

"D A U N T L E S S"

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DAUNTLESS

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FADE IN:

EXT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER - MORNING (1985)

A humid Florida sky. News vans, school buses, hand-lettered signs.

Families crowd the viewing field, waving flags.

The space shuttle DAUNTLESS waits on the pad - white, perfect, impossibly human.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This is a proud day for America...
the launch of the shuttle
Dauntless-1 marks the dawn of a new
frontier-

Cut to the crew walking out, sunlight flaring off visors.

COMMANDER ELIAS ROOK (40s) - steady, unflappable.

DR. JUNE PARK (30s) - nervous smile masking brilliance.

DR. RAFAEL IBARRA (40s) - the optimist.

CAPTAIN LINDA SHAH (40s) - quiet, devout.

Three more follow, faces full of hope.

Among the crowd: YOUNG MARA VALE (6) on her father's shoulders, transfixed.

INT. MISSION CONTROL - SAME

Banks of monitors. Engineers at consoles. Cigarette smoke.

DIRECTOR HAROLD KINCAID (40s) leans over a mic.

KINCAID

T-minus thirty seconds. Let's make
history.

EXT. LAUNCH PAD - CONTINUOUS

Engines ignite - thunder swallowing the crowd.

The shuttle rises, white flame against blue.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
And we have liftoff of Dauntless—

A burst. A blossom of orange and gray.
Pieces tumble through the sky.

Screams. Gasps. Silence.

On Kincaid's monitor, seven heart-rate lines go flat.

KINCAID
(soft) We lost them.

MONTAGE - NEWS ARCHIVE / 1985

- "Seven astronauts presumed dead."
- Funerals. Folded flags.
- Children's drawings taped to fences.
- A granite memorial unveiled:

THE DAUNTLESS CREW - LOST BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN.

INT. NASA ARCHIVE - NIGHT (2025)

Forty years later.
A janitor buffs a display case holding the Dauntless mission plaque.

Fluorescent lights flicker.

Behind the glass, a woman in a scorched orange flight suit stares back.

JANITOR
Jesus... ma'am, you okay?

DR. JUNE PARK (unchanged) collapses into his arms.

INT. SMALL-TOWN POLICE STATION - ARIZONA - NIGHT

Dash-cam footage rolls. A deputy replays it, stunned.
On screen: a barefoot man in a torn flight suit walking down the highway.

DEPUTY
That badge on his arm... NASA?

The man turns to camera. COMMANDER ROOK.

INT. RURAL CHURCH - MAINE - DAWN

Candlelight flickers. DR. RAFAEL IBARRA kneels before the altar, whispering numbers under his breath.

A priest enters, startled.

PRIEST

Son, you should sit down—

IBARRA

(shakes his head) We never came down.

NEWS MONTAGE - VARIOUS

- "Second Dauntless crew member found alive."
- "Pentagon confirms containment team dispatched."
- Hashtag: #DauntlessMiracle trends worldwide.

INT. NASA HQ - PRESS BRIEFING - DAY

Flashbulbs. Chaos.

COL. NYLA BRECK (40s) stands at the podium, stone-faced.

BRECK

At this time we are verifying identities and medical conditions. All questions of where they've been remain under investigation.

A reporter calls out:

REPORTER

Colonel, are they human?

Breck doesn't answer.

INT. PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS OFFICE - DAY

DR. MARA VALE (38) sits alone reviewing old Dauntless footage on a monitor — the explosion frozen mid-frame.

Knock at the door.

BRECK and KINCAID (now 80s) enter.

KINCAID

You were at the launch, weren't you?

MARA

(front edge of bitterness) Everyone was.

BRECK

You're being reinstated as consultant for containment and psych evaluation.

MARA

Why me?

KINCAID

Because they asked for you.

She freezes.

MARA

They don't know me.

KINCAID

They remember you.

EXT. ELYSIUM FACILITY - NORTH CAROLINA COAST - DUSK

An abandoned NASA complex repurposed for quarantine. Barbed wire. Wind off the Atlantic. Helicopter rotors thump in the fog.

Mara arrives with Breck and a team of armed agents.

They enter a hangar where seven figures lie on gurneys, IVs hooked to them — the crew of Dauntless, alive and unaged.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Through the glass, Mara locks eyes with Rook.
He mouths two words: "Doctor Vale."

Mara turns to Breck.

MARA
He shouldn't know my name.

BRECK
No one told him.

EXT. COASTLINE - NIGHT

Waves crash beneath an orange moon.
Out at sea, a pulse of blue light rises and vanishes beneath
the surface.

FADE OUT.

TITLE CARD: DAUNTLESS

FADE IN:

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - NIGHT (2025)

A row of NEGATIVE-PRESSURE ROOMS. Glass walls. HEPA units
whisper.
Each room holds a DAUNTLESS ASTRONAUT on a cot, IV in arm,
sensors taped to temple.

NURSES move carefully, photographing scorched orange suits,
bagging loose ash, cataloging melted harness buckles.

INSERT - EVIDENCE TRAYS:
- A cracked NASA visor with serial
#DA-1-06-84.
- A mission patch fused into
fabric.
- A Rosary bead chain warped into a
glove cuff.

DR. MARA VALE watches from the corridor, quiet, steady.

Across the glass, COMMANDER ELIAS ROOK sits up. He's alert,
breathing slow, eyes taking in everything. His oxygen harness
dangles, half-melted.

COL. NYLA BRECK arrives with a FORENSIC TECH wheeling a decon cart.

BRECK
Suits stay on until we photograph every square inch. If they want blankets, they get blankets over the suits. No exceptions.

FORENSIC TECH
We'll start particulate collection.

MARA
I want chain-of-custody on every fiber.

BRECK
You'll have it.

Breck clocks Mara's personal intensity, files it away.

INT. ELYSIUM - INTAKE PHOTOG STATION - MOMENTS LATER

A pop-up backdrop. Numbered placards.
Flash. Flash.

DR. JUNE PARK stands for profile and three-quarters, helmet tucked under her arm, mission name charred on her chest.

PHOTOG
Turn a little right.
(beat)
Hold.

Flash.

PARK
You got a brush?

PHOTOG
For...?

PARK
The ash. It's itching my neck.
Forty-year-old itch.

The photog hands over a soft brush. Park lifts her hair; as she brushes, black flakes fall like snow.

She looks at the flakes in her palm. Swallows.

INT. ELYSIUM - BASELINE EXAM ROOM - NIGHT

DR. RAFAEL IBARRA sits on an exam table, flight suit zipper stuck halfway, condensation crusts in seams.
MED TECH draws blood.

MED TECH
You feeling dizzy, Dr. Ibarra?

IBARRA
I feel... the wrong humidity. Like a room that moved two inches.

MED TECH
Two inches?

IBARRA
Never mind.

He glances at a wall clock. It ticks evenly. He frowns anyway.

INT. ELYSIUM - OBSERVATION / INTERVIEW SUITE - LATER NIGHT

A small table. Recorder. Water.
Behind glass: Breck, DIRECTOR HAROLD KINCAID (80s), and a LEGAL COUNSEL observe.

ON THIS SIDE: Mara sits across from Rook.
Rook's DAUNTLESS flight suit is zipped to the sternum, straps blistered, nameplate half-melted: RO-K.

MARA
For the record: Commander Elias Rook. Interview one. Are you in pain?

ROOK
I can feel the suit more than I feel me. The weight of it... won't come off.

MARA
We'll get you out of it once we finish documentation.

ROOK
Not what I meant.

She notes it.

MARA

Do you recall the moment after
launch?

Rook stares at the carafe of water, the way light bends
through it.

ROOK

It wasn't after. It was forever in
a second.

(then)

You were there.

Mara does not move.

MARA

I was six years old.

ROOK

Not there-there. There.

(he taps temple)

We were briefing. You asked me to
say your name so I wouldn't forget.
I didn't.

A beat.

MARA

What do you remember clearly,
Commander?

ROOK

Heat. Then quiet. Everyone shouting
at once, mouths closed.

(chooses words)

We exploded. We left.

(looks up)

And I lived a life I can't prove.

Mara watches him. He waits for ridicule. Doesn't get it.

MARA

What's the first thing you saw when
you came back?

ROOK

Headlights. Asphalt. My breath.

MARA

And now?

ROOK

Everything's half a degree off.

Mara's pen hovers. She writes anyway.

INT. ELYSIUM - INTERVIEW SUITE B - SAME TIME

Dr. June Park. Her visor sits on the table like a skull.
Mara flips on the recorder.

MARA
State your name.

PARK
June Park. Flight engineer,
Dauntless.
(glances to the glass)
Hi, lawyers.

MARA
How are you feeling?

PARK
Hungover from a party I didn't go
to.

MARA
You were found in the NASA museum.

PARK
I was home.

MARA
Where is home?

PARK
I can't say without making it ugly
for both of us.

Mara waits.

PARK (CONT'D)
My daughter. Mae. She's eight.
That's what my mouth says.
(beat)
There's no Mae here. I checked your
databases.

A nerve flickers in her jaw. She puts a gloved hand over the
charred mission patch.

PARK (CONT'D)
Do I get to keep the suit?

MARA

For now.

PARK

I think it's keeping me.

Mara clocks the wording — same as Rook.

INT. ELYSIUM - OBSERVATION - CONTINUOUS

Behind glass, Breck and Kincaid watch the two feeds side-by-side.

KINCAID

They're aligning language and they shouldn't be.

BRECK

Trauma survivors mirror. It's textbook.

KINCAID

Is this textbook?

He sets a small evidence bag on the counter — a bent launch button cover, pitted and scorched.

KINCAID (CONT'D)

They found this welded in Rook's harness webbing. Launch pad hardware. That steel never left the tower.

Breck doesn't blink.

BRECK

You worried about hardware, Director?

KINCAID

I'm worried we didn't just get the crew back.

INT. ELYSIUM - FORENSICS LAB - LATE NIGHT

Microscopes. Mass spec.

A FORENSICS LEAD (50s) briefs Mara and Breck.

FORENSICS LEAD

So far: no radiation outside background. Trace particulates consistent with high-temperature combustion and.. some anomalies.

He slides a report.

INSERT - REPORT: "Isotopic ratio variance in nitrogen bound within polymer residue - 0.3% outside expected terrestrial spread."

MARA

Nitrogen variance in... the suit fabric?

FORENSICS LEAD

In the char fused into the fabric. Like the air that burned with it wasn't precisely ours.

Breck sets the paper down.

BRECK

Keep this inside this room.

FORENSICS LEAD

Yes, ma'am.

INT. ELYSIUM - CORRIDOR - PRE-DAWN

Mara and Kincaid walk. Quiet.

MARA

You signed off on their launch.

KINCAID

I signed off on history.
(then, brittle)
And funerals.

They stop at a memorial wall - a temporary printout taped to glass, listing the seven DAUNTLESS names, the same memorial from '85 reproduced for context.

Mara studies it. One name's spelling catches her eye.

MARA

Linda... Shae? It's "Shah."

KINCAID
It's always been Shah.

MARA
Not on this printout.

Kincaid leans in. The printout reads SHAE. He blinks — and it now reads SHAH.

He looks at Mara. She looks back, unsettled, says nothing.

INT. ELYSIUM - INTERVIEW SUITE C - MORNING

DR. RAFAEL IBARRA. Hands clasped. His suit cuff holds a faint crosshatch melt pattern.

MARA
You were found in a church.

IBARRA
I wasn't looking for God. I was looking for a quiet number.

MARA
A number?

IBARRA
Coordinates.

He recites, eyes closed — deliberate, precise.

IBARRA (CONT'D)
34° 45' 29" N, 76° 40' 52" W.

Mara jots it down.

MARA
That's... coastal.

IBARRA
It's the point where the air changed.

MARA
Changed how?

IBARRA
Less like air. More like... glass that forgives you for walking through it.

He opens his eyes.

IBARRA (CONT'D)
I know how that sounds.

MARA
Like someone who was very afraid
and very brave at the same time.

He almost smiles. Almost.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - DAY

A wall of screens: maps, live vitals, legal updates.
Breck runs point; AGENTS confer; a PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
drafts talking points.

BRECK
We're going to clamp
communications. No phones. No
press. No families.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Country thinks it's a miracle.

BRECK
Country can think in the morning.
Today we contain.

AGENT
Spillover?

BRECK
None yet.

Mara enters with a folder.

MARA
Define "spillover."

BRECK
Rumors. Pilgrims at the gate.
That's all.

Mara slides a printed tweet across the table:
A photo of a DAUNTLESS HELMET lodged in a billboard off I-80,
numbers etched in soot along the rim — the same coordinates
Ibarra gave.

MARA
That's a billboard two states away.
Posted twenty minutes ago.

A beat. Breck recalibrates.

BRECK
Pull it down. Send a team. Quietly.

INT. ELYSIUM - LOCKER BAY - DAY

A temporary PROPERTY ROOM. Racks of evidence bags hang from rolling shelves.
Mara stands with the PROPERTY CLERK.

PROPERTY CLERK
Everything cataloged to suit
serials. No personal effects on
them — just the suits, and two
items fused in fabric: a rosary at
Ibarra's glove... and this.

He hands over a bagged WEDDING RING, the gold warped oval,
inscription SERA 7/19 scraped but legible.

MARA
Which astronaut?

PROPERTY CLERK
Commander Rook.

Mara glances toward the ward. Rook watches the ocean through glass.

INT. ELYSIUM - RADIATION DECON SHOWER - LATER

Steam. The shower nozzles stay OFF.
Rook sits on a bench, suit partially unzipped but not removed. A MED TECH tapes plastic over a melted zipper to keep it stable until photography finishes.

ROOK
How long do we have to keep
dressing for the funeral?

MED TECH
Until the cameras are done.

ROOK
Cameras are never done.

Mara steps in, holding the bagged ring.

MARA
Is this yours?

Rook's breath catches. He stares.

ROOK
Yes.

MARA
Who is Sera?

Rook chooses. Or doesn't.

ROOK
A name I remember with the wrong
mouth.

MARA
She exists here?

ROOK
I don't think so.

MARA
Do you want us to try to find her?

A long beat.

ROOK
No.
(then)
Yes.
(then)
No.

Mara nods. No judgment. She seals the ring back in the bag.

INT. ELYSIUM - CAFETERIA - AFTERNOON

Institutional tables. Vending machines humming.
Mara stands in line behind two GUARDS debating coffee vs.
tea.

GUARD #1
They switched brands. Coffee tastes
like tea now.

GUARD #2
It's always been tea.

Mara looks up at the menu board: "TEA / COFFEE". She blinks.
The order reverses: "COFFEE / TEA."
She looks again. It's normal. Maybe it always was.

She rubs her temple. Doesn't order anything.

INT. ELYSIUM - INTERVIEW SUITE D - LATE AFTERNOON

CAPTAIN LINDA SHAH — still in her charred flight suit, helmet
on her lap. She sits with perfect posture.

MARA
Captain Shah, I'm Dr. Vale.

SHAH
I'm aware.

MARA
How are you feeling?

SHAH
Like someone wrote my name with the
wrong hand.

MARA
We found a memorial printout
earlier with your name misspelled.
It corrected itself.

Shah's face doesn't change.

SHAH
We all die twice. Once when we stop
breathing. Once when they stop
spelling us right.

Mara studies her.

MARA
Tell me what you prayed when you
saw the fire.

SHAH
I didn't pray. I counted.

MARA
Counted what?

SHAH

The pieces we broke into. And which
ones might still be us.

INT. ELYSIUM - MEDICAL OBS - SUNSET

The ward windows look out to ocean.
Rook stands there, gloved hand on glass.
Park sits on her cot, examining the char seam on her left
sleeve, the tan line under it.
Ibarra writes numbers on a paper cup with a felt-tip marker.

Mara moves among them, unseen, a quiet steward.

Kincaid appears at her shoulder.

KINCAID

You're calmer than I expected.

MARA

I don't talk when I'm choosing.

KINCAID

Choosing what?

MARA

Who they are to me. Patients, or...
something else.

KINCAID

Ghosts?

MARA

A word for what we can't classify
yet.

Kincaid looks at the suits. All of them. 1985 still breathing
in 2025.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - TWILIGHT

Breck speaks to a DHS VIDEO WALL - pixelated suits in D.C.

BRECK

-We maintain full control. Medical
anomalies are minimal. We
anticipate transfer to long-term
containment by end of week.

Mara enters, sets a folder on the table: PRINTED PHOTOS of the billboard helmet, the coordinates, the isotopic variance report, the menu board timestamped two different ways.

MARA

End of week is ambitious.

BRECK

We don't have the luxury of ambiguity.

MARA

We don't have the option of pretending this is normal.

Breck dismisses the call.

BRECK

Walk me through your concern. Briefly.

MARA

(beat, measured)

Subtle discrepancies aligned to the astronauts' statements. Small things. Spelling. Menu order. A helmet appearing where a coordinate said it would.

(then)

If the suits are anchors, removing them might not fix anything.

BRECK

You think the suits are doing this?

MARA

I think the suits are the part of 1985 that refuses to let go. And the crew... might be the part that can't.

Breck stares at her. Then:

BRECK

No phones. No internet. No names released. We cut the oxygen to their story and watch it asphyxiate.

MARA

Stories don't asphyxiate. They adapt.

EXT. ELYSIUM - PERIMETER FENCE - NIGHT

Floodlights hum. The ocean beyond is black glass.

A SECURITY PATROL walks the fence line.
They pass a sign: Elysium Research Annex.
The patrol rounds a corner and stops.

An OLD METAL DOOR is set into the perimeter wall where no door used to be — ancient paint, NASA stencil faded: B-12.

The guards exchange a look.

GUARD #1
Has that always—

GUARD #2
Call it in.

They approach. The door is locked and rusted. A spiderweb stretches from handle to jamb, unbroken.

On the other side of the fence — the sea exhales.

INT. ELYSIUM - MARA'S TEMP OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

Lamp glow. Case files. A Polaroid of Young Mara at the launch, sun in her eyes.

Mara pins INDEX CARDS on a corkboard: ROOK / PARK / IBARRA / SHAH / (others).
Coordinates. The ring. The isotopic report. A printout: B-12?

She tacks the wedding ring photo next to ROOK.
Tacks "MAE?" next to PARK.
Circles 34°45'29"N / 76°40'52"W.

Her phone buzzes with a PRIVATE NUMBER. She doesn't answer.

She exhales. The building's ventilation sighs in reply.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - SAME

Rook sits awake, staring at the bagged ring on his bedside table.
Park fingers the tan line under her charred sleeve.
Ibarra writes the coordinates again. And again. Each time, his handwriting is perfectly identical.

A LOW HUM (mechanical, plausibly HVAC) rolls through the building.

INSERT - WALL CLOCK: The second hand ticks, hesitates, catches up.

No one remarks on it. No jump scare. Just a feeling.

EXT. ELYSIUM - PERIMETER - CONTINUOUS

Two AGENTS and a FACILITIES ENGINEER study the B-12 door.

ENGINEER
Blueprints don't show this. Not in '85, not after.

AGENT
Could be a maintenance alcove they walled off.

ENGINEER
Then the wall forgot.

He taps the door. Solid. Ancient.
Scrapes at rust with a flathead. The rust falls in fresh flakes.

INT. ELYSIUM - OBSERVATION ROOM - PRE-DAWN

Mara finds Kincaid alone, watching the sleeping astronauts on monitors.

The sea is a gray smear beyond the glass.

MARA
Why did you come back to this?

KINCAID
Because if the universe gives you a second chance to answer for something, you show up.

He stares at Rook on the screen.

KINCAID (CONT'D)
We cut a corner on a booster seal. Everyone cut corners in '85. We called it optimism.

MARA

And now?

KINCAID

And now I call things what they
are.

He gestures at the monitors.

KINCAID (CONT'D)

This isn't a miracle. It's
continuation with consequences.

Mara absorbs it. Looks at the clock. 4:03 A.M.

MARA

Get some sleep, Director.

KINCAID

At my age, that's a rounding error.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - DAWN

Pale light. Gulls. The facility crouches on the shore like a
held breath.

Out at sea, nothing dramatic — just a distant buoy that
wasn't there yesterday.
Or maybe it always was.

Waves fold and unfold. The day begins.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - MORNING

Gray water under a pale sky. The distant buoy bobs.

INT. ELYSIUM - PERIMETER CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

The B-12 DOOR. Rusted, ancient.
FACILITIES ENGINEER, AGENT TEAM, MARA, BRECK, KINCAID.

The engineer runs a GEIGER WAND along the jamb. Barely a
tick. He switches to a NONCONTACT VOLT METER—gets a faint
beep.

ENGINEER

Minimal residuals. There's power
somewhere past the wall.

BRECK

How?

ENGINEER

Blueprints say there's nothing to
power.

KINCAID

We should not be doing this without
a plan.

BRECK

This is the plan.

She nods. The agent PRIES the lock. Metal SCREAMS.
The door GIVES with a WOODEN CREAK that shouldn't come from
steel.

A breath. Then—

BRECK (CONT'D)

Masks on. Small footprint. Vale,
you're with me.

Mara pulls a mask anyway. Kincaid watches, jaw tight.

They SWING THE DOOR.

INT. B-12 - CONTINUOUS

A STORAGE CHAMBER no bigger than a classroom.
Everything is 1980s NASA—but new. Dustless.
Racks of sealed EQUIPMENT CASES, stamped:

DAUNTLESS - MISSION SUPPORT
PROPERTY OF NASA - DO NOT REMOVE

An EMERGENCY EYEWASH station. A WALL PHONE (rotary).
A FLUORESCENT FIXTURE hums overhead with a sound slightly
off-pitch.

On a side wall: a WHITEBOARD with four names in dry-erase:

- ROOK

- PARK
- IBARRA
- VALE

Beneath: "BRIEF - 0900"

Mara stares at her name. Breck clocks it, unreadable.

BRECK

Photograph everything. No touching.

An agent raises his phone. CLICK. CLICK.
Another moves to the PHONE—puts a gloved finger near the receiver. STATIC nips. He pulls back.

Mara steps to a CASE labeled "COUNTERMEASURE KIT (KALPA)".
She points. Breck shakes a no.

BRECK (CONT'D)

Not until I get a go from D.C.

ENGINEER

Power feed's coming from... I don't
know. The line runs into the wall
and stops existing.

Kincaid edges to the board, squints at the dry-erase.
The ink looks wet.

KINCAID

Who wrote this?

No one answers.

BRECK

Seal it, for now.

Reluctant, Mara backs away from her name.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - LATER

Screens: live vitals of astronauts (all normal), an overhead
of B-12 on loop, supply requests.

LEGAL COUNSEL whispers to BRECK.

MARA flips through B-12 photos. KINCAID watches.

LEGAL COUNSEL

If B-12 didn't exist yesterday,
then it's contraband today.

BRECK

It exists now. We assert custody.

KINCAID
You can't assert custody over a
time error.

BRECK
Watch me.

She taps a new order into a tablet.

BRECK (CONT'D)
We transfer the crew to federal
custody at 0600 tomorrow.

Mara looks up, sharp.

MARA
They're not stable.

BRECK
Med says otherwise.

MARA
I didn't say medically.

KINCAID
Moving them could change variables
we don't understand.

BRECK
Keeping them here changes variables
I can't control.

The PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER peeks in, nervous.

PAO
Gate's getting.. visitors.

BRECK
Pilgrims?

PAO
A woman claiming to be June Park's
daughter. Says her name is Mae.

A beat. Mara and Kincaid exchange a look.

BRECK
Turn her away. Politely.

MARA
Let me talk to her.

BRECK
Absolutely not.

MARA

If she's delusional, I'll know. If
she isn't—
(chooses words)
—we can't afford to mishandle it.

Breck weighs it. Hates it.

BRECK

Five minutes. No cameras. No
promises.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE - DAY

A chain-link approach. Protestors; gawkers; cell phones up.
Agents hold them back.

At the front: MAE (28) — steady eyes, everyday clothes, old
Polaroids clutched white-knuckle.

Mara steps out with an AGENT.

MARA

I'm Dr. Vale.

MAE

I know.
(then)
I'm not here for a spectacle.

She offers a POLAROID: a kitchen table, a little girl (Mae,
age 8) holding a paper rocket. A woman's hand reaches into
frame—calloused, grease under nail beds.

MAE (CONT'D)

She taught me how to fix a
carburetor standing on milk crates.
She can take apart a toaster with a
butter knife and a prayer. She hums
when she thinks. Badly.

Mara studies Mae's face—equal parts hopeful and braced.

MARA

If you're lying, this won't go
well.

MAE

If I'm lying, I wish I was better
at it.

Mara nods to the agent, who produces a saliva swab.

MARA
Open, please.

Mae complies without performance. Swab, bag, seal.

MAE
If I'm right... tell her the pancake
mix is behind the cereal, not in
front. She'll argue. She's wrong.

Mara can't help a ghost of a smile.

MARA
Stay by your car. We'll be in
touch.

MAE
I'll be here.

INT. ELYSIUM - LAB - LATER

LAB TECH runs the rapid kinship panel.
Mara and Breck stand over the monitor.

LAB TECH
This is a preliminary screen. Full
profile takes longer.

Bars load on the screen: HETEROZYGOUS MATCHES spike.

LAB TECH (CONT'D)
Half-match. Parent-child
probability is—
(checks)
—96.8%.

Breck sets her jaw. Mara's face doesn't show victory—just the
gravity.

BRECK
Don't say it out loud.

MARA
You asked me to look for delusions.

BRECK
I asked you to keep variables out.

MARA
That's not a variable. That's
blood.

Breck looks at the printout. It faintly ripples—a screen artifact, maybe. She blinks. It's normal.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - AFTERNOON

Through glass: JUNE PARK sits on her cot, helmet beside her, tracing the char seam on her sleeve.

Mara enters the anteroom, picks up the intercom.

MARA
June... someone's here claiming to be
your daughter.

Park doesn't move. Then:

PARK
That's not how sentences should
sound.

MARA
We ran a partial. It... supports her
claim.

Park's throat works. She looks at the helmet, the tan line, the empty space where a ring would be.

PARK
What's her name?

MARA
Mae.

Park closes her eyes. The sound she makes is small and private.

PARK
I can smell pancake batter.

MARA
I can't authorize a meeting yet.

PARK
I'm not asking to. I'm asking you
to hold her where she won't see me
like this.

Mara nods. That, she can do.

INT. ELYSIUM - SECURITY HUB - EVENING

Banks of CCTV FEEDS.

SECURITY CHIEF scrolls back footage from earlier.

SECURITY CHIEF

We've got a timestamp problem.

On-screen: the B-12 entry from this morning.

TIME STAMP: 09:07:14.

He switches to a hallway cam covering the same moment from another angle.

TIME STAMP: 08:59:02.

SECURITY CHIEF (CONT'D)

Two clocks. Same NTP server. Eight minutes discrepancy. Both swear they're right.

Breck watches, expression flattening into something close to anger at the universe.

BRECK

Flag every camera. If a clock drifts by more than a second, I want it off the network.

SECURITY CHIEF

That's... all of them.

INT. ELYSIUM - MAIN HANGAR - DUSK

An old NASA MURAL spans a wall: stylized shuttle arcs, seven gold stars for the DAUNTLESS crew.

Custodial lights flick on.

Mara crosses the hangar with Kincaid. She stops, mid-step.

The mural now shows EIGHT stars.

MARA

How many stars were there?

KINCAID

Seven.

They stand under it. Quiet. The paint looks like it's always been eight.

KINCAID (CONT'D)

Don't give it power.

MARA

It has power.

She steps closer. The stars align over silhouetted faces—artist renderings of the crew, idealized. At the end of the row is a NEW FACE—subtle, recent brushwork—clean lines mimicking the older style.

It's Mara.

Kincaid sees it as she does. He goes pale.

KINCAID

That wasn't—

MARA

No.

They stand there, the hum of the hangar a low, indifferent ocean.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

Breck reviews a TRANSFER MANIFEST on a tablet. Agents gear up in the background. The PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER deletes a scheduled tweet.

Mara enters, still carrying the mural in her eyes.

MARA

You can't move them tomorrow.

BRECK

Watch me.

MARA

A room that didn't exist asked me to brief at nine. Your clocks disagree about whether I did. A woman outside has half her mother's DNA from a pregnancy that didn't happen here.

(MORE)

MARA (CONT'D)
And a wall just promoted me to
something I never was.

Breck doesn't look up.

MARA (CONT'D)
You can put this on a truck, but
you won't be moving it.

Breck finally raises her eyes.

BRECK
Doctor Vale... are you asking me for
faith?

MARA
I'm asking you for error bars.

A long beat.

BRECK
You have until 0500 to convince me.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - LATE NIGHT

Rook is awake, watching the ocean through the window.
Park sits, hands clasped, flight suit still on.
Ibarra sleeps, felt-tip fallen from his gloved hand. The
paper cup beside him shows the coordinates, over and over,
identical.

Mara walks the hall, stops between rooms, a shepherd with no
flock yet.

Her gaze lands on her reflection in the glass, aligning with
Rook's face beyond. For a breath, they share one silhouette.
She steps back. It separates.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - SAME

The buoy bobs.
Far out, lights from a trawler drag a line across the black.

A LOW ROLL of thunder that isn't thunder. Or maybe it is.

INT. ELYSIUM - MARA'S TEMP OFFICE - DAWN (BLEEDING INTO 0500)

Corkboard. Files. The photo of Young Mara at launch. Mara prints the kinship result, camera time drift logs, B-12 photos, a shot of the mural with eight stars. She loads them into a thin binder:

"TRANSFER RISK - PRELIM"

She exhales. Stares at the binder like it might stare back.

Her phone buzzes: PRIVATE NUMBER. She answers.

Silence. Then a man's voice, roughened:

ROOK (V.O.)
You asked me to say your name so I
wouldn't forget. I didn't.

Click. Tone.

Mara stands, binder in hand.

EXT. ELYSIUM - HANGAR - DAWN

First light.
Agents assemble for transfer.
Breck waits, reading the wind.

Mara approaches with the binder.

Kincaid lingers in the background, eyes on the mural-eight stars catching dawn.

Mara stops in front of Breck.

MARA
If we move them, we stop measuring
and start improvising. And improv
kills astronauts.

A long, thin moment.

Breck opens the binder. Pages flip, dead white.
She looks past Mara at the ward.

BRECK
You have until sunrise. After that,
we move.

MARA
Sunrise happened two minutes ago on
half your cameras.

Breck closes the binder.

BRECK
Then you're two minutes late.

They lock eyes. Neither blinks.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. ELYSIUM - MOTOR COURT / LOADING BAY - PRE-DAWN (05:05)

Armored TRANSPORT VANS idle. Exhaust ghosts in the cold.
AGENTS check rifles, MEDICAL CRATES stacked and labeled.
A TEMP SENSOR on a tripod reads 58.2°F. A second, two feet
away, reads 58.2°F—then flips to 57.9°F, then back.

AGENT (to another)
Your watch say five-oh-five?

OTHER AGENT
Yeah. Why?

AGENT
Mine says five-oh-seven.

They compare: both read 05:05.

Across the bay doors, a DIGITAL WALL CLOCK reads 05:05:58...
59... 05:05:60... 05:06:00.

No one remarks. Too much else to do.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - SAME

Rook stands in his scorched DAUNTLESS suit, hood unzipped,
oxygen harness dangling. His eyes are on the window — the
ocean beyond.

MARA (O.S.)
Commander?

He turns. Mara, clipboard in hand.

ROOK
The air is... skinnier.

MARA
Skinnier?

ROOK
Like it's lost a pound and forgot
to tell us.

He taps his ribs lightly, measuring his own breath.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE / VISITORS LOT - SAME

MAE sits in her car, hands on the wheel, eyes red but clear.
Through a break in barricades, the ward windows glint.

She swallows. Steps out. Walks a few feet.
A GUARD lifts a hand.

GUARD
Ma'am, please—

Mae takes one more step and stops. She can see June Park in
the glass, a small figure in orange.

Inside, Park looks up in the exact same second.

Mae and Park lock eyes across distance, glass, fences.

Both women sway—

GUARD (CONT'D)
Ma'am?

Mae's knees buckle.

Inside, Park collapses onto her cot.

ALARM TONES in the ward.

INT. ELYSIUM - MEDICAL STATION - SECONDS LATER

Monitors spike. PARK HR: 148 → 170 → 148, oscillating.
A NURSE slaps a BP cuff on. IBARRA jerks awake, looks around,
breath fogging his visor.

MARA bursts in.

MARA
What happened?

NURSE
She dropped like a switch. Heart
rate synced to—
(checks another screen)
—something else.

MARA
To who?

The nurse points at a SECURITY CAM FEED of the gate — MAE, on her knees, paramedics catching her. Her heart rate on the paramedic monitor matches Park's to the beat.

MARA (CONT'D)
Keep them apart. Don't let them out
of each other's sightlines.

NURSE
That's... contradictory.

MARA
So's today.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 CORRIDOR - 05:12

A low HUM vibrates the air. FACILITIES ENGINEER jogs up with a FLUKE METER.

The B-12 DOOR is shut, sealed with evidence tape.

The engineer touches the metal: warm.

He peels a corner of tape, slips the meter lead to the frame. The readout: 58V ghost. He frowns.

ENGINEER
(to radio) We've got a phantom feed
on B-12. Requesting Breck.

BRECK (V.O., RADIO)
On my way. No one opens that door.

The HUM edges up half a pitch, almost musical.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - 05:16

BRECK strides in, KINCAID already at a terminal.
A LIVE POWER DIAGRAM shows a branch lit up that doesn't exist
on the blueprint.

KINCAID
Grid shows a draw we can't account
for.

BRECK
Shut it down.

KINCAID
I'd love to. It's not on a switch I
have a name for.

A DIGITAL CLOCK on the wall rolls to 05:17:00 and FREEZES.

BRECK
What—

Phones buzz. Radios chirp and then double-voices overlap a
fraction behind themselves.

AGENT (RADIO, OVERLAP)
—all units— all units— hold— hold—

BRECK
Kill the PA. Kill it.

PA TECH slaps MUTE. The PA keeps whispering the echo of
Breck's last words: "Kill it—kill it—kill it—"

Then quiet.

EXT. ELYSIUM - MOTOR COURT / LOADING BAY - CONTINUOUS (05:17
FROZEN)

AGENTS steady themselves. The DIGITAL DASH CLOCKS in the
vans: 05:17.

ANALOG WRISTWATCHES—sweep smoothly: 05:18... :19... :20...

AGENT #1
You seeing this?

AGENT #2
We're jammed?

AGENT #1
Time's jammed.

A THERMO-HYGROMETER flips between 58% RH and 58% RH, as if it can't decide to change or not.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - CONTINUOUS

PARK and MAE (split-screen feeds) ride the same sinusoid-heart rates up/down in step.
Mara slides into the anteroom mic.

MARA

June. You're okay. Stay seated.
Breathe.

Park focuses on the sound of Mara's voice, counts breaths.

Her monitor starts to de-couple from Mae's by half a beat... then a full beat.

NURSE

They're slipping out of sync.

MARA

Good. Keep counting, June.

Park's eyes wet, stubborn.

PARK

Two... three... four...

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 - 05:19 (DIGITAL FREEZE)

Camera peeks through a crack. Inside, the "COUNTERMEASURE KIT (KALPA)" case VIBRATES lightly, a green pilot LED flickers. The ROTARY PHONE on the wall rings once. The sound is muted, like heard through water. It stops.

Fine dust lifts a millimeter off surfaces, suspends, settles.

INT. ELYSIUM - ANALYTICAL LAB - 05:20

KINCAID and MARA lean over a PORTABLE MASS SPEC and a GAS SAMPLE MANIFOLD.

Kincaid taps a screen: Air sample - outdoor baseline (yesterday) vs indoor (now).

KINCAID
We replicated the earlier anomaly.
 $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ is shifting.

MARA
By how much?

He overlays plots. +0.3% since last reading.

KINCAID
Inside the fence only.

MARA
Open gates?

KINCAID
Air doesn't respect fences. Unless...

They both look toward B-12 on the monitor—its power trace now stable. The hum fades a hair.

The DIGITAL CLOCK on the wall still reads 05:17:00.

Mara checks her ANALOG WATCH: 05:23.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - 05:24 (DIGITAL STILL 05:17)

BRECK stands before her team.
She taps the PA from her console. Speaks deliberately.

BRECK
All units— proceed to— hold
transfer at— staging alpha.

Her voice comes twice over the building:
— "All units proceed to staging alpha."
— "All units hold transfer."

They overlap, out of phase, like two takes of the same command mixed wrong.

AGENT (RADIO)
Ma'am— do we proceed or hold?

Breck hears her own echo shiver.

She reaches and UNPLUGS the PA mic. The second voice finishes the sentence without her and stops.

Everyone looks at her. She is ice.

BRECK

We hold.

EXT. ELYSIUM - MOTOR COURT - 05:25 (DIGITAL STILL 05:17)

Engines idle. The TRANSFERS wait.

A SEAGULL lands on the hood of a van, cocks its head. It looks like the wrong species for this coast. Maybe not. It flaps off.

AGENT #2 notices the buoy out beyond the breakers.

AGENT #2

Was that buoy closer?

He blinks. The buoy is where it is.

INT. ELYSIUM - OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME

PARK sits upright, sweating, breathing evenly.

PARK HR stabilizes. MAE HR (on gate-cam) stabilizes.

Mara sets the intercom down. Exhales.

KINCAID (O.S.)

You buy eight minutes?

She turns. Kincaid holds out a PRINTED LOG—a time server drift table.

KINCAID (CONT'D)

Every digital system we own lost eight minutes. Every analog kept it.

MARA

It isn't lost. It's... set aside.

KINCAID

For what?

Mara looks toward B-12 on a monitor. The little green LED still winks.

MARA

For someone else to use.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE - 05:29

Mae, sitting on her bumper now, sips water from a paper cup with trembling hands. A PARAMEDIC takes her pulse.

PARAMEDIC

Back to normal. You on any meds?

MAE

Just pancakes.

He smiles despite himself. Walks off.

Mae looks at the facility windows. She can't see Park anymore. She wipes her eyes with the heel of her hand.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 CORRIDOR - 05:31

Breck, Mara, Kincaid, the engineer.

Breck gestures—cut the tape. The engineer peels it carefully, opens the door a sliver.

Inside is quiet. The COUNTERMEASURE KIT sits still, LED off. The phone is dead.

The whiteboard now reads: "BRIEF - 0900 (HOLD)" in the same hand.

BRECK

I didn't authorize anyone in here.

ENGINEER

Neither did the wall.

Kincaid stares at the word "HOLD." Breck resists reading it as an order.

BRECK

Photograph and reseal.

Mara lingers. The dry-erase ink glistens—fresh.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - 05:34

Wind picks up. The buoy rocks harder.

A FISHERMAN on a distant pier (outside the fence) checks his line, frowns toward shore.

The ocean pulls back with an odd evenness, like a breath in.
Not violent—measured.

WET SAND gleams where water was.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - 05:36

A TIDE GRAPH updates on a coastal app. Numbers don't match
the live cam.

AGENT (pointing)

We're at low tide plus thirty. Camera says minus ten.

BRECK

Is that possible?

KINCAID

Tides don't improvise.

The DIGITAL CLOCK on the wall JUMPS to 05:26:01. Everyone
startles despite themselves.

BRECK

We're back?

KINCAID

Or we skipped.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - 05:38 (DIGITAL 05:28)

More of the seabed reveals—smooth, rippled sand, half-buried
detritus.

Agents and a COASTAL TECH jog down the access stairs, radios
up.

COASTAL TECH

We don't do this. Not without a
storm.

A dark curve extrudes from the sand as water retreats.

AGENT

What is that?

They wade calf-deep. Brush sand aside.

A HULL PLATE emerges, the size of a dinner table. White
enamel under the muck.

One agent scrubs with a glove, revealing a crisp blue NASA worm logo and letters:

DAUNTLESS

The paint is unblistered. Uncorroded.
It looks like it was painted yesterday.

AGENT (into radio)
We've got debris- correction- we've got a plate- looks fresh.

BRECK (V.O., RADIO)
Fresh how?

AGENT
Like they just rolled it out of the
factory.

The ocean STILLs-as if deciding what to do.

INT. ELYSIUM - OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME

Rook stands at the window, staring at the exposed sand.
He places his gloved palm on the glass.

ROOK
(to himself)
We didn't explode.

Mara moves beside him, watching the plate.

MARA
What did you do?

Rook doesn't answer. His jaw tightens with something like
shame.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - CONTINUOUS

The water holds at the unnatural low for a long, quiet ten
seconds.

Then, with the gentlest of motions, the ocean returns,
covering the plate like a hand closing.

The last thing visible: DAUNTLESS.
Then gone.

COASTAL TECH looks at his tide meter: it insists nothing unusual happened.

He looks at the sea. Decides what to believe.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - 05:45

Breck stares at a LIVE FEED of the shore, expression unreadable.

Kincaid prints the latest atmospheric plot— $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ drifts another 0.1%.

KINCAID
It's still moving.

BRECK
Transfer is canceled.

Heads turn. Mara looks at her, surprised to hear it from Breck.

BRECK (CONT'D)
For today.
(to PA Tech)
Draft me language: "out of an abundance of caution, the Department is pausing relocation."
No numbers. No details.

PA TECH
Yes, ma'am.

Breck turns to Mara.

BRECK
You wanted error bars. You have a day's worth.

MARA
Thank you.

BRECK
Don't thank me. Use them.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 - MINUTES LATER

Mara slips inside as FORENSICS finish photos. Alone now, she stands before the whiteboard.

She uncaps a dry-erase.
Writes under BRIEF - 0900 (HOLD):

"WHO WROTE THIS?"

She waits. The marker squeaks in the quiet.

A faint tapping—two taps—three—somewhere in the walls. Could be pipes. Could be rats. Could be the building breathing.

She caps the pen. Leaves.

REVEAL: After she goes, a faint, almost invisible ghosting under her letters—like the board once read "YOU DID."
Blink, and it's clean again.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE - LATE MORNING

Mae sits in a folding chair now, wrapped in a blanket provided by a KIND AGENT who pretends not to care.
He sets a paper bag on her lap.

KIND AGENT
Kitchen sent pancakes. Don't make
me tell them you refused.

Mae almost laughs. She opens the bag. Steam curls.

Across the lot, Park is a small orange shape behind glass.
Mae doesn't look that way. She eats. Eyes closed.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - SAME

Park watches Mae not look at her. The restraint breaks her in the right way.

She whispers to herself, a mantra only she knows:

PARK
Behind the cereal. Not in front.

She breathes. The char seam on her sleeve almost seems shallower. Almost.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - NOON

Sun higher. Normal tourists far down-shore, oblivious.

The sea seems itself again.
The buoy tolls once. Ordinary.

HOLD on the horizon.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. ELYSIUM - CONFERENCE ROOM A - AFTERNOON

A bland government room re-purposed for history.
One long table. HEART MONITOR LEADS snake from chairs to a portable telemetry cart.
A BIO-TECH tapes a sensor to ROOK's neck — over his charred DAUNTLESS suit. PARK, IBARRA, SHAH, and the remaining THREE ASTRONAUTS (WEBB, OSEI, TRAN) sit, IV ports capped, gloved hands folded.

BRECK stands with arms crossed; KINCAID lurks near the door.
MARA places a recorder on the table.

MARA

For the record: supervised group
contact granted at 1400 hours. No
physical contact beyond table
distance. No discussion of escape,
self-harm, or operational sabotage.

Rook nods, formal.

ROOK

Thank you.

He looks around at his crew — the weight of command and apology in one glance.

PARK

So this is... what, the Dead
Astronauts—

ROOK

—Club. If it helps. If it doesn't,
we drop it.

BRECK

Names don't help.

MARA
Names help people be people.

Breck doesn't answer. Mara gestures: begin.

ROOK
We've each been telling our pieces.
Let's lay out the overlaps.
(looks to all)
What phrase do you all remember?

They hesitate, then – one by one:

SHAH
"The brief at oh-nine-hundred."

IBARRA
Same.

WEBB
Same.

OSEI
Same.

TRAN
"Brief at 0900."

PARK
(quiet)
"Brief at 0900."

Mara clocks it. Breck doesn't blink.

MARA
What is that brief?

ROOK
It's the one where we don't
explode.

Silence. The monitors capture seven steady rhythms.

IBARRA
I remember a room that looks like
your B-whatever. Whiteboard. Our
names.

PARK
Mine and... hers.

She flicks her eyes to Mara. Mara keeps her breathing even.

MARA

Do any of you remember me being
present in 1985?

A long beat. No one answers. Then:

ROOK

Not in 1985. In the... other place.
After.

MARA

Doing what?

ROOK

Briefing us to come home.

Breck cuts in.

BRECK

"Home" means here?

ROOK

"Home" means the place we can't
prove.

A sliver of a smile from Park.

PARK

Sounds like here.

MARA

Okay. Let's map the commonalities
that don't require belief. Smells.
Temperatures. Angles. Numbers.
Start small.

SHAH

The air was dry like it had edges.

IBARRA

Breath tasted like... new plastic?
But colder.

OSEI

Shadows were too exact. Like lights
without dust.

WEBB

Gravity felt... considerate. But
firm.

TRAN

There was music sometimes. Not
music — a tone. Like a building
humming with a reason.

Mara writes. Kincaid studies the list, horrified by how
testable it sounds.

KINCAID

What did you do there?

ROOK

We waited. We trained. We learned
how not to pull.

MARA

Pull what?

ROOK

The parts of us that want.

That lands.

PARK

Bad news: want wins.

IBARRA

Present company included.

They share a quiet, bitter warmth. Crew again, in the
smallest possible way.

MARA

What happens at the brief?

ROOK

We don't remember the content. Just
that we were on time.

SHAH

And that we were told: "Hold until
sign."

BRECK

Hold what?

SHAH

The urge.

MARA

To replace?

Shah looks at her. Doesn't confirm. Doesn't deny.

The telemetry cart shows seven heart rates aligning, not identical — like tuning instruments.

Mara notices first.

MARA (CONT'D)
Breathe normally, everyone.

They do. The lines settle. A low mechanical HUM from somewhere in the building answers — not louder, just there.

Breck clocks it. Says nothing.

INT. ELYSIUM - LAB - HOURS LATER

LAB TECH hands Mara a sealed envelope.
Breck and Kincaid stand by.

LAB TECH
Full profile. No caveats.

Mara opens. Reads. Looks to Breck.

MARA
Ninety-nine point nine. Mae is
June's daughter.

Breck inhales through her nose, like pain.

BRECK
On paper?

MARA
On blood.

BRECK
Paper can be burned. Blood can't.

She turns to Kincaid.

BRECK (CONT'D)
We're not telling the press. We're
not telling anyone.

KINCAID
She'll know it anyway.

BRECK
Good. Then we won't have to say it.

INT. ELYSIUM - SECURITY CAM ROOM - EVENING

Rows of feeds. A YOUNG ANALYST scrubs 1985 LAUNCH FOOTAGE for a side-by-side.

On a monitor: the Dauntless crew walkout, visors gleaming.

The analyst freezes a frame - a reflection in Shah's visor: a small figure at the crowd rail. A little girl on her father's shoulders.

He zooms. Enhances. The blur resolves just enough: YOUNG MARA.

ANALYST

Uh... Doctor Vale?

Mara steps in, studies the reflection - a child's face, eyes up, the same tilt as the Polaroid on her desk.

MARA

That's a public feed. I was on the field, like a thousand kids.

ANALYST

Right, but-

(zooms one frame ahead)

-she... blinks wrong.

On the next frame, the blink closes from bottom to top.

Mara stares. The monitor flickers. The blink is ordinary again. She chooses not to react.

MARA

Archive it. Don't annotate.

ANALYST

Yes, ma'am.

INT. ELYSIUM - HALL OUTSIDE WARD - TWILIGHT

Mara meets Park at the glass. Park's jaw works with held-back motion.

PARK

Is she-

MARA

Yes.

Park nods once. Pressure equalizes in her face.

PARK
I'm not going to ask you for
anything you'll say no to.

MARA
What would you ask?

PARK
Can I see her without breaking the
world?

Mara considers. There's no procedural path. There's only
triage.

MARA
Stay inside the glass. She stays
outside the fence. Line of sight
only. Five minutes.
(then)
And if you feel anything—
(makes a fist)
—pull back.

Park smiles, fragile and grateful and doomed.

PARK
Want loses?

MARA
Today, it compromises.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE - DUSK

Mae stands where she stood.
Across the distance, through two panes and a fence, PARK
appears in the ward window, framed by fluorescent light,
scorched suit still on.

They see each other. No sound.

Mae lifts a hand. Park mirrors.
Their hands never meet — fifty feet of air between — but the
gesture lands like a touch.

A beat of tight breaths... then both women exhale.
The telemetry in Park's room shows a gentle deceleration.
The paramedic by Mae's side watches her pulse drop to normal.

Five minutes.

Mara watches the clock. Ends it with a small nod.

Mae lowers her hand. Park lowers hers.

MAE
(half-laugh, to herself)
Behind the cereal.

Park's lips shape the same words.

They walk away in opposite directions. Neither breaks down where the other can see.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 - NIGHT

Door sealed. Darkness.
CLICK — the COUNTERMEASURE KIT LED winks ON.
A faint fan spins to life inside the case.
The rotary phone ticks once. Doesn't ring.

In the dust on the floor, a new set of footprints — the same boot tread as the Dauntless suits — appear one after another, lightly impressed, crossing to the whiteboard.

CUT TO:

INT. ELYSIUM - CONFERENCE ROOM A - SAME

The astronauts sit again, by request.
Mara sits at the head. Breck lingers at the back, pretending she's not invested. Kincaid watches the telemetry.

ROOK
We practiced for this. Not here,
but close enough.

MARA
For what?

ROOK
For not taking what isn't ours,
even if it has our name on it.

WEBB
Said like a commandment.

ROOK
It was.

MARA

Who gave you the commandments?

He looks at her.

ROOK

You did.

A long silence fills the room. There's no good place to put that sentence.

MARA

Okay. Then listen to me now.

(beat)

We're not moving you today. The building isn't stable in the ways I need stability. You're going to help me keep it from getting worse.

SHAH

How?

MARA

We're going to look at the parts of you that want and negotiate with them like grown-ups.

A laugh from Ibarra, despite himself.

IBARRA

I liked you better when you were a myth.

MARA

Myth pays better.

They chuckle. The telemetry levels.

MARA (CONT'D)

Close your eyes. Listen for anything that isn't the HVAC. When you hear it, don't follow. Just point to it in your head and label it.

They obey. Seven sets of eyes close.

The building HUM rises a fraction — that same single tone TRAN mentioned.

Monitors show heart rates drifting toward a common cadence — not identical, resonant.

MARA (CONT'D)

Open your eyes.

They do. The tone recedes.

On the telemetry, seven rhythms hover near each other, like birds drafting.

BRECK (low, to Kincaid)
They're syncing.

KINCAID
They're conducting.

INT. ELYSIUM - SECURITY CAM ROOM - SAME

The Young Analyst watches B-12 on a maintenance cam.
He leans in.

On the whiteboard, under BRIEF - 0900 (HOLD) and WHO WROTE THIS?, faint wet letters appear on their own, one by one:

"STAND BY."

The analyst swallows. Rewinds. Plays forward. The letters are simply there. No pen. No hand.

He reaches for the intercom.

Stops.
Rewinds.
Saves a clip to a LOCAL DRIVE titled "NOT CRAZY."

INT. ELYSIUM - ARCHIVE NOOK - LATER NIGHT

Mara alone. She plays the 1985 footage again.
Shuttle walkout. Visors gleam. She freezes on Shah's visor.

REFLECTION: A child on shoulders. A blink.
Mara raises a hand to the screen, fingers just off the glass, tracing the child's outline - herself. The monitor's static skitters across her fingernails.

KINCAID (O.S.)
Do you need me to say the thing
that makes you feel less alone?

She doesn't turn.

MARA
There isn't one.

Kincaid sits on a nearby stool.

KINCAID

Then here's the other thing.

(beat)

You're not the reason this is happening.

She lets the sentence hover. Doesn't accept it. Doesn't reject it.

MARA

I have to operate like I am, or I stop being useful.

KINCAID

Useful is the only superstition I have left.

INT. ELYSIUM - CONFERENCE ROOM A - LATE NIGHT

The astronauts are quieter now.

They sip water. They sit with their want like adults.

PARK

I want a kitchen that fits in a closet. I want five minutes of bad pancake jokes. I want to keep my suit because I hate it. Because it hates me.

IBARRA

I want one more phone call. I won't make it.

SHAH

I want a number to count toward. I'll count to zero.

WEBB

I want to be right. I'll be polite instead.

OSEI

I want proof. I'll take calm.

TRAN

I want this to end. I'll accept it continuing.

ROOK
I want to be forgiven.
(then)
I'll be accountable.

Mara nods to each, a quiet liturgy. The telemetry shows seven lines closest yet.

A low HUM builds — the same tone, now audible in the room. The paper cups on the table tremble a hair. The fluorescents dim a fraction. The portable telemetry recalibrates and finds them again.

MARA
Keep breathing. Don't chase it.
Label it.

ALL (soft, various)
Tone. Hum. Building. Not me.

The hum eases... levels... holds.

MARA (CONT'D)
Open your eyes.

They do.

TELEMETRY MONITOR - CLOSE: Seven heart rates in phase for a full, impossible ten seconds.

The HUM settles into something like a steady A. Somewhere in the walls, a relay clicks.

In B-12, unseen, the COUNTERMEASURE KIT's LED flips from green to a soft white.

Back in the room, Rook looks at Mara. Not triumphant — relieved and terrified by control.

ROOK
There. That's the brief.

MARA
Good. Then we'll meet it.

BRECK watches from the door — not in control, not out of it, trying on trust like a uniform that doesn't quite fit.

Kincaid exhales for the first time all day.

HOLD on the seven faces — charred suits, unaged eyes, the smallest possible community forming around a table that used to belong to science.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - NIGHT

A low chorus of machines. BRECK fields a secure call on speaker; MARA and KINCAID listen.

WASHINGTON VOICE (FILTERED)
—Risk profile unacceptable. You're
authorized for sterilization if
containment degrades.

Mara goes still.

BRECK
Define "sterilization."

Silence. The definition doesn't come.

WASHINGTON VOICE
You have operational discretion.

CLICK. The line dies.

KINCAID
They'll call it mercy later.

Breck's jaw squares. She doesn't look at Mara.

BRECK
We are not degraded. Not yet.

INT. ELYSIUM - LAB - LATER

A portable spectrum analyzer samples air. KINCAID points to a trending graph.

KINCAID
Another 0.1% drift in $\delta^{15}\text{N}$. It's
easing... not reversing.

MARA
Like it's landing.

KINCAID
Or holding—like your board says.

Mara clocks the time. 08:31.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The B-12 door vibrates with a low, steady tone. An evidence seal trembles.

ENGINEER
We're reading acoustic energy... not
electrical. Room's a speaker.

He touches the jamb. His fingernail buzzes.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - SAME

ROOK, PARK, IBARRA, SHAH, WEBB, OSEI, TRAN stand in their charred DAUNTLESS flight suits—gloved, wired to portable telemetry.

Mara faces them.

MARA
We stay measurable. If you feel a
pull—name it. Don't follow.

They nod: trained.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE - SAME

MAE waits, blanket over shoulders, KIND AGENT nearby pretending not to watch her breathe.

Mae stares at the ward windows. Doesn't try to see more than she's allowed.

She whispers to herself:

MAE
Behind the cereal.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - SAME

Breck stares at the sterilization binder. She closes it.
Locks it in a drawer. Keeps the key.

BRECK
(to herself)
Not today.

She keys the PA.

BRECK (INTO PA) (CONT'D)
All units- stand by. Repeat: stand
by.

Her voice does not double. Just one order.

INT. ELYSIUM - CONFERENCE ROOM A - 08:52

The astronauts take their seats around the roundtable. The
telemetry cart comes online: SEVEN HR TRACKS.
The hum is present, like a building taking a deep breath and
holding it.

MARA
This is the brief. 0900. We arrive
early.

Rook glances at the bagged ring on the cart shelf. He doesn't
touch it.

ROOK
We're here.

MARA
Close your eyes. Label the urge.
Choose the smaller thing.

Eyes close.

PARK
I want to open a door.
(soft)
Want.

IBARRA
I want to answer a phone.
Want.

SHAH

I want to count to a better number.
Want.

WEBB

I want proof.
Want.

OSEI

I want to make the big speech.
Want.

TRAN

I want to disappear.
Want.

ROOK

I want forgiveness.
(beat)
Want.

The hum levels to a single note. The telemetry tightens—seven
rhythms approaching phase.

MARA

Now the smaller thing.

Beat.

PARK

Five minutes where she's okay
without me.

IBARRA

A silence where no one's asking.

SHAH

Zero.

WEBB

Courtesy.

OSEI

Calm.

TRAN

Continuing.

ROOK

Accountability.

MARA

Hold those. Breathe.

INT. ELYSIUM - SECURITY CAM ROOM - 08:57

The YOUNG ANALYST watches B-12 on a grainy cam.
On the whiteboard: BRIEF - 0900 (HOLD) / WHO WROTE THIS? /
STAND BY.

Another phrase slowly appears, as if ink were condensing out
of air:

"IF PULLED, LET GO."

The analyst hits record.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 - 08:58

A soft white LED glows on the COUNTERMEASURE KIT. A relay
clicks inside the case. A rotary phone on the wall rings once
—much louder—then falls quiet.

The tone matches the building's hum.

INT. ELYSIUM - CONFERENCE ROOM A - 08:59

Mara opens her eyes, checks the analog watch on the table:
08:59:27.

MARA

Open.

They open their eyes. The room hasn't changed—angle has.
Corners feel truer. Shadows snap to sharper edges.

The telemetry locks: SEVEN HR TRACES in phase.

MARA (CONT'D)

On my mark, do nothing.

The hum swells one notch.

MARA (CONT'D)

Mark.

0900.

Silence.

No flash. No tear. Just the sound—the building's one note holding, like a string bowed perfectly in tune.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 - SAME MOMENT (0900)

The COUNTERMEASURE case unlatches on its own with a gentle pop.
Inside: a compact coil around a glass torus, tiny diaphragms fluttering.

The whiteboard ink beads—as if the air were denser.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - SAME (0900)

The ocean surface goes matte for a breath—wind present, waves present, yet a thin sheen of order runs across it, like oil that isn't oil. Then gone.

On the sand, a crisp footprint appears next to an older, wind-softened one. Same tread as the DAUNTLESS boots.

INT. ELYSIUM - CONFERENCE ROOM A - 0900:10

The hum steadies.
The astronauts don't move. Their breathing is a choir of small decisions.

Mara glances at the door.

Breck stands there. For once not commanding—witnessing.

KINCAID looks like a man who's seeing an airline of numbers form a sentence.

ROOK
(whisper, to Mara)
If we let go— what keeps us?

MARA
Each other, if you'll let that be enough.

He nods like a confession.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - 0901

A printer rattles. Atmospheric log: $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ trend levels.
Time-server drift graph stops migrating.
Outside tide matches chart with a neat, boring line.

PA TECH stares at the data, blinks at the normal.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 - 0902

The COUNTERMEASURE coil glows a bare gold. Not bright-warm.

On the whiteboard, new letters purl:

"THANK YOU."

The rotary dial spins half a number and stops.

INT. ELYSIUM - CONFERENCE ROOM A - 0903

Mara's eyes shine and don't spill. She takes a small breath,
then:

MARA

Okay. Label what remains.

PARK

Want.

(smiles)

Smaller.

IBARRA

Silence.

(smaller smile)

Enough.

SHAH

Zero.

(soft)

Held.

WEBB

Courtesy.

OSEI

Calm.

TRAN
Continuing.

ROOK
Accountability.

The hum softens — from note to room tone.

The telemetry eases apart, not collapsing—resting.

MARA
You did it.

No one cheers. It isn't that kind of victory.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE - SAME

Mae's breath settles without her knowing why.
She looks up at the ward window.

Park is there, hand raised a centimeter.
Mae doesn't wave. She nods, like promises mean more if you
don't say them out loud.

INT. ELYSIUM - SITUATION ROOM - LATER

Breck stares at the sterilization drawer. She takes out the
key, closes her fist around it, and puts it back on her
chain.

She turns to Mara.

BRECK
I'll take the heat. You take the
notes.

MARA
I already did.

They exchange the smallest smile two adversaries can share.

INT. ELYSIUM - B-12 - LATE MORNING

Mara, Kincaid, Breck, the FORENSICS LEAD circle the opened
COUNTERMEASURE.

No moving parts now. Ambient as a candle after prayer.

FORENSICS LEAD

If I had to call it anything, I'd
call it a phase damper. It absorbs...
pull.

KINCAID

Not a portal. A brake.

He touches the glass torus with a cotton swab. The cotton
leaves a whisper of frost.

BRECK

So it runs cold.

FORENSICS LEAD

It rests cold.

Mara looks at the whiteboard.

The words remain: BRIEF - 0900 (HOLD) / WHO WROTE THIS? /
STAND BY / IF PULLED, LET GO / THANK YOU.

She uncaps a pen. Adds one line:

"CONTINUE."

She caps the pen.

INT. ELYSIUM - ISOLATION WARD - AFTERNOON

The astronauts sit unmoved in their suits, blankets over
shoulders now.

A nurse replaces IV bags.

The telemetry cart shows ordinary vitals.

Rook eyes the bagged ring again. He gestures. Mara brings it,
still sealed.

ROOK

If you... found her—

MARA

I didn't look.

He nods.

She waits.

He hands the bag back.

ROOK

Keep it here, where I can not wear
it.

MARA

Copy.

He smiles, ashamed and unashamed.

Across the room, Park sits straighter, tension emptied but
want intact. That's how she'll carry it.

IBARRA dozes— the first honest sleep since he arrived.

SHAH counts under her breath— quiet zeroes.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COASTLINE - SUNSET

The water is itself.

The buoy tolls like a church bell shrugged into a wave.

A FISHERMAN farther downshore pulls in an old float enameled
white, stamped — under algae — with a faint worm NASA logo.
He turns it in his hands, shrugs, tosses it in his bucket
like any other junk worth repainting.

INT. ELYSIUM - PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - NEXT DAY

No cameras. Just PA STAFF drafting language.
Breck dictates to the PAO.

BRECK

"Out of an abundance of caution,
the Department is pausing
relocation of the Dauntless
personnel to allow for continued
medical evaluation. There is no
evidence of environmental risk to
the public."

She pauses. Looks at Mara.

BRECK (CONT'D)

Add: "We recognize the historical
gravity of this moment."

The PAO types. Looks relieved to type something human.

INT. ELYSIUM - ARCHIVE NOOK - DAY

Mara at a government terminal. She types a report:

"DAUNTLESS - POST-EVENT BRIEF / D. VALE (UNCLASSIFIED SUMMARY)"

On-screen she writes:

WE OBSERVED CONTINUATION RATHER THAN INTRUSION. THE ANOMALY APPEARS TO CONCENTRATE AROUND DECISIONS (WHAT THE SUBJECTS CALL "WANT"). AT 0900, SYNCHRONIZED RESTRAINT PRODUCED MEASURABLE STABILIZATION ACROSS CLOCKS, ATMOSPHERE, AND TIDE READINGS. WE BELIEVE B-12 FUNCTIONS AS A PHASE DAMPER, NOT A DOORWAY. WE RECOMMEND LIMITED EXPOSURE, MEASURED CONTACT, AND NO NARRATIVE BEYOND WHAT IS NECESSARY TO KEEP PEOPLE GENTLE WITH EACH OTHER.

She stops. Adds one more line:

WE DIDN'T FIX ANYTHING. WE CHOSE IT.

She saves. Prints a sanitized version. Closes the rest in an encrypted folder.

EXT. ELYSIUM - GATEHOUSE - DAY

Mae signs a non-disclosure she doesn't read.
Breck hands her a number that is not Breck's and will reach Mara.

BRECK
Once a week. Five minutes. Through glass. If either of you fall apart, we stop.

Mae nods, grateful and furious in a manageable way.

MAE
Behind the cereal.

Breck doesn't ask.

EXT. ELYSIUM - COURTYARD (INSIDE) - DUSK (WEEKS LATER)

A picnic table under dead ivy.
The seven astronauts sit with tea and coffee in paper cups
(the kiosk now sells both, with no order preference on the
menu).

MARA joins them. She doesn't sit. She stands like a physician
taking a pulse by being near a wrist.

WEBB

We meeting at nine forever?

MARA

You can meet whenever you want.
Nine's just... polite to the
building.

They almost laugh.

IBARRA

What do we call this now?

ROOK

We don't.

PARK

Or we do and it doesn't matter.

A gull lands, the right species this time, or close enough
that no one argues.

They drink. No toasts.

EXT. FEDERAL ANNEX - MONTHS LATER (EPILOGUE)

A warehouse by an anonymous river.
Crates labeled EVIDENCE - ELYSIUM.
A forklift sets a sealed case on a shelf: B-12 /
COUNTERMEASURE KIT.

The LED inside the case is dark.
As the forklift beeps away, the case hears its own echo. The
LED thinks about blinking. Doesn't.

EXT. CAPE MOURNING - BOARDWALK - EVENING (EPILOGUE)

Tourists with funnel cakes. A lighthouse out on the point.

A family reads the placard:

"CAPE MOURNING LIGHT - EST. 1902 / KEEPERS: ..."

A new line has been added, honest brass:

"IN HONOR OF THOSE WHO STOOD WATCH FOR WHAT WE COULD NOT SEE."

No one knows when that line got there. It doesn't matter. It belongs.

EXT. SMALL DINER - NIGHT (EPILOGUE)

A parking lot by the water. Neon hums.

Inside, in a back booth, MARA, ROOK, PARK, IBARRA, SHAH, WEBB, OSEI, TRAN sit once a month. No press. No monitors. Flight suits traded for gray sweats and loaner jackets; each keeps a stitched patch in a pocket like a stone.

They talk less than they listen. Veterans of a thing most people will never have to carry.

A waitress sets down coffee and tea without asking which is which. Not because she knows—because both are fine.

Mara looks out the window.

The sea holds two horizons for the length of a blink—one half a degree above the other—then they align as if they always were.

A hum in the diner—refrigerator, neon, human breath—finds a single note and lets it go.

MARA smiles the smallest measurable amount.

FADE OUT.

TITLE: DAUNTLESS

END