

Papá and Elara lay on a black and white San Marcos-style blanket with a pride of lions printed on it. The luminous stars cast down their gentle light on the clearing they've made camp in.

Papá's telescope sits inert on its stand a few feet away.

ELARA'S POV - Papá traces his right index finger across the sky, pointing at the different constellations peppered amongst the vast many-hued mantle of deepest blue above them.

PAPÁ

Did you know our ancestors, *los mayas*, without the help from all this great technology we have now, had some of the most accurate astronomy the world has ever seen? They had a greater knowledge of the stars than even *los conquistadores pedorros*. [funky-ass conquistadors]

Elara chuckles as her eyes widen in wonder.

TEENAGE ELARA

Woowwwww- *Que padre...* [How cool...]

PAPÁ

Ey... [affirmative Northern Mexican slang]

Turning on her side for comfort and to face Papá, Elara searches the sky solemnly.

PAPÁ (CONT'D)

They even built their cities and great monuments according to the paths of the planets and the stars as they believed the will of the gods could be deciphered from their patterns.

Papá streaks his outstretched right arm across the sky for effect.

TEENAGE ELARA

Woowww...

PAPÁ

Ey...

Elara's gaze drops down to Papá's tattoo of the constellation Andromeda on his forearm. The wonder on her face vanishes. She scoots closer to Papá.

Papá notices where her attention is and puts his right arm down self-consciously.

TEENAGE ELARA
You think Mamá is...

Papá puts his left arm around Elara and holds her closer, anticipating the question as she finds the right words.

TEENAGE ELARA (CONT'D)
Do you think she—

Papá gently interrupts.

PAPÁ
No sé, miya. [I don't know, baby.]

Papá reaches across his body with his right hand and places two fingers gently on Elara's chest.

PAPÁ (CONT'D)
But I know she is here.

A silence saturated by nature's nocturnal reverie tenderly descends on them.

PAPÁ (CONT'D)
A dormir pues... [To sleep then...]

Papá gets up and picks Elara up easily onto her feet, kissing the top of her head as she playfully resists and makes a dramatic show of letting her body go limp.

PAPÁ (CONT'D)
(through laughter)
Órale— a dormir, traviesa! Y no te desveles! [Go on now— to sleep, naughty girl! And don't stay up late!]

They walk along together in silence before Elara diverts to her own individual tent as Papá continues to his.

7 INT. TEENAGE ELARA'S TENT - NIGHT

7

Still awake, Elara lifts herself up to a sitting position from laying down and unzips her tent door as quietly as possible.

ELARA'S POV - Between the partition in her door, Papá's tent can be seen a few feet away lit from the inside by an electric lantern before its light suddenly extinguishes.

PAPÁ
(from inside the tent)
Elara... Duermete. [go to sleep]

Elara retreats back inside her tent and zips up the small partition in its entrance. She puts a hand to her mouth as she tries to stifle her laughter at being caught red-handed and retreats into her blanket as she throws it over herself.

CUT TO:

8 INT. INSIDE BLANKET - NIGHT

8

Inside the refuge of her blanket, Elara grabs an astronomy book she had stowed inside with an accompanying clip-on booklight. She ignites the feeble electric torch revealing beautiful images of nebulae and other astronomical phenomena. With practiced stealthiness, she flips through the book silently, drinking in all it has to offer voraciously.

Suddenly, Elara winces as the darkness inside her blanket is dispersed by a light from the outside that pierces right through both her tent and blanket.

TEENAGE ELARA
Okay okay!

Elara turns off her booklight and clamps the book shut before emerging out of her blanket.

BACK TO:

7 INT. TEENAGE ELARA'S TENT - NIGHT

7

She lays her head on her pillow and wriggles her body to face away from the light coming from outside, fluffing her pillow a few times before laying her head down brusquely and shutting her eyes.

The light outside intensifies as a powerful pulsating sound emits from its source, startling Elara upright into full alertness as she looks wildly in its direction.

Shakily reaching for the zipper at her tent entrance, Elara opens its partition.

ELARA'S POV - The silhouette of Papá stands immobile before a radiant PRESENCE floating above an extinguished campfire.

Tendrils seemingly made of light somehow transmogrified into substance extend out of its floating shapeless core, swaying ethereally as they finish unfurling.

The pulsating otherworldly sound lessens in volume and frequency, ceding the way to an all-consuming silence.

9 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

9

Elara emerges from her tent, and slowly approaches Papá.

TEENAGE ELARA
(in a near-silent whimper)
Papá?

The otherworldly sound returns with a deafening intensity as a gale force wind erupts from the Presence, knocking Elara back as Papá plants himself in place with all his strength and keeps his footing.

Elara scrambles to her feet as she struggles to reach Papá.

TEENAGE ELARA (CONT'D)
PAPÁ! PAPÁ!

The sound emitting from the Presence drowns out Elara's voice as she makes her way closer to Papá.

Elara finally reaches Papá's side and wraps her arms around his waist as she braces herself against the gales pulsing out of the Presence in sync with the sound emerging from it.

Papá holds her tight against his body.

As the Presence's radiance grows, Papá's hands shakily try finding Elara's face and cover her eyes unsuccessfully as she stares directly into the Presence as its luminous intensity consumes all her senses.

WHITE DISSOLVE
TO:

10 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

10

ELARA'S POV - Blobs of brightness speed by as indiscernible voices talk energetically.

Dried blood seals Elara's bruised eyes shut.

Medical staff scramble around her as she is transported through a hospital hallway in a stretcher. A nurse joins the medical team with a bottle of clear solution in hand.

The lead ER doctor takes the bottle and spurts some into a bundle of gauze.

He gently wipes away at her eyes as the medical team continues to travel down the hallway, drawing pained groans out of Elara.

The lead doctor forces open Elara's eyes, shining a penlight into them. The doctor and the ER staff freeze their frenzy as gasps echo around the medical staff.

The entirety of Elara's eyes are now saturated in a dark blue/violet hue specked by what look like stars and swirling luminescent nebulas.

MATCH CUT TO:

11 EXT. EXTRAPLANETARY MONITORING CENTER COURTYARD - DUSK 11

The fiery hues of the waning sun mingle their amber light with the blue-violets of twenty-eight year old ELARA POVEDA's (28) eyes.

Elara slides her sunglasses gently down onto her face. She picks up a collapsible cane next to her on the bench she is sitting in and assembles it as she gets up.