

DREAM RIDER

AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
BY

PIPER PICHETTE

FULL CAST:

Meri Mellot: Japanese-American teen girl, 19 years

Zach Fieldman: Euro-American, Meri's boyfriend, 21 years

Pierre Smith: Meri's Grandfather, 65 years

Olivia Smith: Meri's Grandmother, 70 years

Cliff Johnson: Police Inspector, 51 years

Nick Fisher: Sergeant, 22 years

Thin Man: crazy man in tuxedo, age unknown

"Mad" Miles Doomsbree: scientist, 30 years

Rosie Hall: woman in red, 35 years

Joel: African-American male, 28 years

Luc ("Luke"): Indian-American male, 25 years

Rake Jake: British, train-station manager, 43 years

Wilhelm: Zach's father, 40 years

Anita: Zach's mother, 30 years

Lame Boy: Zach at 8 years

Matt: Japanese, Meri's Father, 30 years

Penny: Euro-American, Meri's Mother, 32 years

Teppy: Meri's Sister, 9 years (unspoken)

Brakeman

Passenger

Thug

Woman

Man

EXT. SMALL PLANE LANDING FIELD - DAY

A Crowd gathers on the edge of a plane field.

It's a small, low-class airport with tiny planes, but they easily transport people to and from a secluded neighborhood.

The town is separated from the field by a long wire gate. School children laugh as they run to watch a plane take off.

PIERRE and OLIVIA SMITH stand together amongst a large crowd of onlookers on the field. Pierre - a grandfather at 50 years - has a tired, worried look on his face. Olivia - his wife at 55 - shivers in the cold, impatient.

A passenger hot-air balloon appears and makes a slow descent. Workers run over to catch ropes tossed from the basket.

MAN

Where are the other two?

The passenger balloon is stabilized over a large landing pad and the ropes are tied to steel loops in the pavement.

The pilot WILHELM FIELDMAN - aged 30 - jumps out of the basket and secures the steps for people to disembark.

A LAME BOY - 8 years - comes out, his left leg in a brace. He uses the basket as support and holds the door for passengers.

MERI - an Asian girl, aged 9 - gets out. She walks away and stands alone for a while. The Lame Boy watches her.

The balloon is emptied. Wilhelm bends over and talks to Meri. Only noise of families reuniting. Wilhelm takes Meri by the hand and she leads him through the crowd.

The Lame Boy follows them, awkwardly with his leg-brace but with previous practice. Pierre and Olivia meet them.

WILHELM

Mister and Mrs. Smith, I presume?

PIERRE

Yes?

WILHELM

My name is Wilhelm Fieldman.

OLIVIA

Where are the other balloons?

Wilhelm is slow to reply.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
 (impatiently)
 Meri? What's going on?

Meri fiddles with a flower ring on her finger. No reply.

WILHELM
 (tentative)
 I'm sorry, but I have some bad news. The other two balloons were lost in a storm last night. We didn't see where they went. It was while we passed over the mountains.

He rubs Meri's shoulder. The Lame Boy comes up behind him.

PIERRE
 Our daughter? Her Mother; she--

WILHELM
 She and her husband took one of the other balloons. Their other daughter, too. Mine had only one seat left and...

He glances at Meri.

WILHELM (CONT'D)
 ... and they gave *her* that seat.
 I'm really sorry.

Olivia catches her breath and turns her back on all, continuing to shiver. Pierre holds out his arms to Meri.

They head back to the neighborhood. Wilhelm watches, his arm now around the shoulders of the Lame Boy.

FADE TO: EXT. MERI'S GRANDPARENTS HOUSE - DAY

TITLE: TEN YEARS LATER.

A gated front garden that opens onto the main street. The plane field can be seen easily from the house.

MERI, now 19, sticks her head out of the door. She's in a blue dress with yellow flowers.

A police car pulls up the street from the plane field. The driver - CLIFF JOHNSON, aged 51 - is suited, wearing sunglasses, and has his window rolled down. Meri waves.

MERI
 Afternoon, Cliff!

Cliff smiles and waves back.

She watches him go and then looks left and right. She walks to the gate and repeats the motion. She turns to the door.

MERI (CONT'D)

All clear! C'mon!

ZACH, 21, comes out of the door, grinning. He's tall, lanky, frisky blonde hair, in a plain T-shirt, dark navy jeans, sneakers and carries an aviator's sweater in one hand.

Chuckling, he grasps her hand with his other and looks around. She unlocks the gate and he slips onto the sidewalk, pulling out an iPod and earphones from his jeans pocket.

ZACH

Wish me luck!

MERI

Good luck.

Zach looks down to tie his sweater around his waist.

MERI (CONT'D)

And Zach?

Zach turns to her in question and she plants a kiss on his lips. He returns it and strokes her cheek with a finger.

ZACH

See you later, Samurai.

They gaze the direction Cliff went, then laugh out loud.

Zach waves and jogs down the street toward the plane field.

Meri giggles as she watches him go. She looks around once more and skips back into the house.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is occupied by a long couch and a low table. The decorations are vibrant with colors. A big blue vase and silver dish occupy the mantle. A large portrait of a Samurai warrior, equipped with a quiver and two blades, hangs above.

Meri walks dreamily from the door to the mantle. She looks up at the portrait. The plaque reads: "Mellot, Yuki-san."

She moves the couch and its table to make a big space in the center of the room.

INT. CUPBOARD - CONTINUOUS

She opens the Cupboard and retrieves a broom. She spins off the brush end and leaves it behind.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She stands before the painting of Yuki Mellot, holding the broomstick horizontally before her.

MERI

I will fight for you, alone, though
hell should gape and bid me hold my
place and tongue.

(pauses)

Is Shakespeare appropriate in
Japan? Oh, whatever.

She suddenly turns and thrusts the stick behind her.

MERI (CONT'D)

(miming battle)

Hai-yah! Yah!

EXT. MERI'S GRANDPARENTS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A car pulls up in the driveway. Pierre and Olivia get out.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meri continues to play with the stick.

EXT. MERI'S GRANDPARENTS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Olivia steps onto the porch first, high heels clicking.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meri's stick hits the blue vase. It crashes to the floor.

The front door opens and they come in.

OLIVIA

Meri? What are you---

OLIVIA'S POV. - The vase in pieces, a stick in Meri's hands.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Meredith Mellot! How could you?

MERI
Grandma, I'm sorry--

OLIVIA
You *will* be sorry! I've told you a thousand times not to bring your worthless dreaming into this house!

MERI
I wasn't dreaming!

OLIVIA
Is wielding a giant stick dangerously around the house not *dreaming*?! Now that you've broken a *priceless* heirloom to my family?

MERI
Priceless heirloom? You tried to sell that thing last month!

OLIVIA
Meredith!

PIERRE
(calmly)
Meri? Please.

MERI
(reluctantly)
I'm sorry. I'll clean it up.

OLIVIA
You'll do more than that. And *Sorry* doesn't cut it! This is the last straw, and I've said that before, I'll warrant. You're grounded.

MERI
(shocked)
Wh-What?! I have school!

OLIVIA
I'll call the principal and I'm sure she'll agree with my decision.

PIERRE
Olivia, darling, please---

OLIVIA
Pierre? Don't you get over-excited, too! You'll have a heart attack.

Olivia turns and walks into her living quarters.

Meri sighs and gathers up the vase on the silver platter. She heads to the trash can, passing in front of Pierre.

PIERRE

I didn't like that vase, either.

Meri forces a smile. He lays a hand on her shoulder.

PIERRE (CONT'D)

I dreamed a lot, love, when I was your age. Sorry. You got it from your mother's side of the family. But you got the Samurai from your dad's, all right.

(re. painting)

A proud lineage. Wise common sense.

MERI

(disappointed)

Some Common Sense.

She noisily dumps the china in the trash can.

PIERRE

You can run off to that boy's place, if you know where it is...

MERI

(shocked)

Grandfather!

PIERRE

I know kind people when I see them. (beat) True, I only saw that kid when he was running out the door before your granny's walking stick! But any man who fears Old Olivia *must* be good, don't you think?

(whispers)

Go on. I'll tell her that you've gone to Melissa's!

MERI

I'm grounded!

PIERRE

Then I'll say you went to the store, running errands. Best keep your mobile on. I'll let you know when her temper boils down. Now, I feel peckish...

He turns and goes into the kitchen.

Meri sighs again, turning to the bedroom where Olivia went.

MERI

Will it ever boil down?

She gazes again at the painting of Yuki Mellot.

FADE TO: INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The main room is 3-in-1: sitting room, kitchen, dining hall.

To the light of one table-lamp, Zach lounges on the couch, halfway through a large book of Shakespeare's classics.

DING DONG! He looks up at the doorbell and rushes to finish a line. He bookmarks his place and jumps up to answer the door.

Meri is standing on the threshold. Her hair slightly mussed, she wears an aviator's jacket, which is way too big for her, over her dress. A backpack is slung over one shoulder.

ZACH

Meri?

MERI

Can I come in?

ZACH

(beat) Sure.

Meri passes him and walks to the center of the room. She drops her pack to the floor with a weary sigh.

MERI

I'm sorry to come here so late. I couldn't think of anywhere else.

ZACH

Is this your... grandmother again?

MERI

(chuckles)

I'm afraid so. (beat) She seems to hate my dad more every day. It doesn't matter how long he's...

ZACH

Make yourself comfortable.

MERI

Thanks.

Meri moves to the couch and Zach goes across to the kitchen.

ZACH

You want something to drink? Apart from Coffee and Water, I have Ginger Ale and Coke.

MERI

Ginger Ale is good, thanks.

Zach pours the drinks from a bottle in the fridge. Meri sees his book on the couch and studies it. He returns.

MERI (CONT'D)

I didn't know you read Shakespeare. I'm a fan myself.

Zach sits on the couch and hands her a glass.

ZACH

That makes the two of us. Cheers?

MERI

Cheers.

Their plastic glasses meet but make no sound.

ZACH

(re. glasses)
Clink!

Meri laughs and they both take their first sip.

MERI

Zach? (beat) My grandpa is the best in the world, but my granny's the worst. I hate to ask----

ZACH

(interrupts)
Meri, it's fine. You can stay. I have a spare room.

He gestures over his shoulder.

MERI

Thanks. That means a lot.

He smiles knowingly. Beat. She picks up the Shakespeare book.

MERI (CONT'D)

So, you're reading Shakespeare?

Zach sets down his glass.

ZACH
Yeah. 'The Scottish play' now.

MERI
(spooky-like)
Ooh! Bad luck!

They laugh and Meri opens the book to his bookmark.
She reads dramatically.

MERI (CONT'D)
"My royal lord. You do not give the
cheer. The feast is sold. That is
not often vouch'd while 'tis a-
making."

Zach scoots over beside her to read along.

MERI (CONT'D)
"'Tis given with welcome. To feed
were best at home. From thence the
sauce to meat is ceremony. Meeting
were bare without it."

Zach takes over the reading.

ZACH
"Sweet remembrancer! Now, good
digestion wait on appetite, and
health to both!"

Meri gestures to the side as if to include a third person.

MERI
(in deep voice)
"May 't please your highness sit."

They chuckle and Zach peers at the book.

ZACH
(summarizes)
And the Ghost of Banquo enters.

Meri grabs the book and quickly slams it closed.

MERI
Oh! No ghost, please!

ZACH
(feinting shock)
What is this? Methinks the lady
doth shiver too much!

MERI

Oh, we're going improv now, are we?

ZACH

Pray tell; doth thy ghost lead you into walls? Would thou *knowest* thy ghost at all?

MERI

My ghost is no concern of thine, knave! Have at ye!

She slaps his shoulder.

ZACH

(laughs)

Away thy hand, Coward!

MERI

Take you me for a coward, my lord?

ZACH

Aye, a woman coward--! But let that go; for what is a woman coward with a *fighting prince*?

MERI

No! (beat) Hark! What fool from yonder couch-end boasts?

ZACH

Fie! You cheat!

MERI

I swear, I do not cheat at all. Merely a fool taunting a fool.

ZACH

But soft! Our play grows bitter.

MERI

Then I'll turn the breeze. Prithee, my fighting prince; what wilt thou for a woman coward?

ZACH

Woul't weep? Woul't fight? Woul't fast? I'll do't!

MERI

So quoth Hamlet.

ZACH

Aye, so quoth Hamlet. What is he,
as a thief of lines? It is I. Aye,
the lines of a thief, (beat) but a
thief's heart in ev'ry word.

They kiss.

Meri's hand goes to his cheek. She strokes his neck and tries to reach his chest but his hand stops hers there.

Zach parts from her and gives a sigh. He leans his forehead against hers, eyes downcast.

ZACH (CONT'D)

It's getting late.

He withdraws and takes the book, standing it up on the floor by the couch. Meri doesn't respond.

ZACH (CONT'D)

Take my room. I'll take the
spare...

He exits quickly. Meri is left alone with the single lamp.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN: INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Scrambled eggs sizzle in a pan. In an apron, Zach stands over the stove, dipping bread strips in an egg mix and laying them on another burner. He mixes the eggs with a spatula.

Meri appears in the doorway, hair brushed, in a red tunic and leggings with sturdy heeled boots. Awkwardly, she coughs.

Meri's POV. - The counter is made up with two spots and two high stools. On the other side of the counter, Zach smiles.

ZACH

Good morning!

MERI

Morning.

ZACH

Slept well?

MERI

Yeah. Pretty well. You?

ZACH

Same.

MERI

Making breakfast?

ZACH

Eggs and french toast.

MERI

Sounds good.

ZACH

Take a seat. It's almost done.
(beat) By the way, how'd you find
your way here last night? I never
told you my address.

MERI

I looked you up in the phone book.
Only one address popped up, so...

ZACH

Ah! The Fieldman Flaw strikes
again! I *knew* I shouldn't have told
you my surname.

MERI

Well, mine's Mellot. We're even!

ZACH

Ha-ha! Thanks.

He turns the toast with a pair of tongs.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dressed casually, Pierre sits on the couch, reading the
newspaper. Olivia comes out of the bedroom in her nightgown.

OLIVIA

How long does it take for Meri to
make breakfast?

PIERRE

Who?

OLIVIA

Meri? Our *granddaughter*?

He nods and continues reading. Olivia glares at him.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
 Just like her mother, not listening
 to a word I say. I could be dying
 right now and *no one would know it!*

PIERRE
 Hmm? What did you say, love?

OLIVIA
 UGH!!

Olivia storms back into the bedroom. Pierre shrugs.

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Zach and Meri sit side by side at the counter. Their plates empty, they sip from mugs of coffee. Zach's apron lies on the counter beside him. He wears a brown striped T-shirt and khaki convertible pants with converse sneakers.

MERI
 I had no idea you could cook.

ZACH
 Well, I'm not a chef but I have to
 do something to stay alive.

Meri reaches over his plate and touches the apron.

MERI
 You pull off the man in an apron
 pretty well, you know.

ZACH
 Thanks.

MERI
 You look like a stay-at-home dad.

ZACH
 Hey!

MERI
 You do! A substitute mommy.

ZACH
 Stop it, you jest!

She laughs. He drapes the apron over his shoulder.

ZACH (CONT'D)
 Seriously, a stay-at-home dad's as
 good as any. Nothing to joke about.

He picks up their plates and puts them in the sink.

ZACH (CONT'D)
I mean, my own dad's an example!
He'll get you for that.

He turns on the water. Meri laughs.

MERI
Bring him on! Where is he anyway?
You've come up "close and personal"
with my grandparents. I bet it's my
turn to meet *your* family.

The water runs and Zach stares at it.

MERI (CONT'D)
Zach?

ZACH
He's not here.

MERI
What?

Zach remembers the water is on and turns it off.

ZACH
He's not here. My dad.

He cleans up the glasses. Meri waits awkwardly.

ZACH (CONT'D)
He's missing. (beat) He went out in
his plane and...

MERI
I'm sorry.

ZACH
He hasn't come back yet. Not yet.

They pause as he washes the dishes and glasses.

MERI
Can I ask about your mom?

ZACH
She's gone, too.

MERI
Oh Zach!

ZACH
 Don't. She died when I was a baby.
 I barely knew her.

MERI
 (beat) If it helps, I lost both my
 parents when I was ten.

ZACH
 Oh, Meri.

MERI
Quid pro quo.

ZACH
 Thanks. You want some more coffee?

MERI
 Sure!

He refills her mug. Pause as he refills his own mug.

MERI (CONT'D)
 Zach?

ZACH
 Hmm?

MERI
 About last night...

ZACH
 Oh, please don't--

MERI
 No. I want to know what happened.
 (beat) Seriously! Listen. Something
 pulled you away suddenly. We have a
 wonderful relationship and I don't
 want that to fall apart.

ZACH
 Neither do I.

MERI
 Exactly. What is it? What was it?

Zach sets down the coffee and fiddles his hands, twirling one
 index finger around the other.

ZACH
 I didn't want to take advantage.

MERI

Advantage? Zach, I'm pretty sure I
kissed you first. If anyone, I
would have taken advantage of you.
Were you afraid of me?

Zach smiles and shakes his head, continuing to fiddle.

MERI (CONT'D)

Trust me. Was it something I said?

ZACH

No! No. (beat) Well, I suppose
you'll find out sooner or later.

He carries his mug back around to his stool next to her.

ZACH (CONT'D)

Even I can't run away from it.

He sets his mug on the counter and unzips the removable panel
of his left pant leg. He lets the panel drop to his ankle.

The end of a long pale scar is revealed, starting mid shin
and rides up the outside of his leg.

MERI

Oh my God!

Zach doesn't reply. He watches her reactions.

MERI (CONT'D)

Zach! I didn't know. (beat) Wait,
is that *all*?

Zach hesitates and lifts the left side of his shirt. The
other end of the scar is over his lower rib.

MERI (CONT'D)

Oh, my. I'm sorry!

He wordlessly tucks his shirt in again. Meri silences herself
as he reattaches his pant leg.

MERI (CONT'D)

You know, that's a status point in
Rome? That is *some* scar!

ZACH

(chuckles)

You know, I kept telling myself the
same thing?

Their laughter fades into silence. Zach fiddles again.

ZACH (CONT'D)

My father has a dark past. (beat)
He got stuck in a gang and tried to
get out for my sake. I was five.

MEMORY FLASH - A grinning THUG with an automatic.

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

They barged into our house one day.
I pushed Dad out the back door.

MEMORY FLASH - A young Wilhelm runs down the street.

ZACH (CONT'D)

He got the police and the gang was
arrested. For trespassing and
attempted murder.

MEMORY FLASH - The THUG aims gun. GUNSHOT.

MERI

What?

ZACH

I was running after my dad. Two
bullets, that's all. One in my hip
and that brought me down. The
second went through my leg.

He rubs his left knee, then forces a laugh.

MEMORY FLASH - An Operating table circled by surgeons.

ZACH (V.O.)

Those doctors, they were *nuts!* They
had no idea where to start cutting
and where to stop. They knew there
were two bullets, so...

Zach runs his hand up to his waist.

ZACH

... like Connect-the-dots!

MERI

Zach.

ZACH

I was as lame as a beggar. My Dad
blamed himself. I was home-
schooled, I was his apprentice...
He never let me out of his sight.

MERI

How long did it take to heal?

ZACH

Truthfully, I walked on my own about a year ago. Exercise. *That's* why I'm jogging down your street.

MERI

And why I don't see you at school.

ZACH

Yep. It was weird, when he first left me alone. Like he knew he wasn't going to be around forever.

MERI

What did he fly?

ZACH

Passenger balloons. Then solo.

MERI

I rode in a passenger balloon. It was cool, but a bit scary!

ZACH

Don't worry, it's thick metal between the wicker and wood flooring. When did you ride?

MERI

(hesitant)

It was only once. When I lost my parents. Never mind.

ZACH

It's okay. I chose to tell you about my leg. You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to.

He smiles and she pauses.

MERI

I was nine. We didn't trust the passenger balloons - brand new technology and all. In a storm, the engine of our plane died. We crash landed in the mountains.

ZACH

Whoa! Good pilot.

MERI

Three passenger balloons came to our aid. What could we do, refuse them? They filled up fast.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLIFF FACE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Wind and snow batters a crowd of people milling between three passenger balloons. MATT MELLOTT and his wife PENNY rush through a frantic crowd. PENNY tows Meri, 9.

One Balloon is before them, the gate closed. Wilhelm tugs on the ropes from the roof of the passenger compartment.

MATT

Captain! How much room is left?

WILHELM

I'm sorry, sir. I only have one seat. Standing room all the rest.

MATT

Where's the seat?

Wilhelm gestures to where one final seat is by the door. The Lame Boy, 8, sits on the other side of the door.

MATT (CONT'D)

Meri?

PENNY

Matt, no!

MATT

It's going to be all right.

MERI

Daddy?

PENNY

First Teppy, and now her?

MATT

Penny! We have to get the girls out of here. If something happens to us, they have your parents.

MERI

Daddy!

Matt drops down on one knee. He forces a smile.

MATT

You be a good girl. You'll see your grandparents before you know it.

Meri turns to one of the other passenger balloons. TEPPY, 5, peers out at them from inside.

MERI

And Teppy?

Penny covers her mouth to hide a cry.

MATT

And Teppy. You'll both be there.

MERI

And you? And Mama?

Penny drops and hugs Meri tightly.

PENNY

Daddy and I love you.

MERI

Mama?

Matt scoops up Meri in his arms and hugs her.

MATT

Be careful, sweetie. Make us proud.

He hands her to Wilhelm and Wilhelm closes the door.

MERI

Daddy!

Wilhelm sets Meri in the last seat. Matt pulls Penny away and they run to the third balloon. Meri stares after them.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - MOMENTS LATER

The three Passenger Balloons drop off the cliff face.

The storm batters them like a cat with three mice. People scream and cling to their seats or one another.

Wilhelm shouts over the wind. The Lamé Boy rises and braces himself, pulling on the ropes that hold the sails down.

Meri peers out at the other balloons. They fade in the storm.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN: EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

A passenger balloon creeps out of a foggy mass of clouds.

From the controller, Wilhelm peers ahead and then at Meri, sitting in her seat. She stares at the fog.

The Lame Boy is sitting on the other side of the door from Meri. He holds onto one of the ropes and leans forward.

LAME BOY

Hey. It's going to be all right.

Meri looks at him and he smiles.

LAME BOY (CONT'D)

My dad says that all the time.
Things always lighten up.

Meri doesn't reply.

LAME BOY (CONT'D)

Don't worry. Things *will* work out.
You'll see!

Meri doesn't return his smile. She turns and stares at the fog again. The Lame Boy gives up and goes silent.

Wilhelm smiles and heads over to their sides. He riffles the Lame Boy's hair and crouches down between them.

WILHELM

You two holding up?

LAME BOY

Yep.

Meri doesn't reply. Wilhelm shifts and pulls out a little box from his pocket.

WILHELM

Once upon a time, a woman I love
told me some strange words. She
said I'd pick you up from the
mountain. I have to give you this.

He opens the box which holds two rings. One has a jewelled flower and the other has a square design around its surface.

LAME BOY

Dad?

WILHELM

It's going to be all right.

The Lame Boy forces himself quiet. Meri eyes them both. Wilhelm picks up the flower ring and holds it out to her.

WILHELM (CONT'D)

This could heal you, or just bring good luck. Either way, I hope it leads you in the right direction.

After a long pause, Meri takes the ring.

PASSENGER

Look! We made it!

Wilhelm turns as the people stir. A small town is ahead.

He turns back to Meri and rubs her shoulder. He rises, leaving Meri staring down at the ring in her hand.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Meri looks down at her hands, reliving the experience.

MERI

A beautiful ring. It almost made all the pain go away. A little jewelled flower made up of a small ruby in the center surrounded--

ZACH

(trance-like)

Surrounded by four diamonds. All sealed with a vibrant brass ring.

Meri looks at Zach again. He has a tear in one eye.

ZACH (CONT'D)

That's, at least, how my dad described it.

MERI

Oh my--! You!

ZACH

Did I tell you that I absolutely *abhorred* that brace?

MERI

Zach!

Meri's hands go to her mouth. She laughs. It turns into crying as she embraces him.

MERI (CONT'D)

Oh Zach! I'm so stupid! I should have known *myself* by now--!

ZACH

Hey, hey! Take it easy, Samurai. We're here now, aren't we?

MERI

And that pilot? That pilot was...

ZACH

My dad. (beat) Yeah, that was my dad. Wilhelm.

He pushes her back and kisses her forehead. Then he sets his forehead to hers and gazes at her.

MERI

(catching her breath)
Hello, Zach.

ZACH

(smiling)
Hello, Meri.

They embrace again.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Pierre continues to read on the couch. Olivia comes in with a towel and bathrobe, wet from the shower.

OLIVIA

What takes that girl so long to make breakfast?

PIERRE

There's hard-boiled eggs in the fridge, cereal and milk, water's boiling. Meri's not here, though.

OLIVIA

Not here? Since when?

PIERRE

Yesterday afternoon after your little dispute.

He turns and looks at her.

PIERRE (CONT'D)

Did you really not notice her gone?

OLIVIA
I thought she was crying upstairs
in her room.

PIERRE
Crying?

OLIVIA
Yes. She's supposed to be grounded.
Why? Where is she?

Pierre pauses then goes back to his newspaper.

PIERRE
She's crying upstairs in her room.

Olivia opens her mouth to reply. A tea pot WHISTLES.

PIERRE (CONT'D)
Oh, could you get that, darling? I
can't stress my heart too much.

Olivia stares at him and looks at the kitchen. Pierre sighs.

PIERRE (CONT'D)
Olivia, dearest. That kettle will
not pour itself.

OLIVIA
(enraged)
Of all the God-forsaken ---ooh!

She marches into the kitchen and Pierre smiles to himself.

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Zach stacks their plates and glasses back in a cupboard.

ZACH
I'm just saying, you're welcome to
stay a little longer if your
grandparents haven't called. But
they might worry if you don't call
them first, ya know what I mean?

Meri is staring over her shoulder at the back wall.

An old latched door between two windows. Under one window, an
antique bureau. Outside, the yard and a distant plane field.

Zach turns and sees her preoccupied. He follows her gaze and
smiles at her. She doesn't notice him.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Olivia pulls off the water from the stove and marches back into the room. She crosses her arms and glares at Pierre.

OLIVIA
You were saying?

PIERRE
Saying what?

OLIVIA
I'm not stupid! You said she wasn't here! Where is she?

PIERRE
Upstairs crying. Like you said.

OLIVIA
She's cried enough! (beat) If I go upstairs and find her in her room, she'd better be doing homework. If she's *not* up there... Or she *is* up there with that *boy*... Pierre?

Pierre fiddles the edge of the newspaper but acts innocent.

PIERRE
What?

OLIVIA
Right.

She storms out. Pierre swallows and neatly folds the paper.

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Zach smiles at Meri staring at the door. He sneaks up behind her and leans to her ear.

ZACH
Boo-gah, boo-gah!

She jumps and he laughs.

ZACH (CONT'D)
You have discovered our prime attraction, I see! No circus trots without a dwarf or bearded lady.

MERI
What?

ZACH
The mystery door. You were staring.

MERI
I was not!

ZACH
Oh, yes, you were. I saw you.

He walks around the counter island and heads to the door.

ZACH (CONT'D)
You were staring. For good reason,
though. It's the one mystery of
this house I have yet to uncover.

MERI
A bolted door that doesn't open.

ZACH
And doesn't lead to anything.

MERI
Exactly!

ZACH
Anymore.

MERI
What?

ZACH
It doesn't lead to anything
anymore. C'mere!

Meri gets up and joins him. He gestures to the floor.

ZACH (CONT'D)
See those scrapes? And I swear on
Shakespeare I didn't make them!

MERI
It opened before?

ZACH
A long time ago.

He jiggles the latch. Meri does the same. It sticks shut.

MERI
Does it lead outside?

ZACH

No back door. But I remember standing by the counter and seeing this one ajar. I don't know. Maybe it was a dream. I bet it had to do with my parents, though. (beat) Oh.

He turns to her, wringing his hands.

ZACH (CONT'D)

Which reminds me. Do you have...

Meri smiles.

MERI

Yeah.

She turns and goes to Zach's room.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Pierre sits quietly on the couch, twiddling his thumbs. The newspaper lies on the coffee table.

Olivia stalks around the couch, stopping before Pierre.

OLIVIA

Where is she?

He looks up at her and swallows.

PIERRE

Who?

OLIVIA

PIERRE!!

He cringes in his seat.

INT. ZACH'S BEDROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Meri's cellphone is on the table. On a chair is her pack, and her jacket hangs on the back.

She digs through the jacket pockets and pulls out her ring.

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zach picks up a small box from the top of the bureau and weighs it in his hand. He looks up as Meri enters again.

She holds up her ring to him in her palm.

Zach gazes trance-like at the object and eventually grins, raising his fingers to tap it.

ZACH
It's weird. I still remember.

He opens the box and dumps the contents in Meri's hand.

A brass-copper ring joins the flower ring. It has a Greek-Roman square design on the exterior.

ZACH (CONT'D)
My parents' wedding rings.

MERI
No! He couldn't have given me *hers!*

ZACH
He did. That's it. He must have known we'd click.

Meri picks up the Greek-Roman ring.

MERI
Does it fit you?

ZACH
I won't admit I haven't tried.

He picks it up and slips it on his index finger.

ZACH (CONT'D)
Like I've grown into his print. Or it's grown to mine.

Meri grins and slips hers on. She displays it.

MERI
Your dad was right. It heals, gave me good luck, and led me the right way. And we've clicked.

She kisses him. Zach leans against the bolted door and his ring hand toys with the latch.

When Meri pulls away, he follows reluctantly. He pulls on the latch and the door gives. He catches himself.

Meri steps back and eyes the door. It stands ajar behind Zach, light cascading in from the other side.

MERI (CONT'D)
That's bolted shut.

ZACH
It was bolted shut.

They turn and peer cautiously through the crack.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Pierre stands by the phone, guiltily dialing a number. Olivia paces behind him.

OLIVIA
Of all things, why? Why didn't you think? You *never* think! Our granddaughter could be in danger. That boy could be taking advantage of her right now. She might even be wounded or dying. Or *dead*! Did that come into your brain? I hope you feel *wonderful*!

Pierre winces and puts a finger to his ear, listening to the ringing on the other line.

INT. ZACH'S BEDROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Meri's cellphone vibrates along the tabletop, lit up in the dim room. No one is there to pick it up.

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

No one is present. The bolted door is shut.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

A large area filled with aisles of bookcases. A floor-length mirror, a dictionary podium facing it with a small red book.

ZACH
Oh my god!

MERI
Where did this come from?

ZACH
Who cares? This is awesome! A whole room. A whole *library* out of nowhere. What's with the mirror?

MERI
Don't look at me.

ZACH
Man, I can spend eternity here and
do nothing but read!

He rushes to one shelf and grabs a random book. Meri tiptoes from the door, scanning the room.

MERI
I'm dreaming.

ZACH
This one's empty.

He grabs another.

MERI
But I can't be dreaming.

ZACH
So is this! Okay, forget eternity.
Who wants an Empty Library?

Meri's eyes go up to the ceiling.

MERI
Dreams can't... come... true?

Zach scans the end of a bookcase to find a plain brass plaque. Every bookcase has the same blank label.

ZACH
What are the plaques for?

MERI
Zach?

ZACH
Yeah?

Meri swallows hard and points to the ceiling.

A large stained-glass dome shows the light outside. In the center is mounted a Roman-Numeral clock. Around it, the window depicts the Greek-Roman and Jewelled Flower rings.

ZACH (CONT'D)
Oh my God.

Meri's eyes go down to the ring on her finger.

ZACH (CONT'D)

This was my parent's room! Awesome!

He turns and wanders about the center of the room. Meri backs up and leans against the door.

MERI

I'm going crazy.

ZACH

That makes the two of us, Samurai.

MERI

Perfect. Okay... Keep it together.

Meri takes a breath and approaches the book on the podium.

MERI (CONT'D)

(re. book)

"D.R." What does D.R. mean?

ZACH

Doctor?

MERI

Doctor What?

ZACH

No! You say "Doctor Who?"

MERI

Sci-fi? Be Serious.

ZACH

What? I get bored home alone.

She opens the book. Zach laughs.

ZACH (CONT'D)

My wall's bigger on the inside!

MERI

(re. book)

"Dream Rider."

Zach stops fooling and joins her at the podium.

MERI (CONT'D)

"Prepare yourself, Rider, for I
hold all of your dreams."

They share a wary glance. Zach twiddles his fingers, rubbing his ring in the process. SMALL BELLS RING!

MERI (CONT'D)
"Where can you find your dreams?"
(beat) What's that?

Zach stops twiddling. The BELLS stop.

ZACH
What's what?

MERI
Did you hear bells?

ZACH
What bells?

MERI
Um... I don't know. Maybe my ears
were ringing there.

ZACH
What, you mistake ringing in your
ears for real bells?

MERI
They sounded pretty real.

His smile fades as he studies her. She goes back to the book.

MERI (CONT'D)
"Where can you find your dreams?
Look around you. The pages fill..."

ZACH
The books? They're empty. The
plaques are blank.

Meri spots one far aisle with a plaque reading "D.R."

MERI
Not this one.

She runs over and picks up a book.

MERI (CONT'D)
It's handwritten.

As she flips through it, Zach continues to read.

ZACH
"The longer you are gone in the
mirror, the more pages are filled."
(beat) The mirror's a doorway!
Enter the mirror... and live your
dreams like reality?

MERI

Zach? (beat) This book has a man
named Wilhelm.

Zach pauses. He sprints over and takes the book, reading.

WILHELM (V.O.)

He'll be a cripple. There's doubt
he'll use his leg again. (beat)
Anita? He's been calling for you.

ANITA (V.O.)

Tell him to stop. I don't want him
to know. Not yet.

ZACH

Anita.

MERI

Who is she?

ZACH

My mother.

He weighs the book in his hand, staring into space.

Meri returns to the podium and peers at the red book.

MERI

"... to help you grow as a Dream
Rider and tell your successors how
much of a Rider you really are."

Zach slams his book shut, returns it, and paces to the door.

ZACH

Let's get out of here.

MERI

Just about to say the same thing.

Meri reaches the door. Zach stops and turns back to the room.

INT. ZACH'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meri's cellphone sits quite still. It vibrates violently.
Another call from her grandparents. Missed.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Meri waits at the door.

MERI

Zach?

He doesn't reply. She walks up and takes his hand.

MERI (CONT'D)

There must be a scientific explanation for all of this.

ZACH

Well?

MERI

Not getting anything. You?

ZACH

Chemistry between alien substances or sci-fi catching up with reality.

MERI

Not another Doctor Who quote.

ZACH

Okay, okay. I got nada.

MERI

Didn't think so. (beat) So... Can we go?

ZACH

Yeah. (beat) Let's go.

He starts to pull her towards the Mirror.

MERI

Whoa, whoa! What are you doing?

ZACH

Going to the Mirror.

MERI

What? Why?

ZACH

Our rings, this Library, my parents... Coincidence?

MERI

I don't like this.

ZACH

I do. Living a dream?

MERI

Zach! What's with you? I thought we were leaving.

ZACH

Do you have any idea how many worlds are in dreams?

MERI

You have any idea how much this place creeps me out?

ZACH

Dreams inspire people. Stories, music, adventure--!

MERI

Zach. They're dreams. Dreams can also be forgotten. End of story.

ZACH

(beat) My mom died when I was a baby. Now she knows about my leg.
(beat) You want to see your family?

MERI

Zach--

ZACH

What was your sister's name?

MERI

Don't--

ZACH

Meri? What was her name?

MERI

(beat) Teppy.

ZACH

Teppy.

MERI

But my grandparents. They--

ZACH

-- will never know. A thousand dreams go by in seconds. We'll have just one. Please? Only a second.

She pauses and squeezes his hand. He leads her to the Mirror.

The glass is reflective and appears normal. Zach touches the surface and it ripples like water. His hand passes through.

He smiles at Meri and she tries the same. She smiles back at him. They walk into the Mirror.

EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS

They free-fall, grasping hands tightly.

Small clouds depict silent scenes like old-fashioned TVs. Empty books fly by, being written by an invisible pen.

They both fall into one cloud. A flying newspaper.

INT. ZACH'S BEDROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Meri's cellphone vibrates. It stops. "Five missed calls".

A shadow casts over the table.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Pierre stands at the telephone. Olivia, wrapped in a shawl, glares at him from the coffee table. Cliff Johnson sits on the couch, a cup of tea in one palm.

Pierre sighs and hangs up the phone.

CLIFF

It's okay, Pierre. She'll turn up.

OLIVIA

What makes you so sure?

CLIFF

The best friend of my Melissa? I've gotten to know Meri pretty well.

OLIVIA

You seem too cool about this whole mess, Johnson. Carefree, even.

CLIFF

Easy there, Olivia. Fisher and a few of the men are on the trail as we speak. I have a little theory and they're giving it the test.

PIERRE

What sort of theory?

CLIFF

Well, if I'm right and that Zach is
who I think he is--

The phone rings.

MACHINE

Mellot, Meri.

Pierre and Cliff meet gazes.

Olivia runs to the phone and whisks it to her ear.

Cliff avoids spilling hot tea on himself. He leaps to his
feet and sprints to the other phone in the master bedroom.

OLIVIA

Meri! What do you think you're
doing running away like that?

Pierre's POV. - Cliff winces and slowly raises the master
receiver to his ear.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Your grandfather and I have been
worried sick! Now what do you have
to say to that? Well?

INT. ZACH'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Suited, NICK FISHER, aged 22, stands awkwardly with Meri's
cell on speaker in his rubber-gloved hand. He ignores the
SNICKERS from two policemen in the doorway.

NICK

Uh, excuse me, ma'am, but is the
inspector there?

INTERCUT: GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM & ZACH'S BEDROOM -
CONTINUOUS

NICK

This is Sergeant Fisher?

CLIFF

Nick?

NICK

Oh, thank God. Hello, sir.

OLIVIA

Why do you have Meri's phone?

CLIFF
Olivia, get off the line.

NICK
We found it just now. You were right, sir. We're at Wilhelm Fieldman's house.

OLIVIA
What? Wilhelm Fieldman?

CLIFF
Zach's father.

PIERRE
Will? The pilot?

Cliff studies Pierre's face.

NICK
No one answered our calls and the door was unlocked. No signs of foul play, but you can come over and check for yourself, sir.

EXT. MERI'S GRANDPARENTS HOUSE - LATER

Cliff walks out the front door. Olivia and Pierre follow.

OLIVIA
I hope you know what you're going to do, Johnson. If Will Fieldman took Meri against her--

CLIFF
Olivia, he disappeared while out flying and hasn't returned since.

OLIVIA
Then what about this Zach? If this has something to do with Will's troublesome son, I'll--

CLIFF
Olivia! Zach is a dreamer. A fool, yes, but not a "troublesome son".

PIERRE
Thank you, Cliff. And if there is--

CLIFF
Don't worry. We'll find them both. I'll call you.

He walks down the path to his car. Olivia turns back inside. Pierre watches Cliff drive away. He gazes skyward.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia enters and takes a seat at her desk, breathing deeply.

She keeps stealing glances at her bureau but hesitates.

She rises and pulls open the top drawer. Out of a black velvet bag, she pulls out a copper-gold hand mirror.

She takes another deep breath and looks at her reflection.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

There is little sunlight. The streets are deserted.

MERI (O.S.)
Where are we?

ZACH (O.S.)
Dunno.

An abandoned newspaper rolls by. Meri and Zach exit an alley.

MERI
Okay, Sherlock. Where is everyone?

Zach doesn't reply. He leads a stroll down the street but they see no signs of life. They stop before a small store.

"Xylophone World!" In the display window, instruments sit on sale. A sign reads: "50% off".

ZACH
Xylophones? Well, they need *some* sort of entertainment 'round here.

Meri's POV - Across the street is a THIN MAN who was not there when they came out. Black tuxedo and top hat, white gloved hands leaning on a cane. He tips his hat in greeting.

MERI
Zach? There's a man over there.

Zach turns and frowns. The Thin Man puts his hat back on.

TINK TONK! A Xylophone sounds.

They turn but there is no one inside to play the instruments.
The sound repeats from an unknown source inside.

THIN MAN (O.S.)
Wonderful Day!

The man is standing right behind them!

Zach and Meri jump and noisily collide with the shop window.
The Thin Man steps back and tips his hat in a bow.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)
I didn't mean to frighten you. But
I can't help it, can I?

He has wispy white hair and eyes that don't show emotion.
Only his mouth changes into a grin.

ZACH
It's okay. We're used to surprises.

The Thin Man holds out a hand to Zach's.

THIN MAN
Fascinating. Pleased to meet you.

He moves to shake Meri's hand.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)
Welcome to my town. Care to dance?

He suddenly pulls Meri out into the street. He hooks his cane
on his arm and leads her in the waltz.

ZACH
Hey!

THIN MAN
(to Meri)
I hear music all the time so it
gets into my head.

MERI
What?

THIN MAN
(sings)
Ta-ah ta! Ta-ah!...

ZACH
What do you think you're doing?

THIN MAN
Dancing. Why? Care to cut in?

ZACH
 (sarcastic)
 Very funny. Later, perhaps.

THIN MAN
 Suit yourself.
 (singing)
 Ta-ah ta! Ta-ah!...

Zach catches Meri's arm, stopping them both.

ZACH
 Will you stop that? Who are you?

THIN MAN
 I am the Xylophone, Sir. My name is
 my own. My history? A mystery.

Thin Man bows again. Meri pulls her hand out of his and returns to Zach's side.

ZACH
 Poetic.

THIN MAN
 Really? I feel it needs work. I'm
 not very good at poetry.

MERI
 If you won't tell us your name, at
 least tell us where we are?

The Thin Man's face saddens. Even his eyes show it. He puts down his cane and leans on it heavily. Meri moves forward. Zach glares at the Thin Man from a distance.

MERI (CONT'D)
 Sir?

ZACH
 You okay?

The Thin Man gazes slowly up at Zach.

THIN MAN
 Death.

ZACH
 What?

The Thin Man brightens again.

THIN MAN

Death. An interesting conversation subject. Where do we go when we die? Heaven? Hell? A Newborn Baby?

Zach falters and looks at Meri.

MERI

Dunno. Never been.

The Thin Man grows weary again.

THIN MAN

Run.

ZACH

Wait, what?

The Thin Man straightens again, looking at Zach.

THIN MAN

Run. You run. You know? Run?

He rapidly jogs in place. He runs a full circle around them and comes back to his spot.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)

You run.

ZACH

Oh, Jog! Yeah. Yeah, I ... I jog.

He glances at Meri. The Thin Man tugs at his gloved fingers.

THIN MAN

Good. You've had enough practice.

ZACH

(beat) Uh-huh. What's up?

THIN MAN

The Clouds, the Sun, the Moon...

ZACH

No, what's up with you?

The Thin Man's face turns stern again.

THIN MAN

You cannot stay.

ZACH

Why?

THIN MAN
They will get you.

ZACH
Who?

THIN MAN
The Folk.

CREAK! A door opens a crack. A window shutter is bent for an eye to peer out.

The Thin Man is now smiling, holding up a tea set on a tray.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)
Tea?

More Creaking. Zach and Meri look around as similar signs of life appear.

CRASH! The tea set falls at their feet. A long crack on the tea-pot seeps what looks like dark blood.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)
(in awe)
That is *some* scar.

Zach's POV. - The crack enlarges. He hears a HEARTBEAT.

Suddenly, the Thin Man is stricken with fear.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)
Run! They're coming! *Run!*

Zach stares at the tea-pot. Meri grabs his hand and pulls him away. They run down the street. Doors slam and windows creak.

Zach's POV. - People come out of their homes, dressed in tattered and repaired clothing.

The Thin Man watches Zach and Meri turn the corner. He finally notices the people coming out.

THIN MAN (CONT'D)
What's this? (beat) Ah, I see! Oh well; can't be helped now.

He shrugs and turns away, taking a sip from a random teacup.

EXT. TOWN ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Meri struggles forward. Zach lags behind, a hand to his head.

A THUG steps into their path, weighing a automatic in one hand. He grins. Zach comes alert.

ZACH
You!

Zach's POV - The Thug's automatic twinkles in the sun.

THUG
Pick. The easy way or the hard way.

ZACH
No...

Meri turns and pulls Zach back. He looks over his shoulder.

Zach's POV - The Thug points the automatic at him.

MEMORY FLASH - A Young Wilhelm runs down the street.

The Thug FIRES the gun and the shot lands by Zach's foot.

ZACH (CONT'D)
No! Keep Running!

Zach pushes Meri down the street. The townspeople are closer.

Another GUNSHOT. Zach trips. He rolls over and gazes back.

His POV - HEARTBEAT. Townspeople close in. The Thug aims.

MEMORY FLASH - Wilhelm turns and shrieks out Zach's name.

Meri returns and grabs Zach's hand. CLINK, their rings touch.

CUT TO BLACK:

A solitary GUNSHOT.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia screams. Her hand mirror drops to the floor. She runs to the window and covers her mouth to silence herself.

PIERRE (O.S.)
Olivia? (beat) Olivia, love!

OLIVIA
I'm okay! I- I'm okay...

She stands breathing hard. She closes her eyes.

MEMORY FLASH - GUNSHOT.

Olivia shakes her head and turns towards the hand mirror. She takes off her shawl and uses it to pick the mirror up.

She returns it to the bureau drawer. Pierre enters.

PIERRE
Sweetheart?

Olivia turns, tears in her eyes.

OLIVIA
Oh, Pierre!

Pierre smiles painfully and comes forward. They embrace.

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Nick and Cliff stand in front of the couch. Cliff scans the room while Nick reads from a notebook.

NICK
There's no signs of foul play. No moved furniture. No stolen bags.

CLIFF
Only signs that Meri and Zach should still be in this house.

He wanders to the bolted door and studies it.

NICK
Tried that too, sir. Decoration.

Cliff tries the latch and it doesn't budge. He glances out the window and sees one of the policemen walk by.

CLIFF
No sign of a back door?

NICK
No, sir.

Cliff frowns and shakes his head.

CLIFF
Set a car out front.

NICK
Yes, sir.

They turn away from the bolted door.

EXT. SPACE

Zach and Meri free-fall past clouds.

Zach is dazed. Meri's hand slips from his. He reaches for her but misses. She disappears in the mist. Zach glimpses the picture of a dog catches a frisbee.

He tumbles into a cloud, seeing railroad crossing lights.

Books falling. One writes, "It was a beautiful day!"

FADE TO: EXT. PARK - DAY

The sun's glare is broken with a dog's muzzle. Meri wakes to a golden retriever's wet kisses.

MERI

Pfft! Wh... What the--?

WOMAN (O.S.)

Uh...

A WOMAN in a white body suit, holding a detached leash and a frisbee, stares down at her in question.

WOMAN's POV - Meri is strewn behind a line of bushes, covered in dirt, hair askew.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

What are you--?

MERI

Sorry. Ignore me. Thanks.

She climbs through the bushes and scrambles to her feet. She glances around and rushes off, dusting her clothes.

EXT. TRAIN TRACK - DAY

The sun's glare is unbroken. The hot rails sit lower than the nearby road. Zach lies on the center rail, unconscious.

JOEL, 28, walks along the tracks. He wears a dark blue uniform. He catches sight of Zach and jumps.

JOEL

Hey! Hey, you! What are you doing?
Are you crazy?

He runs to the edge of the rails. Zach doesn't respond.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Hey! Wake up!

Still nothing. Joel looks around warily.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ!

He jumps down and runs out. He shakes Zach vigorously.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Wake up!

Zach groans. CROSSING BELL. Joel looks around frantically and hoists Zach up in his arms. Zach comes to, still dazed.

ZACH
Meri?

JOEL
You're really out of it, man!

ZACH
Bells...

JOEL
Yeah, bells! Bad bells! Get your feet moving, will you?

Joel helps him up onto the side of the rails. Once up, Zach lies limply on the pavement.

JOEL (CONT'D)
What were you doing out there?

ZACH
I... I fell.

They watch a train zoom by on the tracks. Zach sighs heavily.

JOEL
Dude, you're crazy. (beat) C'mon.

He helps Zach to his feet and they move away from the rails.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Meri exits the park and steps onto the sidewalk. Pedestrians, dressed in similar attire to the woman with her dog, give her a wary look and avoid her. Soon she's alone.

MERI
What in the world--?

MILES (O.S.)

Psst!

From a row of housing buildings, she keys in on one door that is ajar. A finger gestures. She warily approaches.

MILES, 30, pokes his head out of the door. She jumps. His bleached hair is in disarray and his eyes are frantic.

MILES (CONT'D)

You're alone?

MERI

Wh... What?

MILES

(looks around)

They can tell when you're alone.

MERI

You've got to be kidding me. Crazy townspeople *again*?

MILES

Get in.

MERI

What? No!

MILES

You want to get arrested?

MERI

(beat) Arrested?

MILES

Get in!

Miles glances around and retreats from the doorway. Meri pauses a moment longer. Flexing her fists, she goes in.

INT. MILE'S SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Arts-and-crafts design with stone and brick inlay here and there. Meri falters in the archway between rooms.

Dressed in a white lab coat over jeans and a T-shirt that has seen better days, Miles slips behind a kitchen counter. He sighs and smiles with relief.

MILES

I'm a bit out of practice. I rarely have guests. Make yourself at home.

(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)
 (beat) Well? Come in! I don't bite.
 At least I hope I don't.

He laughs at the joke and turns away. Meri ventures forward.

MILES (CONT'D)
 Tea?

MERI
 Um... Who are you?

MILES
 Miles Doomsbree, Doctor of Science
 and Human Exploration. (beat) God,
 I wish I worked there.

MERI
 Ohhh-kay. My name's Meri.

MILES
 Last name?

MERI
 Thanks, but I'll stick to Meri.

MILES
 (beat) Huh. Suit Yourself.

She scrutinizes his tea preparation. Nothing suspicious. He playfully balances her cup on a saucer and hands it over.

MILES (CONT'D)
 And... there you go!

She lifts the cup to her lips but doesn't drink. She watches him lift his likewise. He pauses and their gazes meet.

MILES (CONT'D)
 Goodness! I'm not that crazy.

He swiftly drains his and shudders. She warily sips at hers.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

There is no train in the station. LUC, 25, stands on the platform, dressed in similar uniform to Joel. He sighs.

ROSIE, 35, stands before him, dressed like she danced the Charleston right out of the 1920s.

ROSIE
 I have been waiting for two hours!
 It's supposed to be here.

LUC

I know, I'm sorry, ma'am. Our boss
is on it right now as we speak.

Luc and Zach appear, walking alongside the building.

ROSIE

He better be! I have an appointment
that can't wait much longer.

LUC

We have communication difficulties
going on, so please be patient.

JOEL

Hey, Luc. What's up?

LUC

(re. Zach)

Oh, don't tell me he's another one!

JOEL

If you mean, another person
unconscious on the tracks, yes.

LUC

What's that?

JOEL

(re. Rosie)

I got this. What's the trouble?

ROSIE

Where is the 445?

JOEL

Delayed. Up to staying overnight?

LUC

Joel!

JOEL

Why not? Zach, here, is staying
until he gets his memory back.

ZACH

No. I'm not... Oh, whatever.

LUC

Joel, is he one of your guys?

JOEL

God, no! I found him asleep on the
tracks. Almost a pancake from 457.

ZACH

Hey! I wasn't asleep. I was unconscious. There's a difference.

JOEL

Luc, is Rake inside?

LUC

Waiting for the 445, yes he is. Up to a chat, not very likely.

INT. TICKET OFFICES - CONTINUOUS

It looks like the home of an indecisive author in the middle of research. RAKE-JAKE, 43, sits stoic as he listens to a radio system through a pair of headphones. They enter.

JOEL

Hey. Rake?

Rake-Jake raises a hand. They wait. He lowers the headphones.

RAKE-JAKE

Fifteen Days.

LUC

Sorry?

RAKE-JAKE

Our trains are dying. Uptown is in dire need of supplies. Downtown is... well, down! Phone's dead, but-
 (re. Radio)
 -- from what I can get out of this archaic contraption, the repairman will be here in fifteen days.
 (beat) Tell me you have a good reason for barging in.

ROSIE

Where's the 445?

RAKE-JAKE

Derailed at Four-Fields.

ROSIE

What?

RAKE-JAKE

Just got the happy news! The 457 is en-route to finish the job.

LUC
But now that's our last train.

ROSIE
Last train?

RAKE-JAKE
Yep. (beat) Busy day.

He sighs, raking his fingers through his hair.

JOEL
Zach? I give you... Rake-Jake!

Rake glares up at him.

RAKE-JAKE
What is it, Joel?

Joel gestures to Zach. All eyes go to him.

ZACH
Oh. No, no! You've got too much--

RAKE-JAKE
What's the problem?

JOEL
He lost his memory.

ZACH
I did not! I'm just... I don't know
where I am.

Jake picks up a pen and places it on a displayed note-pad.

RAKE-JAKE
Right. Write your name here. The
young lady, too. Might as well take
you in the night. Joel? A Word?

He rises and drags Joel aside by the arm.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)
If they're a couple of your gang--

JOEL
Jeez, Rake--

RAKE-JAKE
I mean it, Joel.

JOEL
Are you crazy? I barely know 'em!

Zach glances over. Rosie looms up beside him.

ROSIE
Rosie Hall. H-A-L-L.

He looks up at her and she smiles sweetly. He mouths "O-K" and turns back to the pad.

RAKE-JAKE
The last one hijacked 492. Your brother, if I remember correctly?

JOEL
And that's why he's dead to me. You don't trust me anymore? I told you. I've finished that life.

Zach spots a newspaper under the note-pad. "Police Drop Decade Old Case." Two school boys and a girl are pictured. Family and Police info is included.

ROSIE
Oh, the poor things!

RAKE-JAKE
Every day, a bloody gangster from your past comes to threaten your job. (beat) You better work harder.

Zach catches Luc's eye and points to the paper in question. Luc grimaces and shakes his head.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)
Believe me. I know you're better than that. Much better.

Joel forces a nod. Radio BLEEPs. Rake rushes back to answer.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)
Jake McMullan, here. Over. (beat)
Yes. En-route as we speak. Over.

Zach reads family info. "Child: Brian Archibald. Parent: Karen McMullan-Archibald." Phone Number follows.

LUC (O.S.)
His sister's kid.

Luc stands by Zach. Rake puts a hand to his ear, wincing.

RAKE-JAKE (O.S.)
Uh... Sorry, could you repeat that, sir? Over.

LUC

Only family he's got. He never talks about it though. Keeps it bottled up in him like seltzer.

Jake sighs at radio, raking hair and rubbing eyes wearily.

RAKE-JAKE

Yes, I got the news. Over.

ROSIE

His nephew? Missing for a Decade?

LUC

More. Look how old that paper is.

Zach flips the newspaper over to another article.

ZACH

"Elvis Wins the World Cup"?

LUC

See? Those kids must be our ages by now, if they're still around.

RAKE-JAKE (O.S.)

Thank you, sir. Over.

ZACH

(beat) I'm sorry. Elvis Presley?

RAKE-JAKE

McMullan Out.

Rake returns the headphones and sighs. Attention to him.

JOEL

News?

RAKE-JAKE

Same as before. Fifteen Days.

His eyes catch the newspaper, and then meets Zach's gaze.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)

(re. Note-pad)

We've got one guest room. Miss...
 "Hall"? You'll take that. And...
 "Fieldman"? You'll bunk with us.
 Joel will help you. Catch me if
 there's trouble and I'll see to it.

Zach forces a smile and nods, setting down the paper.

ZACH

Yes, sir.

Zach follows Joel into another room. Luc leads Rosie down the Hallway. Rake pauses as they depart.

Rake picks up the newspaper and folds it neatly. He secures it under the note-pad again and sits, staring into space.

INT. MILES' KITCHEN - LATER

Miles and Meri stand across from each other at the counter. He lifts up a cardboard box and takes out a metallic globe.

MERI

What is that?

MILES

My own invention, a flying droid.
The first of its kind.

He sets it on a magnetic stand on the table.

MERI

Aren't those only in sci-fi movies?

MILES

That's where all inventions start.

Miles reaches into the box and takes out a smaller globe. This one has a transparent exterior, the inside visible.

MILES (CONT'D)

This one's a rascal. I have to be careful with it.

MERI

What's his name? Zach?

She smiles at the joke. Miles misses it.

MILES

I haven't named them yet.

MERI

Oh, well... Zach's taken, so... ya' know what? Forget it.

Miles takes out another stand. The globe attaches easily.

MILES

This one can't go to the LAB.
(beat) That's the Laboratory on
Alien Biology.

MERI

There's such a place as that?

MILES

Of course! That's where I work.
This globe's determined to go to
the LAB. It doesn't want me to be
recognized for creating it. It's
heard what they call me there.

His gaze goes blank.

MILES (CONT'D)

"Mad". "Mad Miles". This little one
would like to see someone *else* get
the credit for making it. Not me.
It's allegiance is elsewhere.

MERI

How do you know that? It's a globe.

MILES

(points to forehead)
It speaks. I can hear it. In *here!*

MERI

Ohhh-kay...

As they pause, the little globe rattles on its stand. It
rocks and falls on its side.

MERI (CONT'D)

What the---

MILES

Don't you *dare!*

Miles reaches out and catches the globe and stand before they
fall off the counter. He grins at Meri and picks them up.

MILES (CONT'D)

They want their exercise. Come!

He gathers up both globes and stands in his arms.

MERI

You're letting them go?

MILES

Of course not! I'm letting them go
in my basement. Grab the box.

He wrestles a door open. Meri snatches up the cardboard box.

INT. TICKET OFFICES - CONTINUOUS

Sounds of clunking and shifting objects.

RAKE-JAKE (O.S.)

Bloody, bloody machine...

Zach sneaks out of a bunk room, venturing towards the office.

His POV - Rake-Jake wrestles with the wires of the radio.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)

How do you work? (beat) Damn!

SPARK! He cries out and draws a hand to his mouth.

ZACH

You okay?

Rake whirls around with a child-in-the-cookie-jar expression.
He sighs and flicks his hand, painfully.

ZACH (CONT'D)

Sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt.
Please continue.

RAKE-JAKE

(sarcastically)

Gee. Thanks.

ZACH

Do you need a hand?

RAKE-JAKE

No. Just been a while. Settled in?

ZACH

Yeah. With what little I have.

Zach chuckles awkwardly. Rake scrutinizes the radio.

ZACH (CONT'D)

I've... worked on the radio at my
dad's office. Can I try and--

RAKE-JAKE

No. Really. I've got this.

ZACH

Okay. (beat) Out of curiosity, is the helical spine connected to the receiver or both of the phones?

RAKE-JAKE

(beat) Helical spine?

Zach holds out his hands, smiling.

INT. MILE'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The large globe and the small globe fly in lazy circles like a model solar system. Meri and Miles watch them from below.

MILES

Look at them. The little beauties. My very own creations come alive.

MERI

You must have worked hard on them.

MILES

Oh yes. Most of my life.

MERI

Seriously?

MILES

Seriously. I've been obsessed with the little things. (beat) Well, that and Teleportation. Everyone's obsessed with Teleportation. Imagine the possibilities...

The small globe hits the wall and bounces off it. Meri pulls Miles down. It misses their heads and hits the opposite wall.

Miles grabs a wool blanket that lies nearby and tosses it on the globe as it flies by. The blanket slows it down and Miles pounces on it. Both collapse to the floor.

MERI

The other one!

Miles looks up. The large globe hits the bottom step. It starts jumping up the stairs, two at a time.

MILES

No!

Meri runs after the large globe. The small one wrestles under the wool blanket and Miles struggles to stop it.

INT. MILE'S SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The globe pushes open the basement door and rolls out towards the front hallway. Meri dashes after it.

MILES (O.S.)
Don't let it get away!

MERI
I *know*!

The globe slips out through the front door.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Meri opens the door to see the globe resting on the top step of the porch. She pounces and grabs it out of thin air.

She rolls and falls down the steps, landing on her back on the stone walkway. She grimaces and hugs the globe in pain.

Miles reaches the front door.

MILES
Thank goodness! You got it.

MERI
Yep... I'm fine... don't worry.

MILES
Good. Let's put it back in the box.

Miles turns and disappears back into the house. Meri groans.

INT. TICKET OFFICES - LATER

Luc and Joel enter through the front door.

JOEL
He said he had no idea, so I said... what the--?

Zach leans a handmade lightning rod out the window. The wires cascade back to the radio where Rake stands with headphones.

JOEL (CONT'D)
What's going on?

Rake holds up his hand and shushes him.

ZACH
We're fixing the radio.

LUC
What's with the giant antennae?

ZACH
I'm boosting you guys to wireless.
The original spine is fried.

LUC
The helical spine?

RAKE-JAKE
Hang on. You too?

ZACH
Hello. Rake, there's your mechanic!

RAKE-JAKE
Luc, you're a mechanic?

LUC
I'm not licensed but I know radios.

RAKE-JAKE
You should talk more. No offense.

LUC
Um... Thanks?

ZACH
Hey, Rake? How's the reception now?

RAKE-JAKE
Eh... Still too fuzzy.

Zach moves occasional arms of the lightning rod.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)
Nothing. Nothing. Oh wait! Ah it's
gone. Ooh, there! No...

Rosie enters the room from her quarters, confused.

ROSIE
What's all the noise for?

RAKE-JAKE
There! Hold it! That's it!

Rake freezes, listening. His face gradually falls into shock.

ROSIE
What is it?

LUC

Oh no.

Rake's hand lowers to the radio and he uses the other to slip the headphones to his shoulders.

ZACH

Rake?

RAKE-JAKE

She's gone. (beat) The 457. She derailed. She's gone.

JOEL

What? Where?

RAKE-JAKE

Southfield. (beat) A stop from 445.

He leans on the radio and rakes his hair.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)

That's it. That's all. We're done.

ZACH

Wait. No...

RAKE-JAKE

I said, that's it.

ROSIE

What about my train?

RAKE-JAKE

There are no more trains! That was the last. Weren't you listening?
(beat) We're done.

Rake-Jake sits in his chair with a sigh. Luc and Joel shift.

ROSIE

There must be more. This is a train station for goodness sake!

RAKE-JAKE

There are no more.

Zach looks at Luc and Joel. They share edgy glances.

ZACH

Rake? Is there more?

RAKE-JAKE

Have you gone deaf? No!

Zach glances at Luc and Joel again, then back to Rake.

ZACH
Your guys seem indifferent.

Rake-Jake glare at the two of them and they avoid him.

ROSIE
There's a train?

RAKE-JAKE
No.

Zach sets his jaw and walks around to face Jake head on.

ZACH
How many?

RAKE-JAKE
Fieldman.

ZACH
What numbers? (beat) Or is there only one? What is she?

RAKE-JAKE
Forget it.

ZACH
Forget it? This is your station!
This is your county! All these towns depend on you. Why are you holding back a train?

Rake-Jake turns away. Zach catches the newspaper again.

ZACH (CONT'D)
Is it Bryan's?

Rake-Jake snaps his death glare at him. Joel and Luc grimace.

ZACH (CONT'D)
What is she to you?

Rake-Jake and Zach have a mini staring contest.

RAKE-JAKE
She doesn't run. Never did when he knew her. Never will.

ZACH
Then I can play with it. Airplane mechanic meets dead train? With no one else around, what can you lose?

They perform a mini rematch.

EXT. TRAIN YARD - CONTINUOUS

Luc and Joel pull back two barn doors for Rake-Jake, Rosie and Zach. An old, dusty train sits there, awaiting nothing.

JOEL

The 327. First engine to run for the Uptown-Downtown line.

LUC

Ran one time when we opened thirty-five years ago. Hasn't run since.

ROSIE

Thirty-five years?

They nod and Zach whistles. Rake-Jake catches his eye.

ZACH

I'll get her running. Promise.

Rake-Jake turns and walks silently away. Luc hands Zach a tool-box. He and Joel follow Rake. Zach takes a deep breath.

ROSIE

So how much did your dad teach you?

ZACH

Let's find out.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cliff sips tea at the couch with Pierre, laughing. Olivia is visible as she washes the dishes in the kitchen sink.

PIERRE

Their eyes grew sooo wide... how could I be angry at them?

CLIFF

I never heard that story. She was too embarrassed to say anything.

PIERRE

Well, you learn the hard way.

CLIFF

(beat) Pierre. I wish I knew what I was doing. I'm at a dead end.

PIERRE

You got pretty far, by me.

CLIFF

(beat) When we found Wilhelm's house. You called him... "Will"?

PIERRE

Oh. Well, we didn't know him well.

CLIFF

"We"?

Olivia looks up from her chore.

PIERRE

Olivia and I. He brought Meri to us. After she lost her parents.

CLIFF

And you've met him since then?

Olivia approaches the doorway, drying her hands.

PIERRE

He'd come to visit. Briefly. Just checking on Meri, I think.

MEMORY FLASH - Wilhelm with Meri, 9. She plays with a ring.

PIERRE (CONT'D)

He... I think, he gave her a ring. That day we met him. To play with. Made her feel better, I guess.

CLIFF

A ring?

PIERRE

Yes. I think she still has it too.

CLIFF

Ever mention it to Wilhelm?

PIERRE

You know what? I didn't. Funny, how those things slip your mind.

Cliff glances up at Olivia.

CLIFF

And you, Olivia? Knew Wilhelm well?

She stares off to the side.

OLIVIA
Barely. He was a very weird fellow.

PIERRE
A good listener. But not a talker.

CLIFF
A shy man. I learned that much.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Meri, 10, rushes down the stairs with a backpack half her size. She tears past the doorway to the living room.

MERI
Bye, Grampa!

PIERRE
Oi! Meri!

Heaving a sigh, she rushes back in to hug and kiss him.

MERI
Bye, Grampa!

INT. FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Meri throws the front door open. Wilhelm freezes on the front steps, about to knock, wearing a long coat over his uniform.

WILHELM
Oh. Hello, Meri.

Meri stares at him as Pierre catches up. Then she rushes past and down the street, glancing over her shoulder.

PIERRE
Meri! Will, I'm sorry.

WILHELM
No. Kids will be kids.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia wipes down the couch table with a towel.

PIERRE
We're about to pop the kettle on.

WILHELM

Thank you, but I only wanted to check in. How are things?

PIERRE

Well, same as always. Olivia?

Olivia glances at Wilhelm.

OLIVIA

Nothing much, Mister Fieldman.

PIERRE

Olivia! Will, are you sure you don't want some tea?

WILHELM

No, please. I'm on a tight schedule anyway. Like I said.

PIERRE

In that case, hang on a moment. I have something for you. Wait here.

He shuffles into the hallway. Wilhelm turns to Olivia.

WILHELM

Are you sure things are well?

OLIVIA

You know children. We're fine.

WILHELM

I'll trust you. But I thought you'd like to have this, just in case.

Wilhelm pulls out a velvet bag from his pocket.

OLIVIA

In case what, Mister Fieldman?

PIERRE (O.S.)

Where is it, now?

WILHELM

In case you are worried.

OLIVIA

About?

WILHELM

Anything really. Just look in this. It made my sister feel better.

She peeks in the bag.

OLIVIA
A hand mirror?

WILHELM
Call it a good luck charm.

PIERRE (O.S.)
Ah ha! Here it is!

Pierre returns and Wilhelm leaves Olivia's side.

PIERRE (CONT'D)
I came across this in the shop.
Last one on the shelf!

WILHELM
(re. book)
"First Flight: The Story of the
Wright Brothers." Oh, Pierre!

They leave the room. Wilhelm waves. Olivia doesn't respond.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Pierre and Wilhelm's voices are faint. At the counter, Olivia pulls out the mirror. She scrutinizes it.

The glass depicts a hazy background with flying books.

Olivia gasps and tugs the bag over the mirror. She drops it into one of the drawers and slams it shut.

PIERRE (O.S.)
Olivia?

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT)

She leans against the door frame, dishrag limp in hand.

PIERRE
Olivia?

She snaps out of it. Pierre and Cliff watch her.

PIERRE (CONT'D)
I said, 'isn't that right, love?'

OLIVIA
Oh? Yes. That's right.

She turns and rushes back to the dishes.

EXT. TRAIN YARD - CONTINUOUS

Zach lies under the 327. Joel watches. Rake approaches them.

ZACH

It's amazing. The motor of this train is exactly like a plane's!

JOEL

That's what makes our trains so popular. Some experiments work.

ZACH

Cool.

RAKE-JAKE

How's it going?

JOEL

Doing well.

RAKE-JAKE

Zach?

ZACH

On a role, sir.

RAKE-JAKE

Joel? Luc's calling you.

JOEL

Really? What about?

RAKE-JAKE

Dunno. Why don't you find out?

Joel walks off.

ZACH

Let me guess. That was just to get him out, right?

RAKE-JAKE

Yep. (beat) Thank you, Zach.

ZACH

What for?

RAKE-JAKE

For Bryan. Well, for making me remember him. I like to forget.

ZACH
Tell me about it.

RAKE-JAKE
It's hard. When you loose someone.
You can't just forget they existed.
Not like you can with dreams.

ZACH
Wrench?

RAKE-JAKE
Hmm?

ZACH
I forgot to grab the wrench. Can
you pass it over?

RAKE-JAKE
Oh!

Rake grabs the wrench from the tool box.

ZACH
I don't blame you, Rake. I lost my
Mom as a baby. It was hard growing
up without her. When you're the
only one in school without a mom...

RAKE-JAKE
Or a dad.

ZACH
What's that?

RAKE-JAKE
Sorry?

ZACH
What did you say?

RAKE-JAKE
Oh, nothing. My mind likes to talk.
So you were raised by your father?

He smiles and Zach pauses a while. He hands the wrench back.

ZACH
Rag.

Rake tosses the cloth to him.

ZACH (CONT'D)
 Yeah, I was. But my aunt helped,
 bless her.

MEMORY FLASH - Bryan Archibald's contact info.

ZACH (CONT'D)
 Bryan. (beat) Was he the same?

RAKE-JAKE
 The same?

ZACH
 The Newspaper read "Karen"?

RAKE-JAKE
 Oh, Karen. (beat) Yeah. I was the
 secondary parent there. Don't tell
 the others. They'll call me soft.

ZACH
 You're not soft. You're human.

Zach hands back the rag with a smile. Rake accepts both.

ZACH (CONT'D)
 Sonic Screwdriver.

Rake reaches for it but pauses. Zach grins at him.

RAKE-JAKE
 What?

ZACH
 Sonic Screwdriver. Get it?

Rake is completely out of the loop.

ZACH (CONT'D)
 British TV? Never mind. I'm done.

RAKE-JAKE
 Sorry. You know the satellite
 reception is hell out here.

ZACH
 No, no! I mean, I'm done. 327.

RAKE-JAKE
 What?

ZACH
 She's ready.

RAKE-JAKE

Really?

ZACH

Motor fixed. Track-worthy and all!

RAKE-JAKE

Fantastic! How soon can she run?

ZACH

Now. If you're that desperate.
(beat) Next stop, Uptown?

Rake studies his face and then grins.

INT. MILE'S SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meri sags in her seat. She blinks and straightens.

MERI

What?

Miles looks up from bracing the globes in their box again.

MERI (CONT'D)

Oh. Sorry. I'm getting tired.

MILES

You're welcome to stay the night.

MERI

No. I don't want to intrude--

MILES

Nonsense. Right in the back. Bed's made and everything.

MERI

Oh. (beat) Well, thanks.

MILES

You're Welcome.

Miles goes back to his intense work. Meri gives him a double take before finding the back room.

MERI

Good night.

MILES

Yep.

Meri frowns and closes the door. She locks it tight.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - LATER

The 327 sits on the rails, glowing and running. Rake-Jake walks around her front, muttering. Zach and Luc stand with a lantern while a BRAKEMAN pokes his head out of the engine.

RAKE-JAKE
Are you sure she's--

BRAKEMAN
Yes, sir.

RAKE-JAKE
And you checked--

BRAKEMAN
Yes, sir.

Rake-Jake opens his mouth to add something else.

BRAKEMAN (CONT'D)
Yes, sir.

Rake-Jake closes his mouth.

ZACH
Rake. Let's get her out of here.

Rake nods and joins Zach's side. Luc signals the Brakeman.

The 327 starts up. Rake-Jake grimaces and continues to check the train as she pulls away. Finally she departs.

LUC
Let's hope she makes it.

ZACH
She will.

Rake stares after the train. Zach pats his shoulder.

MONTAGE:

One after another, Zach's and Meri's rings glow in darkness.

WILHELM (V.O.)
'Round and 'Round the Outside.

ANITA (V.O.)
Press deep in the center.

INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

WILHELM (V.O.)
'Round and 'Round the Outside.

Zach wakes.

ZACH
Dad?

He rubs his forehead and turns on the light. His ring sits alone on the table. He ignores it.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

ANITA (V.O.)
Press deep in the center.

Meri wakes with a start. She feels about the table and finds her ring. She studies it in the dark.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia sits in her rocking chair by the window in moonlight. She attempts to fiddle her fingers like Zach, studying them.

INT. TICKET OFFICES - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Zach fiddles his fingers while he sits quietly on the bench by Rake's desk. He doesn't circle the finger with his ring.

Luc sits at work on the Radio, headphones on. Rake mutters over maps next door. Rosie enters and approaches Zach.

He looks up and stops fiddling as she sits next to him.

ROSIE
You did a great job on the 327.

ZACH
Thanks. (beat) You should have gone with her. You could make it home.

ROSIE
Didn't want to. (beat) Don't worry. She'll make it.

ZACH
Yeah, I hope so.

ROSIE
Something's still bothering you?

ZACH
(beat) Something.

He looks down at his ring.

Rosie reaches over and takes his hand. She squeezes it and smiles at him. Zach just looks at her, frozen.

LUC
Rake! Rake, get in here!

Zach jumps up and leaves Rosie's side. Rake runs in.

Rake takes the phones. His eyes grow wide. He slips the phones down on his shoulders and twists a knob on the Radio.

BRAKEMAN (RE. RADIO)
... supplies and continuing
Downtown. I repeat: This is the
327. We have successfully restocked
from the 445 and are now pulling
into the Uptown station. Depositing
the requested supplies and
continuing Downtown. 327 out."

Rake twists the knob off and looks up at Zach, aghast.

RAKE-JAKE
She's in. She made it. (beat) She
made it! She's in! Ha!

Rake whisks Zach about in a hug. Then he turns to ruffle Luc's hair with both hands.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)
She's in, Zach! Luc, you're
brilliant. Thank you! Joel, she--

He nearly chokes himself with the headphones. He discards them and runs to Rosie, hugging her and making her scream.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)
Rosie! Ha-ha! She made it, love.
(beat) I can't believe it. Joel!

EXT. TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

Rake steps outside where Joel is walking the tracks.

RAKE-JAKE
Joel! Good old Joel. 327 is in!

Joel starts over at a sprint. Rake turns.

INT. TRAIN OFFICES - CONTINUOUS

Rake freezes and stares at Zach. Zach smiles.

ZACH
Congratulations, Rake.

Out of breath, Rake returns and embraces Zach with a deeper feeling. Zach gives him a couple good pats on the back.

Luc stands up. Rake parts from Zach and runs out the door.

RAKE-JAKE (O.S.)
Joel! She made it. At Uptown now.

JOEL
Really?

Zach's POV - Out the door, Rake embraces Joel, the two of them laughing. Luc watches them from the threshold.

Rosie stands by Zach and gazes up at him.

ROSIE
We have you to thank.

ZACH
No. It was teamwork.

ROSIE
You got the train working again.

Zach's POV - Outside, Rake leads Luc and Joel in a group hug.

ZACH
They got their lives working again.

Rosie touches his chin and turns his attention back to her. They lock eyes for a moment and draw close for a kiss.

RAKE-JAKE (O.S.)
Uptown! Downtown! Every town!

Zach turns his head away. Rosie's lips brush his cheek. She draws back, confused. Rake, Joel and Luc return inside.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)

Luc! Get out that brandy of yours,
eh? I reckon we need a celebration.

He pats Zach's shoulder. The three of them go down the hall.

ROSIE

Zach?

ZACH

Go on ahead. I'll catch up.

He smiles and urges her on. She goes to the hallway and sends him another smile before she disappears.

Zach breathes out a windstorm. He leans on the desk wearily. His finds his hands on the newspaper. He reviews it casually.

INT. MILES' SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meri sits, trance like, on the couch. She blinks back to life when Miles sets a tea-tray on the coffee table before her.

MILES

Tea?

MERI

Thanks.

Miles sits next to her and busies himself preparing a cup.

MILES

Milk and sugar?

MERI

Very much, thank you.

MILES

Is there something wrong?

MERI

Not really, no...

MILES

Good. I'm very grateful for your help yesterday. With my flying machines in the wrong hands--

MERI

Yeah, you said that.

MILES

Oh. Sorry.

MERI

(beat) No. I'm sorry. I'm just anxious on what I'm going to do.

MILES

What do you mean?

MERI

Remember I mentioned the name Zach?

MILES

Um... Yes.

MERI

He's my boyfriend. We're separated - literally! God knows how. I've got to find a way to get back to him.

MILES

You have to leave?

MERI

Yeah, eventually.

MILES

Oh, but you can't!

MERI

What do you mean I "can't"?

MILES

I'd love for you to stay here.

MERI

What?

MILES

I need an assistant. I have so much potential that scientists at the LAB can't see. They don't have the open mind to accept me but *you do!*

MERI

Miles, I'm touched. Really. But I can't work with you.

MILES

Is it me?

MERI

No! It's not you. It's me! (beat)
That came out way too cliché.

(MORE)

MERI (CONT'D)

What I mean is, I have to go and find Zach. I have a life. So do you. You can find your own way without me.

MILES

How can you be sure?

MERI

You have potential.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia stares into her hand mirror.

MERI (O.S.)

You need patience. Don't worry about how others see you.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

Zach sits alone on a bench, staring into space. He absently starts to run his index finger around his ring.

INT. MILES' SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

BELLS RING. Meri sits up and looks around wildly.

MERI

What was that?

MILES

What was what?

MERI

Those bells. Those same bells!

MILES

I... I didn't hear any bells.

MERI

What are you talking about? Those *bells!* They're still ringing...

Meri stops and looks down at her hand with her ring.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

Zach continues to circle his ring with his finger.

INT. MILES' SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The BELLS continue. Meri listens. She rises to her feet.

MERI
I have to go.

MILES
Now?

MERI
I... I think so.

MILES
Meri, no! Please!

She walks around the coffee table and stands in the center of the carpet. Miles circles her. She looks down at her ring.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia strokes the Mirror's handle.

OLIVIA
What are you waiting for? Go.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

Zach continues to stroke his ring.

INT. MILES' SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bells continue.

MILES
Meri?

She doesn't respond. Miles is shaking. Suddenly, he reaches behind one of the couch cushions and brings out a black automatic. He holds it in both hands and points it at Meri.

MILES (CONT'D)
I won't let you go. I'll shoot you!

He blocks the way to the front door. She holds his gaze.

MERI
Don't do this, Miles.

MILES
I can't let you go! I-- I can't.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia jumps to her feet.

OLIVIA
Go! Remember your dream! "Press
Down in the Center!"

Pierre pauses when passing the doorway, confused.

PIERRE'S POV - Olivia protectively cradles her mirror.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
You have more power than him!
Nothing he can do will stop you!

Pierre's eyes widen. He slips past.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Pierre hurries down, chancing worried glances behind him.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
What are you waiting for? Do it!

INT. MILES' SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MERI
Miles. You're too gentle for this.

MILES
But I would! I... I could!

MERI
Goodbye, Miles. And Good Luck.

MILES
Meri! I mean it!

Miles' arms shake. She shuts her eyes tight. Her index finger presses down on the gem of her ring. The bells stop ringing.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

Rosie comes out of the station office.

ROSIE
Zach, dear? Aren't you coming...

Zach is not on the bench. She blinks.

ROSIE (CONT'D)

Zach?

INT. MILES' SITTING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Miles stares for a long moment at the place where Meri used to be. Eventually he lowers the gun, giving an slow smile.

MILES

Teleportation.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Meri and Zach collapse before the Mirror. Meri rises first. She spots Zach nearby and embraces him. He replies in a half-daze, but finally hugs her tighter and kisses her.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia sighs, smiling. She returns the mirror to the drawer.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - LATER

Olivia hums a tune as she enters the room.

OLIVIA

Pierre?

Pierre appears timidly at the bedroom door.

PIERRE

Yes, love?

OLIVIA

Would you like some tea? I'm putting the kettle on.

PIERRE

Kettle? Tea? Oh, yes. Thank you.

He shuffles quickly to the couch and sits abruptly.

OLIVIA

It's a beautiful day, isn't it?

PIERRE

Yes. Whatever you say, love.

INT. LIBRARY - LATER

Aisle. Meri sits reading a book. Zach stands, watching her.

MERI
Jeez! Rosie was a hassle.

ZACH
A bit, yeah.

MERI
I feel for Rake-Jake.

ZACH
Don't we both?

They smile. Zach stuffs his hands in his pockets. He freezes.

ZACH (CONT'D)
Meri? Something's in my pocket.

MERI
What does that mean?

ZACH
There isn't supposed to be
something in my pocket.

He pulls out a newspaper. They lock eyes for a moment.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Rosie stands, confused, by the empty bench.

RAKE-JAKE (O.S.)
Fieldman? Fieldman!

Rake-Jake runs out, note-pad in hand. Joel and Luc follow.

RAKE-JAKE (CONT'D)
Rosie! Where is he?

ROSIE
I don't know. He was here, but...

RAKE-JAKE
Zach! Where are you?

JOEL
Rake? What is it?

LUC
What's going on? Where's Zach?

ROSIE

I don't know. He was here on the bench, and now he's just... gone.

Rake-Jake squints at the view. He glances down at the pad.

It reads: "Someone has to take on the search. I think that someone needs to be me. Keep the station open. I'll be back!"

He rakes his hair, glances around again, and sighs.

RAKE-JAKE

Good Luck. (beat) And thank you.

Joel and Luc awkwardly return inside. Rake-Jake pauses before following. Rosie sits down on the bench, left alone.

ELECTRICAL SURGE. A man lands on his feet before her.

MILES (O.S.)

Hello! Do you happen to know a man named Zach?

INT. LIBRARY - DAY (PRESENT)

Meri and Zach peer down at the newspaper.

MERI

Three kids.

ZACH

Three different Families.

MERI

Are you sure?

ZACH

Why not? Rake's in the Dream World. Besides someone has to find them. Someone with the ability, the time--

MERI

Someone like a Dream Rider?

He smiles and nods. He opens the newspaper to the second page. His face changes.

ZACH

Oh my God.

MERI

What?

(looks where he points)
Their Teacher? Miss Hall?

ZACH

Miss Hall. Miss Rosie Hall! (beat)
She knew them, the little witch!

He throws the newspaper to the floor. Meri jumps.

MERI

Hey! Hey, easy, Zach. It's okay.
Like you said. We have the time.
We'll get them back. Don't Worry.

Zach calms down and heads towards the end of the aisle.

ZACH

Then what are we waiting for?

MERI

Zach! Wait. What I mean is... We
have the time. (beat) In Dreams.

ZACH

And not in what? (beat) Reality?

MERI

I want to go home. We can't spend
the rest of our lives here. Face
it. It's a lot. And who knows--

ZACH

Yeah. I get it. (beat) Whatever.
Fine. I need some coffee anyway.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Zach stalks out of the aisle, Meri following. He stops short.

At the Bolted Door, ROSIE stands studying the wood carefully.
Her dress makes her look like a dragon-witch hybrid.

ROSIE

This door is meant to open. Only
question remains: Where's the key?

ZACH

R... Rosie.

MERI

Oh, God. You're kidding me.

Zach looks back at her. His eyes unfocus. She turns around.

MILES inspects the Mirror on the podium. A large techno-like megaphone hangs across his back. He looks like he dressed for work and then shot out of a cannon.

MILES
Yep. That's Jungian, all right.

MERI
Miles!

MILES
Ah, hello Meri.

ZACH
Oh, this is just perfect.

MILES
And I take it you're Zach?

ROSIE
Affirmative.

ZACH
You work together?

ROSIE
Stop chatting, love. How do you open this door?

MERI
That is off limits.

ROSIE
Why?

ZACH
It's... not safe out there.

ROSIE
Out where?

MILES
Reality, my lovely Rosie. That's the door to the "Real World".

Zach and Meri freeze. Miles circles the Mirror casually.

MILES (CONT'D)
I'm not that crazy. I may not have had prior experience, but I knew Teleportation when I first saw it.

MERI

Oh my god. You watched me leave!

MILES

Yes! Then I explored! There must be a way. I didn't imagine such a woman coming to my aid. It was a sign. And I found the destination.

ROSIE

Jungian Alloy.

ZACH

Young What?

MILES

Jungian Alloy. An astroid fell to earth, carrying an iron that no one had seen before. Except me. I knew it in my dreams. I foresaw its arrival. So when others struggled over its existence, I embraced it.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Olivia covets the mirror, seated on the floor, sipping tea.

MILES (O.S.)

I did not discover it, no. But I found a path. It told me the truth.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Miles turns and glares at Meri and Zach.

MILES

I have been living a dream my entire life. That ends here.

ROSIE

And now he's not alone.

MILES

We've wasted our lives, shunned by our cohorts and our friends. It's time we lived. For Real.

ZACH

Miles. Rosie. There's only one world out there and it won't be different from yours.

ROSIE

But we don't want just one world.
(beat) Oops. Spoiled the best part.

MILES

Wondering how we got here?

Rosie giggles and runs to his side. He picks up his techno megaphone. It WHIRS like a PC motor.

MILES (CONT'D)

A Jungian Kit. Invented it myself.
Tracks down the smallest particles
of Alloy and transports me to them.

MERI

We have no Alloy. (beat) Right?

MILES

Wrong. This Mirror. It's swarming!

INT. GRANDPARENTS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia pauses to study the edges of her hand mirror.

MILES (O.S.)

A doorway into the Dream Matrix.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

ZACH

The what?

ROSIE

The Dream Matrix? It's what you
guys have been riding though this
whole time! You've gone cuckoo.

MERI

Never thought it had a name.

MILES

You never wondered how you could
control it?

MERI

Control it?

MILES

You ride it. You rings allow you.
Magnetism. The Celtic ring is
coated with the alloy.

(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)

And the little jewelled flower? Raw Jungian diamonds. All magnetism.

MERI

The bolted door. We couldn't open it before wearing the rings.

ZACH

Wow. Good job, Miles. You make this dreaming of ours sound so real.

MILES

Idiots! You think you've been alone? All those people! The Matrix is where worlds collide. Realities connect. It *is* real! (beat) All those worlds. You can reach all of them. With two small rings.

ROSIE

Imagine what we could do.

MERI

Oh no. No! This is a mistake.

ZACH

Don't even think about it.

MILES

Rosie?

Rosie walks forward, pointing at Zach.

ROSIE

"Double, Double, Toil and Trouble. Something wicked this way comes."

ZACH

Don't waste your breath, honey. I'm not in a Shakespeare mood.

MERI

Zach...

ROSIE

Old blood and scars, boil and bubble. Methinks you, a past you, becomes!

Zach cries out in shock as his left leg gives. He hits the floor and his cry changes to pain.

Meri runs to his side and tries to help him up. She touches his left leg and her hand comes away covered in blood.

MERI
What did you do?

MILES
A little ride down memory lane.
Never harmed anyone, did it?

Rosie stares intently at Zach, unresponsive.

Meri tackles Rosie with a cry. They fall to the floor.

Zach gasps and struggles to his hands and knees.

Rosie pushes Meri off her and stands again, pointing at Zach.

Zach screams with pain again and falls over, clawing his leg.

Meri moves again, but Miles stops her with a black automatic.

MILES (CONT'D)
That's enough. Remember my metal
friend? I think you'll pay more
attention to her now. (beat) Give
me your ring or he bleeds to death.

ZACH
Meri. Run. (beat) Just run!

Zach writhes. Meri hesitates before sprinting into an aisle.

GUNSHOT. The end of the aisle is wounded.

Miles grins and follows her eagerly.

MILES
Have it your way. I'll pry it from
your dead fingers instead!

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Olivia hugs the mirror to her and crosses herself. She looks around and covers her mouth. She leaps to her feet.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Zach lies in a growing pool of blood. Rosie circles him.

ROSIE
A real pity. I wanted to marry you.

ZACH
Not the most perfect date...

ROSIE

No. It's not. (beat) Oh well.

Rosie rubs two fingers together and more blood seeps out.

MEMORY FLASH - Zach first shows his scar to Meri.

MEMORY FLASH - The Thin Man's tea set. The Bleeding Teapot.

ROSIE (CONT'D)

Well. That is *some* scar, isn't it?

Zach grimaces, on the verge of tears.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The hand mirror depicts Zach bleeding and Meri running. It lies on the mantle before the painting of Yuki Mellot.

Olivia kneels on the carpet with her hands in prayer.

OLIVIA

I have hated you for so many years.
 Many times I have yearned to tear
 you down and rip you apart. Even
 when Meri broke that stupid vase!
 But she believes in you and her
 dreaming started with you. Please.
 Help her. Help them both.

Yuki's painted face shimmers in the glow of the mirror.

INTERCUT: LIBRARY & GRANDPARENT'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meri hides against the end of an aisle, a D.R. plaque mounted above her head. She's lost in thought and frozen in shock.

Yuki's painted face seems to move in the mirror's light.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Rake's newspaper rolls across the floor and hits Meri's foot. She jumps and catches her breath.

MILES

Meeh-riiii... Where arrre yooou?

Miles sneaks into the next aisle. Megaphone WHIRS softly.

Meri whisks up the newspaper and wields it like a club.

MILES (CONT'D)

Amazing how our paths have crossed.
We have gone sooo far. Do you
remember? (beat) It started with my
little globes. Then I met Rosie and
boy, things got interesting.

Meri pauses and her club hand falters.

MILES (CONT'D)

The Palace of the Dead? My
Frankenstein Project? (beat) Our
little tea party in Dumfries! Oh,
those were the days.

Meri mouths the names, face screwed up in concentration. Then she recognizes her make-shift weapon again.

MERI

What the heck am I doing?

MILES

Ah. There you are.

Miles has nearly reached the end of the aisle.

MERI

Oh... Okay, Miles. You win. You're
too smart. You always have been.
But before I die, tell me. (beat)
Where the hell is Dumfries?

MILES

Dumfries? You don't remember
Dumfries? That was where--

Meri whisks around the corner and raps the newspaper on Miles' head. CLANG! Miles reels and collapses.

Meri stares in shock. She studies the newspaper.

Wrapped up inside is a padded rod a foot and a half long and two narrow daggers with engraved hilts.

MERI

Wow. Thanks, Rake.

Miles groans. She grabs his gun and retreats down the aisle.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Zach lies in a daze and Rosie stands over him.

ROSIE

All the memories come back to me.
We had some great times, didn't we?

ZACH

Yep. Great times.

ROSIE

Funny. You beat me and brought me
close to death. Tables have turned.

ZACH

Come again?

ROSIE

Tables have turned. Are you losing
your hearing before your life?

ZACH

Maybe. (beat) I don't remember
fighting you before.

Rosie is taken aback. They lock eyes.

Zach's POV - Meri attacks Rosie with the butt of a pistol.

They fall. Meri chokes Rosie with the rod. She's kicked off.

Meri rolls acrobatically to her feet, drawing out the two
blades. Rosie tackles her with the rod.

Rosie knocks Meri's blades away. Meri performs karate instead
and eventually kicks the rod away too. It lands next to Zach.

Rosie stuns Meri with a few well aimed punches. Meri falls
and Rosie stands victoriously above her with the gun.

ROSIE

You lose. I win.

MERI

I'd call it a draw. (beat) You lost
your concentration.

Her POV - Rosie realizes her mistake and turns just as Zach
attacks her with the rod out front.

It sprouts two metallic hoops that makes it resemble a giant
needle threader. They snare Rosie's hands and she trips...

Rosie disappears through the glass, automatic and all.

MERI (CONT'D)

Nice Moves!

ZACH

Ditto.

Miles appears out of one of the aisles, hand to his head.

Zach and Meri turn to him, wielding blades and rod.

Miles smiles and gives them a wide berth.

MILES

Another draw then? Good job. For a moment, I thought you didn't have those weapons anymore.

Zach and Meri glance at each other. They follow Miles all the way around until he reaches the Mirror.

Miles hides a small taser behind his back.

MILES (CONT'D)

Why are you so on edge? You've won.

He feigns towards the Mirror, and leaps back with the taser.

FLIP! A chain flies out of Zach's rod and snares the taser, pulling it back to the rod like a tape measure retracting.

Zach gawks at his needle-threader and whips his gaze to Meri.

MERI

Nice one. (beat) Give up, Miles.

MILES

Oh, I'll never give up. But I'll bow out this round. Like they say in Rome. It's always fun when you lose. You come back even more pumped!

He smiles and winks at Meri, stepping into the Mirror.

They sigh and lower their weapons.

MERI

Wow.

ZACH

Major Wow.

He unwinds the taser from his rod. The metallic ends slip back inside the handle. He raises his brow.

ZACH (CONT'D)

We're... not done with them.

MERI

Nope.

ZACH

Both Rosie and Miles.

MERI

Yep.

ZACH

And those two were from the future?

MERI

Oh yeah!

ZACH

Great. Now we're time-travellers.

He sighs and shakes his leg. Meri pauses a moment and then turns to study him.

MERI

You okay?

ZACH

Yeah. Just a little numb.

He whacks the rod methodically on his left leg.

ZACH (CONT'D)

Nice blades, by the way.

MERI

Thanks. (beat) Same to you. Nice...
what is that anyway?

ZACH

I have no idea.

They chuckle. It turns into full hearted laughter.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Olivia hugs the mirror and gazes up at Yuki Mellot.

OLIVIA

Thank you. God bless you.

Yuki stands proud. Close on his two blades with carved hilts.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Meri studies their new weapons as Zach reads the Red Book.

ANITA (V.O.)
Your path is dangerous, my friend.
In Dreams, you should not fiddle.

Zach folds up Rake's newspaper and tucks it in the Red Book.

WILHELM (V.O.)
For safety's sake and happy ends,
heed to the Rider's Riddle.

Zach studies his blood-soaked pants. His scar is healed.

ANITA (V.O.)
In order to command your ride and
another Dream to enter...

They lean against the bolted door, studying their rings.

WILHELM (V.O.)
Ring 'Round and 'Round the outside--

ANITA (V.O.)
-- or Press Deep in the Center.

They look around the Library one more time. Then Zach opens the bolted door and lets Meri out first.

INT. ZACH'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Occasional things are marked with little yellow crime-scene tags. Zach closes the door softly and Meri looks around.

MERI
Zach? Do you remember little yellow
cards around the house?

ZACH
What? (beat) Whoa.

MERI
I've got a bad feeling about this.

ZACH
Me too. Wait here.

MERI
Where are you going?

ZACH
To change into some new pants.

He leaves her side. She looks around and flexes her fists.

ZACH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What the heck?

EXT. ZACH'S HOUSE - DAY

Nick Fisher sits in his cruiser, drumming the steering wheel.

His POV - The front door opens. Zach and Meri step out.

Nick continues to drum. Slowly he registers their presence and stares in shock. He recomposes himself and leaps out.

NICK
Hey!

MERI
Nick? Nick Fisher?

NICK
Miss Mellot!

MERI
"Miss Mellot"? It's Meri!

ZACH
Sorry. Is my house a crime scene?

MERI
Zach! This is Nick. He graduated last year. Nick, you're a cop?

NICK
And you're alive.

MERI
What?

NICK
I mean you're okay! Where were you?

ZACH
You missed us?

NICK
We missed you. For Three Days!

Zach winces. Meri glares at him. He smiles sheepishly.

MERI
 "Only a Second."

EXT. MERI'S GRANDPARENTS HOUSE - LATER

Cliff leans on the front gate, glaring down the street.
 He straightens as the cruiser pulls up. He opens the door.

CLIFF
 About time.

MERI
 Oh my God. Cliff, I am so sorry!

She hugs him as Zach slips out the other side.

CLIFF
 At least you're okay. (beat) And
 Mister Fieldman?

ZACH
 Hello, sir.

PIERRE (O.S.)
 Meri!

Meri turns and breaks away. Zach sneaks past Cliff as Nick
 gets out of the cruiser.

MERI
 Grampa! I'm so sorry!

PIERRE
 Oh, love. Where were you?

MERI
 We went on a hike and got lost.
 It's way too silly but that's it.

Zach smiles back at Cliff and Nick. Nick is murmuring to
 Cliff, who watches them suspiciously.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
 Meri.

Olivia stands in the doorway. Meri swallows.

MERI
 Grandma. I can't argue with you. I
 didn't call. I didn't even let you
 know I was okay. I've been foolish--

Olivia rigidly embraces her. Meri pauses before responding.

OLIVIA
You're alive. And home. That's all
that matters to me.

She embraces Zach too, stapling his arms to his sides.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
And you! Zachary Fieldman.

She parts and jabs him with a finger.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
Why didn't you help her? I mean,
that's your duty as... a boyfriend.

MERI & ZACH
What?

OLIVIA
Come on, the two of you. The tea
will steep too long.

INT. GRANDPARENTS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zach awkwardly drops onto the couch.

OLIVIA (O.S.)
Is it too much to ask? Carry a
phone next time, for goodness sake.

Pierre sits in his chair and smiles at Zach.

MERI (O.S.)
Yes, Grandmother. Of Course!

PIERRE
You look just like him.

ZACH
Who?

PIERRE
Your Dad.

ZACH
My Dad?

Cliff and Nick stand in the doorway into the hall.

PIERRE

Your father. God, I wish he was here. He'd get a kick out of this.

ZACH

You know my dad? I mean--

PIERRE

Yes, yes. He popped in once in a while, checking on Meri growing up.

ZACH

Meri? (beat) But... why?

PIERRE

I don't know. But I got him to visit a lot more. I gave him this book, see? "First Flight." That Wright Brothers' history? (beat) Slipped in a pamphlet to the bar down the street. We met up there almost every week!

OLIVIA

Pierre! I knew you were drinking.

PIERRE

Just a little wine! It's medicinal! Come on, love, get with it.

Stunned, Zach turns to Meri and holds out his ring hand. She smiles and touches her ring to his. Nothing happens.

MERI

Don't worry. You're awake.

He laughs and turns back to Pierre.

Meri smiles and leans against the wall. Beside her, Olivia pours hot water into a teapot on a tray.

Cliff walks up beside Meri and nudges her arm. He drops her phone into her hands.

MERI (CONT'D)

Thanks, Cliff.

CLIFF

What happened to you two?

MERI

We got lost. That's all.

CLIFF

In this little town? How can you
get lost on a hike and go missing
for three days?

Olivia glances up as she noisily arranges the china.

MERI

Dreaming. Ever get lost in thought?

Olivia winces. Cliff smiles and shakes his head at Meri.

CLIFF

Dreaming? Oh, Meredith Mellot. You
never cease to elude me.

Olivia's smile replaces her frown as she lifts the tea tray.

OLIVIA

Right then. Tea's up!

She approaches the couch table and the others gather around.

FADE TO BLACK.