

Supernova Blues  
(Pilot Episode)

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 sausage as microwavable breakfast. 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 "13952934781165911.00987A (11.A) - Present Day."

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. COLLEGE PHYSICS CLASS - DAY

Jim, dapper looking, chalks a physics equation fronting a large college class. 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)

These calculations are correct!

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

JIM (V.O.)

(Tinny, garbled)

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 cellphone 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.

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 a red giant.

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, Multimillennial, 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 googul-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.

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, Director 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 or  
X-rays or measurable radiation that  
concern me.

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  
1A7B!

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! The Centurian1A7B  
red giant went supernova between  
five 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. Gravitational waves and  
especially remaining quantum  
entanglement effects contained in  
those photons 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  
 proceed 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.

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  
discredited 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! 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.

MIDDLE-AGE WOMAN (CONT'D)

Come on grandma let's get you back inside.

OLD LADY

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

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 cellphone, 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 cellphone.

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 and reaches the long 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 cellphone.

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-PBR night.

ROBBY

It's the end of the world. I'm buying this round of beers. Pour us some blondes you actually list on the menu. 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 bro. 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.

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-blonde 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, pal.

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 cellphones, 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 cellphones 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 cellphone 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 cellphones?

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 cellphones.

SAMIRA

A bright light!

ROBBY

I've got an app.

Robby moves his cellphone 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 cellphone app, identifying a distant star.

EXT. ROBBY'S CELLPHONE 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 cellphones?

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?

Robby and Samira look at each other.

SAMIRA  
Why?

Robby holds up his cellphone.

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. AN OLD ENGLISH MANOR - DAY

A bright supernova penetrates drifting clouds above a rustic estate. 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 "13952934781165911.00987T (11.T) - Very Next Day."

Three well-dressed young people, faces obscured, exit the car. They encounter cackling chickens as they reach a large, 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 I  
destroyed the device.

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

SORENSON (CONT'D)

Oh, it's you three. Come inside,  
quickly, if you want to save the  
world!

FADE TO BLACK