

SCRIPT TITLE

Written by

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If a story were to end this way,
Would you be curious as to how it got here?

EXT. EARTH ORBIT, SUNLIT SIDE, ISS 3 - TEN YEARS LATER

Camera's THREE-AXIS TUMBLING motion from the previous Montage halts at a WIDE SHOT of the THIRD INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION, partially occupied and still under construction.

A CREW TRANSPORT SHUTTLE maneuvers away from the station for its de-orbit trajectory to the surface.

INT. SHUTTLE, PASSENGER CABIN

All occupants are in pressure suits strapped in for re-entry.

ANGLE - Koko (30's) watching POV helmet cam recording of Luther's first steps on Mars over nine years ago except, they aren't footsteps - the image clearly up-ends itself showing his gloved hands planting firmly in the Martian soil, distinguishing his arrival among the collage of bootprints the other colonists made. Still frame from another colonist's camera then appears confirming - Luther having made the first handstand on Mars.

SHOT WIDENS a bit revealing patches on Koko's suit indicating his various U.N. affiliations.

KOKO (30'S)
(amused)
Why won't you let anyone else see
this?

ANGLE - Luther (30's) in seat next to him. Name tag on his suit reads "Amb. L. Clayton ZMA". His shoulder patch bears the emblem of the United Human Settlements on Mars.

LUTHER (30'S)
 (lackadaisical)
 Not very dignified for an Amba...

His reply is cut off by the sudden, violent shudder of the entire vessel as it begins contacting the upper atmosphere. Every viewscreen reverts to re-entry data/graphics info.

Immediately, Koko breaks off their conversation and treats the ship's return as an amusement park ride.

KOKO (30'S)
 (throws his arms up)
 WooHoo! - Yeah! - Let's do this!

Luther quickly glances at the display showing the shuttle's height above ground is still over One Hundred miles, and tries rectifying that fact with his friend's behavior, whom he knows to have - or had - a fear of heights in their younger days.

Another shudder breaks his attention on Koko. While firmly gripping the armrests, he now directs his concern to the cockpit via a KCT affixed on his seat harness.

LUTHER (30'S)
 (lousy Scottish accent)
 Captain, can yuh guarantee she'll hold together?!

ANGLE - EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Pilot's name tag on chest of spacesuit which WIDENS to include helmet and face of - Captain J. Beardwell.

James (30's) proceeds to bring Luther down to Earth, in more ways than one - as only he can.

JAMES (30'S)
 Cool yer jets your Ambassador-fullness. Atmosphere on this planet's a bit denser than the one your from.

Yet another braking bounce occurs. James instantly bypasses "auto settings" so he and his co-pilot can trim their angle of attack manually with precisely coordinated bursts from reaction control thrusters.

EXT. ORBIT, SHUTTLE RE-ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

All we can see is the superheated plasma trail of the shuttle as it decelerates in the ever-thickening atmosphere. After it passes out of frame, the camera lingers directly above the mid-Atlantic.

Then, it begins a free-fall of its own through the clouds - with another AUDIO VOICE-OVER MONTAGE covering another PASSAGE OF TIME. (Main Characters in this MONTAGE are in their 30's.)

[William greets Luther at landing site.

WILLIAM
(emphasizes name)
Welcome home, Luther.

LUTHER
(takes his meaning)
Keep calling me that, I need to get used to it.

UN General Assembly welcomes their newest member.

UN GENERAL SECRETARY (50'S)
It is my distinct honor to accept the credentials of Ambassador Clayton from the United Human Colonies of the planet Mars.

At international conference, Luther details how much worse Earth's ecosystems are after just 10 years.

LUTHER
One of the first things I did upon returning to this planet after ten years away, was weep. I had hoped to see progress. All I saw was regression and failure. Humans were not sent to another planet to learn how to live there. They were sent to teach you how you must live here. That time has come. Learn how we must progress to a future we all see but some still deny - or we all regress - and fail - and die.

At a science gathering, Luther, Vicky and Rowan confirm rumors of a genetically altered insect taken to Mars to reproduce vital plant organisms at the molecular level.

VICKY

Over fifty years ago, these tiny creatures were meant to show us how our planet might change - for better or worse. Instead, they showed us how we must adapt to whatever changes come and that it is possible to survive.

Simultaneous achievements with 8ftrs on Earth and Mars is secretly presented to Government, University and Industry communities.

CELINA

Presidents and Prime Ministers, Professors and Doctors, ladies and gentlemen; security personnel will unseal your Data Pockets and you will begin learning why there is a continuous human presence on Mars.

Rowan, Arlen, Andrew and Ben make Branch Lake and "8ftr tech" isolated divisions of VOICE based in Canada.

ARLEN

(concerned)

Still a bit suspicious of how easily you got Command Control of The Branch and 8ftr Projects moved to Canada.

ROWAN

(alludes to secrecy)

Listen to me, all three of you. This never leaves the room. Some in VOICE hierarchy are really uneasy about relying on the 8ftr advances.

ANDREW

(realizes)

Shit. And they want control of it as far away from themselves as possible. We're being set-up.

BEN

Why not just turn it over to the "Martians", let them run the whole thing?

ROWAN
They're even more worried about
that.

James plans a birthday party for his daughter, who Aidin refers to as "Kitten."

JAMES
(jibes)
Aid.

AIDIN
(jibes back)
Ame.

JAMES
Your niece wants her favorite uncle
at her 10th birthday party.

AIDIN
Wants?

JAMES
Awright, awright - "demands".

AIDIN
That's better. You know I'll be
there. My "Kitten" deserves the
best.

JAMES
(carefully, cautiously)
Great. Then we're all in agreement,
her mother thinks so too.

AIDIN
(bit uneasy)
That is her job these days.

Many Branch members attend Jake's wedding. Alex brags about engineering aspects of 8ftr use.

ALEX
Whatever Luther's team did to these
little guys up there - it's
amazing. Carlos swears he has a
human skin copy made from a polymer
synthetic. And individual cell
reproduction - is perfect.

BEN
They've already begun organ copies
with fish and small mammals.

ANDREW

The alloy tests should be ready next month.

JAKE

(interrupts, out of breath)

Guys, you're not supposed to be over here talking shop. You're supposed to be out there helping me celebrate being married to the most wonderful person in the world.

Year long "Waste Of Space" protest demonstrations against Mars Colonies is quelled by VOICE alumni worldwide led by Vicky, Mary, Rachel and Isabelle.

PROTESTERS

(chanting)

Waste Of Space - Waste Of Space -
Waste Of Space...

VICKY

I will be proposing that all VOICE Alumni be re-activated. No matter their age or location.

ISABELLE

We must get this information to the grass roots level.

MARY

I can get whatever info we require from Oliver and Celina.

RACHEL

Paris comm base can be up and running in a week.

MAX

Southern hemisphere coverage is running, Queensland just needs to increase the staff.

STELLA

There's a good crew of trainees there now and I can get whoever else we'll need.

Alec, Ammar, Orion and Lauren testify at a closed hearing of the World Court on influence of VOICE. Lauren is in exceptional "rant" mode.

LAUREN

(commandingly)

Don't pretend with us. You didn't "uncover" anything. All of you knew about VOICE. Your ancestors knew before any U.N. or World Court existed. Bonaparte knew! Caesar knew!

ORION

Evidence of VOICE predates written records. How did you think they got the name?

Miller, Muhammad, Jack, Will and Atua discuss status of purposely slowed Ocean recovery programs.

MUHAMMAD

How do we explain the ocean recovery efforts aren't working?

MILLER

(correcting)

They aren't working as fast as p..planned. And we're not here to explain 'cause we haven't done anything wrong. We're here to tell the truth.

ATUA

(hesitant)

Except - if you'll recall - none of us has a lot of experience doing that.

JACK

Yes we do. With each other.

WILL

So long as we're honest with our selves, no one can doubt us.

FASTFORWARD TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN, TALL SHIP - TEN MORE YEARS LATER, DAY

AS CAMERA CONCLUDES ITS FALL FROM THE SKY IT THEN PERFORMS A 360 DEGREE BEAUTY REVEAL of the four-masted, square-rigged Tall Ship *STAD AMSTERDAM II*, largest of its class, under full

sail in the mid-Atlantic.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - DAY

YOUNG SONAR TRAINEES are tracking large target directly beneath them using a remote sensor buoy. At a nearby station, we see a global TxR map showing dedicated, secure KCD/KCi links between *Amsterdam* and locations in East Africa, Southeast Asia and The Branch in Central Georgia, U.S.A.

SONAR OPERATOR (13) reports to the Quarter Deck by phone.

SONAR OPERATOR

(Dutch accent)

Captain Braur, coded I.D. has been transmitted. Target continues to match our speed and course, Ma'am.

EXT. *AMSTERDAM* QUARTER DECK - CONTINUOUS

CAPTAIN BRAUR (50'S)

(to Sonar on phone, Dutch accent)

Very well. Report changes.

(to First Mate)

Heave to, Mr. Mackenbach.

Captain's order to bring her vessel to a virtual stop on the surface sends all the Deck Department's TEENAGE CADETS into the rigging to furl the sails. PURSER is ordered to assemble select members of the SHIP'S CREW and SPECIAL GUESTS on deck.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN, BENEATH THE SURFACE - SAME TIME

ESTABLISHING SHOT, MILITARY SUBMARINE

Vessel slowly cruises at a depth of Five Thousand feet.

INT. SUBMARINE, *USS AKRON* - CONTINUOUS

CAPTAIN SAMUAL ZANE (40's) and Lt. Cmdr. JAKE Truman (40's) at CONTROL ROOM plotting table.

JAKE (40'S)

Fun game. Nothing like the sims at the Naval Academy.

CAPTAIN ZANE

And even those are nothing like the reality from the '80s they're based on.

JAKE (40'S)

Our friends up top, who are they?

CAPTAIN ZANE

My orders say that's classified.

As Jake responds, he adjusts his shirt collar to cover a familiar chain and pendant around his neck. (He knows Captain Zane has uneasy feelings about it.) Elsewhere on his uniform, we see insignia for the U.S. Navy Intelligence and Navy Astro Surveillance Corps.

JAKE (40'S)

(toys with him)

Curious - so do mine.

CAPTAIN ZANE

Then that just leaves an explanation from your friend the...

HELM (O.S.)

(calls out)

Admiral at the Conn.

Captain snaps pencil he holds clean in two as a nervous twitch. A nearby ENSIGN immediately cleans it into a cup containing others that suffered the same fate and pulls a new one from a ready supply to place on the chart table for the Captain's use.

ANGLE - CONN HATCHWAY, HELM'S POV

Foot to head TILT SHOT reveals - Admiral AIDIN Robbins(40's).

AIDIN (40'S)

(aside to Helm Officer)

That never gets old.

(addresses others)

Captain, I understand we have a

(stresses next two words)

"shadow player" topside.

The following is terse and professional.

CAPTAIN ZANE

Aye, Admiral. As per classified directives, coded ping identifier has been confirmed.

AIDIN (40'S)
 Very well. Proceed with your
 orders, Captain.
 (to Jake)
 Lieutenant, if you would accompany
 me.

JAKE (40'S)
 (playing along)
 Yes, Admiral.

CAPTAIN ZANE
 (calls out)
 Admiral, sir, ...

Jake holds his position at the table.

CAPTAIN ZANE (CONT'D)
 ...I will find out what's going on
 here.

AIDIN (40'S)
 Perhaps sooner than you think.

He proceeds to the Officer's Quarters down the companionway.

Jake attempts to ease the Control Room tension.

JAKE (40'S)
 (chooses words carefully)
 The Admiral - appreciates - the
 professionalism and courtesy shown
 by Akron's crew, officers and Her
 Captain these past few days. I -
 expect - commendations will be
 forthcoming.

Jake turns and starts to leave but is stopped by the
 Captain's next words.

CAPTAIN ZANE
 (authoritative)
 Lieutenant...

Jake turns back and is stunned at noticing the near
 imperceptible movement of the Captain's fingers as he says...

CAPTAIN ZANE (CONT'D)
 I expect to know what that...
 (points to Jake's neck
 pendant)
 ...has been doing on my boat.

Jake returns to the Captain's position in the still silent Control Room. With some trepidation, he proceeds to acknowledge the Captain's use of the old *VOICE* Security Protocol - wondering if anyone else in the room is aware of it - and its purpose. He again marks the Captain counting each word correctly.

JAKE (40'S)
 (whispers, heedful)
 It doesn't do, anymore, what you probably heard. No longer necessary, Captain.

He starts to leave but relates one more thing.

JAKE (40'S) (CONT'D)
 (lighthearted)
 And - um - it never did that other thing you also probably heard.

CUT TO:

OFFICER'S COMPANIONWAY

Aidin waits for Jake next to a graphic depiction of a historic U.S. Navy vessel, a near 800 foot long 1930's era rigid frame dirigible: USS AKRON ZRS-4.

AIDIN (40'S)
 What was that all about?

JAKE (40'S)
 Just smoothing over your winning personality,
 (smirks)
 "Admiral, Sir".

AIDIN (40'S)
 (coolheaded)
 You know, we could possibly face a firing squad when he does find out about all this and if so, my last request will be for you to go first - so I can pull one of the triggers.

Jake is unfazed by Aidin's warning.

JAKE (40'S)
 That's really kind of you, Aidin. I know what a lousy shot you are.

Aidin pauses a moment to process Jake's attitude but also, to be privately pleased that Jake still has that memory. Then he shouts to the Control Room.

AIDIN (40'S)

Helm.

HELM

Aye, Admiral.

AIDIN (40'S)

What do you say we show our friends topside just what this boat and her crew can do. With the Captain's permission, of course.

ANGLE

HELM

(enthusiastic)

Aye-aye, Admiral.

Her eyes widen as another pencil is distinctly heard SNAPPING in half.

TWO SHOT - AIDIN AND JAKE

Aidin takes a more stable stance and grabs hold of a nearby railing.

AIDIN (40'S)

(explains, indicating Helm)

She clued me in about the burritos we had two days ago. I owe her one.

A noticeable increase in speed is detected as the bow of the sub starts taking a sharp pitch up. Aidin is prepared for the maneuver but Jake isn't. He skip-slides a few feet down the now sloping deck.

CUT TO:

EXT. STAD AMSTERDAM II, UPPER DECK - DAY

ANGLE - HAMMOCK

Tied between a mast and cabin wall. Occupant reposes, unseen, aiming two cameras at all the activity on the shrouds and yardarms.

MAIN DECK - PORT RAIL

Guests and Senior Officers have gathered amidships. Cadets relay info about the change in sub-surface activity.

OLIVER (40's) and KOKO (40's), look out to sea where the Cadets are pointing.

MILLER (40's), standing between them, calls up to the hammock. As he turns, the small jewel affixed to Mill's recently acquired left-eye patch glints in the sunlight.

MILLER (40'S)
(yells, Australian accent)
Oreo! Your pa..package is here.

Miller's occasional forced stutter, on words beginning with the letter "P", is the only other noticeable effect of the incident that also took his eye.

HAMMOCK

ORION (40's) lowers his cameras and peers out at...

ATLANTIC OCEAN

...the *USS AKRON* breaching the surface, whale-like, at a thirty-degree angle, revealing her entire forward hull before crash-splashing back to the sea. Both vessels proceed to station-keep with each other.

Two inflatable dinghies transfer Jake, Aidin and their gear to the Tall Ship. At mid crossing, Jake watches as Aidin hands a SUBMARINER in the first returning dinghy a sealed water-tight envelope that he then delivers to the *Akron*.

ALEX (40's) and ATUA (40's) help their two friends board *Amsterdam*.

AMMAR (40's) and ALEC (40's) greet them as well.

Aidin catches sight of Orion, now sitting up on the edge of the hammock, watching.

Members of *Amsterdam's* crew are introduced by Koko, Oliver and Miller.

Ammar uses binoculars to observe Captain Zane on the BRIDGE OF AKRON'S SAIL, who seems thoroughly disturbed by Aidin's message.

AMMAR (40'S)
(understates, Syrian
accent)
He does not look happy.

Alec looks too, then brings this to Aidin's attention.

ALEC (40'S)
What did you tell him?

Aidin glances at, then turns away from the Sub. In doing so, he meets Alec's gaze and beyond him, on the upper deck near Orion's hammock - the faces of two more colleagues from years ago. Former Mars Ambassador Dr. LUTHER Clayton DVM (40's) and Professor Sir JAMES Beardwell (40's) of the ISS Five-Point-0 Training Institute.

Consciously taking a moment to recall an exchange with, and answer from Alec, long ago when first meeting him at The Branch. . . . Aidin then responds - just as honestly.

AIDIN (40'S)
(matter-of-fact)
The truth.

Changing the subject and waving his arms out wide, he shouts up to Orion.

AIDIN (40'S) (CONT'D)
I get that you own this relic and
all but, think maybe yuh
went a bit overboard on the
arrangements here?

ORION (40'S)
(slides out of hammock)
Wait till you see the inside.

Aidin looks around at everyone assembled.

AIDIN (40'S)
(confused)
What's going on?
(to Jake)
We're just here to get that hunk-o'-
metal off your neck.

Luther responds as he, James and Orion descend to the main deck.

LUTHER (40'S)
 (British accent)
 No - we're not. Jake must wear that
 till the day he dies...
 (looks directly at Jake)
 which I truly believe won't be for
 many, many, many years.

Jake points to Miller.

JAKE (40'S)
 Hear that. I'm going to live a very
 long time. I expect you to do the
 same.
 (indicates eye patch)
 I want to know how that happened.

OLIVER (40'S)
 (slightly chuckles)
 No you don't. It's really stupid.

KOKO (40'S)
 Trust us, let him tell you one of
 the stories he's made up.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. *STAD AMSTERDAM II*, LOWER DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Portions of this deck have been equipped as a BEYOND-THE-STATE-OF-THE-ART SURGICAL SUITE, with prep and recovery rooms - for three patients. MED STAFF tends to various stations. In an instrument preparation area, some specialized plant-based items and nano-tech equipment are highlighted.

Alex demonstrates how these separate rooms are stabilized individually from the vessel's motion at a control console bearing his engineering company's logo.

ALEX (40'S)
 (Mexican accent)
 The ship rolls, and we don't.

He then points out on a monitor how the *AMSTERDAM* will soon be secured in dry dock, briefly, for what is to happen later.

MILLER (40'S)
 (inquires)
 All "El Pre..Presidente" approved?

ALEX (40'S)
 (clarifies, modestly)
 "Presidente Provisional". It was
 only for two months. It wasn't even
 my idea. Wouldn't let me do
 anything. Just smile and wave at
 crowds in the plaza.

MILLER (40'S)
 Still; pre..pretty sure you
 outrank...
 (mockingly)
 ...the "Admiral" here.

KOKO (40'S)
 (chuckles)
 Pretty sure the Cabin Boy on this
 ship outranks him.

Jake loosens his uniform shirt but keeps the Rank and
 Insignia in place. Aidin also assumes a more casual
 appearance. However, he hands all his Rank and Insignia over
 to Jake.

AIDIN (40'S)
 (to no one in particular)
 There goes my euphoric day.

INT. SECURITY VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

Their entry to an observation area must be approved by the
 revived VOICE A.C.A. protocol.

ATUA (40'S)
 (perturbed)
 Antique Coin Access. Positively
 prehistoric.

He and the others place an actual ancient coin coded to the
 individual in a scanning tray for I.D.

ATUA (40'S) (CONT'D)
 Can't believe they're still making
 us do this. Been carrying this
 thing around for years. Probably
 only second time I've ever used it.

KOKO (40'S)
 Really...

Koko retrieves his well worn item.

KOKO (40'S) (CONT'D)
I use mine all the time.

Ammar is troubled by the computer queries his token elicits.

AMMAR (40'S)
(aggravated)
And I am still having to insist,
Syria is an ancient, sovereign
entity. It is not the "property" of
China, India or Brazil.

Alec imposes himself to calmly remind his friend how to
circumvent this problem.

ALEC
(demonstrates)
Just sing that tune I taught you,
in your head, . . . dance your
fingers on the keypad. Works every
time.
(warns)
And don't tell anyone else.

AMMAR
(smartass-ish)
As if I am going to tell anyone
else I am breaking the law.

OBSERVATION AREA

As they assemble in this comfortable module with seats and
floor-to-ceiling view windows to surgery and support rooms,
Alec points to video and data monitors for what he calls the
Eight-Footer Containment Facility.

Documentation vids chronicle generations of those microscopic
creatures, hard at work for years, creating functional
reproductions for life science purposes. In this first of its
kind case, a human heart.

ALEC (40'S)
(manipulates screens)
These . . . are the descendants
of some friends of ours from a
couple decades ago. Back then, they
randomly turned living plant cells
into solid minerals. Years later,
they were re-engineered...

Ammar and Luther emphasize at the same time.

AMMAR/LUTHER (40'S)
 (together)
 Re-trained.

ALEC (40'S)
 (corrected, for the
 umpteenth time)
 ...Re-trained...

Alec yields to Luther.

LUTHER (40'S)
 (continues)
 ...to turn mineral compounds into
 plant seeds for Mars settlements as
 well as contributing to Re-Greening
 efforts on Earth very soon.

JAMES (40'S)
 (takes over, British
 accent)
 And now - here...
 (indicates immediate
 surroundings)
 ...polymer and alloy templates -
 being turned into living animal
 tissue.

ANGLE - VIEW WALL TO SURGERY TECH SUPPORT ROOM

Everyone's attention turns to this adjoining room as the
 voice of a YOUNG GIRL inside is heard over the intercom.

NIECE (14)
 (very happy, French
 accent)
 Uncle Aidin!

ANGLE

Aidin's face brightens with an equally happy smile at
 recognizing her as she removes a bioprotective face shield.

AIDIN (40'S)
 (pleasantly surprised)
 Kitten. What are you doing here?

She blushes a little at his use of the nickname he gave her.
 James addresses her next.

JAMES (40'S)
 Honey, would you ask your mother to
 join us.

Now she's more than a little embarrassed by James' familiarity.

NIECE (14)
 Daaaaaad!

She snaps what looks like a compact version of a KCT onto a bandolier she wears holding similar tools.

VICKY (40's), a familiar friend and VOICE associate from their Branch days, appears from behind the equipment racks. She and James engage in a brief bit of conjugal sparring.

As they do so, Aidin reflexly looks to see Jake is OK.

VICKY (40'S)
 (in French)
 James. Nous avons discuté du sujet.
 (*James, we've discussed this.*)

JAMES (40'S)
 (in French, to her)
 On lui permet de dire « le Chaton »
 mais je suis...
 (*He's allowed to say "Kitten" but I'm ...*)

Vicky stops him with an intense, direct stare.

James turns and looks to Orion standing nearby.

JAMES (40'S) (CONT'D)
 Kids it's like they think
 they're in charge - of -
 everything.

James' parental foolishness draws suppressed laughter from the others. It's a welcome respite from their secretive worries of how Aidin will react to Vicky's presence.

Vicky turns to the recent arrivals. Mood among Jake and Aidin's friends perceptibly changes to one of tempered concern.

VICKY (40'S)
 (blithely, French accent)
 Jake, Aidin. So good to see both of
 you again.

Without drawing too much attention to themselves, Alec and Atua move closer to Jake as a show of support for him. The pendant's lasting selective effects on his memory cause him merely to return a cautious, friendly, polite smile. Vicky, today, is as much of a mystery to him as she was to his teenage self when accepting Command of The Branch from her, following Oliver's perilous rescue in the swamp.

Vicky moves to and hugs her and James' daughter.

Aidin considers both through the glass. Pleasant and - unpleasant thoughts - swirl in his mind. He's cognizant of things he truly wished for but may never attain.

AIDIN (40'S)

Vicky...

(points to Kitten)

NIECE

(speaks up)

I work here now. Please don't be angry, Uncle. It was my decision.

She smiles, knowing that he thinks favorably of what she has told him by the look in his eyes.

AIDIN (40'S)

(kindly, to Vicky)

She's so like you all those years ago.

The minds of all are eased by Aidin's comforting reminiscence. Everyone harbors their own opinions of how justly or unjustly he blamed Vicky, as their V.I.C., for so much that went wrong during their time at The Branch.

In particular, Miller calms Orion's fears by whispering Orion's own words from that time back to him.

MILLER (40'S)

(softly)

"He has his moments."

VICKY (40'S)

(truly caring, to Aidin)

How are you feeling?

AIDIN (40'S)

Well right now; full-blown-gonzo-confused.

He turns to the others who seem to know more than he does.

JAKE (40'S)
 (explains to Aidin)
 All those molecular, nucleic,
 genome studies the past several
 years weren't just for you. They
 prepared us...
 (points to Aidin, Orion
 and himself)
 prepared me for this.

Orion taps the chest-mounted data-port link to his one-of-a-kind artificial heart, which has kept him alive since that fateful day over Twenty years ago at the Bangkok marketplace.

ORION (40'S)
 We're gettin' rid of MY hunk-o'-
 metal.

Despite the explanation, Aidin seems even more bewildered. Jake indicates the Eight-Footer enhanced replacement heart as Oliver clarifies the situation.

OLIVER (40'S)
 Alec and I were never happy about
 how our team ended up. Koko, Alex
 and Luther have been part of a
 group that developed a way to
 transfer a complete human bio-print
 into a donor organ. Totally mind-
 blowing!. It's taken all of us six
 years and Jake's heart is
 now a better match for you
 than Orion's was even
 though he was paired with you at
 birth.

Oliver points to Orion, Aidin and Jake in turn.

OLIVER (40'S) (CONT'D)
 He gets his back like he needs
 right now. You get the best match
 for yours *VOICE* could possibly
 provide. The Eight-Footer
 replacement for Jake is geminated
 from his original heart before your
 Bio-JT-A-4 enhancements were begun
 and should be no problem.

Aidin can't believe what he's hearing.

AIDIN (40'S)
 This is a joke, right? An
 elaborate...

Jake interrupts, knowing he has to be the one to convince Aidin.

JAKE (40'S)
 (intensely personal)
 All the data's here. You'll have
 all the time you need to go through
 it. Then . . . you decide what's
 best for you. Orion and I both
 believe this is the safest way
 forward.

Everyone hears the emotion in Jake's voice.

JAKE (40'S) (CONT'D)
 He saved your life - so you could
 save mine. You're the one who kept
 insisting I wasn't dead.
 (taps pendant)
 That's one memory I'll never loose
 again.

All in the Observation Room silently concur with Jake's feelings regarding this matter.

JAKE (40'S) (CONT'D)
 (lightens mood)
 Anyway - joke's on me this time.
 All that...
 (fumbles a bit)
 ...J.- T.- 4.- A. stuff cleared
 away the valve and inner chamber
 plaque I had.
 (points at Eight-Footers)
 Those little bastards copied my
 original perfectly and put
 it all back!

All sorts of playful barbs are now directed at Jake. Miller leads off.

MILLER (40'S)
 No more pe..pepperoni pi..pizza!

Oliver, Alec and Luther exchange a quick glance then add...

OLIVER/ALEC/LUTHER (40'S)
 (suppressing laughter)
 "T - A - O!"

ANGLE - POV, VICKY AND KITTEN

Concurrently realizing they are powerless to stop it, the entire group devolves to their younger selves, if only for a few pleasant moments.

Vicky and Kitten happily witness twelve friends from decades ago - sharing concern for each other, proud of their individual and collective accomplishments, confident about the future - and joking their way through it all.

Branch Lake Team One.

All Of Them.

THE END