

EXT. FUTURISTIC CITYSCAPE - DAY

As far as the eye can see, large blimp-like transport spacecraft are tethered to the tops of gleaming chrome skyscrapers. They are bright red, with metallic exoskeletons, and they are shaped like pumpkin seeds.

Beneath the many spacecraft swarms a city in chaos.

EXT. CITY STREETS - SAME

HORDES of people fill the streets, all of them coursing toward a large metallic terminal.

They have salvaged what they can from their former lives. Some carry food, others pets, still others drag large boxes and luggage behind them.

EXT. TERMINAL ENTRANCE - SAME

A seven-year-old BOY walks between his MOTHER and FATHER toward the entrance of a large terminal. The terminal is being overrun: in a scene of mass hysteria, whole families try to press through the gates.

The boy's mother and father struggle to pull him along, shouting to each other above the din of the crowd. Their words are drowned out.

SPEAKER (V.O.)
(echoing and with static)
Ark 145 leaves from gate C-34 in three
minutes.

The speaker CRACKLES loudly.

SPEAKER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...flare will hit in seven minutes.
Repeat, the flare will...

Another loud CRACKLE and the crowd surges in panic. The boy's parents pull him forward.

MOTHER
(yelling hoarsely)
Don't worry, sweetheart! We'll make it!
We're gonna make it!

EXT. FUTURISTIC CITYSCAPE - SAME

Several of the blimp-like spacecraft cut their moorings and begin rising into the air.

EXT. CITY STREETS - SAME

The crowd looks up into the skies after the red pumpkin seeds.

An OLD MAN collapses. The large trunk he was lugging on his back breaks open, dumping out on the street all his belongings.

OLD MAN

They're leaving without us! My God, how can... Come back!

More people notice the old man and look up at the craft rising into the sky. Many react with screams of terror and plaintive cries; others trudge forward through the mass with renewed effort.

EXT. IN FRONT OF TERMINAL - SAME

The boy strains to keep up with his parents.

BOY'S P.O.V.

The boy's parents charge forward, practically dragging him. Only the back of the father's head is visible.

SPEAKER (V.O.)

(broken with static)

...k 145 leav...ne minute...Last transport...Ark 145...Gate...Flare to...

FATHER (O.S.)

(shouting urgently)

Goddammit, Damon! Come on!

INSERT - HANDS

We see the father's grip on the boy's hand begin to slip as they are forcibly separated by the crowd.

MOTHER & FATHER (O.S.)

Damon!

FRONT OF TERMINAL

The boy is pushed away from his parents and quickly finds himself lost in the crowd. He struggles to reach a lamppost and climbs up on its base.

VIEW FROM LAMPPOST

He looks over a sea of heads but fails to find his parents.

FRONT OF TERMINAL

The boy gazes up the sleek metal sides of nearby skyscrapers, amid which drift the many transport craft.

His upward turned eyes fill with tears as he clutches the lamppost with all his might.

All around him the crowd begins to react to something above. Clutching each other in terror, they scream and wail.

A strong wind sweeps up dust and trash. Then it begins picking up people, trees, cars.

It becomes even stronger, sweeping everything off the ground.

The ROAR of the winds grows unbearably loud. The boy urgently tries to open his eyes as wide as he can.

EXT. FUTURISTIC CITYSCAPE - SAME

Above the city, the blimp-like spacecraft tear away from their moorings. Carried off by an upswell of air, they scatter like rose petals across the sky.

EXT. OUTER SPACE - SAME

Silence.

From a great distance, we see Earth as it begins to pass through an engulfing sun flare. The magnetic field of the planet destroyed by the flare, the entire atmosphere sprays off as though it had been merely a thick coating of dust.

We zoom closer to the planet to see thousands of the blimp-like spacecraft tossed into the blackness of space by the escaping atmosphere.

Passing one of these spacecraft as it moves quickly beyond the planet Mars toward the asteroid belt, we cruise out into deep space.

For a moment, we turn back to see the entire solar system in miniature. Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, and Earth seem like static balls in the all-surrounding darkness.

A rectangle of light appears, dim against the blackness. It starts to move slowly. Growing a bit brighter, it starts moving faster.

We discern a small desk beyond the planets, and a bed where the young boy is asleep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

What a moment ago had been the solar system is revealed to be, in fact, merely a mobile hanging in the boy's bedroom. The light through the window cast by a passing car completes its scan of the room and disappears.

The boy, DAMON, awakes in a fright.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Damon sits at the dining room table of a present-day home. In the corners of the room are several sealed moving boxes. Behind Damon is an empty china closet; in front of him is a birthday cake with eight candles. Nearby is an recently unwrapped birthday present: a backyard rocket kit.

Five slightly older BOYS stand around the dining room with Damon's mother waiting for Damon to blow out the candles.

Damon blows out his candles. Everyone CLAPS and CHEERS. The mother leans over and kisses Damon.

MOTHER

Happy birthday, sweetheart.

The boys press forward to get some cake.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

All right, all right, guys. C'mon.
Birthday boy gets the first piece.

As the mother cuts the cake. Two of the boys, ADAM and ALEX, drag the rocket kit off the table and turns to Damon.

ADAM

Are you gonna do it today?

ALEX

After cake! We'll go out back...

The mother pushes the boys aside and hands Damon a slice of cake.

MOTHER

(slightly worried)
Maybe another day, huh? How about some
cake?

Damon suddenly grabs the rocket kit from the other boys and runs upstairs with it. His mother watches after him with concern.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex ignores Damon and wipes some icing off the cake with his finger.

ALEX

What a chicken... Won't even go outside!

CUT TO:

INT. DAMON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We see now that Damon's room is decorated entirely in a space motif: his sheets are covered with little planets, his bedside lampshade with moons, and so on. He also has a small bookshelf full of astronomy books.

Damon sits cross-legged on his bed holding the toy rocket (now assembled) that he received earlier. His mother sits across from him on a small chair. She SIGHS and rubs her temples.

MOTHER

Just...If you would tell me, Damon. I just don't...I don't understand what it is out there that you find so scary.

Damon sits in silence and stares at the rocket. His mother looks away.

DAMON

(softly)

I had the dream again.

Not wanting him to see the tears welling in her eyes, the mother does not look at him at first. She uses her sleeve to wipe her eyes.

Moving to sit on the edge of the bed, she takes the rocket from Damon and sets it on his bedside table. Then she kisses his forehead.

MOTHER

You wanna stay in my room with me tonight?

Damon hesitantly shakes his head.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Sure?

He nods with a little more conviction. She hugs him and gives him another kiss.

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MOTHER (CONT'D)

It's gonna be better once we get in the new place. I promise.

Damon starts to lay down to go to bed. The mother tucks him in then heads to the door. She looks back at him before flicking off the light.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Good night, sweetheart...

She leaves the door open slightly.

Damon lies in bed with his eyes open. A thin sliver of light falls across his face.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Damon's mother paces in the kitchen with a cordless phone pressed to her ear.

MOTHER

(nearly shouting)

You son of a bitch! He won't even go outside! It's like... God, it's like the whole world is coming to an end for him because of this. And you can't even call him on his goddamn birthday!...Sorry's not good enough. He needs to see--

She stops abruptly.

Damon stands in the doorway in his space pajamas, listening to her.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - LATER

Damon's mother lies asleep on her side. Damon faces the other way, toward the doorway. The door is open all the way, and the hallway light is on.

Damon opens his eyes and looks into the hallway. A man in a pilot's uniform walks into the bedroom.

Damon sits up on one arm and looks at the PILOT quizzically.

The pilot approaches the bed and sits near Damon. They share a look of understanding. Then the pilot leans down to whisper something to Damon.

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CONTINUED:

Damon nods and glances at his mother.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Damon's mother awakes with a start. She looks around her room and finds that Damon is gone. She rises from bed and walks to her window.

VIEW FROM WINDOW

The mother looks out on a large suburban backyard. Outside Damon stands in his pajamas. Fifty feet in front of him is the wreck of a small single-engine plane, standing almost perfectly upright on its nose.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

A swarm of POLICEMEN and other OFFICIALS investigates the wreckage of the airplane. One official stands to the side of the rest talking on a mobile phone.

OFFICIAL

What about the FAA?...So the flight wasn't...Wait, what? I can barely make you out. Interference or something...

Through the cockpit window, we see the dead body of a man strapped into the pilot's seat.

INT. KITCHEN - FOLLOW

Damon sits in a chair in the middle of the room. His mother crouches in front of him, holding his hand.

MOTHER

Damon...Why'd you go out back?

Damon stares ahead blankly. His mother tilts her head to put herself more in his line of sight.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Yesterday you were afraid...Why did you go out there today?

Damon seems to come to. He looks into his mother's eyes.

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CONTINUED:

DAMON

He told me it would be all right...He said...He said that if you can see it...if you aren't afraid and you can keep your eyes open...it won't be black as sackcloth. It'll be bright--like a rain of gold...And then it will be quiet.

MOTHER

(growing a little frantic)
Damon... Damon, what are you saying? Who told you?

DAMON

The pilot man.

MOTHER

Who?

DAMON

The pilot man told me...

The mother looks out the glass door in the kitchen to the backyard to the plane wreck.

DAMON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He came to take care of us.

CUT TO:

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Damon sits playing with his rocket in the reception area of a child psychiatrist's office. Through the receptionist window, a nurse watches him and yawns. We can hear the murmur of voices from the next room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - SAME

Damon's mother and a psychiatrist are in the middle of a tense discussion. The mother looks like she hasn't slept much, and her eyes are puffy and red.

PSYCHIATRIST

What about Damon's father?

MOTHER

I don't know...He's away till next week...

(sobbing softly)

And I'm supposed to be moving tomorrow...
Jesus, I just don't know--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PSYCHIATRIST

Listen, listen. I know this is upsetting. Especially with all that happened yesterday morning. But believe me, when I talked to Damon just now, what I heard was just a little boy who's very upset about his parents splitting up.

MOTHER

But he says he sees this man, and--

PSYCHIATRIST

I know, I know...He's told you about his other dream, right?...Children often confuse a vivid dream with real experiences. I mean, this whole business of a sun flare that--what's Damon say? It's gonna break some magnetic field and then something with the atmosphere? I mean, this is a coping fantasy. You said yourself how he reads all those books about astronomy and--

MOTHER

I know, I know...I just...

PSYCHIATRIST

I'm not saying this isn't a problem. I'm just saying it's one you can work with. Your son is experiencing a great deal of anxiety--that's normal. You just need to continue to work through it with him.

MOTHER

And tomorrow?

PSYCHIATRIST

And tomorrow, you move...I might be able to refer you to someone. But maybe in the meantime you can talk to him about it a little more...Help him to understand it's gonna take time, but it'll be all right.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. DAMON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Damon opens his eyes to find the pilot sitting on the edge of his bed.

PILOT

It'll be all right, Damon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAMON

What about--

PILOT

Shh. I'll show you.

The pilot and takes Damon's hand. Together they walk out of the bedroom.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - MORNING

They walk outside. It's still dark out as they cross the parking lot of the small suburban housing development, but the sky is pink on the horizon.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - FOLLOW

The pilot leads Damon up a dirt work road behind the development. It leads past several newly constructed house frames and freshly dug basement.

EXT. HILL - FOLLOW

The pilot holds Damon's hand as they climb a slope to a highway.

As they crest the hill, the landscape is dimly lit but the cars on the highway still have their lights on as they stream past.

Damon and the pilot stand on the hill and watch the sun rise. From its side extends an enormous flare.

PILOT

That's the sun's arm, you see... And it'll embrace us all. It's gonna be a shower of golden light, Damon. And when it's done, you won't hear a whisper.

A strong breeze picks up. Staring at the rising sun, Damon opens his eyes as wide as he can.

THE END