

THE MAN FROM TOMORROW

written by

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Based on a true story

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**"What's the fastest way to become a millionaire?
Make a billion dollars, then invest in the space industry."**

--Elon Musk

A BLACK VOID

Glassy, reflective like a TV screen. A LOW RUMBLE as a RED SPHERE emerges at its center. This could be a planet in space or a cell in a petri dish.

JFK (V.O.)
*No man can fully grasp how far and
how fast we have come.*

PULL BACK reveals it's an eye. It blinks. Keep PULLING BACK:

- TO an alligator cooling off from the scorching sun in an acre of the Florida coastline swamp.

JFK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*This is a breathtaking pace, and
such a pace cannot help but create
new ills as it dispels old: new
ignorance, new problems, new dangers.*

- THEN TO 100 acres of coastline, all covered with tall West Indian grass.

JFK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*But if the history of our progress
teaches us anything, it is that man,
in his quest for knowledge and
progress, is determined and cannot
be deterred.*

- THEN TO 144,000 acres of coastline, stamped with the 40 most important space launch pads in the history of mankind.

EXT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, CAPE CANAVERAL, FL - DAY (1961)

A NASA globe logo, carved in stone, is prominently and proudly displayed at the front gate.

JFK (V.O.)
We choose to go to the Moon...

PAD 39A, EMPTY - (1961)

The most famous pad, at its creation, before the Apollo program's existence. It's an empty block of concrete.

JFK (V.O.)
*We choose to go to the Moon in this
decade and do the other things, not
because they are easy...*

PAD 39A, APOLLO 11 - (1969)

Now modified with the world's best technology, APOLLO 11 stands taller than the Statue of Liberty, supported by a steel launch tower. It's ready for launch.

JFK (V.O.)
...but because they are hard.

It's a MEDIA CIRCUS. Thousands gather in the fields nearby. Excitement fills the air as everyone knows they are about to witness history.

SATURN V BOOSTER ENGINES heat up, glowing orange. The rumble turns to a ROAR as

Apollo 11 Blasts off! The Saturn V rocket booster explodes with a thunderous force, climbing into the sky at *Mach 1*.

JFK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Because that challenge is one that
we are willing to accept...

The crowds CHEER loud enough to nearly drown out the rocket engine. This continues throughout the entire launch.

JFK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...one we are unwilling to postpone...

LOW EARTH ORBIT

Apollo 11 detaches its Saturn V booster (Stage 1). The upper section (Stage 2) fires at full force further out into space.

JFK (V.O.)
...and one we intend to win.

THE MOON

Apollo 11 launch module lands. NEIL ARMSTRONG takes his famous "First Steps". History is made. The crowd's celebration is deafening. America officially won the Space Race!

MONTAGE, (1969-1972): Of each subsequent Apollo Moon mission and the astronauts exploring the Moon's surface.

INTERCUT the first few missions with: astronauts at the White House; parades; coverage on "USA winning the Space Race"; STOPS on DAN RATHER interviewing Saturn V creator WERNHER VON BRAUN with the lower third reading: "The Future of Space"

WERNHER VON BRAUN
By the year 2000, we will undoubtedly
have a sizable operation on the Moon,
and I am certain we will achieve a
manned mission to Mars.

CHEERS QUIET at a steady pace as we INTERCUT the final few missions with: news on the Oil Crisis; long gas pump lines; inflation; Vietnam; NIXON addressing the nation.

THE MOON, APOLLO 17 MISSION - (1972)

ASTRONAUT GENE CERNAN stops walking to look around. He gives a thumbs up. Cheers are barely audible.

NIXON (V.O.)
In today's changing world, space
expenditures must take their proper
place in national priorities.

Apollo 17 DISSOLVES away. The Moon is bare. *Complete silence.*

PAD 39A, APOLLO 17, POST-LAUNCH - (1972)

Cleanup and engineer crews keep working. The crowds are gone.

One by one, the crew DISSOLVES. Each member of NASA disappears like a fading memory, until the entire launch pad is EMPTY.

TIME LAPSE through changing days, changing seasons. As years go by, the pad barely evolves. We stop at -

PAD 39A, EMPTY - (2000)

Unused. Wind WHISTLES. Dust gathers throughout the pad.

CHYRON: *No one since 1972 has been to the Moon...*

Quickly it turns to dusk, the sun a fiery RED looming behind Cape Canaveral on the horizon.

CHYRON: *No one has ever been to Mars...*

Night darkens to pure blackness, but for a RED blinking light atop the launch tower. An alarm BLARES.

SCOTT ANDERSON (PRE-LAP)
Servers down again!

CUT TO:

INT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - AFTERNOON

Full pandemonium. Workers scramble in a medium size Silicon Valley office. A blinking red alarm on a wall also BLARES.

CHYRON: 2000. PayPal. San Jose, CA.

SCOTT ANDERSON, an overwhelmed programmer, frantically types at his computer terminal. He has no idea what he's doing.

SCOTT ANDERSON
The accounts are just gone! I don't -

A HAND ROLLS Scott away from his terminal. ELON MUSK, 28, rolls into view. Elon is in complete command of the computer.

He doesn't speak. He is in a trance. Elon operates like a logic processor. His mind assesses solutions to problems faster than most see the problem. *Call it "Musk Land".*

"MUSK LAND": *The blank account entries; The bandwidth measurements on a wall monitor; The computer code next to him; In an instant, he diagnoses and solves the issue.*

ELON MUSK
You forgot to reduce the output
bandwidth before the server crashed.

SCOTT ANDERSON
I...forgot to reduce the output
bandwidth before the server crashed.
Shit! Sorry, Elon.

Elon codes at a furious, but controlled pace. Beside him is his personal bowl of RED SKITTLES. He takes a scoop and holds it up for Scott, who is too stressed to eat.

ELON MUSK

Your loss...I'll check open nodes
for a breach. Go to the server room
and reset the parameters on my mark.

PETER THIEL, co-owner of PayPal and all around reliable guy, saunters into the office amidst the chaos. He waves, shakes hands, pats guys' backs. He's beloved at Paypal.

Scott exits as Peter approaches. He looks over Elon's shoulder, swaying on either foot. Elon can feel it.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Stop lurching. I hate that.

PETER THIEL

Another breach?

ELON MUSK

Focus on the signal, not the sound.
It's not actually a bandwidth issue.
The signal points to...a coding error.

PETER THIEL

Uh-huh.

ELON MUSK

Vision, Peter. EBay is in our sights!
I can smell victory.

PETER THIEL

I can smell that shirt. CNBC is today.
You couldn't have changed at home?

ELON MUSK

I haven't been home since yesterday.
(stares at screen)
Found the error! What code is Max
using? Unix or Sanskrit?

PETER THIEL

Justine is going to kill you if you're
late to your flight.

ELON MUSK

I own the plane. I won't be late.

Elon picks his head up and sees in the BOARD ROOM that MAX LEVCHIN, another Paypal co-founder, is talking with someone.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Who's Max in there with?

PETER THIEL

(he just said)

CNBC. For our PayPal Mafia profile
piece. She's been here all week.

ELON MUSK
Why is she talking to Max?
(multi-tasking)
Okay, Scott! Do it!

A switch FLIPS. The alarm SHUTS DOWN. Order restored.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Breach clear...See? All better.

PETER THIEL
I bow to your genius. How ever do
you do it?

ELON MUSK
I read a lot of books.

Elon gets up and heads to the

BOARD ROOM -- to disrupt Max mid-interview with SARAH LACEY, an enthusiastic CNBC upstart with roots in Silicon Valley.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Max? Why is our system still coding
in two different languages?

Max looks around the room for defense.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
You're the only Max in here.

MAX LEVCHIN
To...to safeguard accounts. I had
to rerout the uplink codes using a
Unix dummy node.

ELON MUSK
They're safe. So, why don't you go
ahead and fix that code...now.

Elon's stocky, 6'1" frame intimidates Max, who quickly leaves.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
So...you guys seem very -

ELON MUSK
Driven. Inspiring. Attractive?

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
Anxious. Stressed. Overworked.

ELON MUSK
Business is Darwinian. It takes
sacrifice to endure progress. That's
how we survived the dot com bubble.
People here remember that, even if
they sometimes don't show it.
(beat)
Let's do this in my office.

ELON'S OFFICE -- Sarah studies his office, learning her subject.

A framed Iron Man #1 comic, a framed picture of his wife, and a framed poster of Neil Armstrong in his astronaut suit.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
Neil Armstrong...Didn't expect that.

ELON MUSK
Who's not a fan of Neil Armstrong?

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
You're a techy, banker guy. I fail to see the connection.

ELON MUSK
I'm not a...banker guy. I'm an engineer at heart. It's the closest thing to real magic in this world.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
Neil Armstrong wasn't an engineer.

ELON MUSK
He was an adventurer.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
Is internet banking your adventure?

ELON MUSK
Life is my adventure.

Through his interior window, Scott holds up a large pad with the words: "Crash Again. Help me." Elon waves him away from the window before Sarah sees.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Listen, is there any way to make this quick?

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
Why? Big date tonight?

ELON MUSK
(yes)
My honeymoon.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
Oh, shit. Yes. Let's see...

Sarah GRABS a recorder from her bag as Elon STICKS HIS HEAD out the door to whisper yell coding commands to Scott. She waits for him to finish and sit down before recording.

ELON MUSK
Sorry - my mind is always in multiple places at once. My context switching penalty is higher now than as a kid.

In the spotlight, Elon speaks quickly and tends to ramble.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
Let's start with a quick bio. Outside of Silicon Valley, you're an unknown.

ELON MUSK

Well you know my story so I don't -
(off her blank look)
A quick bio. Sure. Immigrant from
South Africa; left home at 17;
graduated Upenn '95; left my P.H.D.
program at Stanford; with no money,
started Zip2 with my brother up the
street. Sold it. Made Paypal. Typical
American Dream.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC

Was that always the pursuit?

ELON MUSK

Absolutely! Even as a kid I knew
America was the land of opportunity -
where real innovation happens. Henry
Ford. Thomas Edison -

SARAH LACEY, CNBC

(connecting dots)

- Neil Armstrong. Got it. Still
doesn't explain why you quit Stanford
to start an internet bank.

ELON MUSK

I left. I could've gone back. I was
trying to solve the renewable energy
problem with ultracapacitors.
Revolutionary stuff for electric
cars. They deliver the same energy
over one hundred times faster than -

Through the window, Elon sees the red blinking light RETURN -
another problem he's got to hurry back to. He refocuses.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

- Anyway, I left when I realized I
could have an immediate impact on
the internet. It's low bandwidth.
Just need a PC and some sweat equity.

She notes his shift in enthusiasm for the internet.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC

Well, after you sell Paypal to Ebay
I'm sure you'll have more time to go
back to your other adventures.

ELON MUSK

That's true. Possibly.
(then, realizing)
Wait, what?! I'm not selling Paypal.
Who said that?

SARAH LACEY, CNBC

Valleywag blogs. Like every day.

ELON MUSK

Blogs. Ugh. My wife blogs. I don't
understand them...What did they say?

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
 There are rumblings Ebay is increasing cash flow to buy you guys out.

ELON MUSK
 Really? Interesting. I believe they'd try. But I'll never sell. We're in a race to the top! And I will win.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
 They also said an inside source told them your aggressive growth "to the top" is to drive up the asking price. Just rumblings?

ELON MUSK
 Just rumblings...

Elon seethes. Sarah senses she touched a nerve. She prods.

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
 Are they? You didn't seem as giddy about internet banking as you did about ultracapacitors.

ELON MUSK
 Which do you find more exciting: internet banks or electric cars?

SARAH LACEY, CNBC
 I didn't start an internet bank.

LATER, MAIN FLOOR -- Sarah exits. Elon impatiently stands by his office door, gritting his teeth. He looks around the office. *Who rumbled?!* Peter opens the front door for her.

Sarah leaves. Then Elon shouts.

ELON MUSK
 Executive meeting!

All the executives quickly flock in. They know this routine rather well.

BOARD ROOM -- Elon sits at the head of the table.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 Whoever's #1 rules the jungle, dictates terms. As of today, Ebay is the lion. That makes us the zebras. If we don't move faster, we're dinner. That is why we must increase growth.

PETER THIEL
 Aren't we growing fast enough?

ELON MUSK
 Growth is never too fast.
 (to group)
 From now on we are no longer using Unix. Period. End of transmission.

The group reacts in shock, Max the most incensed.

MAX LEVCHIN

Changing O.S. could cripple us! We
need time to adjust. Microsoft just -

ELON MUSK

- Microsoft data-center just keeps
productivity going so we don't lose
12 fucking hours for hairballs. I
told you the code to use. But you
didn't listen and our directory
crashed. You need to get on our page.

MAX LEVCHIN

You mean your page.

ELON MUSK

The correct page. It doesn't matter
whose page it is. Understand?

Max backs down, no challenge to Elon. Peter feels for him.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Meeting adjourned. Back to work.

ELON'S OFFICE -- Peter enters as Elon packs up.

PETER THIEL

What was that about? Max is right,
ya know. Unix is slower, but it's
more secure...Are you even listening?

No, he isn't. Peter gives up and leaves, but then -

ELON MUSK

There are rumblings of a sale. Here.
Rumblings. I didn't rumble. Who did?

PETER THIEL

There are worse things than rumors
of you making a billion dollars.

ELON MUSK

I was already rich from Zip2. This
was to do something important. To
make a positive difference in
humanity's future.

PETER THIEL

With a billion dollars, you could
make a lot of positive differences.

Elon stops packing to make his point very clear.

ELON MUSK

I'll never sell, Peter. It's not how
I'm built. I was too young to be CEO
at Zip2 and the board fucking sold
it. I'm not selling again. Ever.

PETER THIEL

I know.

MAIN OFFICE

Scott catches Elon leaving to give him a bottle of wine. He is a loyal soldier. Peter is quick behind them.

SCOTT ANDERSON

Congrats again. And try to relax!

ELON MUSK

Thanks, buddy. I'll certainly try.

EXT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - DUSK

Elon walks with his belongings to his car, Peter in tow.

PETER THIEL

If the SEC finds out about the breach -

ELON MUSK

- Fuck the SEC. We're at war with Ebay. Winning is all that matters.

PETER THIEL

This isn't war. It's just business.

ELON MUSK

Business is war. And in any war there are winners and losers. I won't lose.

PETER THIEL

At what cost?

Elon finds his car - a MCLAREN F1. He gets in. It's covered in dings and scratches from everyday use. He calms Peter.

ELON MUSK

None, I promise. The servers will hold. Do you not believe me?

PETER THIEL

(rephrases problem)

It should've been a group decision.

ELON MUSK

I'm the CEO. It's my decision.

Elon waves as he drives off, leaving Peter in the dust.

INT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - DUSK

A dismayed Peter reenters the office. Max approaches.

MAX LEVCHIN

Peter, it's time. Call them.

PETER THIEL

I know...

EXT. TARMAC, SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Elon boards a Dessault Falcon 900 PRIVATE JET. *HIS JET.*

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Elon sits in a leather recliner and OPENS his laptop.

As fast as it's opened, it's CLOSED by the hand of his frustrated wife JUSTINE, 28, who stands over him. Dirty blonde. Fantasy writer. Former model. Way out of his league.

JUSTINE

You promised me no work.

Justine struggles to keep calm and not ruin their honeymoon in the first two minutes by throwing his laptop at a wall.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

You said, "J, I know I've been a terrible husband lately, but when we go on our honeymoon, I'll make it up to you and romance you all day."

ELON MUSK

I did say that, yes. And I'm sorry. And I will stop being a terrible husband. And I will romance you all day... After I finish this one thing.

He reopens the laptop slowly, purposefully antagonizing her. Justine waits. He doesn't stop. She lets out a loud GROAN.

INT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - NIGHT

Scott is the only worker left at the office. He jams out to *The Eagles* on full blast.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Elon continues typing away on his laptop. We can't see what he's doing. Justine's blood boils. Elon pokes his head over the laptop to give her a Cheshire grin.

ELON MUSK

I swear. This is super important. Almost there...and...done!

INT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - NIGHT

Scott jams away when Peter enters. Odd. Then Max enters.

SCOTT ANDERSON

It's 10:30pm on a Friday. What are you guys up to? Secret office party?

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Elon turns around his computer and presses ENTER.

He made a VIDEO COLLAGE titled "Happy Honeymoon" of their lives: at college together; at crappy Zip2 office; showing the engagement ring; with the McLaren; their wedding; etc.

INT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - NIGHT

Peter calmly stands over Scott. Other BOARD MEMBERS enter.

PETER THIEL
Go home, Scott. Have a nice weekend.

They gather in the board room. Scott finally gets it.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Justine cries to the video. Elon waits for praise. It ends with the note: *"To my beautiful new wife. I love you".*

ELON MUSK
I'm trying to be better.

JUSTINE
You're succeeding.

PILOT (O.S.)
This is your Captain speaking. At this time we ask you to please turn off any cellular devices. Thank you.

Elon shuts down his laptop. Then he pulls out his phone.

EXT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - NIGHT

Scott rushes to his car and immediately dials Elon. It RINGS.

SCOTT ANDERSON
C'mon. Pick up.

INT. PAYPAL, BOARD ROOM, SAN JOSE - NIGHT

The board takes a vote. Everyone is tense.

MAX LEVCHIN
All in favor?

An overwhelming amount raise their hand.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Elon POWERS DOWN his cell phone. They buckle up.

PILOT (O.S.)
Ready for departure.

The plane ROLLS down the tarmac.

EXT. PAYPAL, OFFICE, SAN JOSE - NIGHT

Scott hangs up and redials. Goes straight to voicemail.

SCOTT ANDERSON
 Elon, it's Scott. You need to come
 back right now. Peter fucked you!

Far in the BACKGROUND, the jet is in the sky. He missed him.

EXT. SOUTH AFRICAN SAFARI - DAY

Elon and Justine ride in a Jeep, on a guided tour. Elon looks like a geeky Steve Irwin: hat, cargo shorts, zinc nose. Justine hands him malaria pills. He refuses. The JEEP STOPS.

THEY SEE A ZEBRA, stopping to graze. A beautiful sight.

The ground RUMBLES. Out from the tall grass, a LION POUNCES! The zebra RUNS for his life!

He's no match as the lion chases him down and SINKS HIS TEETH into the zebra's neck. The kill is shrouded by the grass.

As the lion devours its prey, it takes notice of the Jeep, and Elon. ELON LOCKS EYES WITH THE LION. *Kindred spirits*.

CUT TO:

BLOOD

Drawn by a mosquito. Its snout grows red until - SLAP! A hand. REVEAL Elon killed the mosquito on his neck.

INT./EXT. GAME RESERVE BUNGALOW, SOUTH AFRICA - DUSK

Elon wanders the bungalow trying to get a signal. None. He gives up and goes to his wife.

Justine stands at the balcony overlooking the reserve. She looks like the cover of a romance novel. He embraces her.

JUSTINE
 What was it like growing up here? I
 can't imagine young Elon Musk.

ELON MUSK
 Imagine me, only shorter.

JUSTINE
 I mean your life here. You never
 talk about it.

He looks out into the jungle. *Kill or be killed*. He IMAGINES A LION roaming the plains. The lion then VANISHES.

ELON MUSK
 Imagine this, only with people.

She holds him, nurturing. But he's not emotional about it.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 It's fine. You bury the pain and
 move on. Just took time. That's all.
 And a wonderful wife by my side.

He kisses her. His love for her never stronger.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - AFTERNOON

Elon looks out the window, Justine resting on his shoulder. Very relaxed. Very happy. Suddenly, he grows nauseous.

EXT. TARMAC, SAN FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON

He exits and breathes in the refreshing air. It helps but not as much as he needed. He looks sick. *Maybe he is?*

Elon TURNS ON his phone. 41 missed calls. 37 voicemails. 750 unread emails. Elon stops dead in his tracks.

ELON MUSK

What the...

INT. PAYPAL, BOARD ROOM, SAN JOSE - AFTERNOON

Elon yells at all the board members. He's sweaty, pale.

ELON MUSK

...Fuck?! Because of fucking Unix?!

PETER THIEL

It is the feeling of this board that we go in another direction. In infrastructure...

ELON MUSK

Unix!

PETER THIEL

...and in management.

ELON MUSK

Guys, there are important things that need to happen at this company. If I'm not CEO, they won't.
(pleads)

What about our vision, Peter? To change the banking world forever.

PETER THIEL

I don't care about changing banking. I don't care about changing the world. Elon, I only care about this company, the employees, and our shareholders.

The shareholders?!

ELON MUSK

It was you that fucking rumbled...

PETER THIEL

I had a choice between our investment or your "vision".

Elon is speechless at his betrayal.

PETER THIEL (CONT'D)

It's not rocket science.
(MORE)

PETER THIEL (CONT'D)
 You build a successful product, you leverage it to a larger competitor, you cash out. This is how it's always done. You're a genius, Elon. But there are lots of other geniuses in Silicon Valley and they all get how it works. You knew this. Somewhere you lost sight of it. I'm sorry.

Everything he's built, gone. Elon is completely defeated.

ELON MUSK
 Sorry? You're selling my company....

PETER THIEL
 This was a group decision.

MAX LEVCHIN
 We just weren't on your page.

His voice is weak, with only enough strength to say -

ELON MUSK
 Fuck you, Max.

EXT. MUSK CONDO, DRIVEWAY, PALO ALTO - NIGHT

Elon pulls up. He can't quite exit the car. His ego pulverized. His vision challenged. He is white as a ghost.

ELON MUSK
 Fuck!

FRONT PORCH -- Elon shakes, barely holds himself up on the railing. He is sick. Before opening the door, he PASSES OUT.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA - DAY (1982)

Dirt roads. Dilapidated houses. Poverty. Ruin. South African apartheid militants in the streets with machine guns.

The old look weary. The young look jaded. They play soccer in a dirt field as military jeeps drive by. They don't pay it any mind. This is real, everyday life here.

INT. PRETORIA LIBRARY - AFTERNOON (1982)

Inside a beaten down library is just one lonely little boy, ELON, 10, with a stack of books. He reads a model rocket book, jotting ideas into his NOTEBOOK he titled "MASTER PLAN".

Each page has various ideas and drawings: spaceships, electric cars, Neil Armstrong, NASA logos, Elon in a rocketship flying to Mars (he wrote labels for himself and Mars).

The LIBRARIAN WHISTLES, points at the clock. *Closing time.* Reluctantly, Elon closes his book and packs up.

EXT. MUSK CONDO, PALO ALTO - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Justine opens the front door. She finds Elon passed out on the porch. Their Yorkie Terrier, HOBSES, jumps on Elon, wimpering as he licks his master's face. She dials 9-1-1.

EXT. PRETORIA STREETS - AFTERNOON (1982)

Elon trudges along the dreary landscape, through the desolate city streets. Each face he passes scares him.

He eyes a group of BULLIES across the street. He keeps his head down, walking faster. Then one of them YELLS. Elon RUNS!

EXT. MUSK CONDO, PALO ALTO - NIGHT (PRESENT)

An AMBULANCE races out of their driveway with Elon in tow.

EXT. PRETORIA STREETS - AFTERNOON (1982)

Elon's too slow. One BULLY grabs him. Others PUNCH him furiously. This isn't bullying. They are hospitalizing him! They pick him up and THROW Elon down a flight of stairs.

SLOW MOTION as Elon's lifeless body HANGS in the air, releasing his comics and books. They hang with him.

TIGHT ON his Iron Man Comic. The cover depicts Iron Man standing proud atop a pile of defeated enemies.

INT. PRETORIA HOSPITAL, ICU - DAY (1982)

Elon is bloodied, unconscious, and on oxygen. His brother KIMBAL, 9, stays by his side. He puts Elon's Iron Man comics and his Master Plan notebook on the bedside table.

ERROL MUSK (O.S.)
Don't you feel sorry for him.

Elon's jingoist father, ERROL MUSK, appears in the doorway. A mountain of a man, pained by years of machismo, alimony, and failure. He doesn't bother with Kimbal, only weak Elon.

ERROL MUSK (CONT'D)
He's gotta learn to be a man - fight
back - if he's ever gonna survive.

He walks closer to Elon's side, speaking to his beaten child.

ERROL MUSK (CONT'D)
There are winners and there are
losers. Next time, win.

Disgusted with his son, Errol leaves. Kimbal then taps Elon.

KIMBAL MUSK
He's gone.

Elon opens his eyes and gingerly pulls down his oxygen mask.

ELON MUSK
What an asshole.

The two kids laugh together.

CUT TO:

INT. SEQUOIA HOSPITAL, ICU - DAY (PRESENT)

Elon awakens to a familiar face at his hospital bedside.

KIMBAL MUSK (O.S.)
How do you keep surviving?

KIMBAL MUSK, now 27, smiles, expecting the good news. Kimbal is the polar opposite of Elon. Charming, relaxed, social.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
You didn't take the malaria medication on safari. You contract the deadliest malaria strain on Earth. And yet, not only will you live, you're gonna be perfectly fine. Just how?

ELON MUSK
Better to be lucky than smart.

KIMBAL MUSK
Only an idiot would say that.

Justine enters to see him awake. She kisses him repeatedly. Elon enjoys it, but doesn't want any sympathy.

ELON MUSK
I'll be okay. By this time next month, I'll be climbing Everest.

EXT. COLORADO MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

HIKERS trek up a snowy mountain trail. This is no Everest.

CHYRON: 6 months later.

TRAIL APEX -- The FIRST HIKER to the top enjoys a victory protein bar. Kimbal's next. He sits, relieved it's over.

He remembers something and looks over the edge to find Elon much farther down, climbing ever so slowly.

KIMBAL MUSK
Don't push yourself. We'll come down!

Elon's too tired to yell back. He gives Kimbal the finger.

LATER -- Kimbal sits, waiting. Elon finally makes it up. He stomps on the mountain top right in Kimbal's face.

ELON MUSK
Fuck you. I can do anything.

Elon soaks in the stunning view. Malaria left Elon thin and frail these past months, but it did not weaken his spirit.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I haven't felt this free in a long
time. I go from Stanford to Zip2 -

KIMBAL MUSK
- 2 days of Stanford. 2 days -

ELON MUSK
- And then right into Paypal. And
now? I'm free.
(hollers)
I can do anything!!!

He overexcites himself and vomits.

KIMBAL MUSK
Even that, apparently.

Elon stands back up, proving his toughness.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
You must still really hate Peter.

ELON MUSK
I hate the reasoning by analogy that
infects people like Peter much more.
"I do X and not Y because that's how
it's always been done." Silicon Valley
was filled with dreamers, but nobody
takes risk anywhere anymore, even
when opportunity stares them in the
face. People have become lemmings.

KIMBAL MUSK
Just because you thought they could've
changed the banking world -

ELON MUSK
- They could've -

KIMBAL MUSK
- Doesn't mean you're right.

ELON MUSK
- I was. If people can't see a better
future on their own, I have to show
it to them. Or build them a path
myself. And it has to be actually
important. *Next time...*

Elon stares intensely out toward the setting red sun.

KIMBAL MUSK
So what is the next adventure?

Elon ponders that as he TROTS down the mountain. First.

INT. KIMBAL'S MOUNTAIN LODGE, COLORADO - NIGHT

It's a cozy cottage. Kimbal and Justine, now 6 months
pregnant, prepare dinner. He changed clothes. Elon didn't.
He sits at the table deep in thought. Kimbal talks at him.

KIMBAL MUSK
Solar? You could invest in solar.
Too boring...Electric cars, then?
You never shut up about electric
cars since your 2 days at Stanford.

JUSTINE
How about nothing? We have enough
money to retire on our own island.

KIMBAL MUSK
E always has some crazy new idea
running in his head. Look at him.
He hasn't moved in a half hour.

Elon's head tilts at an odd angle whenever he thinks deeply.
He stares at a dinosaur poster on Kimbal's wall.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
He's got kind of a Forrest Gump thing
going, don't you think?

"MUSK LAND": dinosaurs; Ice Age; asteroid attack; Armageddon; Earth destroyed; the Moon; Mars... Then out of nowhere -

ELON MUSK
Do you think we're prepared for an
asteroid attack? Or some other kind
of extinction event?

JUSTINE
Hypotheticals after dinner.

ELON MUSK
Forgive me, I nearly died. I'm
thinking about mortality at the
moment. What would we do?

KIMBAL MUSK
Die. We would die.

ELON MUSK
Exactly. We would die. So not
knowing what that extinction event
might be, wouldn't it be important
that we are a multiplanetary species?

She stops setting the table and stares at him. *Seriously?*
Elon, now excited, finishes setting the table for her.

JUSTINE
It's important we live on Mars?

ELON MUSK
Long term, absolutely! It's one of
the most important achievement in
the history of mankind. Governments
should invest some amount to it -
say, 1% of our resources. It's less
critical right now than health care,
but more than, say, cosmetics.

JUSTINE
You'd miss my lipstick.

ELON MUSK
I love your lipstick. But your lips
or Mars? Not that difficult.

She kisses his cheek, leaving a lipstick imprint on him.

JUSTINE
You're not going to Mars, baby.

ELON MUSK
Why not? Why can't I go to Mars? Or
rather, as of today, when can I go?

JUSTINE
You're not going to Mars!

KIMBAL MUSK
When is NASA going to Mars?

JUSTINE
K, don't encourage him, please.

ELON MUSK
I'm sure it's on their website.

Kimbal hops on his desktop near the couch and looks.

KIMBAL MUSK
Actually, no. It isn't. No missions
on the manifest. No rocket tests.

Elon, in disbelief, pulls Kimbal back from the computer.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
E, wait. You can't -

Elon shoots him a look. *Don't say, "you can't".*

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
What I meant was, before you do
something very...Elon...why don't
you learn more, please?
(Elon isn't listening)
And that's exactly what you're doing.

Kimbal loses Elon to his brain. In seconds, 19 articles and websites are open. He's reading them all, including NASA's website which has no mention of Mars.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
I hated when you did this shit with
our encyclopedias. Hey, Jackass!

Elon pulls out of his trance to listen to his brother.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
If NASA isn't going, there must be a
really good reason.

ELON MUSK
And if there isn't?

He stops on one website in particular. The home page is all red with two words in the middle: *Mars Society*.

EXT. VALLEY VIEW SUN FOUNDATION - NIGHT

Elon's McLaren peels into the valet. Elon exits in a tuxedo. Justine stuns in a ruby red dress.

INT. VALLEY VIEW SUN FOUNDATION, BALLROOM - NIGHT

Inside is equal parts bar mitzvah and airport conference. Men wear department store suits. Women wear casual sweaters.

JUSTINE
We look like Bond Villains.

ELON MUSK
Timothy Dalton Bond Villains at best.

Society Chairman ROBERT ZUBRIN, 50, speaks at a podium with a 90's high school video projector setup. His voice booms.

ROBERT ZUBRIN
NASA has lost the will. If they won't go to Mars, then someone here will.

He receives a rousing APPLAUSE - Elon the most enthusiastic. The projector then plays a CGI SIMULATION of a capsule on approach to Mars. Elon lights up.

LATER, TABLES -- Dinner is served. Everyone eats. Several big wigs include JEFF BEZOS, RICHARD BRANSON, JOHN CARMAC. All have a great time. Except Elon. He's bored and confused.

ELON MUSK
You don't see any computers or business plans open. No one working in groups. Why are they just...eating?

JUSTINE
Hunger. It's only a theory.

CHRIS THOMPSON (O.S.)
Interesting theory.

CHRIS THOMPSON, a well groomed rocket scientist, pipes in.

CHRIS THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Nobody believes we're actually going to Mars in our lifetimes. So people come to talk shop, network, and eat.

ELON MUSK
Was Zubrin right? Did everyone at NASA simply lose the will?

CHRIS THOMPSON
 Space exploration hasn't progressed since Apollo. We're still using parts from the 60s. The Shuttle has been a disaster. We pay the Russian Soyuz to get to the I.S.S. Mars?? We can't get back to the Moon. Forget Mars.

Elon's heard enough. He gets up and beelines to

ZUBRIN'S TABLE -- Elon purposefully COUGHS to get everyone's attention. The whole table turns and stares at him.

ELON MUSK
 Why isn't NASA going to Mars?

The table includes MICHAEL GRIFFIN, 30s, military pilot material. He is comfortable being the spokesman.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
 It's more complicated than just going or not going.

ELON MUSK
 It really isn't. Either we have the technology or the ability to develop it now or we don't. Either we can go to Mars or we can't. Can we?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
 Theoretically? Yes. Actually? No. It's just not a concern right now.

ELON MUSK
 It's the entire planet's concern!

ROBERT ZUBRIN
 Michael, do you know this man?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
 That's Elon Musk. He made Paypal.
 (shaking Elon's hand)
 Michael Griffin, Orbital Sciences.

ROBERT ZUBRIN
 Michael is the next NASA Admin in waiting. Some would argue nobody knows more about space travel.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
 I've argued that many times myself.

ROBERT ZUBRIN
 So you're a banker?

ELON MUSK
 Classically trained as an engineer.
 Why isn't someone going to Mars?

ROBERT ZUBRIN
 Politics. Bureaucracy. Technology.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
(cutting the bullshit)
Money. Lots of it. Space is expensive.
Governments and Big Aerospace can
afford it. People can't.

INT. UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE - DAY

Elon goes through the engineering section with purpose, putting textbook after textbook into his cart.

LATER, CASHIER -- Justine puts one book on the conveyor. Elon has 12! Justine isn't shocked. He'll read all of them.

INT. MUSK CONDO, PALO ALTO - NIGHT

Elon speed reads a stack of books on his half of their SPLIT DESK. He looks just as he did as a kid. Justine, now almost at her due date, writes on her side. Both work quietly.

JUSTINE
Ahh, this monologue's killing me! E,
you have no idea how hard this is.

Elon lifts his head up from one of his books.

ELON MUSK
Is it as hard as this rocket science
thing? Cuz, ya know, rocket science.

JUSTINE
Point taken. I'll shut up now.

FAST FORWARD -- Justine eventually exits; Elon works through the night; sifts through various manuals; puts finished books in a pile; plays video games; reads more until sunrise.

Every book's in the finished pile. His phone RINGS ON SPEAKER. As soon as the person picks up, Elon starts.

ELON MUSK
In your opinion, can liquid propulsion
be cooled enough to carry a rocket
into LEO without adding .75 tons?

VOICE (O.S.)
No. That's a stupid question...Who
the hell is this?

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO CAFE - DAY

Elon is mid conversation with a shocked MICHAEL GRIFFIN.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
Say that again. A rocket for what?

ELON MUSK
I want to send a small greenhouse to
Mars. A public spectacle. Reinvigorate
the public towards space exploration.
And I need your help finding a rocket.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

In America, the cheapest to buy is
Boeing's Delta II at \$50 million.

ELON MUSK

Fuck. That's so unnecessary. Nothing
I've read on rocket components at
all would justify that cost.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

It's not what's in 'em. It's who
makes 'em. Without competition, Boeing
and Lockheed have no incentive to
charge anything other than top dollar.

ELON MUSK

There has to be a cheaper way.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

There is. You just need to get
yourself a refurbished ICBM.

ELON MUSK

And where can I get that?

INT. MUSK CONDO, PALO ALTO - NIGHT

Elon wheels his luggage downstairs. He kisses Justine and
their newborn boy, NEVADA, on the couch.

JUSTINE

Russia?

ELON MUSK

It's only a few days.

JUSTINE

Are you losing your mind?

ELON MUSK

You've known me for 10 years. Is
this really odd behavior for me?

JUSTINE

No...Still...Russia?

EXT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - DAY

Elon's jet flies over the Pacific.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - DAY

Griffin, Kimbal, and Chris sit in one aisle on recliners.

KIMBAL MUSK

Russia. To buy intercontinental
ballistic missiles. Great. We're
gonna nuke Mars.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

Actually we're just purchasing the rocket mechanism. We'll let them keep the bomb portion.

The word "bomb" has them slightly terrified.

KIMBAL MUSK

Chris, you think he's nuts, right?

CHRIS THOMPSON

I think one day more humans will be living off of Earth, than on it.

KIMBAL MUSK

So that's a no? Good talk.

Elon pops in, enthusiastic, holding an important SUITCASE.

ELON MUSK

Now this is an adventure!

KIMBAL MUSK

This is Russian Roulette.

ELON MUSK

It's worth noting in Russian Roulette that you're probably going to win.

EXT. ST. PETERSBERG - NIGHT

The plane lands on a closed, snowy runway. They exit to a femme fatale, TALIA, and her associates waiting.

Her associates pull out GUNS! Elon's hands shoot up. Chris calmly lowers Elon's hands. These are their escorts.

TALIA

Welcome to Russia, Mr. Musk.

INT./EXT. FIELDS - NIGHT

The escort truck rampages through large fields. The group struggles with the turbulence. Elon clutches his SUITCASE.

INT. RUSSIAN HOTEL - DAY

Though lavish and elegant, the "hospitality" of this place is betrayed by the myriad of armed guards.

Elon's team sits on a sofa across from NPO CEO, VICTOR HART.

Victor sips tea as Chris explains their demands in Russian. Victor nods. Elon has no idea if this is good. Victor smiles at him. Elon smiles back. *Maybe good?* Then -

VICTOR HART

Fuck. You.

Next...

INT. KREMLIN CAFE - AFTERNOON

Now they sit with another fat old man, VADIM KOVALEV. From his pure black outfit and his stoic expression, there's no telling who he works for.

KIMBAL MUSK
He reminds me of Dad.

Elon quiets him as Chris translates Elon's demands.

ELON MUSK
Make sure it's a Knepper ICBM rocket
capable of reaching Max Q.

Chris gives a thumbs up. *"I got this."* Kovalev listens, then SPITS in Elon's face! Guards drag them away like children.

KIMBAL MUSK
Yep. Definitely reminds me of Dad.

Next...

INT. RUSSIAN MISSILE SILO - NIGHT

Talia ushers them inside a dank, dusty Cold War relic; Nobody would hear them scream except Kosmotra CEO, VLADIMIR ANDREEV.

VLADIMIR ANDREEV
Hello, Chris. Friends of Chris.

ELON MUSK
You speak English? Perfect.

VLADIMIR ANDREEV
Yes. I meet lots of Americans who
wish to be the next Neil Armstrong.

ELON MUSK
The irony isn't lost on me.

VLADIMIR ANDREEV
Americans beat Russians to the moon.
Then quit. We built MIR, so you built
I.S.S. except you need Russian rockets
to get on board. That's fucking irony.

ELON MUSK
I lived in South Africa during the
Cold War. This is merely business.

Elon opens his SUITCASE. Inside is \$20 million cash.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
You sell RD-180's to Boeing and
Lockheed, correct? Well, I'd like
three Kneppers. Please.

The muscle behind him stands. Chris shivers. Elon doesn't.

VLADIMIR ANDREEV
Lots of balls on you.

ELON MUSK
Regular amount of balls, just a little more in them.

VLADIMIR ANDREEV
I know about you, Mr. Silicon Valley.
You buy missile, reverse engineer it, and what? Make American versions?
You plan to start the space race all over again by yourself?

ELON MUSK
Is it a deal? Or do I go elsewhere?

VLADIMIR ANDREEV
You don't understand. You buy from nobody in Russia. We dominated the Space Race for 30 years. And we will for another 30. Now fuck off.

INT./EXT. FIELDS - NIGHT

The team drives back defeated. Elon stares out the window.

KIMBAL MUSK
Sorry it didn't work out, E.

Elon sees KIDS set up around a fire pit with a metal grill. They stuff a balloon with alcohol into an empty can. They place the can upside down on the grill and run.

In seconds, the balloon POPS releasing the alcohol. It strikes the fire and EXPLODES sending the flaming can sky high!

"MUSK LAND": *In flashes - (1982) Elon blasts a model rocket on his lawn; a page of his notebook with the rocket specs; (PRESENT) The can stops in mid-air, transforms into a rocket. It separates into 3 giant pieces; Each piece has thrust, weight, vectors, equipment all being itemized. Elon gets it.*

ELON MUSK
It's just that simple...

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

All in the same recliners as before. More traumatized.

KIMBAL MUSK
Well, that was terrifying. To Mother Russia! And never coming back here.

They toast to that. Elon interrupts, holding his laptop.

ELON MUSK
It's fairly obvious based on today's rather unimpressive showing, that a new plan is needed.

He doesn't look a bit demoralized. In fact, he's inspired.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I did some of the calculations and I think - I know - this makes sense.

CHRIS THOMPSON
What makes sense?

Elon shows them the laptop data. Griffin and Chris both look.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
Where did you get this?

ELON MUSK
I made it.

ROCKET SPECS -- The height of each level of atmosphere has a velocity and thrust number associated with a rocket launch.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
How are Russians able to make something so much cheaper than Americans? It's not like we buy Russian cars, fly Russian planes or use Russian kitchen appliances. They just go and build them.

SPREADSHEET -- costs associated with each rocket component. It's detailed on a massive scale.

CHRIS THOMPSON
Incredible. I got an engine guy, Tom Mueller, would kill to see this.

ELON MUSK
The answer to this problem was obvious from the start. I just wasn't asking the simple, right question. I kept asking, "Where do we find a rocket?"

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
But the real question is -

ELON MUSK
- "How do we get mankind to Mars?"

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
The answer?

ELON MUSK
We make the rockets ourselves. Not just a rocket. Our own space company.

The impact of that statement hangs in the air. Chris and Griffin look to Kimbal, who bows out.

KIMBAL MUSK
Don't look at me. I know my brother. I knew he was going there.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
You'll need way more than \$20 million.

ELON MUSK
I'm aware, Michael.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

I don't think you are. 50 years.
Hundreds of billions of dollars.
Entire nations. The smartest men
and women in the history of space.
None of them could get to Mars.

ELON MUSK

They didn't have this spreadsheet.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

It's not funny. I was onboard to
launch a rocket for philanthropy in
hopes of increasing NASA's budget,
not to compete against them.

ELON MUSK

You think I prefer this way. It's
NASA! I've had Neil Armstrong posters
on my wall since I was a kid and
today kids have that same poster -
because people forgot how to have
big dreams. Or take big risks.

Elon stares at Chris as if to say, "Are you on board?"

CHRIS THOMPSON

Only if the Missus approves.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

Take some free advice: Don't do this.
Go live the rest of your life like a
king instead. Don't be like every
other rich schmuck who lost his entire
fortune in space. You will fail.

ELON MUSK

You're probably right. Failure is
the highest probable outcome...

Elon sits back down. *Is he that easily defeated?*

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

...I'm gonna do it anyway.

Elon sips his whiskey - his confidence never stronger.

INT. MUSK CONDO, NEVADA'S BEDROOM, PALO ALTO - AFTERNOON

Elon and Justine both kiss Nevada goodnight, now asleep in
his crib. Elon caresses his son's cheek. A proud father.

LATER -- Justine cleans up the house. She sees Elon staring
into nothingness, half watching TV, half thinking.

JUSTINE

You're off in 'Musk Land' again.
What are you thinking about? E?

ON TV -- GM debuts EV-1, the first PRODUCTION ELECTRIC CAR.
They open the hood to showcase the ultracapacitor battery.

ELON MUSK
Electric cars. I think about them
all the time. Do you?

JUSTINE
No. I don't.

ELON MUSK
You should. It's important that we
make the switch to renewable energy.

JUSTINE
How about one crazy idea at a time?
(she heads upstairs)
Okay, nap time's over. You coming,
Elon? Or is it Elton now?

Elon's confused. OFF SCREEN she turns the sound system on.

NEVADA'S ROOM -- Justine walks in to check on Nevada. She
rustles his tummy, but he doesn't wake up yet.

DOWNSTAIRS -- Elon finally turns off the TV, ready to help
and hears the song she picked: Rocket Man by ELTON JOHN.

ELON MUSK
You're a riot, J!

NEVADA'S ROOM -- We look at Justine as she nudges her baby.

JUSTINE
Nevada? Wake up...Baby?

Then horror strikes across her face. Something is very wrong.

DOWNSTAIRS -- Elon slowly gets off the couch when he hears -

JUSTINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Elon!!!!

Her screams LAUNCH Elon up the stairs to the rescue.

INT. PALO ALTO HOSPITAL, ICU HALLWAY - NIGHT

Elon has been up for days as he digests what the DOCTOR says.

DR. ADLER
There's been no brain activity in 3
days. SIDS is a terrible condition.
There's just nothing more we can do.

NEVADA'S ICU ROOM -- Justine can't move from the bed. At 10
weeks old, her baby is attached to a ventilator. Elon enters.

Elon's eyes swell with pain. He looks at his son and kisses
him for the last time. It tortures him to have to guide
Justine away from Nevada. She SCREAMS in agony for her baby.

Elon needs to restrain her so the doctors can shut down the
ventilator. As it's shut down, Elon bursts into an endless
sob with her. Two parents lose a child. Inconsolable pain.

EXT. CEMETERY, NEVADA'S FUNERAL - DAY

A private gathering. Justine cries as hard as before. She hangs on Elon. He stays strong for her, holding back some tears, learning to swallow his pain.

INT. MUSK CONDO, PALO ALTO - EVENING

Elon greets guests giving their condolences. Sadness fills every part of this condo.

LATER, BACK PATIO -- Open design with a great view. Elon finds Justine. He'll say anything to distract her heartbreak.

ELON MUSK

The patio needs a cobblestone trim.
What do you think? Maybe grey or -

Justine isn't listening. She fidgets with his large TELESCOPE. Elon adjusts the telescope's position for her.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Look at it now.

Justine puts her eye to the telescope.

TELESCOPE -- It's a view of Mars, millions of miles away. Red glow. The detail is vivid - you can even see ridges.

JUSTINE

It's beautiful. What's it like there?

ELON MUSK

Well, the gravity is 1/3 of ours.

EXT. MARS - DAY (ELON'S VISION)

A cold, red desert with valleys and mountains.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)

The average temperature is minus 80 degrees. Atmosphere is 95% carbon dioxide. It's red because of the iron oxide on its surface.

A CAPSULE lands. Elon steps out.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Getting there would only take about 80 days when the planets align - happens once every 26 months.

BACK TO PATIO:

Elon looks up at Mars. So far away to him. And yet not.

JUSTINE

Do you want to die on Mars?

ELON MUSK

Not on impact.

She chuckles sadly. Only one thought comes to Elon's mind.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I love you.

She smiles but she's too hurt to let go of her pain.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
We'll get through this, J. In a long enough timeline everything goes back to normal. Just takes time. That's all. Just time.

JUSTINE
It will never go back to normal.

ELON MUSK
Then we make new. All of it. Everything. It will get better. I promise you that. It will.

She HUGS him, cries. He lets her, silently holding her tight.

LATER, ELON'S OFFICE -- Elon tries to work on his rocket. He reaches for a pen and catches a glimpse of a PHOTO OF NEVADA on his desk. His hardened exterior crumbles as he's overcome with grief, crying uncontrollably into the photo.

FADE OUT:

INT./EXT. SAN JOSE HIGHWAYS - DAY

Months have now passed. Elon looks a little more filled out as he cruises in his McLaren. He heads toward Silicon Valley.

INT. EBAY H.Q., SAN JOSE, CA - DAY

Peter and the Paypal board take pictures with Ebay's board.

CNN REPORTER (O.S.)
Paypal CEO Peter Thiel announced today that Ebay has purchased the internet bank for \$1.5 billion.

OFF TO THE SIDE -- Elon, not allowed in the photo.

CNN REPORTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
\$180 million going to former CEO Elon Musk, the leading shareholder.

Friend and former Ebay co-founder JEFF SKOLL, 37, joins him.

JEFF SKOLL
Remember when they were our companies?
You won't miss it. Trust me.

ELON MUSK
I already moved on to the next thing.

JEFF SKOLL
Good for you, pal. So what is it?

ELON MUSK
I'm going to Mars.

Jeff DROPS his drink. Elon leaves him on that note.

INT./EXT. HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA - DAY

The McLaren races down the coast into an industrial section.

CHRIS THOMPSON (O.S.)
Tom Mueller did things at TRW that they didn't like, but you would.

INT. INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOP - DAY

TOM MUELLER, 30s, an engineering boy scout, finishes a bolt on a makeshift engine. He runs to his bunker. The engine FIRES, roasting the test bed underneath.

CHRIS THOMPSON (O.S.)
He built an 80 pound liquid engine that produced 13,000 lbs of force -

LATER -- Tom lifts the engine, finishing the story to Elon.

TOM MUELLER
- Or simply put the world's largest amateur liquid rocket.

ELON MUSK
Ever work on anything bigger?

TOM MUELLER
I developed engines for Delta IV but they went in "another direction."
That's why I'm here. I'd rather do it all myself. At least I'd use them.

ELON MUSK
Make an engine for me. I'll use it.

TOM MUELLER
And where's my engine going?

ELON MUSK
Mars.

Tom DROPS the engine.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Why do people keep dropping things when I say that?

TOM MUELLER
I don't think I can make that.

ELON MUSK
Yes, you can. Can you get into LEO?

TOM MUELLER
Yes. Absolutely.

ELON MUSK
 Then what's the difference? Same
 parts. It's just farther away. Decide
 if you're up for this, then call me.

Elon walks away. Tom has to shout at him.

TOM MUELLER
 Where's your company located?

ELON MUSK
 I'm working on it.

EXT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Elon brings Justine, sporting a brand new baby bump, to their beautiful new \$17 million Bel Air Mansion. It's a palace.

INT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Completely empty. Hobbes excitedly runs throughout the house.

ELON MUSK
 Yea, all new smells buddy.
 (to Justine)
 You like it, baby?

She's filled with energy looking at the elegance of the house, but mostly at the effort Elon is putting in. She smiles.

JUSTINE
 I love it. You did good.

EXT. FACTORY DISTRICT, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Elon admires an empty white factory in a business district.

CHYRON: June, 2002. El Segundo, CA.

ELON MUSK
 It was an old shipping factory.

TOM MUELLER
 It's definitely old...

ELON MUSK
 Vision, Tom. Have vision.

Tom is less optimistic. As they walk in...

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

...they are wearing different clothes. Two months later and every inch of the interior has a fresh WHITE epoxy coat.

Construction outlines have begun on several areas. Drills, hammers, saws - a cacaphony of progress...and NOISE.

INT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - DAY

The construction NOISE continues in the Musk's new house. Justine, now with a larger baby bump, grows irritated listening to it while she watches TV. She MUTES it.

Elon does a walkthrough with crew members into the living room. He stops walking when he sees that HE'S ON TV.

ELON MUSK
What are you watching?

Justine UNMUTES the TV.

CNN REPORT: CNN interviews tech expert MIKE MUSGRAVE. In the corner of the frame is video of Elon interviewed at SpaceX.

CNN REPORTER
What do you think of Elon's announcement that he's leaving Silicon Valley to send humans to Mars?

MIKE MUSGRAVE
We call guys like him "Thrillionaires" since they spend their tech fortunes on high risk ventures. I don't get this move at all.

Justine MUTES the TV again.

JUSTINE
They are on CNN laughing at you.

ELON MUSK
I don't care what anyone thinks.

JUSTINE
I can see that...Are they right?
Are we going to lose everything?

ELON MUSK
No. I'm right. I promise.
(holds her hand)
I need you behind me, J.

Before she decides that, there's a KNOCK at the entrance.

FRONT ENTRANCE -- It's missing the front door. Kimbal walks right in, KNOCKING on a nearby wall. He finds them.

KIMBAL MUSK
Woah, this place is a fucking mess.

JUSTINE
Welcome to our new life.

KIMBAL MUSK
Not gonna touch that. E, I wanna show you something I made for you.

Kimbal puts in a DVD. Elon sits next to Justine, who at the moment doesn't want to be touched. Kimbal hits PLAY.

ARCHIVE VIDEO: It's a collage of every recorded space ship and rocket crash ever. Apollo II. Challenger. You name it.

ELON MUSK
You do understand I wont be in the rocket?

Another rocket goes up and EXPLODES!

KIMBAL MUSK
So? This is what happens to rockets.
They explode. They fail.

ELON MUSK
They soar. They go to other planets!
I'm gonna fly to outer space. You have to admit, this is exciting.

KIMBAL MUSK
Yea, it is kinda awesome.
(then)
Wait - stop! Don't do that. I'm serious. The odds are against you.

ELON MUSK
When something is important enough, you do it even if the odds aren't in your favor. This is important enough.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - MORNING

Gwynne Shotwell, a blonde bulldozer in the middle of her rising career, stares at the outside of this crummy factory.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Trucks are pulled inside to deliver office supplies. Elon helps unload. He's joined by familiar faces, Chris and Tom, and two others, HANS and TIM - we'll meet later.

Chris half gestures to Elon, finding a moment to speak up.

ELON MUSK
Out with it, Chris.

CHRIS THOMPSON
Can we change some of the designs?
Nothing sucks the fun out of working in space like using knobs and dials made for a 60's laundromat.

ELON MUSK
Do we need any of it?

Tim grabs a piece of furniture and pipes in.

TIM BUZZA
Nope!

ELON MUSK

I don't care how it's been done anywhere. Think for yourself. If we don't need it, we get rid of it.

CHRIS THOMPSON

Thank you, Elon!

Elon walks away to greet Gwynne, who enters the front gate.

ELON MUSK

You're right on time. Hans raves about you: "If anyone can sell your rocket, it's Gwynne Shotwell" ...Ahh, I like him. Come. Right this way.

INT. SPACEX, OFFICE, EL SEGUNDO - MORNING

The office is completely empty, except for their two chairs.

ELON MUSK

How much did Hans tell you about us?

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

Only the sound bite on Mars. I haven't heard about your market entry.

ELON MUSK

Our initial goal will be to provide transportation services for small satellites to LEO.

(explains)

We can control the market if we launch cheaply, launch regularly, and launch reliably. Basically become -

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

- The Southwest of space?

ELON MUSK

Cheap, reliable, and never out of the sky!

Elon's having fun, but Gwynne is nonplussed. He straightens.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

What's it...

ELON MUSK

...Pay? Shit. I want as much money invested in the company. But every employee gets stock options. So every member stands to become a millionaire.

Gwynne ponders his salesman routine up and down.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

The infrastructure here won't pass FAA regulations. We're grossly understocked on supplies, equipment -

ELON MUSK

- Relax. We'll fix it. That's what I'm here for.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

How do you even know how to build a rocket?

ELON MUSK

I read a lot of books...Now, why did you want to meet me?

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

I've been doing this for 15 years and I'm sick of how this business drags its feet. I'm desperate to explore outer space. I wanted to know if you were the real deal.

ELON MUSK

I am going to Mars. With or without you. I'd prefer with. Interested?

INT. SPACEX, OFFICE, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Elon walks with Gwynne in tow. He reads an email on his new BLACKBERRY; it will be attached to his hand from now on.

His young assistant, MARY BETH, hands him a Diet Coke. She follows him like his shadow. Her anxiety powers her through every task. This girl never sits still.

ELON MUSK

MB, book a visit to Vandenberg.
We're gonna need a launch site.

CONFERENCE ROOM -- The other five employees chit chat waiting for Elon. Still no chairs. Elon enters with Gwynne and MB.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Everyone, this is #7, Gwynne Shotwell, our new VP of Business Development. She moonlights as an engineer.

Gwynne waves, then falls back in line.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Welcome to Space Exploration Technologies. SpaceX for short. So I know we're all here because we want to go to Mars. But we can't think about Mars until we first launch a rocket to LEO.

He writes on the board behind him. 'Step 1, LEO'.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Step 1 - we build a rocket. Falcon 1 will be a clean sheet design. All ideas are welcome. Best one wins, no matter who says it. Hopefully, I do.

TIM BUZZA, class clown, raises his hand while chewing gum.

TIM BUZZA
How many launch attempts do we got?

ELON MUSK
Tim Buzz, Boeing's lead rocket tester
and now our lead rocket tester.
Please say your name and title when
it's your turn to talk, thank you.

The team looks at each other. *Is this high school?*

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
To answer your question, we have
enough money for 3, maybe 4 tries.
Probably 3.

He thinks on it. Writes '3' on the board with optimism.

CHRIS THOMPSON
(raising hand too)
Chris Thompson, VP of Operations.
Who's our Chief Engineer?

ELON MUSK
We weren't able to lure someone I
felt comfortable with so...
(raises hand)
Elon Musk, CEO and Chief Engineer.

They tease him with a fake clap. Elon enjoys this group.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Okay, fuck you guys. Step 2 - Cost.

Elon writes down 'Step 2, COST' and then the 5 items below.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
5 things make launches expensive:
Overhead. Engines. Structure.
Avionics. And Launch Operations.
(beat)
We're going to make all that shit
cheaper, faster, and better.

EXT. STANFORD CAMPUS - DAY

Elon shakes hands and takes pictures with graduates. The excitement in these young minds is overwhelming.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
That means cheaper employees. Stalk
campuses. Get graduates. Get interns.

INT. BOEING, CAFETERIA - DAY

Tim with his old buddies, other 80s loving anti-authority rocket testers. Tim pulls out a SpaceX pamphlet and slides it on the table like it's drugs.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)

Your friends, ex-colleagues, anyone fed up with bureaucracies. If they're bored, they're perfect. Steal 'em.

EXT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Parked outside is an 18 WHEEL TRAILER. Elon hops out.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)

Cheaper equipment. If it costs a lot, try auto parts stores for valves, computer stores for circuitry, etc.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Meet Mobile Mission Control. We won't have 300 people stand around a launch pad for fucking weeks during prep. 12 go in this. The rest stay home.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - MONTHS LATER

Workers arrange machines and desks where nothing separates departments, a complete open floor design.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)

Faster workflow. In Silicon Valley we called it Vertical Integration.

Engineers and welders work on one rocket fuel casing together.

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Every department works side by side. Scientists think, welders weld, and they'll talk.

EXT. MCGREGOR AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS - DAY

Tim and Tom are at an abandoned concrete plot as wide as a football field. They stare at the rusted steel test facility.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)

Cheaper Testing. Find other people's used stuff. If it works, who cares.

TIM BUZZA

Call Elon. And get a tetanus shot.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Pearl Jam blasts in the factory. At a workbench, Chris looks in a microscope. He presses a button on a machine. SPARKS!

ELON MUSK (O.S.)

Faster decisions. No paperwork or reports. You don't need babysitters. Do what you think is best. Need something? Speak up.

CHRIS THOMPSON

Elon?! Micronozzle is shot. Gonna cost \$75,000 for it.

30 feet away, despite wearing an Italian blazer, Elon is filthy, helping the welders. He trusts Chris' word.

ELON MUSK
Can you get it down to \$65,000?

CHRIS THOMPSON
I can do that. Approved?

ELON MUSK
Okay!

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It will be hard work. The hardest of your life.

INT. MUSK HOME, BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Justine sits at the dinner table with two plates, a 3 course meal and an empty chair across from her.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
A lot of missed dinners at home.

LATER, BEDROOM -- Justine is already asleep. TWIN CRIBS are inside their bedroom. Elon enters and quietly checks on the babies before getting into bed. He looks at the time - 1:30am.

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
But we will succeed. Believe it.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Elon gives Kimbal a guided tour. Kimbal's jaw drops.

BIRD'S EYE POV -- In 2 years, SpaceX is now a rocket producing revolution. 200 employees. 3D models. Engine designs. Capsule designs. Young minds building things in every corner. The Falcon 1 casing is finally visible. Truly unbelievable.

ELON MUSK
You have to admit, this is exciting.

KIMBAL MUSK
Yea, it is kinda awesome.

PRELAP: The thunderous ROAR of a rocket engine.

EXT. MCGREGOR AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS - DAY

TIGHT ON AN ENGINE FIRING! A Merlin Stage 1 booster engine is hooked up to a horizontal test stand. It fires 3 seconds of steel-melting, blue heat before shutting off.

Elon excitedly steps out from a small dirt bunker with D.O.D. Consultant, GENERAL PETE WORDEN, 50's. Worden is that heroic military hero you want your kids to look up to.

ELON MUSK
It's incredible, isn't it!? Tom developed a unique pintle injection thrust design, that's really quite -

GENERAL WORDEN

- Gwynne said you're a talker. Tell me, what's our launch timeline?

ELON MUSK

We've been wet testing for about 6 months now so I'm guessing...March? What's the payload we're launching?

GENERAL WORDEN

It's classified.

ELON MUSK

Right, D.O.D. I always forget.

Worden wanders around, observing the now partially upgraded testing grounds. The rust is gone. Everything is operational.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Better than a trip to NASA, right?

GENERAL WORDEN

The word at NASA is you're one of these Silicon Valley "Thrillionaires" spending his dot com money on hobbies. Today it's rockets. Sooner or later, you'll get bored...and quit.

ELON MUSK

NASA's scared. Just like DARPA underwrote the cost for the internet before dot com guys like me improved it, NASA took on the initial cost of space. Now it's up to the private sector, like me again, to take over and improve space. Don't you agree?

Worden's military stare is hard to read. Did Elon just insult him? Worden waits a beat as he studies Merlin one last time.

GENERAL WORDEN

NASA is filled with dinosaurs. If NASA, Boeing, and Lockheed don't start thinking like you - simple, cheap - they'll be left behind.

LATER -- Worden leaves in a government sedan, picking up a dust trail. Elon watches them go; Tom meets him, elated.

TOM MUELLER

It's really happening, isn't it? Our first customer. This is awesome!

ELON MUSK

Tom, I have no idea why you're excited. Merlin burned for 3 seconds. It needs to burn for 180 seconds or there is no fucking launch. You're on the critical path to my success.

That pressure terrifies Tom. Elon harnesses that fear.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 I believe in you. That's why I hired you. Can you make this work?

TOM MUELLER
 Yes. Yes, I can make this work.

ELON MUSK
 Good. I'll give you whatever you need, you say the word. But it's on you now. Don't fuck this up.

INT. MUSK HOME, ELON'S OFFICE, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Elon works on launch trajectories at his desk. He's intensely focused. Justine holds one of the twins, now 1, and enters.

JUSTINE
 Hey, Genius! Come play with us.

ELON MUSK
 Sorry, J. I'm trying to figure out a launch site on our budget

Justine encroaches Elon's space using her boy as a prop.

JUSTINE
 Are you gonna say "no" to this face?

Elon is face to face with his son, who has snot crusted on his nose and PB&J still left on his lips and cheeks.

ELON MUSK
 It's easier than you think.

Elon puckers for a kiss. The boy turns his head away. No!

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 No? No?! Why you little -

Elon rips him out of Justine's hands and acts like he's gonna throw him before they all giggle and run to the couch.

INT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Elon and the twins play on the couch. He's rolling around, picking them up in the air, playing peek-a-boo. Justine is in the middle of it, but mostly sits and watches, happy.

Elon sees her laptop and notes on the kitchen table.

ELON MUSK
 Blogging or real writing?

JUSTINE
 Both. But it's going well.

ELON MUSK
 As long as you finish it - whatever gets you working - is great! Always believe in what you're doing. I do.

Justine rests her head on his shoulder.

LATER, FRONT ENTRANCE

Elon kisses Justine goodbye and rolls his suitcase out first before exiting.

LATER, KITCHEN TABLE -- Justine opens a new entry in her blog. Previous articles include, "The Motley Crew" & "The Billionaire's Wife". We HEAR her as she types.

*JUSTINE (V.O.)
E's left to prepare his rocket site.*

TIGHT ON A MERCATOR PROJECTOR:

Listing every launch site in the world. Only 2 are near SpaceX: Vandenberg Air Force Base, within a 30 mile drive;

*JUSTINE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Vandenberg delayed SpaceX by a year
to launch the retiring Titan IV.*

And A TINY ISLAND, 2000 miles west of Hawaii.

*JUSTINE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Needless to say, Elon doesn't wait.*

EXT. KWAJALEIN ISLAND - DAY

Beautiful tree tops cover the small tropical islands. This looks like paradise. *Looks.*

CHYRON: The Kwajalein Atoll. Marshall Islands.

*JUSTINE (V.O.)
The U.S. Army conducted missile tests
on Kwaj for decades. The only way
there is either boat or jet.*

Like troops sent to Vietnam, BOATS ferry cargo and crew to the main island. They reach land.

Teams exit with their supplies and trudge through the trees until they reach the MAIN LAUNCH SITE, a 7 acre open grass field with two dilapidated bunkers. This is no Pad 39a.

Tim drops his stuff and takes one look around.

TIM BUZZA
This is gonna fucking suck.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - LATER

Dark clouds and thunderous rain blast the island sideways.

*JUSTINE (V.O.)
There is periodic heavy rain
throughout the day and the wind is
so strong it blows the rain sideways.*

INT. KWAJALEIN, BARRACKS - NIGHT

The team shivers in these old army barracks. Rain pelts the metal walls with force and vigor - then it STOPS.

JUSTINE (V.O.)
*Sometimes the rain stops instantly.
 In minutes, the sun returns to dry
 you out at a blistering 98 degrees
 with 75% humidity.*

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Elon and the team sweat like dogs in the sweltering sun as they construct the launch pad. An empty rocket shell is moved with logs, like stones were for the pyramids.

INT. KWAJALEIN, MACHINE SHOP - DAY

Rain returns to blast away as the rocket equipment is unpacked in the shop. Elon observes some of Tim's items.

ELON MUSK
 Does that calculate weight to transfer
 ratios? Can you teach me how it works?

TIM BUZZA
 Sure. I have time for that. While
 I'm at it, why don't I just teach
 you how to do my whole fucking job?

ELON MUSK
 Really?! That would be great!

Elon's genuine excitement defeats Tim's sarcasm.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The LAUNCH PAD is finally installed. A working Falcon rocket stands on the tower. Every part is tested thoroughly.

INT. SPACEX, OFFICE, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Gwynne oversees the Mission Control team. They confirm each test protocol. She gets the final launch approvals. INTERCUT -

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
 Green light on our end, Kwaj. Our
 bird is ready to soar.

Elon glows with pride. They are ready. He radios back.

ELON MUSK
 Copy that, H.Q.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The birds chirp. The sun shines. Palm trees wave.

The FALCON 1 rocket stands only 70 feet but on this small island it looks massive. Workers fuel it with Liquid Oxygen.

CHYRON: March 24th, 2006. Falcon 1, Test #1.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

A makeshift Mission Control is set up for the on-site operators. Operators do final pre-tests.

TOM MUELLER
Go for precheck.

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

The trailer is transformed into a row of computers against one wall. Several monitors track the flight.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL
Falcon 1, you are go for precheck.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Elon arrives by helicopter in a t-shirt and shorts. As he steps onto the small island, he admires his masterpiece.

ELON MUSK
You are the most beautiful thing I have ever seen in my life.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

The other employees listen to the launch through the speakers.

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

Gwynne, Chris, and Hans at their stations. Everyone has headsets. On a monitor, they see the rocket standing tall.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
She's perfect.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Elon is ushered away as the crew finishes tightening the bolts. The fuel pump is pulled away from the rocket.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon enters, relaxed, but excited. Worden and DARPA officers watch on TV monitors. Worden is skeptical.

ELON MUSK
Better than a trip to NASA yet?

GENERAL WORDEN
We'll see, Musk.

Elon plays an animation of the flight path on TV monitors.

ELON MUSK
I had this made for you guys.

CGI ANIMATION -- (all over techno music)

Falcon 1 launches up until trajectory moves sideways, accelerating to gain ORBITAL VELOCITY (Max Q). The jetstream matches the curved "X" in SpaceX's logo.

At Max Q it escapes gravity to enter LOW EARTH ORBIT (LEO).

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We'll reach the end of Stage 1 at
6,850 mph. Stage 2 could reach a
Max Q of 17,000 mph.

In LEO, the first section (Stage 1) detaches. The second section (Stage 2) refires and stays in orbit before releasing the top portion (Fairing) with the cargo (Payload).

ANIMATION ENDS. Mission Control gives Elon the "go".

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
(into com)
H.Q., we are go for launch.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Copy that. *Falcon 1 fires in 5...4...*

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The deluge FLOODS the stand.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
...3...2....1....*launch*.

Falcon 1 FIRES! The first rocket in SpaceX's history launches.

The tether from the launch tower rips away as Falcon 1 climbs into the heavens. The ROAR of the engine shakes the trees.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We have lift off. *Falcon 1 is airborn*.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon watches in wonder as Falcon 1 SOARS INTO THE CLOUDS.

ELON MUSK
It's really happening...

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Thrust at 50,000 lbs.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Falcon 1 is leaving Earth in its wake. Then suddenly, a FIRE on the side of the Stage 1 engine!

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Control, we have a Stage 1 breach!

Falcon 1 RIPS APART! The exposed engines collide and EXPLODE! A massive fireball of debris falls down on the launch site.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon on the com unit, panicked. He watches the debris fall.

ELON MUSK

Everyone evacuate the area!

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Workers run as the fiery debris crashes everywhere, including the ocean. Tim and others jump into the water after it.

TIM BUZZA

Grab the panels! Grab the guidance systems! Let's move!

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Silence on the coms.

ELON MUSK

Somebody talk to me - What's happening out there? Who's safe?

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The site is a wreck, but the crisis is over. Tim checks in.

TIM BUZZA

We're okay. We made it.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, EL SEGUNDO - DAY

Gwynne listens in and hits the com.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

Where's the payload?

EXT. KWAJALEIN, MACHINE SHOP - DAY

The sky is empty....Birds chirp again....Then the PAYLOAD SMASHES through the roof.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon waits to hear something from someone.

TIM BUZZA (O.S.)

Now we made it.

Elon shuts off the com. He then addresses the room.

ELON MUSK

It's perhaps worth noting that those launch companies that succeeded also took their lumps along the way. Only 5 of the first 9 Pegasus launches succeeded. 3 of 5 for Ariane; 9 of 20 for Atlas; 9 of 21 for Soyuz; Failure is how we learn.

Worden and DARPA aren't loving it. Elon squeezes by to leave.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Sorry about your stuff. Excuse me.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Elon's boat reaches the main island. He quickly scampers to see. Everything is destroyed. The SpaceX logo on the Payload MELTS from the fire in the machine shop.

Tom and Tim are covered in soot, clothes a mess. Tim finds Elon, hands him a beer. Tom drinks quietly beside them both.

TIM BUZZA
We just launched a rocket.

ELON MUSK
We just crashed a rocket.

TIM BUZZA
Crashed, right, of course. Crashed.

Elon hasn't decided if he'll kill them for celebrating, yet.

ELON MUSK
You're still on my critical path.

TOM MUELLER
I know...

Elon cracks open his beer and smiles. He lives for this stuff.

ELON MUSK
We just launched a rocket.

INT. AVIATION CONFERENCE AFTER PARTY, PALO ALTO - NIGHT

A tradeshow-like atmosphere. The biggest tech geeks around mingle on a patio with trophy wives, or no wives at all. It's rather droll to consider this a party.

Elon sends Justine a quick text: "*Write, damn you! This is my motivational message :-)*"

She writes back: "*Ah. The power of love. Foiled again!*"

Elon finds his friend, LARRY PAGE, a fellow dorky, tech genius. If his name seems familiar, it's because that dork created some company called Google.

ELON MUSK
This is Palo Alto's idea of a party?

LARRY PAGE
Rich and successful? Yes. But celebrities we are not, my friend.

LATER, PRIVATE CORNER -- Elon geeks out with Larry.

ELON MUSK
The indefinite extension of the Fossil Fuels era is the dumbest experiment in the history of our planet.

Overhearing them is JB STRAUBEL, a young, shy genius with no social skills. He's fixated on their conversation.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
The greater the change to the chemical composition of our oceans and atmospheres -

JB STRAUBEL
- due to increased carbon emissions.

Elon turns to see JB, this stranger, on his page.

ELON MUSK
Exactly... The greater the long-term effect will be. Given that at some point they'll run out anyway, why run this crazy experiment to see how bad it'll be?

LARRY PAGE
On that fun note, I need a drink.

Larry exits as JB makes his move towards Elon.

JB STRAUBEL
I couldn't agree more about switching to renewable energy source.
(closes in)
You ever think about electric cars?

ELON MUSK
You could say that.

EXT. AVIATION CONFERENCE, PARKING LOT - LATER

Elon waits by JB's car. JB plays him a video on his laptop.

ARCHIVAL NEWS VIDEO: At a city junkyard, a row of EV-1's are lined up near a MACHINE PRESS.

JB STRAUBEL (O.S.)
The EV-1. After restrictions on oil were lifted, GM immediately recalled the electric car for destruction.

EV-1 owners stand by the press holding a candlelight vigil.

JB STRAUBEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
When do you ever see people hold a candlelight vigil for a product?

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
Especially for a GM product.

An EV-1 is moved onto a machine press. SMASH! It's flattened.

BACK TO PARKING LOT:

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
What kind of battery did it have?
Those weren't ultracapacitors.

JB hands a small lithium BATTERY to Elon.

JB STRAUBEL
18650 Lithium Ion. String together enough batteries and you could power a car farther than gas ever could.

ELON MUSK
Now that's a reason to buy an electric car. Is somebody making one?

JB STRAUBEL
Tesla Motors. 3 engineers out in Menlo. They're smart. But need money and a battery. Doing a Series A now.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - DAY

Elon still holds the battery. He enters "Musk Land."

"MUSK LAND": *Thousands of batteries string together in mid-air. A bare chassis appears, the batteries lay in the middle. Mathematical formulas float in the air - DRAG, TORQUE, KWH/HR.*

ELON MUSK
1,000 miles on a single charge...

MB is constantly emailing as Elon speaks out of nowhere.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Electric cars. I think about them all the time. Do you?

She snaps to attention to answer, jittery from anxiety.

MARY BETH
I haven't. I will! I saw JB's email;
I swear I read it -

ELON MUSK
- MB? Are you afraid of me?

MARY BETH
Yes? I mean...
(reluctantly honest)
...Yes.

INT. TESLA, OFFICE, MENLO PARK - DAY

MARTIN EBERHARD, 30s, leads the 3 man pitch to Elon and JB in a small, shitty office. He is overly cocky, but brilliant.

MARTIN EBERHARD
Your \$7 million investment for a Tesla prototype will help humanity switch to renewable energy sources.

Elon skims their business plan. The car design looks like something from The Jetsons. Unimpressed, he hands it to JB. Elon grills Martin, not wanting to waste his money.

ELON MUSK

Don't exaggerate. This buys maybe 2 mules. Manufacturing strategy?

MARTIN EBERHARD

We already have a deal with Lotus on the chassis and Gage licensed us his power train amongst other things. We'll be outsourcing most parts.

JB marks up their business plan. It has highlights like 0-60 in 3.9 seconds; 300 mile range; world class handling.

ELON MUSK

JB runs the battery department. Or no deal. Trust me, you'll thank me.

That surprised them. Martin and his team are reticent.

MARTIN EBERHARD

You see, the thing is we want someone who sees our vision, our way -

ELON MUSK

- I know you're worried about control, Martin. I've been there. I'm prepping a launch. I've got twin toddlers. I don't have extra time to fly here every week. Now I'm making an electric car. So either I invest in you or I invest in your future competitor.

Marc and Ian look to Martin. Martin shake's Elon's hand.

INT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Justine cooks a large feast. The dining room is set for 15 people. Elon enters the front door with his carry-on. He drops it, walks to the fridge to grab a Diet Coke.

ELON MUSK

Hi. Going to the office. Bye.

JUSTINE

No. Not bye. It's Thanksgiving.

ELON MUSK

It's a turkey dinner for people who take days off. I don't take days off. I'm the Chief Engineer of a space company preparing for a launch.

JUSTINE

You're Chief Engineer every day. Today you're Mr. Justine Musk.

Getting through to him is infuriating. Then she blurts out.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

The IVF worked! Again!

ELON MUSK
What?! You're pregnant!?

He drops his bag and erupts in joy, kissing his amazing wife.

INT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - AFTERNOON

The dining hall is fit for a presidential banquet as it houses Elon and Justine's extended family. They drink, laugh, eat, horse around, try and stop Hobbes from eating everything.

Justine wheels in the twins, who wave, to much coo-cooing.

JUSTINE
Are you boys saying 'Hi'? Are you?

Elon doesn't notice, typing on his phone. She glares at him. Kimbal cuts the tension and SLAPS Elon's phone from his hands.

KIMBAL MUSK
So Tesla? That's...additive.

JUSTINE
Yes, it is. He's lead investor, chairman, and designer. But from a distance, of course.

The sass in her voice is thick. She and Kimbal gang up as Elon picks up one of the twins and holds him as a buffer.

ELON MUSK
So I'll be a little busier. I'm growing my family and my businesses.
(beat)
This is all part of the same Master Plan since I was 10 - Human Survival.

Kimbal sees the plush IRON MAN doll Elon's son holds.

KIMBAL MUSK
You know you can't ever actually be Iron Man, right? Cuz he's not real.

ELON MUSK
I don't think anybody could really be Iron Man. The feet propulsion isn't feasible to control. He'd tear his own legs off. Though, I suppose theoretically you could design -

KIMBAL MUSK
- I'm gonna shove a Merlin 1-B class engine thing up your ass if you don't say to me that you know you can't be the fictional superhero Iron Man.

Kimbal waits. Elon changes subjects to avoid answering.

ELON MUSK
K, I've been wanting to do clean energy since Stanford.

KIMBAL MUSK
2 days at Stanford. 2 days! If GM failed to do it, how can you?

ELON MUSK
Maybe I can't. So what? It's okay to fail. Companies fail all the time.
As long as I try.
(explains)
At its core, what's in an electric car? Batteries. Drive electronics.
Electric motor. Silicon Valley skills, not Detroit skills. I know that.

JUSTINE
And I know you. Once someone does their job wrong, you'll fire them and take over. Am I wrong?

ELON MUSK
J, I promise you I don't want to be CEO of two companies and I won't be. I'm not crazy.

KIMBAL MUSK
You know Nikola Tesla went crazy.

ELON MUSK
A new idea is crazy. Until it's not.

INT. NASA HQ, CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Elon sits with BURT RUTAN, BOB BIGELOW, and a few other NAMES around a conference table. The TV plays a video.

VIDEO -- sequence of clips narrated by Optimus Prime himself, PETER CULLEN. This is all to 80s synthesizer music.

- NASA LOGO; Below that the acronym "C.O.T.S" Commercial Orbital Transportation Services.
- SHUTTLE COLUMBIA FUNERAL; Shuttle Discovery in a hangar.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
After the Columbia tragedy in 2003, President Bush called for the end of the Shuttle Program by 2011.

- I.S.S.; THE MOON; NEIL ARMSTRONG; The words "YOU?"

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's time for a new way. You can be that way. To Space. To the I.S.S. To the Moon. And beyond. C.O.T.S.

VIDEO ENDS -- Standing by the door is new NASA Administrator, MICHAEL GRIFFIN. He's older, greyer. He gets right to it, handing out packets about the program to everyone.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
The COTS partnership provides commercial suppliers - you - a chance
(MORE)

MICHAEL GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
 to work with NASA - us - to develop
 manned and unmanned vessels. We'll
 be giving out 'milestone money' if
 you achieve certain goals.

Jackpot! Elon's brain is already racing. Griffin hands Elon
 his packet. They exchange a nod.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
 But let me be blunt: 'partnership'
 doesn't mean 'helping NASA spend its
 money'. You'll have skin in the game.
 (he stands)
 Read up. I'll be meeting with all
 of you to discuss more. Good luck.
 And welcome to the New Space Race.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE - DAY

Elon drops off a folder to a surprised Worden.

ELON MUSK
 Here's our Falcon 1 report to go
 along with yours. I don't want any
 secrecy between us.

GENERAL WORDEN
 I appreciate that. Ready to quit?

ELON MUSK
 Never. Just getting started.

EXT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

CHYRON: Tesla Factory. San Carlos, CA.

A Tesla prototype, or "MULE", pulls onto a makeshift TRACK
 beside the factory. It looks like a mutated Lotus Elise.
 Not a very pretty thing.

The driver's ready, waits for the signal. It's GREEN. He
 SHOOTS off the line like a Ferrari. Track speedometer clocks
 it: 3.9 seconds.

The mule pulls up to Martin and JB. The driver takes off
 his helmet. It's Elon. The doors don't work so he jumps out.

JB STRAUBEL
 6,381 batteries in that sucker. 230
 miles range. But it can do better.

ELON MUSK
 So fucking cool, man. Just beautiful.

MARTIN EBERHARD
 Thank you. The look is -

ELON MUSK
 - Shit, Martin. It's shit.

Elon inspects it, tucks wires in. He's visually unimpressed.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Martin, it needs to kick ass. The first "cool" electric car.

Elon hands Martin the key. JB and Elon high five.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
We only get one chance at a first impression. If it doesn't delight customers, it's over. So when you modify it, focus on "cool".

Elon waves MB to pull up his McLaren.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I'll send over my designs.

INT. NASA HQ, MICHAEL GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Griffin meets with Elon. They have grown distant since Russia. Griffin reviews a file he has on SpaceX.

ELON MUSK
What's our delivery schedule like if we decide to help you?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
You have until August to deliver your proposal.

ELON MUSK
Proposal? Isn't having a real, functioning rocket company better than any proposal?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
Not if your rocket explodes.

ELON MUSK
Oh, I haven't missed your pessimism. You still don't believe I can do it, huh? You think I'm the rich schmuck?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
You're giving 24 year olds full authority to run around buying cheap makeshift parts for space travel.

ELON MUSK
What difference does it make to you how much the parts cost?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
Cheap shit is cheap for a reason.

ELON MUSK
Legacy parts breed legacy costs so -

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
Elon, I know you believe anything's possible and that's part of your
(MORE)

MICHAEL GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
 "sell". This is the big leagues. You
 don't know all that you don't know.

ELON MUSK
 By definition, does anybody?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
 This gets voted on. That's the
 reality. You remember reality, right?
 That thing that's always in your
 way? So here's some more free advice:
 play by the rules and take all the
 help you can get.

ELON MUSK
 I'll write your proposal, but put us
 in the program. What could possibly
 happen? We fail. And you get to
 stay on your very high horse.
 (beat)
 Or we succeed. And wouldn't that
 just be a real fuckin' tragedy.

CUT TO:

EXT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, CAPE CANAVERAL, FL - DAY

A gathering at an outdoor press conference. SpaceX, RpK, and NASA are on stage. Griffin speaks.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
 We are pleased to announce RpK...and
 SpaceX...are the winners of the COTS
 Phase 1 rocket development contracts.

EXT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, CAPE CANAVERAL, FL - LATER

It's a full cocktail party celebrating the agreement. Guests are primarily comprised of NASA, RpK and SpaceX executives.

Gwynne, the only one still reviewing the COTS agreement, catches Elon by the punch bowl. She's concerned.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
*'NASA will be on site to review and
 approve all design and manufacturing.
 Partial payments of Phase 1's \$278
 million will be due only after each
 of the 19 milestones are met.'*

ELON MUSK
 Half of these we won't get done for
 another 3 years. They are hedging.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
 You knew it was on purpose?

ELON MUSK
 Wasn't it odd to you that Boeing or
 Lockheed didn't compete at all?
 NASA hopes this fails so they can
 stop being pressured to go commercial.

Elon closes the agreement for her and hands Gwynne a drink.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

As long as we get to orbit, none of that matters. They'll have to give us the I.S.S. resupply contract.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

We'll need more machines, more manufacturing, more staff -

ELON MUSK

- Gwynne, that's what I'm here for.

LATER, PAD 39a

Elon wanders alone to see the pad up close. Alone means MB is a step behind him awaiting his every command. The two of them are puny next to the monolithic structure.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Did you know Apollo 11 took off from this very pad? Right at our feet!

OVER SFX: Transmissions from Apollo missions. Elon hears them in his head as he marvels at the pad's place in history.

MARY BETH

I'm sorry Elon, but we need to be in Santa Monica by 8pm.

ELON MUSK

One day. One day I'm going to fly from right here.

MARY BETH

All the way to Mars.

ELON MUSK

That's right. In my own capsule. I need the extra leg room.

Elon walks back the way he came. MB quickly follows.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Come. Let's go change the world.

EXT. DEBUTANTE BALL, BARKER HANGER, SANTA MONICA - DAY

Crowds pour into the hangar. There's a valet for all the luxury cars pulling in.

CNBC REPORTER (V.O.)

After much anticipation, PayPal founder and tech-visionary Elon Musk is finally ready to show off one of his keynote projects...

INT. DEBUTANTE BALL, BARKER HANGER, SANTA MONICA - DUSK

Elon is on stage with a mic, the emcee of the evening.

ELON MUSK
The Tesla Roadster!

FLASH! The Roadster center-stage on full display. It looks magnificent. Cameras, press, and fans come to admire it.

CHYRON: July, 2006. Tesla Roadster Test Drive Event.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Faster than a Ferrari, more efficient
than a Prius.

The buzz is palpable. Stars like SCHWARZENEGGER, DICAPRIO, and SPIELBERG are in attendance. They speak to engineers, the real stars of the night.

LATER, CENTER-STAGE -- Martin takes over to do the Q&A. Elon stands beside him. Martin is mid-answer.

MARTIN EBERHARD
No, the Roadster won't be sold at
dealerships. We sell memberships
for our early customers to keep the
price at a reasonable \$85,000.
(silence, waits)
Are there any more questions?

POTENTIAL CUSTOMER
Elon, when can we go to Mars?

The crowd laughs. Elon chuckles, delighted for the spotlight.

ELON MUSK
As soon as I sell enough cars!

Large APPLAUSE. The crowd loves him.

LATER, OUTSIDE -- Elon finds Martin watching the test drives. A TEST DRIVER opens the passenger door for the next potential customer: ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER. Press surround him.

MARTIN EBERHARD
We need more money for production to
match this kind of order size.

ELON MUSK
That's fine. I'll lead another round.
Are we on schedule to go from
development to production in Q3?

MARTIN EBERHARD
We're not there yet. I need to focus
on fixing the 2 speed transmission.

Schwarzenegger takes up half the car with his frame. The car TAKES OFF! It rockets down the track. Elon is livid.

ELON MUSK
It's an electric car. We can regulate
torque however the fuck we want. It
doesn't need a 2 speed transmission.
(calms himself)
What does the group think?

MARTIN EBERHARD
 It's not a group decision. I'm CEO.
 It's my decision.

Elon bites his tongue for a moment, trying to placate.

ELON MUSK
 It can't affect the \$85,000 price
 tag. And it can't go overbudget.

Griffin ignores him as Schwarzenegger returns from his drive.
 The press awaits a response... Arnold puffs his cigar and
 GRINS. The Roadster is officially approved by The Governator.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 Look at that. We were an idea before.
 Now we have expectations...
 Congratulations, Martin.

MARTIN EBERHARD
 You too, Elon.

The rivalry apparent to both. Elon leaves Martin to take the
 lead in greeting Arnold. The two pose for pictures together.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
*The debut of Elon Musk's Tesla
 Roadster could not have gone better.
 Pre-orders are already sold out with
 shipments expected in mid-2007.*

EXT. BURNING MAN - DAY (2006)

Fire shoots out of a man's mouth as he spits gas through a
 torch. Burning Man brings hordes of free spirits in cars
 to spend a week escaping today's world.

Justine, Elon, and Elon's cousins, PETER and LYNDON RIVE,
 exit their luxury camper van into the MAD MAX style arena.

Kimbal is already there in his own van waiting to greet them.
 He's not really sober at the moment.

KIMBAL MUSK
 Is that Iron Man?! Here??

They give each other a big bear hug and begin the festivities.

LATER, EAST SECTION -- Three 40 foot climbable POLES stand
 for people to conquer their inner warrior. Elon observes.

Peter and Lyndon find him. They grew up in Pretoria too but
 never lost their accents or comfort in hot, dusty climates.

LYNDON RIVE
 I love it here - reminds me of home.

ELON MUSK
 It does...

He looks back at Kimbal leading a large group of dancing,
 cheerful people - including Justine. Elon smiles.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
...and it doesn't.

The sun blinds him, he quickly turns and shades his eyes. Now in his view is a BURNER holding a MAGNIFYING GLASS to sticks. The sticks catch fire. Elon sees something more.

MUSK LAND: The festival VANISHES into acres of flat surface. Solar panels appear. The suns rays visibly draw into them. Equations for Kw; output; panels - increase at absurd rates.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Did you know, if you occupied the same land as a nuclear power plant and replaced it with solar panels, you'd create more energy? With about 200 sq km of solar panels we could power the entire U.S.

LYNDON RIVE
When d'ya start thinkin' about this?

ELON MUSK
Always. Tesla is renewable energy consumption. Solar is renewable energy production. Eventually I want Tesla to be solar powered. With our battery, we could be energy positive.

LYNDON RIVE
Is SpaceX using renewable energy?

ELON MUSK
We can't. The whole Newton's 3rd law thing. We need that reaction.

PETER RIVE
E, you sellin' solar panels now?

ELON MUSK
You don't sell. You lease like a car. Infrastructure would then be in the \$10 million range, I'm guessing.

Elon knows he's onto something. He grows more confident and starts eyeing up one of the poles for his own climb.

LYNDON RIVE
E, give us \$10 million and we'll do it. You don't worry about a thing.

Impulsively, Elon CLIMBS onto a pole. He clenches it for dear life. Unlike other climbers, he shimmies his whole body.

On the ground, Peter HITS his brother in the arm.

PETER RIVE
Don't ask our cousin for money.
Rude sonofabitch sometimes.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
Okay!

Peter and Lyndon look around for where Elon is. Shockingly, they see he's already half-way up! And still climbing higher.

LYNDON RIVE
Okay, what, mate?

ELON MUSK
\$10 million. It's yours.

Elon reaches the top. He sits on the stump, no support protecting him. The crowd CHEERS below. Elon ROARS!

MONTAGE:

MUSIC over a CNN PROFILE PIECE on Elon.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
Elon Musk is quickly becoming our
hope for the future of humanity.

EXT. INC. MAGAZINE PHOTO SHOOT - DAY

Elon poses for a photo shoot. FLASH! The image FREEZES. It becomes the cover of Inc. Entrepreneur of the Year 2007.

ELON ON MORE MAGAZINE COVERS: Wired, Discover, Time, etc.

EXT. NECKER ISLAND, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS - DAY

Helicopter flyby reveals Richard Branson's Billionaire Island. On the BEACHFRONT, Larry Page is getting married. Justine and Elon are in attendance.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
Part playboy. Part tech genius.
Part family man.

INT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - DAY

This is Elon's real private life: a playpen for the twins, now 2, a COOK, a HOUSE KEEPER. Three NANNIES to hold his newborn TRIPLETS! Elon bought all the help he needed.

He kisses Justine and leaves for the day. She's used to it.

EXT. TESLA, FACTORY - TEST TRACK - SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

Elon races a Roadster with a delighted reporter/passenger.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
He's ramping up the car industry
with his electric masterpiece Tesla.

INT. TESLA, BOARD ROOM - DAY

The Tesla Board is up to 7 members. The original 3 founders, Elon, and 3 "Musk Men": JB, Larry Page, and VantagePoint CEO ANTONIO GRACIAS. They are in the midst of voting on an issue.

The Musk Men wait for Elon to vote first. He raises his hand as a YES vote. They follow and vote YES. Elon's power grows.

BACK TO MUSK'S KITCHEN -- Elon types on Tesla's website.
 (NOTE: this is still on Tesla's website to this very day)

IN SHORT, THE MASTER PLAN IS:

- Build sports car
- Use that money to build an affordable car
- Use that money to build an even more affordable car
- While doing above, also provide zero emission electric power generation options
- Don't tell anyone.**

INT. SOLAR CITY, BOARD ROOM, SAN MATEO - DAY

Elon signs the investment deal. Across are Peter and Lyndon. They all pose for a picture with the Solar City logo.

CHYRON: Solar City. San Mateo, CA.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
*He's getting us off the grid as the
 Chairman of Solar City.*

INT. VALLEY VIEW SUN FOUNDATION, BALLROOM - DAY

In front of a more excited, engaged crowd, Elon is now the speaker of the Mars Society. It is a proud moment for him.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
*And, of course, he's taking us to
 Mars with his rockets at SpaceX.*

ELON MUSK
 We will get to Mars! And we will do
 it in this lifetime.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
So what's his secret?

SHOT OF ELON FOR PROFILE PIECE: Taken at his house.

ELON MUSK
 Like what you do. Life's too short.
 If you like what you do, you think
 about it even when you're not working.

INT. MUSK HOME, MASTER BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Elon and Justine are turning down for bed. Justine feels tortured having to listen to yet another Elon idea.

JUSTINE
 Propulsive landing now?

ELON MUSK
 Yea! It's the key to reducing cost.
 I mean it'd be kind of weird in a
 movie if aliens landed by parachute.
 It'd be like, "Okay. Nothing to fear."

JUSTINE
 So we're the aliens now?

ELON MUSK
When we land on Mars, we will be.

JUSTINE
If you say so.

EXT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - MORNING

The sun rises over 11.4 acres of new SpaceX property.

CHYRON: January, 2007. 1 Rocket Road, Hawthorne, CA.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Hawthorne is light years ahead of El Segundo. 500 employees work in-house on assembly, manufacturing, storage, etc. Raw materials go in, rockets come out.

INT. SPACEX, OFFICE, HAWTHORNE - DAY

The new offices have a Silicon Valley feel in design and efficiency. Low walls, open cubicles, Red "Mars" motif. MB carries in red TRASHCANS as she notices DOWN THE HALL -

Gwynne directs a team of NASA SCIENTISTS led by Griffin to review SpaceX's progress and success for COTS Phase 1.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

NASA makes notes on clipboards at each terminal. Gwynne watches them observing work, noting the job of one WELDER.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
Why is he trying to build the nozzle lock? India sells it at cost.

The welder stops and addresses him.

WELDER
Legacy parts breed legacy costs.

He takes off his helmet and approaches. It's Elon!

ELON MUSK
That nozzle costs \$17 on the open market. \$18 in India. See that guy?

A few feet away Chris cauterizes wires in a tube.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
He produces them in-house. It costs us \$3 per unit now. That's why.

Griffin reluctantly bites his tongue.

EXT. VANITY FAIR PARTY, VALET, HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Elon pulls up in a Roadster prototype. The crowds can't stop staring at it. People come up to take pictures with the car.

JUSTINE
Now, we look like Bond Villains.

ELON MUSK
Pierce Brosnan Bond Villains, maybe.

EXT. VANITY FAIR PARTY, HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Absolute bedlam. Hundreds of celebrities, models, rappers. Champagne flows. Deejays blast music. Bartenders. Ice luges.

MOVING THROUGH THE CROWD, it's as much a work event as it is a party. A gala to the rich and powerful - Hollywood Elite.

In the center of it all: Elon! He gives the same "propulsive landing" talk. Unlike Justine, everyone soaks it up! Geek is now cool. They've never had someone like him at these parties.

OFF IN A CORNER -- Justine is by herself, staring at Elon. He's so far away and growing more distant.

Kimbal comes by, absorbing the craziness of this party and his brother at its chic center.

KIMBAL MUSK
I never thought I'd see the day when
Elon is the coolest person at a party.

She dismisses Kimbal, enjoying her drink.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
Don't tell me you're jealous?

JUSTINE
No! Let him tackle the larger issues of space exploration and clean energy and general let's-not-destroy-ourselves-first human advancement.
All I want to do is turn out my daily five-to-ten pages, read to the kids, then to myself, hit the gym. Recycle.

Elon notices her in the corner and excuses himself.

ELON MUSK
There are people here for your book.

He grabs her hand and leads her to be swept up in the hoopla.

INT. SPACEX, OFFICE, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Gwynne gets to her desk at work and sees a full cup of coffee. Elon sticks out his hand, waves. He's there before everyone.

LATER, CAPSULE TEST ROOM -- Elon reviews works with Hans. YELLING and LAUGHING can be heard from the factory. Elon ignores it, but it grows too loud. He leaves to investigate.

FACTORY FLOOR -- Elon sees his employees all gathered around something. Elon breaks up the crowd.

ELON MUSK
Unless Chris's tie is caught in the landing gear again and someone has a camera this time, get back to work.

Elon moves to the front. The throng opens up. Then Elon sees - it's ROBERT DOWNEY JR.! Iron Man! Elon's star struck.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I...I can't believe its Iron Man!

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.
I go by Robert most days. So nice to meet you. Though Iron Man is why I'm here. Technology is like an extension of Tony Stark's mind. And well -

ELON MUSK
- You need to know our technology?

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.
No...I need to know you.

Elon gets a text - Hans: "Is that Robert Downey Jr.?"
Elon looks up and sees Hans's face pressed against the window.

LATER, OTHER SIDE OF THE FACTORY

Elon and RDJ stand in awe beside a real DRAGON CAPSULE.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR. (CONT'D)
So this is really going to take us to Mars some day. Wow! Where do ideas like this come from? Divine Intervention? Drugs? A Fortune Cookie?

ELON MUSK
Well, I suppose I start by thinking from a First Principles perspective.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.
What is that? Can anyone do it?

ELON MUSK
Sure. First Principles asks you to boil things down to their fundamental truths and say, "What are we sure is true?" Then reason up from there.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.
Yea, you lost me. I'm more of a visual learner. Maybe some examples.

INT. IRON MAN SET - DAY

The conversation continues on a set tour, Justine with them.

ELON MUSK
People used to say, "Nobody wants a car because horses are great: there are lots of them, they eat grass, and there's no gasoline to buy."

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.
We know how that worked out.

ELON MUSK

Exactly! People now say, "Nobody wants electric cars because gas cars are great: we have them, gas is cheap, and batteries will always cost \$600 per kwh and that's too expensive."

(beat)

First Principles would ask, "What are batteries made of? What is the spot market value of the material?"

(lists)

You got: cobalt, nickel, aluminum, carbon, some polymers for separation, and a sealed can.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

How much to buy it all separately?

ELON MUSK

\$80 per kwh. So all you need are clever ways to combine it and -

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

- you get batteries cheap enough to change electric cars forever. Wow.

Elon looks for Justine's approval at his answer. RDJ notices.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR. (CONT'D)

And how long have you two -

ELON MUSK

- going on 14 years.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

Justine, what's it like being married to a "Man from Tomorrow" so to speak?

Justine sees Elon's worry; she is careful with her words.

JUSTINE

Well... You and everyone else sees this tech billionaire genius. I don't.

(beat)

I still see the boy from South Africa I met my first week of my first year at Queen's University in Canada. He invited me out for ice cream -

ELON MUSK

- she stood me up.

They reminisce together. Justine glows from nostalgia.

JUSTINE

Of course. C'mon, I was -

She points to her own model-esque figure.

ELON MUSK

And I was -

Elon points for comparison between his face and RDJ's.

JUSTINE

But, he refused to take no for an answer, until I finally caved.
(resentment brewing)
He is brilliant. But also relentless, you see. Single-minded. Unstoppable. Difficult. Critical. "My way or the highway" kind of man...

She squeezes his hand. Elon's collar is getting hot.

INT. MUSK HOME, FRONT ENTRANCE, LOS ANGELES - LATE NIGHT

Elon says goodbye to Justine. He rolls his suitcase out first before exiting. The door shuts. Justine is alone again.

JUSTINE (V.O.)

...Nobody truly knows or understands the sacrifices he had to make to become the man he is today.

She leans against the door. The cathedral ceilings illustrate the loneliness she feels in this big, empty house.

BACK TO IRON MAN SET -- She hides her sadness with poise.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

Determination. Sacrifice. Wants to make the world a better place. All the makings of a superhero, I'd say.

Justine smiles, but deep down only she knows that's his curse.

INT. MUSK HOME, MASTER BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Justine walks into her bedroom. Alone.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - NIGHT

Elon is on his way to Kwaj, still working on his laptop.

INT. MUSK HOME, MASTER BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Justine can't sleep. Elon's side is still tucked in. Two people literally and figuratively worlds apart.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The team is frantic to get off the island.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)

Launch is ready. T-minus 10....9...

CHYRON: March 21st, 2007. Falcon 1, Test #2.

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

Elon watches the launch from the now operational trailer. Worden and NASA are present, observing.

Elon puts on a headset, flashes a maverick smile. *Showtime!*

INT. SPACEX, MISSION CONTROL, HAWTHORNE - CONTINUOUS

The mecca of SpaceX. 80 terminals surrounded by three glass walls that overlook the factory floor. 2 stories worth of monitors on the fourth wall. Gwynne and the larger Mission Control team watch Stage 1 break Earth's atmosphere.

CHEERS from employees on the other side of the glass wall.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The setup for Falcon 1 Test #2 is exactly as before. The deluge SPRAYS. The rocket IGNITES.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
We have ignition.

The Falcon 1 flies straight and perfect.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Systems are nominal. Ready Stage 2.

EXT. LOW EARTH ORBIT:

Unlike Test #1, this rocket reaches the floor of outer space. Stage 1 separates, dropping to Earth. Stage 2 ignites.

INSIDE ROCKET:

The LIQUID OXYGEN fuel in the tank SLOSHES.

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

The sloshing causes Stage 2 to gyrate during acceleration.

TOM MUELLER (O.S.)
I don't like the way she wiggles.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
T +4 minutes. Stage 2 on target.

The wiggling increases into FLAILING. The force at those speeds RIPS the rocket in two.

The entire upper stage EXPLODES! *Mission Failure...*

There is collective disappointment, except NASA, basking in Elon's comeuppance. He is quick to address the group.

ELON MUSK
 We hit Stage 2. Our rocket technically
 was in space. Incredible progress.
 We're closer. We really are, guys.

The monitor still shows the flaming rocket falling into the ocean. The feed REWINDS to the explosion and it replays.

LATER -- The trailer has been cleared out. Elon clicks and watches the broadcast alone. REWINDS. Watches all over again.

Elon is sick with failure. The emotion quickly fades, replaced only with his obsession to solve the problem.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE - DAY

Worden flips through the latest report while Elon watches.

GENERAL WORDEN
LOX sloshing overflow. Solutions?

ELON MUSK
We're testing a new Kestrel casing
to secure the run off.

GENERAL WORDEN
What does Griffin think?

Elon doesn't want to refer to Griffin by name.

ELON MUSK
NASA has slowed our progress. I'm
developing the casing myself.

GENERAL WORDEN
NASA is trying to help you. Let
them...or you could just quit.

ELON MUSK
I'd rather commit seppuku than quit.
It's expected we'll lose some battles,
but we'll win the war.

Worden closes the report, happy with Elon's resolve.

GENERAL WORDEN
Let's call that one a demo. Load
TacSat-2 on the next one. And can
you stop blowing up my stuff, please?

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

Elon gives Kimbal the tour. Kimbal marvels at new red assembly machines autonomously constructing car parts.

KIMBAL MUSK
Which Tesla are you giving Iron Man
for his collection?

ELON MUSK
I kinda like this gray one.

They stop at the first Roadster off the assembly line. Elon hops into the Roadster and starts it, but it won't turn on.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
JB, this one doesn't work.

JB STRAUBEL
This whole row doesn't actually.

ELON MUSK
How many are like this?!

JB STRAUBEL
Maybe a third? Hard to tell. Most of
them haven't shipped back to us yet.

ELON MUSK
Will we still make November?

JB STRAUBEL
November 2009 maybe.

Elon spots Martin farther away. *He fucked this all up...*

INT. LOTUS FACTORY, LONDON - DAY

Elon walks the floor with an OPERATIONS MANAGER. Lotus assembly moves rapidly everywhere. Elon has to shout.

ELON MUSK
You're 3 months behind schedule.
Where are all the Teslas?

OPERATIONS MANAGER
In the back.

They walk until Elon spots a single row of Teslas. ZERO ARE FINISHED! None are even being worked on. It's quiet here.

EXT. BATTERY FACTORY, THAILAND - DAY

Elon arrives at what he expects to be his factory.

INT. BATTERY FACTORY, THAILAND - DAY

It's a corrupt assembly operation. Empty. Dusty. Equipment is covered in salt deposits. A concrete manufacturing tomb. Elon is disturbed at the sight. Something must be done.

INT. TESLA, BOARD ROOM - DAY

The entire Tesla Board meets without Martin. Speaking is TIM WATKINS aka "The Money Man", 40s. His specialty is finding where the money goes. They read his report on the Roadster.

ELON MUSK
We have a battery factory in Thailand,
panels in France, motors in Taiwan,
bodies in England - all shipped here.
How the fuck did this happen??

ANTONIO GRACIAS
Just how bad is it? What's the number?

TIM WATKINS
Your stated car valuation was \$85,000.
The actual valuation is \$200,000.

LARRY PAGE
Fuck! That's a new Lamborghini. For
that money, do they at least work?

TIM WATKINS

The Roadster was also revealed to have 14 separate issues that will cause a full system shutdown.

ELON MUSK

We basically have to reboot the entire car from scratch. What's the overage?

TIM WATKINS

Forecast puts your overage at \$40 million dollars for production.

ELON MUSK

Okay. We do another \$40 million round. I'll put in half if you all match.

Larry questions the math of Elon's wealth. Elon answers it.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Yes, it's the last of my Paypal reserve, but I don't care. We can fix this and produce the Roadster we promised. These are management mistakes, not investment mistakes.

ANTONIO GRACIAS

What are we doing about those management mistakes?

They all look to Elon. He knows what they want.

ELON MUSK

No, I can't become CEO...I need to spend more time at home as it is.

LARRY PAGE

Martin has taken this company as far as it can go. He doesn't have your ability to deliver. We need you, E.

Elon mulls it over, then checks his watch and quickly panics.

ELON MUSK

Shit! I'm gonna be late for J's book release. I'll think about it. Thanks.

INT. MUSK HOME, MASTER BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Justine finishes her makeup. Her ASSISTANT shows her dress options. An entourage of people put her together. This is her night. Elon holds a bouquet of long stem roses.

JUSTINE

What do you mean you're investing more? How much more? What's wrong?
(to Assistant)

The red one, Jeanie. The book is called Bloodangel. C'mon.

ELON MUSK

\$20 million. It maintains my share percentage. There's more... J?

She's too frazzled to listen. She doesn't know what else she forgot to do. As she wanders off, Elon BLURTS out -

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I'm considering becoming CEO.

She stops. *He finally went there.*

JUSTINE
Elon, no. You promised me. The kids need their father. I need my husband.

ELON MUSK
I wouldn't do it if I didn't think I had to. Otherwise Tesla will fail.

JUSTINE
Who gives a shit? Let it fail.

ELON MUSK
What do you mean, "let it fail?" I can't just let it fail.

JUSTINE
Why? You said it's okay to fail. Companies fail all the time.

ELON MUSK
These companies are like my kids. I can't watch one of them die.

Justine erupts on him. *He had to make that point?*

JUSTINE
It is nothing like watching a child die!

ELON MUSK
I'm sorry, I didn't mean that -

He's cut off by her assistant, motioning it's time to go.

JUSTINE
Why don't you just stay home tonight? I'm used to you not being around.

She leaves him still holding the bouquet.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon still thinks about his decision. He walks through the factory floor, his place of peace. The workers all look busy, talking to each other in harmony. In one word: efficient.

Elon continues walking...

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

...only now he's at Tesla. The machines aren't running. Departments silently stick to themselves. In one word: inefficient. To Elon, another comes to mind: unacceptable.

INT. AUTOMOTIVE CONFERENCE - DAY

Martin reviews notecards backstage. He's the guest speaker. His assistant whispers something and hands him a cellphone.

MARTIN EBERHARD
What was the final number?

Martin paces back and forth. Stress oozes from his pores.

INT./EXT. MALIBU - DAY

Elon takes command of his empire like Tony Stark would.

ELON MUSK
\$200,000. Per car.
(silence)
Expectations, Martin...

INT. AUTOMOTIVE CONFERENCE - DAY

HOST (O.S.)
Welcome Tesla CEO, Martin Eberhard!

The audience CHEERS. Martin's face falls. It's over.

INT. TESLA, CONFERENCE ROOM, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

Elon meets with the remaining execs. Everyone is on edge.

ELON MUSK
With Martin and now Ian gone, there
are going to be a lot of changes
here, starting with personnel.

The executives all look worried for their jobs. Elon shows his strength and leadership in a room full of fear.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I don't suffer fools. The minimum
passing grade is 'excellent'. The
minimum passing emotion is 'happy'.
It's not okay be unhappy and part of
this company. If you're not happy,
you get divorced.

That last part slipped out. He stops, but quickly moves on.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
We haven't shipped one Roadster yet.
That changes today.

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

Elon continues the meeting on the floor with his executive team. He carries his own Ikea desk.

ELON MUSK
We'll work nights, weekends, sleep
under desks, until it's completed.

JB STRAUBEL
 These guys need some kind of a break.
 They need to see their families.

ELON MUSK
 You'll have a lot of time to see
 your families when we go bankrupt.

He passes in front of newly installed BATTERY EQUIPMENT taken from Thailand. He DROPS his desk in the middle of the factory.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 What we have to do is fucking hard.
 That's why you must use max effort.

LATER -- Engineers put 70 batteries together to form the "brick". The teams are testing it in cold and hot air.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 I want you to think ahead and think
 so hard every day that your head
 hurts at night when you go to bed.

LATER -- Engineers lower a brick into a Roadster chassis. Elon walks over and points out something they did wrong.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
 Let's do it again. Let's go.

Elon's hard charging ways push them to work like they never have before. They do it again.

EXT. JEFF SKOLL HOME - NIGHT

Elon checks the time. 2:00am. He knocks. Jeff answers.

ELON MUSK
 It was too late to drive back to LA.

JEFF SKOLL
 Come on in, buddy. I've got room.

LATER, EXTRA BEDROOM -- Elon texts Justine, "Love U G'Nite." He crawls into bed, head hurts. He practices what he preaches.

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - MORNING

The morning carpool of engineers enters at the same time only to find Elon is already at his desk, drinking coffee, watching brake pad simulations on the system.

LATER -- Elon finalizes tweaks on a nearly ready Roadster.

ELON MUSK
 Good job everybody. It's a start.

INT. MUSK HOME, LIVING ROOM, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Elon opens the door. The exhausted warrior is finally home. He picks up a triplet and relaxes on the couch with him.

LATER, TWINS' ROOM -- XAVIER, 3, strokes a bandaid on his cheek while talking with his parents. We HEAR Justine's blog.

JUSTINE (V.O.)
During our nightly bedtime chat, my son told us how a bully tripped him to score the winning soccer goal.

XAVIER MUSK
I didn't cry! Not once!

He puffs his chest, looking to Elon for praise.

JUSTINE (V.O.)
Only four and he's already learning to suck it up and move on.

Justine glares at Elon as she kisses her son's cheek and holds him tight. During the embrace -

JUSTINE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's no secret since he's profiled in everything from Wired to Discovery that E grew up in a male-dominated family in a male-dominated culture, and works in a male-dominated industry. He lives in a highly competitive world.

XAVIER MUSK
I'm so mad we lost. It's not fair!

ELON MUSK
Xavier, in this world there are winners and losers. Fairly or unfairly. In this case, you lost.

JUSTINE (V.O.)
He's done very well in that world.

Justine smacks Elon's arm. Elon calms her. He wasn't finished.

ELON MUSK
But that's okay. Daddy fails all the time. It's how we learn to win.

XAVIER MUSK
But they laughed and made fun of me.

JUSTINE
Did it hurt your feelings? Because it's okay to have those feelings.

Elon accidentally undermines her point.

ELON MUSK
Don't listen to it. Those bullies are all noise and sound. You just focus on hearing your sound.
(Off Xavier's confusion)
There's a signal in your brain that you know is true. And it will make you stronger than any bully in the world. Hear the signal, not the sound. And one day, you'll win. Understand?

Xavier nods. This made some kind of sense to him.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Now, are you a winner or a loser?

XAVIER MUSK
A winner!

He brightens. Elon wraps his loving arms around his boy.

INT. MUSK HOME, MASTER BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Elon and Justine get ready side by side. It's sadly quiet, a growing space between them. As Elon helps her with a necklace -

JUSTINE
From now on, when you introduce me, you will say that I'm a published novelist, please. I won't be looked at as some trophy wife. Thank you.

ELON MUSK
Out of nowhere, but okay. Sure...

INT. TESLA SHOWROOM, MENLO PARK - DAY

Elon presents the first PRODUCTION ROADSTER to a happy crowd.

ELON MUSK
This is only the beginning of the beginning. We won't stop until every car on the road is an electric car!

OFF TO THE SIDE -- Antonio and Larry comment.

ANTONIO GRACIAS
One. He made one car.

LARRY PAGE
Nobody works as hard as that guy. If Elon says they'll deliver the cars, I believe him.

ANTONIO GRACIAS
And if he doesn't? Each month we spend millions with no cars, we kill what the Tesla name has become.

LARRY PAGE
Stop. I invested in Elon, not a brand.

ANTONIO GRACIAS
I'm not talking about the brand. He's the face of this thing. If he fails, this electric car revolution he started fails with him.

LATER, MEET AND GREET -- Elon greets a potential ELDERLY BUYER. Justine hangs on Elon like arm candy.

ELDERLY BUYER

My eldest passed 5 years ago. Lung cancer. Didn't smoke a day in her life. Doctors said it was the smog in the air. We've gotta do something.

ELON MUSK

That's why we're all here tonight. But we have a long way to go.

ELDERLY BUYER

We'll get there, won't we dear?

Justine politely smiles. Elon only now introduces her.

ELON MUSK

Sorry. This is my wife, Justine.

Justine waits. Her resentment is palpable. Elon doesn't understand. It's a painful beat before it clicks in his head.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Right, sorry - she reminded me to tell people that she's a published novelist. This is me telling you. Quite good books, all biases aside.

Elon thinks he did right. To Justine, he's dead wrong.

INT. MUSK HOME, LIVING ROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Still in their dress clothes, she scolds him as loud as she can without waking the kids.

ELON MUSK

What did I do? You told me what to say. I said it. I don't understand.

JUSTINE

You know what you did! "Justine wanted me to tell you." I don't care where you fit on the autism spectrum, you know that's rude. Goodnight!

Justine stomps up the stairs. She SLAMS her door.

ELON MUSK

I'm always wrong...

Elon pulls out a check as he continues muttering to himself.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

But she did order a car, right? Everything's fine. This is good.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Thunderous rain blasts the island. Tim and his team are quickly trying to top off the fuel.

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

Elon waits on the "Go ahead" from NASA. They wave it off.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL
That is an abort launch. Over.

Elon throws his headset down and storms out.

INT. SPACEX, MISSION CONTROL, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon finds Griffin beside one of the OPERATORS.

ELON MUSK
This is bullshit! We would've gotten
it refueled. The panel would hold.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
I don't care that it could hold, the
thermal casing isn't regulated for
these weather conditions.

ELON MUSK
Bullshit! You're wasting my time.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
It's not your way or the highway
here. Follow the rules.

INT. SOLAR CITY, BOARD ROOM, SAN MATEO - DAY

Elon meets with Peter and Lyndon. Elon reviews their books.
The Rives are grinning like idiots.

ELON MUSK
Let me guess? Good news again.

LYNDON RIVE
Yep! Everything's great!

The relief on Elon's face is priceless.

ELON MUSK
I love coming here.

EXT. TESLA GARAGE, MENLO PARK - NIGHT

Construction is underway for the delivery infrastructure.
Elon does an interview with SARAH LACEY again, now with Yahoo.

SARAH LACEY, YAHOO
So... Electric cars. You did it.

ELON MUSK
I did. And now you're the blogger?

SARAH LACEY, YAHOO
Online publisher. It's like a blog,
minus the dirt or gossip. Sometimes.

ELON MUSK

I don't enjoy that part of celebrity. Sometimes people say false things and I think, "My kids will read that one day." Stuff that isn't even true.

SARAH LACEY, YAHOO

Stuff like Leo Dicaprio going to your house and buying a Roadster in cash? Off the record, of course..

ELON MUSK

No comment. Which gossip blog do I have to thank for that one?

SARAH LACEY, YAHOO

Your wife's blog. Now she rumbles.

Elon seethes at the betrayal.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO CAFE - DAY

Justine reads a book in peace.

JUSTINE (V.O.)

Love going into bookstores in San Fran. Couldn't resist picking up Gordon Ramsey's autobiography.

Elon exits the cafe holding two coffees for him and Justine.

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

Yet another ferociously driven, successful man who suffered an asshole for a father.

Elon places Justine's in front of her and kisses her forehead.

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

I'm hardly saying that all uber-successful people have brutal parents, or that the child of a brutal parent will grow up to be successful...

INT. MUSK HOME, MASTER BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Elon READS THE BLOG in bed to an unapologetic Justine.

ELON MUSK

...But in my experience, especially the last few years, among people I know, there seems to be an uncommonly common link.

Elon CLICKS another entry. He reads it to her.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

You know you've been married for a while when you take a moment out from arguing to decide to go to a Maroon 5 concert, and then resume arguing again.

Elon CLICKS another entry. He reads it to her.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

I'm dealing with the issue of just where, exactly, to exercise this new steel-like sense of discipline. Home is no longer - and hasn't been for a long time - a reliable, happy place in which to get work done.

Elon CLOSES the laptop, dumbfounded. There's silence.

JUSTINE

Just say something.

ELON MUSK

I'm afraid to. You'll put it on the fucking internet. What is the matter with you? Our private lives are ours and nobody else's. Understand?

JUSTINE

Don't talk to me like an employee.

ELON MUSK

If you were an employee, I'd fire you for this. Use your head, J, for god's sake. I'm a public figure. My reputation makes sales.

JUSTINE

That you read all of this, and your first thought was about your company -

She's CUT OFF by Elon's phone RINGING. It's Mueller. He's torn between answering it or arguing with his upset wife.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

I'm sure it's more important.

She chooses for him and walks away, leaving him alone.

EXT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER, HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Thousands are outside for the Iron Man Premiere. Elon walks on the red carpet with Justine. He's in 7th Heaven.

Towards the front, RDJ answers a reporter's question.

ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

The inspiration for Tony Stark? It's Elon Musk. He's the real Iron Man.

Cameras cut over to Elon. Justine taps him to turnaround and wave. Elon soaks in every minute of this red carpet moment.

LATER -- Elon interviews with those same reporters.

ELON MUSK

Hi, Elon Musk. And this is my wife, Justine. She's a published novelist.

Justine appreciates it, but it may be too little, too late.

INT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER, HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

A packed house watches the movie. Elon is glued to the screen.

INTERCUT IRON MAN MOVIE AND ELON WATCHING THE MOVIE

IRON MAN: Soars through the clouds, testing his limits.

ELON: Smiles like a little boy, as his hero comes to life.

IRON MAN: Has a glitch in his feet propulsion.

ELON: Giggles and points at the screen. *He called it!*

IRON MAN: Crashes into his lab destroying a few of his luxury cars. Behind him, one car was spared: A TESLA ROADSTER!

ELON: Tears up. His baby is on the screen. Validation.

EXT. IRON MAN PREMIERE AFTER PARTY, HOLLYWOOD - LATER

Among the high profile crowd, Elon geeks out with Larry.

ELON MUSK

I'm not putting J.A.R.V.I.S. in a Roadster. It's dangerous.

LARRY PAGE

C'mon, why? A.I. could autodrive Teslas or order you coffee as you drive. Limitless possibilities!

Justine doesn't bother participating. She's checked out.

INT. MUSK HOME, MASTER BEDROOM, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Elon and Justine undress from the premiere.

ELON MUSK

I don't like it.

JUSTINE

Don't like what?

ELON MUSK

Larry's excitement for A.I. I should start an R&D team and see where they stand on it. I'm thinking in Tokyo.

JUSTINE

Are you fucking kidding me right now? You're thinking about stopping robots from taking over the world.

ELON MUSK

It's a real concern.

JUSTINE

Only to you and Larry.

ELON MUSK
Well just to me. That's my point.

JUSTINE
Just like you are the only one concerned with getting us to Mars?

ELON MUSK
That was rhetorical, right?

JUSTINE
You don't know any of this you're building will work. Your rocket won't fly. Your electric car won't drive.

ELON MUSK
I won't fail. I can't. Too many people are counting on me.

JUSTINE
And what if you do fail? What happens then? You gonna mortgage the house?

ELON MUSK
If we have to mortgage the house, then we do it. We'll live at Kimbal's.
(quoting Iron Man)
"There is nothing except this. The next mission, and nothing else."

JUSTINE
Can you not hear how insane you sound? You know that wasn't you on the screen? You're not Iron Man.

Justine sees that he's too locked into his position.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)
In college, you were a guy who wanted to make the world a better place. And it was sweet and noble. But somewhere along the line you got lost in your "vision" and you haven't come back. Your mind is always somewhere else. It's either Mars, or electric cars or A.I. or flying cars -

ELON MUSK
- I disagree on flying cars for a number of reasons, the first being -

JUSTINE
- Shut up! I can't do this any more.

Justine stops undressing and enters her walk-in closet.

ELON MUSK
What are you doing?

JUSTINE
I'm leaving. I can't live with half a husband anymore. I can't.

Elon walks into the closet to see she's packing a suitcase. She can't see what she needs, she just packs. (This is all highly unnecessary - her assistant could do this)

ELON MUSK
You're packing? This is ridiculous.

With renewed confidence, she stops packing.

JUSTINE
You're right. It is.

She goes back into the walk-in closet and comes back with HIS suitcase. Places it on the bed and packs his things.

JUSTINE (CONT'D)
You leave. I actually live here.

ELON MUSK
What do you mean? I live here.

JUSTINE
On which days of the week?

ELON MUSK
Yes, I'm working more now. But our kids are healthy and happy. I've never cheated. I don't have a substance problem. I take you on plenty of trips. I don't see how I haven't provided everything else you needed. I don't understand.

JUSTINE
I know you don't understand. That's the problem...

ELON MUSK
How can I solve this? Tell me.

JUSTINE
Marriage isn't a physics problem, Elon. Maybe to you it is.

ELON MUSK
J, please. What do I have to do? I won't leave until you tell me.

She stops packing and calms down enough to give him a chance.

JUSTINE
Answer one question: When?

ELON MUSK
When, what? Can you be more specific?

JUSTINE
When will you finally stop? When will you accomplish enough to sit beside me and say, "I did it." We're 50? 70? People are on Mars? When?

She holds out hope, but Elon can't lie to her.

ELON MUSK
Never...It will never end...

Can this really be how it ends? 14 years. 5 kids.

Elon steps close to her. She retracts, but not from disgust - from the unfamiliar intimacy they lost a long time ago.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I tried to be better.

JUSTINE
Failure is a part of learning, I suppose.

He kisses her cheek. One last feeling of love. They touch for the final time. He heads to the door.

INT./EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Musk drives off, tormented over his marriage.

JUSTINE (V.O.)
I am getting divorced. We married young, took it as far as we could.

EXT. JEFF SKOLL HOME - LATE NIGHT

Elon knocks on Jeff's door. Jeff opens and immediately gets the situation. Elon is a disheveled mess.

JEFF SKOLL
Come on in, buddy. I've got room.

JUSTINE (V.O.)
In the end, I wanted smaller and slower and closer where he wanted grander and faster and farther. It was a good run. And now it's over.

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME, ELON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Elon is now the one sleeping with one side still tucked in.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

CHYRON: August 2nd, 2008. Falcon 1, Test #3.

The team scrambles to get everything strapped in and test every bolt. They raise the rocket as carefully as can be.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon looks worn out. Gwynne finds him.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
Are you okay? Nervous?

ELON MUSK
 Yea. Probably all it is. Come. Let's
 fly this thing.

INT. SPACEX, MISSION CONTROL, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Gwynne and Elon walk in to greet the Air Force and some NASA experts, including Griffin. Mission Control is bustling with activity. Crowds of employees gather outside to watch.

ELON MUSK
 (to D.O.D.)
 We have your satellite,
 (to NASA)
 And your...let's say "experiments".

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The Falcon 1 starting point is the same. It's being pumped with fuel. Then gets a full systems check.

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

Elon has moved to the trailer. He is confident today.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Falcon 1 launch in 5...4...3...

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The deluge SPRAYS.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
...2...1...Ignition.

The rocket IGNITES. Take off goes smoothly. Falcon 1 climbs higher and higher, reaching beyond Earth's atmosphere.

CONTROL TRAILER (O.S.)
Begin Stage 1 separation.

Stage 1 unhooks from Stage 2.

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

Elon doesn't move a muscle. He waits.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Separation complete.

CONTROL TRAILER
Commence Stage 2.

EXT. SKY - DAY

Stage 2 releases from Stage 1, then begins thrust.

Except Stage 1 doesn't slow down and fall. It SPEEDS UP!

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

Elon tenses up. He can already calculate the error.

ON MONITORS -- Stage 1 gets uncomfortably close to Stage 2.

ELON MUSK
Please don't...

EXT. EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE:

Stage 1 SLAMS into Stage 2. The rocket EXPLODES!

This high into our atmosphere contains barely any oxygen. The large fireball from the rocket is snuffed out, leaving only BLUE SKIES.

INT. SPACEX, MISSION CONTROL, HAWTHORNE - DAY

All heads hang like a funeral. *They failed.*

INT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

Elon's eyes dart back and forth. Is he giving into failure? He's manic, hard to get a read. Is it regret or defiance?

EXT. MISSION CONTROL TRAILER - DAY

The trailer doors open. Elon steps through. He slowly approaches the factory floor. Mood still unclear.

EXT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon enters and looks around at the devastation in the room. Employees are holding each other, crying. Looking for hope.

ELON MUSK
The most important message I'd like to send right now is that SpaceX will not skip a beat in execution going forward. We are going to launch #4 immediately. For those who don't believe, you lack vision. For those who don't stay, you lack will. For my part, I will never quit on SpaceX or our mission. I mean never!

A silent beat. How will the crowd react?

The company ERUPTS. Applause. Cheers. Griffin even smiles, surprised. He is bombarded with high fives and hand shakes. His troops are devout radicals to the house of Elon.

Behind the speech, though, Elon knows this could be the end.

MONTAGE:

A series of news outlets reporting on Elon.

INT. FAST MONEY TALK SHOW - DAY

Jim Cramer rips into Tesla.

JIM CRAMER
This is a car company that can't deliver cars.

INT. TESLA GARAGE, MENLO PARK - DAY

All the cars are marked with some kind of issue.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)

Tesla Death Watch is now at 7 months. CEO Elon Musk promises to deliver by the end of the year, but it looks less likely every day.

HEADLINES OF THE "TESLA DEATH WATCH" BLOG APPEAR ON SCREEN

TESLA DEATH WATCH 17: Elon running out of cash?

TESLA DEATH WATCH 23: Tesla raising prices...again.

INT. TESLA GARAGE, MENLO PARK - NIGHT

Elon explains the price hike to angry CUSTOMERS.

ANGRY CUSTOMER

It feels like a bait and switch. We were told to have faith and wait it out. We did. And now because you screwed up, we have to pay for it?

ELON MUSK

It is a bait and switch. I admit it. We screwed up.

TESLA DEATH WATCH 28: Roadster delivery delayed. Sound familiar?

TESLA DEATH WATCH 31: Or is it Tesla Suicide Watch?

EXT. MCGREGOR AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS - DAY

Falcon 9 engines FIRE on the test stand. It doesn't make it more than 10 seconds before glitching and shutting down.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)

Meanwhile, SpaceX has still not announced its return to flight, bringing doubt as to whether they will make the final COTS deadline.

INT. SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING - DAY

Neil Armstrong, now 75, speaks before the committee, railing against privatizing space. Elon's hero is even against him.

NEIL ARMSTRONG

I support the encouragement of newcomers towards a lower cost entry to space. But having cut my teeth in rockets more than 50 years ago, I am not confident.

EXT. TESLA SHOWROOM, MENLO PARK - DAY (2007)

Elon outside with various celebrities earlier, shaking people's hands and smiling for the camera.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
Once considered the living embodiment
of Iron Man, now we can only wonder
if it was all a hoax. The childhood
dreams of an out of touch billionaire.

- **HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS** -- MUSGRAVE weighs in.

MIKE MUSGRAVE

He duped us. I really wanted to believe someone could do all the things he said. But he's a fraud.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Elon stares up at an empty test stand. Doubt creeping in.

INT. GROSSMAN, SILVERSTEIN & ZAMBRANO, OFFICE - DAY

Elon meets with SILVERSTEIN, his divorce lawyer. Elon's weight has dropped considerably. He's a haggard shell of himself.

SILVERSTEIN

Elon, you look like Kate Moss. What happened to you?

ELON MUSK

How much is she asking?

EXT. MUSK HOME, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Justine opens the door and the kids run out to the car. At the doorway isn't Elon, but MB. Elon won't go himself.

ADAM SILVERSTEIN (O.S.)

She is contesting the post nuptial. If deemed invalid, then every dollar from Paypal would become a marital asset, entitling her to half of your estate: Tesla, Solar City, SpaceX.

MB leaves with the kids for Elon's visitation. Justine closes the door and breaks down in full on hysterics.

INT. GROSSMAN, SILVERSTEIN & ZAMBRANO, OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Elon is in disbelief over this situation.

ADAM SILVERSTEIN

We'll fight it. But the court asks for living expenses for her during the trial. A minimum amount of -

ELON MUSK

Nothing? I just put my last reserves into SpaceX. Can I send an I.O.U.?

ADAM SILVERSTEIN

Don't piss off the courts with this one. It's a very generous amount in our favor. This gives you options.

ELON MUSK
I'll never pick those options.

ADAM SILVERSTEIN
Elon, I've known you and that stubborn
look for 15 years. Even if we
liquidate all of your long term
assets, without new revenue, by
Christmas you'll only have enough
money for Tesla or SpaceX. Not both.

ELON MUSK
Adam? Start liquidating.

EXT. JEFF SKOLL HOME - DAY

Elon watches his McLaren lifted onto a FLATBED TRUCK and strapped in like it's a prisoner. *Asset liquidated.*

EXT. BURBANK AIRPORT - DAY

A Dassault 900 private jet takes off from the runway.

INT. SOUTHWEST AIRLINES, ECONOMY CLASS - DAY

It's not Elon's. He's now crammed on the airline he modeled SpaceX after. He reads the "Tesla Death Watch".

INT. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE - DAY

Elon hands in his report for the latest crash.

ELON MUSK
It was a timing issue. We tested a new engine for NASA that had more thrust jettisoned. But it's being fixed now. This one will succeed.

Amidst Elon's delusion, Worden still has to give bad news.

GENERAL WORDEN
We don't have a satellite ready to go. Next Ratzat won't be deployable 'til March, I think. Until then, we have to postpone our next contract.

ELON MUSK
No...

GENERAL WORDEN
It's just a delay. We'll be happy to ride launch #5.

ELON MUSK
But we need that money. We will make it to LEO this time. I swear.

GENERAL WORDEN
There's nothing I can do. We don't have a payload for you. I'm sorry.

Elon opens his door to exit. Worden sees his resolve cracking.

ELON MUSK
 I know what you're going to say.
 But no, I'm not ready to quit.

EXT. MCGREGOR AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

Tim and Tom test their latest engine. Tom is particularly excited about this one even though he looks beaten down by the stress. Buzzza fears for Tom's sanity.

TOM MUELLER
 I feel it this time.

TIM BUZZA
 You say that every time.

TOM MUELLER
 I mean it every time.

Merlin 1-C FIRES, keeping steady. Then EXPLODES!

TOM MUELLER (CONT'D)
 I'll call Elon.

INT. SPACEX, OFFICE, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon is livid. He rips into Tom.

ELON MUSK
 So we have to start from scratch?
 Can we run the other test stand?

EXT. MCGREGOR LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Tom's had it today, but tries to keep composure. Tim listens.

TOM MUELLER
 Yes, but not today.

INTERCUT: Telephone Conversation.

ELON MUSK
 You are still on my critical path!
 You are really fucking us over.

TOM MUELLER
 The deadline is too tight. Merlin 1-C was made for Falcon 9, which isn't supposed to launch for four more years. You're asking for an upgrade in a few months. I need more time.

ELON MUSK
 We don't have more time, understand?
 We must win COTS. I won't lose. I can't launch my rocket without a working fucking engine. So hurry!

TOM MUELLER
 Elon, I bleed SpaceX. I love this place. I love the mission. I love our passion. I even love you.
 (MORE)

TOM MUELLER (CONT'D)

(controlled)

So, in your opinion, if you need us to put another engine on the stand, fine. Sure, whatever you say. I work 100 hours a week. I'm chafed. I popped three blisters on my right foot - just this morning. But, in my opinion, I've blown up enough fucking shit today!!!

ELON MUSK

Okay, alright, that's fine. Just calm down. We'll do it again tomorrow.

TOM MUELLER

Understood. Thank you. <Click>

Tom hangs up in victory. Tim's jacked up from that.

TIM BUZZA

God, that was amazing! Fuck! I am literally hard from that. Yea, I am.

Elon, on the other hand, is left hanging, and concerned.

INT. SPACEX, BOARD ROOM, HAWTHORNE - LATER

Gwynne and Elon go over the financials alone. It's all bad.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

Dragon, Falcon 9, Grasshopper - all being built now, all returning zero income. We have to shut it down until we find a launch partner for #4.

ELON MUSK

No, we stay the course. When #4 flies, this will all work itself out.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

And what payload are we launching?

ELON MUSK

We'll make a dummy payload. We don't need any customers. We don't.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

Please, listen. If #4 doesn't fly -

ELON MUSK

- If?!? It's a two second glitch. Everything else ran fine. We already fixed the glitch. So #4 will work. Are you fucking kidding? If?

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

Don't give me that shit. I've been by your side for 6 years. You know I believe in us. I'm trying to keep us alive a little longer.

(MORE)

GWYNNE SHOTWELL (CONT'D)
 We got ahead of ourselves. So, yes,
if #4 fails - if a screw breaks, if
 a radio malfunctions - shit, if a
 fucking bird flies into it - it's
 all over. We're out of money. You
 can't save us from that.

He knows that reality. And all those reasons to quit.

ELON MUSK
 Okay, Gwynne. Shut 'em down.

The PHONE RINGS in the other room. MB gets it, then enters.

MARY BETH
 Elon? It's Peter and Lyndon.

INT. SOLAR CITY, BOARD ROOM, SAN MATEO - DAY

Elon stares at them. It's not good news. They look to Elon.

ELON MUSK
 Please tell me this isn't real.

INT. NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE - DAY

Men and women at their desks in hysterics. The Nasdaq is plummeting. Millions are losing everything.

CHYRON: September, 2008.

PULL AWAY from the desks to reveal chaos on the trading floor. Every trading screen is RED. Full on alarm by everyone.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
This is what financial Armageddon looks like. Red screens that scream, "Sell! Sell! Sell!"

EXT. MORGAN STANLEY, NEW YORK - DAY

Employees exit with their belongings. It's all over.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
Morgan Stanley is closing its doors, declaring bankruptcy this morning after 115 years as one of the leading financial institutions.

INT. SOLAR CITY, BOARD ROOM - DAY

LYNDON RIVE
 Without Morgan Stanley, the round couldn't close. What do we do?

Elon's in disbelief. Like every problem recently, Elon says -

ELON MUSK
 We stay the course. I'll float you.

INT. GENERAL MOTORS FACTORY - DAY

The factory is 5 times as large as Tesla. The machines are bigger, the lights brighter. The power of Detroit.

CNN REPORTER (V.O.)
Amidst the economic crisis, GM declared bankruptcy. The American Car, for many, is dying.

The factory's machines come to a HALT. The lights TURN OFF.

INT. TESLA, BOARD ROOM - DAY

The board meeting just started and there's already panic.

JB STRAUBEL
 GM?! Are you kidding? If they failed, what chance do we have?

Elon chuckles at hearing that concern again.

ELON MUSK
 Did you call Valor? What'd they say?

ANTONIO GRACIAS
 No. They said no.
 (explaining)
 There's no car to buy. You're behind delivery by 10 months. We spent \$115 million more than we started with.

ELON MUSK
 Roadster production is coming along, but I can't make payroll next month.

ANTONIO GRACIAS
 Sell Model S "memberships" early.

ELON MUSK
 How do you suppose I sell cars now, Antonio? Try to imagine explaining to someone that they should buy an electric car. Sure, everything you read about us sounds like the car's shit and we're doomed, and we're in a recession so there's no credit for you anywhere because banks everywhere are going under, but yes, give me \$125,000 for a sports car in 2 years.

ANTONIO GRACIAS
 Daimler would have an interest in our battery. Sell that. Sell the I.P. to Ford. Sell Tesla outright. I don't really care. We're out of options before this thing implodes.

INT. CAR SERVICE - DAY

MB sits next to Elon with more problems to address.

MARY BETH
Tim says he needs a new LOX tank.

ELON MUSK
Sure. We need to just buy in bulk
at this point. Enough already.

MARY BETH
You can't afford it.

ELON MUSK
I know that, goddamnit. What else?

MARY BETH
Goldman Sachs called. You'll max out
your credit extensions if you proceed.

ELON MUSK
(embarrassed)
Proceed. What else?

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME, KITCHEN TABLE - NIGHT

Jeff and Elon eat take-out burgers and fries for dinner.
Jeff eats relaxed, while Elon stuffs his face quickly.

JEFF SKOLL
If you could get the investors for
Tesla, how much would you need?

ELON MUSK
\$40,000,000.

JEFF SKOLL
Fuck me. That's a lot of cheese.

Elon pulls a wad of his cheese fries and eats it.

ELON MUSK
Depends on your relative scale.

Jeff sees the stress on Elon's face as he gorges himself.

JEFF SKOLL
You bit off more than you could chew?

Elon has a mouth full of burger. He masticates dramatically
to show Jeff that he can chew anything. He swallows it all.

ELON MUSK
I have to get back to work.

Elon puts his burger package in the trash and goes upstairs.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon scolds engineers while reviewing their report.

ELON MUSK
What is this? I said the fuel must
test at 60% efficiency. Run it again!

Elon yells at helpless, nervous workers walking by.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Does the Max Q look right to you?
(nobody responds)
Does it look right to anyone?!

LATER, CUBICLES, NIGHT -- Everyone's gone, but Elon and MB.

MB's ready to leave. She approaches Elon cautiously. He's catatonic rewatching the #3 crash footage on his computer.

MARY BETH
Just a reminder tomorrow's call with
JB is at 7:30 a.m. and then pick up
at Jeff's at 8:15 a.m. Did you pack?

ELON MUSK
Pack what? I don't have time.

Elon continues watching. MB exits momentarily.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I didn't dismiss you.

A few seconds and she comes back with a small carry-on bag.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
What's this?

MARY BETH
Your bag. I packed for you.

He opens it, pulls out two of the bright blue shirts.

ELON MUSK
Can't wear these. Toyota is blue.
These have to be red. You know that.

MARY BETH
I've never needed to know that.

ELON MUSK
I don't want to hear that. I want a
red fucking shirt!

He throws the shirts and they GENTLY FLOAT to the ground.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
Pretend that looked dramatic.

The phone RINGS. MB moves for it.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I didn't dismiss you.

MARY BETH
But the phone...

ELON MUSK

I don't give a shit who's on the fucking phone when I am speaking. I didn't dismiss you! I'm speaking!

The phone KEEPS RINGING. Elon TRASHES the entire office space as MB stands petrified to move.

His YELLS turn soft. The whimpers of a man near his breaking point. The phone STOPS RINGING. He finally gives up and slumps into his chair.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

You're dismissed.

The phone again RINGS. This time MB exits to answer it. Permission or not, she is going to help him.

MARY BETH

Yes. Elon's unavailable to handle that, but email me right now.

(sits down)

Uh-huh. We'll have that out in the morning. Great. Thanks, Janet.

She doesn't leave him, choosing to go back to work.

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME, ELON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Elon stares at the ceiling. Blanket tightly grasped, head barely ducks out from the covers. Regression settling in.

EXT. ERROL MUSK HOME - DAY (1982)

Elon is by himself building his model rocket. Nearby, Kimbal plays tag with some friends. He notices what Elon is doing.

YOUNG KIMBAL

Don't. Dad's napping inside.

Elon is in his own world, not listening. He places the rocket on the stand and lights the fuse. In seconds, it BLASTS OFF! Elon stares in wonder as it soars high into the sky.

Then just as quickly, it falls back down, CRASHING into the gutters and KNOCKING an entire panel off of the roof.

The other kids see the crash and think it's awesome! Elon, however, quickly worries about the repurcussions.

INT. ERROL MUSK HOME - DAY (1982)

Elon carefully enters hoping Errol didn't hear. He rounds a corner. And there, in the kitchen, is his father.

ERROL MUSK

What were you building a rocket for?
You planning on going somewhere?

Elon is too scared to speak. Errol places a book on the table. Elon's Master Plan notebook.

ERROL MUSK (CONT'D)
You left this inside.

Elon's precious book in his father's control. Errol flips through it - stops on Elon's drawing of an American Flag.

ERROL MUSK (CONT'D)
Oh, you want to go to America? Okay.
Then let's play "America."

QUICK CUTS of Elon forced to do all the chores around the house: sweep the leaves; clean the gutters; scrub the floors with a toothbrush. Errol screams in his ear the whole time.

ERROL MUSK (CONT'D)
Welcome to America, boy! Isn't this fun? Still wanna go?

Elon is reduced to a punished little boy. Elon tries his hardest to not cry in front of his father.

ERROL MUSK (CONT'D)
Do winners cry? Answer me! Do winners cry?!

ELON MUSK
No!

Elon starts to break down. Tears well up in his eyes.

ERROL MUSK
Are you sure? You sure look like you're crying. You think you can do anything you want. But you can't.

ELON MUSK
Yes. I can...

ERROL MUSK
What was that?

Elon's anger swallows every tear. He looks his father dead in the eyes. Pure fiery rage, like a lion.

ELON MUSK
YES I CAN!!!

Instead of shock, Errol is pleased with his pupil.

ERROL MUSK
Good. We might make a man outta you, yet.

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME, ELON'S ROOM - MORNING

Elon still stares at the ceiling. The doorbell RINGS. Elon won't move. The doorbell RINGS 12 more times, like it's being rung by an annoying kid.

EXT. JEFF SKOLL HOME - MORNING

Elon opens the front door. It's Kimbal!

KIMBAL MUSK
You look like shit. Good thing I
brought reinforcements.

Elon peers through and sees Elon's boys! They are playing
on the front lawn with MB. Elon finally smiles.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
Take a shower and get dressed. Now.

Even in this stupor, Elon listens to Kimbal and goes upstairs.

EXT. LOCAL YMCA - DAY

Elon's boys play on the playground as the brothers talk.

ELON MUSK
I never thought of myself as someone
who could have a nervous breakdown.
Like, what kind of pussy has a nervous
breakdown? But this has been bad.

KIMBAL MUSK
If you keep going this way, you're
going to end up alone with nothing.

ELON MUSK
But I'm not alone. Even now I'm with
my brother, my kids, my assistant.

REVEAL -- MB stands a foot away; They smile to one another.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I couldn't be less alone if I tried.

KIMBAL MUSK
Do you miss the old days at Zip?

ELON MUSK
I remember being broke. Taking showers
at this YMCA. I remember what it was
like to have nothing. I didn't forget.

KIMBAL MUSK
Okay -- but do you miss them?

ELON MUSK
Not at all. We weren't making a damn
bit of difference in the world. If
we got hit by a bus, our legacy would
be GPS business programmers.

KIMBAL MUSK
I miss them. Do you know why? It's
because we made stuff. No investors
or bottom lines or public image or
any of it. All we had was the simple
joy of making stuff together.
(points to sky)
That up there? Not your legacy.
(points to the boys)
That right there is.

ELON MUSK
I know that.

KIMBAL MUSK
So why put yourself through this?

ELON MUSK
That rocket works. When it flies, I'll have done what was thought to be impossible. And thus, impossible will be disproven. Nothing will be impossible any longer. For anyone. I'm doing this for them.

EXT. JEFF SKOLL HOME - LATER

Kimbal drops off Elon and the boys.

KIMBAL MUSK
You gonna be alright?

ELON MUSK
I'll survive.

KIMBAL MUSK
Good. One last thing.

Kimbal hands Elon something. Elon takes it.

ELON MUSK
What's this?

Elon looks at it. It's a check. A \$5 million check.

KIMBAL MUSK
A lot of people depend on you for a reason. They believe in you. I believe in you. You can do anything, E.

Elon hugs his brother tight, tears in his eyes.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
Now go make stuff.

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME, LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Elon spins around his twins. The triplets play with trucks. He displays a rare level of joy just playing with his kids, drawing strength from them.

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME, EXTRA BEDROOM - NIGHT

Elon kisses all his boys goodnight. Xavier teases his Dad.

XAVIER MUSK
Are you a winner or a loser?

ELON MUSK
Most people think your Dad is a loser.

XAVIER MUSK
It's just sound, right?

ELON MUSK
(renewed strength)
Yes, it is.

INT. TESLA, BOARD ROOM - DAY

Elon looks at his adversaries. All are on the same side, but not for this battle. Elon gathers his thoughts.

ELON MUSK
If we're out of equity investors
then I'm asking this board for \$40
million. \$40 million and I'll match
it, dollar for dollar.

ANTONIO GRACIAS
But you don't have anything anymore.

ELON MUSK
I'll classify the round as debt. All
my assets as collateral.
(stern)
We'll fail to make payroll and go
bankrupt on Christmas Day at 6:00pm.

The Board is stunned. Elon grabs his coat to leave.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
I'll leave you to it. I have to get
back to finishing these cars.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon has gathered the entire staff.

ELON MUSK
I called you all here today to give
you some bad news.

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

Elon continues the speech to the Tesla team as well.

INTERCUT: Both factories (unless noted otherwise)

ELON MUSK
We are just about out of money. We've
got enough for one last shot...

- SPACEX, Gwynne knows but nobody else does.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
...At LEO.

- TESLA, JB knows but nobody else does.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)
...at delivering these cars.

Elon relaxes into accepting the possibility of the end.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Now, I'm not stopping. I don't quit. I don't give up. Ever. If I have to build engines out of my garage, I will. But I can't succeed on my own. Not this time.

His humility only strengthens his conviction.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

If this is too much for you, I understand. You have families to think of. I'll personally call your next employers.

Employees from every department consider his offer.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

But if you stay - If you choose to endure the long hours and the hard work and the stress and the sleepless nights and the missed dinners and follow this vision with me - I promise you, we will survive...

It's as bold a promise as you could have, but all of his soul believes it. The workers feel it too.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

... And we will succeed.

Elon waits for this to sink in. Then, he simply asks -

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Now, what are you gonna do?

CUT TO:

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Engineers everywhere either build parts or test parts.

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

Factory workers, like a pit crew, assemble cars, bit by bit.

INT. MCGREGOR AIR FORCE BASE, BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

Tom and his team stand ready. Tim is with them.

TOM MUELLER

Let's scare some cows!

INT. TESLA GARAGE, MENLO PARK - DAY

The "defective" cars have parts pulled out. Transmissions are going in. These cars are getting finished.

EXT. MCGREGOR AIR FORCE BASE - DAY

Another Merlin 1-C engine is on the test stand. Merlin FIRES. The force BLASTS air in a 4 acre radius. Cows scatter!

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Worden arrives with his own team helping with adjustments.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Tim and Tom arrive with more troops and the new Merlin engine. Elon is already there working with the assembly team.

ELON MUSK

Always fashionably late.

TIM BUZZA

We do like to make an entrance.

INT. KWAJALEIN, MACHINE SHOP - LATER

The team gathers around, debating a key issue.

TOM MUELLER

We could remove the radio assembly.

TIM BUZZA

Would that lower enough weight?

Elon quietly attempts to answer the question.

"MUSK LAND": various equations build around phrases - 'scale reductions', 'thrust varient', 'yaw turn'. Then Elon stops.

ELON MUSK

Yes. 20% reduction would result in a thrust need of 200lbs/second. Do it.

TIM BUZZA

How the hell did you know that?

ELON MUSK

You taught me.

TIM BUZZA

I didn't teach you that.

(to his team)

Whaddya standing around for? You heard the man. Do it!

Tim's soldiers scatter to their sergeant's commands.

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - NIGHT

JB shows Elon the progress. 2 more cars are finished.

ELON MUSK

We're doing better. Daily reports?

JB hands him a large binder to read.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

From now on, reheat the aluminum scraps and reuse them. No more waste.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Tim clocks his team on a wet test of the launch prep.

INT. SPACEX, MISSION CONTROL, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Mission Control in full assembly testing the launch protocol. Gwynne working on communications with the Kwaj team.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
Green light on our end, Kwaj.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The end of the wet test is the green light. Tim clocks it.

TIM BUZZA
Two hours, 14 minutes. Let's do
better. Start it up again.

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elon walks in and finds something on the counter: A BLOCK OF CHEESE, a CHECK for \$2 million, and a NOTE that says, "You'll need all the cheese you can get - Jeff Skoll." Elon laughs.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Griffin arrives for NASA inspection. He looks at a panel.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
Welding still leaves an exit dimple.

Elon's weary. Is Griffin going to roadblock more items?

MICHAEL GRIFFIN (CONT'D)
We have something for that. It's a
shoulder-less conical tool. The bit
can be withdrawn without creating a
defect. I'll have some sent here.

ELON MUSK
I appreciate it.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN
We're not all useless here, you know.
The most incredible advancements
still happen under that symbol.
It's not Mars, but it is something.

ELON MUSK
It certainly is. Thank you, Michael.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - LATER

Merlin, now attached to the Falcon 1, fires slightly as a pre-launch measure. The valve spews more liquid.

TIM BUZZA
Elon, we have a real problem here.
The LOX is boiling off. It's bad.
We're losing 500 gallons per hour.

Elon doesn't show panic. He's a calming presence.

ELON MUSK
Okay. Can we seal the issue?

TIM BUZZA
Not likely. The power distribution
system needs new capacitors.

NEXT OFFICE -- Tom is on a call and very excited.

TOM MUELLER
(into phone)
That is great! Yes. We'll take them.
(hangs up)
Tim! TWS has them. You gotta go now.

ELON MUSK
Take the jet. It's faster.

TIM BUZZA
Really? To Minnesota? This is the
weirdest job ever, man.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Tim lands with the capacitors. They are quickly being loaded.

TOM MUELLER
Let's hustle, people. Let's go!

LATER -- Final test with the Stage 2 engine. Tom is nervous.

TOM MUELLER (CONT'D)
Kestrel 1-D as in "Do not fuck this
up" is a go.

The engine FIRES. It hums. It's a good sound. Tom looks at
his watch: 30 seconds. It hums. And hums some more.

TIM BUZZA
Please God. I'll stop
masturbating...on weekdays.

Tom looks at his watch: 120 seconds.

TOM MUELLER
Almost there...

The fire stays steady. Tom looks again: 160 seconds.

They PUSH a button. The rocket quietly powers down. Tom
looks at the final time: 180 seconds.

Tim and Tom celebrate. Tom video calls Elon.

TOM MUELLER (CONT'D)
Elon, test confirmed! I'm out of
your critical path.

INT. ELON'S PRIVATE JET - DAY

Elon uses his jet only to/from Kwaj. He watches their joy.

INTERCUT: Skype Video Conversation.

ELON MUSK

You guys are awesome. Thank you.

TIM BUZZA

Did he just say, "Thank you?"

TOM MUELLER

That's what I heard.

ELON MUSK

Don't get used to it.

He hangs up. Elon can't celebrate. He reads Tesla reports...

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - NIGHT

Elon hands a binder back to JB. He sees 3 more failed inspection cars. For every two steps forward, another back.

ELON MUSK

Daily reports?

JB hands him a new, thicker binder. Elon is visibly weak.

JB STRAUBEL

You need a break. If you die, who will throw their money away on us?

Elon is too tired to fully laugh.

ELON MUSK

Haven't you heard? I'm Iron Man.

As he leaves, he points to some active assembly machines.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

If those machines aren't necessary, shut them off and everything we don't need until we make it through this.

INT. SPACEX, CONFERENCE ROOM, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Elon looks over the new daily reports. Any car guy would drown in this many details. His eyes are bloodshot.

A HAND SLAMS a check on the table. It's Gwynne.

ELON MUSK

What's this for?

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

For you. For taking us to the finish line. Now do the same for Tesla.

ELON MUSK

Gwynne, I can't.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
 You've never said "I can't" in your
 whole life. Yes. "You can." Pay me
 back when #4 launches.

He smiles at her. Chris enters. He places a check down.

CHRIS THOMPSON
 Nobody has ever given me this kind
 of autonomy before. This is my way
 of giving back.

Tim and Tom enter.

TIM BUZZA
 We flew in coach, don't worry.
 (places check)
 I figure once we colonize Mars, we're
 gonna need electric cars up there.

Tom places his check down.

TOM MUELLER
 You believed in what I could do before
 I even knew if I could. I didn't
 think it would work. Now it's real.

MB enters and places the final check down.

MARY BETH
 I'm at Tesla so much, I deserve a
 car.

The original team is all together, ready to battle for Elon.

ELON MUSK
 Why are you all doing this for me?

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
 If you had the chance to go back in
 time and work with Howard Hughes
 when he was creating TWA. If you
 had a chance to be there at that
 moment when it was the dawn of a
 brand new era, wouldn't you want to
 do that? That's why I'm here.

TIM BUZZA
 That's why we're all here.

Elon has no words. A man so close to the edge of sanity, and
 now he can't help but think one thing -

ELON MUSK
 Is this legal?

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
 No. I'll collect it and have SpaceX
 "loan" it to you.

ELON MUSK
 There it is.

INT. TESLA, BOARD ROOM - DAY

Elon signs over the last of his account.

ELON MUSK

We delivered another 20 cars.

While positive, it doesn't have an effect on Antonio.

ANTONIO GRACIAS

The board will review the debt round
and give you our response.

EXT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

Elon gets in his Roadster, MB joins him.

ELON MUSK

You're buying lunch.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - EVENING

Elon walks around the factory. All of the employees have left. He stares at DRAGON on the test stand. He hops in.

He grabs the controls and plays with it like he's in an arcade game, making rocket noises and yelling fake commands.

LOOKING THROUGH THE COCKPIT WINDOW, ELON IMAGINES

The Capsule taking off, flying through the factory ceiling and heading into -

OUTER SPACE

Stars whip past. It's the magic of space flight. Elon's coffee floats in Zero G. The MOON passes by the window.

He's now flying through deep space. Mars is only a tiny red dot - but it's growing larger as he gets closer.

REVERSE ANGLE AT ELON

We're not in the Dragon Capsule anymore. We're in -

INT. ERROL MUSK HOME, BOYS' BEDROOM - NIGHT (1982)

Young Elon lays on his back looking through a slanted skylight covered by sheets to look more like a hexagon cockpit.

He holds a video game controller as a command stick. He's in his own world of imagination. His happy place.

END OF IMAGINATION

Elon smiles. Through all the stress, he cheers himself up.

Gwynne sees it, but doesn't disturb him. Elon then speaks -

ELON MUSK

When I was 12, I made my first video game, Blaster. Taught myself from scratch how to do it. Sold it for \$500. I was so proud, it made me angry. I had an existential crisis.

(explains)

I was reading Nietzsche and Shopenhauer, which you should not do as a 12 year old, FYI.

(continues)

Then I read Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. It's the question that matters. The answer is the easy part.

(he asks himself)

"What is the meaning of life?"

That was the question Elon would spend all his life answering.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL

Get some rest. Big day tomorrow.

Gwynne leaves him to his thoughts.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The birds chirp. The sun shines.

CHYRON: September 28th, 2008. Falcon 1, Test #4.

INT. KWAJALEIN, BARRACKS - DAY

An alarm RINGS! Everyone is out of their bunks and moving to their battle stations. They are fired up.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Engineers answer the call to action in every corner of the island. This is watching soldiers in the midst of war.

INT. KWAJALEIN, PAYLOAD HANGAR - DAY

Technicians load the PAYLOAD into its casing.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The casing is placed onto a horizontal Falcon 1 that sits on a ROCKET RIG. The Rigs' hydraulics LIFT the rocket vertically and connect it to the stand. Workers connect the FUEL PUMP.

LOX condensation shoots out the rocket's side vent valves. They finally remove the fuel pump and leave the launch site.

A WELDER wearing a MICKEY MOUSE T-shirt walks toward us. C/U on Mickey Mouse. He has a devilish grin on his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. DISNEYLAND, ANAHEIM, CA - DAY

A VENDOR with the same shirt gives Elon and Kimbal churros. The biggest day of his life and his brother took him to Disneyland to relax. Elon is anything but calm.

ELON MUSK
You took me to fucking Disneyland.

KIMBAL MUSK
You needed to calm down today.

ELON MUSK
I don't know how to do that.

KIMBAL MUSK
Look at it this way - You can't fix what you already fucked up. So you either fucked up your whole life and it was always going to end this way.
(Elon buys that)
Or...you just so happened to do everything right and it took until this moment for you to succeed.
(takes a bite)
Either way, enjoy a churro.

CUT TO:

SPACEX LIVE STREAMING WEBCAST

A TITLE SCREEN with the SpaceX logo, like a movie studio. A Discovery Channel-style show on the Falcon 1 launch begins. The webcast explains every part of the launch in detail.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The Falcon 1 provides the world's lowest cost ride to orbit for small payloads. It also acts as development for the much larger Falcon 9 which will take man to outer space.

It PLAYS throughout the following until the launch is ready:

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

The factory DOORS OPEN. PRESS floods in. Gwynne handles them.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL
Welcome to SpaceX, everybody. Follow me. There is so much to show you.

MISSION CONTROL -- The monitors have the launch viewable. The entire company watches through the glass wall.

SECOND FLOOR -- Cameras are set up to handle all the marketing blitz for this event. Gwynne produces the webcast.

GWYNNE SHOTWELL (CONT'D)
As you can see behind me, we are streaming this historic event live for the entire world.

CAMERA ROOM -- Off to the side of the floor is a makeshift SpaceX Newsroom. It's their own personal reporting team. They will be live, broadcasting the play-by-play.

EXT. HAWAII AIRPORT - DAY

Elon's jet arrives. He is then guided to a HUEY HELICOPTOR.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Workers close the vent valves when it's this close to launch.

INT./EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

The Huey approaches Kwaj. Elon stares out at his island. His last chance. He reminisces for a moment.

ELON MUSK

Now we look like Bond Villains.
Sean Connery Bond Villains.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

The Huey lands. Elon sees all the hustle of his workers.

The crane pulls away from Falcon 1. It's the last step. Falcon 1 is ready...

CONTROL TRAILER (O.S.)

We are go in T-minus 15 minutes.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon meets Kimbal inside. The team concludes prechecks.

KIMBAL MUSK

I'm proud of you.

ELON MUSK

Really?

KIMBAL MUSK

If it launches? Sure, why not?

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)

Falcon 1 precheck complete. We are go for launch.

They look at the monitor. Falcon 1 stands all alone. Elon takes a personal moment and looks up to the heavens.

ELON MUSK

I'm just wishing to any entities listening. Please bless this launch.

Elon grabs the controls. It's time.

ELON MUSK (CONT'D)

Falcon 1 is a go. Fire when ready.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)

Copy that.

INT. SOLAR CITY, BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Peter and Lyndon watch the webcast. They have a miniature Burning Man statue on their desk. They light it on fire.

PETER RIVE
Light up the world, E.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Launch in T-minus...

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - CONTINUOUS

Factory workers watch through the glass wall.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
...5...

INT. NASA HQ, CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Griffin and Worden watch from NASA's Mission Control.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
...4...

INT. IRON MAN 2 SET, DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

RDJ watches while PA's strap Iron Man's chest plate on him.

INT. JEFF SKOLL HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jeff watches on his couch.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
...3...

INT. MUSK HOME, LIVING ROOM, LOS ANGELES - CONTINUOUS

Justine watches with the five boys.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - CONTINUOUS

The deluge SPRAYS for maybe the last time.

INT. TESLA, FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - CONTINUOUS

JB watches with a crowd of Tesla workers. All nervous.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
...2...

INT. SPACEX, MISSION CONTROL, HAWTHORNE - CONTINUOUS

Gwynne watches on the monitor, fully confident.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
...1...

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

Elon stares intensely at the screen. This is for everything he's worked towards. He nods to control.

CONTROL ROOM
Go for launch.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
We are go for ignition.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - CONTINUOUS

Falcon 1 BLASTS OFF the platform.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

The room RUMBLES as the rocket rises above the tower.

EXT. SKY:

Up in the sky, the rocket flies higher and higher, going Mach 1. So far, so good.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - CONTINUOUS

The press now join the employees to watch through the window. They all have the same awed look as the Apollo 11 crowds.

EXT. SKY:

Stage 1 accelerates sideways to Max Q thrust.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
T+ 2 min. Commence Stage 1 Separation.

The shackles on Stage 1 UNHINGE.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Separation complete. Fire Stage 2.

But Stage 1 doesn't fall away. The timing is off again. Stage 1 ACCELERATES just like Launch #3. *Will it hit?!?*

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon sees Stage 1 catching Stage 2 on the monitor.

ELON MUSK
Come on, baby. You can do this.

EXT. SKY:

They are about to hit! At the last moment, Stage 2 finds another gear and SPEEDS UP. It keeps Stage 1 at bay long enough to thrust itself far away and into Low Earth Orbit.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
T+5 min, Stage 2 on target.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon lets out a long held breath. And then takes an even deeper breath. This is the final step...

EXT. LOW EARTH ORBIT:

Stage 2 pushes deeper into orbit. They have never gotten this far. No chance to fix errors. Anything could go wrong.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Commence Fairing release.

The NOSE OPENS. Like peeling away a pistachio shell, the casing is released. Time for deployment.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Fairing released. Deploy Payload.

The "dummy" Payload DISCONNECTS from Stage 2.

A tense beat. Stage 2 throttles down but is right behind it. So much can go wrong right here...

Then, as graceful as a butterfly, the Payload outstretches its solar wings and soaks in the sunlight. The Payload gets carried away into LEO. Stage 2 fades from view.

MISSION COMPLETE.

SPACEX MISSION CONTROL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Payload deployed. Mission success!
Falcon 1 is a mission success!

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

Employees, friends, and family on the floor number in the thousands celebrate like they just won the World Series.

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

The room screams with so much joy. Champagne bottles pop! Elon cries, his face buried in his hands. Kimbal hugs him.

KIMBAL MUSK
 I'm proud of you! I'm proud of you!

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY

Tim and Tom hug and shout at each other like two little kids.

TOM AND TIM
 All you! No! All you!!

INT. SPACEX, MISSION CONTROL, HAWTHORNE - DAY

The team is ecstatic. Gwynne, Chris, and MB jump up and down.

INT. TESLA FACTORY, SAN CARLOS, CA - DAY

JB and the entire factory cheer in delight.

INT. MUSK HOME, LIVING ROOM, LOS ANGELES - DAY

Justine can't help but crack a smile. *He really did it.*

INT. KWAJALEIN, TEMPORARY MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Elon is immediately escorted out to his helicopter.

SPACEX WEBCAST REPORTER (O.S.)

We are getting word that CEO Elon Musk will be joining momentarily.

INT. SPACEX, FACTORY, HAWTHORNE - DAY

The celebration hasn't slowed down. They can hear the helicopter touch down.

The BAY DOORS OPEN. Elon enters. The company ERUPTS! Even members of the press and NASA can't help but clap.

Elon stands in front of a raucous crowd. He is the tried and true rock star - their leader. Cameras capture this moment for the world. They quiet as Elon prepares to speak.

ELON MUSK

A lot of people thought we couldn't do it. A lot. But ya know the saying, "Fourth times the charm."

(laughs, then serious)

One of the most significant achievements in the four billion year history of Earth will be when man becomes a multiplanetary species. For the first time, our rocket begins the steps toward making that possible.

This is a truly historic day.

Elon sees all the happy families. He checks his phone - his background is Justine and the kids. His sacrifice for mankind.

INT. NASA HQ, LOBBY - DAY

Gwynne and Elon await their COTS fate. NO SOUND except -

RECEPTION

Mr. Musk?

He follows her. We hear Elon's shoes KNOCK on the tile.

INT. NASA HQ, MICHAEL GRIFFIN'S OFFICE - DAY

STILL NO SOUND. Michael directs Elon to sit in a chair. Michael speaks. It's hard to tell if it's good or bad.

INT. NASA HQ, LOBBY - LATER

STILL NO SOUND. Gwynne reads a magazine. The KNOCKING grows closer as Elon re-enters. Gwynne stands. Elon, in full emotional outburst, hugs her. As Gwynne pulls away, she smiles and laughs: Good!

INT. KIMBAL'S MOUNTAIN LODGE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CHYRON: Colorado. 5:00pm Christmas Day, 2008.

Kimbal cooks. Elon stares at two laptops.

KIMBAL MUSK
A watched pot never boils.

ELON MUSK
Stoves don't deal with wifi.

LAPTOP #1 SCREEN -- Transactions processing for the wire transfer of NASA's money.

Kimbal brings Elon a bowl of RED SKITTLES. Elon passes, too distressed. Kimbal peers at the second laptop.

LAPTOP #2 SCREEN -- Email for Tesla Bankruptcy proceedings.

KIMBAL MUSK
They have an hour left. They'll call.

LATER -- All quiet. Kimbal builds a fire. Elon sketches in a notebook at the table, nervously looking at the clock.

A phone RINGS, startling Kimbal and Elon. It was Kimbal's.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
False alarm. Turning it off.

ELON MUSK
Give a guy a heart attack why don't -

Elon's phone RINGS. They freeze. Elon takes a big scoop of Skittles and scarfs them down. He picks up, but can't speak.

ANTONIO GRACIAS (O.S.)
Check your email.

LAPTOP #2 SCREEN -- New Email. Elon opens it. It's from the Tesla investors. They matched Elon's \$40 million.

ANTONIO GRACIAS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Merry Christmas. <Click>

Elon, overcome with emotions, runs outside for air.

EXT. KIMBAL'S MOUNTAIN LODGE - NIGHT

Elon's heart races as he stands on the patio in just his socks. They quickly soak from the snow. He doesn't care. He ROARS! Kimbal joins him, glad to see Elon free once more.

KIMBAL MUSK
So? What's the next adventure?

A COMET shoots across the sky. Then another. Elon smirks.

KIMBAL MUSK (CONT'D)
You already started, didn't you?

INT. KIMBAL'S MOUNTAIN LODGE - NIGHT

On the table is a familiar composition notebook. On the open page is a sketch for an air-powered rail system tentatively titled: HYPERLOOP.

He has already started indeed...

FADE OUT:

INT. STANFORD UNIVERSITY, HALL B, GRADUATION - DAY

In full cap & gown, Elon receives a STANDING OVATION as he is presented with an honorary degree from the school he left (not quit) to chase his dreams.

From the front row, Kimbal shows his brother support - by holding out 2 fingers and mouthing, "2 days" on repeat.

The audience quiets down and takes their seats. Elon begins his keynote speech to the graduating class.

ELON MUSK

Life has to be about more than solving problems. Be inspired. Do things. Be proud to be a part of humanity.

EXT. TESLA SUPERCHARGING STATION, NEVADA - DAY

A brand new MODEL S finishes charging at a Tesla Station.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)

And when you are inspired, work hard at it. Every. Single. Day.

CHYRON: Tesla released the Model S Sedan in 2012. Motortrend unanimously voted it "Car of the Year". Consumer Reports gave it the highest rating of any car in its history. 99/100.

The Model S PULLS OUT and hits the open road.

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

If you put in 100 hours of work and your competitor puts in 50 hours...

ON ONE SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY -- miles of housing developments, all with SOLAR PANELS on their roofs.

CHYRON: Solar City is the largest solar energy services provider in the U.S. and the 3rd largest in the world.

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...then what it takes them a year to do, you'll accomplish in 6 months.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY -- is the battery producing GIGAFACTORY, the largest man made structure in the world.

CHYRON: Tesla acquired Solar City in 2016 for \$2 billion to become a one stop shop for clean, renewable energy.

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

But be prepared to fail...A lot.

EXT. KWAJALEIN, LAUNCH SITE - DAY (FLIGHT #1 CRASH, 2006)

The Falcon 1 EXPLODES in mid-air shortly after launch.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
*So what happens when things go wrong?
 When times get tough? What do you
 do when you're one misstep away from
 total failure? Do you quit?*

Below, the MACHINE SHOP is on FIRE. Elon watches the SpaceX logo melt. Workers pull damaged equipment from the ocean.

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*There's going to be a lot of noise -
 a lot of sound - doubting you.*

INT. SPACEX, EL SEGUNDO - (2002)

The first time Elon stood inside his factory. It's empty.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
DON'T LISTEN TO IT.

INT. SPACEX, HAWTHORNE - (FLIGHT #4 SUCCESS, 2008)

SpaceX is filled with workers, rockets, and high-tech gear.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
*Stay focused and find your signal -
 that sound only you can hear that
 points you in a single direction.
 Hear the signal, not the sound.*

On ELON'S CALENDAR, MB adds a new event: LAUNCH #5.

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*And when you hear it, and you will,
 it will say one thing to you: Believe.*

EXT. LOW EARTH ORBIT, FALCON 9 FLIGHT (2016)

As Falcon 9 hits Max Q, Stage 1 DISENGAGES. Stage 2 continues flying as Stage 1 falls back to Earth...until it REFIRES!

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
*Believe in the research, the theories,
 the calculations, and the results.*

Deftly, the booster's propulsion system guides it, targeting a BARGE in the Atlantic Ocean trying to "catch" the rocket. Stage 1 touches down softly, landing upright on the barge.

CHYRON: *On April 8th, 2016 SpaceX's Falcon 9 booster became the first successful reusable rocket in space history.*

EXT. PAD 39A, FALCON 9, CAPE CANAVERAL - AFTERNOON (2017)

Falcon 9 LIFTS OFF from the pad where Apollo 11 made history.

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
*Believe in the attempts, the failures,
 the set backs, and the progress.*

CHYRON: *On February 19th, 2017, SpaceX successfully launched their first mission from NASA's Pad 39a to resupply the I.S.S.*

INT. SPACEX, OFFICE, HAWTHORNE - NIGHT (2017)

As the lights SHUT OFF, we stare down the end of a long hallway. TWO LARGE FLAGS hang - both of Mars. One as the Red Planet. One filled with green plants...and people...

ELON MUSK (O.S.)
Believe in the vision.

CHYRON: *Today, SpaceX is worth more than \$12 billion.*

LOOKING THROUGH A COCKPIT WINDOW

A Dragon Capsule ZOOMS through deep space.

REVERSE ANGLE AT PILOT

It's Elon in a full astronaut suit. Stars reflect off his helmet. The faster he flies, the faster stars whip past. A LARGE RED OBJECT appears at the bottom of the reflection.

Its size grows as he gets closer. We know what it is...

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
And above all, believe in yourself,

...MARS...He's on his way...

ELON MUSK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
And say, "Fuck it. I can do anything."

FADE OUT: