice field, blanketing into infinity. *The seven seas lay dead ahead.*

PCK-KOHCK! A mother hen, exuberant as she is quick, scuttles by as her little chicks tail close behind through golden tall grass, rimmed by the morning sun. The sky is equally blue as the ocean.

Then—

WHOOOM. Something like an airborne surfboard—propelled by dual rocket engines, shoots into frame from below, just beyond the edge of the cliff.

Its rider twists and flips by several degrees, letting his arms hang loose, in the calm and weightless exchange of gravity. A gleam of youthful vigor flashes across his visage, accompanying a daring edge. *This*; is JASON.

VVVUUUMME. Camera follows close behind as Jason flies down the cliffside, picking up speed.

WHOOM-WHAA! He jets past massive rocks and roots, weaving between them with expertise—hugging the edge of the cliff like a daredevil.

JASON

Whooooo-hoo-hoo-hoooo!

FFFSHH! A spray of salty mist occludes the frame as Jason dances within the ocean waves below...*he's a natural.*

WHOMMM! A tidal wave forms, curling right over Jason's head...

He eyes the wall of water, raising an eyebrow—KCHK-ZZRGG! He kicks a lever on his rocketboard, launching it into high gear—*challenge accepted*. FLUUUMME.

Ultramarine embers blast from dual thrusters as he spirals through the tunneling wave.

WHOOM...VOOOM! Jason zooms past great plateaus of concrete and steel, jutting out of the ocean; an ancient metropolis...the forsaken ruins of a time long forgotten.

Overgrown with plant life, these curious highlands seem to form lettering, perhaps by a trick of the eye. A title, laid between the colossal angles and serifs left behind by fallen skyscrapers along the crashing waves.

M A N I F E S T

EXT. NUEVA COLOMBIA - VILLAGE SQUARE -
LATER

A bustling country square animates with the constant chatter of villagers...haggling eggs for skins, trading lumber for turnips.

PCH-KOOHCK! The mother hen and her little chicks run wild across the dirt road. It's a mad house; but hey, *it's home*.

Jason pushes through the mayhem, gripping his rocketboard in arm.

JASON

'Scuse me...*watch it!*

A butcher from across the way eyes Jason scurrying by; he abandons a negotiation, pointing a large cleaver knife—

BUTCHER

¡Oye, Jason!

Jason startles, looks.

BUTCHER

¡Amigo! You still owe me for those chops I cut you last week! *¡No soy estúpido, hombre!*

JASON

¡Mañana, mañana!

The butcher shrugs in defeat, turns back to his client, tossing the blade behind his back—KACHK! A shriek echoes offscreen.

Jason continues pushing through—

MAYBELL (O.S.)

Rocketman!!

Jason skids to a stop—slaps a hand across his forehead.
Will it ever end...

JASON

Mrs. Maybell! I promise I'll have those parts for you this
frid-

She tosses him a guava.

Jason flusters to catch it, fumbling between the fruit and the rocketboard in his hands.

She offers a keen wink.

MAYBELL

Be good, now.

Jason hesitates between the guava and Maybell—struggles to offer a response.

JASON

Th—thanks.

He bolts outta there.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - CONTINUOUS

The multicolor rays of dawn shaft through a darkened and lonely jungle canopy. Intertwined with untamed palms and soaring waterfalls, an array of concrete plateaus tower above the forest domain. Some stand tall—overgrown with plantlife, while others lean over their neighbors like fallen redwoods...*this*; is the BABYLONIA RAINFOREST.

Jason darts through the ruins, rocketboard in hand—

SKAFF! The guava slips from his grip. He doubles back, scooping it up.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - TREETOP
BUNGALOW - CONTINUOUS

Jason runs up the base of a massive Kapok Tree—grabs a handmade rope of braided vines and kicks a wooden lever attached to the base of its gargantuan roots, dropping his rocketboard—

SCHLRRG! A counterweight attached to a pulley overhead drops down, hoisting Jason up to the heights of the forest canopy.

SHLRRRG-KOCK! He lifts into a single-man bungalow. Bit of a bachelor pad—possessing a handmade charm of bamboo and steel. It's perched at the peak of one of the tallest trees, overlooking the immeasurable vastness of the Babylonia Rainforest.

He flicks a handmade switch on the wall—

...Nothing.

FLCK-FLCK-FLCK! He jiggles the scrap-metal contraption.

JASON
(*sighs*)
Huugh...

Jason rolls his eyes, clumping across the single-room treehouse, to a trunk full of what looks like complete junk. He rummages through the mess—KRFLCK!

Amid a jumble of wires, tools, and miscellaneous metal parts, he uncovers a cylindrical device—the mere size of a can of soup, with glowing blue edges.

JASON
...Bingo.

He grabs a few.

SHVVV! He slides down the vine-rope while gripping a leather sling between his hands.

BRUMPDT! He takes a hard landing—grabs a heavy black wire running along the length of the tree and pulls it up from the ground.

JASON
...Gotcha.

Jason drags up more of its length through the dirt. It trails off into the forest...

He tucks his leather sling, kicks his rocketboard up from the ground, grabbing it in one hand—KUFF! ... And gets going—darting into the depths of the jungle.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - GEOTHERMAL PIPELINE - CONTINUOUS

Jason arrives at a colossal iron channel—a building sized pipeline, running through the length of the rainforest, off into the distance. Its very size dwarfs some of the trees themselves...

Jason sifts through the dirt and leaves, finding his wire—examining it.

SCHRRK! It runs into the massive pipeline, crudely spliced-in with some other wires.

Jason raises an eyebrow...drops the wire.

He eyes a console upon the side of the iron walls; slaps its side—SCHRRG! Nothing. It sputters sparks and white noise on its blacked-out display. It's dead.

JASON
Uhh, huh.

He kicks up his rocketboard—

CHK-VVRRRR!! Ignites his thrusters, galloping to a sprint—

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - CANYON
GORGE - CONTINUOUS

Jason leaps off the edge of a steep and sudden drop—
throwing all caution to the wind...*then*,

CH-VOOOM! He secures upon the board, kicking it into
high gear—VUUMMME...dust and leaves erupt in his
wake.

RAINFOREST HEIGHTS

Jason rips and rides above the forest heights, weaving
between palms and vines with style and flair; he might
even be enjoying himself.

FLAAH. He crests over the canopy peak, high above a sea
of green. The golden sunlight rims his frame in brilliant
rays.

JASON
Whoohoo!!

VOOOM...He rides along the tips of the palms, to a
barren summit beyond. Great columns of black smoke
billow from its greyed vents...*a volcano*.

EXT. MOUNT GUÁJARO - SUMMIT -
CONTINUOUS

Guájaro's monstrous vents roil with that of an untapped
force; red hot lava dances within its depths, as deep black
fumes enshroud the entire spectacle in darkness.

VUUMME. Jason wings through scorched skies, gazing down into the fiery mouth below; raging embers radiate a crimson glow all over his face—reflecting within his eyes.

JASON
...*Woah*.

NUEVA COLOMBIA, FROM THE SEA
The humble civilization perches upon the edge of a great seaside mesa, redefining what it means to live by the water. Mount Guájaro looms in the background, even-tempered and undisturbed.

BACK TO JASON
He pulls a glowing soup can from his jacket, twists its lid—T-TE-TEET! It beeps in affirmation, as its lights flicker to life...

JASON
Now or never...

KCH-VUUMME. Jason circles the edge of Guájaro's gargantuan mouth, slinging the soup can in his leather strap, picking up speed...

TEE-TEE-TEET!! The device beeps louder, as its lights flicker to a strobe...

JASON
AAAAGH!

TEE-TEE-TEET!!! The device strobes in red, just as—

SHEWWWW! Jason launches it into the mouth of the volcano, jetting outta there at peak velocity—

...WHHHIIP. As an invisible shockwave implodes all matter surrounding the device in a radius...

...*Then,*

BOOOAAAMMMM! ... Detonates. Guájaro's rage, *is unleashed.*

Jason bolts outta there with all pace. Lava rains from the sky and bursts from numerous cracks in the ground. Jason rips and rides like he's playing jazz, weaving for dear life.

Molten streams of hot lava flow down the sides of the mountain, into the rainforest.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Villagers from all over gape in alarm at the erupting titan beyond. A panic breaks out in the streets as vendors all over pack up their carts, just as—

EXT. MOUNT GUÁJARO - CONTINUOUS

BOOOAMMMM!!! Another big one. Flashing out the side of the mountain. Red hot lava spills into the canyon gorge, sending plumes of vapor up from the river.

ON GEOTHERMAL PIPELINE

The black iron of the pipeline fills with a red light, illuminated through thin slats at its top. It ripples red with magma flow—

FSSHHH!! Steam explodes from the cracks in its divisions as magma trails down the tube.

...The console *sputters to life*.

ON JASON

Jason weaves through the fiery skies, dodging a death of brimstone—

VRRRRSH!! As a ball of fire *zooms* past his board, throwing him aside by the turbulence. Jason sputters in its trail of smoke, blinded.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Streetlights and signs peppered throughout the humble village flicker to life. People all over marvel as electricity sparks alight across every house on the block.

IN TREETOP BUNGALOW

TICK. The lamp hanging in Jason's bungalow...*flicks on*.

BACK TO JASON

Jason struggles to descend as serial blasts of molten rock bullet from the very earth. He kicks his thrusters to high gear—VRRRRVV!! Leaning into it.

WAAAH...WAAAH-WAAAAHH! What looks like a tidal wave of doom—or a molten grave, descends down the mountainside, *after Jason*.

JASON
C'mon!!

CHRRK! He kicks the lever on his rocketboard, to no avail. It sputters sparks.

B-B-B-BB-BOOOOOMME!! The entire mountainside detonates down its blackened slopes, in a series of hellish bursts...*that thing could even be targeting him.*

Jason rips between them with all the concentration he can muster. *A tinge of fear* flashes between his eyes.

JASON POV

He races for the very edge of the coastside mesa, towards the ocean beyond...

CLIFFSIDE - CONTINUOUS

WHAAAAAH...Jason flies over the edge of the cliff, as a tidal wave of volcanic lava narrowly fails to take Jason as its molten prisoner.

Jason dives to the ocean below, dodging raining lava, and pieces of Guájaro himself—

KRISHHH-KRAASHHH!! Vapor explodes from the ocean below as hot chunks of earth plunge into its depths.

Jason weaves through the firestorm as he laps the ocean waves, dodging white-hot plumes of vapor.

RRRSSHHH! As a massive tidal wave walls him in—

JASON
Daw, c'mon!!!

EXT. CLIFFSIDE VISTA - CONTINUOUS

The rice field continues to sway in the serenity of the highland winds, oblivious to the chaos about..

FLUUUMME! As something like a rocket-borne surfboard shoots up from below, just beyond the edge of the cliff.

Its rider twists and flips by several degrees, letting his arms hang loose, in the calm and weightless exchange of gravity...

A calmed exhalation escapes Jason's lungs amid the peaceful in-between...*he made it.*

Then—

SPCH-KCHK, KACK! The twin engines along his rocketboard begin to sputter—jolting, emitting black smoke.

VVR-VRR-VRRRRR...They dwindle to a standstill, dying in midair as the board flips from Jason's feet—drifting out of his grip.

JASON

Whuah...huoh...AAHHH!!!

He falls from the sky, down to the ground below—

BRAMM. Face-plants right into the dirt from 30 feet up.

...Silence.

JASON

Ugh...

KRCK-CRAK. Tendons and bones crack back into place as he cranes his head from the dirt...

...Meeting the incredulous face of a puzzled young woman; 20-something years old, and dauntlessly jovial.

Her irises gleam with a lively radiance. The kind that only take a split-second to leave a lifelong impression.

She snickers, weakly holding back a chuckle...before giving up entirely—laughing right in his face, *at his demise*. She snorts. *Meet*; CATALINA.

Jason fails to embrace the humor, as well as his spatial orientation. He glares at her from the dirt.

JASON

Thank you...*thank you*. You're all very welcome.

She laughs evermore, snorting again.

Jason eyes that—helpless to a smirk.

CATALINA

Come on...

She extends her hand—

FRRHMP. Dragging him up from the dirt, as he grips his rocketboard in arm. He clasps a switch on the board—

SHWUCH-WUCH-WCK! The surfboard collapses into a cylindrical cluster of tubes in Jason's hand. He stumbles left and right...

CATALINA

Nope; this way, clumsy...

SMAP. She slaps his back, sending dust into the air.

JASON

Agh! ... *Cat.*

She giggles.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - CANYONSIDE -
CONTINUOUS

They amble under the folds of a dense jungle canopy, along a trail overlooking a vast canyon below; the view...*is breathtaking.* Countless rust-eaten plateaus scatter along the canyon gorge below, overtaken by lush forestry and winding rivers.

Jason and Catalina stroll the tranquil highlands, indifferent to the grandeur beyond. *They see this every day.*

JASON

Why not take the shortcut?

CATALINA

Got somewhere to be, *rocketman?*

She grabs an overhanging vine—swinging like Tarzan—

KRUND-FNDD! Dragging down a bunch of forest brush from above, and the vine with it. She stumbles along the ground.

JASON

Y'know what, let's take the long way. *I could use the entertainment.*

CATALINA

Shut...*up*.

She fakes a punch—

He flinches. She giggles—does it again.

JASON

(chuckling)
St-stop!

He shoves her back, laughing all the while.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - PLAZA RUINS -
LATER

WHRSSHHH...a towering waterfall rushes over the remains of a triplet of fallen buildings—taller than any of their peers. They lay crumbled overtop one another, creating a colossal steel canopy.

KREAP-KREEAP! KREAP-KREAAP!! The endless cacophony of a flock of toucans echoes between the falls as they flutter across the towers...

Jason and Catalina meander through the great structure, marveling at the life that sprang from death.

CATALINA

Got anything planned for New Year's?

Jason still eyes the falls...

JASON

Nah...probably goin' down to the rice fields like usual—see what the town's up to. *You?*

Her eyes wander from the toucans, down to Jason—an excited glimmer catching within her eyes...

CATALINA

...Same.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - TILTED
HIGHLANDS - LATER

The crystal-blue rays of a mid-morning sun beat across the rainforest ruins, dividing the fog, and rousing the ancient wilds.

Jason and Catalina walk along the peak of a titanic swath of land, looking high above the jungle canopy. Its starboard end leans skyward, as the other end rests underneath the forest floor. All of Babylonia sprawls out before them.

VSSHHH!! A gust of wind chases through the jungle heights, rippling Catalina's hair.

MRRRR...The massive plateau *sways* in the wind.

CATALINA

(yelling over wind)

Think they'll do anything special this year?

Jason eyes her with a sarcastic glint.

JASON

(yelling)

Why, 'cus it's the big one?

The wind stops.

MMRRRR...the tilted highlands sway back down into position, shifting the very ground under their feet. Neither Jason nor Catalina even flinch.

Jason scans the jungle vista; he spots the village square across the horizon, bustling just as it was before. The crystal blue of the ocean glimmers beyond...

JASON

Cat, if there's one thing I've come to know about this place...is that it'll surprise you...how much it *doesn't surprise you*.

He continues walking.

JASON

...They're not gonna do anything.

Catalina furrows her brow—eyes the village. Something’s on the tip of her tongue...she gives up on it, shaking her head.

They continue their trek across the strange terrain, edging along the tilted highlands of the Babylonia Rainforest. Behind tangled vines and moss, the underside of the great plateau is branded: GRAVIMAXX. REAL ESTATE, ELEVATED.

EXT. THE OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

Somewhere across the cerulean expanse, a towering kingdom perches proudly by the sea...

RSSHH! Camera surfs along threatening waves, approaching a distant collection of mountains hugging the coastline...a titanium fortress towers above the water, seamlessly intertwining between land and sea.

EXT. LARIMAR - TITANIUM COVE - CONTINUOUS

A futuristic metropolis glimmers among the clouds, cast in the brilliant rays of daylight. The gleaming citadel hosts a collection of levitating platforms—home to towering skyscrapers and municipal squares, hovering high over the mountains below.

The modern paradise perfectly wraps around oceanside sierras, as clear glass channels of a luminous flowing substance runs throughout the entire city, glowing in hues of blue.

Waterfalls cascade from the platforms above, synchronizing the entire province between earth and sky.

Pools flow into rivers through civic areas below. This is a utopia...*this*; is LARIMAR.

EXT. TITANIUM COVE - FREIGHTER DOCKS -
CONTINUOUS

An array of gleaming battleships—*or what look like titanium space cruisers*, perch along the edge of a mountainside dock, suspended hundreds of feet above the water.

The LEVIATHAN ARMADA.

INT. LEVIATHAN ONE - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Equally stunning as its exterior, the control bridge of the Leviathan One hosts a sweeping frontal window dome, company to dual-pilots, titanium furnishings and state of the art technology.

KRRUMMMMM...the colossal freighter rotates along the dock, readying for launch, as a glittering horizon unveils through its majestic windows.

A tall, fortified, statue of a man—cloaked in heavy armor and badges running down all available space—*glimmering in platinum and diamond*, walks onto the bridge, to the head of the ship. His stonewall frame is silhouetted against the brilliance of the wide windows.

The chilling intensity of an elder visage accompanies the acerbic gleam in his freezing-cold eyes. *This*; is MALIK, Commodore of the Leviathan Armada.

MALIK
Take her down.

He hardly breaks a gaze with the horizon.

FREIGHTER DOCKS

CHUNGG...the entire vessel tilts forward, as a titanic sliding catch releases the ship toward the ocean far below.

The array of titanium freighters follow suit, leaning towards the tumultuous waves below.

BRIDGE

Malik maintains a gaze upon the horizon, as the entirety of the control bridge remains level, rotating upon a gyroscopic floor...

OCEANSIDE

VUUUUUMMEEE...the Leviathan One drops into free-fall, sliding off of the massive docking system—

ON ROCKET THRUSTERS

VAAAHHH...sapphire-blue rocket thrusters from every angle come alive, slowing the colossal ship's descent to the ocean surface, and propelling it to the skies.

The Leviathan displaces mountains of tidal waves in every direction, flashing the very ocean to steam by the heat of its rockets.

RRUMMMM! It looms over the ocean waves, vaporizing all that would dare to come close. A titanium freighter...*of titanic proportions*...the size of several football fields.

BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Malik holds his stare, raising an eyebrow...challenging the vista beyond. *He's in his element.*

MALIK

Steady now. All units, to the Xinjiang Isles.

A lieutenant grabs a comms microphone from above—

LIEUTENANT

(speaking Larimaean)

Dhammaan cutubyada, ilaa Xinjiang! Wacan oo nadiif ah, hadda.

ON HORIZON

VA-VA-VA-VA-VAHHH. The Leviathan soars onward...to the wide world beyond.

RRRMMMMMM...its fleet follows behind in formation, tossing waves and wind in their wake...

EXT. XINJIANG ISLES - LATER

KRACKMM-KRACKKMMM! A cascade of lightning ripples across the skies, over a tumultuous collection of islands. A black hurricane of smoke swirls through the air, emitting from the vents of several oceanborne volcanoes.

VAAAHHH!!! A white-hot eruption from an unsettled volcano exposes an unusual molten material...something like iridescent *blue lava* boils down the volcano's edge, right before flashing into scalding, turbulent vapor. *This*; is LIQUID CARBON.

Clusters of what look like *pure diamond* crystallize over the edge of the searing vents.

PHRP! PUT-PUTT-PUTTT...a small, steam-driven airship hovers over the vents, struggling to fit a dangling tube over the mouth of the volcano.

INT. PUNY STEAMSHIP - CONTINUOUS

Beads of sweat collect over the brow of an overwhelmed pilot-captain, as he strains with his ship's controls. The fury of Xinjiang's islands cast red-hot light upon his frantic face.

A woman grips him by the arm, worried—

WOMAN

(*Chinese*)

Qing kuài dian!

ON DARK SKIES

CRACKMMM...another strike of lightning bursts along the skies, as...VVVUMMMM. The Leviathan Armada emerges from the blackened clouds above.

INT. LEVIATHAN ONE - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Malik hovers over his omnidirectional window as they descend over roiling volcanoes. The ocean surface boils as numerous vents pepper across the scape, emitting cyanic magma.

MALIK

There we are...well, make a haste of it, then! It evaporates once it hits the oxygen, *lower the pipes!*

VRRRRRR. A great suction tube lowers, as the freighter steadies over the mouth a volcano.

A pilot points across the horizon—

PILOT

Kabtan!

Malik looks.

PILOT

Bidix ayay ka yimaadeen, mudane...

(subtitled)

Approaching on our left, sir...

About a kilometer ahead, a meager entourage of aircraft scatter along the blackened oceanscape.

MALIK

‘Ello! What have we here...

They tumble and rip across ocean waves, skillfully using the thick smog to their advantage...*fighters.*

LIEUTENANT

Ciidamadeenu ma cararaan?

MALIK

No! I’m long wasted on these *dogs* ruining my catch. Ring Alpha One on the line.

LIEUTENANT

Dabcan!

SHVZZZW! A wall-sized hologram populates before the grand window, displaying a telecom of a cockpit interior...Alpha One.

A fresh-faced soldier huffs into the lens. A kindred scowl resounds about a fearless gaze as he raises his brow...*meet*; JOJO.

JOJO

Alpha One, reporting.

MALIK

Scramble the fighters. I want every one of those crickets in the water.

An excited gleam runs across Jojo's face...

JOJO

...*Yes sir.*

INT. ALPHA ONE - COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS

The single-man cockpit twinkles with red LEDs, as the fightercraft rotates into position. Jojo flips his telecom off—grabs a microphone:

JOJO

Alright, y'all heard him! Alpha Two and Three, you're with me...Bravo and Charlie, get our six!

CHUNK! Jojo's ship leans forward, dangling downward to an open floor, exposing the ocean below. He looks to either side, eyeing his comrades quivering excitedly in their jets, whooping like it's a football game.

JOJO
Guul ama geeri!!!

JHIKK! His fighter drops, along with eight others—VUU-VUU-VU-VUMMMM...spiraling over violent waves.

CRICK-UMMM, KRCK-MMMMM...lightning flashes across the expanse as they scramble through obsidian waters.

Jojo spirals through the fog, dodging past erupting vents and crashing waves...

JOJO
Baako-Baako! Where you at, homes?!

A voice fuzzes through his radio comms, as a fighter spirals right at Jojo's 9 o'clock. Its pilot excitedly grins from ear to ear, looking more like he's on a rollercoaster than in a dogfight...*this*; is BAAKO.

BAAKO
(through comms)
Oye, Jojo! Try to keep up this round, ah-hah?

JOJO
(laughing)
Boy, get outa here, Baako!

SHVVRRFF! Jojo swipes against a tidal wave—they both tunnel into the black fog...

JOJO
'Bout to see how it's done, *son!*

VVVRRMMM....an enemy fighter dips right by—emerging from the black vapor for just a second—

BAAKO
Waa taydii!

VRM-VRMM-VRMMM...he spirals out of formation, chasing his first kill.

SHUUMME! Another fighter pokes through the mist—

JOJO
Aah!

He dives after him.

VVEEWW! They chase through the tumultuous black hurricane—CRACK-MMMM! Lightning flashes...

CHEE-CHEE-CHEET! A series of flares fire from the rear of the enemy fighter...flashing amid the smoke.

JOJO
Ain't firin' yet, jethead!

CLK-GRMM! He flips a switch—driving dual joysticks forward to full throttle—

FSSHH! His ship barrels through the smog—crashes through a towering wave, overtaking the unfortunate fighter—

JOJO
GEAAAH!

KLICK! He pulls dual triggers—GEEE-GEE-GEEP!
Unleashing a salvo of plasma fire—

BA-BABA-BBAMMMM!! The enemy fighter is destroyed...

Jojo flips on his comms.

JOJO
Read ‘em and weep, Baako!

BRKGMMM!!! A dual explosion smatters across the dark skies, as a Larimaeen skyfighter jets through the remains, victorious.

BAAKO
Four already!

Jojo grumbles to himself, shaking his head.

JOJO
That boy know he lyin’...

CHRRZCH! Static overtakes the transmission, as another voice blares over the signal—

MALIK
(*over comms*)

Would the two of you quit your monkeying and see to it that we can pull some *ruddy carbon* over here!

JOJO
...Yes sir.

BAAKO
Yes, Commodore!

VRRRMMM...Jojo banks across the waves, heading back into the fray—where a swarm of enemy fighters swirl about the Leviathan One.

JOJO
(*to himself*)
...Alright, Baako.

KLCK-RRMMM...he kicks it into overdrive.

VOOOOMM! A great spout of white-hot lava bursts from below—

JOJO
Woah!

VR-VRR-VRRMMM! Jojo spirals out of the way, flipping by several degrees.

He regains orientation, rotating back into the fight, *when*—

CH-VMMM! CHH-VMMM! An enemy fighter nabs a shot at him—

KRACKA! The inside of his cockpit ruffles by the impact, sputtering with smoke. Red warning lights blare as alarms siren.

BAAKO (O.S.)

(*over comms*)

Alpha One! Are you okay, *Alpha One!!*

Jojo coughs on the smoke, struggles to pilot his ship...

JOJO

Yeah...yeah, I'm straight.

INT. LEVIATHAN ONE - BRIDGE

Malik eyes a holographic display of their fighters on a radar map. One of the fighters goes red, stalling its movement.

Malik whips from the display—

MALIK

Send a recovery dispatch.

LIEUTENANT

Laakin soo kabashadu aad bay u nugul tahay horaanta
dagaalka—

(*subtitled*)

But a recovery unit would be too vulnerable this early in—

Malik steps right in his face—

MALIK

SEND...*A RECOVERY DISPATCH!*

EXT. LEVIATHAN TWO - LAUNCH BAY -
MOMENTS LATER

An obtusely-framed utility ship blasts from the underside of the Leviathan Two, heading into the fray. A dread washes over its pilot's gentle eyes as she eyes the battle ahead...

RECOVERY PILOT
U socda alfa kow!

VRRMMM...the heavy cruiser spirals into the fray—
CHAK-BOOOMM! CHAKA-BUUMMMME...dodging cerulean lava and plasma fire.

EXT. XINJIANG ISLES - CONTINUOUS
VVVUUUMME...the recovery cruiser slows over the crashed wreckage of a Larimaean skyfighter...Jojo. Another friendly fighter banks overhead, taking out approaching enemies—

BACK-UUMME, BACK-UUMMMME! ... Baako.

BAAKO
(*over comms*)
The calvary has arrived, my friend!

VVRRRUMME...the recovery cruiser docks overtop the Alpha One—

KRUTCH-CLUTCH! Anchoring to the wreckage with giant metal clutches.

RECOVERY PILOT

Soo noqonaya!

VRRRRMMM...it takes off, towing Jojo underneath.

INT. LEVIATHAN ONE - LAUNCH BAY -
MOMENTS LATER

JCHK-GMMMM! The recovery cruiser docks into the
Leviathan One—

KACH! A door along its towed wreckage kicks open. Jojo
stomps out, grabbing his helmet in one hand. He circles
around the cruiser, heading to the other ships in the bay—

RECOVERY PILOT

Maxaad samaynaysaa?! ... *Ma waalantay?!!*

(subtitled)

What're you doing?! ... *Have you gone mad?!!*

Jojo quickens his pace.

JOJO

Nuh, uh. You must not 'a heard...

CHVVP! He opens a fightercraft door, similar to the one
he just wrecked—*hops in.*

JOJO

Ain't nobody can't stop tha' Joe!

CHHVP! He slams the cockpit door, straps his helmet
on—

JOJO
(*over comms*)
Let's bust 'em up, baby!

CH-KOCK! The ship drops, back into fury...

JOJO (O.S.)
WHOOOOO!!!!

The winded recovery pilot hangs behind in the launch bay; a column of golden beads dangle from her bangs, as a side-eyed *smirk* glints across her face...she sniffs at that.

EXT. XINJIANG ISLES - CONTINUOUS
VRUUUMMMME...the Alpha One spirals back into action, hugging between lava spouts and tidal waves like he never even crashed.

Another friendly fighter swoops by overhead.

BAAKO
I'll have to try that one sometime, ah? Let me go here an' crash and see what they give me.

Jojo glances, delivering a sarcastic *scowl*.

JOJO
Yeah, go ahead and laugh it up while you're ahead...won't be long, now!

BAAKO
In your dreams, *afweyne*.

VWOOOM! Baako spirals off...to claim more kills. Jojo follows.

ON LEVIATHAN

A giant Magma Tube continues lowering from the hull of the Leviathan One, steadying over a white-hot vent of carbon.

INT. LEVIATHAN ONE - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Malik leans over the omni-window, gazing at their progress below...the tube dangles over the volcano; *a delicate art.*

MALIK

Steady now...*steady*...

ON MAGMA TUBE

CHRLK—GRUMMM! The tube fastens to the mouth of the volcano via vacuum suction. Cerulean magma bubbles up the pipe...

BRIDGE

Technicians from all over the bridge yelp commands—

TECHNICIAN ONE

Diyaar!

TECHNICIAN TWO

Bilaabay!

BAAP! A technician slams a holographic icon, as it flashes red.

ON MAGMA TUBE

SHLLRRCH! The blue magma shoots up the tube, rising into the Leviathan.

EXT. XINJIANG ISLES - CONTINUOUS

IN ALPHA ONE

Jojo eyes the blue tower of light as it cascades up the tube...

IN ALPHA TWO

Baako is equally enthralled...as a building-sized tower of light funnels into the sky, illuminating the blackened clouds about—reflecting within his eyes...

KRCKUMMM-CRACKMMM!! Lightning flashes evermore...

IN ALPHA ONE

Jojo flips on his comms—

JOJO

Aay, everybody run a disc around the suction—nothing gets through!

SHREEWWW...the skyfighter fleet sweeps in, circling around the suction tube with a certain *aeronautical beauty*; the scarlet-red blaze of their rocket thrusters accentuate the piercing blue of the colossal pillar of carbon...

INT. LEVIATHAN ONE - BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Malik eyes the phenomenon below, from his omni-window. His brow raises...*amused*.

MALIK

Alpha One!

JOJO (O.S.)

(*over comms*)

Yes, sir.

MALIK

I see it appears you've made up for your little...*mishap*
earlier.

JOJO

Yessir—won't let it happen again. We're pullin' carbon
down here, sir.

ON CARBON SPOUT

The tower of carbon glimmers in an uncanny beauty, as a
fleet of fightercraft swirl around its circumference...*truly a*
mesmerizing sight. Like a massive lantern amid darkness.

Malik can't resist a proud smile.

MALIK

Yes...*yes we are.*

EXT. XINJIANG ISLES - CONTINUOUS

SCHILLRRCH! The great mass of molten diamond
shoots up the tube, sucking the volcano dry. The tower of
light disappears.

Jojo and his fleet break formation, scattering along the
skies...

JOJO

Alright, I believe that's all of 'em, Captain.

MALIK (O.S.)
(*over comms*)
All but one, boy...

Jojo scans the skies...the puny steam-driven airship still struggles over the farside vents...

A long, toothy grin crawls across Jojo's face. He flips his comms off.

ON ALPHA TWO
Baako eyes the little airship, wincing...shaking his head.

JOJO
Y'all get'cha selves ready for some *fireworks*, okay!

INT. PUNY STEAMSHIP - CONTINUOUS
The frantic pilot-captain eyes the horizon, *as his worst fears are realized*. He grapples with the controls, pulling away from the volcano.

The woman panics behind him, pulling his arms, as two toddling children grip her by the legs...

TODDLER
(*crying*)
Zou, bàba, zou!

WOMAN
Tāmen zhèngzài suǒdìng wuqì!

PILOT CAPTAIN
Wō yào qù! Wō yào qù!

ON ALPHA ONE

Jojo's visage sinks to a deviant grimace as he speeds in their direction...locking onto his target.

IN LEVIATHAN

Malik turns from the window's view. Stoic and apathetic...content with a job well done.

IN STEAMSHIP

The pilot-captain's face sinks to pure fear, as he realizes their inevitable doom...

He lifts his eyes to the horizon, meeting with Jojo's for only a half-second—

IN ALPHA ONE

JOJO
GEAAH!

KRCK! Jojo fires dual plasma cannons—

PHFEEW—PHFEEW! Blasting them to high heaven—

ON STEAMSHIP

BUMMMMMME!!! A shockwave of blue-hot embers erupts from the humble steamship as a chorus of screams reverberate across the skies...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. NUEVA COLOMBIA - RAINFOREST
ENCLAVE - DUSK

The resonating song of a thousand cicadas drifts throughout the twilight sky. Something like a neighborhood of hand-built cabañas perch along the banks of a bubbling waterfall, under a starlit clearing above.

Jason and Catalina meander through the forest brush, into the peaceful enclave...

JASON
(*sighs*)
'Bout freakin' time...

Catalina rolls her eyes...gives Jason an affectionate shove.

CATALINA
You *never* stop complaining...

They laugh.

Villagers walk to and fro, passing between the twinkle of lights within various homes. The hidden collective possesses a subtle pageantry along its winding walkways...a delicate, yet priceless charm.

They walk up to a little house on the corner, up to its wood-borne steps. Catalina stops at the front door...

CATALINA
Well...

JASON
Oh, yeah! Almost forgot.

Jason reaches into his jacket—pulls a slightly bruised guava. He hands it to her, as the biggest smile bursts along her radiating face.

JASON
(*stammering*)
In case you...didn't—in, in case you were hungry.

Catalina's eyes meet his, as the subtle twinkle of the forest enclave sets the tone. She can't stop smiling.

CATALINA
...Okay.

Jason returns the smile. They stand there awhile; short enough to ignore...*but long enough to remember.*

JASON
...*Okay.*

RRRR...she cracks her door open...

CATALINA
My dad's inside, I better...um—

JASON
Yeah! ... Um, yeah.

Jason steps down from the porch. Turns to leave—

CATALINA

...Bye.

Jason whips around—

JASON

Oh yeah! ... Sorry, bye!

They wave. Even from a distance, every light in the enclave seems to twinkle in Catalina's eyes...Jason turns to leave again—

CATALINA (O.S.)

Hey Jase!

He whips back.

She tosses a green, oblong fruit in his direction—

SMAP. He catches it...*the guava*.

CATALINA

...Thanks for taking the long way home.

She winks, sending along one last smirk—as she closes her door.

Jason cracks a half-hearted smile as he's left in solitude, breathing out a confused *chuckle*.

He eyes the fruit, standing alone, as the pale moon lights its rough green skin in a softened gloom.

Jason gives it a toss, catching it in the same hand—raising his brow with a hopeful gleam.

He bites it—continuing along his way.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - NIGHT

Jason trudges through the dark jungle, as it reverberates with nightlife...the once tranquil rainforest clamors with the constant resonance of frogs and cicadas. A hair-raising cacophony of howler-monkeys screech across the canopy.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - CANYONSIDE -
LATER

Jason hikes the edge of the great canyonside as they did before...he gazes out at the vast jungle, alit in stark moonlight. Towering plateaus of steel and concrete pepper across the ruined expanse below...

Jason continues his trek, eyeing the vista with a fresh wonder. *This view never gets old.*

Then—

SPINNG. A golden gleam of light—ever so sudden, flashes within the canyon ruins.

Jason breaks his step—eyeing the steel plateaus with a newfound fascination...

...Nothing.

JASON
Hmph.

He continues along the—

STTTTH! It flutters again, sparkling in golden flashes amid the ruined plateaus.

Jason's pace quickens—as an enlivened inhalation quivers past his countenance...*that time he saw it.*

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - TIMES SQUARE
- LATER

Within the depths of the canyon gorge, amid an endless array of steel columns and ancient destruction, a rainforest glade opens to the starlight above.

The dell is surrounded by the destruction of a fallen civilization...towering with age old ruins, several centuries old.

Jason creeps into the clearing, as the starlit sky unveils above his head...he gazes at the sight of the Milky Way, in the clarity of midnight.

SHWSHH...a draft of wind whirls in a cyclone across the range of the forest glade, tossing dead leaves and dust through the air...

SHTTTPH—PHT! Another flash of golden light. It strobes across the steel columns and jungle foliage—at the center of the cyclone of dust.

Jason's eyes flare...he shields his brow with a hand and covers his nose under his shirt, inching further still...

PHT-AHH! PHTT-AAHH! As the strobes of gold flash
evermore...

WRRSHH! The wind intensifies...

Jason peers at the flashes through his fingers—

JASON
Gugh!

Coughing on dust...

He takes one more step—

WHUMMM...the wind ceases. The flashes subside.

...Silence.

The clearing is eerily dark, once again.

TEET-TEET. A feeble glint of light flickers along the
ancient pavement...Jason eyes it;

It's a hollow ring of faded and chipped platinum, about the
size of a medallion—able to fit inside the palm of one's
hand.

JASON
What?

He picks it up...

Under a layer of scratches and chip-marks, the artifact hosts an arrangement of notches and faint LEDs. He eyes the subtle details of the device, holding it up to his eye...

The timeworn relic returns a lengthy gaze...it's unassuming in design, yet appears to command a pause, now that it's in frame...

Jason squeezes its edge—

SCHAAH! As an explosion of golden light *erupts* from the disc, emitting a holographic field, casting glowing trails into the air.

Jason clutches the device, frantically dodging left and right as strokes of golden light blast from its bands—

JASON
Gaagh!

He dives to the ground, tossing the thing to the trees—

ON DISC

WHUMMM...it halts in mid-air, levitating, and spinning hyper-fast—casting flecks of ultraviolet light—PHTT!
PHT-PHTT!

Jason covers his head...

The device glows ever-brighter, drawing strokes of gold throughout the ruins of Times Square, expanding into a dome of aureate light.

Jason eyes the phenomenon...the gleaming image of a globe drifts by his gaze...

Another...he turns his shoulder...

And another...a circulating waltz of planets dance around the earth in a geocentric model, tracing their orbits like rose petals.

Jason's jaw drops, dumbfounded at the building-sized spectacle...the forest glade is lit up like daylight, as a holographic masterwork suspends amid the air.

He leans up from the ground, eyeing the disc as it hovers above, twirling within the center of the display.

He rises, *taking a chance*—approaching the brilliant orb of gold...

He reaches...

WAUNNG...the air distorts around the orb...as a mirror image of Jason's hand recoils from the orb on the opposite side.

Jason recoils—whipping his hand back just like the reflection did...he *winces*, trying again...

WAYUNNG...a ghost image of his arm separates from his body, moving in reverse. He waves his hand, watching his phantom reflection do the same thing, but backwards.

JASON
Oh...*kay*...

TEE-TEET! TEE-TEET! A luminous floating speck across the glade blinks and beeps repeatedly...

Jason eyes the speckle of light, approaching it with all caution...

TEE-TEET! TEE-TEET!! The little speck continues to call him...

He touches it—

ZWOOMM. It's the planet Earth. It expands, multiplying in size...widespread across the glade.

Jason springs back—

JASON
Yuuugh!

The display continues to grow as its perspective *zooms* through space to Earth's surface.

TEE-TEET! TEE-TEET!! The speck continues to blink...it rests in the midst of a continent-wide jungle...the view continues to zoom...

The very same plateaus of the canyon gorge appear, from a bird's eye view...a figure, standing in the midst of a rainforest glade, hovers over the blinking spec, reaching his hand out to touch it; *it's him*.

Jason's eyes...*widen*.

CHAPTER TWO

AULD LANG SYNE

A SONG OF BIRDS ripple across rays
of dawn as its fog begins to lift. Catalina's family cabaña
perches along the edge of the bubbling falls.

EXT. RAINFOREST ENCLAVE - DAWN

A pair of voices can be heard within the bamboo and straw
dwelling, arguing...*screaming*.

CATALINA (O.S.)

(screaming)

¡¿Y qué si lo hago?! ... ¡¿¿QUÉ SI LO HAGO?!?

CATALINA'S FATHER (O.S.)

¡¡No me sorprendería!! Por ahí haciéndote la ramera,
COMO TU MADRE!!!

GAMM! The bamboo door flings open, as a beet-red,
teary-eyed Catalina storms out.

CATALINA

Aagh!

She thrusts herself against a wooden railing, overlooking
the falls below—drying tears from her eyes...

JASON (O.S.)

Hey Cat! ... Catalina!!

Catalina jumps, startled. She hurriedly dries her entire face
in her shirt, flicks her hair.

CATALINA
Hey, what's up.

Jason runs up to her, bubbling with excitement—pausing as he eyes her reddened cheeks.

JASON
What happened to you?!

CATALINA
W'haat?

She plasters on a phony grin.

Jason motions with his hands, gesturing to his cheeks—blowing them up like a pufferfish.

JASON
Your face is like—

CATALINA
My face is gonna punch you in the face if you don't start talking.

Jason shrugs—flicks a leather strap around his neck. The platinum disc jangles back and forth, strung along the cord with some multicolored beads.

CATALINA
Got you a little man-chain, there?

JASON
*Ab, ah, ah...*a distinguished, male fashion accessory.

Catalina hardly gives that a sniff.

CATALINA
Man-chain.

JASON
New year's resolution, *be cooler*...check.

He gestures to an invisible list in the air. Catalina knocks his arms aside, erasing his non-existent lettering.

CATALINA
New year's resolution, *suck*...check!

JASON
Slash, I don't suck.

CATALINA
(*giggling*)
Slash, you actually do.

He pushes her—she shoves him back. They laugh together, perfectly remedying Catalina's morning gloom.

She glows, back to her radiant self—eyeing the waterfall vista.

JASON
So...what's the move today?

Catalina's eyes trail off—her smile begins to fade...

JASON

...Wanna sling rocks in Gordo's chicken coop again?

He chuckles at that—must've been a good time.

Catalina's gaze remains on the horizon...she glances back to her house.

CATALINA

Um, you go ahead. I've got...stuff to do here.

Jason's brow raises.

JASON

...Sure? You're not skippin' New Year's are you?

Catalina smiles, as that faint glisten returns to her eyes...

CATALINA

Not for anything.

EXT. CLIFFSIDE VISTA - MAGIC HOUR

MUSIC: *Awake My Soul, Mumford & Sons.*

Firelight and sparklers twinkle over the once uneventful rice fields...the entire cliffside has been transformed into a village festival.

The lively zig-zag of festive string-lights illuminate an exterior dance floor, as villagers bustle to and fro, partaking in a grand outdoor buffet.

Jason dawdles through the celebration, a bit aimless. He doesn't really know anybody...

BUTCHER (O.S.)

¡Oye, Jasón!

Jason startles—

The butcher waves his cleaver knife, hailing him down.

BUTCHER

Trust me, you gonna wanna try out some of these chops
amigo! ‘Es free tonight!
(*laughs*)

Jason offers a polite chuckle, waves back.

He walks to the seaside edge of the gathering—eyes the
ocean beyond...it twinkles in hues of purple and gold.

JASON

Hrmph...

...A melancholy sigh.

CATALINA (O.S.)

(*mocking*)

¡Oye, Jasón!

He jumps, whips around, revealing—

Catalina...a woman who could already steal one’s breath
without extravagance—*but with extravagance*. An
unpretentious, yet radiant white dress flutters in the seaside

breeze, as her hair and makeup tell the rest of the tale. *She's gorgeous.*

Jason fumbles over his words...

JASON
Cat...um,
(grunts)
Um, you look—um...

She laughs.

CATALINA
Well, dance with me, stupid!

She grabs his arms, swinging him onto the dance floor...

EXT. CLIFFSIDE VISTA - DANCE FLOOR -
CONTINUOUS

The amber tone of light emphasizes the hazel in Catalina's gaze, as the biggest laugh explodes out of her softly painted face. *Jason's horrible at dancing.*

A four-string banjo quartet performs on the opposite end, clapping hands and stomping feet.

Catalina's dress bounces to the music as she dances faster, daring Jason to keep up...

Jason glimpses into her eyes a brief moment, as the golden firelight glimmers over her pupils. She grabs his hands, spinning with him—

He tries his best to keep up. She twirls out on one arm, spinning ever-faster.

WOAHH! The villagers eye the spectacle that *is* Jason and Catalina. The crowd edges to the sides of the dance floor, giving the duo room.

The crowd starts a synchronized stomp...STMP-STMP-STMP-STMP!

Jason and Catalina eye their audience...*they're the center of attention.* They stomp with them, doubling over in laughter.

The stomping quickens...Jason and Catalina raise their pace, keeping up with popular demand.

Jason takes Catalina by the hand, twirling her to the other side—

CATALINA
Ha-ha!

They're stomping even faster...

They twirl together, hyper-fast, pacing with the music. Catalina grabs both of Jason's hands...

JASON'S POV

SLOW MOTION: For a brief moment, all of time ceases to exist—as *what is to Jason*, the most beautiful creature ever created, giggles in pure joy, gripping both hands in enfolded fingers—swaying somewhere amid the cleft between fantasy and reality...

CHKH! He trips—

They both stumble to the ground in hysterical fashion. Catalina trips onto Jason, face buried in his chest—still laughing.

The crowd hoots and cheers, applauding the impromptu stage-show.

She rolls off of him, laughing still—tripping over herself again...

Jason can only gaze upon her, frozen in the aftermath—hardly laughing at all.

Then...

VVMMMMMMMM...somewhere across the starlit horizon, a massive blast of cerulean *thunders* beyond the edge of sky and sea, dazzling across the atmosphere, and painting the night sky in a raging blue...*something big just happened.*

The banjo quartet ceases their plucking. Villagers all over freeze in utter shock, spellbound at the sight. An *iridescent gleam* shimmers along the clouds...

Jason gapes at the phenomenon from the floor of the dance square...his jaw, dropping.

CATALINA

C'mon! We can get a better view from up here.

She yanks Jason up—dragging him as she darts towards a secluded peak along the cliffside...

EXT. CLIFFSIDE PEAK - CONTINUOUS

They climb up a steep incline of rocks, up to a secluded ledge, where a solitary Nutmeg Tree clings to the edge of the mesa.

Jason leans out upon the ledge, hanging on a Nutmeg branch by his hand...he can't take his eyes off the horizon.

The clouds divide and undulate, *roiling* from the seismic event in the skies...

CATALINA

What is this...

EXT. LARIMAR - FREIGHTER DOCKS -
CONTINUOUS

CHUNK-JUNG, KUNG-CHUNG! A gleaming array of titanium freighters unhitch from their docks—

KLUMM-KRUMM, BRUMM-RUMM. Leaning down to the ocean, readying for take-off.

Malik hurries down a skywalk overlooking the madness, with a broad view of the seismic phenomenon across the horizon.

The nighttime sky glimmers in hues of sapphire, casting iridescent blue rays across the gleaming empire, occluding the very stars themselves.

Malik barks orders as the ships come alive, and crew members from all angles rush to their freighters. *This place is a madhouse.*

MALIK

Ready the launch! Freighters one through five, begin undocking!

Jojo catches up, running alongside.

JOJO

Commodore, why we takin' all five!? We don't even know what that thing is yet!

Malik grabs him by the shoulder, whipping him from his stride—

MALIK

I know what it is boy!!!

He pulls a pair of electromagnetic binoculars—shoves them in Jojo's face.

BINOCULAR POV

A rainbow of light boils within the digital scope, animating across the skies from end to end...

MALIK

That...would be my retirement.

Jojo removes his gaze from the binoculars...eyeing his captain with a solemn density.

MALIK

...And your *commencement*.

He shoves past the pilot, rushing onward...

Jojo's stuck in the aftermath, processing all of this...

JOJO

...Commencement for what?!

Malik turns, eyeing the squadron leader, unable to hide a glint of pride...

MALIK

Why, as Commodore, no doubt! ... You're my son, aren't you?!

(*laughs*)

He rushes onward.

...As an adventurous gleam ignites in Jojo's eyes, *game for the chase*.

Jojo fist-pumps to himself—

JOJO

WHOOO!!

Rushing to catch up.

EXT. CLIFFSIDE PEAK - CONTINUOUS

Jason and Catalina stare in silence, mesmerized by a cosmic anomaly, manifest among the clouds.

JASON
...It's carbon.

Catalina startles at that. They've been sitting quiet for a while.

JASON
...A *big one*.

Her eyes drift back to the horizon...a combination of wonder and fear.

JASON
Whoever gets it is gonna be rich.

Catalina shuffles her stance, wincing at the foreign twilight above...

CATALINA
I didn't think anyone still did that anymore...

Jason raises a brow at the night horizon, lit up like an atomic bomb. The very clouds scatter from shockwaves pulsing across the skies...

JASON
Whoever's not already is sure gonna start...

EXT. SANTA VICTORIA - CONTINUOUS

A team of laborers furiously band together, heaving colossal braided ropes—ST^rTRRCH, hoisting an oakwood sliding catch of titanic proportions, over the oceanside cliff of a majestic Spanish dynasty. The city glimmers like the medieval kingdoms of old.

A group of them toil to thrust a massive wooden lever, dropping a counterweight into the ocean—

KLCK-RRLLLLL...the gigantic weight-system shifts the balance of the titanic oakwood rails, leveraging them forward—down to the ocean.

The throng of laborers release their ropes as they go flying into the air...

MUMMA-MUMMAA-MUMMAAH...from below the depths of the oceanside kingdom, an emerald luminescence raises—casting radiant green light upon the spires of the limestone empire.

A succession of cedar beams raise from the understory, lifting past houses and streets...a promenade of broad masts, hosting sails of all sizes...

RRRRMMMMMM...the body of a great Spanish Galleon looms above every tower within the city; a sailing warship—*of epic proportions*.

VVRRRRRR...an innumerable collection of rearward rocket thrusters radiate in hot, viridescent embers, throwing green brilliance across the countryside.

RRRRR..VRRRRR...RRRMMM...*dozens* of majestic warships rise from the cliffside, widespread along the coast.

...*Then,*

BLOOOOOMMMEE. The flagship blasts onward, down to the ocean, leaving the wooden railing—

BLUUUUMMEE-VVUUUMMMEE-
RRRUUMMMEE...as the vast fleet follows suit.

THHHWAAAAHH...a pair of tremendous canvas wings extend on either side, as the grand flagship sails over the waters—*and into the skies.*

THHWAAH! THHW-THHW-THWWHHAAAAH!
Dozens of palatial vessels file behind, following the flagship's lead...

They glide over the waters, to the gleaming vista beyond.
RRRRRMMMMM...an emerald brilliance overtakes the entire cove—*casting tumultuous waters in a vivid green*, as rocket thrusters propel the airborne assemblage.

They sail onward, as an iridescent blue haze echoes across the nighttime horizon, splitting the darkness itself.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - CANYONSIDE -
LATER

Jason and Catalina hike through the thick underbrush of the rainforest canyonside. The abnormal night sky pulsates

over the grand vista of the ancient ruins, casting everything in a bizarre blue twilight; *like moonlight, but on overdrive.*

Jason trudges through dead leaves...keeping to himself as Catalina walks ahead.

CATALINA

Why ya so quiet all the sudden?

Jason keeps walking, shrugs it over.

JASON

I'dn-nh...

CATALINA

Huuh?

Jason shrugs it over again—avoiding it. He walks onward, passing Catalina as she hangs back.

CATALINA

Jason...*what?*

Jason breaks his step, eyeing the sapphire twinkle of the foreign night sky...he blows a despondent sigh.

JASON

*It's just...*I've been wanting to get off this rock as long as I can remember. And some people, Cat...that's their living, I mean—that's their life!

He trails his gaze to the coastline behind them. Their quaint little New Year's Festival twinkles along the cliffside.

JASON

Whatever this place was before it fell, I'm sure *those guys* knew what I'm talking about.

He keeps walking, leaving Catalina behind.

Catalina furrows her brow, crossing her arms. *She's had it.*

CATALINA

So what're you gonna do, gripe about it?!

JASON

No...*Cat.*

CATALINA

No—I mean seriously! You get into these *mopey attitudes* all the time about this, and it's really starting to bum me out.

JASON

Can we not do this?

CATALINA

Do what?! I'm trying to *figure you out!*

JASON

GAAH!! Every day I'm asking myself that exact same question! *Who am I?! What am I supposed to do?!* Everybody else seems to have that stuff figured out already...

He huffs as he recomposes.

JASON
...*You have it easy.*

Catalina raises an eyebrow—cocking her head to the side.

CATALINA
What's that supposed to mean?

JASON
I mean...at least you have *your dad*, ya know, to like—

CATALINA
My dad's a *deadbeat*, thanks for asking.

He sniffs at that—raising his brow to himself.

JASON
Really? ... Is that why you were *crying* this morning?

Catalina immediately blushes. She turns away, ignoring the question—walks in the other direction.

JASON
Wait, Cat...*Cat!*

She whips around—eyeing him from a distance; biting back emotion, hoping for something good.

Jason scans the vista beyond...the ancient ruins of Times Square lies in the midst of the canyon gorge below, cast in eerie blue twilight...

JASON

Just...lemme show you something.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - TIMES SQUARE
- LATER

The gloomy rainforest dell emanates with a certain kind of *darkness*—as a forest of rusted plateaus loom over the space.

Jason drags Catalina by the arm as he hastens into the dark city, overgrown with plant life...

CATALINA

Why do we have to—

JASON

Just follow me!

They run down into the abandoned square...*where Jason found the artifact.*

CATALINA

...So much for New Year's.

CHINK. He snatches the disc from his strap.

JASON

I found this thing on the way home yesterday...

Catalina rolls her eyes.

CATALINA

Yeah, your man-chain. You showed me.

Jason shakes his head...stifling his exhilaration.

JASON

...Not all of it.

He cradles the hollow disc in his hands, as its LEDs blink along its edges...TEE-TEET...TEE-TEET...

And squeezes its sides—

KLOHH! An *explosion* of golden light erupts from the once hollow metal ring, tracing aureate trails across the glade and around plateaus, drawing rose petals in midair.

CATALINA

Yaagh!

Catalina jumps, dodging the strokes of light as if they were made of fire.

JASON

Don't worry, don't worry...I did the same thing.

The golden strokes align with a series of tick-marks, displaying calendar dates—as the nine planets intertwine in articulating orbits, revolving around the Earth.

Shimmering particles of light dance in Catalina's face, reflecting in her eyes—as her fear turns to wonder...

JASON
Watch this...

He walks over to planet Earth, tapping it with his finger—

SHWOOP! It expands, zooming in on their exact point,
emitting a holographic depiction of the Babylonia
Rainforest.

CATALINA
So, what is this...

JASON
It's us. It's showing exactly where we are...*a map of the world.*

Catalina eyes a particle of gold as it drifts by...

CATALINA
But what does it mean...*for you.*

Jason's face falls.

JASON
I don't know, Catalina...

SHTAK! He claps his hand over the artifact, shutting it
off.

JASON
...I don't know.

The golden projection disappears, leaving behind countless clusters of *red speckles*, surrounding them amid the ancient structures...

They glare at the two, *like eyes in the dark*.

Jason and Catalina study the ghostly figures—as a swarm of red speckles appear to be *crawling* down the vine-infested plateaus above.

CATALINA

You turned that thing off, *right?*

JASON

Yeah...

The wraithlike lights drift ever closer, as even more appear from the alleyways...

CATALINA

Then why are there *still lights?!*

Jason shudders...

JASON

Hey, Cat?

CATALINA

...Yeah?

JASON

I'm thinkin' we take the shortcut home tonight...am I right?

CATALINA
Yeah, no...you're not wrong.

JASON
Good.

They book it, hurtling over each other with all pace—

WREAAAAH! The horde of scarlet eyes leap into the twilight, chasing after them—revealing a brood of monstrous *insectoid* creatures; *WRRAAAIH-GAIH-GAIH!!* They howl into the twilight skies, exposing razor sharp, slime-dripping teeth.

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - BROADWAY -
CONTINUOUS

Jason and Catalina high-tail it through the crumbled remains of what must've been an ancient labyrinth. Dozens of towering plateaus lean overtop another, lining a desecrated avenue ahead.

WREAAH-WRREEAAH! Multitudes of coal-black beetles swarm down the walls, cascading over themselves like a waterfall...*crawling out of the very earth.*

JASON
Run, Cat!!

CATALINA
I'm literally in front of you!

They sprint down the alleyway, racing against an obsidian tidal-wave.

They rush to a dead end—a fallen column blocks the way, eaten through by parasitic plant life. It exhibits the text: EMPIRE STATE.

CATALINA

Frickin' prickly pears...we're trapped.

Jason grabs her hand—

JASON

Not yet, we're not.

He yanks Catalina down a narrow corridor, just as insectoids cover the avenue like water on rock.

WRREEAAHH!

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - RUSTED
CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

They sidle through a narrow passageway created by leaning plateaus. Their corroded support beams give only a foot of passage—*it's a tight fit.*

CATALINA

You'd better have a plan in case this falls through!

She sidles ahead of Jason, between rust-eaten beams and tangled vines.

Her fingers graze a rod of metal—

ON METAL BEAM

A microscopic *legion* of insectoids seethe from the rusted rod, like a disturbed termite nest—CHAKA-CHAKAA-CHAKKAA...their bodies flicker in crimson red...

JASON

It won't, just *hurry up!*

KRUNK! A heavy steel beam crashes right behind Jason's foot from a hundred feet up; he jumps, eyeing the structure above...

...As the entire framework of corroded supports overhead begin to disintegrate, aided by an army of ten-thousand microbugs. A sinister scarlet glow radiates from the tarnished metal above...

JASON

(*to himself*)

Hmph, so it *is* falling through.

CATALINA

What was that?

KRAASH!! The supports above give way—

JASON

Nothing, just run a little faster, and don't look up!!

KRUMM-BRUMM, FRUMMMM! A cascade of oxidized metal showers from above, as Jason and Catalina bolt for dear life—the rusted corridor is coming down, *with them inside*.

JASON
There!!

Twilight shines through a thin opening about thirty yards away...

RRREEAAAR...the entirety of the leaning plateaus begin to crumble overhead, as a cascade of scarlet microbugs explode from their beams. *It's like an evil light show—*

JASON
Run, Cat!!

CATALINA
Literally, going, *faster than you!!*

BRUMMMMMMM!!! The towering plateau collapses, sending steel, dust and concrete to the very ground, swallowing up the narrow corridor and all that's inside—

JASON
AAAAGH!!

CATALINA
YAAAGH!!!

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - FIFTH & 33RD -
CONTINUOUS

BRUUMMMME!! Concrete, steel, and jungle foliage crashes down from all angles, occluding everything in gigantic billows of dust...

Jason struggles to see through the thick haze; he stumbles around a barren intersection, struggling to breathe.

JASON
(*coughing*)
Cat...CAAT!

He eyes the crumbled towers behind...*fearing the worst*. He rends his fingers through his hair, trembling—fathoming the unthinkable...

JASON
CATALINA!!!

CATALINA (O.S.)
Nice to know I mean so much to you.

Jason jumps, coming down from hysteria...

CATALINA
Now, about that shortcut...

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - BROOKLYN
BRIDGE - LATER

The ancient remains of a once prominent viaduct now wither under the gloom of twilight. Massive Liana vines and Kapok trees entrap and suffocate the fragmented archway, as nature reclaims its rightful domain.

This is the BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

JASON
We cross this and we're home free!

KREEAAHH! A multitude of jet-black insectoids with blood-red divisions emerge from the gorge below,

multiplying across the nighttime landscape, *like an ant hive come to life*.

Jason leads the way as they race onto the bridge—vaulting over fractures and bobbing under tangled vines, striving to beat the horde across.

Catalina trips over a snarled root—SCHOOF!

CATALINA

Aggh!

BRAMM—takes a hard landing...

Jason glances back, double-takes.

JASON

Caat!!

She shakes it off, grabbing a vine, raising herself up—

CATALINA

Don't worry...*got it!*

KRUM—B-BUMMMM! The gravel under Catalina's frame gives way, crumbling down a long descent below, into the depths of the canyon gorge.

Catalina clutches the vine with all she can offer, dangling through the broken cavity, wincing at the thousand foot drop below...

Crimson luminescence roils across the great ravine...

CATALINA
Yeah, I *ain't* got it.

SLRRCH! The vine slips, dropping her three feet—

CATALINA
JASE!!

JASON
Hang on!

Jason dives for the vine—grabs hold.

SHRRCH! The vine's many tendrils begin to stress and break—exposing numerous strands within...

Catalina eyes it—

CATALINA
JASONN!

JASON
I've got you!

He begins pulling her up, careful not to break the vine...

JASON
...You're not goin' anywhere.

A cluster of scarlet eyeballs illuminate from behind Jason's back...they're too late.

Catalina's eyes widen in fear...

Jason turns—

JASON
Wba—

SCHREAH! The vine snaps, relinquishing Catalina to the hellish chasm below...

CATALINA
EEAAH!

JASON
NAOO!

FRMMP! He grips her by the hands, leaning halfway through the crevice, about to fall in himself...

Jason gazes into her soft eyes, reflecting the desolate twilight...

JASON
...You go, I go.

For that brief moment, all fear evaporates from Catalina's visage...she furrows her brow, grabbing onto Jason's arms—

CATALINA
ENGH!

Pulling herself up.

She grabs onto the ledge of the crevice, pulling Jason as well.

JASON
Aargh!

They tumble over each other, onto the base of the bridge. *KREAAAGH...* as a mob of insectoids encircle them on all sides.

Catalina gazes all around, as a scarlet doom reflects within her eyes...the monstrous locusts encroach upon their prey, dripping a thick black *sludge* from their teeth...

CATALINA
...Happy New Year, Jason.

JASON
Uh, huh...

Then—

WREEAAHHH!! The slime-laden beasts pounce all at once, leaping for Jason and Catalina—

JASON
GAAGH!

CATALINA
YAAGH!

SCHOOOF! SCHOOOF-SCHOOOF!! A sudden salvo of plasmatic *buckshots* takes out three of them. The insectoids scatter around their prey, startled.

VRRRM. A blinding collection of headlights gleam from behind their heads, as the screech of an antique hoverbike skids to a halt.

A heavily cloaked figure, significant in years, donning shades at night, and pointing a smoking blunderbuss—scoffs from the seat of his bike...*like it's just another day of the week. This;* is LEVI JONES.

LEVI
...Get on.

Jason and Catalina exchange looks, mutually agreeing upon the obvious—

They scramble into the backseat of the bike, hanging on for dear life.

LEVI
(*to himself*)
...Kids.

SCHEEEWMM! He takes off, back down the Brooklyn Bridge.

RUNGGA-GUNNGA! They zoom over roots and vines, swerving left and right...

JASON
You're going back?!

LEVI
Safe house, don't worry.

CHK-VUUMME! He speeds back into the ruins...

WREEEAHH!! As a horde of demoniac insectoids retain their pursuit, effusing from the very earth.

LEVI
Hang on!

EXT. BABYLONIA RAINFOREST - CITY HALL -
CONTINUOUS

A desolate glade lies surrounded by the ruins of countless steel plateaus...*BBRRROAAAH!!* As an underground swarm of bug-like mutations erupt from the center of the abandoned clearing.

LEVI
Really ticked 'em off, didn't you?

SCRRRR! He torques his hoverbike sideways, shredding the ground with sparks—

JASON
What're you doing!?

SHHVVV!! Levi drifts a semicircle around the dell, wheeling around the mounting insectoid army...

ON HOVERBIKE FRAME
The sparks cascade from the drifting edge of the hoverbike, landing upon a trail of discarded aluminum jugs and gasoline—

FREAAAHH! Fire *explodes* from the very ground, lining a wall of flames behind them, catching upon the crumbled towers above.

Jason and Catalina gape at the spectacle, awestruck at the climbing inferno...

RRUUMMM!! A wild blaze rapidly overtakes the center of the dell, wrapping over an amassment of flaming locusts—

LEVI

It's 'bout to get loud!

CHBUUUMME! BUUMME-BWUUUMMMME...a series of explosions erupt across the entire forest dell, radiating out to all of the Babylonia Rainforest; these ruins...*are 'bout to be ruined.*

WREEEAHHH-GREEEAHHH!!! The cries of a legion of accursed beasts ring out across the skies, as Levi pedals to the metal—

RRRVVVVVM! They fly down a straightaway, racing the fire itself, as a succession of detonations line the towers on either side—

CHBOOOM, CHAKA-BUUMMMEE!! Flocks of birds evacuate the crumbling plateaus, as the rainforest falls to its knees. Fire and steel crumbles and explodes a *mere foot* behind them...

CATALINA

We're not gonna make it!

LEVI
(*to himself*)

C'mon, boy. I know you 'round here somewhere...

GAAAAAAHH...the raging inferno licks at their backs as all of Babylonia crumbles to smithereens...a firestorm surrounds them on all sides.

Jason and Catalina eye one another in defeat...*surely, this is the end of the line.*

LEVI
There!!

They glance to the pathway; *a subway entrance lies dead ahead.*

BAKA-BUUUMMEE!! As a final detonation overtakes them all, enclosing them in a ball of fire...

LEVI
GEEEAHH!!

SLOW MOTION: Levi gives it all he's got, as roiling flames encircle them all...

SCHVOOOM!! They zoom into the abandoned subway entrance...

INT. ANCIENT SUBWAY - CONTINUOUS
Clusters of cobwebs and Liana vines overtake an abandoned railway below the ground...

SCHVRRRMM...Levi speeds onto the rails, chasing into the dark tunnel.

WWEEAAHHH...the blood-curdling howls of the insectoid swarm drift off into a distant echo, waning to silence as the crew crosses into blackness. Levi's headlights illuminate the way.

Silence, dominates...

JASON

Hey, where you taking us?!

CATALINA

Jase!

JASON

What?! We don't know this guy!

Levi turns to Catalina...

LEVI

Guessin' your boyfriend's the *grateful* type.

A stray ember burns along Jason's jacket...

LEVI

...Put that out, please.

JASON

Gaagh!

Jason jolts at the flame, slapping himself.

...Repeatedly.

INT. ANCIENT SUBWAY - BROAD STREET
STATION - CONTINUOUS

CHRZWK! A jerry-rig of ultraviolet fluorescents flicker along the ceiling, illuminating a cobweb-infested mosaic. Clusters of baby tarantulas scatter as Levi and the crew ride in...

SCHAFF-FAFF-FAAAF...the worn-out hoverbike scrapes along the rails, slowing to a stop in the middle of the abandoned subway terminal.

Levi dismounts, trudging up a set of crumbled steps—

LEVI

You'll have to stay here for the night...

Catalina winces, dismounting from the bike as well.

CATALINA

Okay, first of all...*um*. Um, second of all...he's not my
boyfriend.

Jason glances at that.

CATALINA

And third of all, *um*...

LEVI

Was there a third of all?

CATALINA
Working on it. Third of all...

LEVI
Thank you. Third of all, thank you.

He removes his shades, smiles—resuming his step...

CATALINA
...Right.

LEVI
Your boyfriend can thank me later—

SHVVV! He passes through automatic doors.

Catalina glances back to Jason—dubious of their next move...

INT. SAFE HOUSE - ENTRYWAY - LATER
A narrow staircase lines an ominous path beyond the foyer of a dark and lonely office wing. A smattering of ultraviolet and tungsten lamps illuminate the way onward...*this joint is just plain creepy.*

Catalina and Jason tail after the heavily-cloaked elder, reluctantly following his lead.

CATALINA
Hey! What were those back there?!

The place is absolutely cluttered, filled with maps...*maps everywhere*—plastered all over the walls, and piled upon tables and shelves, alongside compasses and ink wells.

CATALINA

...What are these?

She grabs a map...an old *papyrus scroll*.

TWRRL...a quill rolls down its reeds, trailing fresh ink—

Levi whips back—*snatching* the page from her hands, like he's handling a precious China vase.

LEVI

A-tut, tut, tut! That one's a work in progress...

Catalina's brow raises, deciphering this mysterious *weirdo*...

CATALINA

...Who *are* you?

Jason studies a map, marveling at its features...*it's unlike any he's ever seen*. Under an ultraviolet lamp, phosphorous blue veins radiate into sight...tracing through land and sea like invisible rivers.

LEVI

...That depends on who you're talking to. Most know me as *Mr. Jones*...yet there are still some, who call me—

JASON

The Diamond Cartographer...*wait*, I thought those were only stories—you're...*you're real?!*

Levi pats his jacket...then his chest.

LEVI

...Last I checked.

An enlivened exhalation escapes Jason's lungs...he grabs his forehead in disbelief, *like he just met a rockstar*.

JASON

Whoah...this is crazy. You're supposed to be like...dead, or a legend, or a *dead legend*—

CATALINA

What's...a diamond cartographer?

Levi points right at her nose—

LEVI

The...Diamond Cartographer.

JASON (O.S.)

Legend!!

LEVI

That's right...come along, lemme show you somethin'.

INT. SAFE HOUSE - MAP ROOM - CONTINUOUS
CHGRLK! A rickety door struggles open as Levi and the crew creep inside...

It's a grand exhibition room, host to all sizes of maps, lining the walls like wallpaper, piecing together like a puzzle. Looks as either the work of a genius, *or the cave of a madman.*

LEVI

You see, I traveled the world...no sector too trivial, no region too remote.

The charts sprawl across every wall, piecing together a map of the world...*reshaped as we know it.* The continents we once knew are no more; disfigured, scattered, and spiraled around a central isle in a ring-like formation.

JASON

All over the world, you say...

Catalina shoots a silent glare at Jason...*he ignores it.*

LEVI

...No place untouched.

CATALINA

What were you looking for?

LEVI

Not looking, darling...

He backs towards a steel lever on the wall, throws it—

JUMMM. The warm tungsten lamps suddenly switch to chilling ultraviolet fluorescents, illuminating radiant blue

veins along every map on the wall, unifying them by their blood-like channels.

They converge...*all of them*, into a central isle, in the middle of the back wall.

LEVI
...*Charting*.

CATALINA
Charting for what?

LEVI
My maps are priceless. Possession of one of these could make the right man a *billionaire* in a matter of months.

JASON
So that makes you a billionaire, then?

...Catalina rolls her eyes in private.

Levi shakes his head, averting his gaze.

LEVI
No...no, I'm not the right man. The Medianic Ocean will test one in ways...*one ought not to be tested*...that, and carbon's one of the dirtiest businesses a man can get into—that's why I just stick to my maps.

CATALINA
...Carbon?

LEVI

Each one of these channels is a stream of liquid carbon...*molten diamond*—pre-oxidation, traveling underground. And they all connect...*here*.

KACK. He slaps his blunderbuss at the glowing central isle...it radiates under the handgun in phosphorescent ink.

LEVI

...At *Diamond Rock*.

His eyes and dentals gleam in the ultraviolet, as he cracks a toothy grin...

Jason raises a brow, intrigued beyond measure.

JASON

Diamond Rock...

LEVI

An entire continent...made of re-crystallized diamond, jutting into the sky. By the grace of my maps, I'd only theorized its existence...*until today*.

JASON

That big light in the sky...that was it, wasn't it?

LEVI

The end has come!!!

He laughs through his teeth. Catalina winces, disturbed.

LEVI

And they'll all be running for it, the buzzards...to claim it first.

CATALINA

Will *you*?

KLUNG. He throws the switch again, setting the lights back to normal.

LEVI

You kids wanna see somethin' cool?

INT. SAFE HOUSE - RUSTED HOIST - MOMENTS
LATER

They all squeeze into a corroded construction-grade elevator—*designed for one person*.

CATALINA

Watch it—*ouch!*

JASON

Just...

Levi eyes them amid their struggle, suppressing a helpless smirk.

RAACKKA-TACKETA-RACKA...he pulls the rickety door closed.

LEVI

...Pull the lever, son. You're the closest.

TWUCK. Jason flips it—

GRUMP! The hoist rattles, dropping a foot..

Catalina and Jason ruffle in alarm; *nothing happened.*

JASON
It didn't—

FLAAAH! The elevator takes off, dropping like an amusement ride.

Jason and Catalina grip against walls of the hoist, clinging for dear life...Levi can't help but chuckle.

FLOOMM...they descend fathoms underground, whipping by dozens of proximity lanterns, marking their depth.

CATALINA
...It's getting faster!

JASON
How do we stop this thing?!

Levi winks...

...*Then,*

WHOOHHMM. They plummet into a vast underground chamber; a mountainous cavern, concealed under the rainforest.

A circular substructure hugs the perimeter of the cavity, hosting four tremendous mechanical arms, spaced in equal quadrants, elevating a titanic watercraft above the fathomless depths below...*a carbon freighter.*

Jason presses his nose right up to the frame of the hoist...he's speechless.

JASON
...You can say *that* again.

Catalina eyes him, a quizzical look.

CATALINA
*Jase...*I didn't say anything.

He whips to Levi—

JASON
How many kilos does that thing hold?!

Levi raises his brow...

LEVI
You know your equipment...

He turns to eye the vessel, a gleam captivating his eye.

The seaborne behemoth appears to be constructed of every metal known to man; the size of a battleship, *but a real hack job*—with entire sections crumbled away by rust. Ain't pretty, but it works. *This*; is THE AURORA.

LEVI

She's a battle-class carbon freighter. Capable of unleashing 7000 rounds of pure plasma on either side before needing a reload. That there at the top is The Maelstrom. A custom-modified gatling laser designed for anti-air and sea-level defense.

(leans to Jason)

Ya ain't 'bout to find another one of *those* on the water...

He eyes the iron titan, as his face brims with pride...

LEVI

...Her name is Aurora.

(to Jason)

And she can hold thirty thousand kilos—fifteen on each side to be precise.

Jason and Catalina gape through the rusted slats, unable to believe their eyes; this *is cool*.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE - CAVERN HANGAR -
CONTINUOUS

KRUNKA-GUNGGA...the elevator scrapes to a stop, lowering down to an observation deck, overlooking the entire cavern hangar from a circular skywalk.

RAKETA-TACKETA. Levi raises the steel doors, as Jason and Catalina collapse out onto the solid floor, stumbling around with a newfound appreciation for gravity.

LEVI

...Okay.

They lean over the rail of the lookout—gaping at the spectacle beyond.

LEVI
Big, isn't it?

They can hardly offer a word...

JASON
You don't seriously *own* this thing!

LEVI
Oh, yeah. Used to tear it up with this beauty all the time,
until...

Catalina breaks her gaze.

CATALINA
Until what?

Levi's eyes trail off a moment...

...He clears his throat.

LEVI
Anyway, I better show y'all where you can bunk for the
night. Plenty 'a rooms on board.

He starts down the way...

Jason and Catalina exchange a raised eyebrow...

Levi whips back around—

LEVI

And I know what y'all are thinkin'...*separate* suites, 'ya hear me?!

KLAPP. Levi crackles in laughter—slapping Jason's shoulder, *who doesn't appreciate the joke at all*, as Catalina mouths "*Oh my gosh*" to herself...eyes widening in discomfort.

INT. THE AURORA - CABIN HALL - LATER

CHK-ZWK! The strobe of overdue bulkhead lights casts the dark interior of the Aurora in a dim, aquamarine flicker. A succession of rust-eaten nautilus doors line the way down the dingy Cabin Hall.

Levi marches down the way, hands crossed behind his back...

LEVI

Do not be fooled by the immaculate interior. The Aurora is a Class-A carbon freighter, and I intend to keep it as such. Mandatory lights-off in forty-five. Optional breakfast at oh-six-hundred.

A trio of black rats scuttle across the iron-bolted floors, right over Catalina's feet—

CATALINA

Shpb!

She exhales sharply, quietly rolling her eyes in *dread*.

JASON

Wait, did you just say six AM?!

LEVI

At lights-off, there will be no visiting, no canoodling, no talking, no yelling, no *telling*. I sleep light. I also snore loudly. If that bothers you, there are ear plugs hanging on the inside of each and every door. They are gently used, though I've no idea by who. Lavatories are located at the head. As we are currently static, they are for number one, and *number one only*. If you have a number two, hold it. If you can't hold it...*hold it*. Any failure to follow the aforementioned orders will result in immediate disembarkation from this vessel. *Do I make myself clear?*

Jason and Catalina shuffle in Levi's shadow, a bit overwhelmed.

JASON

You really don't have to do all this Mr. Jones...

Levi flips around, making eye contact for the first time since bringing them aboard.

LEVI

...On my ship, it's *Captain Levi*.

He disappears around the corner.

CATALINA

Uhm, Captain Levi?

He pops back in the hall.

Catalina hesitates...

CATALINA

...Do you live here alone?

He extends a polite smile.

LEVI

...Get some rest, princess.

He disappears again...leaving Catalina helpless to a smirk.
Jason eyes them, *annoyed*.

CATALINA

What?

JASON

Don't you find any of this creepy?

CATALINA

Of course I do! You were the one who had to show me
that *stupid* chain!

LEVI (O.S.)

I heard that! You're free to test your luck sleeping outside
if you want, won't bother me at all!

They hunch in real close, quieting down to a whisper.

JASON

...I think this guy might be our ticket.

CATALINA

Jase, *no!* I saw that look in your eye, you are not
manipulating him!

Jason can't suppress a grin...*he's really riling her up.*

CATALINA

You listen to me, tomorrow morning, we are eating
breakfast and going back to our regular lives, you
understand?!

LEVI

Ticket to what.

STHUH! Jason and Catalina leap out of their shoes,
startled; he's standing right behind them.



That concludes this sample of
[The Infinit Universe™ Book Two: Manifest](#)

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