

Supernova Blues

(Episode #1)

Written by

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FADE UP

EXT. EARLY MORNING SKY ABOVE JIM'S HOUSE - DAYBREAK

A brilliant bright light shines quarter-sized of the moon, just above a visible tree line, in early morning twilight.

JIM (V.O.)

(Southern accent)

My name is Jim. I prefer Jim, not Jimmy or James, because my last name is Dean. I grew up with kids teasin' me when they found out I shared a common handle with frozen foods or some iconic dead actor. My parents are from Arkansas so I'm named after the famous singer actually, who yep, sold microwavable breakfast saugage. But, never mind all that.

It's a slow pan down, from the brilliant bright light, to a rundown two-story house in East Portland.

A font reads: "Portland, Oregon - Multiverse ..." Digital numbers rapidly click under the locaters, landing on "13952934781165911.00987ZZ (11.ZZ)" / 168 Hours to Gravitational Wave Impact"

JIM (V.O.)

This is where I live.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAYBREAK

Two hipster 20-somethings sit in separate furniture, totally engrossed in their cell phones.

JIM (V.O.)

And these are my roommates. They're watching an event unfold that has never been seen, so vividly, in, welp, all of human history. I mean, there was the Christmas star, but no one really knows what that was.

INT. LIVING ROOM COUCH - DAYBREAK

Robby (27), loose hipster clothing, big African American hair, sits scrolling his cell phone.

JIM (V.O.)

Robby Smith's parents are from New York City but go figure they were Goth fans. Robby's dad played off-stage synthesizers with an old rock band called Living Colour.

-Electronic static fuzzies the screen.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. QUANTUM Q CORPPORATE OFFICES - DAY

Robby, immaculately dressed and groomed, stares out of a high-rise window in his sleek office. He turns to the camera, takes off his glasses.

JIM (V.O.)

He is named after Robert Smith of The Cure.

INT. LIVING ROOM OLD RECLINER - DAYBREAK

Samira (26), woman of color, attractive, stares at her phone.

JIM (V.O.)

She's Samira. Her parents are Egyptian immigrants.

-Electronic static fuzzies the screen.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DATA ROOM AT CERN - DAY

CERN signage clearly marks the setting. Samira points her pencil at a large computer screen, discussing data with another scientist. She looks back at the camera.

JIM (V.O.)

She's named after the famous Arabic singer Samira Said.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAYBREAK

Robby and Samira scroll their phones.

JIM (V.O.)

That's right. We are Gen-Z'ers named after famous Boomer celebrities. Well, our parent's favorite singers, that is. I reckon that's why we sorta gravitated toward each other and ended up sharing an old three-bedroom house in Portland, Oregon.

Robby and Samira pause, look at each other, then return to their phones.

JIM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We are all grad-school dropouts. We know we could do better in life. But, we just gave up tryin' and decided to keep partyin'.

INT. JIM'S BEDROOM - DAYBREAK

Jim, young slacker looking Caucasian, sleeps in a messy bedroom.

JIM (V.O.)

That's me. I'll be late for work, but it won't matter today. I'm enjoying my last normal dream. Welp, as normal dreams go, anyways.

-Electronic static fuzzies the screen.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CHEMISTRY CLASS - DAY

Jim, dapper looking, chalks a chemistry equation fronting a large classroom. He stops, turns to the camera.

JIM (V.O.)

I reckon all dreams are a little weird.

EXT. SPACE - NIGHT

It's various stills of the crab nebula.

JIM (V.O.)

Now, this ain't my dream, this is the Crab Nebula. Formed by something called, a supernova.

(MORE)

JIM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A supernova happens when a dying star explodes. And this here Crab Nebula thing is, welp, basically visible by any joe-sixpack through telescopes now available at Sam's Club or Costco. It was first observed by Chinese astronomers in ten-fifty-four, with only their naked eyes, as what they called, a guest star in our night sky.

EXT. EARLY MORNING SKY - DAYBREAK

It's a new supernova, brightly visible from earth. It shines brilliantly above Jim's house.

JIM (V.O.)

My point is, nothing in this story is extraordinary, nor even got-dang supernatural. But then again, ain't no prize hog ever wondered why it's fed so good. So I'm just gonna...

-Fuzzy synth sounds/static drown Jim's monologue.

SAMIRA (V.O.)

(Tinny, garbled)

The calculations are correct!

The fuzzy audio sounds are obviously switching channels. Jim's dialogue is reheard, faint and muffled.

JIM (V.O.)

And I'm not gonna worry because ...

The fuzzy, scratching audio noises subside, Robby is suddenly heard loud and clear.

ROBBY (V.O)

Jim! It's up to us to save the world!

CUT TO:

Series Open.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JIM'S BEDROOM - DAY

-A font reads: "Episode One - Microwavable Sausage"

JIM DEAN (26), handsome, slacker hair, bolts out of bed.

JIM

Well thanks for nothin' Lord! You
coulda woke me up by now! Dang I
drank too much last night.

Jim finds his delivery uniform on the floor, dresses
hurriedly, looks in a small mirror. He brushes his teeth with
his fingers.

JIM (CONT'D)

I gotta pee.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jim enters the living room, headed to the front door, stops.

JIM

Are yawl still up? Or am I later
for work than usual?

ROBBY points his cell phone at Jim.

ROBBY

It's the end of the world bro.

SAMIRA throws a baby carrot across the room at Robby.

SAMIRA

The aliens haven't contacted us yet
we don't know that!

Jim is unfazed.

JIM

Yawl are obviously still partyin'
but I gotta get to work!

EXT. NASA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Wide-shot of NASA Headquarters.

A font reads: "NASA Headquarters / Multiverse 11.ZZ / 166
Hours to Gravitational Wave Impact"

INT. NASA CUBE FARM - DAY

It's a pan of blended NASA scientists and astrophysicists.
All sit in cubicles, studying data.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (74), dyed jet-black hair, power suit, enters the cubical floor. Everyone ceases all activity and turns toward him.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
I know we've identified the bright light above earth as a type-two supernova.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE is excited.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
We haven't officially classified it yet sir, we're still measuring hydrogen levels. But it was definitely the red giant Centurion 1-A-7-B!

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO shouts in glee.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
The greatest event any of us will ever witness!

Everyone claps and throws paper in the air. Administrator Burnside watches the celebration, then raises his arms.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
Now now. Calm down everyone. The President asked me to assure The White House, this supernova, poses no threat to national security.

Astrophysicist One rises.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
This supernova event poses no threat whatsoever to planet earth!

Astrophysicist two rises from his cubical.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
All radiation levels negligible. No detection of lethal cosmic rays, magnetic pulses, nothing.

ASTROPHYSICIST THREE rises from her cubical.

ASTROPHYSICIST THREE
It's a multimillennial fireworks show!

Everyone on the floor claps, shouts for joy.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 I'm a former United States Senator.
 Hearing even one of you mention
 that word, Mallinnial, scares the
 hell out of me.

Burnside looks at his assistant, HOWARD (60), standing next to him. Howard holds a clipboard.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (CONT'D)
 Howard what was the name of that
 damned Libtard Mallinnial band from
 Bernie's state?

HOWARD
 Uh, Vermont? Um. Are you thinking
 of, PHISH? Sir?

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 Worst goddamn Mallinnial music ever
 made.

HOWARD
 Uh. I think you mean, Mill-ennial,
 sir? But PHISH is considered a
 Generation X jam band sir, not,
 Millennial. Um, Millennial music is
 generally defined by groups like
 Vampire Week...

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 Yes Fish! And that damned southwest
 music thing those Mallinnials
 started in Austin!

HOWARD
 Uh, South by Southwest? Sir?

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 Practically turned Austin into a
 hippy mecca. Anything Mallinnials
 do, always bite God-fearing
 Americans in the ass.

Burnside turns back to the room.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (CONT'D)
 Check, recheck, and gogol plexize
 all of your data!

Howard clears his throat.

HOWARD
 (Whispering)
 Uh. It's actually pronounced goo-
 ghul-pleks, sir.

Burnside acknowledges Howard.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 Well, what the hell did I just say?

HOWARD
 Gogol, plexize, sir.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 I'm not talking about those
 jackasses Bernie invited here to
 the District so they could lobby
 more funding in U-krain, Howard.

HOWARD
 That would be Gogol, Bordello, sir.
 (Sort of singing)
 Start wearing purple, wearing
 purple...

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 Are you finished?

HOWARD
 I think goo-guhl-pleks is the term
 you are searching for, sir.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 That's the technical term of keep
 searching until they find me
 something?

HOWARD
 Uh? Well no sir, that would
 approach infinite searching, until
 or unless of course one of them
 actually discovered, uh... but then
 that wouldn't technically be
 infinite, so, uh...

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 I never liked Bernie Sanders,
 Howard!

HOWARD
 A googolplex certainly includes
 zeroes beyond human comprehension.

Administrator Burnside turns back toward the NASA scientists.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

I don't give a possum's ass under my porch what any of you people call geek math! Gogol plexize your data because you all are missing, something!

Burnside surveys the suddenly silent, expansive room of blended scientists. He approaches a woman, typing stoically in her cubical.

- The three lead astrophysicists remain standing, watching Burnside.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (CONT'D)

Who are you, young lady?

ROBERTA (46), African American woman, looks up at the head of NASA. Photos of her children tack the walls of her obscure, tiny work space.

ROBERTA

My name is Roberta Robinson, sir.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

Tell me why do you sit so somber, as your peers obviously celebrate this spectacular event? Do you have data suggesting anything, other than, celebration?

ROBERTA

No sir. I'm only a neuroscientist, not an astrophysicists. But all available data suggests earth is outside the kill zone of this supernova.

Roberta looks at the photos in her cubical, then up at Burnside.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

But I believe it is too early to draw any conclusions, sir. Only the photons have reached earth so far.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO

No supernova so many light years away could threaten planet earth!

ASTROPHYSICIST THREE

It's impossible!

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
Typical neuroscientist!

The packed, large room erupts in laughter. Administrator Burnside enters closer to Roberta, studies photos tacked on her cubical wall.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
Handsome family, Miz Robinson.

ROBERTA
Thank you sir.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
I've shaken enough hands in my career to know you are concerned for the people in these photographs.

Roberta looks at her photos, then back up at Burnside.

ROBERTA
These are my babies, sir. I'm always concerned about them.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
Should I, or the President of our United States, be concerned about your babies right now, Miz Robinson?

The three lead astrophysicists, glance at one another.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
Robinson is new up here. Basically, still a data entry technician.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
She has no standing on this supernova event, Administrator Burnside!

Burnside looks at his assistant. Howard shuffles papers on his clipboard.

HOWARD
They're right. Robinson is new to this floor.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
She does make good coffee!

Everyone laughs. Burnside surveys the floor, sighs, then peers back down at Roberta.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 Did you not have your coffee this
 morning, Miz Robinson? I want to
 know why you aren't celebrating.

Roberta takes a deep breath.

ROBERTA
 I spent twenty-years at N-I-H.

Burnside looks at his assistant.

HOWARD
 National Institute of Health, sir.
 She studied effects of long
 durations in space on mental
 health. Before landing here at
 NASA.

Burnside untacks a photo of Roberta's children standing in
 front of a Houston landmark, stares at it.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 You've got my attention, Miz
 Robinson.

ROBERTA
 Well, sir. It's not cosmic rays,
 measurable radiation, or even
 gravitational waves, that concern
 me. As a neuroscientist.

Burnside retacks the photo on her cubical wall.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
 I'm listening, Miz Robinson.

ROBERTA
 The last time such a remarkably
 visible event like this happened,
 God visited earth. Or, at least
 that's what we believe in my
 church.

The entire floor erupts in laughter.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
 She's obviously spouting religious
 nonsense Administrator Burnside!

Burnside acknowledges the interruption.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
I won the Harris County vote by ten
points in my last Senate run young
man.

Burnside returns to Roberta. The floor quiets.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (CONT'D)
Forgive me Miz Robinson for
assuming the location of your fine
place of worship.

ROBERTA
Houston, Texas, yes sir. But my
concerns aren't necessarily
religious. So to speak.

Roberta pauses, looks at her photos, then back up at
Burnside.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)
Quantum effects of such an event
are currently unmeasurable, sir.
Even by our most advanced
scientific instruments.

The room erupts with laughter.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
This is ridiculous!

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
She doesn't belong up here!

Burnside backs out of Roberta's cubical. He surveys the room
again, looks back down at Roberta.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
What are you saying Miz Robinson?

Roberta speaks above continued laughter and murmuring.

ROBERTA
Quantum theory dictates
entanglement!

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
I'm not an astrophysicist Miz
Robinson. Make it plain, like I was
visiting your church.

ROBERTA

Everyone of us is entangled with all matter in the universe, even space and time, because we are the universe, sir. Cells or particles inside our bodies could be linked to that exploded star out there.

Laughter in the room grows louder, Roberta stands, raises her voice above the ridicule.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

We don't know nor can any of us accurately measure quantum effects of this supernova, yet!

She sits back down.

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

If not physiologically than psychologically, on a planetary scale.

Suddenly, STEWART (87), ancient-looking but still crew cut debonair, rises from his cubicle.

STEWART

(Graveled voice)

This Supernova is called Centurion 1-A-7-B!

Laughter subsides. Burnside looks at Howard.

HOWARD

Legendary Mercury and Apollo program mathematician. Medal of Freedom recipient. Now obviously, just an honorary role here at NASA sir. But, still a whip with data.

STEWART

The Centurion said, surely this was the son of god.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE

Sit down Stew! Centurion 1-A-7-B red giant went supernova between four and seven thousand years ago.

ASTROPHYSICIST THREE

Any form of quantum entanglement has more to do with early Mesopotamia or even Stonehenge, than us.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
Stewart was at Stonehenge, sir.

The room laughs. Stewart remains lucid.

STEWART
Yet. Photons, Gravitational waves
and especially remaining quantum
entanglement effects contained in
those waves are only just now
reaching us.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
This is a ridiculous waste of our
time, Administrator Burnside.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
NASA can only deal in measurable,
empirical data sir. It's how NASA,
including Stewart, landed men on
the moon.

STEWART
We did that sixty years ago, with
less technology than a modern
calculator, ya bastards.

Stewart sits back down in his cubical. The room explodes
again, in laughter. Roberta looks up at Burnside.

ROBERTA
Maybe my place is back at N-I-H,
sir.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
Send her back to the N-I-H!

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
Unfortunately, perhaps that's where
she belongs. It's my mistake.

The entire floor erupts with scientists now arguing with each
other. Burnside watches, looks down at Roberta.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
I'd consider you running point for
me on this, supernova thing.

There is a gasp of disbelief on the floor as all voices fall
silent.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
I am the lead astrophysicist on
this floor! I discovered exoplanet
S-R-three-B-eighty-six!

Burnside looks at Howard.

HOWARD
One of the first confirmed rocky
exoplanets.

Burnside whips his gaze back down at Roberta.

ROBERTA
Uh, a fiery exoplanet orbiting its
star so closely it might be Mercury
in actual hell.

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
You can't do this! I discovered
fluorocarbon elements on Mars!

Burnside acknowledges the interruption, then Roberta.

ROBERTA
Uh well, possible planetary
contamination via the actual drill
bits used by our own Mars rovers.

ASTROPHYSICIST THREE
I'm researching life on Europa!

Burnside acknowledges the astrophysicist, peers back down at
Roberta.

ROBERTA
Well sir. It's statically
impossible Jupiter is a failed
binary star. But, odds are even
less, in my opinion, that even
chemoautotrophs could spontaneously
begin or evolve there.

ASTROPHYSICIST THREE
She doesn't acknowledge life could
begin as chemoautotrophs?

ASTROPHYSICIST TWO
Chemoautotrophs thrive right here
on earth!

Burnside looks at Howard.

HOWARD

Uh, well sir. Uh. Sort of, chemically specialized organisms. For instance, consider deep sea creatures on earth who thrive in the tectonic friction generated...

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

Those little tube wormy things, down there deep under the ocean.

HOWARD

Not technically chemoautotrophs, but there is a symbiotic relationship between...

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

I've seen the documentary where Morgan Freeman explains those Howard, just say, tube wormy things.

HOWARD

Not technically chemoautotrophs.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

Don't be a wise ass.

Burnside looks back down at Roberta.

ROBERTA

Chemoautotrophs could conceivably thrive on Europa. But I'm not sold on the theory. Stars and photons spawn biological life, in my unproven opinion.

Burnside smiles at her.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

Let there be light. Well doggy. Finally, someone up on this floor who talks my language.

ROBERTA

Maybe I, I don't belong here.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

You got that right. Honey your office is now next to mine.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE

This is absurd! I hired Robinson!
Robinson you're fired!

Burnside points, one by one, at the three Astrophysicists still standing in the room.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

No. Son, you're fired, you're fired
and ma'am you're fired. Hell this
entire agency is fired until you
all provide me, a gogol
plexation...

HOWARD

(Whispering)
goo-guhl-pleks.

Burnside glances at Howard, pauses, looks back out at the floor.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

Howard is right. You all think
you're younger and smarter than me
but I am appointed by the President
to run this agency. So, friends,
here's the hound dog's version of
that supernova and why I'm up here.
Did I say hound dog right, Howard?

HOWARD

Yes sir.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE

Goddamned right I did.

He returns to his speech, raises his voice.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (CONT'D)

British Intelligence says there is
something dangerous about this
supernova! All of you people,
besides Miz Robinson and Stew over
there...

STEWART

I sent men to the moon with less
than a calculator!

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
... are up here whistling Dixie
while those damned redcoats make
this historic agency look like
school girls showin' their
underpants to the football captain.
Stop cheerleading for that damned
bright light above our United
States of America, and find out
what the Brits know about this
supernova that we don't know!

Roberta looks around her cubical, eyeing photos of her family. Burnside notices it.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (CONT'D)
Don't worry about your photos dear,
we'll have them framed for you.

Burnside shouts at the floor.

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE (CONT'D)
NASA, as we all knew it, ceases to
exist! We are now a national
security agency of the United
States government, and this entire
building is in lockdown until I
have better answers than you all's
Mallinnial hippy fits about that
bright light above our airspace! Do
I make myself perfectly clear to
you all? Or does Howard need to
interpret my home spun former
Senator from Texas, vernacular?

Astrophysicist One now sinks in his cubical, along with the entire floor.

ASTROPHYSICIST ONE
Yes sir! We are on it!

STEWART
But we demand pizza!

ADMINISTRATOR BURNSIDE
Howard order that old sum-bitch
pizza from D-C Pizza on nineteenth
and L street, then lock down this
entire building. Robinson, you come
with me.

EXT. CHINA SPACE AGENCY - NIGHT

It's a wide shot of a Chinese government complex.

INT. ASTROPHYSICISTS COMPUTER WORKSPACE - NIGHT

A CHINESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL stands addressing a room full of Astrophysicists, parked at rows of computers.

CHINESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL
 (In Mandarin, subtitled)
 British Intelligence suggest this
 supernova posses a real threat to
 earth! Find this data!

EXT. RUSSIA SPACE AGENCY - NIGHT

A wide shot of a Russian government building.

INT. ASTROPHYSICISTS COMPUTER WORKSPACE - NIGHT

A RUSSIAN GENERAL stands addressing a room full of Astrophysicists, parked at rows of computers.

RUSSIAN GENERAL
 (In Russian, subtitled)
 British Intelligence suggest this
 supernova posses a real threat to
 earth! Find this data!

EXT. INDIA SPACE AGENCY - NIGHT

A wide shot of an Indian government building.

Music plays as a SPLIT SCREEN of an Indian General addressing scientists at computers/African officials addressing scientists at computers, appears.

The split screen becomes a FOUR BOX, then multiples, until most every nationality on earth is represented inside the multiple boxes. All small boxes show government officials demanding answers from their nation's scientists.

EXT. 10 DOWNING STREET - DAY

It's a wide shot of 10 Downing Street.

A font reads: "10 Downing Street / Multiverse 11.ZZ / 165 Hours to Gravitational Wave Impact"

INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Prime Minister SHERRY HALE (53), very attractive, sits behind her desk, obviously bored. She sneaks views out her office window as two advisors sit in-front of her desk.

SHERRY

Yes, yes Richard, gold and blue curtains in that room, whatever you say. Now both of you get out of my office so I can abscond my young grandchildren and adore this wonderful supernova fate has afforded us.

Advisors RICHARD (43), and THEODORE (49), both white men wearing designer suits, stand up, glancing at each other.

RICHARD

About the supernova, Madam Prime Minister.

THEODORE

We wouldn't bring this up...

Sherry turns in her chair.

SHERRY

I'll resign at this instant if our party of bent noses want to deny me enjoying a supernova with my grandchildren!

RICHARD

Oh no, the party would consider these great photo ops!

SHERRY

It's not about photo ops Richard, it's about my two grandchildren.

THEODORE

Oh uh, yes ma'am. Our final note concerns nothing of your grandchildren.

RICHARD

Just a parting word about the supernova.

SHERRY

Why bore me further with details of which I've been briefed at nauseum?

RICHARD

It's traffic from M-I-Six, ma'am.
It seems the entire world believes
British Intelligence has
information this supernova is
potentially...

SHERRY

Splendid? Glorious?

Sherry looks back out her window.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Oh I did find it lovely last
evening. I so want to enjoy every
moment of this historic event with
my family, while the supernova
remains so vivid in our night sky.
Thank god for this clear weather.

Richard and Theodore look at each other.

THEODORE

Dangerous. Madam Prime Minister.

Sherry stands and pounds her desk.

SHERRY

We've discussed decorum for over an
hour and you save this tidbit of
world-wide existential importance
on your way out the door! I am
informed this supernova is benign!

RICHARD

Oh, it is most certainly benign,
Madam Prime Minister. But M-I-Six
reports the entire world's spy
apparatus believes British
Intelligence has secret information
suggesting otherwise.

SHERRY

Does M-I-Six have intelligence
suggesting otherwise? The lives of
my grandchildren are at stake!

THEODORE

No ma'am. M-I-Six reports nothing
of the sort.

RICHARD

But, world spy agencies seem to think we have, some unknown information. Even unknown to us.

SHERRY

And why do world spy agencies think this? Do not lie to me!

RICHARD

That's a wee bit why we even hesitated to mention it, actually.

THEODORE

It's fake news! Fake, fake news ma'am.

RICHARD

Beyond fake, fake news ma'am.

THEODORE

I said that.

RICHARD

You said, fake fake. Perhaps add another fake. Like, fake, fake, fake news...

SHERRY

Is the supernova benign gentlemen?

THEODORE/RICHARD

Yes ma'am!

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Unequivocally, benign to planet earth.

Sherry takes a deep breath, thinking about it.

SHERRY

Motives are obviously clear.

Richard and Theodore look at each other.

RICHARD

And what motives would those be Madam Prime Minister?

SHERRY

Chaos you bureaucratic simpletons. This benign supernova provides a perfect opportunity for sinister chaos.

THEODORE
Chaos, of course. Yes ma'am.

SHERRY
Find the source of this
disinformation!

RICHARD
Um. We we know the source ma'am but
you are not going to like it.

THEODORE
Sinister chaos may not prove the
motive, on this one.

Richard and Theodore look at each other.

SHERRY
Do not say Sorenson or I'll explode
beyond that supernova out there!

THEODORE
Yes ma'am. It seems Doctor
Sorenson's book predicted...

SHERRY
I'm aware of what his book
predicted gentlemen it's why our
government fired him!

THEODORE
Yes ma'am. Yet, right wing fake
news organizations still link
Sorenson to us.

RICHARD
Even fake, fake news organizations
Madam, involving foreign
disinformation.

THEODORE
It delves deeper into fake, fake,
fake news sources. Even Elon Musk
is now quoting Sorenson's
discreated book.

RICHARD
Unfortunately adding a fourth layer
of fake, once it hits his social
media platform as a full-blown
right-wing conspiracy theory.

Sherry positions full-alpha, her torso planted between both
her fists pressed into the desk.

SHERRY

Oh spare me eccentric billionaire semantics Richard, it's sinister chaos these Authoritarians desire and we know it.

RICHARD

Yes, ma'am.

Sherry sighs.

SHERRY

The public must be reassured Sorenson is no longer a trusted British scientist. Arrange me an interview with the B-B-C, promptly.

RICHARD

Yes, ma'am.

SHERRY

I despise this part of my job, but ensure the press follows me and my grandchildren, every step of the way as we admire the supernova together, this evening.

THEODORE

Yes, ma'am.

SHERRY

I want every British scientist and astrophysicist, not named Sorenson, back in my office, come morning. I must ensure Sorenson's models are indeed lunacy, and that any supernova scare is the hoax of a madman.

RICHARD

Madam Prime Minister, these academics have already briefed you...

SHERRY

Come morning!

RICHARD

Yes ma'am.

SHERRY

Not two days hence of my absolute reassurance of all our safety, I will expect a nationally televised address to parliament. Begin working on this speech immediately.

THEODORE

Yes ma'am, we'll write a nationally televised speech to parliament.

The men look at each other, instantly bouncing ideas.

RICHARD

Fake news is rather nonsensical. We'll label fake news as, nonsensical fake news.

THEODORE

Although, nonsensical, is four syllables. Perhaps each syllable represents an element of fake news.

RICHARD

Indeed!

Theodor touches invisible dots in the air.

THEODORE

Fake, fake. Fake, fake.

RICHARD

A demonstrative approach!

Sherry sighs, drops and shakes her head. She laughs.

SHERRY

I'm not Elaine Benes, you blessed-hearted dimwits!

Richard and Theodore snap their full attention back to her.

RICHARD

Forgive us, Madam Prime Minister!

THEODORE

Perhaps Elain, uh, Ben Ess, is an upcomer Astrophysicist from a lesser school?

Sherry turns, still laughing, looks back out her office window.

SHERRY

I'm simply calling it, flake news.

THEODORE

Flake news, I rather like that term.

RICHARD

We could do polling research on that term, ma'am.

SHERRY

Consider it polled. And both of you immediately go watch more classic American sitcoms. Start with Ted Lasso and work your way to Seinfeld.

RICHARD/THEODORE

Yes ma'am!

Sherry admires the visible supernova, outside her window.

SHERRY

Churchill had gin. Bring me gin!

EXT. A NICE PORTLAND NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Jim parks his delivery van and flicks the GPS device on his dashboard.

JIM

Come on.

He jumps out of the van with his barcode device and a small package. He tries to engage the handheld barcode laser but it doesn't scan the tiny package.

JIM (CONT'D)

This is my last delivery, Lord. Make this scanner work and I'll serve you forever.

He fiddles with it, then finally marches to a house and rings the doorbell. An OLD LADY opens the door.

OLD LADY

Oh dear. I can't chew bubblegum.

JIM

I'm sorry to bug you ma'am, but did you place an order with...

The old lady shuts the door. Jim looks at the box in his hand. The door reopens.

JIM (CONT'D)

This is the address marked on this box. I can't scan the barcode, so I just need a signature.

The old lady shuts the door. Jim sighs, shakes his head.

JIM (CONT'D)

Looks like another night of partying for me, Lord.

The door opens, again.

OLD LADY

Perhaps my granddaughter ordered something from you. But that box is so small. I can't chew bubblegum.

JIM

Is she home?

OLD LADY

Why no, but I do recall she ordered something. That box is so small.

JIM

I'll help you ma'am.

LATER

The old lady examines several boxes, now lined up on the curb behind Jim's delivery van. A MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN arrives in a black SUV, parks just behind them. She bullrushes out of her vehicle.

MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN

What the hell is going on?

JIM

I have a delivery for this address but she says the box is too small. I can't scan the...

The middle-age woman grabs a hand-sized box laying on the sidewalk. It's the same tiny box Jim presented to the old woman.

MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN

I ordered her new hearing aids you idiot! She's eighty-seven-years old!

(MORE)

MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Our address is listed right here on
 the box. Are you stoned or just
 completely stupid?

JIM
 I was tryin' to help her. My
 barcode scanner...

The woman rushes to her SUV, opens the door, points a handgun
 at Jim.

MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN
 Pack up all that crap and get the
 hell out of here!

Jim freezes. He glances at several boxes, laying on the
 sidewalk.

MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Now!

The middle-age woman leads the old lady back toward the
 house, gun still pointed at Jim. He doesn't bother with the
 boxes, jumps in his truck and throttles away from the scene.

OLD LADY
 All those, boxes. I told him I
 can't chew bubblegum.

MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN
 Come on grandma let's get you back
 inside.

INT. JIM'S DELIVERY TRUCK - DAY

Jim drives furiously to escape the upscale neighborhood,
 nearly causing a few accidents. He sideswipes a parked car,
 looks up in the air, as he races down a suburban street.

JIM
 What the hell, Lord! See this is
 why I don't try and improve my
 life! Here I was trying to help
 that old woman and that bitch,
 sorry for cussing Lord, but she
 pulled a gun on me!

Jim is finally out of the neighborhood and screeches to a
 halt. Boxes in the cargo area slam against the retaining
 wall, and a few fly through the cab walkway, hit the dash.

-He sits, breathing heavily, surrounded by tangled boxes in
 the cab area.

JIM (CONT'D)
 A gun! What in thee dat-gum world
 was that all about?

He gathers his composure, looks around the cab, then up in the air.

JIM (CONT'D)
 Oh I'm partying tonight Lord! I
 don't care if I work in the morning
 'cause I'm quitting this here job!

He shakes his head.

JIM (CONT'D)
 A gun!

INT. LOTUS BAR - NIGHT

Robby sits at a long wooden bar engrossed in his cell phone, as Samira strums an acoustic guitar on a small stage.

INT. THE SMALL STAGE - NIGHT

Samira soulfully sings her final song of the evening.

SAMIRA
 (Singing)
 Maybe I wasn't present / enough to
 hear words you spoke softly / yet I
 recall the essence / of cries your
 heart rendered, passionately / of
 how I wasn't there / baby neither
 of us were there / at the right
 time / in the right frame of mind /
 And it's why I am now... your
 ghost.

INT. LOTUS BAR - NIGHT

The small audience of young, Portland hipsters clap. Robby turns toward her, still looking at his cell phone.

ROBBY
 (Shouting)
 Go Samira!

INT. THE SMALL STAGE - NIGHT

SAMIRA

That song was called Ghosting.
Thank you.

Samira unstraps, places her guitar on a small stand, and walks off stage.

INT. LOTUS BAR - NIGHT

Jim enters the dive bar, just as Samira reaches Robby.

SAMIRA

You missed my set!

JIM

Another song about an old boyfriend
Samira, I've heard all your songs
and I need Jager shots now!

Jim turns toward the bartender, who is already pouring Jägermeister into two shot glasses.

JIM (CONT'D)

Yawl won't believe my day!

Robby is now more interested in shots than his cell phone.

ROBBY

One credit away from your master's
degree and you deliver cheap
electronics bro.

JIM

A suburban housewife pulled a gun
on me today! Right in front of an
old lady!

The bartender MANUEL (37), finishes pouring shots and grabs a pint glass to pour cheap beer.

MANUEL

Plus two P-B-R's and a glass of
wine for lovely Samira.

ROBBY

Hold on the P-B-R's Manuel.

MANUEL

But, it's two-dollar-P-B-R night.

ROBBY

It's the end of the world. I'm buying this round of beers. Pour us some blondes you'd actually list on the menu if you had one. Dealer's choice.

JIM

Did yawl hear me? A suburban housewife who drives an S-U-V pulled a gun on me today! In West Linn! Right in front of an old lady!

MANUEL

Whole world's going crazy right now, Jim. You're lucky she didn't shoot you.

ROBBY

There was a shooting right down the street a few hours ago. We had to walk all the way down thirtieth avenue just to go around all the cop cars. It's the end of the world bro.

SAMIRA

We don't know it's the end of the world. But I'll have a vodka cran instead of wine. And a Jager shot with my boys tonight, Manny.

JIM

Now I don't know why yawl are ignoring me here, but yawl have been acting weird since this morning. And well, I sort of expect shootings here in our neighborhood. But in West Linn? In front of an old lady?

Manuel quickly fills another shot glass, hands a shot to each of the roommates.

SAMIRA

To the end of the world!

Jim sort of smirks at Samira.

ROBBY

No. To Jimmy Dean! King of electronic deliveries.

SAMIRA

Jimmy Dean!

They down the shots, as Manuel places new drinks on the bar.

MANUEL

Two Bend Brewery strawberry-blond
ails and a cranberry vodka.

ROBBY

P-B-R's from now on, Manuel.

SAMIRA

Keep the vodka cranberries coming
for me. House vodka, of course.

Robby and Samira look at each other, chuckle.

ROBBY

Capitalism is so dysfunctional. Of
course we'd celebrate the end of
the world on a budget.

JIM

Are one of yawl moving out or
something? Two more Jager's Manuel.

SAMIRA

Make it three, Manny.

JIM

This is the weirdest day.

The trio settle into their usual spots at their corner dive
bar. Jim sits between Robby and Samira. He looks at Manuel,
busy serving their orders.

JIM (CONT'D)

But no weirder in Portland than
usual I reckon, right Manuel? A
woman pulled a gun on me today. In
front of an old lady.

MANUEL

Glad she didn't shoot you.

Robby and Samira look around Jim, at each other.

SAMIRA

I spoke to my parents in L-A. They
don't think it is really the end of
the world. But my mom asked me to
start wearing a scarf.

ROBBY

My dad texted and told me to party like it's nineteen-sixty-nine.

SAMIRA

Like I'm supposed to suddenly behave like some perfect Muslim woman? Not one of my aunties ever wore hijabs. Only with sunglasses, as fashion not piety!

ROBBY

I'm like my dad. It's why I moved to Portland. It's sort of like New York but more depressing.

SAMIRA

Shaming me with all that guilt, like I don't realize my own Jadda is a good Muslim woman?

Jim finally slams his hands down on the bar.

JIM

What the hell are yawl talking about?

ROBBY

The light bro. The supernova.

JIM

What supernova?

Robby and Samira whip out cell phones, scrolling photos in Jim's face.

ROBBY

You haven't seen this? They say it's a red giant star gone supernova!

SAMIRA

Look at this Jimmy! It could be aliens or something!

ROBBY

It was nearly bright as the moon last night!

SAMIRA

Like, the brightest object besides the sun and moon in our sky.

ROBBY
It's a supernova!

SAMIRA
They say, it is a supernova. A bright light that just suddenly appeared out of nowhere? Now my perfectly agnostic Muslim family expects me to wear a hijab?

Robby and Samira frantically scroll images, until Jim finally pushes their cell phones out of his face.

JIM
I was delivering packages all day and I didn't see no damn bright light or no supernova! I only saw a gun.

They back off, still scrolling images.

SAMIRA
Maybe you can't see it during the daytime.

ROBBY
But it's right here bro. Pictures of it from all over the world!

JIM
Will yawl quit it! I see yawl's cell phones photos, but did either of you actually see this thing in the sky? Cause I didn't.

ROBBY
The photos are undeniable bro.

SAMIRA
My mom asked me to start wearing a scarf!

Manuel finishes pouring three more Jager shots.

MANUEL
I haven't seen it yet, either. But my sister in Italy says she saw it.

JIM
So all of yawl are acting batshit crazy about something yawl have only seen on your cell phones?

SAMIRA

Maybe it's just not visible in daylight.

Jim hands the shots to his friends.

JIM

Drink the damn shots. It's dark out now. Yawl need to show me this supernova thing.

Robby and Samira nod at each other, downing shots.

EXT. LOTUS BAR - NIGHT

They stand inside a designated smoking area, fronting a narrow empty street. Samira pulls a pack of American Spirits from her pocket, hands a cigarette to Robby.

JIM

I thought yawl were only vaping now days?

SAMIRA

Screw you, Jimmy Dean.

ROBBY

It is the end of the world or something, bro.

JIM

Then give me one too.

Samira lights their cigarettes and they each begin searching the blank night sky.

SAMIRA

Too much cloud cover.

ROBBY

Yeah. Looks like clouds moved in.

JIM

So, what did this supernova or whatever thing look like?

Robby and Samira both whip out their cell phones.

SAMIRA

A bright light!

ROBBY

I've got an app.

Robby moves his phone around the night sky.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
Yeah! There it is! Just on the
horizon above those trees!

They all move toward the image to view Robby's cell phone app, identifying a distant star.

EXT. ROBBY'S CELL PHONE SCREEN - NIGHT

The image of a bright light appears and the register reads:
"Centurion 1A7B- NOW SUPERNOVA!"

EXT. LOTUS BAR - NIGHT

ROBBY
We told you bro.

SAMIRA
Isn't it beautiful.

JIM
So yawl spent yawl's entire day
looking at that damn supernova
thing on your cell phones?

ROBBY
Not the entire day.

SAMIRA
I had a set to prepare for tonight.

JIM
But neither of yawl actually went
outside to look at it? Before the
sun rose or the clouds moved into
Portland? A real supernova actually
visible from space and yawl watched
it on your cell phones.

Robby and Samira look at each other.

SAMIRA
Why?

Robby holds up his cell phone.

ROBBY

Yeah. We got it all right here.
Like, photos and live event
podcasts of it from around the
world.

JIM

Yawl have made this day even
weirder for me. Why didn't you tell
me about this so I coulda looked
for it this morning?

ROBBY

We did.

JIM

Yawl guys were talking about aliens
or something when I left the house.

ROBBY

Yawl guys? See. You're even turning
Portlandian now.

Samira extinguishes her smoke, then walks into the middle of
the empty street. She looks up at the blank sky, begins to
sing.

SAMIRA

(Singing)

I am me / I am free / I feel fresh
summer breeze touch my face, gently
/ my life-light is on / clouds are
gone / no one can place a veil over
anything I see / my voice is loud /
cause I am proud / my future shines
in every midnight sky as destiny /
I glow so bright / feeling oh so
right / no one can ever cover me /
because I'm free

(speaking)

Or at least, I want to be free.

Jim and Robby look at each other, back out at her.

JIM

Get out of the got-danged street
Sam there could be an ICE van
around here! They'd whip you into
the van before either of us could
do anything.

Samira approaches.

SAMIRA

That's a new one, Jimmy Dean.

ROBBY

I'm sorry they revoked your
birthright citizenship, Sam.

JIM

I like it Sam, but ya gotta start
being more careful out in public.

SAMIRA

It's the song I'll never write.

The trio sigh, sadly, as Jim and Robby extinguish their
American Spirits.

JIM

American Spirits. The all natural
American cigarette. Yawl want more
shots? I'm quitting my job tomorrow
so it's on me.

ROBBY

Jimmy Dean!

The trio head back into the bar.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OLD ENGLISH MANOR - NIGHT

A bright supernova penetrates drifting clouds above a large,
rustic mansion. A black Jaguar sedan enters a semi-circular
gravel driveway in front of the home.

A font reads: "Devon, England - Multiverse ..." Digital
numbers rapidly click under the locaters, landing on
"13952934781165911.00987A (11.A) - 162 Hours to Total
Cataclysmic Impact"

Three well-dressed young people, faces obscured, exit the
car. They encounter cackling chickens as they reach a large,
dimly lit, wooden front door.

- DOCTOR BRETT SORENSON (74), grey disheveled beard, loose
professorial clothing, opens the door slightly. Only half his
face appears in the doorway.

SORENSON

M-I-Six again? You already know the
device is destroyed.

(MORE)

SORENSEN (CONT'D)

Go home and spend the last week of
existence with your families!

Immaculately groomed versions of Jim, Robby, and Samira, look
at each other, shrug their shoulders. He fully opens the
door.

SORENSEN (CONT'D)

Oh, it's you three.

Sorenson steps out, looks around.

SORENSEN (CONT'D)

Come inside, quickly, if you want
to save the world!

FADE TO BLACK