

Space Oddity

By

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INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

An old slide projector HUMS as it throws an image of a red planet across a wall.

ALEX (V.O.)  
This is Mars.

The projector WHIRS, then CLICKS: small, futuristic white dots on the planet's surface.

ALEX (V.O.)  
This will be the first colony on  
Mars.

CLICK. A shuttle.

ALEX (V.O.)  
For 210 days, I will travel there  
in this.

CLICK. The white dots are pods, connected by hallways.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Then this will be my home.

QUICK CLICKS: a compact bedroom, a greenhouse, a lab, a rec room. A face in a space suit, walking the foreign terrain. Two hands joined in matrimony. A flag planted on a hill.

ALEX (V.O.)  
This is where I'll sleep. This is  
where I'll eat. Work. Play.  
Explore. Get sick. Get better.  
Marry. Pioneer. And die.

BACK ON: Mars. Desolate, alien Mars.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Mars is where I'll die.

A long, dramatic pause as ALEXANDER MCALLISTER (27) looks out over his audience.

Handsome, with an intelligent face and an air of awkward endearment he would strongly dispute, he wears a t-shirt with a CIRCULAR RED LOGO, not unlike NASA's.

DIMITRI (O.S.)  
This is for children?

His audience is DIMITRI (30), a Russian with brooding features that are at a constant clash with an uncharacteristically cheery personality.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Yes.

DIMITRI

And you must end on dying?

ALEX

That is how it ends.

DIMITRI

But do you really want to bring  
that up to a room of first graders?

ALEX

Second graders...

DIMITRI

Maybe you should talk more of space  
adventures?

ALEX

Space adventures?

DIMITRI

Discovering aliens, or racing  
rovers. Oh, oh, oh - playing  
basketball!

ALEX

You're thinking of Space Jam.

DIMITRI

Oh. Yes. I do not think they would  
realize this, though.

ALEX

That stuff isn't real, Dimitri.

DIMITRI

Well this is not yet real, either.

ALEX

It will be. That's the difference.

DIMITRI

(considering)

Let me see it again-

He grabs the remote from Alex and CLICKS through slides.

DIMITRI (CONT'D)

Projectors and Space Jam...what a  
time to be alive.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
(re: slides)  
Some are from my old astronomy set.  
I thought it'd be kind of cool...

DIMITRI  
Is that why Pluto's still a planet?

Alex looks at the projection. The former planet looks back.

ALEX  
Oh...maybe I can scratch it out.

Dimitri watches as Alex attempts to tamper with the slide.

DIMITRI  
Use a laptop.

ALEX  
(having destroyed the slide)  
Fine.

DIMITRI  
And finish with living. This is  
where I live, the end.

ALEX  
Alright.  
(beat)  
They released Space Jam in Russia?

OVER CREDITS:

EXT. VERMONT - DAWN

Mars, a tiny dot in the night sky, disappears behind  
sunlight as DAY BREAKS over an enormous field of flowers.

A figure lies among them. UP CLOSE we see it's Alex, doing  
push ups, fog swirling around his motion. We HEAR him  
breathing. We SEE his focus. This is a man on a mission.

And then he's off, RUNNING down a long driveway, watched  
from the retreating farmhouse by his bemused PARENTS.

EXT. VERMONT - DAWN - CONTINUOUS

He runs through meadows, past hay barrels and farm animals.  
A dark cloud follows him, but it never gives way to rain.

He races himself up a hill, framed by staggering mountain  
ranges, running towards the sights and sounds of life in-

EXT. BARTLET - TOWN SQUARE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

-Bartlet, a small town with a bustling main street and town square housing too many STATUES of long lost pioneers.

He stops by ETHAN ALLEN, MILITIA LEADER, 1738-1789, leaning against his bronze coattails as he catches his breath.

EVAN (O.S.)

We have a perimeter breach. This is not a drill.

JACK (O.S.)

Put your weapons down and your hands up. I said weapons down!

LOUIS (O.S.)

Weapons down, hands up!

Three EIGHT-YEAR-OLDS stand on the balcony above the corner store, head to toe in army camouflage and pointing menacing POTATO GUNS at him. Several POTATOES roll round their feet.

ALEX

(hands up in surrender)

I'm a civilian.

EVAN steps forward. He talks like he's seen a whole lot of Brad Pitt movies a kid shouldn't have seen.

EVAN

State your name.

ALEX

Alexander McAllister.

EVAN

Your purpose?

ALEX

Supply pick up.

Evan eyes him. Checks with his team. A tense beat.

EVAN

Denied.

And they unleash a HAIL of potato pellets. Alex ducks and covers himself as they RAIN down on him.

ALEX

Evan!

(CONTINUED)

A stray PLONKS onto a passing WOMAN'S head. She touches her hair, pulls it out and turns.

This is DAISY TAYLOR (27), a tangle of dark hair and inquisitive eyes, the perfect match for the personality churning beneath.

The boys DUCK under the safety of the white railing, hidden. No such luck for Alex.

DAISY

People usually just tap me on the shoulder.

Alex looks to the balcony. Nothing. He's on his own.

ALEX

Well...you've got to stand out.

DAISY

Does it ever work?

ALEX

Does what?

DAISY

Throwing potato at passing strangers?

ALEX

It's...hit or miss...

Beat. And then she laughs. He's quite proud of himself.

DAISY

Oh, you deserve this.

She flicks it at him before turning. He notices another pellet caught in her hair.

ALEX

Wait - there's another one.

She shakes her head but it remains lodged. He tentatively moves closer and pulls it out. From here, he can see freckles, the hazel in her eyes, a scar...

DAISY

Thanks.

She pulls away, bringing him back to reality.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Righting your wrongs. How noble.

ALEX  
(losing his nerve)  
I mean...you know there are kids up  
there, right?

DAISY  
(a glance to the balcony)  
Are there? I've only ever seen  
highly trained military operatives.

She grins and walks off. The boys emerge from their hiding.

EVAN  
Smooth.

Grimacing, Alex throws the pellet back up at them.

ALEX  
Thanks Evan.

As he slings his fake gun over his shoulder and looks off  
into the distance:

EVAN  
That's Commander Marshburn to you,  
son.

INT. BARTLET COUNTY GENERAL STORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Alex enters, still holding the pellet. Evan's mother LINDA (40's) is perched behind the counter, eyes glued to a KINDLE which plays a constant stream of the darkest - though sleekest - Scandinavian crime dramas.

We hear Swedish DIALOGUE. Intense MUSIC. FOOTSTEPS. Blood SPLATTERING over minimalist furniture.

ALEX  
Hey-

She jumps.

LINDA  
Sorry. Good bit. Hi Alex.

And her eyes are right back on the Kindle as Alex pays for a newspaper.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Think there's been another raid on  
the potatoes.

He sets the pellet down within her line of sight.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

JANE and JEFF MCALLISTER (60's) eat breakfast round the table of a immaculately clean house, joined by daughter LIZ (30), a high strung PR Executive in a serious and committed relationship with her phone.

Jeff reads the paper. Jane looks at her spoon and, dissatisfied, rubs at the sole blemish on it. In the reflection, she catches her daughter TYPING furiously.

JANE

Honey, it's not going to kill you  
if you look away for two minutes.

LIZ

*It won't. People will.*

Alex enters, sweaty. He throws Jeff the newest edition.

ALEX

(to Liz)

Good, you came.

LIZ

Whatever I can do to fulfill your  
unreasonable demands.

She continues TAPPING on her phone. Alex pours cereal.

ALEX

It was a request.

LIZ

Mom made it a demand.

JANE

No, I didn't.

A look between mother and daughter: you sure as hell did.

ALEX

Well, I'm forever grateful that you  
made the impossible journey from  
the city-

(CONTINUED)

JANE  
Alexander.

LIZ  
(still on her phone)  
It's OK mom, I didn't hear him.

ALEX  
Do you need me to text it to you?

LIZ  
Would that mean I can leave?

JANE  
(warning tone)  
Elizabeth...

LIZ  
(mimicking her)  
Mom...

ALEX  
Can I start?

JANE  
Yes, yes, sorry. Shh, Elizabeth.

All eyes on him, Alex sits down. Clears his throat.

ALEX  
So I asked you here for a reason.

LIZ  
You need a lift.

ALEX  
(ignoring her)  
I'm not returning to engineering.

LIZ  
What. Why?  
(beat)  
God, please don't be a food truck.

ALEX  
I got through to the next round.

Jane and Jeff share a nervous look.

JANE  
Wow, honey...

LIZ  
Next round of what?

ALEX  
The Mission Mars Space Program.

LIZ  
What the hell is that?

ALEX  
I'm going to Mars.

LIZ  
(playing along)  
Okay.

ALEX  
It's a one way journey so I wanted  
to tell you all as soon as I knew  
for sure.

Now Liz is concerned, glancing over at her guilty-looking parents.

LIZ  
I don't understand. Are we joking-

ALEX  
I'm going to Mars.

LIZ  
Like with NASA?

ALEX  
(scoffing)  
NASA's schedule is thirty years  
out. We're doing it in ten.

LIZ  
I still don't...what...

ALEX  
I'm going to be training soon,  
mostly in isolation, so I thought  
we should all spend some time  
together before that happens.

Liz looks around the room. Looks back at him. His sincerity.

LIZ  
You really believe this?

ALEX

It's not a belief, it's a reality-

Liz isn't listening, she's glaring at her mother.

The home phone RINGS. Alex answers:

ALEX

Hello?

NEWS PRODUCER (O.S.)

Is this Alex McAllister?

He exits into the hallway.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

ALEX

Yes, it is.

NEWS PRODUCER (O.S.)

I'm calling from NBC Local News 5.

We'd like to interview you for a  
segment tonight.

ALEX

Uh...sure-

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

LIZ

You knew about this?

JANE

Elizabeth...

LIZ

(accusingly)

Dad?

JEFF

I thought it was like that LARP-ing  
thing people do. When they dress up  
as knights and-

LIZ

Yes I know what it is, Jeff.

He shrugs and goes back to the sports pages. Alex returns:

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

They're going to interview me for the news! And the paper's writing a story. They want a photo of me as a kid - where do we keep the photos?

LIZ

Oh my god.

Jane pulls her daughter into the kitchen.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

LIZ (CONT'D)

Mom, he's fucking lost it! And you've let him!

JANE

Shhh, he can hear.

LIZ

So? He probably thinks you're Santa Claus and I'm the god damn Pope!

JANE

This is the most he's done all year. He gets up early, he exercises, he works with your father - he goes *outside*. *Outside*, Liz! Remember how long it took him just to come out of his room?

ON LIZ: She does.

JANE (CONT'D)

So does it really matter why?

LIZ

Of course it matters. You are pandering to a lunatic!

JANE

He's your brother.

LIZ

So he's a lunatic with a sister!

JANE

We don't know this isn't real. They're a private company. They have means.

(CONTINUED)

LIZ  
*To get to Mars?*

Well when you put it like that...

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Mom, do you have any idea how much  
this would even cost? The  
technology they'd need to have  
access to?

JANE  
No, I don't, Elizabeth. *But he*  
*does.* And he's excited and happy.

LIZ  
(exasperated)  
Because he thinks he's moving to  
another planet.

JANE  
Well, maybe he is.  
(off her glare)  
In any case you need to leave him  
alone. Do you understand?

LIZ  
No.

JANE  
Then start to. Whatever gets him  
out of bed in the morning, we will  
support. We will all support him.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BATHROOM - DAY

Alex wipes the steam from the mirror.

ALEX  
This is Alex McAllister, calling  
Mission Control. It's 9:50AM on  
Mars. The temperature is a balmy  
-40, wind speed a mild 5 knots and  
the radiation reading on track for  
an annual 300 millisieverts. Final  
numbers should be coming through  
shortly, but, all in all, a nice  
day to be on Mars. Over and out.

The steam snakes its way across the mirror again, cutting  
the "transmission."

PRELAP: The sound of a SKYPE CALL.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

Alex's bedroom is decorated in space posters. It looks like a child's room. He runs through and answers:

CURTIS  
What's up, cosmonaut?

CURTIS (40's) is middle aged, balding, crass, permanently on the Mission Mars forums and BEYOND EXCITED to leave Earth.

ALEX  
Did you get through?

CURTIS  
You better believe it. We're on our way, boy.

...he also uses a lot of lingo best left to teenagers.

ALEX  
I wish it was tomorrow.

CURTIS  
I'd be first in line. Mars, bro!

A SCREAM in the background. A child FLASHES PAST.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
Hey, HEY- daddy is on the phone, do you understand? He is on the phone.

ALEX  
They must be excited.

CURTIS  
They are LOVING IT. Dad's an astronaut!

CHILD  
Dad's an astronaut!

Curtis laughs a big, BOOMING laugh.

CURTIS  
That's right! But go outside. Now.

He leaves the frame. Some SQUEALS and a door SHUTTING.

ALEX  
Any news on training sites yet?

(CONTINUED)

CURTIS

Nah. I'm still betting Antarctica.  
Closest to the real thing.

Alex looks at a poster of the planet. To him, that red, rocky surface is nothing but an invitation.

ALEX

Can't wait.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY

Jeff and Dimitri work in the flower fields.

Jeff doesn't talk, but Dimitri has a little STEREO which he uses to SING ALONG to Eastern European ballads.

ALEX (O.S.)

Dimitri!

INT. MCALLISTER FARM - GREENHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Alex is in the furthest greenhouse, which has been transformed into his makeshift lab.

A metal contraption lies on the ground. Dimitri bounds in:

DIMITRI

Finally, my time to shine.

ALEX

No, I just need you to hold that end up there while I join these-

Slightly disappointed, Dimitri lifts it up.

DIMITRI

What does it do?

ALEX

Ideally, it will germinate seeds using Martian soil.

DIMITRI

But Martian soil is not really soil, yes?

ALEX

That's what I have to figure out.

He opens a control panel and fiddles with the wiring.

(CONTINUED)

DIMITRI  
(thoughtful)

The winters in Russia are the same,  
it is impossible to grow plants  
but, somehow, life finds a way.

ALEX  
That's from Jurassic Park.

DIMITRI  
No it isn't.

ALEX  
Yes it is.

DIMITRI  
What is a Jurassic Park?

The machine WHIRS. SMOKE pours out. Alex SHUTS IT DOWN.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
So that didn't work.  
(rubbing his eyes)  
And it's burning my face.

DIMITRI  
It's good practice for space, no?  
This is what it will be like when  
you disintegrate because you  
accidentally opened a window?

ON ALEX: Very funny.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jeff and Jane are in their comfy chairs - Jane polishing the silverware because she must always be doing something - as Liz paces around the TV.

NEWS ANCHOR STEVE  
Now to space news - boy, you don't  
hear that often enough - where  
privately funded company Mission  
Mars has today announced it's final  
candidates in the race to colonize  
the planet.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - BARN - NIGHT

As the story continues, Alex is across the fields, climbing the debris of a very old, very unstable barn.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

NEWS ANCHOR LISA

That's right Steve. The incredibly ambitious, perhaps impossible, goal of the program is to get humans on Mars by 2023, decades ahead of NASA, Space X and Virgin Galactic. Mission Mars believes they can by making it a one way journey, thereby halving the supplies and materials needed for a round trip.

NEWS ANCHOR STEVE

You're saying there's no return?

NEWS ANCHOR LISA

Yes, Steve. Colonists will farewell their friends, their families and their lives here to participate.

NEWS ANCHOR STEVE

You'd sure hope you like your coworkers!

Lisa can't hide her smile.

LIZ

They're mocking him.

JANE

No they aren't.

INT. MCALLISTER FARM - BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Alex nearly falls as a chunk of timber crumbles, but grabs on to a piece of the roof and hoists himself up.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

NEWS ANCHOR LISA

Who would sign up for a one way ticket to a place so inhospitable that it's atmosphere and sub-zero temperatures would kill you in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NEWS ANCHOR LISA (cont'd)  
seconds? The answer, from this  
state at least, is Alex McAllister,  
who we spoke to earlier today.

A TAPED SEGMENT plays. Alex's face appears on the screen.  
Liz GROANS.

ALEX ON TV  
Hi Lisa, Steve.

NEWS ANCHOR LISA  
Alex, will you really leave planet  
Earth forever?

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Alex lies back on the roof, looking up at the stars. His  
future home, somewhere up there.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

ALEX ON TV  
Without a second thought, Lisa. I'm  
very excited.

NEWS ANCHOR LISA  
But can you even grasp what you're  
giving up? You're relinquishing  
your whole life to this program.

ALEX ON TV  
Well, you may see it as giving up a  
life, but I see it as choosing a  
new one.

LIZ  
(to Jane)  
He sounds like he's in a cult.

NEWS ANCHOR STEVE  
Question, Alex - if you have kids  
up there, are they martians?

ALEX ON TV  
(considering)  
Yeah, I guess they are.

The anchors erupt into laughter.

(CONTINUED)

LIZ  
Jesus Christ.

EXT. BARTLET - DAY

Alex is back in town. He looks at a MAN reading THE BARTLET GAZETTE. Double takes when he see's his own face on the front page.

Another NEWSPAPER ALEX floats past in the hand of a WOMAN.

He passes the corner store - slowing as he catches sight of even more newspapers - and is HIT by a potato pellet.

EVAN  
Keep moving, citizen.

Reality reaffirmed, he carries on to a row of small offices.

INT. THOMPSON & TAYLOR INSURANCE - DAY

He concentrates deeply as he folds a post-it note into a small but mighty PAPER PLANE.

With the last wing assembled, he SHOOTS IT into the air, watching as it soars above him in blissful, perfect FLIGHT.

Then the door SWINGS OPEN and it CRASH LANDS into Daisy.

She looks at the plane, lifeless on the ground, and back up at him, trying to conceal a smile.

DAISY  
Now I feel like this is just how  
you greet people.

ALEX  
(grimacing)  
Only when I'm really trying to  
impress them.

DAISY  
Then I'm honored.

She shakes his hand as she sits behind her desk.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
I'm Daisy, by the way. I'll be  
helping you with your insurance.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Where's Mike?

DAISY

He asked me to sit down with  
you...I hope that's alright.

ALEX

(very pleased)

Yeah, absolutely, screw Mike.

DAISY

He's my Uncle.

ALEX

Oh. I didn't know he had nieces.

DAISY

Well, he does, it's me.

(amused)

So what can I do for you, Mr.  
McAllister?

ALEX

Alex.

DAISY

Alex.

ALEX

I need to take out a life insurance  
policy.

Daisy shuffles through forms.

DAISY

Is this for yourself?

ALEX

Yes. I'm going to Mars.

DAISY

I'm sorry?

He points at a copy of THE BARTLET GAZETTE on her desk.

ALEX

I'm a crew member on a mission to  
Mars and as it's a little hazardous  
I felt I should look into life  
insurance.

Daisy takes a second, then LAUGHS. God, he likes her laugh.  
It makes him want to laugh along and NOW HE IS.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY

Ok, I'll just use our standard  
space travel template.

ALEX

Great.

Then she stops. He stops. Her eyes widen.

DAISY

Are you not joking?

ALEX

No.

DAISY

You're going to Mars?

ALEX

Yes.

DAISY

How?

ALEX

The Mission Mars Space Program.

DAISY

I thought that was a scam.

(off his look)

Sorry. I shouldn't have said that.

ALEX

It's alright. You're not the first.

DAISY

Okay, so, wow. Mars.

ALEX

Mars.

DAISY

I actually don't have a template  
for that.

She rustles around in the papers.

DAISY (CONT'D)

I guess you can fill out the  
standard form to start.She hands it over. Watches as he writes. Taking in his  
earnestness. Eventually unable to help herself:

(CONTINUED)

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Why are you going?

ALEX  
No one ever asks me that.

DAISY  
(curious)  
...I am.

ALEX  
Because it's Mars!

DAISY  
And?

ALEX  
You really want the "and"?  
(off her nod)  
Well, we know next to nothing about  
the universe, and we aren't going  
to figure it out from here. Just  
like a hundred years ago we didn't  
know anything about the Amazon, or  
Antarctica. We had to explore. So  
we get to Mars, maybe we could  
start to find answers...it could be  
the beginning of everything.

She sits back, playing with her pen. Intrigued.

DAISY  
"The beginning of everything."  
Sounds like a song.

ALEX  
Thanks.

He cringes: why is he pleased?

Her eyes flicker to the clock. Quarter to five.

Right. He looks back down and continues scribbling. Until:

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Did you just move here?

DAISY  
What?

ALEX  
It's a small town...

DAISY

Yeah, I did.

ALEX

Why?

DAISY

I guess sometimes you wake up with the crippling desire to work in the insurance industry, and then you do everything possible to make that dream a reality.

ALEX

Oh.

He goes back to the paperwork, oblivious. Or confused.

DAISY

I wanted to be a swimmer.

He looks up.

ALEX

What happened?

DAISY

A lot of other people did too.

Beat.

ALEX

I'm a really bad swimmer.

DAISY

(laughing)

Well, good, then I at least beat you.

EXT. TAYLOR & THOMPSON INSURANCE - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

She walks him out, keys in hand.

DAISY

I might have some follow up questions if that's OK.

ALEX

That's fine.

(lingering)

What are you doing tonight?

(CONTINUED)

DAISY

Don't know anyone yet so just  
hanging out with my pal Netflix.

ALEX

Are you two close?

DAISY

Not really. He keeps trying to make  
me watch the Vanilla Ice Renovation  
show. Need some new friends...

She looks at him. Pointedly. And he freaks out.

ALEX

Ok, well, have a swell night.

She raises an eyebrow: swell?

Cringing, he's down the steps and across the street before  
she can blink again. MIKE TAYLOR (60's) joins her.

MIKE

Sweet kid. Known him since he was  
yea high-

He reaches his hand low to the ground.

DAISY

Is he crazy?

MIKE

I never thought so before.

(thinking)

Look, obviously we can't insure him  
if this is all nonsense, but we owe  
it to him to look into it. I know  
it's not part of the job  
description but...

Far away now, Alex glances back, OUT OF BREATH from his  
escape.

DAISY

(fascinated)

I'll do it. I don't mind.

Alex ducks and shields his face as he enters the zone of  
potato pellets. Mike pats her on the back, relieved.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex sits in the dark, watching the earth roll by via the International Space Station STREAM on his enormous MONITOR.

Except he's not really watching. He's daydreaming. Reflections glide over his face. The Earth, going from night to day in seconds, and her somewhere on it.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DUSK

Alex and Dimitri are putting equipment away. Dimitri is singing, and following each verse with translations.

DIMITRI

She's saying when you say her name,  
she will run through the flames to  
you. Peace will prevail-

ALEX

There will be peace because you  
said her name?

DIMITRI

And fire. Peace *and* fire.

Jane leads Daisy towards them.

DAISY (O.S.)

Wow, this is beautiful.

Alex hears and looks up. Panics, but there's nowhere to run.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Hi.

ALEX

Hi.

They both notice the other person beside them, grinning deliriously. Dimitri is quickly back to work and Jane-

JANE

-I think I hear your father-

-is gone in a flutter. Beat.

DAISY

So you live on a flower farm.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
Yeah...flowers everywhere.

DAISY  
Any daisies?

ALEX  
(scoffing)  
No. Daisies are weeds.

DAISY  
Thank you.

He has no idea how to save that moment.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Sorry to just show up...I had some  
follow up questions but you didn't  
leave a number.

ALEX  
I don't have a phone. It's part of  
preparing for isolation.

DAISY  
Oh, of course...isolation.

She looks around. Dimitri sings quietly nearby.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Well, we can underwrite a policy,  
but since it's such a unique  
situation I need some more details  
in order to create a plan.

ALEX  
Ok. But I'm running late for  
something.

Dimitri GLARES at him.

DAISY  
Sorry, I came at a bad time...

Dimitri GESTURES to her.

ALEX  
It's a first aid course.  
(beat)  
Dimitri sometimes helps me out but-

Dimitri SPEEDS past:

(CONTINUED)

DIMITRI

So busy tonight. Plans. All of  
them. See you tomorrow.

ALEX

I guess seeing the training might  
answer some of your questions?

DAISY

You're learning first aid for  
space?

ALEX

Just locally at the moment. They'll  
put us through more rigorous stuff  
down the line.

(beat)

I have to go right now.

She looks at him. Such an odd proposal. Decides.

DAISY

Ok.

INT. SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

Bodies and dummies litter the floor. Daisy is lying on a mat  
in front of Alex.

The course is run by RENEE (60's), a retiree who has  
wholeheartedly embraced the idea of Alex training for Mars.

Alex looks MORTIFIED. We find out because it is CPR NIGHT.

RENEE

Your cousin has jumped in the pool,  
can't swim and is drowning. You  
must resuscitate her.

She turns to Alex.

RENEE (CONT'D)

Alex, Daisy here has taken her  
helmet off for too long.

ALEX

Ok, but in that case, she'd be dead  
instantly.

RENEE

Why?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Because there's very little oxygen.

RENEE

Well, say there is oxygen.

ALEX

But there isn't. She'd be dead.

RENEE

Then say she fell into a pool too.

But the pool is on Mars.

Resuscitate her. Begin!

The class performs CPR. Alex sighs.

DAISY

Am I drowning now? Ok-

She makes a choking sound.

ALEX

I'm sorry, I didn't realize we were  
doing CPR tonight.

DAISY

Sure you didn't.

ALEX

No, I really didn't.

Daisy makes another choking sound. From across the room:

RENEE

Alex, she's dying! Save her! Save  
her now!

With extreme reluctance, Alex kneels down. He places his fingers on her neck to find her pulse. Then he moves over her mouth. He gets close. His lips right above hers.

ALEX

And then I do the breathing part. I  
get it. It makes sense.

He sits back up and tentatively places his hands on her chest, beginning light compressions.

DAISY

You're not doing it right.

ALEX

What?

DAISY

You're pushing the wrong parts.  
You're not making me breathe.

She takes his hands and moves them over her chest to the proper position. She leaves her hands on top of his.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Now push.

She pushes their hands. He's having trouble concentrating.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Here - let me show you.

She gets up and indicates for him to lie.

ALEX

Oh...no-

DAISY

Come on, I was a swimmer, remember?

With extreme hesitation, he complies. Her lips press his as she performs perfect CPR. It catches Renee's attention:

RENEE

Bravo Daisy, after surviving a near drowning she has pulled Alex from the water and now saved his life.

Daisy grins at the disgruntled astronaut before her.

DAISY

Sounds like you owe me.

EXT. BARTLET - NIGHT - LATER

They separate from the dispersing class.

ALEX

I'm sorry. I thought we'd be tying bandages or something.

DAISY

Hey, at least one useful thing came out of my swimming days.

They walk in silence for a little. Alex, as he is prone to do, looks up at the night sky. She follows his gaze.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Were you always into space?

ALEX  
When I was a kid.

DAISY  
Then puberty happened?

ALEX  
Something like that.

DAISY  
So what did you do in between?

ALEX  
Before Mars? I went to school.

DAISY  
For what?

ALEX  
Engineering and psychology...

DAISY  
Psychology?

ALEX  
Hard to believe?

She smiles.

DAISY  
But you don't want to do anything  
with them?

ALEX  
I'm going to Mars with them.

DAISY  
Right. Of course...have you had a  
lot of other jobs?

ALEX  
Job offers.

DAISY  
You turned them down?

ALEX  
Didn't think they'd fit.

DAISY  
So you went a whole other direction?

He hesitates, but nods.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
I can't imagine. I was only ever good at the one thing...and not even good enough at that.

ALEX  
No one's only good at one thing...you're great at first aid.

DAISY  
I guess.

ALEX  
You just don't love it.

DAISY  
No.

ALEX  
So now try something else. One day you'll find the thing you want to do. It's an inevitability.

DAISY  
(extremely skeptical)  
Sure.

ALEX  
It also helps to remember we're all just on a giant rock hurtling through space and our meaningless existence could end at any moment.

She actually laughs at this nugget.

DAISY  
Thank you. That will keep me warm at night.

ALEX  
Sorry.

DAISY  
Have you tried teaching?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
You think I shouldn't.

DAISY  
Actually, I think you'd be great.

ALEX  
I hope you're right. I'm speaking  
at the school next week.

DAISY  
...can I come?

ALEX  
Why?

DAISY  
Maybe I want to learn more about my  
meaningless existence.

He looks at her as her mouth twitches, hiding a smile.

ALEX  
Oh. Yeah, then. You should.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex SPINS in his chair, on the phone to Curtis.

CURTIS  
Bang her.

ALEX  
I'm not banging anyone.

CURTIS  
Bang her.

ALEX  
No. It's not like that. She's just  
doing my insurance.

CURTIS  
A woman named Martha does my  
insurance. Have you ever heard me  
talk about her?

ALEX  
No.

CURTIS

Because Martha's a hoarder who  
dresses like she died on the  
Titanic. You need to grab these  
opportunities when they fall into  
your lap!

ALEX

It's not like that.

CURTIS

Make it like that!

Curtis plays a SUGGESTIVE SONG in the background.

ALEX

I'm going.

CURTIS

Listen.

ALEX

No, I'm going. Bye-

CURTIS

Bang her!

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Alex runs down a forest path shrouded by trees.

EXT. BARTLET - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Then the town, breathing hard.

Potato pellets.

INT. BARTLET COUNTY GENERAL STORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Danish interrogation scenes. A newspaper.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. OLSEN (60's), town physician, sits across from Alex.

DR. OLSEN

They're sending you to Mars but  
they only care about my medical  
opinion?

(CONTINUED)

(off his nod)  
I don't usually work for NASA.

ALEX  
You're approved.

DR. OLSEN  
(indicating the room)  
How? I deal in flu shots and diaper  
rash.

ALEX  
You're qualified.

Dr. Olsen pushes a jar of LOLLIPOPS towards him.

DR. OLSEN  
You need the kind of doctor who  
doesn't have these on his desk.

ALEX  
How do you know there aren't  
lollipops at NASA?

DR. OLSEN  
A wild guess.

ALEX  
Please...

He looks over the forms headed with the MISSION MARS logo.

DR. OLSEN  
It's a standard physical.

ALEX  
Then it will be easy!

DR. OLSEN  
(dumbfounded)  
On the bench with you, then.

Alex moves to the bench.

DR. OLSEN (CONT'D)  
(feeling his glands)  
Still disease free?

ALEX  
Yep.

(CONTINUED)

DR. OLSEN  
(sticking a thermometer in his  
mouth)  
Alcohol or drug habits?

ALEX  
No.

The thermometer BEEPS. He looks down at the forms.

DR. OLSEN  
They don't even require a  
tuberculosis X-ray? You have to get  
that just to move countries...

ALEX  
I'm sure they will somewhere down  
the line.

DR. OLSEN  
Hmm.

Now he's TAPPING for reflexes, swinging joints for movement.  
While swaying an arm:

DR. OLSEN (CONT'D)  
Your joints are fit for space  
travel.

ALEX  
Great.

DR. OLSEN  
In ten years it might be a whole  
other story.

ALEX  
That's alright. I'm keeping fit.

He takes his blood pressure.

DR. OLSEN (CONT'D)  
What about your mental health?

ALEX  
It's fine.

DR. OLSEN  
You don't get to decide that. How  
are you feeling?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
Fantastic.

DR. OLSEN  
Willing to see a psychologist to  
confirm that?

ALEX  
Nope.

DR. OLSEN  
So you're asking me to sign off on  
the psych evaluation as well?

ALEX  
Yep.

Olsen sighs.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Can I have a lollipop?

INT. BARTLET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Liz and Jane wait in the hallway.

LIZ  
This is irresponsible. They're  
children.

JANE  
He's not telling them unicorns  
exist, Lizzy.

Liz's phone BUZZES. The SCREECH of approaching footsteps.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
(answering)  
Liz McAllister.

Alex rounds the corner with a laptop, lollipop in mouth.

JANE  
Just in time.

ALEX  
It's alright, they can't give me  
detention.

JANE  
This is a good thing you're doing.

Ignoring her, his focus is on Liz:

(CONTINUED)

LIZ  
Give me ten minutes...tell them I'm  
in a meeting.

She spots Alex watching her.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
I have to go. Distract. Bye.  
(to her brother)  
Ok, Alex, I have ten minutes.

ALEX  
I heard.

LIZ  
So, with our clients, we tell them  
to stick to the story. Your story  
is space. Not you in space, because  
that's a hypothetical, but space.

ALEX  
But I am going to space.

Jane discretely mimes hugging Alex - *supporting Alex.*

LIZ  
Do you think you could just keep it  
to what's real right now, though?

ALEX  
Did you tell Miss Frizzle the same  
thing?

JANE  
Alex-

ALEX  
(to Liz)  
Are we paying you for this?

LIZ  
You're a semi-public figure at the  
moment and that means you have to  
be careful with what you say.

ALEX  
They're second graders...

LIZ  
And second graders talk.  
(off Jane's hugging motion)  
Can you please just teach them  
facts? And when you have a shuttle  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LIZ (cont'd)  
and a launch date you can come back  
and talk about the mission.

Jane gives her a thumbs up. Alex surrenders his laptop.

ALEX  
Yeah. Ok.

He looks back to the empty hallway. Liz follows his gaze.

LIZ  
What are you looking at?

ALEX  
Someone might come.

LIZ  
That is how hallways work.

ALEX  
I mean someone I invited.

She pulls the lollipop out of his mouth. He reaches into his pocket and produces one for her.

LIZ  
Focus.

INT. BARTLET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Alex stands in front of EYES. Rows and rows of EYES, all glued on him. Among them are the ARMY BOYS.

He's currently the only thing standing between these kids and home. And they know it.

ALEX  
So I understand you've been  
studying the solar system.

Silence. Alex looks longingly at his laptop in Liz's arms.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Which one's your favorite planet?

Blank faces. They want OUT OF THERE. Alex thinks.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Ok, how about this, everybody up-

INT. BARTLET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Daisy rounds the corner, looking for him.

Hearing LAUGHTER, she looks in a window to see him arranging the kids in several circles.

INT. BARTLET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

As she slips in:

ALEX  
Ready...go!

The kids TWIRL and SPIN and GIGGLE in their circles. Alex moves through them, adjusting as he goes.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Jack, you're the sun, got it? You stay still - everything orbits around you.

Jack nods. He moves to another child.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
You're Mercury. It only takes you eighty seven days to orbit Jack so you're going to move quickly now. Yes, exactly. Venus, you rotate counter-clockwise. Like this.

He demonstrates. Venus follows. He repositions Evan.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Evan, you're Earth. You're our home. You spin a bit slower than Venus. Every time you come back to face Jack you've experienced a day, and every time you rotate all the way around Jack it's been a year.

The kids are eating it up.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Louie, you're the moon. There are lots of moons in the solar system but we'll just use ours today. So you circle around Evan as he circles around the sun.

The boys LAUGH as they try to keep track of their spinning.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (CONT'D)

You're Mars. You're where we will  
live in the future.

(noting Liz's warning look)  
And you orbit like this-

He demonstrates an elliptical orbit. Mars mimics it. A few  
PARENTS are now huddled in the doorway.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Good! Now you four are the gas  
giants. Jupiter. Saturn. Uranus.  
Neptune. Some of you have rings  
around you, like you Saturn. And  
some of you are very cold, Uranus.  
Neptune, it takes you 164 years to  
orbit the sun. So you have to move  
really slowly, alright?

Neptune slows his orbit.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Are you dizzy yet?

KIDS

(excited)

No!

ALEX

Good! Jupiter and Saturn, you have  
metallic hydrogen layers that  
conduct electricity.

On the kids: COOL.

ALEX (CONT'D)

And Saturn, you have 150 moons so  
don't bump into them.

Saturn holds his arms tight against his body as he turns.

ALEX

You guys make up the solar system!  
Want to go even bigger?

CLASS

Yes!

ALEX

The rest of you, then, can you  
stand around our solar system?  
You're the stars in the milky way.

They TWINKLE with their hands. The TEACHERS join in.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (CONT'D)

Very good! There are billions of stars so imagine a lot more of you.

The room is awash with MOVEMENT and LAUGHTER.

Alex meets Daisy's eyes over the chaos. He shrugs. She twinkles her hands in support, smiling. Liz witnesses this, and studies Daisy with curiosity.

Alex crosses through the increasingly frenetic solar system.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(to the kids)

I'm an asteroid.

(to Daisy)

You made it.

DAISY

How could I miss the formation of the universe?

ALEX

Actually this is how it is right now, when it was formed it looked completely different-

He stops himself.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Do you want to get a drink?

She smiles.

Mars STUMBLES into Earth. Alex looks back. A domino effect is underway.

ALEX (CONT'D)

In a minute, I mean. Give me a minute. Have to save the world.

INT. O'REILLY'S - NIGHT

A New England dive bar. The Red Sox chase a ball across several TV screens. The patrons CHEER and BOO as their team inevitably lets them down again.

DAISY

You have a way with kids. I mean it. They were spell bound.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Because space is interesting.

DAISY

It's not easy to understand,  
though. But they got it. I got it.

ALEX

What didn't you get before?

DAISY

Don't be too judgmental here, but  
I'd forgotten the difference  
between the solar system and the  
milky way.

ALEX

Oh, that's simple.

DAISY

Hey!

ALEX

Sorry...but I mean I could make  
your head explode.

DAISY

(challenging)

Go on, then.

ALEX

Are you sure?

DAISY

I'm not that attached to it.

ALEX

Well, for instance, there are a 100  
billion stars in the milky way and  
maybe ten trillion galaxies in the  
universe. Multiply that by a 100  
billion and you have an extremely  
rough, probably low estimate for  
the number of stars.

DAISY

I can't do that math.

ALEX

100 octillion...it's a 1 with 29  
zeros after it.

(beat)

We make the mistake of thinking the  
universe is for us. But it's not.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY

Ok, new rule: every time you tell  
me how meaningless my existence is  
I'm going to need another drink.

ALEX

(signaling to the bartender)

Alright.

INT. O'REILLY'S - NIGHT - LATER

Alex has clearly been responsible for a few more rounds.

DAISY

Nah, I dated an asshole.

ALEX

What did he do?

DAISY

Crossfit.

Alex laughs. He's the most relaxed we've seen him.

DAISY (CONT'D)

What?

ALEX

Come on.

DAISY

Shut up.

ALEX

Is that why you're letting me talk  
about space? Because you've only  
heard about protein for two years?

DAISY

He didn't just talk about  
protein...he also liked talking  
about reps. It was...educational.

ALEX

Sounds like it.

DAISY

Anyway-

(a pointed look)

Before him there was Venti Bold,  
X-Files-

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

What was that one?

DAISY

He was into conspiracy theories.  
God, I shouldn't tell you this.

ALEX

I don't know if you should tell  
anyone this.

(off her mock anger)

What would I be?

This is forthcoming for him, and they both know it.

DAISY

The Martian.

(laughing)

Nah, that's too easy.

ALEX

Also not true scientifically-

DAISY

Shh, I can't take another drink.

ALEX

Ok, ok. It's not bad.

DAISY

Really?

ALEX

Beats the current one.

DAISY

Which is?

ALEX

Alexander the Great.

(beat)

We were named after historical  
figures.

DAISY

No way.

ALEX

Christopher, Elizabeth and  
Alexander.

DAISY  
The explorer and the queen?  
(off his nod)  
Wow. So you don't have much to live  
up to.

ALEX  
He'd conquered half the world by  
the time he was thirty two.

DAISY  
Still got a few years.

ALEX  
Yeah.

DAISY  
Plus he never got to Mars.

ALEX  
It's not like they could even  
fathom that there were other  
planets out there, we can barely  
comprehend it now-

DAISY  
And that's another drink.  
Bartender!

EXT. BARTLET - NIGHT - LATER

The now drunk pair emerge from the bar.

It's RAINING. Daisy takes off in a run, YELLING back:

DAISY  
You don't have to walk me home.  
Rain's a game changer.

But he doesn't like the implication and follows her.

ALEX  
I'm not scared of rain.

They RUN through the town:

DAISY  
At least you won't have to worry  
about it on Mars!

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Just the solar flares which cause  
storms that last for hundreds-

DAISY

Bartender!

ALEX

He's not here!

They head down Main Street. Alex is trying to catch up to her but she's quite fast. And oblivious to his effort.

They hit suburbia. A few streets come and go before she skids to a halt under a semi-effective umbrella tree.

DAISY

This is me-

It's a driveway leading to a guest house.

ALEX

It's nice.

DAISY

Yeah. Well, have a swell night.

He LOCKS EYES with her. The gaze lasts that one extra time-bending second.

He leans forward and KISSES her.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The door CRASHES open.

They BUMP into a dresser as she PULLS OFF his shirt. She laughs.

ALEX

I like your laugh.

DAISY

Shhh.

They fall on the bed.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - DAY

Alex opens his eyes. He's in an unfamiliar place and his head hurts. The clock reads 9:30AM.

He turns over to see Daisy asleep beside him. God, she's pretty. But-

This is not part of the plan.

He quietly gets out of bed, pulls his jeans over his MISSION MARS BOXER SHORTS and sneaks out.

EXT. BARTLET TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The army boys sport royal blue t-shirts and shorts today.

ALEX

Career change?

EVAN

We've been recruited.

ALEX

Where?

EVAN

It's classified.

INT. BARTLET COUNTY GENERAL STORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Linda glances up. Today she doesn't look back down. Slyly:

LINDA

Where are you coming from?

On screen, someone is being BLUDGEONED to death.

ALEX

Nowhere. Home.

(points at the screen)

Murder.

EXT. BARTLET TOWN SQUARE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Even the statues seem to be judging him today. He speeds up.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - DAY

Liz follows Jeff through the fields. An odd sight given her corporate look.

LIZ

There's something wrong with him.

JEFF

I know.

LIZ

I don't care what mom thinks,  
ignoring it isn't good for him.  
Have you even looked into this  
company? They sound  
convincing...but what if that's it?  
What if it's a *scam*?

He thinks.

JEFF

I should show you something.

INT. MCALLISTER FARM - GREENHOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

They inspect the seed germination machine.

LIZ

How long does he spend on this?

JEFF

Hours.

LIZ

Does it even do anything?  
(off Jeff's shrug)  
This is worse than I thought.

He exits. She pursues.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

LIZ (CONT'D)

Dad, look at him. He has a training  
schedule to *get to another planet*.  
He's building machines when he  
should be working. And he's  
spending all his money on  
merchandise, I swear to God if I  
see that stupid logo one more time-

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (O.S.)  
Sorry!

Alex is running down the stairs. He passes them heading for Dimitri in the fields.

But all they can see is that MISSION MARS logo stamped on his shirt. Liz FUMES.

JEFF  
He went to Dr. Olsen last week.

LIZ  
He did? For what?

JEFF  
His "space physical."

LIZ  
Then he already knows he's crazy!  
We need to see him. He can help us!

JEFF  
I don't know-

LIZ  
Look, it may seem harmless now but this is how these things start and I don't want him to become one of those guys who sits in a Starbucks all day talking on an imaginary phone about FBI missions.

Jeff sighs, defeated.

JEFF  
We can't tell your mother.

LIZ  
I'll get the car.

She's STARTLED when she runs into Dimitri on the main path.

DIMITRI  
The infamous Elizabeth! What are you doing here?

LIZ  
Not today, Russia.

He leans down, plucks out a flower and hands it to her.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Thanks, that fixed everything.

She keeps walking...but she also keeps the flower.

INT. DR. OLSEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Olsen is trailed as he prepares his exam room.

DR. OLSEN  
Doctor/patient confidentiality  
means what it sounds like it means.

LIZ  
But this is different. This is  
Alex.

DR. OLSEN  
A patient.

LIZ  
An insane patient who needs help.

DR. OLSEN  
He diagnoses himself sane and you  
diagnose him insane - at the very  
least we can have no doubt you two  
are siblings.

Liz nudges her father.

JEFF  
You've told me about him before.

DR. OLSEN  
Yes, when he was a child!

Liz's phone BUZZES. She glances at it.

JEFF  
Joe, I know it's breaking protocol-

DR. OLSEN  
The law-

JEFF  
But we are concerned.

DR. OLSEN  
That doesn't mean I break the law.

Liz sits down in a chair and crosses her arms.

(CONTINUED)

LIZ  
I'm not going to leave.

Dr. Olsen turns with a SYRINGE in his hand.

DR. OLSEN  
What if I break out one of these?  
Are your immunizations up to date?

Liz bristles. The downside of having a small town, lifelong physician is that he knows your secrets.

DR. OLSEN (CONT'D)  
Sometimes at night, I still hear  
the screams from your measles shot.

She weighs her options, not taking her eyes off the needle.

LIZ  
If you help...you can give me the  
tetanus booster.

DR. OLSEN  
(tempted)  
I've been waiting ten years for  
that.

She holds out her arm.

LIZ  
Please.

Dr. Olsen looks at them. He sighs.

DR. OLSEN  
He's not crazy - he's one of the  
smartest people to ever come out of  
this town. You know that.

LIZ  
That's the problem, then? He's so  
smart he doesn't know what to do?

DR. OLSEN  
There is no problem. Maybe he has a  
slight delusion, but once upon a  
time you were convinced you were a  
wizard.

LIZ  
I was ten.

(CONTINUED)

DR. OLSEN  
They don't always follow age  
guidelines.

LIZ  
But this is suicide!

DR. OLSEN  
It's only suicide if he goes  
through with it. So far he's just  
living out a fantasy. What's the  
difference between that and someone  
who plays video games all day?

Jeff looks to Liz: he has a point.

DR. OLSEN (CONT'D)  
Do you know how many MENSA members  
are unemployed?

(off their silence)  
More than you'd imagine. What you  
have is an exceptionally  
intelligent brother, Liz. And  
sometimes those kinds of people  
have the hardest time living.  
Sometimes they have the hardest  
time *coping*. Consider that this  
might be something he needs to do.

LIZ  
We can't let him keep believing  
it's real.

DR. OLSEN  
It is real to him.

LIZ  
(hesitant)  
What about the fact that it's  
space?

DR. OLSEN  
What about it?

LIZ  
You know when he was a kid he used  
to be obsessed with space.  
(reluctantly)  
They *both* were.

Jeff cringes. Olsen watches the reaction.

(CONTINUED)

DR. OLSEN

It likely plays a part. But say I  
brought him back in here. What  
would you have me say? That he's  
not going to Mars? Would he listen?

(off her silence)

We all have our distractions.  
You've looked at your phone ten  
times since you walked in.

Liz tries very, very hard not to look at her phone.

DR. OLSEN (CONT'D)

(preparing an injection)

Now sit still.

INT. SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

Alex collects a dummy as the class sets up. Returns to his  
spot to find Daisy standing there.

ALEX

(terrified)

Hi...

DAISY

I just want to preface that the  
girl you hung out with a few times  
doesn't need to talk about what  
happened, but the insurance agent  
who works for you does.

ALEX

Ok...

DAISY

So we got drunk.

ALEX

I remember.

DAISY

Things happened.

ALEX

I remember that less.

DAISY

It meant nothing.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
No. We were drunk.

DAISY  
Which was your fault.

ALEX  
Spoken like a true insurance agent.

RENEE  
Take your places, life savers!

The class shuffles to the mats. Renee YELLS instructions.

ALEX  
I'm sorry for sneaking out. I  
didn't know what to do. I can't  
have a relationship right now with  
training and isolation coming up-

DAISY  
-did you assume that's what I  
wanted? Remember that whole  
conversation about Crossfit?

ALEX  
Sort of.

DAISY  
It just ended. I don't want  
anything to do with-

She makes a circle motion with her hands.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
That.

RENEE  
Miss Daisy, you are far too alive  
right now. Assume the position of  
my choking mother or leave it to  
the dummy.

DAISY  
So we're ok?

ALEX  
Yep.

DAISY  
What are we doing, then?

ALEX  
The Heimlich maneuver.

DAISY  
I mean you and I.

ALEX  
What do you mean?

DAISY  
I thought we could be friends.

ALEX  
I didn't think you'd want to.

DAISY  
Why? Because you're odd?

ON Alex: thank you.

ALEX  
Because of last night. And because  
I'm leaving the planet.

DAISY  
I don't mind. I can help you train!  
I'm actually great at that.

ALEX  
Then...sure.

DAISY  
Yeah? God, I was hoping you'd say  
that - I'd already told Netflix I  
wasn't interested anymore.

ALEX  
How'd he take it?

DAISY  
Recommended the Saw movies. They  
take up the whole screen when you  
line them up.

RENEE  
Patients, begin choking-

HACKING SOUNDS fill the room.

RENEE (CONT'D)  
Life savers...start your saving!

(CONTINUED)

DAISY

Go ahead then, save me.

ALEX

I wasn't paying attention.

DAISY

Can't. Breathe.

ALEX

You're not going to show me how to do it?

DAISY

You're on your own. Don't kill me.

He puts his arms around her waist. Doesn't see her smile.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Alex does knee ups. Sets the timer on his watch and:

EXT. VERMONT - DAY

He runs. Shoes THUD on asphalt down a long road.

He breathes HEAVILY. Likely because another pair of shoes THUD ahead.

It's Daisy. And he's struggling to keep up with her.

She stops at a light post, waiting for him.

DAISY

Come on!

(checking her watch)

You were two minutes and twelve seconds quicker yesterday. Two and thirty last week.

Huffing and puffing, he finally catches up:

ALEX

Just so you know, I completely regret this.

He takes off again, trying his darndest to get a head start.

She smiles, knowing it won't last, turns and follows.

EXT. BARTLET - TOWN SQUARE - DAY - LATER

Post run, they're walking through town, Alex still panting.

DAISY  
Oh my god, look-

Alex turns to see the three boys, on the balcony and in astronaut suits. Their career change. He's touched.

They're "walking on the moon" but stop and salute him with the utmost severity as he passes.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY

Alex leads Daisy through the flowers, showing her the farm.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Jane and Liz watch from the windows.

LIZ  
He's outside. With a girl.

JANE  
That's his insurance agent.

LIZ  
She's really going above the line  
of duty...

Their eyes gleam with hope.

INT. MCALLISTER FARM - GREENHOUSE - DAY - LATER

Alex demonstrates his machine.

DIMITRI  
We're calling it The Germinator.

ALEX  
No we aren't.

DIMITRI  
But we should.

DAISY  
I think you should.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

That's the least important part.

DAISY

I don't know - people judge books  
by their covers.

ALEX

Anyway...this is how the world will  
work one day. Underground,  
self-sustaining farms. There's one  
in an old tube station in London  
already. I just need to be able to  
make it work-

DIMITRI

-on Mars.

ALEX

Yeah. The International Space  
Station got some seeds growing but  
Mars is another story. I have to  
account for the lack of atmosphere,  
the radiation, the gravity...

DAISY

This could go to NASA, Alex. I mean  
it. This could be your career.

ALEX

It's only a small bit.

DAISY

It's the survival bit!  
(off his skepticism)  
You could take it to the Vermont  
Space Consortium. They're run by  
NASA. You could get grants and  
funding and a team and everything!

Dimitri looks excited, Alex less than thrilled.

ALEX

Nah. Probably won't work anyway.

DAISY

Come on-

ALEX

(firm)

No. Thanks.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT - LATER

They've all stayed on for dinner. Jane runs the room.

JANE  
Dimitri, you get the potatoes.

DIMITRI  
In Russia we call them kartofels.

Liz SCOFFS:

LIZ  
Beautiful language.

DIMITRI  
Yes, I forget about the glory of  
the word potato.

JANE  
Get the kartofels then. Liz,  
Elizabeth, hello-

Liz looks up from her phone.

JANE (CONT'D)  
Yes, you. Can you take the plates?

LIZ  
In a sec.

DIMITRI  
Come on, Liz, I'll help you with  
the tarelkas.

He over-pronounces it, enjoying annoying her.

LIZ  
Whatever, comrade.

Daisy and Alex watch them from the kitchen bar.

DAISY  
Well, that's an inevitability.

ALEX  
What?

DAISY  
Those two.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

There's a better chance of Putin  
opening a wildlife sanctuary.

DAISY

(shrugging)

He's pretty charming.

Something twinges in Alex.

ALEX

He said potato in another language.

DAISY

It was charming.

Beat.

ALEX

Patata.

DAISY

What?

ALEX

That's potato in Spanish.

Daisy turns to respond but-

JANE

Daisy, dear, if you could just  
carry this plate out. Then please,  
take a seat.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

She does. The others are already there, including Jeff.

Alex and Jane join them. They pass the food. Liz watches as Daisy plates potatoes for Alex. Watches when she says:

DAISY

-Patata-

-to Alex, before laughing. Watches as Alex grumbles, then laughs in spite of himself.

LIZ

So, Daisy, you seem normal.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY  
Relatively.

LIZ  
How do you tolerate Alex?

JANE  
Liz!

DAISY  
He's not the worst.

ALEX  
Thank you.

LIZ  
You're not an investigative reporter, are you?

Jane DROPS her cutlery. Jeff jumps.

JANE  
(exasperated)  
Are you?

LIZ  
I read a feature on one of the British applicants and they'd revealed everything to this reporter feigning friendship. I mean, Daisy, you get it-

ALEX  
Wow, thanks-

DAISY  
No, wait, it's alright. I get it.  
(to Liz)  
I'm not a reporter.

LIZ  
Thank you.

ALEX  
And you're not a cop.

LIZ  
I'm looking out for you.

ALEX  
Don't.

JANE  
Elizabeth! Alexander! Stop!

They both lean back in their chairs, harumph-ing.

Daisy puts it on herself to break the silence:

DAISY  
They really suit their names, Mrs.  
McAllister.

LIZ  
No, we don't.

DAISY  
You do! You rule a PR company and  
Alex is conquering space...it fits,  
doesn't it?

JANE  
I certainly hope so - I spent my  
pregnancies buried in books.

Alex and Liz SIGH: they've heard this a thousand times.

JEFF  
What she means to say is you were  
looking like a Genghis for a minute  
there, Alex.

JANE  
Well, at the end of the day, the  
right names were given to the right  
people and I have no regrets.

DAISY  
What about Christopher, then? Is he  
a big traveler?

The room falls into a swift and terrifying silence.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, what did I...sorry-

LIZ  
(matter of fact)  
He was.

Nobody really knows what to do. Alex won't look at her.

Jane forces a smile, scrubbing at a small water mark on the  
table, and, unnaturally brightly:

(CONTINUED)

JANE  
How do you like the green beans?

DAISY  
They're great.

JANE  
Good. Dimitri used a recipe he  
brought over from Russia.

LIZ  
Mom, he put paprika on them. It's  
hardly revolutionary.

DIMITRI  
Maybe it is. We've had quite a few.

LIZ  
That's not what I meant.

As they continue to bicker, everything back to normal, Daisy looks at Alex. He's still looking at his plate.

EXT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - PORCH - NIGHT - LATER

Daisy waves goodbye from her car before driving off.

LIZ  
Sorry about cornering her.  
(off his skepticism)  
Sort of sorry.  
(continued skepticism)  
She's nice. I like her.

ALEX  
I heard that.

LIZ  
Heard what?

ALEX  
She's just a friend, Liz.

LIZ  
Why?

ALEX  
I can't form attachments when I  
have to prepare for training.

Liz tries to maintain calm despite her head exploding.

(CONTINUED)

LIZ  
Why even be friends with her then?

ALEX  
It's good practice for the mission.  
She's different from most people  
around here so makes a good stand  
in for the other astronauts.  
Relationship building will be half  
the battle before launch.

Though she doesn't push it, she doesn't buy it for a second.

LIZ  
Does she *know* she's not your  
girlfriend?

ALEX  
Yeah.

LIZ  
Do *you*?

He pauses for a moment, then exits, leaving her baffled.

EXT. GUEST HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike's sorting the recycling. Daisy greets him as she walks past. Then she stops. Walks again. Stops.

DAISY  
You said you've known them for  
years, right?

MIKE  
Known who?

DAISY  
The McAllisters. What happened to  
them?

Mike stands up tall and looks at her.

MIKE  
Rats, he's crazy, isn't he?

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY

Alex hauls several bunches of lavender over to Jeff.

ALEX

We can do another field today and  
be ahead on the orders.

JEFF

Let's finish this one first. My  
knees are getting too crook.

ALEX

You should go to the doctor.

JEFF

It's age Alex. There's no  
outrunning it.

(a glance at his son)

I would like to leave the business  
in good hands, when the time comes.

ALEX

Yeah.

JEFF

I want to sign it over to you.

Alex stops, genuinely surprised.

ALEX

Dad, I'm going to space, remember?  
I won't be here to take it.

JEFF

But realistically-

ALEX

I am being realistic.

JEFF

You won't even consider it?

ALEX

No.

JEFF

Because you're going to space...

ALEX

Yeah - it'd be a waste of time for  
both of us.

Jeff just looks at him - no IDEA how to handle this.

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

Daisy and Alex walk through a dense, less traveled part of the forest, pushing aside branches and stepping over logs.

ALEX

You know I saw some at my house last night. It's not some magical forest thing. They aren't fairies.

DAISY

But today is the day most of them are out. It's like their reunion.

ALEX

You mean they're mating?

DAISY

Yeah...or dying. I forget which.

ALEX

How did you get your scar?

DAISY

You ask things at strange times.

ALEX

Sorry.

DAISY

Are you still asking?

ALEX

Yes.

DAISY

We spun out on the freeway when a tire came off our car. My sister and I both went-

She SLAMS a balled up fist into her hand.

DAISY (CONT'D)

-through the windshield. The doctors could see my skull.

ALEX

That's disgusting.

DAISY

My sister was worse. We thought she was dead.

(CONTINUED)

Alex's expression changes - very much against his will - to one of sorrow.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Shit. I didn't mean to-

ALEX  
(deliberate)  
Sorry you had to see her like that.

It reads very clearly: he doesn't want to talk about it.

DAISY  
(cautiously)  
It wasn't all bad. She was a mean  
teenager. This leveled out her  
brain and made her tolerable again.

He laughs as they sit on a tree stump.

ALEX  
You know, you're weird than I  
thought you were.

DAISY  
Well, you're less weird than I  
thought you were.

They smile at each other, when suddenly a firefly LIGHTS UP in her face. She instinctively SWATS at it:

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Ah!

ALEX  
Did you kill it?

DAISY  
No!

ALEX  
Then where is it?

DAISY  
I don't know!

There is a tense few seconds. Then a little light near them.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Ok, he's fine.

There's another light. And another. She loves it, pointing at them all like he can't see them with his own eyes.

ALEX

You're getting joy out of a bug's  
ass lighting up.

DAISY

Come on, so are you.

ALEX

No, I'm not.

She puts her arm around him. He tries very hard to act like  
this means nothing.

DAISY

Yes, you are. Watch those pretty,  
pretty butts.

(off his laughter)

Now how could you think about  
giving this up?

At that moment, he doesn't know.

INT. GUEST HOUSE - DAY

Alex opens his eyes.

He turns to see Daisy asleep beside him. He watches her. The  
vein in her neck pulsing very subtly with her heart beat.

And then he frowns. Jumps up.

ALEX

What happened?

DAISY

(eyes closed)

What?

ALEX

Did we?

DAISY

Look down.

He does. He's fully dressed.

DAISY (CONT'D)

(grinning, eyes still closed)

If you stop panicking you might  
remember falling asleep. Very  
scandalous. Especially when you  
drooled.

(CONTINUED)

He looks behind her. Her clock shows 10:14am.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
I have to go.

DAISY  
Where?

ALEX  
(frustrated)  
Training, Daisy. I'm training.

And he's out the door.

EXT. GUEST HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Alex CLAPS his hands in the cold morning air. Does knee ups in the driveway. Furious at himself for slipping.

Mike watches from the main house, concerned.

INT. BARTLET COUNTY GENERAL STORE - DAY

LINDA  
(playful)  
Late again, hmm.

ALEX  
It's not what you think.

She glances down at the Kindle. SUSPENSEFUL MUSIC. A surprised SWEDISH VOICE. The murderer is REVEALED.

LINDA  
It never is.

As he grabs his newspaper, he catches the USA TODAY headline:

BOSTON MISSION MARS FINALIST: IT'S A SCAM.

His face clouds. He throws money down and leaves.

EXT. BARTLET - MAIN STREET - DAY

Alex is walking down the street when there is a:

PERSON (O.S.)  
Schizo!

He spins around. People stare, but no one reads guilty. He studies the second story windows. Whoever it was is hiding.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S ROOM - DAY

A glum Alex is on a VIDEO CALL with Curtis.

CURTIS

Of course they're calling it a scam  
- they're angry they didn't get  
through.

ALEX

I know.

CURTIS

And they're going to call it  
impossible until the day we take  
off. But then who'll be laughing?  
(off his silence)  
Me. Loudly. Through all the layers  
of the atmosphere. You too.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Liz is trying to get better cell reception when she hears Alex TALKING. She leans up against the door.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

CURTIS

Did you watch the press conference?

ALEX

Not yet.

CURTIS

They said we'll be able to request  
the Super Bowl. And it'll only be a  
three minute delay!

ALEX

I don't watch the Super Bowl now...

CURTIS

Well, you will when we're on Mars,  
brother, trust me. PATS NATION!

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS  
Liz fumes at the door.

LIZ  
Nope, nope, nope, nope-

She walks down the hall towards the kitchen-

LIZ (CONT'D)  
(hollering)  
Mom!

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUOUS  
Jane is cleaning the windows.

LIZ  
He's still fucking crazy.

JANE  
No he's not.

LIZ  
I just heard him talking to one of  
the other psychopaths about the  
"mission." Nothing's changing.

JANE  
No-

JEFF  
She's right, Jane.

They both turn to look at Jeff. Interjection is a rarity.

JEFF (CONT'D)  
It isn't healthy. And it's not  
getting better.

JANE  
Well, what are we meant to do?  
Ground him?

LIZ  
Get some psychologists and let them  
treat him!

JANE  
He's not crazy!

(CONTINUED)

LIZ

He's talking about watching the Super Bowl from Mars.

JEFF

But he doesn't watch the Super Bowl.

LIZ

I know, he said that, that's not the point-

(a heavy sigh)

Maybe it's not just a slight delusion. You know he and Chris used to pretend to be astronauts...

JANE

(terse)

Yes, we remember.

LIZ

Don't you think something might have gone wrong in his brain, then? If he really wanted to go to space wouldn't he have gone to NASA?

It's a good point. But they don't know what to say.

LIZ (CONT'D)

What if it's about Chris?

JANE

(snapping)

It's not about him.

LIZ

It has to be.

JANE

Oh, leave it alone, Elizabeth!

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Alex watches the Space Station stream as he talks to Curtis.

ALEX

Curtis-

CURTIS

Yeah-

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
You have a family-

CURTIS  
The screaming give it away?

ALEX  
They're okay knowing that you're  
leaving Earth?

CURTIS  
Yeah man, Tiff's fine with it.

ALEX  
Really?

CURTIS  
Of course. It's bad if the other  
person doesn't want you to follow  
your dream, am I right? I am right.

Alex notices YELLING coming from outside. Turns to the door.

INT. THOMPSON & TAYLOR INSURANCE - DAY

Daisy researches the mission, increasingly concerned. Mike enters and reads over her shoulder.

MIKE  
Did he ever tell you how he was  
selected?

She shakes her head.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Skype Interviews. Does that sound  
like NASA to you?  
(beat)  
Don't spend too much time on  
this..."policy."

She looks at him.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Because there are lots of  
"policies." And most of them are  
more normal than  
this...particular...one.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Alex peeks in the kitchen to find Liz and Jane at war.

LIZ

He's spending all his money on that merchandise.

JANE

That's his choice.

LIZ

He has nothing saved. He's not planning for a future because he thinks he's going to fucking Mars-

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Alex enters.

ALEX

I am going to "fucking Mars."

LIZ

No you aren't!

JANE

Elizabeth!

LIZ

Mom, stop letting him go on like this - you're not helping him!

ALEX

What's wrong with you?

LIZ

What's wrong with me? Are you really asking me that?

JANE

She's just concerned, honey, you're doing something so different, it's only natural to be concerned. But you have to do what's best for you-

ALEX

I'm going to Mars.

LIZ

God, if I hear you say that one more time.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
I'm. Going. To. Mars.

LIZ  
He's not going to have kids, mom.  
Think about that. He's not going to  
have a career or family or anything  
normal. He's just going to sit in  
this house and rot waiting to get  
on a spaceship that never comes.

JANE  
No...he will. You will, Alex.  
You'll find all those things.

ALEX  
(hesitant)  
Not on Earth, mom.

Jane wavers a little. Alex kneels down beside her.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
You're looking at this the wrong  
way - think of your history books.  
Think how many thousands of people  
have left everything behind and  
migrated to the unknown, with no  
intention of returning to their  
homes. Even Alexander the Great did  
it. It's how we've evolved.

LIZ  
You can't seriously think that's  
the same thing.

He clearly does.

JANE  
(quietly)  
Are you really giving them all your  
money?

ALEX  
I donate to help fund the mission.  
So do thousands of others.

JANE  
And you won't have a family?

ALEX  
It wouldn't be right, mom, if I'm  
just going to leave them a few  
years after.

(CONTINUED)

Jane lets out a small GASP, unable to mask her distress.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
(trying to lighten the mood)  
Come on, who's going to love me  
enough to have kids with me?

JANE  
(upset)  
No one if you don't let them, Alex!

LIZ  
You're using this as an excuse not  
to live your life.

ALEX  
You should know.

As if on cue, her phone RUMBLES with messages.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Why do you care now, Liz? You've  
barely been around this whole year.  
Why do you care so much now?

LIZ  
Because you're committing suicide,  
you asshole. Even if you've got it  
masked in this space explorer  
bullshit I can still see what  
you're doing! Dad, help me-

JEFF  
What do you want me to do?

LIZ  
Something! You can't be passive  
anymore! He's killing himself.  
That's all this is. He's just being  
really fucking creative about it.

Jeff really, really doesn't know what to do. Liz takes a deep breath, preparing for the backlash that will follow:

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Is this because of Christopher?

JANE  
Elizabeth!

ALEX  
Don't bring him into this.

(CONTINUED)

LIZ  
It is, isn't it?

ALEX  
(angry)  
Stop talking about him!

LIZ  
We have to!

JEFF  
Liz-

LIZ  
No, dad!  
(to Alex)  
You can't escape by jumping on a  
rocket. You will feel all the same  
things about Chris up there.

ALEX  
How do you know what I feel?

LIZ  
Really? I don't know what it feels  
like? You have it worse because you  
were his *brother* and I'm just the  
lowly fucking sister?

All now YELLING, Jane stands up between them.

JANE  
Stop it, stop it, both of you. Show  
some respect and leave him out of  
this. This conversation is OVER.

She says it with such ferocity that they're instantly quiet.

Alex GLARES at Liz as he storms back to his room. Liz GLARES at Jane as she exits the house. Her CAR is heard speeding off. Jane looks to Jeff, but he's looking into the distance.

In a daze, she slowly goes back to cleaning the windows.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Daisy drives. Alex stares out the window. She glances over.

DAISY  
What's happened?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Nothing.

DAISY

You've been weird all day.

ALEX

I'm fine.

(she remains concerned)

I'm fine.

And suddenly he is fine, because this is his area of expertise. He smiles.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Maybe I'm a bit scared of your driving...

DAISY

(grinning)

Shut up.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY - LATER

They hike a forest trail until they emerge-

EXT. NATIONAL SEASHORE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

-to find themselves on the edge of a bluff overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The vast beach before them is dwarfed only by the ocean stretching out in all directions beyond it.

ALEX

I know you miss swimming, so...

She turns and hugs him.

DAISY

But I mean, don't get me wrong, I also hate swimming.

ALEX

I know.

DAISY

It ruined my life.

ALEX

Temporarily.

He has such a faith in her she believes it.

(CONTINUED)

A PEELING WHITE FENCE stops people from tumbling down the steep, eroded hill. She hoists a leg over it.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

DAISY  
Come on.

ALEX  
Wait, there's a trail that leads to  
the beach-

DAISY  
No time-

ALEX  
-No way.

DAISY  
If you're going to get to Mars then  
you can also get down this cliff.

ALEX  
No.

She swings the other leg over.

DAISY  
Come on Alexander the Great.

ALEX  
No.

DAISY  
Trust me.

With a smirk, she disappears, SQUEALING, SKIDDING - and then unwittingly SLIDING - down the enormous dune.

He waits, hesitates, um's and ah's, until:

ALEX  
Fuck it.

And he follows. SCREAMING...more than he'd probably like.

After reaching the bottom, he races after her.

Daisy RUNS into the surf, sun beaming down on her back, not caring about anything except the water. She lets the waves crash over her. It makes him happy to see her happy.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY  
Alex!

He BOUNDS in, dodging the waves en route to her. She's a little over waist deep, where they break.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Let them hit you.

ALEX  
What?

DAISY  
I used to love doing it when I was younger.

ALEX  
Why?

They duck under a wave. Surface.

DAISY  
(insistent)  
Because.

Another wave is approaching-

DAISY (CONT'D)  
Let it hit you.

She backs away from him. Holds out her arms to the wave.

Alex reluctantly turns to face it. It CRASHES into them. They're both thrown around in the surf. It's exhilarating.

Another wave BREAKS. She's flung down. He helps her up. Instinctively, he brushes her hair off her face.

He blinks. He loves her.

He blinks again. Oh shit, he loves her.

Then BAM, they're thrown by another wave. She SHRIEKS.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Neat houses in neat rows. Daisy and Alex approach one, though the lawn needs mowing and the rafters some paint.

DAISY  
You've really never met Curtis?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

No. He lives in another state.

DAISY

We're two hours from your house.

ALEX

Oh, we should meet Curtis then.

EXT. CURTIS' HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

She laughs and rings the DOORBELL. It swings open.

CURTIS

Hey hey!

They embrace. Curtis notes Alex's MISSION MARS shirt. He wears a similar one.

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Nice!

ALEX

Sorry, this is Daisy.

CURTIS

(shaking her hand)

What insurance agency do you work for? I'm thinking of switching.

He WINKS at Alex. Daisy does not like it.

INT. CURTIS' HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

CURTIS

Welcome to mi casa!

A CHILD CRIES upstairs. Another RUNS past, followed by a very nice but very tired looking WOMAN, who stops.

TIFFANY

I'm Tiffany. Sorry for the ruckus.

Tiffany glances at the logo on Alex's shirt.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Oh, you're a colonist.

CURTIS

He'll be waving down at you, too!

She looks at Daisy. A desperately cheery warning:

(CONTINUED)

TIFFANY  
I thought it was just a phase!

A BLUR of a child zooms past again.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)  
Sorry - I better get him.

She disappears. Curtis slaps Alex on the arm.

CURTIS  
Best part about Mars is the no kids  
policy, am I right?

He LAUGHS LOUDLY and leads them through, sliding open the back door to reveal a shed in the corner of the yard.

INT. CURTIS' SHED - DAY

Computer monitors. A stereo with the volume on high. A couch with a pillow and Curtis-sized indent. A mini fridge.

He turns on SPACESHIP by Kanye West.

DAISY  
Your wife is nice.

CURTIS  
Yeah, Tiff's great. Sit, sit.

They gingerly perch on the couch. Daisy is not impressed.

CURTIS (CONT'D)  
It's good to meet you properly, my  
man. You realize I'm one of the  
only people you're going to see in  
person for the rest of your life?  
Crazy, huh?

ALEX  
Crazy.

DAISY  
(deadpan)  
Wild.

CURTIS  
I'm sick of waiting. When will  
training start? I'm ready to go!

He holds his hand out for a high five. Alex HALF FIVES it.

DAISY  
I'm sure you'll be missed.

CURTIS  
(oblivious)  
Well, what can you do, space calls.

A KNOCKING on the door.

CHILD  
Daddy!

Curtis leans over and turns the music up.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex drives in a stunned silence. He nervously glances over at Daisy a few times but she just gazes out the window.

ALEX  
Curtis is very intelligent. He published a paper several years ago on the topic of solar flares on Mars. The atmosphere there is very-

DAISY  
Stop.

ALEX  
What?

DAISY  
Stop. For five seconds. Just stop talking about Mars.

ALEX  
What do you want to talk about?

DAISY  
Anything else.

He doesn't have anything else. She turns his CD Player on.

It's SPACE ODDITY by David Bowie. She switches it off.

And then she turns back to him:

DAISY (CONT'D)  
I think you need to consider if you're going for the right reasons.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

What?

DAISY

If it's to be an explorer and a scientist, then great, I can get behind it. If not...

ALEX

If not what?

DAISY

Did you not see that man? He's just going to escape his own life!

ALEX

You think I'm doing the same thing?

DAISY

I'm asking if you are.

He pulls over. Gets out.

DAISY (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

ALEX

I need some air.

He disappears into the trees. She contemplates, then grabs the keys and follows.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - CONTINUOUS

DAISY

But we're talking.

ALEX

So keep talking.

DAISY

Fine. I looked into your mission.

ALEX

And?

DAISY

And it's a whole bunch of ifs and maybes.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

So?

DAISY

So what if you don't get there?  
What if it all amounts to nothing?  
Do you want to turn around and see  
you could have had a life but you  
didn't because you were waiting?

ALEX

It's a risk-

DAISY

It's hiding.

ALEX

I'm not hiding.

DAISY

Yes you are! You're giving up on an  
entire planet after barely  
experiencing it. You have degrees  
you don't use, you haven't had  
relationships, you haven't traveled  
- you haven't really tried Alex,  
but you act like the problem is the  
world and not you.

ALEX

It's a shit world.

DAISY

Then change it! Don't go finding a  
new one!

He sighs, hands in his pockets, all defenses up.

ALEX

Can we talk about this later? When  
we're home?

DAISY

No way. You let all these things  
churn inside of you and you don't  
acknowledge them and you don't let  
anyone else acknowledge them and it  
isn't healthy and I won't  
contribute to it.

ALEX

What things?

(CONTINUED)

DAISY

Well, like your brother. We don't talk about your brother. I know he died last year, but you still can't talk about him? Even to remember?

ALEX

(tense)

What else.

DAISY

Really?

ALEX

Yep. What else.

DAISY

Fine. How about that you like me? That's a *happy* thing and you still won't acknowledge it. And the stupid thing is *I like you too*, and we have to pretend it isn't happening because it doesn't fit your schedule?

Equal parts surprised and elated and terrified:

ALEX

I thought we weren't dating.

DAISY

You're right. You drove me four hours up the coast to take me to the beach because we're buddies.

ALEX

So what, then? Do you want me to quit the mission so I can date you?

DAISY

No!

She circles around, thinking of a way to get through to him.

DAISY (CONT'D)

I want you to decide which world you're going to live on. The one where you shut yourself off from everyone and everything because your focus is on the mission and nothing else. Or one where, yeah, you're a little sadder, because you've had to accept the things

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DAISY (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
that have happened, and you're a  
little scared, because you don't  
know what's next. But that's the  
adventure, isn't it? You don't have  
a clue what's in store. Just like I  
didn't know that the guy needing  
space insurance would turn out to  
be the most interesting and strange  
and fun person I've ever known. And  
that kind of thing happening, when  
you least expect it, that makes you  
happier than you could ever be on  
that other world because it's real.

(meeting his gaze)

You have one life, Alex, one single  
life and if you waste it waiting  
for this, you don't get a second  
chance.

Beat.

ALEX  
...spoken from the daring realm of  
the insurance industry.

DAISY  
(losing hope)  
Temporarily.

ALEX  
I don't see you trying to do  
anything else.

That's a real blow to her, and they're both aware.

DAISY  
At least I tried, Alex.

He watches a SQUIRREL run down a tree and onto the road,  
picking at something on the asphalt. It seems to glance up  
at him. Then it turns to face an oncoming CAR. Frozen.

Right before the car makes contact, it LEAPS out of the way  
and runs back into the forest past him.

ALEX  
I'm going to Mars.

She nods, already knowing she'd lost.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY  
Then I'm going home.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - NIGHT - LATER

She gets out of the car. Pauses at his window.

ALEX  
Well...have a *swell* night.

She smiles a weak smile.

There's a moment where he hesitates. Wanting to reach out to her. But he just nods and drives away.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

Alex's alarm BUZZES. It's promptly THROWN across the room.

MUSIC: SPACE ODDITY by David Bowie.

He passes the computer. Curtis is CALLING. It goes ignored.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BATHROOM - DAWN

Unwashed Mission Mars T-shirt on, he addresses his mirror:

ALEX  
This is Alex McAllister, calling  
Mission Control. Sorry you're stuck  
on Earth.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAWN

He does jumping jacks. Push ups. Puts his earphones in.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Sorry I left you all to die.

And he runs. Angrily. Tearing through the forest. Purposely STOMPING on whatever CRUNCHES and bypassing the town.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Sorry you'll never know anything  
except overpopulation and  
commercial breaks...

Reaching the open plains, he takes off, running as fast as he can, the world a blur around him.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Sorry you're stuck with each other.

He runs until he can't go a second longer and COLLAPSES in the middle of a field.

He watches a plane pass through the blue sky above him.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BATHROOM - DAWN

Alex SPITS OUT the toothpaste.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Over and out.

EXT. BARTLET - TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The SUMMER HARVEST FESTIVAL is in full swing. Vendors line the streets, buskers and animals and tourists and kids racing through them all, BUZZED on sugar.

Daisy runs into Liz by JOHN STARK (1728-1822) HERO OF BENNINGTON.

LIZ  
Hey.

DAISY  
Hi! I didn't know you were in town?

LIZ  
Just helping out. How are you?

DAISY  
Good.  
(beat)  
How's Alex?

LIZ  
Oh, you know...preparing for space travel.

To both of them this signifies a lost cause.

Dimitri appears from around a booth.

DIMITRI  
Elizabeth, I lied, I can't carry it all.

LIZ  
Coming.

Daisy looks between them both. Liz appears very guilty.

DAISY  
I knew it.

LIZ  
We're just getting some food.

DAISY  
That *is* helpful.

LIZ  
Gotta feed the employees.

DAISY  
Where are the rest of them?

Busted. Liz smiles.

EXT. BARTLET - TOWN SQUARE - DAY - LATER

Alex and JEFF cross the festival to JANE, Liz and Dimitri.

DAVE (40's) and his FRIEND have spotted Alex and are PUSHING through the crowd towards him. They meet at the same time.

DAVE  
Hey Jeff.

He shakes hands with Jeff. Everyone knows everyone.

DAVE (CONT'D)  
Alex, wanted to have a quick word?

ALEX  
Sure.

DAVE  
I've been told you're talking at  
the school again.

ALEX  
Looks like it.

DAVE  
Some of the parents and I wondered  
if you might reconsider.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Why?

DAVE

(uncomfortable)

You know...

ALEX

No?

DAVE

I mean, it's not like you're from  
the observatory...

ALEX

So?

DAVE

So I'm all about knowledge and  
learning but my kid doesn't need to  
hear about some scam.

ALEX

It's not a scam.

DAVE

Come on, he thinks he knows an  
astronaut, for God's sake. He  
thinks he's going to follow in your  
footsteps!

JEFF

And last week he thought he was in  
World War II. I don't think any  
harm has been done here.

DAVE

There is if he believes it can  
happen. If he becomes deluded like-

He stops himself on Jeff's look, but Alex understands. Is  
that what people actually think of him?

He sees Daisy in the small crowd around them. She's heard  
everything. She's sympathetic. It makes him FURIOUS.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY

Alex pulls out VIOLETS in a FLOWER KILLING RAGE.

He KICKS another bunch. Grabs a handful and THROWS THEM as  
far as he can. Petals and leaves FLOAT to the ground, unable  
to keep up as the stalks TORPEDO through the sky.

(CONTINUED)

He stops to catch his breath. Jeff calmly walks out of the house. Notes the circle of destruction around Alex.

JEFF  
You gonna replant those?

Alex stops.

ALEX  
Yes.

JEFF  
Now?

Beat. Then, begrudgingly:

ALEX  
Yes.

Jeff heads back inside-

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUOUS  
-where Liz and Dimitri have been watching.

LIZ  
It's really good that he's angry,  
dad, trust me.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY - LATER

Alex rakes the destroyed flowers, leaving the ground barren.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - LATER

He's on his hands and knees, pulling out damaged bulbs and replacing them with fresh ones.

Dimitri comes to help, digging to coerce debris out.

DIMITRI  
I know I joke with you...but I  
understand what you're doing. I  
come from a different place, and I  
came here never intending to  
return. I came to America to die in  
America. Ideally after many more  
years. But that's my truth. I did  
it and it's not easy but people  
have always done these things and I  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DIMITRI (cont'd)  
think they always will. You just  
have to be sure. That's all.

Alex is quiet.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - BARN - DUSK - LATER

Alex lies on the roof, tired and dirty.

LIZ  
(from below)  
Alex?

ALEX  
He's not here.

LIZ  
I can see his feet.

The feet disappear and suddenly he's peering down at Liz.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Can I come up?

ALEX  
The roof might collapse with two  
people on it.

He watches as she disappears into the barn. A few moments  
later she can be heard CLIMBING the ladder.

He goes to the hole and pulls her up.

LIZ  
I haven't been up here in so long.

As she surveys the land spread out around them, he lies back  
down, looking up at the stars. She sits beside him.

LIZ (CONT'D)  
Killed enough flowers for one day?

ALEX  
Yeah.

LIZ  
Good. It seemed pretty effective.

ALEX  
(a begrudging smile)  
It was.

(CONTINUED)

Beat.

LIZ

I don't think I ever asked you why  
you were doing this.

ALEX

There's not one answer.

LIZ

Well, that part's pretty normal.

She plays with her jacket.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Do you really think I don't care?  
(off his shrug)

Every time I look at you I see  
Chris. Then I imagine you dying as  
well, which, trust me, I'm aware I  
need colossal amounts of therapy to  
fix. Just imagining it...the pain  
is so unbearable, so instantly-  
(searching for the word)  
-crippling, it's just been easier  
if I stay away.

Something is resonating with him.

LIZ (CONT')

Look, mom and dad are their own  
people and they can handle things  
how they like, but I get angry  
because I care. I can't face losing  
another brother and that's exactly  
what they're letting happen with  
you. We're losing you.

Alex looks at her, framed by the night sky, surprised.

ALEX

I thought there was something wrong  
with me because I imagine you  
dying, too.

LIZ

Really?

She laughs, relieved.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Wow. See? Everyone's fucked up. I  
don't think you realize that but  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LIZ (CONT'D) (cont'd)  
everyone is...I still sometimes  
jump into bed at night in case the  
monster grabs my ankles.

ALEX  
That is messed up.

LIZ  
The most. Of all these things.

ALEX  
By far.

She lies down next to him and looks up at the stars.

LIZ  
Can you see Mars from here?

ALEX  
Nah, it's behind the sun for the  
next few months.

Alex points out two little lights:

ALEX (CONT'D)  
But that's Venus. And Jupiter.

LIZ  
You're willing to live in such a  
big universe. I prefer thinking  
it's only us.

ALEX  
It's never been only us.

A long beat.

LIZ  
I think the last time I was up  
here, Chris was too. Right here.

She pats the empty roof next to her.

ALEX  
He was.

He's quiet for a moment, then turns over onto his stomach.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Do you remember this?

(CONTINUED)

She turns to look at the wooden beam behind them. Badly etched into the wood are six words: THE EXPLORER, THE QUEEN and THE CONQUEROR.

LIZ  
Oh my god.

She reaches out to touch it. And then she bursts into tears. He hugs her.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Back from his run, Alex picks up a stack of mail. Under it is Liz's beloved phone, abandoned.

ALEX  
Liz?

There's a YELLING outside. He looks out to see her in the fields, wearing farm clothes and helping Dimitri. Dimitri says something and she throws her head back and laughs.

He spots a Mission Mars logo on one of the envelopes.

EXT. BARTLET COUNTY GENERAL STORE - DAY

Alex approaches the store. The balcony holds two astronauts and one very sad plain-clothed boy. It's Evan.

ALEX  
Permission to come aboard the shuttle?

Evan nudges Jack.

JACK  
Proceed via the airlock chamber.

EXT. BARTLET COUNTY GENERAL STORE - BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Alex emerges from the fire escape/airlock chamber.

ALEX  
I have a delivery from Earth.

It's a box of space toys and memorabilia, including the projector.

ALEX (CONT'D)

These were my brothers and  
mine...but I thought they might be  
better use to you.

EVAN

I didn't know you had a brother.

ALEX

I used to, yeah. We wanted to work  
at NASA.

EVAN

That's where I want to work!

ALEX

Good! Tell your dad that!

Louie holds up walkie-talkies from the box:

LOUIE

Evan!

EXT. BARTLET COUNTY GENERAL STORE - BALCONY - DAY - LATER

They are lying on chairs that have been turned horizontal,  
to better mimic a space shuttle launch. Alex is on board.

EVAN

Houston, we are ready for launch.

ALEX

Roger that.

EVAN

Lift off in 10, 9, 8, 7-

As the boys madly flip imaginary launch buttons, Alex looks  
through the railing and sees Daisy walking below.

EVAN (CONT'D)

6, 5, 4-

He's conflicted. He wants to call out.

EVAN (CONT'D)

3, 2, 1-

A stream of BLAST OFF and FIRE noises courtesy of the  
astronauts. Alex takes part, BUMPING his chair around.

A series of WHOOPS as they celebrate a successful launch.

(CONTINUED)

EVAN (CONT'D)  
We did it, son.

Apparently, Brad Pitt's made it onto the shuttle, too.

Alex grins. This might be enough.

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - ALEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

He paces, looking at the Space Station stream, the Mission Mars forums, the unopened letter...

INT. MCALLISTER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The family and Dimitri eat breakfast. Jane cleans the pans. Liz gets up and steers her to the table.

LIZ  
Stop! Don't move. I'm doing it.

Jane tries to resist but Liz has already taken over.

Alex sticks his head in:

ALEX  
Mom, do you know where my suit is?  
The grey one?

JANE  
The hall closet.

Alex disappears. She and Liz exchange looks. He bounds back in a moment later, suit in hand.

ALEX  
I'm going to the dry cleaners, if anyone wants me to take anything.

LIZ  
What's the occasion?

ALEX  
Getting my suit dry cleaned.

LIZ  
Thank you. I meant *why*.

ALEX  
I have a job interview.

More glances. Rising hope.

LIZ  
Where?

ALEX  
(fiddling with the suit)  
The Vermont Space Grant Consortium.  
They have some impressive resources  
- I was surprised - plus they  
expressed interest in my project-

DIMITRI  
The Germinator!

ALEX  
Still not calling it that. I don't  
know. They're run by NASA, so-

He shrugs, aiming for nonchalance.

JANE  
(tentatively)  
That's great, honey. And the  
mission is OK with it?

ALEX  
Well, I was thinking of just  
concentrating on this.

A COMMUNAL GASP that ripples round the table. And then  
silence as they all look hesitantly to Jeff.

JEFF  
(genuine)  
I think that's a great idea.  
Really. Much better than mine.

The group attempts not to EXPLODE from complete and utter  
joy. Liz breaks first, reaching out and grabbing his arm:

LIZ  
It is great.

JANE  
*Wonderful.*

ALEX  
It's just an interview.

LIZ  
It's still great.

DIMITRI

It was great when Daisy suggested  
it, too.

All eyes are back on Alex.

ALEX

I don't remember that.

DIMITRI

Yes, remember she was like "they'll  
give you funding" and you were like  
"no thanks, I'm fine in my  
greenhouse?"

ALEX

(Yep)

No.

More furtive glances. More hope.

LIZ

I always liked her.

JANE

So did I.

JEFF

Me too.

DIMITRI

I like anyone who likes The  
Germinator.

ALEX

(grumbling)

Ok, I get it, you all like Daisy.

LIZ

They're just observations.

He grabs the keys and heads out the door:

ALEX

Bye!

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY

They're installing a new watering system along a flower row.  
Dimitri SINGS along to his stereo. A JAZZY SONG begins:

(CONTINUED)

DIMITRI

This is the Russian Frank Sinatra.

ALEX

There's a Russian Frank Sinatra?

DIMITRI

Or is Frank Sinatra an American  
Vladimir Krestovozdvizhensky?

He sings the lyrics in English over Vladimir.

DIMITRI (CONT'D)

*There was something in the sky that  
night, there was something in the  
air like light, there's a magical  
spark like breaking car parts-*

(he pauses)

That sounds more romantic in  
Russian...

Alex stops. He grins and shakes his head.

ALEX

God dammit.

DIMITRI

What? It's not that bad.

ALEX

It sounds like he's talking about  
fireflies.

DIMITRI

No it doesn't, we don't even have  
them in Russia.

ALEX

I know, I know, it just sounds-  
(yelling)

Liz!

She comes out to the patio. Yells:

LIZ

What?

ALEX

Do you know where Daisy works?

LIZ

Yeah...why?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX  
I need to talk to her.

Her eyes light up.

LIZ  
What changed your mind?

DIMITRI  
Ah Elizabeth, I would sing it but  
then you will fall in love with me  
even more.

Liz rolls her eyes...but also blushes.

LIZ  
Calm down, Romeo.  
(to Alex)  
Why can't you go?

ALEX  
I have to do something first.

LIZ  
Well, what am I supposed to say?

ALEX  
I don't know. PR something.

LIZ  
Not how that works.

ALEX  
Liz!

LIZ  
I'll go, I'll go.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY - LATER

Alex and Dimitri hastily plough an empty field.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY - LATER

They prepare soil.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - DAY - LATER

And plant seeds. Dimitri is singing again.

EXT. MCALLISTER FARM - FIELDS - LATER

Daisy stands before Alex. Skeptical.

And Alex's grand gesture: a field of brown dirt.

ALEX

I know you can't tell but they're  
daisies.

(beat)

We only had the seeds.

She surveys her seeds.

Liz and Dimitri are "picking flowers" nearby. They are the most suspiciously silent they have ever been.

DAISY

They're very beautiful.

(beat)

Could this not have waited 'til  
after work?

ALEX

I was wrong. And you were right.

DAISY

Never mind, I like this.

ALEX

Space is safe, to me, I can control  
it...except, you know, it's ever  
expanding and completely  
unpredictable to a degree where it  
could all implode at any moment-

She TAPS her foot.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Not the point. The point is this-

(indicating them)

-and this is terrifying. I'm  
terrified. Ever since you threw  
potato at me, I've been terrified.  
You are terrifying.

(CONTINUED)

DAISY

Glad I've brought so much to the table.

ALEX

My brother died.

Daisy shuts her mouth.

DAISY

I know.

ALEX

But I never told you. So, there it is. He died. Last year. He was traveling, he was happy, and it was sudden. He was one of the only things I thought was a constant in my life, but in a second he wasn't there anymore. And I have to wake up every morning and remember that. And I'm scared, I'm so scared, of it happening to anyone else I love.

(looking at the ground)

I'm scared of it happening to you.

She's touched.

ALEX (CONT'D)

So that's how I know this is the real adventure. For me.

(he frowns as she smiles)

That's corny.

DAISY

Sure is.

ALEX

But you know what I mean.

DAISY

I do.

He moves closer and strokes her cheek. He goes to brush her hair back when Jeff saunters out:

JEFF

What have you got there?

ALEX

Daisies.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF  
Weeds, huh?

ALEX  
Couldn't really do roses...

Jeff glances over at Daisy, with the hint of a smile:

JEFF  
As it happens, I rather like them.  
(unable to help himself)  
Though keep them separated from the  
rest of the fields.

LIZ  
(from her flower picking)  
Dad, go away!

He leaves and Alex turns back to Daisy.

DAISY  
Forever a weed.

He reaches out to her again. She hesitates.

DAISY (CONT'D)  
What about Mars?

He stops, thinks - he's got it.

ALEX  
There are no daisies on Mars.

DAISY  
(laughing)  
Wow. Did you rehearse that?

ALEX  
Actually, it just came to me.

DAISY  
Well, you nailed it.

ALEX  
Really?

DAISY  
Really.

And in the middle of a field of dirt, with the sun shining down and the wind blowing through the fields, he looks at her. Finally out of words and hesitations and apprehensions and deliberations, he pulls her close and kisses her.

(CONTINUED)

Liz jumps up and down, CLAPPING.

DIMITRI  
Yes. Now we die here together.

He pulls his shirt over his head and runs around the field, as if scoring a soccer goal. Liz is suddenly distracted.

OVER BLACK:

ALEX (V.O.)  
This is Mars.

VISUAL: the projector's image of Mars.

ALEX (V.O.)  
This will be the first colony on  
Mars.

CLICK. Small, futuristic white dots on the planet's surface.

ALEX (V.O.)  
For 210 days, people will travel  
there in this.

CLICK. A shuttle.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Then this will be their home.

CLICK. The white dots are pods, connected by hallways.

Beat.

ALEX (V.O.)  
But I will be here.

VISUAL: Earth, from space.

ALEX (V.O.)  
This is my home.

ZOOM IN: An apartment he shares with Daisy.

ALEX (V.O.)  
This is where I sleep. Where I eat.  
Work. Play.

FAST CUTS: A comfortable bedroom, a kitchen with two discarded mugs, a lab at the consortium where a high-tech version of his machine is worked on. Alex showing children the stars. Daisy teaching the same children how to swim.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Explore.

VISUAL: Alex and Daisy visiting the Taj Mahal, the Pyramids, Machu Picchu.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Get sick, get better.

VISUAL: Dr. Olsen reluctantly handing over a lollipop.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Pioneer.

VISUAL: Alex presenting his experiment to NASA. Daisy attending university classes.

ALEX (V.O.)  
Grow old, and live.

VISUAL: Him hiking with Daisy. The sun cutting through the trees. Them on top of a mountain. Her touch on his skin.

Then, more satisfied, as we zoom out to show the earth:

ALEX (V.O.)  
This is where I live.