

SPACED OUT

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COLD OPEN

EXT. MARS - DAY

Barren Martian landscape. Whitesnake's *Here I Go Again* swells as we see a HABITAT. A STEELERS FLAG hangs by the door. A YOUNG MAN speaks. This is PETER GIBBONS (22, confident, blue-collar everyman, bright like a young John Krasinski).

PETER (O.S.)

I love Mars. Sure, the average temperature is eighty below, but whatever, I grew up dealing with winters in Pittsburgh. You feel me, computer?

Peter FLOATS into frame, wearing a sweet, sleek SPACESUIT. His space glove grips the handle of an 80's BOOMBOX, playing the song. His SPACESUIT COMPUTER responds (like SIRI):

SPACESUIT COMPUTER (O.S.)

I can't feel you. I'm a computer.

PETER

Please don't kill my vibe.

Peter CRANKS the VOLUME and FLIES OFF. He looks like Star-Lord, zooming through the air, doing turns and flips. A RED LIGHT goes off in his mask - he's running out of air.

SPACESUIT COMPUTER (O.S.)

Pressure at 650 millibars and falling. Peter, did you forget to change the atmospheric regulator in your suit? You won't survive.

PETER

(struggling to breathe)
So I screwed up. Don't be a bitch.

SPACESUIT COMPUTER (O.S.)

Oxygen level critical. And Peter...
You're the bitch.

Peter drops the boombox into the Martian dust, then collapses, gasping for air. A WARNING ALARM sounds.

SPACESUIT COMPUTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I knew you weren't cut out for this mission, Peter. They should have sent someone, you know... better.

Peter is almost completely out of air:

PETER
Fuck... you...

As the ALARM gets louder and Peter DIES, we go--

INT. PETER'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The ALARM is actually Peter's clock alarm. He's not dead on Mars, he's in bed on Earth. He pops up, rattled:

PETER
It's okay. You're alive.

Peter's room reflects a mix of interests: VINTAGE NASA POSTER of Mars that says: MARS, EXPLORERS WANTED, and the PITTSBURGH STEELERS FLAG and 80's BOOMBOX we saw in his dream.

PETER (V.O.)
Luckily, I don't have to survive
life on Mars. I just have to
survive my first day of work.

He sits up and grabs a FOOTBALL resting on his bedside table. He spins it on his finger - the kid is clearly athletic - then grips it, looking at the alarm clock, across the room.

PETER
Make this, and today'll go perfect.

Peter throws the football at the alarm... and hits a lamp. He RETRIEVES the ball, hops back into bed, then:

PETER (CONT'D)
Make *this*, and today'll go perfect.

He throws and hits the alarm, turning it off. He pumps his fist: *it's gonna be a good day.*

EXT. SPACE ONE - DAY

Peter approaches a huge, futuristic-looking building.

PETER (V.O.)
This is crazy. I get to work at the
one company actually trying to get
us up to the planet I can't stop
dreaming about.

Peter stops at the entrance, looks up at the SPACE ONE logo, takes a deep breath and enters.

INT. SPACE ONE - CONTINUOUS

It's a massive, open space: people bustling about, a working mission control, technology everywhere. It's like Willy Wonka for nerds. Also, EVERYONE wears SPACE ONE gear.

SPACE ONE MECHANIC (O.S.)
ROCKET COMIN' THROUGH!

A HUGE ROCKET, 200 feet long, passes by (this happened to us on our visit to the real SpaceX). Awed, Peter asks:

PETER
How cool is that?!

Everyone in earshot looks at him: *who the hell is this guy?*

PETER (V.O.)
Right. This is every day stuff for them. Be cool. Take it in stride.

Peter nods, trying to play it off, overly casual.

PETER
Whatever. Just a rocket. No big thang.

Peter turns to exit and immediately SLAMS his head into a giant rocket piece in mid-assembly, falling out of frame.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

OVER BLACK TITLE CARD: DAY ONE

INT. SPACE ONE - MAIN AREA - MORNING

Peter wanders around, aimlessly, like a kid in a candy store... or an engineer in a rocket factory. Then--

MAX (O.S.)
Peter Gibbons!

MAXINE "MAX" DONOVAN (29), a no-bullshit, born leader, alpha female engineer, approaches.

MAX (CONT'D)
Max Donovan.
(off his look)
The leader of the propulsion team.

PETER
You're Max? Sorry, I thought you were a guy.

MAX
We spoke on the phone. You think I sound like a man?

PETER
No, I thought "he" sounded like a woman.

PETER (V.O.)
Nice save.

PETER
Let's do this. Super excited to help humanity become a multiplanet species.

MAX
Would it be better for you if I talked and you just listened?

PETER
So much better.

Max walks, points out MISSION CONTROL (like NASA's):

MAX
That's mission control, where you can get a twenty-four hour feed from all of our satellites.

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

(re: CAFETERIA)

That's the snack bar where you get frozen yogurt. That's a really big guy on a tiny bike...

Peter sees a HEAVY GUY ride past on a TINY BIKE (we saw a lot of this on our visit).

PETER

That guy must be desperate for exercise if he's biking indoors. I mean, no judgement here. Who knows why that gentleman is so heavy.

PETER (V.O.)

He eats too much.

MAX

Look, Space One is sending its first, unmanned rocket to Mars, but only if our team can find a way to increase the engine's power output in the next three days. Otherwise, we have to push back the launch. That cannot happen.

PETER

How much more power do we need?

MAX

Point zero zero two percent.

As Peter whistles, wow:

PETER (V.O.)

Doesn't sound like much, but in our field that's a buttload.

They make a turn onto the MANUFACTURING FLOOR. Tough-looking BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS in SPACE ONE mechanic outfits handle large machinery. Peter loves it.

MAX

Finally, the manufacturing floor.

PETER

Love it. I'm very hands-on. Gonna spend all kinds of time down here.

MAX

Never go here.

PETER

Understood. Why would I?

MAX

The manufacturing guys are insanelly territorial. They don't want us in their workspace. So definitely--

Peter is about to touch a MASSIVE ROCKET THRUSTER.

MAX (CONT'D)

Never touch anything.

Peter looks - the manufacturing guys are gone. He TOUCHES the thruster. **IN FANTASY**, TWO MANUFACTURING GUYS FAST ROPE down from the ceiling. They each grab one of Peter's arms and go yank him up, out of frame, screaming. Max watches. After a beat, Peter's body drops back to the ground, with a splat.

WE SNAP BACK to REALITY. Peter doesn't touch the thruster.

MAX (CONT'D)

So where did Leon find you? How'd you even get this gig?

PETER

I almost killed my friend Jamison.

Off her look, we go--

INT. LEON'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK

Peter enters with LEON NESS (40's), the unpredictable, brilliant founder of Space One. He's got a short attention span, but there's always method behind his madness. Or not. There are TWO CHAIRS in the sitting area.

LEON

Have a seat. Either one.
(Peter starts to sit)
Not that one.

Peter takes the other chair. Leon sits across from him.

LEON (CONT'D)

Let's dive in. Biggest influence in your life? Go.

PETER

My father. He was a mechanic--

LEON

You know what? Let's switch.

Peter, a little off kilter, switches chairs.

LEON (CONT'D)

Much better. Continue.

PETER

I grew up working in my dad's body shop - I wanted to be just like him, but he dreamed bigger for me. He always said, "do something no one else can do".

LEON

I should warn you, I'm extremely competitive. Whatever you tell me that "only you can do", by the end of the day I will be able to do it.

PETER

He just meant "be the first one in our family to go to college". I know everyone says they had the best dad, but I really did.

LEON

Your father sounds amazing. I hope I meet him, someday.

PETER

He died.

LEON

Then it's probably impossible.

PETER

Sir, meeting you is an honor, but I have to ask, how'd I get this interview? I mean, college didn't really work out for me.

LEON

You were expelled.

PETER

Yes. Lost my scholarship, so I'm back working at my dad's garage.

LEON

One of your teachers, Professor Manning, called me. He's a friend. Were you really able to invent a lightweight, cold gas thruster that still had enough power to lift a patio chair airborne - WITH a human being in it?

PETER

(ashamed)

My friend Jamison passed out and I thought it'd be funny to fly him to the top of the school chapel... I almost killed him.

LEON

"Almost"?? So who gives a shit? It was a big idea. I love big ideas. Still, as a rule, don't blow up your friends. They get so mad...

(then)

Welcome to Space One. You're hired.

INT. SPACE ONE - MEETING ROOM - PRESENT

The THREE OTHER TEAM MEMBERS (we'll meet them shortly) turn from working as Max leads Peter in.

MAX

Peter, team. Team, Peter. Please greet him, but do not stop working.

The team grunts half-hearted "hey's" without looking up.

MAX (CONT'D)

Grab that desk and I'll come catch you up to speed in a second.

PETER (V.O.)

(sits, PEP TALK to self)

Okay, Pedro, for some reason life's giving you a second chance, so do not mess this up. Just lay low until you're comfortable. Stay under the radar.

As Peter finishes, Leon enters.

LEON

Oh, good! Peter! Gang, I know you've been a little stuck and the clock's ticking.

(does bad "clock" noise)

I'm not great at clock noises. Anyway, Peter is a "big idea" guy and he's your new team leader!

MAX

(surprised)

WHAT?!

PETER

WHAT?!

LEON

And I'll make it three.

(high-pitch, sing-songy)

WHAAAAAT?

Off Peter's reaction, we--

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. SPACE ONE - MEETING ROOM - DAY**

Everyone is there. Leon turns to Max.

LEON

Max, this is nothing personal. I just think we're at the stage where we need to try anything. You okay?

MAX

(smiles, seems okay)
Of course, sir.

Leon turns away. She immediately GLARES DAGGERS at Peter.

PETER (V.O.)

This could not get any worse.

Leon hands him a PEN, holding it like a microphone.

LEON

Here you go, Peter. An imaginary microphone. The floor is yours.

PETER (V.O.)

I stand corrected.

Peter takes the pen. Leon starts to move off, then remembers:

LEON

Almost forgot: Space One T-shirt comin' in hot!

Leon tosses Peter a shirt. Peter SPEAKS INTO THE PEN:

PETER

Sir, one question--

LEON

Peter, the imaginary microphone is only for speeches.

PETER

(lowers pen)
I've noticed everyone wearing Space One gear. Is it mandatory?

LEON

No, of course not.

JET FU (25), a nerdy, but insanely cocky Asian guy who's a rockstar electrical engineer jumps in.

JET FU

Mr. Ness, no disrespect, but we all know it's mandatory.

LEON

There's no dress code here.

JET FU

Just admit it. Because I'd love to wear my own stuff. I'm a peacock.

(does peacock hands)

I want to show my feathers.

LEON

Doesn't matter to me what you wear.

It's a standoff. Beat, then Jet removes his shirt and hands it to Leon. Jet Fu is now SHIRTLESS. Leon smiles and exits. Max turns on Peter, unloading:

MAX

I am not okay with this. How did this happen? Are you his son? You know what? I don't care. Clock's ticking. Let's hear one of your super exciting big ideas.

PETER

Feeling the love. Okay... I might have one thought to get more power out of your engine.

PETER (V.O.)

It's a great idea, but be cool. After you say it maybe take a casual sip of coffee.

PETER

I don't know, what if we cover the engine in photovoltaic paint and use solar power to squeeze out a little extra juice?

Peter takes a "super casual" sip of coffee: "Ahh..."

MAX

That's actually a great idea.

Peter smiles. Max goes to the DRY ERASE BOARD. IN a CIRCLE it reads: INCREASE POWER 0.002%. Lines shoot out with ideas.

MAX (CONT'D)

That's why it's on the board. I came up with that idea a month ago.

CASEY PANJABI (25), brilliant software engineer with O.C.D., steps to board and methodically erases stray marker spots:

CASEY

If you come up with an idea, you put it on the board, so everyone knows what you're working on.

PETER

This one just says "eat healthier".

CASEY

They're not all work ideas.

MAX

Peter, tell me something: Did you really think that on your first day you were going to come up with something that we hadn't already thought of in the last six months?

PETER

Well, I obviously did. Excuse me.

INT. SPACE ONE - CONTINUOUS

Peter chases down Leon, walking with him.

PETER

Sir--

LEON

(holds Jet Fu's shirt)

Does he not realize how soft those shirts are? They're made of space cotton!

(off Peter's look)

I'm kidding, it's just cotton.

PETER

I'm grateful for this opportunity, but maybe I could "ease in". I'm not sure I should be team leader--

LEON

Sorry, kiddo, I'm fluent in Chinese, German and Spanish, but I unfortunately don't speak chickenshit.

(MORE)

LEON (CONT'D)

You know why I think you can do this? Peter, do you know anything about my background?

PETER (V.O.)

I know everything about you.

PETER

No, sir.

LEON

Like you, I'm also a blue-collar kid, lost my dad when I was young, got tossed out of school...

(re: Peter)

It's okay to smile, Peter, we're connecting.

(Peter smiles big)

That's a little much, dial it back.

(Peter does)

People like us just need someone to give them a chance. Tell me something, how'd you get the idea for that cold gas thruster?

PETER

Sometimes things get stuck in my head and I just keep cycling through them like a fever dream.

LEON

I love that! See? There's a bunch of amazing ideas in that head of yours. This is what your dad dreamed for you. Make him proud.

(then, into Peter's eyes)

Peter, I believe in you.

Leon gives Peter a supportive clap on the arm and moves off.

PETER (V.O.)

HUGE moment. Just like that, Leon's unwavering belief in me erased my self-doubt. Time to get to know my team.

INT. SPACE ONE - DAY - MEETING THE TEAM

QUICK WHIP SHOTS of team members, in various locations. Casey gets up and holds out her hand to shake:

CASEY

Hi, I'm Casey. Software engineer.

JET FU, still shirtless:

JET FU
 'Sup. Jet Fu, electrical engineer
 slash alpha dog slash playaaa. I've
 hooked up with forty-two percent of
 the women here. I need a shirt.

Casey again, the exact same way/gestures as before:

CASEY
 Hi, I'm Casey. Software engineer.

DICKY QUINLAN (40's) the blue-collar manufacturing guy is on
 the manufacturing floor.

DICKY
 Dicky Quinlan. Manufacturing. I
 build what you nerds think up.

PETER (V.O.)
 I also learned that Casey had
 Obsessive Compulsive Disorder--

CASEY
 (same way, again)
 Hi, I'm Casey. Software engineer.

PETER (V.O.)
 And I already knew Max.

MAX
 When you crash and burn I'm gonna
 throw a party.

PETER (V.O.)
 No matter who you asked at this
 company, they all had the same
 reason for working at Space One.

QUAD SPLIT of Casey, Max, Jet Fu (now wears a ridiculous,
 bright orange T-shirt) and Dicky:

CASEY/MAX/JET FU/DICKY
 I want to change the world.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Peter enters. The team is there.

PETER (V.O.)
 Okay, time to get Max on my side.

PETER

Look, I shouldn't be team leader over you. Leon's crazy--

MAX

Leon Ness is a once in a generation thinker who understands that the only way for humankind to survive is to become a multi-planetary species and he's committing his life to doing that, so if I hear another disparaging word about him come out of your fat mouth, I will actually fight you at lunch. I'm serious, I'll text everyone in the building to come watch.

JET FU

Careful, bro. She's crazy in love with Leon.

MAX

That is so not true.

CASEY

Oh, please. Max, think about what you sound like when you laugh.

MAX

I never laugh.

CASEY

Correct. Now think about how you sound every time Leon says something remotely nice to you.

We see **QUICK CUTS** (anywhere) of Leon ad-libbing "good-morning, you look nice" etc. Each time, Max GIGGLES like a school girl. We come back to Max REACTING:

MAX

I don't want to be your best friend anymore.

CASEY

Too bad. You're stuck with me.

DICKY

(stands to head out)

Congrats. That's yet another day where you have nothing for me and my guys to build. I'm gonna go home, eat a sandwich, pet my dog, and make love to my wife.

JET FU

If your wife's up for it, you can
do all that stuff at the same time.

(off Dicky's look)

I'm gonna die, aren't I?

MAX

Peter, before he goes, do you have
any other big ideas?

PETER

(looks at board, then)

Lightbulb!

DICKY

Please don't tell me you say
"lightbulb" whenever you get ideas.

PETER

I don't anymore.

PETER (V.O.)

(as he looks at Max)

If she isn't gonna help, throw her
ass under the bus.

PETER

Maybe this team's problem is
management style.

Jet Fu looks at Max, who's pissed. No-look TEXTS:

JET FU

Lunch fight back on!

PETER

We need to find point oh-oh two
percent more power. Now, there's
five of us, just like there's five
people on a basketball team, right?

(off blank stares)

There's five people on a basketball
team. My high-school team sucked
until we stopped going off one-on-
one, and started running plays as a
group.

(re: board)

Jet Fu's working on his "rewiring
the combustion chamber" idea, Casey
is looking into hybrid propellant
fuel; Max has everyone doing their
own thing. We should look at each
of these ideas together, as a team.

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)
We just have to decide whose idea
to focus on first.

Everyone looks at each other. **IN PETER'S FANTASY**, they are
now all inside a WRESTLING CAGE dressed as PRO WRESTLERS.

CASEY
CAGE MATCH!

A melee ensues: chairs, punches, kicks, etc. Peter SNAPS OUT
OF FANTASY. Everyone is BICKERING. He turns to Max, casual.

PETER
Later I'm gonna have us all do some
trust falls.

MAX
You're pretty cavalier for a guy
who's shooting blanks, so far. This
is a "sink or swim" company, my
friend. You produce or you're gone.
I mean, there's three empty desks
just in here. Leon's fired so many
people in the past few years, we
don't even remember their names.

Max walks off. Shell-shocked, Peter turns to Casey.

PETER
That's not true is it?

CASEY
No.
(then, quick list)
Seth-Amy-Haus-Allison-Jon-Austen-
Craig-Neal-Laura-Mike-Terrell.
(sweetly)
I remember all their names.

PETER
(to Max, confident)
This is different, okay? Leon
believes in me.

INT. LEON'S OFFICE - LATER

Peter is with Leon. Leon looks confused.

LEON
I said I believed in you?

PETER
(incredulous)
Yeah!

LEON
Sounds like me. Kiddo, part of my job is to motivate. The travel to and colonization of Mars is my life's work. I'll do anything, short of murdering someone.
(thinks about it)
Yeah, I wouldn't do that. Peter, I'm rooting for you. I mean, in my head, it's like -- "Go, Peter!". But how the hell could I already believe in you? Grand total, we've spent thirteen minutes together. And that's exact, I keep track.

Peter does this V.O. with the same inflection he did before:

PETER (V.O.)
HUGE moment. Just like that, Leon's lack of belief in me brought back all my self-doubt.

PETER
But what if I can't figure it out?
What if I don't find the power?
What if I--

LEON
What-if-I, what-if-I, what-if-I-
Calm down. It's not a big deal. If you can't come through, life will go on, Peter Gibbons.
(Peter is relieved, then)
Just not for you, at Space One.

PETER
You'd fire me?

LEON
Good luck. And we're now up to fourteen minutes.

OVER BLACK TITLE CARD: DAY TWO

EXT. MARS - PETER'S DREAM

Peter SOARS through space. He slows, then looks down at his BOOMBOX -- all the knobs are GLOWING from the friction.

As he PLUMMETS back toward the surface of Mars, hitting rocks and EXPLODING--

INT. SPACE ONE - CAFETERIA - MORNING

Peter is ASLEEP at a table, face down, paperwork everywhere. He shoots up, waking from the dream. To self:

PETER
I'm alive. I didn't explode.

REVEAL the BIG GUY ON THE TINY BIKE, watching.

BIG GUY ON TINY BIKE
I have that dream.

He rides off. Peter gathers papers and goes, with BEDHEAD--

INT. SPACE ONE - FACTORY FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Peter walks through Space One, determined.

PETER (V.O.)
You know what? Screw Leon. He thinks he can threaten my job? Nobody threatens Peter Gibbons.

DICKY
(angry, yelling)
Hey, new guy! If I see you on my factory floor again, I will strap you to one of these rockets.

PETER
Sorry!

PETER (V.O.)
Nobody else threatens Peter Gibbons.

INT. ENGINEERING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Max and Casey are there. Peter kicks open the door--

PETER
Time to--

The door, not on a spring, swings back, closes in his face, maybe hitting him a little. He opens it.

PETER (CONT'D)

Time to get to work. Max, I need you to--

Max ignores Peter, eating FROZEN YOGURT.

CASEY

He's talking.
(takes her frozen yogurt)
Stop eating your yogurt.

PETER

Max, I know you don't like me, but I'm drowning, here. I mean, have you ever gotten a taste of something you love and then it's just taken away from you?

MAX

(re: yogurt)
That literally just happened to me.

She takes her yogurt back. Peter goes to the board.

PETER

You know, I was hoping one of these ideas you already have could be the solution. So I stayed here all night and looked at your research on rewiring the combustion chamber, on hybrid propellant fuel... on everything. I don't think any of this stuff is going to work.

MAX

Oh, really, you don't, do you?

PETER

No. Do you?

MAX

(admitting, sadly)
No.

PETER

You've gotta believe me: I would do this job for free.

MAX

Me, too.

PETER

I know! So who cares how we get there? Just help. Please.

MAX
(beat, then)
Okay. How?

PETER
(thinks, then)
Lightbulb!

Max rolls her eyes.

CASEY
Don't roll your eyes at him, I
think it's charming. Peter, I'm
here for you. What are you
thinking?

Peter looks at Casey and smiles.

PETER (V.O.)
God, you have beautiful skin. Run
away with me.

PETER
When I was a mechanic... last week,
I could fix anything once I got my
hands on it. That's where ideas
come from. I know we're not
supposed to touch anything on the
floor, but if we want to find more
power we need to get that engine up
here. What do you think?

CASEY
It'd be nice to run diagnostics on
the actual wiring. Max?

MAX
(can't help but admit)
I'd actually love to get a look at
that thruster casing.

PETER
That's what I'm talking about!
(re: Max at window)
What are you looking at?

MAX
Just Jet Fu running to work.

OUT THE WINDOW Jet Fu runs down a BUSY STREET. He stops to
catch his breath. Cars HONK. He starts running again.

INT. SPACE ONE - ENTRANCE - A LITTLE LATER

Peter, Max and Casey arrive just as Jet Fu bursts in, gasping for air. He wears no Space One gear.

CASEY
What happened?

JET FU
(out of breath)
Leon moved... my parking spot... a quarter mile away... 'cause I won't wear... company clothes.

MAX
You're being paranoid.

PETER
You're that tired from running a quarter of a mile?

Max, Peter and Casey help Jet Fu to his feet.

INT. SPACE ONE - MANUFACTURING AREA - LATER

The four of them approach Dicky.

PETER
Look, Dicky, my man, we need to get our hands on the engine prototype.

DICKY
You have a 3-D model on your computer upstairs. It has all the information you need. I'm not trying to be difficult. The engineers design, me and my guys build. And it's my ass if anything gets screwed up. Would you guys let me mess around with your computers?

They shake their heads. Dicky shrugs: *see?* He exits.

JET FU
(out of breath)
Why's... he such... a dick?

MAX
You're still out of breath?

CASEY
It's okay. We're scientists. We'll find a scientific solution to this.

PETER

Or we can wait until everyone goes home and steal the damn engine.

PETER (V.O.)

And look like badasses doing it...

INT. SPACE ONE - FACTORY FLOOR - LATE NIGHT

Peter, Max, Casey and Jet RIDE TINY BIKES through the empty facility. Peter gives a HAND SIGNAL and they turn, in unison.

INT. SPACE ONE - FACTORY FLOOR - MINUTES LATER

They stand by the ENGINE. Peter runs his hand over it.

PETER

What a beautiful girl.

JET FU

Are you gonna steal it or make love to it?

PETER

Maybe both.

(gets in FORKLIFT)

Let's get this thing to our office.

MAX

You can drive a forklift?

PETER

There was one at my dad's garage. It's like riding a bike.

Suddenly the forklift shoots in reverse, hitting a GIANT WALL OF GLASS, partitioning the area. It SHATTERS, raining glass.

PETER (CONT'D)

Okay. At least no one was hurt.

CASEY

Jet, your foot!

Peter looks: Jet has a HUGE PIECE OF GLASS stuck in his foot.

PETER

Oh my god!

As Jet SCREAMS we--

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**INT. SPACE ONE - FACTORY FLOOR - NIGHT**

More people have arrived. SECURITY, some MEDICS to deal with Jet Fu's foot, an angry Dicky. An intrigued Leon walks over to Peter, Max and Casey.

PETER

Leon, I'm sorry--

LEON

Why? I love the passion I'm seeing.
Real sweat. Real blood. Real tears.

JET FU

(teary)
It hurts bad, okay?!

LEON

That long walk from your new
parking spot is gonna be tough.

JET FU

I knew it! I'm not wearing the
shirt!

DICKY

Of course he's not. See, Mr. Ness?
These genius kids are all arrogant,
ungrateful shitheads.

PETER

I just wanted to take a look at the
engine prototype, but Dicky won't
let us on the factory floor.

LEON

Why not?

Standing in front of the shattered wall of glass:

PETER

He thinks we'll break stuff.

DICKY

Sorry, sir, I can't trust people
who don't know what it means to
make something with their hands.

Leon looks at Dicky, confused, then to Peter.

LEON

That's not Peter at all. Dicky, do me a favor, hold Peter's hands.

Reluctant, Peter sticks out his hands. Dicky takes them.

MAX

That is not something I expected to see tonight.

CASEY

It's adorable.

Max nods: *you're right.*

DICKY

Hm. Dry. Rough. Calloused. These aren't the soft hands of a coddled brainiac. Look at Jet's hands--
(grabs Jet's hand)
I'd let my wife eat off these.

JET FU

I would too. She's hot.

LEON

His father was a mechanic. He worked in his garage. Dicky, maybe give the kid a shot.

Leon walks off. Dicky looks at Peter, considering.

OVER BLACK TITLE CARD: DAY THREE

INT. SPACE ONE - ENGINEERING AREA - MORNING

Dicky wheels the engine prototype in on a dolly. The rest of the team moves in, examining it with reverence.

JET FU

Seeing a rocket engine will never not give me a boner.

DICKY

Don't make me take it back.

Jet Fu nods. The team dives in, getting to work.

MONTAGE - THE TEAM WORKS

As we move through Space One, the hours pass, and we see the team in various stages of research and experimentation.

PETER (V.O.)

We worked our asses off, looked at every calculation, ran every possible scenario.

Peter watches Jet Fu, Max and Dicky at work.

PETER (V.O.)

It was amazing for me to watch because these people really are the best at what they do.

(turns to Casey)

Casey blew me away. Turns out O.C.D. gives her laser focus when she has something to obsess over. She told me everything else disappears.

-Casey, at her computer, writes code. As she types, the world around her FLIES PAST in high speed. She's totally locked in.

PETER (V.O.)

Honestly, it was inspiring. And at the end of it all...

INT. SPACE ONE - ENGINEERING AREA - LATE NIGHT

Pizza boxes are strewn about. The team is there.

MAX

We still have nothing.

PETER

Dammit!

(kicks engine)

OW!

(then)

Sorry, gang. Who was I kidding?

Defeated, Peter limps out. Max watches. A beat, then:

MAX

Casey, go talk to him.

CASEY

No. Max. It needs to be you.

Everyone shares a look - she's right.

MAX

Fine.

As Max starts out:

CASEY

Wait. Max...
 (as Max turns back)
 It needs to be you.

MAX

I don't have time for this.

Max exits. Then, really dramatically, almost whispered:

CASEY

It needs to be you. That was it.

Dicky and Jet Fu ad-lib agreement: *Perfect, nailed it.*

EXT. SPACE ONE - NIGHT

Peter is outside, looking up at the stars. Max approaches. There's a beat. Peter's gaze stays on the sky.

MAX

What are we doing? Mopey star-gazing? That's my favorite kind.
 (off no response)
 What's with you, man? You're like "I don't believe in myself, I do believe in myself, I don't, I do..." Just pick one.

PETER

I am. I'm out here under the stars, picking "not believing in myself." You want to know a secret? I'm pretty sure the only reason Leon gave me this job was because I remind him of himself. But here's the thing: I don't think I can ever be Leon.

MAX

(sympathetic)
 Oh, Peter... There's one thing I know for sure in my heart: You can never be Leon.

PETER

Thanks.

Peter again looks up at the stars.

MAX

Don't get me wrong, I could understand how you could remind some people of him, a little.

From MAX'S P.O.V. she sees Peter looking at the stars. She shifts her gaze up, to where Leon stands, in the distance, on his OFFICE BALCONY, also looking up at the stars. Peter turns to see what she's looking at. Leon CALLS from afar:

LEON

The stars, huh? Every time I look at 'em, I just...

Leon drifts off. Max turns to Peter:

MAX

Do you want to know what the biggest difference is between you and Leon?

PETER

Is it that he has twelve billion dollars?

MAX

It doesn't matter what problem we're trying to solve. Whenever I look in Leon's beautiful blue eyes-- his eyes -- whatever; I never see a quitter. He never gives up.

PETER

I'm not a quitter.

MAX

Oh, please, you don't think I read up on you? You quit college...

PETER

I didn't quit, I was expelled.

MAX

Right, right. Did you ever reapply? I mean you're obviously smart, did you try to get into any other schools? Or did you just run back to work in a body shop because there's no risk in that? Peter, did you even apply to work here, or did Leon go find you?

PETER
I'm not going to answer any of
those questions.

MAX
Why? Because the answers make you
feel bad about yourself?

PETER
Exactly.

MAX
Come on, man, don't give up yet. If
he saw something in you, it's in
there. You got your hands on the
engine. What did it feel like when
we opened the damn thing up?

As Peter considers this, we FLASHBACK to a shot of him
opening the ENGINE PANEL and looking inside.

PETER
Ugly. It looked like a robot threw
up wires and computer chips into a
giant metal cylinder. So much stuff
in there.

MAX
Okay, not the most scientific
answer, but--

Peter holds up a hand as he's on a track of thought:

PETER
Can you give me a few minutes?

Max nods, heads back in, leaving Peter alone. As Peter (and
Leon, in B.G.) stares up at the sky, we go--

EXT. MARS - PETER'S DREAM

We're back. The kick-ass chorus of *Here I Go Again* swells as
Peter, in spacesuit, holding his dad's 80's boombox, flies
into frame. He zooms over the Martian landscape, twirling
through space, loving every moment.

In the distance, he spots his Space One family: Leon, Max,
Casey, Jet and Dicky, all DANCING in space. Peter tries to
accelerate to his friends... but they just keep dancing
further away.

Peter looks down and sees ALL THE KNOBS on his BOOMBOX, again
red hot, with streaks of RESISTANCE coming off.

Finally, Peter SNAPS HIS FINGERS and all the knobs magically POP OFF. Peter can accelerate toward his team. As he does--

EXT. SPACE ONE - NIGHT

Peter's eyes pop open, inspired.

INT. SPACE ONE - ENGINEERING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Peter finds his team, passed out around the office.

PETER

Wake up! Everybody up!

They all wake, groggy. Jet Fu and Max separate, having cuddled in their sleep. Max isn't happy.

JET FU

Technically we slept together.

PETER

I had a dream. I'm flying through space and *Here I Go Again* is playing--

MAX/JET/CASEY

There's no sound in space.

DICKY

It's a dream. Ignore the nerds.
Love Whitesnake.

PETER

You guys were all there having a dance party, but I couldn't get to you, because the knobs on my boombox were causing too much drag. But when they popped off, I suddenly had all this extra thrust. Get it?

CASEY

(nods "yes")

Not at all! But we want to!

PETER

If we reduce the weight of the rocket, we'll get more power.

MAX

We tried. But we need every piece of equipment on this engine.

PETER

Yeah, but not for the whole burn. Some of this stuff we just need for the ignition. What if we spring-load some of the internal hardware to eject through the thrusters after the combustion phase?

DICKY

So you want the rocket to just... spit out some of its parts?

PETER

I really do.

The team shares a look, considering Peter's idea.

CASEY

It could work.

MAX

How much time do we have?

JET FU

Four hours.

MAX

Sounds impossible. Let's do it.

Inspired, the gang gets to work.

EXT. SPACE ONE - THE NEXT MORNING

Employees stream into the building.

INT. SPACE ONE - ENGINEERING AREA - SAME TIME

The exhausted, bedraggled propulsion team sits together.

PETER

Here he comes.

MAX

Remember, play it cool. We're the best engineers in the world. Let's act like we've been here before.

LEON

Well? How'd we do? Does my rocket have enough power to get to Mars or do I have to push back the launch and clear some time off my schedule today for a massive temper tantrum?

They ALL take CASUAL SIPS of their coffees, the way Peter did, earlier. Then, super casual:

MAX

Yeah, we found the power, no problem. Peter figured it out.

Leon nods, smiling. He knows what a big deal it is.

LEON

Great job, Peter.

PETER

Thanks.

(then)

I wouldn't have gotten there without Max pushing me. Sir, she's the leader of this team.

Max looks at Peter, surprised and GRATEFUL.

LEON

Sounds good to me. I'll see you all at the launch. Max, great job, as usual.

As he exits, she GIGGLES, girlish. Then, to the others:

MAX

Shut up.

INT. SPACE ONE - MISSION CONTROL - DAY

It's LAUNCH TIME! The entire company is crammed into mission control, ready to party. There's a LIVE FEED of the launch site in Florida on the massive, hundred foot screen.

PETER (V.O.)

Launch Day felt like a combination of every birthday, Christmas and game-winning shot I'd ever had.

Casey finds Peter.

CASEY

Congratulations.

Casey hugs Peter, then they separate. Peter smiles. Then--

CASEY (CONT'D)
 Congratulations.

She hugs him again. Peter smiles.

PETER
 That one was perfect.

They share a smile. Leon takes the stage.

LEON
 Welcome to Space One's first,
 unmanned interplanetary flight.
 (off restrained applause)
 Let's go to Mars!

Everyone cheers as the countdown begins.

ALL OF SPACE ONE
 Ten. Nine. Eight. Seven. Six.

ON THE MISSION CONTROL SCREEN the engines begin to fire. The propulsion team comes together to enjoy the moment. Dicky pats Peter on the back.

PETER (V.O.)
 This didn't just feel like my
 moment, it felt like ours.

ALL OF SPACE ONE
 Five. Four. Three. Two. One--

BOOM! The rocket EXPLODES on the launch platform into a MASSIVE FIREBALL. Total annihilation.

The room falls into total silence as everyone stares at the massive fire on the screen.

LAUNCH ENGINEER
 Initial diagnostic report...

PETER (V.O.)
 Please don't be our fault.

LAUNCH ENGINEER
 Critical propulsion system failure.

Jet Fu points at Peter:

JET FU
 He did it.

Everyone looks at Peter, who is dying inside. Then... The sound of ONE PERSON CLAPPING. Everyone looks and it's Leon.

LEON

Failure? Did you all see the size of that explosion?! It was huge! Play it back again!

The giant image REWINDS and then replays the explosion. A ripple of "ooh's" runs through the room.

LEON (CONT'D)

Look at that fireball! That is an explosion we can be proud of. Again!

The image plays again.

LEON (CONT'D)

When I see that glorious rocket disintegrate, I don't see a billion dollars in flames. I see an engine that finally has enough power to get us to Mars. People, you must know this - at Space One, there is no failure. Only progress.

Everyone APPLAUDS. The applause turns into CHEERS. Peter is stunned, but smiles, moved by Leon's attitude.

As the funeral turns back into a party, Leon finds Peter. He points at the screen, now on a loop of the explosion.

LEON (CONT'D)

You did that.

PETER

So you're not mad?

LEON

You can't be mad when you never lose. And I never lose.

Leon nods toward Jet Fu who, we now notice, is dressed HEAD TO TOE in SPACE ONE gear. Jet Fu gives a thumbs up.

JET FU

I'm even wearing the boxers.

PETER

Does this mean I'm not fired?

LEON

No way I'd give the competition a chance to steal you. Maybe sometimes I motivate people by saying I believe in them. Maybe other times I challenge people by saying I don't. Nobody knows with me. It's why I'm so interesting. WHAAAAAAT?

(then)

What do you think? I'm making it my catchphrase.

(starts off, then)

Oh, and Peter? Your dad... He'd be really proud of you, tonight. I know I am.

Leon moves off. Peter, emotional, smiles. He's joined by his team and they hand him a glass of champagne.

PETER (V.O.)

Every employee got an email from Leon that night, reminding them that doing something that's never been done before is hard. And one setback doesn't mean we stop believing or stop taking big risks. And, sure, the bigger we dream, the bigger we'll fail. Until we don't. And that's when we've changed the world.

As the propulsion team toasts the explosion, we pull back and take in the company-wide celebration, the explosion now playing on a loop behind them.

THE END.

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