

HOMESTUCK: PART 1

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FADE IN:

EXT. JADE'S MEMORY - DAY

A HEARTBEAT in the dark. A massive, checkered battlefield flashes into view. The heartbeat quickens.

Black and white chess-figures battle. Walking assault platforms tear through enemy barricades. Paratroopers rappel from gold and purple transport vehicles into a heated war.

Breathing accompanies the heartbeat: stressed and scared.

JADE
(terrified)
What is this? Where am I? Hello?!

Red lightning arcs across the battlefield, into the sky, everywhere. Figures in its path are rent to pieces.

JADE (CONT'D)
Oh god oh god oh god... what's
happening? Why...why is...

At the center of the lightning, an obsidian arm holds aloft a bright RING, which releases the devastation.

JADE (CONT'D)
I remember this! This is a memory.
A memory of...how I died?

The heartbeat races. See a glimpse of wings, a sword, and a glowing scepter as the screen fades to white, barely catching the blue watermark of a boy's silhouette.

JADE (CONT'D)
No, I remember.

THE HEARTBEAT STOPS.

JADE (CONT'D)
This is the first time I died.

EXT. FURTHEST RING - NIGHT

Darkness, surrounding two white eyes, which become strikingly green. They belong to JADE HARLEY, 16, cloaked in stygian mystery and doglike power. Emphasis on DOGlike.

SUPER: FURTHEST RING

She stands on the arm of a spiral galaxy, winding inward like a yellow brick road. At the center, a hand-drawn stage appears beside a MYSTERIOUS FIGURE.

Seeing the stranger, Jade brightens.

JADE
Hello?! Hello there!

The person SCREAMS! Jade SCREAMS! The person dives behind the stage's green curtains as Jade runs down the spiral.

JADE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Sorry, I didn't mean to frighten you! My name is Jade. Jade Harley.

FIGURE
J-Jade?! Stay back!

JADE
Don't worry, I'm a friend! There's no need to be afraid.

FIGURE
No, I - look, just stay back! Pay no attention to the girl behind the curtain!

JADE
Okay, okay! I just want to talk.

The curtain shuffles, the only movement in a still void. Jade looks at the endless expanse and shivers. Inches closer.

JADE (CONT'D)
How long have you been...here?

The curtain pauses, but there's no answer.

JADE (CONT'D)
Please! Can't you at least talk to me? I just need someone to...I-I don't want to be alone.

FIGURE
Please go away...I'm sorry.

JADE
There's nobody else here!

FIGURE
Maybe that's the point. Maybe we're meant to be alone. Even in death.

A beat. Jade hesitantly steps forward.

JADE
So this is the afterlife?

FIGURE
No, it's a dream bubble. If you just appeared, you either fell asleep or died.

JADE
How do I know which?

FIGURE
You'll have to remember. And if you died to get here, your eyes will turn blank. Like mine.

Jade looks up. Two white eyes stare at her from a slit in the curtain. She gasps and they vanish.

JADE
I'm sorry! I didn't mean to-

The curtain rustles. Flash of white hair, an orange horn.

JADE (CONT'D)
Please talk with me for a little longer, I don't want to remember!

FIGURE
Look. Jade, was it? You have to stop fighting your memories. If you do, the bad ones will always come back first.

This resonates with Jade. She finally reaches the stage.

JADE
Who are you? You can tell me, I just want to be your friend.

CALLIE
My name is...CALLIE OPHEE. Take some advice from a hypocrite, Jade. Things aren't so bad. Try to remember something good: where you were, or...the people with you.

JADE
Okay. Yeah. I'll try.

She closes her eyes. Squirms. Callie watches closely.

CALLIE

Don't fight it, allow yourself to remember... And be kind to the past. It's not your enemy.

The curtain parts by itself, forcing Callie to move!

JADE

I do remember a place...the Medium!

She opens her green eyes, looking at a hand-drawn version of the MEDIUM. The stage reflects her thoughts.

Jade moves onstage like a moth to flame, surrounded by her galactic diorama as Callie watches from the side, entranced.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

A dark purple planet, Derse, appears at the edge of an asteroid belt. Jade touches the ephemeral image lovingly.

JADE (V.O.)

There were two kingdoms here. This one is DERSE, a world of darkness on the edge of space. And past the VEIL, an asteroid belt, is the golden city, PROSPIT, orbiting with four special planets!

The planets emerge: black, red, blue, and white. They're followed by Prospit itself.

JADE (V.O.)

Everything revolved around Skaia.

A shining planet amidst arcs of light.

JADE (V.O.)

The battle happened on there...

Flash of red. Jade flinches but fights back. Memories appear, coming faster. They swirl around her like a storm.

JADE (V.O.)

But there was more! A puppet, rings, trolls...and salamanders! I remember a cat, a dog, and a poor, dead bird! There were queens, kings, houses, a mayor, time travel, a game called Sburb, and-
(heavy beat)
Four HEROES.

EXT. JOHN'S NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

A notably generic neighborhood: white, two-story, cookie-cutter houses. One has a tire swing and a pogo ride.

SUPER: EARTH, APRIL 13, 2009

DAVE (V.O.)
John Egbert!

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - MORNING

JOHN EGBERT, 13, an adorable gamer, grabs his glasses and fogs the lenses with a breath. He rubs them clean on his Ghostbusters slimer t-shirt and turns to a facetime session on Pesterchum, a multi-medium chat application.

JOHN
Dave Strider! How are ya?

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

A hot, bustling cityscape looms. The sound of phat beats rise around one particular building.

DAVE (V.O.)
Oh, man. Shit's basically flying
off the hook.

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Deft hands operate turntables. DAVE STRIDER, 13, wearing a gear logo shirt and badass shades, lays down the sicknasty tune. If cool was an art, this kid would be Van Gogh.

DAVE
It's like shit wants nothing to do
with that hook. The hook filed for
divorce from the shit and is
seeking custody of the hook and the
shit's two kids.

INTERCUT BETWEEN DAVE AND JOHN

John attempts to hold in a laugh as Dave grins.

DAVE
But hey, happy thirteenth! You
raking in all kinds of sweet loot?

On John's nightstand, by his lamp and alarm clock: a hammer and nails, notecard, poster, and birthday cake await.

JOHN

I have a poster from dad. And a, uh, another cake.

DAVE

Another one?!

JOHN

At least it's not a clown statue or anything! I'll never understand his thing with clowns. Sylladex: open.

The command opens his sylladex, a holographic inventory system. He touches the poster, hammer, and nails, which zap into storage slots called captchatalogue cards. Once the items are stored, John glances at the note.

INSERT - NOTECARD

"Happy birthday. I'm so proud of you, son."

John shows mixed emotions. Dave cuts into his thoughts.

DAVE

Your dad's an interesting fellow but today's your day. You're the big man. What will you do?

JOHN

Well, if Sburb finally arrives I want to play it with you guys!

Concerned, Dave pokes a developing photograph as John expertly combines the hammer, nail, and poster cards. He flicks the combo at the wall and a "Little Monsters" movie poster appears! A normal action in John's world.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Oh my gosh, this is awesome!

DAVE

(tentatively)

You're that excited for Sburb?

JOHN

Dude, Sburb's called the "video game to end all video games"! You need exactly four people so it's perfect for you, Rose, Jade, and I. How cool is that?

DAVE
I'm gonna let you down now: I can't
play it with you guys.

JOHN
What?! Did you lose your copy?

DAVE
No, I got both of 'em.

Dave holds up two copies of Sburb. John stares hungrily.

JOHN
TWO? So what's the issue?!

Dave sighs, appearing suddenly defeated.

DAVE
My Bro also got two copies and he's
not going to play them, just for
irony's sake.

JOHN
(facepalms)
Oh my gosh. Your battle of ironic
one-upmanship is ridiculous, Dave.

DAVE
I don't care how weird it sounds to
you or anyone else, John, this
matters to me! I have to beat him.

JOHN
Well, you're never going to beat
Bro, he's too ironically cool!

DAVE
Sure, Bro is awesome and basically
knows everything. But dude, I'm so
close to winning this time!

JOHN
And you won't at least play for me?

DAVE
John. I love you like a brother.
You are my brother. But right now I
gotta beat my Bro.

Dave looks resolute. John racks his think pan, fails.

JOHN
There's no way you'll join?

DAVE

If there's any way to do that and still be more ironic than Bro, I'm down one hundred percent.

JOHN

Fine. I can settle for a challenge!

DAVE

Glad to hear it. And if you can outsmart Bro, you are my hero.

JOHN

(Superman impression)

Don't worry, Dave. I'll think of something. Over and out.

John logs off. Dave turns to an old photo on his cork-board: BABY DAVE, held by a SHADOWY SILHOUETTE. He frowns.

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - DAY

A car rumbles outside. John flies to the window.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

DAD steps out of the car; 45 years old, a dapper fellow hidden by a stylish fedora, carrying a briefcase and a green package. He opens the mailbox, pulls out a red package.

INSERT - GREEN AND RED PACKAGE LABELS

They say, "FROM JADE TO JOHN" and "FROM DAVE, TO JOHN".

Last, Dad pulls Sburb from the mailbox! John flips out. Dad sets the green package back in the car's front seat temporarily and heads inside with his arms full.

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - DAY

John stumbles back, trembling with excitement.

JOHN

Sburb is here! But Dad has it... I don't wanna to talk to Dad...

He looks to his magic chest. On top, there are fake arms, smoke pellets, costume glasses, a bowler hat, and the book *Colonel Sassacre's Daunting Text of Magical Frivolity and Practical Japery* (called *Colonel Sassacre* hereon).

John stores the items in his sylladex, laughing impishly, but tries to fit six items on five storage cards! The first item - fake arms - ejects and lands in the cake! John facepalms.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

John enters the living room wearing a clever disguise (costume glasses and the bowler hat) and discovers a large present below. RIIIIIP! John tears off the paper and recoils.

JOHN

Oh hell no.

It's a life-sized clown doll! John sets it aside on the couch, mesmerized by its horrific glory. After a moment, he experimentally attaches the caked-up arms.

JOHN (CONT'D)

There. Not so freaky now, eh?

The clown's lurid stare drives John toward the kitchen.

Before heading in, he gravitates to the fireplace. Over the hearth, a picture of NANNA hangs above a sacred urn holding her ashes. John basks in the matriarch's warm aura.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Always a pleasure, Nanna.

He touches the urn as if rubbing Buddha's belly. It topples! John catches it, spilling ashes on himself. Panicking, he puts them back, returns the urn, rushes in the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

John halts. Dad decorates a cake next to a hidden pie tin of whipped cream. Sburb and John's red package wait on the counter. John creeps toward them, grabs the red package and-

Dad turns around. He laughs, seeing John's disguise.

DAD

There's my little trickster! Or, are you someone else right now?

John removes his disguise, tosses it on the table.

JOHN

No! I was just- it's nothing, dad.

Dad proudly pushes his cake forward, a Betty Crocker mix.

DAD

Well, whatever "it" was, I thought it looked pretty cool. So, are you ready to celebrate? How about we sing happy birthday, then-

JOHN

Would it be alright if I just take my stuff back to my room?

Dad pauses, crestfallen.

DAD

Oh. Sure. Is everything alright? Did you get your present?

JOHN

(trying to be nice)
The doll? It was great, thanks.

Dad thinks.

DAD

Alright, John. If that didn't cheer you up, I'll have to pull all the stops early. Here's your final birthday... surprise!

JOHN

What do you mean, sur-

WHOP! The tin pan of whipped cream plows into his face. Dad beams, waiting for a reaction. John throws the pan and cream into his sylladex. The smoke pellets eject, unnoticed.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What was that for?!

DAD

I though it might cheer you up. You love jokes, just like your Nanna.

JOHN

Do you even understand me at all?

Dad looks hurt, then has a thought.

DAD

John, I get it. There comes a time in every man's life when he wants to be an independent grown-up. But I'm your dad and I'll always love you now matter-

JOHN
It's not like you're my real father
anyway.

Dead silence. Dad looks punched! John backtracks.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Shit, I'm sorry, I didn't mean
that! I should just go-

He picks up Sburb and *Colonel Sassacre's* ejects from his sylladex, landing right on the smoke pellets, which explode under the huge tome! John seizes the opportunity to escape.

EXT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

John stops, eye to eye with the clown doll. He covers his face in shame and runs on. An arm falls off the doll...

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - DAY

John drops into a chair and opens Pesterchum to a facetime call from "tentacleTherapist". He tries to smile.

JOHN
Hey, Rose. You'll never guess the
kind of day I've had so far.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A haunting violin refrain plays. A house (a la Frank Lloyd Wright) stands in the clearing of a dark forest tossed by a raging storm. A river, swollen with rain, runs under the house and waterfalls on the opposite end.

On the horizon, a Skaianet Laboratory broods. In the clearing nearby, a mausoleum for a cat, JASPERS, waits patiently.

ROSE (V.O.)
Well, John, judging by your
appearance you've either come into
possession of Sburb or had another
altercation with your father. My
guess is...both?

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - NIGHT

C.U. On a loving smile framed by black lipstick. It belongs to Rose Lalonde, 13 years old: smart, calculated, crafty.

ROSE
Rain or shine, John, I'll always be
glad to see you!

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE AND JOHN

John smiles warmly at her comment.

JOHN
If my birthday weren't crazy, it
wouldn't be me.

He pops Sburb into his computer. A window appears with
Skaianet's spirograph logo, a process list, and MUSIC.

ROSE
Care to tell me about the most
recent strife with your dad? What
happened, and how did you feel?

JOHN
Rose, are you trying to
psychoanalyze me?

Rose holds a pen and notebook at the ready. She lowers them.

ROSE
John, we're discussing why you
spurn parental affection due to
your secretive aversion to clowns.

JOHN
You think I fight with Dad because
I'm afraid of clowns?

ROSE
Hmm. I never said you were afraid
of clowns. Do they scare you, John?

JOHN
Oh, no. Rose, please.

ROSE
(more tenderly)
Or could it be related to the fact
that you recently learned that you
were adopted?

John slumps quietly. Rose looks at him lovingly.

ROSE (CONT'D)

John, you know I care about you. That's why I'm telling you the only way to fight the problem is talking with your dad. Communication is the only way to reach understanding.

JOHN

Yeah, sounds easy when you put it that way, but I can't do it, Rose! It never goes well. Dad's one of those parents you can't push away, even when they're invading your space. I just- I dunno, keep it all bottled until I explode and just feel terrible. I feel trapped.

Rose scribbles furiously in her notebook. She pauses, guilty.

ROSE

Sorry. Bad habit.

JOHN

(sighs good-naturedly)

No prob. The download just finished and I'm getting online now. You're the server player, so ready up!

Rose's Sburb window shows John's room! A Heads-Up Display (HUD) drops over her screen. She wiggles her cursor in the air and John can see it above his head.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Whoa! The Skaianet Corporation pulled all the stops on this one.

ROSE

Wow. What should I do first?

JOHN

I'd start with building. The early walkthroughs are pretty short, but apparently Sburb works like a sandbox game.

Rose uses an alteration cursor to move a wall outward: it grows instantly to where she dragged! An arrow indicates her "grist cache" decreasing as John admires the new space.

ROSE

Amazing! How does the game do this?

JOHN

Doesn't your mom work for Skaianet?

ROSE

She's just in the research division, it's a huge company. You'd be better off asking Jade, her Grandpa owns the thing. Jade's always talking about "Dream Selves" and other weird technobabble...

JOHN

Okay, I'll ask later. The point is: rumor has it Sburd uses sylladex technology to alter our physical world with digital programming.

ROSE

This is just a game, right?

JOHN

It sure is!

A "==" arrow points to Rose's phernalia registry.

ROSE

Alright. I'm being told to select the phernalia registry, there are a few "important items". The first is a cruxtruder.

From her view, she drops the cruxtruder in a perfect alcove. She scrolls out. It blocks the front door.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Oh, my bad!

JOHN

No worries, we're learning. I'm just excited to open this thing!

He struggles to pull a wheel. It doesn't budge, so he pushes with all his strength until the cap blasts off, releasing a blue kernelsprite and cruxite dowels!

JOHN (CONT'D)

Cool! These are cruxite dowels, they're used to make items. And that's a kernelsprite. It becomes a guide later on, according to-

BEEP! A clock on the cruxtruder begins counting down from four minutes and thirteen seconds.

ROSE

Oh shit. Countdowns are usually bad, any idea what this one means?

JOHN
I have no idea, none of the
walkthroughs mentioned this! But-

EXT. SPACE - DAY

A green, spirograph portal launches a meteoroid at earth.

JOHN (V.O.)
- It looks like we get four minutes
and thirteen seconds to find out.

EXT. JADE'S TOWER - DAY

A small, crescent island rests in the Pacific ocean. A dormant volcano crowns its spine. The green arms circle a bay, where frog temple rises from the placid waters.

A futuristic tower perches on the western arm.

SMASH CUT:

EXT. FURTHEST RING - NIGHT

Callie GASPS, revealing another glance of orange horns and white hair before she draws the curtains back.

JADE
Sorry, did I startle you?

CALLIE
No, I'm just surprised! You lived
in a tower? So did I.

JADE
No way, how crazy is that? What was
yours like? I mean, of course it's
okay if you don't want to tell me.

CALLIE
No, you've been forthcoming with
your own story. It's only fair...
(building courage)
I lived in a tower all my life.
Alone. Well, my brother was there
too, but never when I woke up. We
had an interesting relationship, to
say the very least, and until the
end it was never pleasant...

Jade waits politely. Callie squirms, can't take it.

CALLIE (CONT'D)
 Sorry, I'm still no good at this!
 Could you start again?

JADE
 Of course. And if you want to talk
 more about yourself, I'm all ears!

She looks jokingly toward her own dog-like ears.

JADE (CONT'D)
 So, an important package had just
 landed on my island but to get it,
 I needed to talk with my grandpa-

EXT. JADE'S ISLAND - DAY

The tower still waits over the pleasant island.

INT. JADE'S ROOM - DAY

PAST JADE, 13, a cute genius, bakes steak on a cookalizer set
 to irradiate. She throws the glowing result in her sylladex,
 shoulders a rifle, and sets her "wardrobifier" to an atom
 logo. Her shirt changes accordingly.

Jade steps onto a transporter pad and disappears.

INT. MULTIPLE FLOORS - DAY

Jade flashes past floors for weapons, mummified things, and
 blue ladies. She walks down the last flight, past a huge
 statue of TYPHEUS, a snake denizen, into the main foyer.

INT. MAIN FOYER - DAY

Jade stands at attention.

JADE
 Grandpa, I'm going out for a
 package. Yes, I'll be safe. Yes, I
 have a rifle with me! No, it shoots
 perfectly deadly bullets! No, I
 won't take your gun, I can barely
 carry it! Geez, I love you, BYE!

She twirls away, leaving behind her dead, stuffed grandpa.

JADE (CONT'D)
 (grumbling)
 He was so much easier to deal with
 when he was alive.

EXT. FURTHEST RING - NIGHT

Jade senses Callie's gaze: two white eyes, wide with wonder.

CALLIE
 Your grandpa - your dead grandpa -
 was stuffed.

JADE
 It's an old family tradition.

CALLIE
 (sarcastic)
 Oh, well then. As you were!

JADE
 (oblivious)
 Right! After talking to my grandpa
 I still had one more person to deal
 with: my dog, Becquerel.

EXT. JADE'S ISLAND - DAY

Jade sprints into an ancient ruin, vaults a fallen pillar,
 and slams against the wall. She peeks around, rifle ready.

Nearby, a blue package attached to a parachute lies tangled
 in a bush. Jade looks in every corner, over every hill. So
 far, nothing for miles except a green corona on the horizon.
 Jade turns, but it disappears.

JADE
 Bec? Becquerel? You there?

Jade's eyes narrow. She turns the corner and runs for the
 package, getting closer and closer, until...

BECQUEREL, Jade's god-dog, appears! Jade readies for action.

JADE (CONT'D)
 Aha!

BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG!

Jade fires her rifle four times in quick succession. When a
 bullet "hits" becquerel, he and Jade transport to another
 location! At the end, they're a mile from Jade's package.

She aims her rifle back at the ruins.

JADE (CONT'D)
 Alright, boy. Fetch!

BAM! As the bullet leaves her gun, Bec transports them right back to the ruins. Jade blinks and it's over.

With a clink, Bec drops the bullet at her feet. She smiles.

JADE (CONT'D)
 Aw, you're a good boy, aren't you?
 Here's your treat!

She gives Bec the irradiated steak and picks up the package while he chows down on his glowing meal.

INSERT - BLUE PACKAGE LABEL

"TO JADE, FROM JOHN"

Jade smiles for a moment, then YAWNS. Seeing this, Bec runs to her and transports them away.

INT. JADE'S ROOM

They reappear. Jade sits down in bed. Bec licks her hand, she pets his head, and he teleports away once again.

EXT. FURTHEST RING - NIGHT

Jade smiles, reminiscing.

CALLIE
 Seriously? You're astounding!

JADE
 Looking back, I guess I was always different from other people. But being alone on my island I never realized just how strange I was. You felt that too, right?

CALLIE
 Not at all. I was always painfully aware of my differences... Anyway, you were saying something?

JADE
 Of course. Now, during my package adventure, John and Rose weren't having the easiest time of it...

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

Rose's cursor rips a toilet through the wall. She repairs the gaping hole with her cursor.

ROSE (V.O.)

Whoops!

INT. JOHN'S BATHROOM - DAY

John captchalogues a few glass shards off the floor.

JOHN

Forget about it! We have four minutes to make an item that saves my neighborhood by transporting it into a place called the Medium. That can't be too difficult, right?

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - DAY

The storm roars harder outside. Sweating with worry, Rose clicks her mouse faster than a League of Legends player. On screen, the cursor carries a tub through John's hallway. She loses connection for a moment and it falls.

ROSE

Dammit! The storm's making me lose connection. You may be alone until I can find higher ground.

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE AND JOHN

John runs into the living room and picks up cruxite dowels.

JOHN

Stay with me while you can, okay? I just need the important items from the phernalia registry to-

The cruxite dowels overload his sylladex.

Glass shards eject! John matrix dodges, but his clown doll loses part of its fool hat and gets a scar over one eye.

ROSE

John, are you okay?!

JOHN

Yeah, yeah. We gotta keep going!

ROSE

I moved your piano from the study
for a PUNCH DESIGNIX.

Rose wipes her brow as John skids into the study.

PUNCH DESIGNIX

Punch designix deployed. Place
cards here for punching.

JOHN

Now we're cooking with petrol! But
before we go on, let's prototype my
kernelsprite real fast. Just touch
it with any item, that's supposed
to help it become a guide later on.
Not sure how, though, it-

ROSE

Alright...done!

JOHN

Really? That fast? What'd you use?

Realizing, he GAGS. Runs back out.

The harlequin doll disappeared! John's kernelsprite bears
clownish traits! He groans, squirming, as Rose moves on.

ROSE

Geez, it's like playing Tetris in
here. I'm putting the totem lathe
in your room now.

He rushes up as it lands in place. Lights indicate key areas.

TOTEM LATHE

Totem Lathe deployed. Insert punch
card here to alter carving shape.
Insert dowel here for carving.

JOHN

Okay, but why the clown doll, Rose?

ROSE

Later, John! Where can I put a
large item? There's no more room
for the alchemiter.

JOHN

You tried the balcony?

ROSE
Oh yeah, let me check. It looks
like we have space...

A heavy silence. Rose stares at her screen.

JOHN
What is it? What, Rose?

ROSE
John, get up to your balcony. NOW.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - DAY

A red glow descends on John's neighborhood as he slams
through the door and looks upward.

The meteor first appears as a reflection in John's glasses.

ROSE (V.O.)
That's what the countdown's for.

JOHN
Holy shit.

The alchemiter appears beside him with a thump.

ALCHEMITER
Alchemiter deployed. Place dowel
here to begin item alchemization.

ROSE (V.O.)
We need to move! There's one more
thing, a special pre-punched card.
Remember: use the card to shape a
dowel in the lathe, then put the
dowel on the alchemiter to make an
item. Simple as that. You ready?

JOHN
Hell, that's confusing. Whatever,
we'll figure it out. Let's do this!

Rose's cursor holds a pre-punched card bearing a blue apple.
It descends gloriously for one moment, then disappears!

JOHN (CONT'D)
Rose. Rose? Rose!
(a beat, then realization)
Oh fu-

His phone RINGS. John whips it from his pocket.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Hey, you're back already.

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
Do you remember me, John?

He checks the caller: "gallowsCalibrator". He groans.

JOHN
Dammit! You're one of those
internet trolls, aren't you? Look,
I don't have time for you or your
friends right now-

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
I'd say so, John: you have a meteor
to deal with!

He pauses, amazed.

JOHN
You can see me?

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
We can see your whole timeline.
We're aliens, remember?

JOHN
Ugh, come on with that! I have way
more important things to do,
Gallows. Wish me luck.

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
You'd have to talk to my friend for
that, she's the one with the luck.
I'll catch you later, John!

She hangs up. John looks at the phone. Confused, distressed.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rose stares at a "CONNECTION LOST" message. A troubleshooting
notification suggests: "FIND HIGHER GROUND".

ROSE
What?! That can't happen now!

She appears very small, very alone in her dark room. The
storm outside her window seems bigger than ever.

Then, Rose's eyes harden with determination.

She grabs her laptop and her *Grimoire for the Zoologically Dubious*, then heads for the door.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rose bowls onto a rail-less walkway. She can't move, powerless against the rain. She glares at the storm.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - *FLASHBACK* - DAY

On a cold winter's day, Rose opens a blue package from John. John reads his note as she removes purple yarn and knitting needles from the package, touched by the gift.

JOHN (V.O.)

Dear Rose: happy thirteenth birthday! I know you like to make it out like you're playing cool and don't care too much about the people in your life, but I know deep down you really do. I got you this because I think you're really creative and could make something nice if you put your mind to it. Anyway, you're the best, Rose. Have a rad thirteenth birthday!

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rose steels herself and finally pushes forward, heading toward an observatory: the highest structure on her house.

INT. OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

The door SLAMS and Rose collapses through, soaked. She pulls her laptop from the "tree" sylladex and opens it reverently.

The laptop still shows "CONNECTION LOST".

ROSE

NO! C'mon, please!

She looks around. Nowhere to set her laptop higher. She tries lifting it a little, but her hands are too cold and wet to type at the same time. Frustrated, she captchaloguees it.

Her sylladex unbalances, and everything falls out. It's the last straw; she sits amongst her things, despairing.

Then Rose notices her grimoire... The huge tome flicks through pages on FLUTHLU, NRUB'YIGLITH, OGLOGOTH, and a window-like summoning device. She gets an idea!

Rose puts the grimoire on her lap and her laptop on the grimoire. The laptop shows: "CONNECTION GAINED".

ROSE (CONT'D)
YES! HELL YES!

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - DAY

John looks around his room for the last time. He sits on his bed and opens Dave's present with one of Dad's straight razors. The light grows redder.

He pulls a scummy, stuffed bunny from the box.

JOHN
This...this is the bunny. It's THE bunny. From Con Air!

He looks to a "Con Air" poster, the movie scene playing out.

JOHN (CONT'D)
In the final scene, Nic Cage, as a street-tough maverick with nothing to lose, reunites with his loving wife and daughter.
(speaking with Cage)
I got a present for ya', Casey.

John opens a letter from Dave. He barely holds off the tears.

DAVE (V.O.)
Happy birthday! If you don't believe it, yes: this is the actually bunny from Con-Air. Nick Cage himself grubbed it up with his clownish, no-talent fingers. Still, you'll probably sleep with the damn thing and nibble its ear and stuff. But the weird thing is, that's just one of the things that makes you such a cool guy. Someday we're going to meet up and bro bump, getting our filthy wife beaters all that much filthier. Until then, peace, dawg!

John's eyes find their way to Dad's note. He remembers:

JOHN
Dad... Dad!

He spins to the door, but Rose's cursor blocks his the way, holding the pre-punched card! John tries to dodge for a moment before realizing what he's looking at.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Rose?! Is there still time?

He pauses a millisecond, debating: talk to Dad and make up before dying, or attempt to survive? ... He grabs the card.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rose sits back with a sigh, her work finished.

ROSE
Job well done.

Lightning glares and the power dies. She looks around and throws up her hands.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You've gotta be kidding me!

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

John picks up a new cruxite dowel. He glances to the kitchen, eyes saying a "sorry" to Dad he never got to.

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - DAY

The punch card and dowel slide into their places. John hits "start" and the lathe whirs to life, carving away cruxite. Seconds later, John picks up a now-curvy dowel like King Arthur accepting Excalibur. Captchalogues it.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - DAY

John's dowel lands on the alchemiter scanner. It starts up!

Scanners fire through the dowel, creating a light show in its sapphire depths. Internal cogs spark and grind as the extruder arm moves over the build platform, ready to fire.

John shows every possible sign of impatience.

JOHN

This is no time to be all cool and techy, ten bucks says this goes way quicker in the future.

Finally, the extruder nozzle fires streams of light. It's a futuristic 3-D printer! Slowly, John's artifact forms...

A cruxite tree appears: azure, crystalline branches and leaves. A single blossom forms an apple. John picks the fruit, considers it a moment, and takes a huge bite.

His apple splits, glowing.

The tree fractures. Cruxite pieces float into the sky and form a spiraling barrier around his house. John realizes:

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's only around my house! Rose?
What's going on?

A terrible ROAR rises, threatening to drown him out.

JOHN (CONT'D)

The neighborhood! We have to save
the- ROSE!

His house vanishes as the meteor hits, leaving an enormous mushroom cloud to herald the catastrophic destruction.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND - DAY

Dust swirls aesthetically over an arid landscape. THE MAYOR, a Dersite exile, journeys across.

SUPER: EARTH, YEARS IN THE FUTURE

Tattered strips of cloth flap around his carbon-black carapace as he scans the lonely expanse from the top of a dune, using a measuring spear as a walking stick. So epic.

He strides forward and biffs it.

The Mayor scrambles up and looks back to a round hatch in the sand, bearing the Skaianet logo.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY SHAFT - DAY

Light floods through the cylindrical tube. Dust lazily drifts to the floor as the Mayor descends on a ladder.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Lights flicker on. The facility feels pristine, alive. Wires, conduits, and power boxes line the walls.

The Mayor gravitates to a large, four-paneled computer, shaped like the Homestuck logo. At his touch, it awakens. All four panels show different views of a dark land. The Mayor stares, enraptured, as we near the screens and -

ENTER:

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NIGHT

Fireflies wing through brooding, cloudy skies. Below, fluorescent plants illuminate an alien world filled with streams, rivers, and oceans of black oil.

SUPER: THE MEDIUM - LAND OF WIND AND SHADE

John's house perches above the clouds on a rocky spire. A chunk breaks away and Dad's car falls, vanishing. Yikes.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Darkness outside the window. The house feels too quiet.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dad washes dishes by hand, sleeves rolled up. He finishes a tray, grabs the pie tin used on John. He slumps on the sink.

Unnoticed, white eyes appear outside the back door.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

John leans against the balcony as a strong wind rustles his hair. He looks at the awesome sight below and up to the actual Skaia, momentarily distracted by its glory.

His kernelsprite bobs past.

CRACK! A line appears across its equator. The "kernel" splits like an egg. The light half ascends, the dark one descends. A CLOWNSPRITE remains behind, cackling.

JOHN

Oh hell no.

He rushes inside.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The Mayor watches John with interest. He experimentally types out "BOY" in all caps and hits the send button, "==>".

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - NIGHT

John plops down on the bed, covering his face with a pillow.

VOICE

BOY.

JOHN

Who is that?!

VOICE

YOU THERE. BOY.

JOHN

(reflexively)

My name is John, thanks!

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The Mayor bounces, thrilled. Onscreen, he notices Rose messaging John. He gets to typing.

INT. JOHN'S ROOM - NIGHT

John looks around, uncertain. Guarded.

JOHN

Is it God? No, God wouldn't sound like (insert VOICE's voice actor).

VOICE

JOHN. RESPOND TO YOUR FRIEND UNIT.

JOHN

Friend unit...? Rose!

He looks to his computer, where Pesterchum has notifications.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The Mayor watches John. Satisfied, he leans on the console with both hands under his chin, absorbed by the screen, his back facing the quiet, empty laboratory. Meanwhile-

EXT. APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND - DAY

Outside, the lone and level sands stretch far away...

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A meteor burns through rainclouds over the Skaianet lab. Rose catches sight of the event and gets a bad feeling.

INT. OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

Rose's laptop illuminates the room, the only light left.

ROSE

Bad news, John. I'm running out of battery; the house's hydraulic generator got fried by lightning, so I'll be leaving again soon.

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE AND JOHN

John sits. He tries to look fine but feels survivor's guilt.

JOHN

Rose, I'm sorry! That sounds awful.

ROSE

No worries, I'm just glad you're safe on some other planet. Do you think you'll be alright?

JOHN

(babbling)

Hopefully! I need to prototype the kernelsprite again. Well, it's a sprite now, since the kernel split. Point is, it needs to be prototyped the second time. Also, Dave and Jade should know what happened, we need to contact them. And on that note, why does my internet still work? We're long past walkthroughs, who knows if anyone else made it this far! We barely made it out-

ROSE

John!

(a beat)

That's not what I asked. Will you be alright?

JOHN

Yeah. Sure. Are you okay?

She lies, her expression revealing something darker.

ROSE

Right as rain. I'll stay as long as I can, okay? Let's get as far as possible before I lose battery.

JOHN

Sounds good. But first, I need to talk with my Dad.

ROSE

Right behind you.

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dave draws a *Sweet Bro and Hella Jeff*. His phone rings and he rolls over to check the message.

DAVE

Sylladex; JUICE.

His "hash map" sylladex receives the command and ejects Card 5: a bottle of apple juice. Dave catches it in one hand, scoops up the phone with the other.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Let's see here. Group message. From Rose. "Dave, Jade. We urgently require assistance in Sburb...?"

He trails off, skimming.

DAVE (CONT'D)

"Meteor destroyed John's house--"

He leans in.

DAVE (CONT'D)

"Everyone is in danger...!"

Dave nonchalantly throws the phone aside, rolls back.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Sheesh. She must really want my sexy ass to join.

WHOOSH! Something flashes through his room. Dave drops the phone and spins around, on high alert. Nothing's there. His developing photographs twirl in a mysterious breeze.

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Bro? I know that was you!

No response. Dave grunts, turns back to his computer and-
 Comes face to face with LIL' CAL, a puppet with terribly realistic eyes. Dave flips the hell out, spilling his apple juice on the Sburb copies. He rears back to punch Cal, but stops short. Plays it cool. Afraid?

DAVE (CONT'D)
 Man, I can't stay mad at you, Lil'
 Cal! Hey, how about a fist bump?

Dave carefully grabs Cal's arm and maneuvers the hand in for the bump. Once he finishes, he grabs the copies and heads into the bathroom...and Cal seems to watch him go.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

John pushes through the saloon doors, into his kitchen. It's been ransacked! A trail of black oil leads out the back door.

JOHN
 Dad?! He's gone!

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE AND JOHN

Rose uses her cursor to pick up a Betty Crocker cake mix. She pushes it toward John's Clownsprite, but the sprite dodges.

JOHN
 Wait, don't use that cake mix!

He grabs *Colonel Sassacre*, holds it up. Tries to joke:

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Better the genteel Colonel Sassacre
 than Betty Crocker the batterwitch.

John's hands shake noticeably.

ROSE
 John, we should talk.

JOHN
 No, we need to focus. This is one frisky customer. How about you drop the book while I distract it-

ROSE
I'm sure your dad is fine,
but we have a lot to take in. Rose, please-
We should pause a second, and-

JOHN (CONT'D)
Rose, do you see a pause button?!
This is real life now, it's not
just a game, and people are DYING!
There aren't any pause buttons, we
don't get extra lives, so would you
stop screwing around and FOCUS?!

They both fall silent. He rubs his eyes with a hand.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I-I'm sorry. I'm just a bit
stressed. That's no excuse, but-

ROSE
To be honest, I'm not doing so hot
either... But I'm here for you.

JOHN
Thanks, Rose. Let's finish this and
then talk, okay? I, uh...I could
probably use a therapy session.

They both smile, melancholy but warm.

ROSE
Alright. That sounds good.

He moves toward the sprite, Rose sneaks her cursor over its
head. She drops the book, but the sprite disappears!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It reappears by the hearth as *Colonel Sassacre* shakes the
house. Nanna's urn falls over, the ashes spill into the
sprite. Flash! They vanish.

John rushes in a moment too late. Rose scrolls over.

JOHN
I didn't see what happened! You?

ROSE (V.O.)
No, I couldn't scroll fast enough.
There was a light, and then-

Her voice cuts out. The cursor fades away.

JOHN

R-Rose?

INT. OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

Rose jumps up in frustration. Her laptop taunts: "BATTERY LOW, SHUTTING DOWN". She paces, and swiftly stubs her toe.

ROSE

Agh! I can't SEE! Why the-

Rose stops. In the darkness, she finds a pinpoint of light on the observatory wall. *From where??* Forgetting her pain, she follows the small beam like a spider navigating its web.

Rose arrives at the window. Across the lawn, through lightning and pouring rain, Jasper's Mausoleum glows like a lighthouse. A portable generator provides the energy.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Bingo.

INT. JOHN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John stands alone in the dark. A clear KNOCK sounds upstairs, amongst the house's wheezing CREAKS and GROANS. He looks to the noise, but shadows claimed the upper hallways.

JOHN

Hello? Sprite? Is that you?

He brandishes his hammer, holding it in front of himself, more a shield than a weapon. He heads upstairs.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The Mayor watches John, his own room empathetically shadier. He JUMPS in fright as a spectral, blue figure passes by the camera. Onscreen, John turns to look at an empty hallway.

INTERCUT BETWEEN JOHN AND THE MAYOR

John reaches the upstairs landing, hammer ready.

KNOCK. A sound comes from his bedroom. John approaches. He grasps the handle and cracks open the door, slowly.

Oil trails. Posters torn. Books strewn about. Writing on the walls. An IMP stands with its back to John, holding the red present from Dave.

The Mayor gropes for the keyboard and clacks out a message with terrible speed.

VOICE
IT'S AN IMP. JOHN, ABSCOND AT ONCE.

JOHN
Wh-what?

John steps back, but sees the imp remove his Con Air bunny from the box. He creeps back through the door. Hesitates.

VOICE
JOHN, DO NOT AGGRIEVE!

JOHN
P-put the bunny back in the box.

IT turns. Underneath a clown hat, an inky face contrasts white eyes and sharks' teeth. It grips the bunny as John takes a step back, holding the hammer like a lifeline.

It opens a devil's smile: "What are you gonna do?"

VOICE
JOHN-

JOHN
I said put the bunny. Back. IN THE BOX!

IMP
Come and get it, human!

John's jaw drops: the imp talked! Then-

The enemy blitzes! John swings hard but it feints and punches him in the nose with his own bunny. John stumbles back, eyes tearing up, and rallies. They exchange furious blows.

John catches himself on the nightstand, touches oil. Seeing the black liquid, he remembers the scene of Dad's abduction.

JOHN
You. What happened to my dad?

The imp snickers knowingly. John's emotions land on anger. Grip tightens, eyes narrow. The imp notices his change and shows the first signs of real fear.

It holds razor-sharp fingers to the bunny's throat.

IMP
Any closer and the bunny gets it!

JOHN
Tell me where my dad is.

It remains silent.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You know something, tell me!

Nothing. He roars and throws his hammer. It almost misses, but a wind (faintly blue) changes the trajectory. BAM!

The imp reels. John stands empty-handed! Thinking quick, he begins captchaloguing everything from the floor. Items eject from his sylladex:

A book ricochets off the imp's shoulder. An alarm clock strikes. The imp drops its guard as a huge tome - *Data Structures for Assholes* - crashes into its face.

Yelling, John rushes. The imp flees from the deluge of items, out the balcony door. John grabs his hammer.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

The imp hits the railing, looks over. Nowhere to jump! John approaches carefully, hammer ready.

JOHN
This doesn't have to go any further. I just want to know where my dad is. You understand me?

IMP
Your dad is gone, taken to Derse!

JOHN
Why? Why did they take him?!

IMP
A small move in a bigger game. You'd have to ask the mastermind.

JOHN
Mastermind?

IMP
Archagent Jack Noir.

JOHN
Okay, how do I find this guy-

He lowers his guard. The imp attacks, tearing John's shirt! RIIIIIP! Reactively, John brings his hammer down!

The enemy turns into build grist, the spoils of victory.

John falls to his knees and touches a gushers-like piece of grist. It zaps into his grist cache. John breathes heavily, trying to accept the reality of his first kill.

He picks up his bunny, holding it close with steely eyes.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Jack Noir.

EXT. DERSE - NIGHT

The planet hovers in space like a volatile deep sea mine. Purple and black colors blend together on awesome gothic architecture. A castle dominates the surrounding world.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

ARCHAGENT JACK NOIR slaves over a huge mound of paperwork covering his desk. The deadly-efficient Dersite carapacian wears an awful clown outfit over his slick black suit.

In front of his desk, three fenestrated walls (windows to other places) create a makeshift cubicle. A fourth wall appears to be missing...

The walls cycle through views of Ders: politicians orate, war efforts abound, and dad busts out of a jail cell!

Parking citations land on Jack's desk, carried by a soldier.

SOLDIER #1

Compliments of the queen.

The soldiers laugh. Jack sneers and leans around the papers like a chained dog watching the mailman. He gets angry.

Jack slams a switchblade through the paperwork and jumps up, throwing his hat to the side. He almost makes the door, but the screens HISS with static! Jack freezes, groans.

One by one the screens change, showing: sensuous hips, a four-pearl ring, and an exoskeletal clown hat over sharp, white eyes (one is scarred). Jack sneers, but stands at attention.

JACK

Glorious Monarch.

BLACK QUEEN (O.S.)

Archagent Jack Noir...you're not in full uniform. Where is your hat?

JACK

It wasn't conducive to my work, so-

BLACK QUEEN (O.S.)

The prototyping commands you wear
it and so do I. Put it back now.

Her lips curl into a smile at Jack's helpless anger. He dons the hat, twitching with rage and humiliation.

BLACK QUEEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Good. Without a hat, you may as
well be naked... And I want you
properly dressed for our next
meeting. Until then, Jack.

She disappears. Jack fumes, looking like the devil incarnate.

INT. DERSE PRISON - NIGHT

A Dersite guard flies against the opposite wall. Dad walks into the corridor, looks left, right...and sees something. His eyes go way up to a huge carapacian: the HEGEMONIC BRUTE, standing over him with a full safe door.

DAD

Oh boy. Hey there, big guy.

HEGEMONIC BRUTE

Think you can escape through this?

Dad cracks his knuckles and prepares for a fight.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jack's COURTYARD DROLL rushes in: he's a small, bubbly, and somehow cute agent. He pauses, breathing hard.

COURTYARD DROLL

Jack!

JACK

Archagent. Noir.

COURTYARD DROLL

Archagent Jack Noir, sir, there's a
problem.

JACK

Yeah. Our wise and just leader is
becoming a royal pain in my ass.

The Courtyard Droll jumps as the DRACONIAN DIGNITARY, a classy and ruthless agent, appears in the room. Jack grunts.

DRACONIAN DIGNITARY (O.S.)
Boss. It's the human prisoner.

JACK
I saw that. Send the damn Brute!
Are you my agents, or aren't you?

DRACONIAN DIGNITARY
We sent him, sir. That's the thing-

A screen shows: Dad holds the Brute in a headlock, punching its lights out. Jack yanks his switchblade from the desk. The agents move aside as he stalks out. Jack mutters:

JACK
Gravestuffers.

INT. DUNGEONS - NIGHT

Steps ring down the hall. Dad lets go and creeps to the corner, preparing his shaving cream and a lighter.

Jack turns the bend.

FWOOSH! Dad fires the shaving cream and the lighter. Jack ducks under the flaming jet, his hat takes a hit, and he throws it to the ground. He grabs his switchblade.

JACK
Stick this in your pipe and bleed
to death-!

DAD
CMON! I'll find my son if I have to
go through you!

Intimidation! Dad sprays more shaving cream on the hat, stomping the smoldering remains. Jack watches with anger, then curiosity. Dad looks up, dukes ready.

Jack stares at the hat. He suddenly points down the hall.

JACK
The exit's that way.

Dad pauses, suspicious. Jack sheathes his knife.

With a thankful hat tip, Dad accepts his luck and runs off. In his wake, Jack experimentally stomps the clown hat. Once.

INT. ROSE'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

Rose dries her hair with a pink and purple scarf. She wrings out the sopping knitwear.

At an intersection, lightning reveals the silhouette of a WOMAN around the bend. Seeing the figure, Rose jumps back and flattens against the wall.

She sidles toward the edge, breath bated, and jumps across. Lightning flares just afterward! Rose zips away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rose angrily regards the visage of ZAZZERPAN THE WISE, a huge marble wizard statue.

ROSE
(hello, old foe)
Zazzerpan the Wise.

She walks down a grand staircase, past the kitchen, looking at empty vodka bottles and wizard paraphernalia. Mom's doing. She wrinkles her nose in disgust.

Rose wanders to the couch where her ELDRITCH PRINCESS - a doll with the head of a Lovecraftian nightmare and body of a pretty princess - holds an umbrella for a scepter. Rose bows.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Eldritch Princess. Might I
perchance borrow your scepter?

She graciously accepts the item and rises to leave-

BOOM! MOM, 40, appears before Rose with a bronze vacuum statue, holding a martini. Mom wears a lab coat that looks akin to a cocktail dress. She looks good! And drunk...

Rose flips the hell out.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Mom?!

MOM
R-rose, I need to talk to you-

ROSE
Not today, this bird's gotta fly!

She rolls over the couch to escape, but tumbles against a brace of mini wizard statues, which knock the wind from her.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Lousy goddamned stupid wizards.

MOM
Rose! Whatever did you do that for?
Here, let me help you, dearest.

ROSE
No, stop. I don't need your help, I
need power to save John. That's
what I need right now.

MOM
But Rose, I got you a pony!

Rose
You got a what?

MOM
I know how much you love horses, so-
She points to a corner. Sure enough, there's a HORSE in the
house, sporting a large pink bow.

ROSE
Mom! You just don't get me, do you?
I'm not the kind of girl who likes
pink and horses, and, and-

Mom becomes more and more crestfallen. Rose gives in.

ROSE (CONT'D)
And I'll name it Maplehoof.

MOM
(vindicated)
I knew it! I knew you'd love it if
you gave it half a chance!

ROSE
Thanks, mom. I-I need to go.

MOM
Outside? But it's raining cats and
dogs. You'll need an umbrella.

Rose whips hers out, shading her eyes heroically.

ROSE
Don't worry. I found one myself.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

John puts the bunny back in its box as A soft glow descends.

NANNASPRITE (O.S.)

John? Why do you look so sad?

John looks up. NANNASPRITE, a combination of clown, kernelsprite, and Nanna herself, hovers over John like a guardian angel! Her aura is warm. She smells like cookies.

NANNASPRITE (CONT'D)

You've become such a fine man, just like your father!

JOHN

N-nanna?!

John hugs his grandma with abandon.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Dad was taken!

NANNASPRITE

Yes, poor dear! He was apprehended by the very forces your presence has awakened here, in the Medium.

JOHN

In my computer?

NANNASPRITE

Hoo Hoo! You can't be so linear! The computer was simply a gateway to this universe, which always existed outside your own.

JOHN

I don't understand.

NANNASPRITE

Let me show you the big picture...

They raise their eyes through the portals, to SKAIA.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

Rays of light circle the planet. Clouds reveal past and future events. Prospit orbits nearby.

NANNASPRITE (V.O.)

At the center of the Medium lies Skaia, a crucible of unlimited creative potential. Wherever such a force is found, forces of good and evil will inevitably vie for its protection or destruction.

INT. SKAIA - DAY

Hovering at the center: a 3X3 chessboard holds two kings.

NANNASPRITE (V.O.)

Until your arrival, they were locked in an eternal stalemate.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - *FLASHBACK*

John's kernelsprite splits once again.

NANNASPRITE (V.O.)

Then your kernelsprite brought information from its clownish prototyping into this world!

INTERCUT BETWEEN PROSPIT AND DERSE

The kernel's light half lands on a tower over the Prospitian castle. An orb on top lights up.

The dark half journeys through space, past the Veil, to Derse. It lands on a corresponding tower. Illumination.

NANNASPRITE (V.O.)

One half went to a kingdom basked in light - Prospit - the other to a kingdom entrenched in darkness - Derse. From there, it altered the very fabric of the Medium.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

Both kings grow harlequin hats. The 3x3 chessboard grows to 12X12 and more pieces appear.

NANNASPRITE (V.O.)

Now the game is afoot! A war between good and evil, which good is destined to lose. Your true goal is to solve the Ultimate Riddle.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Visions of Skaia fill John's eyes.

JOHN

What's the Ultimate Riddle?

NANNASPRITE

That's for me to know and you to find out, darling. It's your quest!

JOHN

Will it help me find dad?

NANNASPRITE

Absolutely!

JOHN

And save the world?

NANNASPRITE

I think not! That old planet's quite done for.

John's excitement dies instantly.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

The White King holds his sceptre on a hilltop.

NANNASPRITE (V.O.)

When a powerful agent of darkness takes the White King's scepter, the RECKONING shall begin...

The scepter glows. Asteroids from the Veil fire towards Skaia, but portals appear and swallow the threat.

NANNASPRITE (V.O.)

Fire shall rain upon Skaia, which must redirect the danger through time and space...but only for a while, hoo hoo!

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Something doesn't add up.

JOHN

But I just entered the medium. Did the Reckoning already start?

NANNASPRITE

Remember, the Medium exists outside your time! Here, the Reckoning has yet to begin. Now, John, You've been a good boy, and good boys deserve cookies!

Nanna hovers through the wall, leaving blue ectoplasm.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM

The Mayor jumps, amazed, as Nannasprite vanishes.

JOHN (V.O.)

Wait, Nanna!

The Mayor's elbow hits the "Caps Lock". A storage container opens in his room, and a book tumbles out: *Human Etiquette*. He looks between "Caps Lock" and *Human Etiquette* a few times.

Then he notices other stuff in the container. Mayor rushes over and throws out Crayola chalk, cans of food, Tab soda, a carton of oil, and a FIREFLY (named SERENITY) trapped in amber. He surveys all his new swag and gets an idea...

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dave shakes water off his Sburb copies, presses them against a towel, and hangs them on a line by his window to dry. They twirl precariously before Dave turns off his electric fan. He nods, satisfied. Cool, calm, and-

CAW, CAW! A RAMBUNCTIOUS CROW barrels through his window!

DAVE

The hell?!

Dave falls back as it tangles with his Sburb copies. Game in tow, it flaps around his room, knocking everything over. He leaps forward with inhuman speed and catches the bird, but it pecks, flaps, and scratches at his hands.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Ow, hey! I'm trying to untangle you-

It escapes! The bird flutters to the window, vacillating on the edge. Dave's heart skips a beat.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Wait! I need those copies, please.

The bird doesn't listen to reason, oddly... It shuffles back.

DAVE (CONT'D)
Listen you brainless, feathery
asshole! I want to help you-

It crouches, preparing to jump outside.

DAVE (CONT'D)
No! I. Said. STOP!

His sylladex interprets "STOP" as a command! It ejects a katana, which impales the crow. Everything crashes through the window. Dave covers his mouth with both hands.

DAVE (CONT'D)
No one can know about this.

He walks to the window, looks out.

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The skewered bird lies on an abutting rooftop. Lost.

His attention turns skyward, where SMALL meteors fly across the crimson horizon, growing more intense by the second. A few touch down, starting sick fires, bro.

DAVE
Meteors?

He rushes to his phone.

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dave checks the message from Rose. It says: "meteor" and "Sburb". Dave puts two and two together, and grits his teeth.

DAVE
Bro? Bro! You there? I need your
copies of Sburb RIGHT NOW!

Dave exits. Second after, Lil' Cal disappears from the desk.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Streets drawn in chalk meander around "buildings" represented by cans of food. A majestic City Hall stands at the back. It uses stacked cans for walls, the Human Etiquette book as a roof, and the firefly in amber as democracy's light.

The Mayor turns around, wearing a sash of wires, with a MAYO label. He added a red, chalk "R". He's officially the MAYOR!

INT. JADE'S TOWER - DAY

Jade's lunchtop, a lunchbox-laptop combo, rings. Jade rolls in her bed, asleep. We enter her mind as an electrical signal travels down one of her neurons and morphs into-

EXT. PROSPIT - DAY

- A beam of light from Skaia, directed at Prospit's moon!

INT. JADE'S PROSPIT TOWER - DAY

JADE'S DREAM SELF opens a lunchtop on Prospit. Its holographic display swirls around her and we-

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FURTHEST RING - NIGHT

Jade pauses in the midst of her story, arms mid-gesture.

JADE

Right! I should add: everyone who plays Sburb has a "Dream Self". Kinda like a second life, another body that wakes up when your "real self" falls asleep. Cool, right?

CALLIE

Oh, I already knew that.

JADE

What? Seriously?

CALLIE

Yeah, my friends from before experienced a Sburb session and told me a lot of the details.

Jade stares in awe. Callie shuffles side to side.

CALLIE (CONT'D)

Please don't ask.

JADE

Very well, keep your secrets then! Just until I finish my story...

INTERCUT BETWEEN DAVE AND JADE'S DREAM SELF

Dave paces up and down a hallway, outside a door with a puppet hanging over the handle. Jade stretches.

JADE
Hey, cool kid! What's new?

DAVE
Jade! Grab your Sburb copy and start the game NOW, we need all hands on deck.

JADE
Dave, I don't have my copies!

DAVE
Hey, same here. I'm just going to have to ask Bro for help.

Jade takes a hushed breath.

JADE
Oh, wow. Okay. This must be really serious. I'll make something work, Dave, that's a promise.

DAVE
Thanks, I knew I could count on you. And, Jade?

JADE
Yeah?

DAVE
You know I have to ask: your grandfather was the globetrotting billionaire genius that founded Skaianet, and Skaianet made Sburb...do you know if he-?

JADE
Had anything to do with this? My grandpa's been dead for years: since I was a little girl. This has to be Skaianet's doing! It has to.

DAVE
Are you sure?

Her face says "no". She lies.

JADE
Absolutely.

DAVE

Okay. Find some copies and let's make shit happen, yeah?

JADE

Yeah! Sounds like a plan.

They hang up. Jade runs to her window, looking over Prospit to Skaia. She addresses the huge planet:

JADE (CONT'D)

My friends need help and I could really use some guidance. Please. Show me the way!

The clouds respond! Images appear in their fluffy depths: a crashing plane. Jade's frog temple. An enormous lotus.

Jade smiles, nods, and returns to bed. Taking a deep breath to brace herself, she slaps herself hard.

INT. JADE'S TOWER - DAY

Jade jolts awake! After a moment of surprise, she flies to the window and gazes at the frog temple in the bay.

INT. BRO'S ROOM - DAY

The door creaks open slightly. Dave peeks in.

DAVE

Bro? Bro, you there?

He opens the door to find... puppets!

Specifically smuppets, an invention from Bro himself. Their plush rumps and long, sausage-like noses protrude from every crack and crevice of the room. Dave faces a "Mr. T" version.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Yo, Mr. T, you seen Bro around?

Silence. It stares at him.

DAVE (CONT'D)

(trying to calm himself)
Puppets. Awesome. That's all there really is to say on the matter.

Squirming, Dave scoots past Mr. T to Bro's computer, which runs a content aggregator program called Complete Bullshit.

DAVE (CONT'D)
This is complete bullshit.

He checks the disk drive, trying to ignore the many eyes on his back. Bro's smuppets all look at him, one way or another. The disk drive holds nothing but disappointment.

WHOOSH!

Every hair on Dave's neck rises. He turns to find Lil' Cal behind him again. The leering smile bores between his eyes.

DAVE (CONT'D)
C-Cal? What are you doing in here, man? You really gonna keep helping Bro scare me like this?

"Scare". At once, he realizes the room terrifies him.

DAVE (CONT'D)
C-C'mon, give me a bro bump, Cal.

His hand shakes too much, he can't move Cal's arm for the bump. Dave goes to exit Bro's room-

But the door is locked!

A comic appeared by the handle, from Bro himself. A puppet version of JIGSAW asks: "Do you want to play a game?" Dave regards it for a moment with breathless horror.

He draws a katana and cuts the handle right off.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Panting, Dave flings the refrigerator door open. Shitty swords fall out. He drags the freezer open and finds throwing stars. The ice dispenser releases cherry bombs.

DAVE
The hell is all our food? Why is there no water?!

Dave works toward a full panic attack when he notices a shadowy reflection in the refrigerator door. Looks up.

Cal sits on the fridge. Pointing.

Dave follows the finger to an attic hatch. Bro drew a red puzzle piece, surrounding the words, "HELLO DAVE". Dave gets the message: *open the hatch*. He grabs the cord.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Please don't be-

The slightest pull releases a wave of smuppets! Dave tries to not scream as the weight pulls him down. Roaring, he bursts from the pile with his katana.

Dave looks up. Bro pinned a NOTE to the other side of the attic hatch using a Batarang. Dave jumps, snatches the paper.

INSERT - POORLY WRITTEN NOTE

"bro. roof. now. bring cal. where doing this man, where MAKING THIS HAPPEN" (the bad spelling is intentional).

Bro's note brings Dave back to his senses. He crushes the paper angrily, looking to the roof.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Meteors flash through the sky in abundance. One turns downward, sizzles toward the tree line below. It lands near Rose's clearing with a FIERY EXPLOSION!

Startled, Rose throws her arms up against the sudden heat. She watches the plume of flame, so hot rain sizzles away. Rose runs toward Jasper's Mausoleum and the generator.

INT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mom watches from a large window, holding a fresh Martini.

MOM

Look at her. My daughter. She's become a fine woman in spite of me.

GRANDPA HARLEY, a cheery, mustachioed giant of a man, steps from the shadows in full safari gear, a musket on his back.

GRANDPA HARLEY

Perhaps it's time she learned the truth, Miss Lalonde. All of it.

Mom reluctantly slides a small painting aside to reveal a blinking control panel.

EXT. JASPER'S MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Rose drags the generator toward the mausoleum entrance, but a flaming tree falls toward her! Last moment, she leaps out of the way, flame separating her from the prize.

INT. JASPER'S MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

Rose pounds in, gasping for breath. She leans on the wall, facing a small casket in the center, with decayed flowers on top. Tears (possibly smoke-induced) run down her ashen face.

She opens the casket lid. Her preserved cat, JASPERS, rests inside, wearing a cute little tuxedo. Rose smiles.

ROSE

Hey, Jaspers, old buddy-

CLICK!

The pedestal moves aside. Rose watches, amazed. Underneath, a dark shaft waits, illuminated faintly in green. Spooky.

The quickly moving fire has surrounded the mausoleum. Rose looks between the shaft, the fire, and Jasper's casket. Necessity takes hold.

ROSE (CONT'D)

How about one more adventure?

She captchalogues Jaspers and hops down the hole. The casket and pedestal slide back into place over her head.

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The roof looks like the scene of a prize fight.

INT. STAIRWAY - DAY

Dave kicks the door open. He ascends the stairs with Cal over his shoulder, a katana in his hand, and hell to raise.

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dave emerges, sets Lil' Cal down, and looks ahead.

A lone figure stands on the AC unit. Meet BRO, in his early 30's, ironically cool on over nine thousand levels, watching meteors fall through badass anime shades with his unbreakable katana in hand. His rocket board rests nearby.

Dave watches: awe, love, fear.

Bro casually backflips down and performs a chill turnabout. With ninja super speed, he snatches Lil' Cal. Dave flinches.

BRO
Dave.

DAVE
Bro.

Bro readies his sword, silhouetted by the apocalypse.

BRO
You ready for another epic battle?

DAVE
Not in the mood. I seriously just
need your Sburb copies.

CRACK! Bro appears right in front of Dave, who blocks Bro's
attack just in time. They're locked face to face.

BRO
If you can kick my ass, they're
yours!

Dave pauses, considering, then pushes Bro away.

DAVE
Not now! John, Rose and Jade need
someone to keep shit from hitting
the fan. They need help. I'm pretty
sure all these meteors are being
caused by this game they're
playing, Sburb!

BRO
So we have Sburb to thank for the
epic backdrop to our final fight!

DAVE
Bro, why can't you listen to me?!

BRO
You're not speaking my language.

They engage! Dave moves like lightning, but Bro always pulls
a step ahead, moving so fast he appears to teleport: flash-
stepping. Dave takes a fist to the gut.

He stands up amidst a storm of blades, blocking madly and
attacking when Bro appears long enough for him to strike.
Dave's matched! And Bro is just testing him.

Seconds later, Bro grabs Dave by the collar and throws him in
the air, where he appears and kicks Dave down. He reappears
on the roof and elbows his brother down the stairs. Dave
rolls over and over again; it keeps happening!

BRO (CONT'D)

Nice try, man. But you're gonna
need to be stronger to win Sburb.

Bro adjusts his glasses and begins to walk away, but the rooftop door slams open. Dave came back! He grips his katana with scraped hands and spits blood.

DAVE

You done playing? 'Cuz I'm ready
for that game now.

Bro grins.

INT. SKAIANET LABORATORY - NIGHT

Rose steps across a walkway bifurcating an enormous grid of glowing green boxes. One box has a lightning logo.

ROSE

Power.

She pulls out her laptop, but unbalances the sylladex. The items spill out and Jaspers lands onto a transportalizer. He disappears! Rose rushes over, leaving her laptop to charge.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Jaspers! What is this thing?! What
is this place?

She cautiously explores an area filled with girly stuff. Rose reflexively sighs, picking up a pink scarf. Scoffs, happy.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Seriously, Mom?

Her thoughts sour: what was Mom really doing?

She moves to an appearifier: the arcade-like is connected to an appearifier (platform fro incoming objects). The screen targets Jaspers, whose body lies in mom's room.

Rose taps a blinking button and Jasper's body appears!

ROSE (CONT'D)

Whoa, this works! And that pad
must've been a transporter...

The screen prompts: "Choose Preset"? Rose hits "yes" and the view goes back in time: flowers on Jasper's casket revive, a funeral plays in reverse, and Rose leaves Jasper's body in the river. After a blank period, a final screen appears:

Young Rose talking to a living Jaspers. A "therapy" session. Onscreen, Rose gasps. Current Rose reaches out to the screen.

ROSE (CONT'D)
The day Jaspers disappeared!

She finds the "retrieve" button again. Smashes it. The screen replies with: "PARADOX CLONE RETRIEVED".

Rose looks to the rig for a miracle, but green "paradox slime" version of Jaspers appears. A cylinder absorbs the goo clone as a blue button lights up. Curious, Rose hits it.

GENETIC RECONSTRUCTOR
Genetic reconstruction initiated.

Something appears and jumps behind the conduits, while Rose follows. She finds a black-furred, white-eyed KITTEN!

ROSE
No way! Hey there, little fella-

It opens another pair of eyes. Rose's breath catches.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Why...you're adorable! I'll call you Vodka Mutini. C'mere, ya cutie.

Rose puts her hand down, scurries her fingers about. The kitten playfully pounces. Rose rolls Vodka over, rubbing its tummy as it nibbles. She smiles, laughing.

ROSE (CONT'D)
I'm glad you're here, Vodka. Let's see what else there is, huh?

Cradling Vodka protectively, she visits an enormous computer with satellite screens running data and info. A map of earth shows dots of varying size and color.

Rose checks a legend. Meteors! Size indicates mass, color represents time: from blue (safe) to red (impact).

ROSE (CONT'D)
These are meteor landings! How the hell is Skaianet tracking this?

She notices a large, red circle.

ROSE (CONT'D)
That's John's house...

Another decently-sized green circle over Texas.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 And there's Dave. They're both
 being targeted!

A gigantic circle rests over the Pacific. Blue.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 Jade's island! Thank the gods it's
 a ways off. Which leaves me-

Two orange circles. One marks the lab (almost RED), another
 circles her house. She tentatively clicks on the lab's circle
 and another countdown takes over all screens: "01:37".

Time to go.

Rose zips across the catwalk, snatches her stuff. She turns
 back at "00:23" and notices Jaspers' body by the apparifier!

ROSE (CONT'D)
 Ah shit. Here we go again!

She rushes back, grabs her friend. Carrying Vodka and
 Jasper's, she dives onto the transportalizer.

INT. MOM'S ROOM - NIGHT

Rose appears, safe!

ROSE
 Whew, that actually went pretty-

The laboratory EXPLODES on the horizon. Rose SCREAMS as
 everything shakes and alcohol bottles fall. She absconds.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The Mayor plays with his food cans as an ALARM begins.

COMPUTER
 Multi-site facility launch
 initiated. Lockdown in effect.

Surprised, the Mayor takes a moment to begin rushing toward
 the escape ladder!

INT. SHAFT - DAY

Metal bars slide into place above! A wall closes off the room
 behind and a touchscreen appears: three options, two of which
 are locked. With no real choice, he takes the third.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY APPEARIFIER ROOM - DAY

Light crashes in. The Mayor discovers a large appearifier!

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT

Dave and Bro lock in mortal combat. Behind them, a building sinks from view, downed by a fiery meteor. The brothers have become evenly matched, despite Bro's speed.

Dave gets a lucky hit in! He trips Bro, who rolls to a slide and catches his footing. Dave smiles.

DAVE

You listening now?

Bro sneers and rushes forward... holding Lil' Cal! Dave goes to block, but pulls away to avoid the puppet. He takes a whopping KICK to the face, shakes it off, and returns.

Dave artfully slices around Cal, barely avoiding the puppet. Bro matches, dodging to either side while LAUGHING at Dave. He SLAMS Cal into Dave's chest, sending the younger brother into the wall...looking over the drop to the street below.

DAVE (CONT'D)

You - you're cheating!

BRO

What are you gonna do about it?

That's it. Dave yells in anger, jumps forward, and - SLICE!

Bro falls back, holding Lil' Cal's diced remains. He looks at it for a few seconds, then turns to Dave with a hellish glare. Dave's anger dissipates under Bro's fury.

DAVE

Oh my God. I'm sorry, I-

CRASH! Bro shatters Dave's sword with his unbreakable katana and punches Dave into the AC unit, creating a dent.

A millisecond later, Bro appears with a sword to Dave's throat. Murderous. Cain and Abel.

Bro stops. Ashamed. He pulls away. Dave falls, clutching his throat and choking. CRYING. Bro kicks his rocket board up under his arm without looking back.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I just need Sburb. Please.

Almost imperceptibly, Bro turns his head. As he flies off, the copies float onto Dave's chest.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

An imp sneaks over the railing, creeping around spent cruxite dowels and punched captchalogue cards. It stops by a box of Hellacious Blue Phlegm Aneurism Gushers.

At the alchemiter, John turns around and eyes the imp. He holds the Barber's Best Friend, an umbrella of razor blades.

SHINK.

The imp retreats, back down the side of the house. It glances below, where far more imps are approaching! A swarm, with a few enormous figures scattered amongst their ranks...

John opens his phone. Sighs: beaten but hopeful.

JOHN

Calling all channels. Anyone there?

INT. ROSE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rose sits between Jaspers and her eldritch princess doll.

ROSE

Hey, John! I have battery, and guess what? The meteors cleared a hole in my storm for wifi. Small blessings abound!

DAVE (V.O.)

Speaking of blessings-

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dave downloads Sburb on his screen.

DAVE

Your savior arrived! Any rats in this boat better jump ship, 'cause it's about to go down!

(serious)

You guys are alright, yeah?

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE, DAVE, AND JOHN

John leans on the wall, relieved and exhausted. Rose grins.

ROSE

I have been feeling lonely. Care to give me a lift off this planet?

DAVE

I can't resist showing a lady a good time. What do you need?

ROSE

Everything free inside the phernalia registry; I visited the Skaianet lab near home - mom's lab - and they're tracking meteors. I'm next, then Dave, and finally Jade! She'll be safe for now.

DAVE

She can't be targeted yet, she hasn't even started the game!

JOHN

Doesn't matter. Sburb exists outside our timeline completely.

ROSE

How do you know?

JOHN

My sprite, Nannasprite, told me. She also said meteors are caused by the Reckoning, an in-game cataclysm. It hasn't started yet in the Medium and supposedly can't be stopped...but hell, impossible shit has happened all day. How about we do something impossible for once?

Rose and Dave smile as John works with the alchemiter.

ROSE

I'm with you.

DAVE

Hell yeah!

John looks at two punch cards: his POGO RIDE and the HAMMER.

JOHN

Great! First things first, Dave, make sure Rose has everything she needs to get in the Medium safely. And hey, I'm really glad you're here, man.

DAVE
Anything for my homies.

JOHN
Rose, while you still have time,
build me toward the first portal.
Keep it bare bones if you can, all
I need is height.

Rose peers at her screen, concerned.

ROSE
I'll do my best. But it looks like
you have company...

John starts the alchemiter. In a flash of light, a brand-new item appears. The Pogo Hammer. John takes it in hand.

JOHN
I can take care of them.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY APPEARIFIER ROOM - DAY

Countdown running. The Mayor looks at the appearifier screen, seeing a pumpkin, carved in the shape of Becquerel's head, on a greenhouse table. He presses "==>".

ZAP! The pumpkin appears on the panel, disappears onscreen.

INT. JADE'S TOWER - DAY

Jade skips through a greenhouse, sporting an enormous harpoon. She pauses, looks at one of her carved pumpkins, and-

What pumpkin? It's gone!

Jade shrugs, moves to the window and brings the harpoon to bear. BOOM! She fires across the bay into an ancient pillar and zip-lines across like a badass.

INT. SKAIANET FACILITY APPEARIFIER ROOM - DAY

The Mayor hastily operates the "location" and "date" controls. He focuses on his facility, briefly viewing an x-ray of the whole complex: a buried bottle. He's in the cork.

The Mayor targets his swag: cans, measuring spear, etc. ZAP! They appearify in his scooped-out pumpkin. He targets the bars blocking his path. ZAP! Grabs his stuff and goes.

He almost reaches the shaft when he notices the firefly in amber, named SERENITY. He looks at his countdown: "01:14"!

Decision made: he rushes back and apparifies her from amber.

The Mayor grabs his belongings with Serenity happily blinking around his head! She remains with him from now on.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

Imps swarm over the railing. John crushes the first to approach, but the pogo hammer's recoil sends him back a few steps. He looks flustered, but only for a moment...

He wades into the enemies, swinging faster, using every strike as momentum to deal more damage on the next, creating a whirlwind of pain, and a rain of grist!

Rose's cursor passes overhead. Chimneys, platforms, and ladders appear out of nowhere, creating a Donkey Kong-esque scaffold over the house.

INT. ROSE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rose enters the zone. Next to her, Vodka plays with a scarf. Dave's cursor floats over her head.

DAVE (V.O.)

Want these anywhere specific, or-

ROSE

Anywhere's fine, just get it done!

DAVE (V.O.)

So, here's the thing. The only places I can see are-

ROSE

Dave!

DAVE (V.O.)

Okay, right.

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dave makes a select few clicks.

DAVE

Done, done, and...done!

He plops the cruxtruder in the living room, picks up Zazzerpan the Wise, and bops the machine's cap off. He throws the wizard outside and its hand breaks away.

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE, DAVE, AND JOHN

Rose flips the laptop shut as Dave delivers her Pre-punched card. It bears a purple bottle.

ROSE

John, I'm done. Are you okay now?

He looks up to the portal. So close!

JOHN

Perfect! You're the best, Rose.
I'll see you all on the other side?

Rose and Dave smile.

DAVE

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

John works up momentum for a large bounce. He jumps above an imp for a hero slam, which rockets him up multiple levels. John yells, spinning out of control, and lands on...his bed!

Nannasprite holds it with a blue tractor beam!

NANNASPRITE

John, you never came for my cookies. You have to eat!

JOHN

Sorry, I got busy, Nanna.

NANNASPRITE

It's fine, dear. Just give those imps a good drubbing for old Nanna!

EXT. JADE'S ISLAND - DAY

On the frog temple pillar, Jade drops her blue package and it disappears! Unconcerned, she drops her harpoon and coil.

She hops across giant lily pads until she stands before the monolithic Frog Temple. Every inch bears odd hieroglyphics. The dimensions are monumental.

Jade enters with the cautious, catlike stride of Lara Croft.

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE AND DAVE

Rose powers up toward the observatory, tornados forming in the rain! Her totem lathe waits inside.

ROSE
Dave, why HERE?

DAVE
You told me anywhere! You haven't even seen where the alchemiter is-

He drops the eldritch princess doll into Rose's purple kernelsprite as she spots the alchemiter...on the roof.

ROSE
STRIIIIIIDEEEEEEER!

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

On the top panel, John stares at his portal, horrified.

JOHN
It's still too far.

BUMP. The platform sways like a glass of water shifting at the approach of a T-Rex. John turns around.

Two CRUDE OGRES climbed up behind him. One puts John's tire swing around him and slams John about like the Hulk thrashing Loki. He flies free and Nanna narrowly catches him again!

NANNASPRITE
Careful, John! Right back at 'em!

INTERCUT BETWEEN ROSE AND DAVE

Dave's cursor picks up Jaspers in the living room, bringing it to the kernelsprite, as the house flashes red.

DAVE
The hell?!

Swirling tornados absorb the flame. Firenados!

Rose runs across her roof as a firenado grabs Zazzerpan. She rams her cruxite dowel in place and starts the process, but when her bottle appears, Zazzerpan's flying hand hits it!

The bottle flies, unbroken, into the river. Rose rushes to the edge as it floats under her house. It's a race! She runs to the other side, working off pure instinct, and jumps!

A purple glow appears. The bottle emerges. Rose catches it and falls...into the waiting tentacles of Jaspersprite! He's a mix of the eldritch princess doll and her long, lost cat. Rose tears up at the sight.

ROSE
 Jaspers! Or, Jaspersprite?
 (grateful)
 Dave, did you do this for me?

Dave sits back, pleased, working on *Sweet Bro and Hella Jeff*.

DAVE
 Only the best for you, my dear.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John slams his hammer into an ogre's foot. It roars, trying to catch him with the tire swing. He slides under its legs!

JOHN
 Like I'd fall for that twice-!

The second ogre slaps John away with his own copy of Colonel Sassacre. He rolls to a stop and comes back in, serious. Once again, John uses the pogo hammer's momentum.

BOOM! BAM! POW! He becomes a blur!

One ogre disappears into grist. Mid-bounce, John targets the other's enormous head with a downward strike.

BOING! The second ogre vanishes and John blasts up into his first portal!

INT. FROG TEMPLE - LOTUS ROOM

A platform lifts Jade into a majestic room built around a huge lotus on a metal pedestal. She approaches. It blooms. Inside, Dave's Sburb copies appear! Jade captchaloguees them happily and her other stuff falls out of her Jenga modus.

She whistles and Becquerel appears, sniffing. She winks at him, smug.

JADE
 Hey, boy. Let's go back to my room!

They vanish.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Amidst the falling rain, Rose pets Jaspersprite, affectionate. They embrace as her meteor appears overhead.

She smashes her cruxite bottle on the railing. A vortex of purple appears around the house-

ENTER:

TIME LAPSE - ROSE'S METEOR

The meteor lands on the house. Hours, days, and years pass. Earth suddenly becomes a wasteland.

Where Rose's meteor landed, the Mayor's bottle facility appears! Years go by and shifting sands cover the bottle. Time slows to normal and our Mayor exits his hatch. Too late.

EXT. APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND - DAY

BOOM! The facility's cork launches, propelled by rockets! The Mayor holds on for dear life as he travels far, far away.

EXT. APOCALYPTIC WASTELAND - EVENING

More time passed.

The Mayor jumps at an EXPLOSION! He searches for the cause and finds an apple facility with helicopter blades. The two facilities converge toward some location...

A hole in the apple belches smoke. A female Prospitian steps through the cloud, looking out of the gap! Meet PM: tall, thin, cool under pressure. She holds mail and a regisword.

They make eye contact. The Mayor's instantly smitten.

Both carapacians look ahead as clouds whisk by, revealing the apocalyptic remains of Jade's frog temple.

The facilities are landing.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC FROG TEMPLE - DAY

The Mayor crash-lands. The Apple facility descends lightly.

PM steps outside and looks at the frog temple, amazed. We approach her stunned face as she goes way, way back-

ENTER:

EXT. PROSPIT TOWN SQUARE - DAY

PM, in parcel mistress attire, happily regards a city square. She pulls her mail cart onto a transportalizer pad.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NIGHT

PM reappears. She checks her mail directory, chooses a path, and voyages off with confident strides.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - FOOTPATH

Caution tape on the trees ahead. She slows.

Dad's fallen car lies amongst shattered glowtree branches. A Dersite AUTHORITY REGULATOR (called AR hereon) investigates.

PM quickly hides in a dense copse of trees. She watches closely as AR extricates the green package...

INSERT - PACKAGE ADDRESS STAMP

"FROM JADE. TO JOHN."

PM

Mail!

AR starts to leave. PM struggles to get out.

PM (CONT'D)

Hey, excuse me! I can deliver that package for you. Come back!

He disappears right as she breaks out. Panting, PM looks around for help but finds none. She stows the mail cart and rushes off in pursuit.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - CLEARING

AR steps onto a purple transport pad. PM breaks into the clearing seconds after him and stops by the edge.

She rolls her shoulders, follows after.

EXT. DERSE - NIGHT

The enemy heartland! Citizens eye PM warily, then go about their business, unimpressed. She notices AR disappear down a main boulevard. Pursuit!

EXT. DERSE CASTLE - NIGHT

PM reaches the footsteps to Derse' castle and sprints up.

INT. DERSE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

She passes two Dersite guards. They snicker and catcall. PM glares and sneaks to an open door. Peeks in.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

AR holds the green package, standing at attention.

AR

Jack, Sir! I discovered this contraband in the Land of Wind and Shade, near a player's home.

JACK

Yeah? Toss it over there and scram.

AR

Yes sir!

AR salutes smartly and places the box on Jack's enormous pile of paperwork. It causes an avalanche.

JACK

Forget about that, I've got it! You can return to your duties.

Jack grits his teeth, shaking his head.

At the door, AR passes PM. He pauses in surprise, coughs, and doffs his hat furiously to the pretty lady. PM nods in confusion, and heads to Jack.

The Archagent feels the package's heft, shakes it. He nonchalantly glances in...and drops the box instantly.

PM

Um...excuse me?

JACK

What?! You...you're Prospitian!
What are you, an ambassador?

PM

I'm just a Parcel Mistress. I, uh,
came for that green package.

JACK

You came here. To Derse. For THIS
package. During WAR?

She nods, yes. Hopeful. He glares.

JACK (CONT'D)

Well, that's too damn bad, 'cause
if you want it I'll need a favor in
return. Take this hit list.

He hands her two cards from a drawer. They show white crowns.

PM

Y-you want me to kill the white
royalty?! That's insane! Do you
even care about the package?

JACK

No. But you do. Do it for the mail,
sister! And here's your regisword.

He passes her a black regisword. PM considers stabbing him.

PM

I'll be back. Soon.

JACK

Great! Thank you, and goodbye.

He pushes PM out the door and watches her go.

JACK (CONT'D)

More spirit in that flighty broad
than all the damn royalty together.

The door shuts. Jack turns back to the package, cautious-

His screens flash! Jack hides the box under some papers.

BLACK QUEEN (O.S.)

Jack, you're not in uniform again!

JACK

Glorious Monarch, I needed to-

BLACK QUEEN (O.S.)
Nothing comes before my royal
 decree. Unfortunately, it's become
 clear to me that you will only
 respond to *punishment*...

SLICE! The entire screen falls in half. The black queen
 stands in Jack's office, sword ready! She grew the tentacles
 of the eldritch princess doll and ears of a cat: Rose's
 prototyping. The queen levels her sword at Jack's throat.

BLACK QUEEN (CONT'D)
 Follow me. NOW. You must be
 properly dressed.

Choking on anger, Jack shuffles out.

INT. QUEEN'S CHAMBERS - LATER

The queen lounges on her throne as Jack tries garments. She
 gives orders and watches his silhouette on the backlit
 dressing screen. Jack emerges in rags.

BLACK QUEEN
 Ah yes, THAT ONE! It's perfect.

She leans seductively, holding the green package. Caressing
 it. When Jack notices, the queen smiles: smug, contemptuous.

BLACK QUEEN (CONT'D)
 Yes. What might this be, Jack?

JACK
 Contraband. Just contraband.

BLACK QUEEN
 Are you sure it's not a package
 from an admirer?

Jack's blood boils.

JACK
 Sure ain't for you, if that's what
 you're wondering.

With agonizing slowness, she opens the package with a razor-
 sharp finger, reaches in, and gropes around dramatically,
 watching Jack squirm.

Her hand gets pulled deeper. Her eyes shoot wide.

BLACK QUEEN
 WHAT IS-

A spike of purple lightning obliterates her forearm.

The box falls, open end toward the queen. She tries to crawl back, tentacles moving to close the flaps.

BLACK QUEEN (CONT'D)

N-NO!

Another jet of lightning rips her to pieces!

The ring lands at Jack's foot. He rams it onto his own hand and convulses! Jack painfully spawns cat ears, tentacles, and an exoskeletal clown hat. On him, it's nightmare fuel!

SOLDIERS rush in, weapons drawn. They circle.

SOLDIER #1

Archagent? Surrender the ring, NOW!

SNAP! Jack lashes out with his tentacles. He breaks one soldier's neck and slaps another into the wall with spine-crushing force. He grabs the last, pulls the soldier in.

SOLDIER #3

You'll never be able to sit on the throne! The people of Derse won't-

Jack buries his switchblade in the soldier's chest.

JACK

I don't plan to rule.

He tosses the body aside and admires the carnage, fully appreciating his new power. Steps outside.

EXT. DERSE BALCONY - NIGHT

Jack glares at SKAIA, bloody knife in hand.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NIGHT

A spirograph portal spins into existence, shaking nearby foliage. John falls through the aperture, tries to land properly, but tumbles to the ground.

CRACK! Something moves nearby! John rises and prepares for another fight. The surrounding plants whisper, the land seems alive, and John doesn't feel alone. Something is watching.

A bush shakes. John freaks the hell out.

A LARGE MAN in safari gear holds John's copy of *Colonel Sassacre* and a huge musket: Grandpa Harley! He leaves.

JOHN

A human... Hey, wait up!

John follows, catching up, when-

A wild SALAMANDER appears! It has captivating blue eyes, bright lemon skin, and a bubble-blowing mouth. John yells in fright, and it shrinks away.

Boy and amphibian lock eyes. It nears him cautiously and chirps; questioning, hopeful. John understands, surprised:

JOHN (CONT'D)

I understand you! You need help? I can't, I have to find that man-

Grandpa Harley turns. They make eye contact, then Harley disappears. John reflexively steps forward, but the salamander grabs the edge of his shirt, pleading.

JOHN (CONT'D)

What?

The salamander points. Smoke rises nearby, from a large fire.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Aw, c'mon...I don't have time!

He looks at where Harley disappeared, locked in a mental sprint to catch up. In the end, he turns away, frustrated.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Argh, fine! I'll help you, okay? Fine. Do you have a name?

It shakes its head.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Really? Then, uh, how about I call you Casey? My name is John, it's nice to meet you.

CASEY blows a bubble in affirmation. John reaches out for a handshake and she scurries up to his shoulder. He smiles despite himself. They head toward danger!

Unnoticed on a hill nearby, Grandpa Harley watches them go.

GRANDPA HARLEY

Excellent decision, m'boy.

EXT. SALAMANDER VILLAGE - NIGHT

SHALE IMPS run rampant! Two TAR BASILISKS spit jets of fire onto salamander huts! A COPPER GICLOPS stomps through homes!

In one house, two SALAMANDERS cower as a toothy basilisk peers inside, charging flames within its gut. A third salamander jumps in front of the others as-

The basilisk strikes.

John appears! He pounds the creature's head down with his hammer, swings around, and smashes it into a flaming hut.

JOHN

Get out of here, quick! Into the forest with you.

He stands guard as enemies take notice. The first tar basilisk slithers out of the smoke, unharmed! Casey appears at his side, tiny fists ready.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Okay. Here we go-

CHOMP! A second basilisk sidelines John, scooping him into its mouth! He screams through huge fangs. Casey furiously punches the monster's legs, but the basilisk easily kicks the salamander aside.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NEARBY

Grandpa Harley's musket peeks from the trees. He FIRES.

EXT. SALAMANDER VILLAGE - NIGHT

The basilisk's body disappears. Casey scuttles over and helps John escape from the head.

Monsters look around in fear. The copper giclops eyes the forest. It ROARS a ferocious challenge... And gets shot in the eye! It flees blindly. The remaining enemies retreat and a few get crushed by their large comrade.

John watches them, feeling defeated. The village burns.

A convenient flow through, faintly blue like the one that guided John's hammer. The strange air puts out the flames and vanishes. The village smolders safely.

John sighs deeply, relieved. Casey runs to his arm, hugs him. It chirps repeatedly. He smiles.

JOHN
I'm what?! The Heir of Breath? No,
silly, I'm just John-

Salamanders appear from the woodwork! Casey calls to them,
and they all repeat the same phrase: "Heir of Breath". John
smiles, tickled, as they lift him up and cheer.

His phone RINGS. Quickly, while trying to balance, John
checks the caller: "gallowsCalibrator". He answers:

JOHN (CONT'D)
Gallows?!

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
Need help, John? You smell lost!

He unbalances and falls.

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Dave holds a piece of Lil' Cal, pulling at fluff and
stitches. Jade's cursor drops his bed on the roof.

INT. JADE'S TOWER - DAY

She works happily, typing on her lunchtop computer.

JADE
Just moved your bed to make space
for the cruxtruder. Look alive!

INTERCUT BETWEEN JADE AND DAVE

Dave nods. Sighs.

JADE
Something wrong?

DAVE
I'm just thinking about Bro.

He waits, hoping Jade will ask. She doesn't. Instead, her
cursor brings a toilet over the roof.

JADE
Well, think fast! I'm getting this
party started.

DAVE
Why is my toilet- ?

He lifts a questioning finger as the toilet FALLS. CRUNCH!

It breaks through his roof and pops the cruxtruder open. Water splashes everywhere, soaking the carpet. An orange kernelsprite emerges! The cruxtruder shows: "4:13:00".

DAVE (CONT'D)

Could you please NOT destroy my entire apartment?!

JADE

Sorry, I'm just trying to help!

DAVE

(listens)

Wait a sec. I'll be right back...

The door opens. Bro steps in, hesitantly. Dave drops his phone. They circle each other as they begin talking.

BRO

Hey, uh, we should talk about our fight. Things got out of hand-

DAVE

Are you kidding me? Things got out of hand?

BRO

Yeah. I'm pretty sure we both regret stuff we did. So...
(lullaby-chant-rapping)
Let's chalk it up to badass broskies battling across sun-bathed rooftops as flaming meteors drop from starlit perches, dripping red with hellfire and human spirit on-

Dave steps back.

DAVE

You're a maniac.

BRO

Excuse me?

DAVE

You - I...you nearly killed me!

BRO

We both let our tempers run hot, but that's what happens when you're a Strider, little man-

DAVE
Little man? That's what you call
your puppets.

The air chills.

BRO
Hold on a sec, that's unfair-

DAVE
You keep me locked in this house
with no food or water. You
regularly fight me-

BRO
That's just part of training!

DAVE
BULLSHIT. Give me a real answer,
just once.

BRO
(sincere)
Okay, okay. I'll be honest.

DAVE
You took me in as a kid. Why?

Bro comes to Dave's level and puts a hand on his shoulder.

BRO
I wanted to help you become strong,
Dave. That's all I ever wanted.

Dave stands up.

DAVE
Get out. I'm going to help my
friends, and then I'm gone.

BRO
But - you're thirteen!

DAVE
If I survived with you for thirteen
years, I can take anything outside.

Bro's head falls. Dave's adamant, furious.

BRO
Dave, I'm really-

DAVE
Get. OUT!!!

WHOOSH! Bro disappears.

Dave looks crippled for a moment, but slowly begins to breathe. He notices his phone, groans. Grabs it.

JADE

Dave! I had no idea! Look, if you want to talk, I'm glad to listen. I'm no therapist like Rose, but, you're not alone here. Okay?

DAVE

Oh, geez. Sorry, thanks, I'm alright. I'm fine. Really, you didn't need to hear all that, Jade. It was super uncool of me.

JADE

It's totally fine. In fact, I know what might cheer you up! I found this bird for your kernelsprite-

DAVE

Wait!

Her cursor brings Dave's impaled crow through the window and drops it in the kernelsprite. Flash! BIRDSprite appears, a crow with a sword through its chest. Dave GAGS.

EXT. SALAMANDER VILLAGE - NIGHT

John wades through amphibians, phone in hand.

JOHN

Please stop calling me!

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)

John, did you ever wonder why we hated you?

He dodges a salamander procession, confused.

JOHN

Of course I wondered. We didn't do anything to you guys. I think...

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR

Disappointing. I thought you would have figured it out by now:

INT. PARADOX SPACE LAB - NIGHT

A SILHOUETTED GIRL leans close to her computer. She sneers, revealing sharp teeth. True anger:

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR

We can see your whole timeline. At least, right up until the moment you *ruin everything*. You and your friends mess up Sburb so badly it affected our universe.

INTERCUT BETWEEN JOHN AND GALLOWSCALIBRATOR

Casey watches John step outside of the village, concerned.

JOHN

You know, part of me is starting to believe you are aliens.

(he laughs, thinking)

You know, I remember you used to say you were a blind girl that saw with taste and smell. I suppose that's still true?

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)

Why would it change? Am I supposed to suddenly grow new eyes? Is that a human thing?

He becomes serious.

JOHN

If you really hated us, you wouldn't help me, right?

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)

Not necessarily. I'm bored, for one. Two, despite the fact that most of my friends think your timeline's a lost cause, I still believe there's hope. So if you listen to me, I promise to do my best to get you through this.

John remains still a moment, listening to the sales pitch.

JOHN

But, you're probably just a hacker, or a Skaianet programmer.

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
 Wouldn't that give me more reason
 to help? Also, I'd have a better
 understanding of Sburb. It's a win-
 win either way you slice it!

JOHN
 So... Whoever you are, you must at
 least have selfish reasons to help!

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
 Better than help: I'll be a guide.

Her words strike home as she delivers an impish smile. He
 pretends not to be sold, but she knows.

JOHN
 Alright. I'll give you one chance,
but you have to make it count.

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
 Excellent. You won't regret this!
 Follow this map first, I want you
 to see your Denizen's Lair.

EXT. TYPHEUS' CASTLE - NIGHT

A chasm. One blue return node hovers over the abyss, and an
 indomitable castle of organ pipes commands the other side.
 John looks over the huge expanse, then down at the portal.

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
 See? You're so focused on beating
 the Reckoning, you didn't notice
 your Denizen was here all along! If
 you beat it now, you can finish the
 game early.

JOHN
 That sounds awesome, but Nanna
 would've told me about this!

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR (V.O.)
 Not exactly: Denizens are end-game
 bosses and sprites are supposed to
 lead you through the game step by
 step. Slowly. Instead, you're going
 to kill the denizen in its sleep!

JOHN
 Then there's no time to waste.

John clenches his fist. Nearby, Casey watches from a bush.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NIGHT

Dad spots John leaping over the cliff, into the portal.

DAD

John! SON!

FLASH! John's node disappears. Dad grinds to a halt at the chasm edge, shoes kicking gravel into the abyss. He takes a sharp breath, yells, and strikes a tree. It cracks in half.

Dad looks at his own hand in surprise, and sits next to the stump, elbows on his knees. He lost John once again.

GRANDPA HARLEY (O.S.)

You've raised an upstanding young man, Egbert. Be a shame if you wasted time waiting for him here.

The explorer stands above Dad, hand proffered. Dad takes it.

DAD

Harley?! I thought you were dead.

GRANDPA HARLEY

In some ways, you're not mistaken, old friend. That fate still awaits me on Earth, in your past and my future I'm afraid. But here-

He scans the landscape proudly, a glint in his eyes.

GRANDPA HARLEY (CONT'D)

Wonders never cease! I would travel this land forever if permitted. This place taught me so much.

DAD

I have questions, Harley. The game, this place...John. I need help.

Harley glances at Dad's oil-stained hat.

GRANDPA HARLEY

And it'd be my pleasure to give it! But first, I suggest we retire to my lab. We're in need of rest and you probably want a new hat. Also, a mutual friend wants to see you... It's best we not keep her waiting.

Dad experiences an emotional explosion.

DAD

Lalonde?

EXT. LAND OF LIGHT AND RAIN - DAY

Sherbet light glimmers across great oceans. Rose's house rests on one of many small islands.

Mom walks across fine, brightly-colored sand toward the remainder of Jasper's Mausoleum, which leads down to an incandescent tunnel. Maplehoof follows.

EXT. DOCK - DAY

They enter a sailboat at the end of the dock. Mom smiles, brushes the pony's mane fondly. She's sober.

MOM

Not to worry. She'll be more than fine without us...

The boat shifts as the pony enters. They cast off.

Mom takes one final look at her house, and notices Jaspersprite on a beach nearby. She waves goodbye, and he wags a tentacle in response. In their wake, her abandoned martini glass casts radiant arcs of light on the dock.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The second portal fires a beam down onto the roof and John appears like Thor. He looks around-

JOHN

Gallows, did you hear something?

Casey stands behind him, sheepish. John's overjoyed.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Casey, it was you! C'mon sweetie, stay close. We're going to make some *sweet loot!*

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - MONTAGE

Casey happily spins the cruxtruder's wheel and dowels fly! Codes zip across the punch designix's screen. CLIP! The lathe whirs. Chips of cruxite cascade down. The alchemiter fires. New items appear on the build platform.

END MONTAGE

John slips his arms through the sleeves of a new *Wise Guy* Slime Suit. He pushes Serious Business Goggles up his nose and hefts the Wrinklefucker hammer. He poses.

JOHN

You like what you see?

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR

Again, I can't see, but you certainly taste good!

JOHN

Ew, don't make it weird, Gallows!
(examines card)
Anyway, there's one more dowel here. Code name: pchooooo.

GALLOWSCALIBRATOR

Oh, yes! Finally! I think you'll like this one, John.

The alchemiter fires and a JETPACK appears.

JOHN

Oh. My. God. Gallows, thank you!

INT. PARADOX SPACE LAB - NIGHT

She finally reveals herself fully: pointy horns, red glasses and a black shirt bearing a teal Libra symbol. Meet TEREZI.

TEREZI

I'm glad you like it, John. And... my name is Terezi. Terezi Pyrope. I think we're close enough for that.

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

John brings out the finger pistols. Funny, but sincere.

JOHN

It's nice to meet you, Terezi. Now let's get this denizen! Come on, Casey, you can't stay here alone.

He stores Casey in his sylladex, gears up, and blasts off.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAND OF HEAT AND CLOCKWORK - DAY

Dave's planet, one of the four orbiting Skaia, appears like a red sore in the darkness.

SUPER: DAYS IN THE FUTURE

Dave wears a Puppet Tux and wields Caledscratch, a time-swapping sword. He battles stronger versions of the familiar enemies, hopping across cogs over burping lava.

Using TIMETABLES, Dave attacks a group of imps with two versions of himself. The imps die. Dave's halves converge.

His iShades light up.

DAVE
iShades: answer Rose.
(tentative, nervous)
So, what's your call?

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - DAY

Future Rose is exhausted but powering on.

ROSE
We stick to the plan.

INTERCUT BETWEEN DAVE AND ROSE

A RUBY OGRE wades toward Dave.

DAVE
Rose, please-

ROSE
You agreed! We learn as much as we can about the game, then you go back in time and stop John from trying to kill the Denizen.

Dave spins the timetables, gritting his teeth. The approaching ogre freezes and Dave rushes up its arm.

DAVE
But what happens to you?!

ROSE
Let's be honest: I cease to exist as this branch of time gets cut at the stem. Or, if you'd prefer a euphemism: I go to sleep.

Dave stabs his monster's eye like Perseus. He yells angrily.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Listen, hotshot: it's done! We're tired and Sburb's catching up. One mistake now and this will be final.

DAVE

So it's settled? We just give up?

ROSE

(comforting)

We had a good run here. Nobody else could've come so close to pulling a win from the void, but this game isn't meant for two.

Dave gives in. His hands reluctantly grip the timetables. Glowing red gears encompass him, turning back the clock.

DAVE

You can rest now. And I promise,
Rose: I'll get it right this time.

One tear slides down his cheek. He vanishes.

Rose surrenders herself. The world fades toward her, lapping at her heels as she falls into nothingness.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOHN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

John prepares to launch, once again.

JOHN

It's nice to meet you, Terezi. Now come on, Casey, you can't stay here alone. Let's do this!

John's goggles light up: Dave requesting to join the chat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Dave?

DAVE (V.O.)

John, where are you?!

JOHN

I'm in the Medium. What's up?

INTERCUT BETWEEN JOHN, DAVE, AND TEREZI

Dave paces above his lava world. John toys with the ignition.

DAVE

Don't listen to her. Terezi's trying to kill you, the denizen is too powerful!

TEREZI

It's supposed to be asleep! He can stop the Reckoning now.

DAVE

I want to stop the Reckoning as much as you, but it's impossible. You have to give up on that.

John's confusion hardens into angry stubbornness.

JOHN

I'm sorry, Dave. I'm afraid I can't do that.

TEREZI

Yeah! Leave him alone.

DAVE

Terezi, I swear I will find you and beat the hell out of you.

TEREZI

I'd like to see you try, cool kid.

DAVE

John! Turn yourself around. The next portal will take you to Rose, in the Land of Light and Rain.

JOHN

How do you know all of this?

DAVE

I came from a doomed timeline. You died and Jade never made it into the Medium. We couldn't save her.

Angry, John guns the jetpack engine, and blasts off.

JOHN

Stop playing around, man. This is our best chance, this is happening!

DAVE

JOHN. For once, please cut the positive crap and look at reality! I already lost you and Jade once. My Rose died in a failed reality. Please, please don't make me go through that again.

JOHN

No. I don't believe you.

DAVE

JOHN!

John hangs up. Future Dave paces, nearly hysterical.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NIGHT

John nears the seventh portal, angst increasing. TORN. Seconds away, he reconsiders and heads back down.

INTERCUT BETWEEN DAVE AND TEREZI

Terezi watches her screen, angry. She pounds her keyboard.

TEREZI

He didn't go. We were so close!

Dave collapses, relieved.

DAVE

Stay away from John! No more taking advantage of a good, trusting guy.

TEREZI

Trusting? He's gullible.

DAVE

When it comes to seeing other people's faults, John's as blind as you are.

Hot dayum.

TEREZI

Like I care? He had it coming.

Lava cools under Dave's icy chill.

DAVE

Wanna run that by me again?

TEREZI

There's no punishment severe enough for what you four will do. Besides, I knew you would stop him.

DAVE

You did? So I, Future Dave, was already here and nothing changed?

TEREZI

Yeah. So what?

DAVE

That means your actions brought me here, the timeline leading to your Disaster. Paradoxically, you helped start it! You share in the blame!

Terezi's stopped. She shakes her head, denying the truth.

TEREZI

Shut up, Strider! That's not true. Jegus, it couldn't be true...

DAVE

You know it is. You're part of the cause! And not only that, but your "decision" made me lose my John, Jade, and Rose in a doomed timeline. If we're monsters, what the hell are you?!

TEREZI (CONT'D)

SHUT UP! What I did was justified. There's no way to be certain my actions led to this...

I, I'm...

Fumbling, she takes her glasses away from sightless, blood-red eyes. Shaken. Dave goes in for the kill.

DAVE (CONT'D)

You're GUILTY.

Terezi holds her walking stick in her lap, feeling its balance. She sighs raggedly, and takes a deep breath. Dave listens, more surprised by the moment.

TEREZI

Dave...I'm sorry. I lost friends too, I thought I saw a chance to do something. I mean, if you had the opportunity change reality, save even one of them and take away their pain...wouldn't you try?

Dave weighs the emotion in her voice. He replies evenly:

DAVE

I would. But that doesn't give you the right to condemn us for a crime we haven't committed yet.

(thinks)

So how about this? We start over, clean slate. New timeline.

Dave grits his teeth as Terezi looks up, amazed.

TEREZI

You'd forgive me?

DAVE

I would. But no more "messaging" with our timeline. And from here on out, you run all your ideas through me. We work together.

TEREZI

I...I think I'd like that, Dave.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC FROG TEMPLE - EVENING

The Mayor looks to the ground from his facility. Too far! But a harpoon and rope lie on a nearby pillar...

In the frog temple, AR watches the trespassers through his assault rifle scope, wearing a cloak of caution tape!

INT. APPEARIFIER ROOM - DAY

The Mayor targets the harpoon, but accidentally spins the time dial. ZAP! Jade's blue package from John appears.

Confused, the Mayor checks his screen. He resets the dial to appearifies his coil, but glances at the package once more and notices a note, addressed to him.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC FROG TEMPLE - DAY

The Mayor rappels down his facility, pumpkin under one arm. Serenity the firefly follows. He hits the ground and makes eye contact with PM. They wave at each other, mesmerized.

Gunfire rains down from the temple!

PM reacts instantly, diving behind a fallen pillar between the facilities. The Mayor hasn't moved.

PM

Come on! What are you waiting for?!

The Mayor crouches further, head in his hands: an attack of horrible PTSD.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKAIA - *FLASHBACK*

The Mayor tills a field, his WIFE and CHILD nearby. The kid runs to him, he reaches out...and the family disappears. His home now burns. The crops vanish. A Dersite warship flies overhead. The Mayor becomes angry.

EXT. SKAIAN BATTLEFIELD - *FLASHBACK*

He brandishes a red flag, and CALLS to nearby soldiers. They listen! An army forms behind the Mayor's colors.

INT. DERSITE BASE - *FLASHBACK*

United warriors march toward the Black King, a colossal figure. The Mayor plants his flag. The king lifts his scepter-

Something cuts it in half and decapitates the king! His body falls over, revealing Jack. Dave's Birdsprite prototyping gave the archagent wings and a sword through his chest.

Soldiers rush in and the Mayor gets knocked down. Screams ring out and the Mayor protects himself until silence falls. He looks up at Jack, in a sea of fallen soldiers.

JACK

You're the one who brought this
posse together, huh?

Jack grins and flies away. The Mayor looks at his handiwork.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC FROG TEMPLE - DAY

AR's crosshairs lie on the Mayor, then drop below into the sand: he's firing warning shots! The Mayor curls up further-

PM (O.S.)

Get over here!

PM rushes out, grabs the Mayor's arm, and drags him to safety. Serenity hums along as the Mayor looks up at PM: his savior, his crush, his hero. She offers a wry smile.

PM (CONT'D)
Stick with me. I'll keep you safe.

EXT. LAND OF LIGHT AND RAIN - DAY

John rockets through a portal and banks down toward Rose's house. He crashes through a wall.

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - DAY

John and Casey shake themselves off. He looks around.

Rose's room, her life, surrounds him! He takes it all in and notices her, sleeping on a pile of knitwear. Everything he ever wanted: a friend! He reaches out-

But John can't bring himself to wake her. It isn't the right time. He steps back, breathing deep.

JOHN
I'm going to explore. I'll get back
when she's awake, and...Casey? No!

The salamander reads Rose's secret diaries. As if to a child-

JOHN (CONT'D)
Those are Rose's, we can't look.

But while setting them on a windowsill, he PEEKS. A "MEOW" diary is filled with "MEOW"s. Yeesh. The other, *Complacency of the Learned* contains over-involved wizard fanfic. John laughs a little as he places them back. Sweet:

JOHN (CONT'D)
You're just a weird kid like me.

He notices: a purple package for him! John carefully opens it and removes a knitted bunny! He dies with happiness, then notices a trashcan full of discarded notes that all begin with, "Happy Birthday, John". His eyes tear up.

JOHN (CONT'D)
You didn't have to worry, Rose. It
was absolutely perfect.

He captchalogues the package and leans down to Casey.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I'll just be out for a bit, okay?
You're the salamander of the house,
so stay here and protect Rose.

He kisses Casey's forehead, grabs the jetpack, and steps out.

EXT. ROSE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John prepares to launch, but Vodka Mutini rubs against his leg right before he jumps. John picks her up in her arms, rubs noses happily.

JOHN

Hey, four eyes, you want to come with? I'm gonna call you...Doctor Meowgon Spengler! Let's leave Rose to sleep, okay?

With the cat safely on his back, John heads off.

INT. ROSE'S DERSE TOWER - NIGHT

Rose wakes up in a strange, purple room. Scrawled "MEOW"s cover the wall behind her. She lies on a pile of knitwear.

ROSE

This is it. I'm dreaming.

She tiptoes to the window.

EXT. DERSE - NIGHT

Rose breathlessly contemplates the huge drop, steps out carefully, and flies to Dave's tower, across from hers.

INT. DAVE'S DERSE TOWER - NIGHT

Dave's dream self sits at a computer inside, sleepwalking. From outside, she throws a ball of yarn into his head.

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

On his computer, Dave's normal self builds Rose's house toward the first portal, with Birdsprite hovering nearby.

JADE (V.O.)

Daaaave. Guess what I have?

DAVE

Hey, awesome!

Jade's cursor hangs in front of him with his pre-punched card. It shows an egg! He reaches for it and falls asleep.

JADE (V.O.)

Um, Dave?

EXT. DERSE - NIGHT

Dave appears at his tower window, face to face with Rose.

DAVE

Rose, it's really you...

She reaches for his hand and leads him outside. They admire Derse, the moon, and the distance to Skaia together.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I never wanted to tell you about my dreams because you'd psychoanalyze everything. The strange glubbing outside our universe, my weird puppet thoughts... but now I understand. It all makes sense.

He looks up. Vast, tentacled horrorterrors swirl through the darkness, barely visible. Rose watches them fondly.

ROSE

It's the horrorterrors. They're real! I always knew it, but until now I couldn't see them, talk with them. To think Oglogoth, Fluthlu and the other are right here, within the Medium!

DAVE

You meant to say Cthulhu, right?

ROSE

Dave, please. Don't be absurd.

(a beat)

Hey, why did you mention puppets?

Dave self-consciously looks back inside; a Lil' Cal in Derse nightwear flashes around. Rose waits until Cal appears on the sill, and snatches it by the neck. She chucks it.

DAVE

What?! Oh, I guess it makes sense. Sleep. Real sleep. I've wanted that for a long, long time.

Tentatively, Rose leans her head on his shoulder. He shifts, uncertain, then accepts it. They fit like long-lost siblings.

ROSE
 You know, Dave, the horrorterrors?
 They talked to me for a long time.
 You don't need to be bothered by
 them, just listen!

DAVE
 I'm never going to be used to their
 garbled, slithery weirdness. So,
 uh, what are you hearing?

ROSE
 (trance-like, blissful)
 Instructions for what to do next.
It's time to wake up.

EXT. LAND OF LIGHT AND RAIN - DAY

John spots Mom's boat at another dock, along with footsteps
 leading into a cavern. He lands carefully, heads inside.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Tons of grist lies on the ground.

JOHN
 Whoa...

At the back of the cave, he finds a transportalizer pad. He
 steps on and disappears.

INT. ASTEROID LAB DECONTAMINATION ROOM - NIGHT

John reappears in a pristine prep area. Nearby, a youth-sized
 mannequin holds a John-sized ectobiology coat. A note: "JE".

JOHN
 No way...

INT. ASTEROID LAB - NIGHT

He enters, wearing the coat. It fits him perfectly!

The cavernous space holds enormous scientific jars with
 carapacian chess creatures in their depths, waiting for
 examination. Knights, pawns, bishops...

An archway bears the name "Skaianet"! Outside a huge window,
 glints of light reveal other facilities in the Veil!

JOHN

What in the hell is going on here?
Skaianet is in the Medium!

He arrives at a cutting-edge appearifier. Next to the screen, four paradox slime jars stand in a line.

Personal items gather: flintlock pistols, John's *Colonel Sassacre* copy, a stylish, yet inky hat...and Maplehoof, along with Doctor Meowgon Spengler. John examines everything.

He runs a finger across the console. Perfectly clean. The screen reads, "BEGIN SEQUENCE?" John cautiously hits "==".

Onscreen, a young Dad walks out of Nanna's family joke shop. He notices a beautiful woman - Mom. They lock eyes.

The speakers come to life:

DAD (V.O.)

Um, hey there, John. Happy thirteenth birthday! I'm recording this message from where you're standing right now...

JOHN

Dad-

DAD (V.O.)

I know this sounds crazy, but please hear me out; I want to tell you an amazing story. Something you should've heard a long time ago.
The story of how you were born.

A meteor blows the joke shop to smithereens!

Young Dad forgets the woman and runs into the wreck. He finds Nanna dead, and a baby riding *Colonel Sassacre* in the ashes.

DAD (V.O.)

Yes, that's you, John! The meteors destroying Earth brought you to me.

The appearifier targets Nanna. John tries to wrap his mind around the idea, skeptical and concerned. A green button blinks at him insistently. He presses it.

INSERT - SCREEN

"PARADOX CLONE CREATED"

A paradox slime version of Nanna appears. It goes in a slime jar as John watches carefully, with deadly premonitions.

The screen targets Mom as another meteor flies overhead. She draws her phone and tracks the second fireball. John's green button lights up again.

John touches it with more hesitation. A Mom clone appears!

A graphic shows the appearifier creating eight babies and placing them on meteors. The meteors go through portals and land on Earth at various years. John begins to face reality.

DAD (V.O.)

John, this machine will create you, your friends, and a few others. You'll be sent to earth as children at different points in time so the cycle can begin again. And if that seems crazy to you, don't panic! I have the smartest woman alive here to help me and I still don't understand it myself.

Onscreen, a third meteor destroyed a Crocker Corporation factory. Grandpa Harley lifts Baby Jade from the rubble, cradling her softly as he climbs out single-handedly.

DAD (V.O.)

This may hurt, John. You may want to blame yourself. But it's not your fault: something is wrong with our universe and it desperately needs to be fixed! As long as you go on, there's hope. The only hope.

John stares at the button.

DAD (V.O.)

Nobody should have to make this decision, it's unfair. But whether by design or accident, you've been chosen. You must exist so our world can eventually be healed.

Through excruciating existential pain, John presses the button. Sweating. A Grandpa Harley clone appears.

Onscreen, the final meteor landed in a bustling city, on a popular record store. A good ol' vinyl rolls past a cool baby lying on a dead horse: Dave and Maplehoof!

A shadow falls over them; Young Bro, kneeling close to Dave.

He veritably PRODS the infant with a finger, but Dave GRABS his hand, astonishingly fast and strong.

Bro jumps in surprise. A smile appears on his face. With some ceremony, he puts anime sunglasses on the baby, miniatures of his own. The baby burbles. Bro chuckles.

BRO

Hey there, my dude. My little Bro.

He holds Dave; kind and tender for one heartbreaking moment.

John can't move, but-

JOHN

No, STOP!

Doctor Meowgon Spengler walks across the green button! The Bro clone appears. At last, a central blue button activates. John picks up the kitten and backs away, shaking his head.

Dad appears onscreen, standing in John's very spot at the console with Mom and Harley.

MOM

You're doing wonderful, John.

HARLEY

M'boy, it is truly an honor. Happy birthday, by the by!

DAD

Son, I know I made mistakes. I was overbearing and worried, and I'm sorry. I want you to know there was never a time when you disappointed me. Ever. I wish I could be there to tell you how proud I am, and that I know you can do anything you put your mind to. I love you, John.

Eyes shut, tears on his cheeks, John presses down.

The appearifier creates four babies: NANNA, HARLEY, LALONDE, BRO.. John presses again: meet BABY JOHN, ROSE, DAVE, JADE!

John GASPS. The eight kids naturally find certain objects: Harley grasps the flintlock pistols, Dave climbs Maplehoof, and so on. Only Baby Jade and Rose remain empty-handed.

JOHN

Oh my gosh.

"How Do I Live Without You" plays in as John takes out both versions of his bunny and gives them to baby Rose and Jade. He hugs them and whispers, harrowed:

JOHN (CONT'D)
I just destroyed the world.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC FROG TEMPLE - DAY

The Mayor scoots closer to PM, nervous. He taps her shoulder.

PM
What?

He hands her the blue package and she sees the note to the Mayor. On the opposite side, a hand-drawn note tells her to go through a hole in the cork facility!

PM (CONT'D)
B-but there's no hole...

AR fires a ROCKET into the facility, creating a hole! PM stares at the card as we visit her past, the kids' present-

CUT TO:

INT. PROSPITIAN CASTLE - DAY

PM makes her way through a golden cathedral to the WHITE QUEEN: as alien and beautiful as her Dersite counterpart. PM bows and brings out the regisword and hit list. She blurts:

PM
Y-your highness, I tracked a green parcel to Derse, but the Archagent Jack Noir told me to kill the white royalty in exchange!

WHITE QUEEN
You must believe this package has great meaning, to visit me...

PM
Yes. I'm certain: that package is important. It was meant for one of the humans! If you give me your crown, just your crown, I may be able to trick the archagent.

WHITE QUEEN
And if you fail? What then?

PM
He will kill me and your crown alone will be lost. But your ring can remain safe!

WHITE QUEEN

Hmm. This troubling request comes in troubling times, young Parcel Mistress. Our army faces certain defeat and now it's clear to me-

The queen rises, towering over PM. The parcel mistress shows fear. Then, the queen removes her crown and her ring! She loses all prototyped traits, but retains great dignity.

WHITE QUEEN (CONT'D)

Our only hope for survival lies in patience, planning, and hearts of courage such as your own.

PM

My queen-!

WHITE QUEEN

I have seen your package in the clouds of Skaia. You are right; it must find its master, but I had to test your conviction. Make haste to the battlefield, find my king, and acquire his crown. See the package delivered; this is your duty.

PM bows deeply, puts the ring carefully in her pocket, and runs to the door.

EXT. PROSPIT STREETS - DAY

PM stands in line for a transport ship with soldiers. The Courtyard Droll follows, dressed as an ambassador! He nicks her ring and runs into an alley, and draws a walkie-talkie.

COURTYARD DROLL

Jack! Come in, Jack! I have the white queen's ring on Prospit-

POW! Jade flies in with an awesome kick. She catches the ring and turns to find PM, but the transport vehicle left. The Droll's comm device crackles-

JACK (O.S.)

Don't worry...I'm already here.

Uh-oh. Jade looks up as a shadow falls. Jack lands on the rooftop above like a demonic gargoyle. He SNARLS.

She flies away. Jack chases.

He moves much faster, but Jade outmaneuvers using her knowledge of Prospit! A few quick turns later and she SLIPS away. Jade flies back up to the moon, into John's tower.

The archagent's ROARS and his ring begins to glow, red.

INT. JOHN'S PROSPIT TOWER - DAY

Jade slams down, grabs John, and shakes him frantically.

JADE
John, you need to wake up NOW!

INT. ASTEROID LAB - NIGHT

John jolts, becoming surprised and drowsy in a moment.

JOHN
Jade? I-I hear you...

INTERCUT BETWEEN JADE AND JOHN

On Prospit, his dream self mumbles sleep-talk. Jade watches flashes of red light and hears SCREAMS.

JADE
You have to truly wake up. Our dream selves are in trouble!

JOHN
I can't, I was never able to!

JADE
Just go to sleep. Let go! It's easy, but we don't have time!

He accepts the gravity of the situation. Closes his eyes.

JOHN
I'm trying, but it's not-

JADE
Listen closely: we have to be honest with ourselves in dreams, so stop holding back! Whatever you're struggling with, let it go! I'm here with you, you're safe.

In the lab, his face screws up. On Prospit, he mumbles things that sound like: "Clowns", "Dad", "Friends", and "Death".

CRUNCH.

Jade pauses, eyes wide. She goes to the window. The chain holding Prospit's moon was chipped.

JOHN
Jade, what was that?

EXT. PROSPIT - DAY

Jack rears back for another go, sword ready to finish the chain. He rushes in and- CRUNCH! The moon breaks loose from Prospit, its momentum sending it hurtling toward Skaia!

INT. JOHN'S PROSPIT TOWER

Jade and John bounce around. She grabs him and pulls him out!

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

The two children fall through space. Above, Prospit's moon hits the atmosphere and begins burning on entry. Jade finds John in midair and grabs him.

JOHN
What's...happening? I feel sick.

JADE
(hyperventilating)
John? John, it's okay! No matter what happens, I'm here for you.

She looks up, wind screaming through her ears: the moon hangs above them, Skaia rushes up below. Last ditch effort: she slaps him. Again and again. He winces, but he's stuck.

They reach critical distance. She hugs him close.

JADE (CONT'D)
You're going to be safe. I promise.

JOHN
Jade? Jade, WAIT!

She gains control and drags John sideways at top speed while dodging shrapnel, then throws him toward safety with all her strength at the last second. She watches him fly clear as jaws of debris close around her.

Everything goes dark.

FADE IN:

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

John wakes up, blue eyes scanning the alien, checkered landscape. He watches Derse and Prospit battle from afar.

He turns around.

An enormous crater, surrounded by mountains of golden rubble, marks the impact zone. He runs over, begins tearing up rocks.

JOHN

Jade? Where are you?! Jade!

INT. DEBRIS PILE - DAY

THROUGH JADE'S VIEW - Jack lands on Skaia: the opening scene! He raises his ringed hand and releases the Red Miles, destructive arcs of crimson lightning.

This time, Jade's breath slows down. The life goes from her.

More light appears. Jade barely catches John's silhouette as everything goes white.

CUT TO:

EXT. FURTHEST RING - NIGHT

Jade collapses to her knees, crying. Tears fall to the floor.

CALLIE

It's okay, Jade. You're alright-

Callie pauses: no way to comfort from behind the curtain!

The fabric moves. One foot tentatively steps out, then the other. Callie (not fully shown yet) moves across to Jade and rests a hand on the other girl's shoulder.

CALLIE (CONT'D)

It's okay. I...I'm here for you.

JADE

Callie, I finally feel whole-

Jade's breath catches. She looks up.

Callie stands there: a head shorter than Jade, white hair, orange horns, wearing a cute, green tuxedo. Nervous, on the edge of fight or flight. Jade stands very, very slowly.

JADE (CONT'D)
Why, you're beautiful!

Callie almost shrinks away.

JADE (CONT'D)
Are you one of the trolls?

CALLIE
(embarrassed)
No, this is just a trollsona. It's a character I created. A mask...

JADE
Well, I think it's wonderful. You didn't need to hide at all!

CALLIE
You wouldn't say that if you really saw me. Underneath, I'm a monster.

Jade puts a hand on Callie's shoulder.

JADE
Callie, I've seen a lot of monsters, too many to count. But trust me, every monster I've met chose to be that way. None of them could've helped me the way you did.

CALLIE
I...helped?

JADE
Yes! You listened to me, let me tell my story. If you weren't there to support me, I couldn't have made it this far. Thank you, Callie.

They take each other's hands, standing together on the edge of the vast darkness, each glad to have a friend. Jade does not take her smiling eyes off of Callie, who's bashful.

CALLIE
So, what happened next? If there's more, I'm ready to listen! And I promise: I'll be right here when you wake up from the past.

JADE

That sounds perfect. But once I'm done, promise you'll tell me your story? I want to know how I ended up in the middle of oblivion with the coolest girl ever!

Callie nods, taking the request with deadly seriousness.

CALLIE

I promise you.

Jade squeezes her hands and they sit down side by side. The stage changes back into Skaia:

CUT TO:

EXT. PROSPITIAN BASE - DAY

The White King shrinks to normal size, handing PM his crown and scepter. PM takes the burden with a deep bow.

Hidden nearby, the Hegemonic Brute watches her from hiding.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

As PM journeys along the edge of a huge cliff, the Hegemonic Brute strikes like a freight train, bowling PM over with his considerable weight. He ROARS, a terrifying bellow.

PM crawls backward. Her arm finds the cliff edge! The scepter falls! She tries to grab it, but it's gone.

The Brute approaches. PM gets angry. When he gets close, she skewers his foot with the regisword and rolls away. The Brute turns and grabs her, holding PM close. His mouth grows huge, and he leans in as if trying to swallow her head.

PM drags her sword out and rams it through his neck. He chokes. She pulls back and swings, decapitating him.

The Brute's body falls over the cliff. PM watches, bloody.

EXT. SKAIAN BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Jack stands over ground zero of his attack, looking at the destruction with grim affirmation, yet no pleasure. He hears footsteps behind him: it's PM, with the white crowns.

PM

I got them. Now where's my package?

It takes Jack a moment to accept reality.

JACK
You came back. You did it.

PM
Package! We had a deal.

He reaches behind his back and brings out the package.

JACK
Keep the crowns. Job well done.

She throws the crowns aside, takes the prize, and stalks away. Jack watches with unconcealed interest.

JACK (CONT'D)
Ma'am, you got a name?

PM
PM will do.

JACK
PM, huh. Funny moniker. Guess what I'm really asking is: who are you?

She pauses, turns slightly.

PM
Just a parcel mistress.

PM feels the breeze with a hand, leaves confidently. Jack watches in awe: he met one person he doesn't want to kill.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

John looks down his friend: crushed, beaten, dead. He doesn't cry, he simply CHOKES; sadness, horror, fear. PM approaches.

PM (O.S.)
Hey. John.
(off his surprise)
Take this. It's yours.

When he continues staring, PM shoves it into his arms and walks away. He calls after.

JOHN
I need help! My friend is dying!
She's...she's dead.

PM sighs. Looks at the battlefield's carnage ahead.

PM

There's no time for the dead now.
If you still have a chance to save
the living...do that first.

INT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dave wakes up, face down on the keyboard. Right next to his elbow: his pre-punched card waits, compliments of Jade.

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dave's alchemiter creates a cruxite egg. He draws a sword, preparing to cut it, but Birdsprite swoops down and carries the egg to a nest of swords, fireworks, and smuppets atop his radio tower! He grits his teeth and begins climbing.

The meteor breaks through the clouds overhead, revealing a starry night. It frames Birdsprite in hellish destruction!

DAVE

I need to break that egg, dammit!

Birdsprite squawks, swoops down, and attacks Dave. One by one, his fingers release.

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - DAY

Rose jolts awake. She rushes to her bed, looks underneath.

ROSE

My diaries. Where are my diaries?!
I have to destroy them, I have to-

Rose spots Casey hiding, the salamander chirps frantically.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Shh, it's okay... Do you have them?

Casey shakes her head, points: a diamond playing card waits on the windowsill where John left Rose's diaries. Rose looks outside and sees the Draconian Dignitary walking to a boat as hundreds of monsters emerge from the ocean, approaching.

EXT. THE MEDIUM - NIGHT

Grandpa Harley pilots an enormous Skaianet ship through the Medium, headed for Skaia. He takes in the grandeur.

Ahead, on a viewing deck, Dad slumps over the railing.

Mom touches his shoulder, softly. Dad stands as she joins him. They hold hands, lending each other emotional support. The two parents watch Skaia approach...

EXT. SKAIA - DA

John opens Jade's package and pulls out a note. Jade reads as he smiles and cries, laughs and weeps.

JADE (V.O.)

Dear John, happy birthday! I hope my present cheers you up, in the clouds you looked so sad while reading the letter! But now that you're awake we can solve our problems together! You can meet my friends on Prospit and we'll fly to all my favorite places and you'll never be alone in your tower again. I still don't know everything that will happen in the future, but I know this: your friendship means the world to me. Thank you for everything! Love, Jade.

John reaches for the box, but a sword appears at his throat.

JACK

I'm gonna need her ring, kid.

JOHN

You're Jack Noir...the Archagent!

Jack expands his wings, impressive and terrifying.

JACK

NO! Not archagent anymore! I've become a manifestation of death, the Sovereign Slayer!

JOHN

Where did you take my Dad?!

He rushes forward, but Jack simply buffets John with his wings. Jack places his sword back through his own chest.

JACK

I released him.

JOHN

Why? You wouldn't just do that.

JACK

Let's just say he did me a favor;
none of this would've been possible
without him. In return, I gave your
father his life.

JOHN

And now you're going to destroy
earth and kill your own people,
everyone? That doesn't make sense!

JACK

Trust me, this universe deserves
everything coming to it. I don't
care how long it takes or how many
bodies I have to pile up, I'm going
to make it suffer.

John readies for a fight.

JOHN

Then I have to stop you.

JACK

You're really going to make me do
this, kid?!

JOHN

I've made my choice. And don't call
me "kid".

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dave holds onto the radio tower for dear life as Birdsprite
keeps attacking! He defends himself and his fingers release.
He falls one rung, yelling!

Dave looks down. His fear warps the view, making the tower
seem to hang over space. His last finger fails. Dave reaches
for anything, finds nothing. He SCREAMS-

Until Bro's rocket board swoops under him! Dave stands,
catching his balance, realizes what saved him.

DAVE

Bro?!

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

Jack's wings extend and slam the air. He rockets forward.
John guards and they collide. The impact unbalances John, but
Jack swings around for take two.

John raises his hammer for a huge strike, but Jack attacks so quickly he's forced to defend again. CLASH! Jack keeps the heat keeps coming, nonstop.

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - DAY

Rose watches the horde and notices her own reflection in the glass pane: a 13-year-old against an army. Poor army.

She grabs her KNITTING NEEDLES and holds them tight.

Rose examines her room: grimoire, cruxite dowels, wizard statues, purple squiddles, and more. This is her house! She came too far, grew too much to fail now. To the side:

ROSE

Hey, salamander. You have a name?

She glances at Casey, self-assured. Her eyes glint **black**.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

Jack punches. John loses his glasses and fights through blurry vision, getting thrashed. Jack stops and kicks the glasses over to John in disgust, watching him scramble.

JACK

Why do I even bother with the likes
of you?

John forces himself to stand. Through cracked glasses, he notices movement in the distance: mom and dad, standing on the opposite side of an enormous chasm!

JOHN

Dad?

Jack smiles, to John's despair.

JACK

Much as I don't want to kill you, I
don't have any qualms about them...

John ROARS, attacking like a man possessed. He swings and dodges, pounds and strikes, gaining speed. Jack CACKLES.

EXT. CHASM EDGE - DAY

Dad gauges the chasm's width: too far to jump! Mom holds him back as he becomes frantic.

DAD

That's John, it's him! What do we do?! We have to help!

MOM

Stop! We can't, Egbert! There's no way to reach him.

(hesitant)

I'm afraid this is John's fight.

Dad reluctantly calms. They watch John battle from afar.

EXT. DAVE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dave looks up at his enormous fireball from the rocketboard.

EXT. METEOR'S SURFACE - NIGHT

Flame swirls aesthetically over the jagged terrain. Bro steps through the blaze, unharmed, with his unbreakable katana in hand. He raises the sword and slices down!

EXT. DAVE'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

The meteor breaks in two over the apartment, leaving the building untouched for seconds longer. In the middle, Bro free-falls to earth. Dave swoops in. They connect.

A moment of silence falls. Dave looks at Bro, finally seeing his humanity, his flaws. Bro makes eye contact and tries to find words, but fails. He can't stand being seen.

The moment dissipates. Hurt, Dave pulls out his sword.

When the meteor halves impact, Birdsprite's nest falls. Dave and Bro dive as the flame boils in. They get closer and closer to the ground, and we-

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

Jack shuts John down. He grabs the Wrinklefucker: SSSSSS! Jack throws the hammer aside and sends John flying end over end with a punch. He approaches.

JACK

Sorry, kid. You never had a chance.

John croaks one phrase to the world, to Skaia:

JOHN
Please, anyone. HELP!

INT. GREEN PRESENT - DAY

His present responds! Electricity crackles. Glowing weapons spring to life. Two eyes - red and green - light up.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

The package EXPLODES! Amidst smoldering remains, the UBER BUNNY (known as LIV TYLER) prepares an arsenal: Ahab's Crosshairs, the Warhammer of Zillyhoo, and more.

Jack's eyes narrow. Liv retrieves the wrinklefucker as John stands. They form up. Jack SNARLS.

JACK
I'm not afraid of some toy!

JOHN
For one, I'm naming it Liv Tyler.
And two, it isn't just any toy...
it was a gift from my friend, Jade.

Jack understands.

JACK
It seems I made a misstep: I
should've killed you first.

Jack wings forward and Liv Tyler fires Ahab's Crosshairs, shooting purple lightning that booms in crackling explosions. Nothing hits Jack as he gets closer and closer...

CRASH, CRASH! He strikes at John and Liv, both of whom defend. As distance opens up, the bunny fires again, holding Jack at bay. The fight goes on!

EXT. LAND OF LIGHT AND RAIN - DAY

Rose dons the Hubtop Band and Velvet Squiddleknit Dress, standing before a tricked-out alchemiter atop her house.

The first group of monsters looks up, surprised, as her shadow elongates and swallows them.

ROSE
Viceroy Bubbles von Salamancer! Are
we ready?

Casey, known as BUBBLES hereon, rolls more cruxite dowels to the machine, wearing a black cloak. She chirps, affirmative!

ROSE (CONT'D)

Then let's dance.

The monsters below rush forward, hunting their prey...

But Rose goes to them! She jumps down like a Spartan warrior and stabs her needles into the eyes of a LIME OGRE. She wraps her yarn around its head, drags it onto the crowd.

Rose leaps off and burns back up the steps, turning CHALK and MARBLE IMPS to grist with pinpoint strikes, weaving chaos.

On the roof, Bubbles works captchalogue cards like a champ. ZAP! She calls loudly and tosses Needlewands: Rose catches them, turns, and annihilates a squad of imps with magic!

A CAULK LICH remains. It roars, a petrifying shriek.

Rose focuses her blast, but the lich pushes ahead, its claws nearly touching her face before it falls to grist. Rose breathes heavily, looks at the needlewands.

ROSE (CONT'D)

We can do better.

She whips out her sylladex. The grimoire proffers itself.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Heads up!

She tosses the captchalogue card. Bubbles picks it out of the air with her tongue and gets working. Rose holds the enemies at bay, but they flank and approach from all directions. The magical effort drains Rose's energy. She holds on!

Bubbles cries as an ogre picks her up with one meaty hand.

ROSE (CONT'D)

No! Bubbles!

ZAP! Two wands, Thorns of Oglogoth, appear on the alchemiter.

Rose breaks for them. She threads through the chaos and dives across the alchemiter, under an ogre's crushing fist. She grabs the Thorns, rolls off the build platform...

And rises above the army, imbued with power. In response, the creatures roar! Winged liches swoop to engage.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Welcome to the party,
motherfuckers.

She looks at the ogre holding Bubbles and lifts one finger. An arc of purple magic blows its head off! Rose battles.

INT. POST-APOCALYPTIC FROG TEMPLE - DAY

AR's RPG destroys a pillar. The Mayor and PM run to safety, and their pumpkin rolls in the open. AR grabs his rifle and checks it through his scope.

The pumpkin's carving depicts Becquerel's head! AR drops his rifle in fear, grabs a rope, and descends.

EXT. POST-APOCALYPTIC FROG TEMPLE - DAY

AR approaches the pumpkin and PM tackles him! When they roll to a stop, she draws her regisword.

AR

I'm unarmed, I'm unarmed!

The Mayor grabs PM's sword arm, so she resorts to shaking AR.

PM

Why were you shooting at us?!

AR

I HAVE to destroy this place, I couldn't let anyone get in the way! I wasn't trying to hurt you, I was only trying to scare you off-

PM

Why? What's so important?! TELL ME!

AR

THAT!

He indicates the pumpkin carving. All three exiles look as we visit AR's past-

CUT TO:

EXT. DERSE - NIGHT

Once again, see Rose throw Lil' Cal from Dave's Derse tower. This time, see Bro's rocketboard catch him! The board cruises down and bumps into AR as he patrols the streets.

AR

Huh? Who owns this?! You just
landed yourself in citation city!

He looks around. The streets are empty. AR turns back and runs a hand over the rocketboard, tentative. It's cool.

EXT. THE VEIL - NIGHT

ZOOM! AR flies away from Derse, weaving through asteroids, and pops stunts something uncannybrutal! He whoops with delight, holding Lil' Cal. Upon spotting a frog temple, he remembers himself and banks down for landing.

INT. PRISTINE FROG TEMPLE - NIGHT

AR scans the interior, wilding a night stick. He hides, spotting the Draconian Dignitary ahead!

AR

One of Jack's agents?!

The dignitary sorts an armful of items: Dave's game copies, John's posters, and Rose's diaries.

AR (CONT'D)

Items from the players...

The dignitary takes Rose's MEOW diary and throws everything else out. Dave's game copies land in a huge lotus at the center of the room. It closes: it's a real time capsule.

The agent walks to an appearifier, which targets a DOG.

ZAP! A doggie paradox clone appears. The Dignitary scans Rose's MEOW diary on a pad and genetic code runs onscreen! The MEOW Code. He presses "=>". The alchemiter fires.

ALCHEMITER

Genetic reconstruction initiated.

DRACONIAN DIGNITARY

It is finished.

A green, glowing blob forms. It becomes puppy-like!

Destructive energy rips the Dignitary apart. PUPPY BECQUEREL forms inside the terrible singularity. The distinctive shape of his head burns itself into AR's memory. He runs.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

Liv Tyler dials in: a beam from Ahab's Crosshairs singes Jack's wing. He booms to a full halt as an explosion touches down just in front. He reverses.

Strategy time: Jack watches the bunny carefully. Liv can't fire when he goes behind John!

Jack swoops around, using John as a shield. The boy tries to move aside for Liv, but Jack maneuvers quickly, approaching at deadly speeds! Last second, John jumps! Liv fires.

Jack expected the trick: he flies up, meets John in midair, and tackles him. They blow through Liv and her weapons scatter. When they roll to a stop, Jack picks John up by the shirt for good measure, and slams the boy into the ground.

JACK

Game over.

He raises his sword for the final blow. John lifts his arm-

The blue wind swirls around John's hand, momentarily forming a shield, which blasts Jack away! John looks at his hand, amazed. Dad and Mom are riveted. Jack's eyes widen.

JOHN

I'm the Heir of Breath...

JACK

He's AWAKENING.

Liv Tyler returns John's hammer and draws a Broken Royal Derringer. They prepare for battle! Jack considers the team, amazed. He puts his sword back in his chest and backs away, giving John a nod of sincere respect.

JACK (CONT'D)

I misjudged you, kid. You might just have a shot at this yet...

His wings open and Jack flies off. John tracks him until he's GONE, then SLUMPS and turns to Dad. Their eyes lock.

EXT. SKAIAN BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Jack drops over a cliff to a river. Below, the Courtyard Droll holds his walkie-talkie next to the crushed and broken body of the Hegemonic Brute.

JACK

What happened here?!

DROLL

He got the job done, but someone
got to him. Some Prospitian.

He points. The white king's scepter lies in the river. Water flows around it. Jack reverently takes the item, admiring the top, a huge gem that looks like Skaia...

Jack ascends to a cliff top and raises the scepter high. The gem glows and Skaia reacts: the ground rumbles, lights flare.

The Reckoning has begun.

EXT. VEIL - NIGHT

AR flies out of the frog facility as it launches toward Skaia. A spirograph portal intercepts as more asteroids join the fusillade!

He gets hit by one and crash lands in another facility...

INT. ASTEROID LAB - NIGHT

AR looks up at Baby Bro, empty-handed and CRYING. Surprised, touched, AR gives him Lil' Cal. Bro is soothed.

AR

There you go, kid-

ZAP! Bro and all the surrounding children disappear. AR spins, wildly confused. The appearifier shows a display of the children leaving, along with: "PRESET COMPLETE".

A countdown appears: 4.13 seconds!

AR notices John sleeping under the appearifier screen. He glances between the boy, the rocketboard, the time. The asteroid LAUNCHES and he drags John onto the rocketboard!

EXT. MEDIUM - NIGHT

John flies to safety, headed for the Land of Wind and Shade, tied down with caution tape. He begins to stir!

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

John feels his chest, breaking eye contact with Dad.

JOHN

I'm waking up!

He begins running toward Dad.

EXT. CHASM EDGE - DAY

Dad watches John, concerned.

DAD
Something's wrong.

EXT. SKAIA - DAY

John breaks into a sprint. He reaches shouting distance.

JOHN
Dad, I'm sorry! About everything!

DAD
No. You did nothing wrong, son!
You've grown so much.

John looks down at his hands: fading like Marty McFly. He reaches the edge of the cliff, with tears on his face.

JOHN
I love you, Dad!

He takes a flying leap across, reaching out to Dad. Their hands nearly touch! Then John disappears.

In his wake, Dad looks shaken, but somehow whole.

DAD
I love you too, son. More than anything.

EXT. LAND OF HEAT AND CLOCKWORK - DAY

Future Dave sits on his perch. He opens a picture on his phone: an 80's poster with glasses and a gear logo badly drawn over the model. In teal: a smiley face and, "IS THIS YOU, COOL K1D?" It looks absurd. Dave LAUGHS.

FUTURE DAVE
Dammit, Terezi, that's golden.

BOOM! A flash of light illuminates the area. Bro, Present Dave, and their apartment appear.

Present Dave sleeps. Bro sets him carefully on the rooftop, and turns around to find-

FUTURE DAVE (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

BRO

I...I can't stay around.

He tries to walk away. Dave blocks his path.

FUTURE DAVE

You're not going to leave him here.

BRO

Why?

FUTURE DAVE

We have no memories of you other than pain- I said STOP!

Bro does. Dave sees true hurt in Bro's eyes. Desperation. It cuts deep; Dave never wanted to see this side of his hero.

BRO

(pleading)

I HAVE to. I've already ruined so much with you. There's no fixing what I've done now, no going back.

Dave shakes his head, trying to hold it all in.

FUTURE DAVE

You don't know that. You don't know that! You're running away because you're scared but if you truly care about making me, about making us strong, you'd man up and become the guardian we deserve. There's time.

BRO

I can't. It's too late.

(last hope)

I have no right to ask, but will you tell him, for me? That I wanted to be there, but...I was too weak?

This brings Future Dave to tears. Bro's hopeful, but-

FUTURE DAVE

No! I swear, if you leave now he'll never know how you felt about us. I'll let his memory sour until he believes you never cared for him at all. Unless you stay. Please. Just for a while, one minute.

BRO
 (a beat)
 Then...then I guess that's how this
 has to be.

Dave is STRUCK TO THE CORE.

But before he can object, Bro HUGS him tight. Bro's ultra-cool facade shatters for one moment.

BRO (CONT'D)
 I won't make excuses, Dave. It
 doesn't matter if I was in pain,
 or...whatever was wrong with me.
 I'm so, so sorry I hurt you.

Then, Bro disappears, gone. Dave weeps.

A soft, orange glow descends around him. Future Dave looks at Birdsprite hovering close. He can't help smiling in the glow.

FUTURE DAVE
 Hey, buddy. Sorry about the sword.
 And the egg. I promise I only
 wanted to help my friends.

He reaches up tenderly, and pets the bird's head. In a flash, they become DAVESPRITE. He looks at DAVE, wipes his tears, and hides all emotion behind the glasses...

DAVESPRITE
 Showtime.

Davesprite shakes Dave awake. He nods, looking fine.

DAVESPRITE.
 Sup.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAND OF LIGHT AND RAIN - DAY

A flash of arcane light and the top of Rose's house explodes. Her first portal breaks and the others above become ashen gray. The monsters below flee the wanton destruction.

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - DAY

Rose enters with Bubbles, softly shuts the door, and blacks out the windows. Jaspersprite naps on her pile of knitwear. Rose laughs softly, and scratches his head.

She opens her computer, visits her GameFAQs page: "Sburb Beta Walkthrough. By: tentacleTherapist". She takes a deep breath.

ROSE (V.O.)

Since you're reading this...chances
are you started playing a game
called SBURB.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NIGHT

John wakes up as his rocketboard crash lands. He tries to right himself, but tumbles to the ground. For a moment, John remains down. Tears don't come.

JOHN (V.O.)

If this is true, like many others
you've participated in bringing
about the end of the world.

John picks himself back up. He takes off his serious business goggles, fogs the lenses with a BREATH, and rubs them clean on his lab coat. Looks at a nearby hill.

INT. LAND OF HEAT AND CLOCKWORK - DAY

Dave alchemizes the Red Plush Puppet Tux, switches to the new outfit, and happily appreciates his fresh suit.

He creates the "SBAHJifier", a camera that prints comics. He takes a selfie with Davesprite and they laugh at the result.

DAVE (V.O.)

But don't beat yourself up about
it: we're all in this together now.

He gets a call from Terezi: "gallowsCalibrator" and looks at Davesprite, who delivers a solid thumbs-up.

EXT. JADE'S ISLAND - NIGHT

Becquerel stands on the Frog Temple, watching an enormous meteor slowly approach from above. The largest yet. He becomes agitated and disappears.

JADE (V.O.)

Besides, there was nothing anyone
could've done to prevent it. The
question now is:

INT. JADE'S TOWER - NIGHT

Jade wakes up in a cold sweat: confused, SCREAMING. Bec appears with a questioning bark and nuzzles under her arm. She hugs him desperately, burying her face in his fur. Cries.

JADE (V.O.)
What will you do?

Nearby, her phone rings: a call from "carcinoGeneticist".

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Rose continues typing as her phone lights up. A call from: "grimAuxiliatrix". She's too busy to notice.

ROSE (V.O.)
 Because, while Sburb is one "slab
 of rock sealing our planet's fate"-

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

- On Skaia, Grandpa Harley lifts Jade's dead dream self. He waves goodbye to Mom and Dad and returns to his warship.

ROSE
 It's also your only hope to live.

- PM, AR, Mayor, and Serenity gather around a cozy fire.

- In the kids' present, PM dresses in a fallen Prospitian flag. It morphs into her post-apocalyptic shroudwear.

- Near the site of the asteroid lab's crash-landing, AR makes new clothes of caution tape.

- On Skaia, the Mayor watches John's bedsheets from Prospit fall from the sky. He makes a cloak and washes his face in a river. A bright glimmer below reveals the White Queen's Ring!

ROSE (CONT'D)
 So, I've detailed our trials in
 this walkthrough and placed it in a
 server outside our universe.

- The White Queen rides a Prospitian Battleship into a portal. It lands in the apocalyptic wasteland, and she leaves on a quest of exile, waving goodbye to her citizens.

ROSE (CONT'D)
 No matter your situation, remember
 these two ground rules:

EXT. LAND OF HEAT AND COGS - DAY

Bro sits on Beats Mesa, a huge, revolving turntable. He draws his katana as Jack Noir lands. They size each other up. Bro frowns. Jack smiles.

ROSE (V.O.)

First, play together. Sburb wasn't meant to be challenged alone.

EXT. LAND OF WIND AND SHADE - NIGHT

Rocketboard under his arm, John ascends the hillside. He gets a troll call from: "arachnidsGrip". He considers the name, smiles, and places it back in his pocket, for now.

ROSE (V.O.)

Second, don't give up. No one can tell me our fate is beyond repair. We've come too far to fail now.

John reaches the top of his little hill. He can see his home, the Denizen's Castle, and everything else in between. He stands over the landscape. This is his world.

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - DAY

Rose types with finality. Bubbles wraps Rose's scarf around his waist. Jaspersprite yawns, stretching. Rose stands.

ROSE

And finally, if it wasn't clear already...magic is real.

She smiles at us and winks. Rose raises her wands and TEARS the screen apart. In the darkness behind, she carves her initials into the Medium's void with magic.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END

TAG

FADE IN:

EXT. FURTHEST RING - NIGHT

Jade finishes and flops back onto the stage.

JADE

That was amazing! I didn't know it could feel so good to let it all out! Callie, I have to say-

As she talks, Callie pushes back to the curtains, calming herself. By the time Jade looks up, darkness has begun to radiate from Callie, across the stage.

JADE (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

Callie looks at her hand: it's clawed, smeared with gray face paint. Her white wig partially pulled back, revealing the defined edge of her skull. Jade becomes unsettled.

CALLIE

Thank you for sharing, Jade. I promised to do so as well once you were finished. I'll uphold my word. But something tells me you're not going to like this as much...

The stage changes to a room divided. A bed shaped like an Egyptian casket stands in the middle. Jade picks up a huge, hand-drawn fang from the ground and a terrible memory comes back. She drops the tooth, looks at Callie.

Callie's lips draw back. Sure enough: two large, green fangs.

JADE

Callie...when you said you were a monster, what did you mean?

Callie's shadowed eyes glint red.

CALLIE

I mentioned my brother, didn't I? While nobody will remember my name, his will likely never be forgotten: they call him LORD ENGLISH.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END