

A GUARDED RECLUSE ATTEMPTS TO ESCAPE HER LIFE BY LAUNCHING INTO SPACE ... VIA HER COMPUTER.

[SCENES OMITTED]

INT./EXT. ROCKET SHIP/EARTH'S ORBIT

Hester jumps awake with a huge inhale. She is inside the circular window with BLACKNESS all around.

She looks down frantically at her controls, and can be heard pressing SWITCHES and BUTTONS. The BEEPING stops. She scans the dials gravely.

HESTER
Boosters disengaged. All systems to
internal power. Currently orbiting...
(in disbelief)
...Earth.

She turns to the LEFT. The EARTH, massive and glowing, fades in from the blackness. Hester stares out her window in awe.

HESTER (cont'd)
Everyone. Everything. From all the
way up here. I could cry it's so
beautiful...

Hester turns to the RIGHT and dark, infinite SPACE appears. On the LEFT, the Earth has faded away.

HESTER (cont'd)
Nothing. Like a warm dark blanket.
Mm.

PURE SILENCE as Hester stares out, looking as though she might weep.

Then, a RINGTONE chiming. An obnoxious FACETIME NOTIFICATION pops up: "CALL FROM MOM." She quickly declines.

HESTER (cont'd)
Quiet now. Listen.

She's absorbed back into the SILENCE. Then, a RINGTONE: Mom again. She groans and clicks "ACCEPT."

INT./EXT. DESKTOP - FACETIME CALL - DAY

Hester's circular window in space returns to the ordinary Facetime interface in her bedroom. MOM is grappling with her camera.

HESTER

Hi, Mom.

Mom puts on her glasses and squints at the screen.

MOM

For Goodness sake, would it kill you
to open a window in there?

Hester looks to her right, and for a moment, the SILENCE of
space returns. She looks back.

HESTER

Yes.

MOM

You haven't called.

HESTER

Yeah I know. I've been busy.

MOM

It's half past two and you're still
in pajamas. You don't look busy.

HESTER

Sorry.

MOM

You said it wouldn't be like this
anymore. You said that you'd take
care of yourself. Have you even
finished unpacking?

HESTER

I know. I'm awful.

MOM

Stop being ridiculous.
(brightening up)
Now how is Houston doing? Has he
started at the new job yet?

HESTER

I don't know...he's fine. Look Mom, I
gotta go. Can we talk later?

MOM

Where?

HESTER

What?

MOM

You said you have to go. Where do you have to go?

A long pause.

HESTER

You know that the Universe is expanding?

MOM

Okay?

HESTER

Well it doesn't make any sense...The Universe is everything and since the very beginning, it's been growing and getting further apart. But, what has it been expanding into?

MOM

Hester, tell me what's going on. Something's wrong.

HESTER

Hmm. What I mean is... What's outside, on the edge, of... everything?

(a beat)

That's um, that's where I'm going.

She hangs up. She is breathing hard and quick, looking around frantically. She's panicking.

Then she forces herself to slow her breathing. She closes her eyes and takes several deep breaths. Her Facetime window conforms back into a circle.

INT./EXT. ROCKET SHIP/EARTH'S ORBIT

Hester opens her eyes, and is relieved to be back in space. She looks to her LEFT: the Earth is further now.

HESTER

All I need... is a little space.

(yelling at Earth)

IS THAT SO MUCH TO ASK FOR?

Hester looks down and A WINDOW POPS UP beneath her: a CLOSE UP of a THROTTLE. It's somewhere between Scifi movie and children's toy.

HESTER (cont'd)

Huh.

She places her hand on the handle and pushes all the way up to "HYPER SPEED." A beat, then: ZIP! Her window shoots through space and shrinks into the distance.

INT./EXT. ROCKET SHIP/SPACE

In several WINDOWS, dark space dotted with stars is streaming past. Hester watches passively, slightly bored.

PURE SILENCE here: the VOICE MEMO is at a flat line. Hester clicks "RECORD" but struggles to vocalize, as if she hasn't spoken in ages.

HESTER

Eh- uh mm- ck-ck-Captain's. Log. I will admit, the quiet is starting to get to me. And out here it can be hard to get a signal.

Hester presses a BUTTON. A little window pops up below her: a WIFI ICON, flashing red on ONE BAR. She looks down at it for a moment, thinking very deeply.

HESTER (cont'd)

Oh. We'll have to make a stop then.

She looks down at her controls in a daze.

HESTER (cont'd)

Prepare the landing gear.

The WINDOWS fill with static. The ship begins to RATTLE as Hester grips her seat.

CUT TO BLACK.

The sound of FOOTSTEPS.

EXT. PURPLE PLANET - MOUNTAIN - DAY

Hester is climbing up a mountain:

In ONE WINDOW: her face in profile, bobbing up and down, out of breath. She's wearing a plastic face-shield like a space helmet.

In OTHER WINDOWS: vignettes of a strange planet scrolling along. Trees and dirt and rocks manipulated and re-colored, barely recognizable as Earth.

Hester stops hiking and faces forward. She comes close to the webcam and clicks VOICE MEMOS.

HESTER
Special Relativity is pretty
depressing.

She turns, and starts hiking again.

HESTER (cont'd)
Let's say you give birth to twins:
Joey and Jaime. You take little baby
Jaime, put him on a rocket ship, and
send him into space. Meanwhile, Joey
stays home and gets old, living out
his life without ever realizing he
has a twin brother. So right as Joey
lies on his deathbed, Jaime finally
returns back to Earth. But here's the
kicker: after hurling through space
at such rapid speeds, he's still just
an infant. Maybe he's aged a few
hours. By the time Jaime is ready to
begin living, a lifetime has passed
him by on Earth.

She reaches the top of the mountain and faces forward. The WIFI ICON bumps up to THREE BARS and turns GREEN. A series of "MISSED CALL" notifications roll in, several from Houston and Mom.

HESTER (cont'd)
If Einstein was right, I've missed an
awful lot.

A vast purple landscape unfolds below her. Like an ocean or a desert in otherworldly colors.

Hester OPENS FACETIME and calls "MOM." Mom's face appears hovering in the sky, large and pixelated.

HESTER (cont'd)
(voice cracking)
Mom? Hello?

MOM
Hester? Can you hear me?

Mom is glitching and freezing.

HESTER

Yes Mom, I can. Can you hear me?

MOM

Hester?

HESTER

Hello? Mom?

MOM

Honey, you're all static.

HESTER

Mom! I- I don't know what to do.

MOM

(suddenly clear, and
very stern)

Hester. Stop it. I can't hear you.
(a beat)

Do you remember you used to hide
under the kitchen table when you got
upset? You would stop talking and
eating and I never knew what to do...
to make you come back. Hester, you're
all grown-up now. So what do you want
from me? When you're ready to stop
this nonsense, I'm here. Waiting.
Goodbye.

HESTER

No! Mom, please don't-

The call ends. Hester's head droops down. She remains this
way for awhile, with her face obscured.

HESTER (cont'd)

(to herself, low)

She...she left me. All alone here.

She brings her head up.

HESTER (cont'd)

Prepare for lift-off.

EXT./INT. DEEP SPACE/ROCKET SHIP

The CAMERA TILTS DOWN from black, revealing a spare array of
glimmering stars. TILTING FURTHER, there are clumps of red
and blue and green PIXELS, jumping about.

Hester looks out her window. She begins building speed: her body and head are pulled against the back of the seat.

The WIFI ICON is blinking rapidly and BEEPING, then it explodes in a little burst of smoke. Hester's body is paralyzed. All she can do is watch.

Space begins to break apart into fast-moving abstractions. Colorful dots and hairs and textures in rapid loops.

Hester's face in bright freeze frames. In pain and fear and wonder, all at once.

A magenta nebula, just like the default wallpaper on Mac. Then, more cosmic screensavers. Rainbow tendrils circling and flowing.

Hester's eye ball, very close and wide open. She blinks.

EXT. THE EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE

A plane of shimmering chrome just like the back of a DVD. A tiny circle of Hester's face in the center. She looks around, like: "*is this it?*"

Then she rummages below and takes out a paper and pen. In a POP-UP WINDOW, her hand is writing.

THE CAMERA ZOOMS-IN to her face.

HESTER

Dear Mom. If I know anything it's that I deserve nothing. I would apologize...for being a bad daughter, a bad friend, a bad girlfriend... but I know I'd mess that up too. I thought that I could fix it by leaving. But even here, at the Edge of the Universe, I am taking up too much space. I know I don't deserve anything, but Mom, I'm so scared. I've gone really really far this time. And I'm not sure I know my way back.

(a beat)

I love you. I love everything.

Now Hester fills the screen. She rolls up the letter and inserts it into a GLASS BOTTLE. Then she holds out her hand and drops the bottle out the window.

The bottle is falling down the chrome plane.

EXT. SPACE

The bottle is spiraling through stars and galaxies. The MUSIC, a ballet, builds.

EXT. DESKTOP - SPACE

Now space becomes the hand-drawn WALLPAPER again. The bottle is floating, passing by folders and files. Past the LAUNCHPAD, and VOICE MEMOS, and FACETIME icons.

The bottle reaches the corner of the screen, then disappears past the edge.

THE END.