K-PAX

Screenplay

By

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(Based on the novel "K-PAX" by Gene Brewer)
INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - NEW YORK - DAY

New immigrant families stand in ticket lines next to body-pierced teens. Dozens of languages fly through the air, none of them English. This is the crossroads of the world for the down and out, hard luck and New York on 5 dollars a day crowd.

Witness to it all is a grey-bearded BLACK HOMELESS VETERAN who sits with his prosthetic leg parked beside him.

VET
Dollar fo' a homeless vet. Help out
a homeless vet.
(as a student with a
duffel bag hurries past)
C'mon, li'l man - I fought the war
with your Daddy. P'nam Pen. Y'all
ain't paid me for this leg yet!

A young, SWEDISH COUPLE with backpacks catch his eye.

VET (CONT'D)
Yo, Swiss Miss - let's see that smile!
How 'bout you Fritz? I know y'all got
a wallet in that backpack.
Freeloadin' mother-
(stops midword, as an
Asian family with many
bundles passes by)
Heyyy - Jackie Chan! Shanghai Noon!
I take traveler's checks. Yeah,
arrigato to you, too!

He pauses for a moment, with a curious expression, as someone else catches his eye ...

A BEAM OF HAZY SUNLIGHT shines down through one of the high arched windows of the terminal building ...

onto a MAN. Or an apparition.
The VET squints, closely ...

as the FIGURE seems to emerge from the sunlight. Dark, wraparound SUNGLASSES mark his placid face. He wears corduroy pants, a faded denim shirt. And though he carries no luggage, his cheap canvas shoes look like they've got some miles on them.

We will come to know this "man" as PROT. For now, he just stands there, taking everything in with the fascination of a tourist, as the crowd bustles around him.

Suddenly - in front of the rest rooms -

TWO YOUNG THUGS bump into a middle-aged RUSSIAN WOMAN. One wrenching her SUITCASE away - the other knocking her down.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

As she screams for help, they run off -

shoving past PROT and into the crowd. Prot watches them for
a moment ... as if unsure whether to register anger or
cautions. Then, he turns to the woman.

She is on the ground, dazed and sobbing, while everyone steps
quickly around her.

Prot approaches her. The vet keeping a careful eye on him.

Prot stops, standing over the woman. She looks up at his dark
glasses, stocky shoulders, fearfully. But as he holds his
hand out, and offers a smile ... her fear is strangely allayed.

PROTO
Here, let me help you.

The CRACKLE of WALKIE-TALKIES interrupt, as two TRANSIT COPS
hurry over.

1ST OFFICER
Hold it right there!

VET
Oh, man - he ain't done nothin'.

The OFFICERS nevertheless regard Prot with suspicion.

1ST OFFICER
Step away from her.

PROTO
This woman is hurt.

2ND OFFICER
Ma'am, what happened?

The woman struggles with limited English.

WOMAN
Eh - take bag ... eh - hit.

2ND OFFICER
Who took your bag and hit you? This
man?

The vet shakes his head at the cops, sorrily.

VET
No, no. Couple a punks. They ran ran
off. Y'alwayz comin' around too
late - askin' what? Where? How?
This brother just tryin' to help her.
CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN
(one eye on Prot, trying
to explain, unable to)
Yes - he - he - he.

The 1st officer speaks into his radio:

1ST OFFICER
Four-eight, this is Romano. Robbery
and assault victim with facial wound
at West Forty-Second entrance.
(then, to Prot)
Sir, I'd like you to just stand right
there, answer a couple of questions
for me. Standard procedure.

The 2nd officer carefully handcuffs Prot. Prot gives both
officers a curious smile, as if discerning a foreign custom.

 PROT
Of course.

1ST OFFICER
Are you travelling somewhere?

 PROT
I've arrived. My travels are over for
the time being.

1ST OFFICER
Where's your luggage?

 PROT
Luggage?

1ST OFFICER
Your bags.

 PROT
I don't require luggage.

The officer takes a good, hard look at Prot. His sunglasses,
canvas low-tops, general appearance. Outside, an ambulance
pulls up with a whoop. An M.T. enters the station, starts
tending to the woman.

1ST OFFICER
(pressing Prot)
Do you have a ticket?
(off Prot's look)
A train ticket. A ticket stub.

 PROT
I didn't arrive by train.

CONTINUED
1 CONTINUED: (3)

1ST OFFICER
Then, what are you doing in the train station, sir?

PROT
It seems a likely place to begin.

The officers glance at each other, this is beginning to sound familiar.

VET
Name! Rank! Serial number! All you got to give 'em, my man!

1ST OFFICER
Freddy, chill.
(back to Prot)
Would you remove your sunglasses for me, please?

PROT
I'd rather not. Of course, they warned me about the photokinetic energy from star G-643, or as you would call it, the sun, but, I mean, wow! Your planet is really bright!

A wry understanding moves across both officers' faces.

1ST OFFICER
I see ...
(into his radio)
West Forty-Two. We have an E.D.P.

2ND OFFICER
(to Prot, politely)
I'm going to ask you to come with us.

PROT
(polite in return)
Certainly.

As Prot is led away, the VET straps on his leg and gets himself up. For some strange reason he feels an affinity with Prot.

A2 EXT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - DAY

As Prot is led outside. His dark glasses take in the noisy chaos of New York, with amazement.

The VET hobbles out the doors, as PROT is placed in a POLICE CAR. The 1st officer comes back over to the vet.

1ST OFFICER
You see this fella come out of a gate?

CONTINUED
A2 CONTINUED:

The vet leans closer, with import, to the officer:

VET
Didn't come from no gate. Brother just ... came outta nowhere. You know what I'm sayin'?
A2 CONTINUED: (2)
The officer considers the vet a moment, smelling the alcohol
on his breath.

1ST OFFICER
Yeah, Freddy. I know what you're saying.

B2 EXT. MANHATTAN - DAY - QUICK CUTS:
Steam. Metal sheet on road clatters as POLICE CAR speeds over
it ... pan down through grill over bridge of POLICE CAR
speeding underneath us.

POV from inside police car of metal lattice work on bridge
strobing past.
The reflection of a skyscraper ... becomes a SYRINGE.

B2A EXT. MANHATTAN PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE (MPI) - DAY
Establish hospital. Powell walks to entrance.

C2 INT. MANHATTAN PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE (MPI) - DAY
LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW of DR. POWELL'S OFFICE onto the TRAFFIC
on 112th and Amsterdam below. Horns honk, drivers cuss.
Superimpose: One Month Later

ERNIE (V.O.)
I - I don't want to go outside ...
Because, you know ... there's things ...
that can kill you.

2 INT. DR. POWELL'S OFFICE - SAME
DR. MARK POWELL, who has been staring out his window, closes
it, shutting out the noisy world.

ERNIE sits in a comfortable chair. Pale, nervous, he wears
rubber gloves and speaks through a surgical mask.

ERNIE
(relieved)
Thank you. I mean you breathe all
those chemicals out there. Not to
mention the cosmic rays and that -
that West Nile virus - and the other
one! The new airborne pigeon disease
nobody wants to talk about!

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

POWELL, late-forties, takes his seat. He rolls a gold Montblanc pen in his fingers as he listens to Ernie covering his tedium with the studied patience of a man who's been at his job a long time. Perhaps, too long.

CONTINUED
POWELL
Pigeon disease - I've heard of that.

ERNIE
And - and another thing that's been bothering me - is the food. The cafeteria serves lukewarm food - full of germs! You need to do something about that, Doctor Powell. Heat is the only thing that kills the germs. Heat!

POWELL
Point taken.
(pretends to seriously jot it down on his pad)
We'll look into that right away. In the meantime - I want you to start taking your medication again.

(reminding him)
It's liquid now, so you can't choke on it. It'll help you sleep. And you need to sleep, Ernie. Sleep is good.

Ernie shakes his head vehemently.

ERNIE
Sleep!? You - you - you know what happens when you sleep? You can swallow your tongue - or - or fall out of bed, break your neck.

(slumps in the chair, a hopeless knot of worry)
Or ... or burst a blood vessel in your head. Never even wake up ...

Powell's BEEPER goes off, much to his relief. He glances at the clock on the wall, presses a buzzer by his chair.

ERNIE
Is ... is our time up?

Powell addresses the fear on Ernie's face with a rushed smile.

POWELL
Only for today, Ernie.

He barely waits for the attendant, SIMMS, to come in and escort Ernie out, before speaking into a hand held RECORDER:

POWELL (CONT'D)
Patient one-five-six, Ernie Coleman. Suggest slightly increased dosage of anafronil.
3 INT. POWELL'S OUTER OFFICE - IN A MINUTE

As Powell gets his jacket from the coat rack.

JOYCE TREXLER sits at her computer. Pictures of her husband, a policeman, and her grown children grace her desk. As well as a knit affirmation that reads: "There is a Rest of Your Life." She keeps her eyes on her screen, her voice pleasant:

MRS. TREXLER
Two calls. Your wife, bring home a bottle of wine. And Doctor Chakraborty - transfer from Bellevue he wants you to take a look at.

Joyce hands him a file.

POWELL
Great. Who is it this time, Jesus or Joan of Arc?

Mrs. Trexler just raises an eyebrow to him. After fifteen years as his secretary, she's used to the sarcasm.

MRS. TREXLER
Doctor Chakraborty didn't say.

4 INT. MANHATTAN PSYCHIATRIC - MAIN FLOOR

Powell navigates through NURSES, SOCIAL WORKERS, POLICE transferring homeless psychotics...

Head Nurse BETTY MCALLISTER, an unflappable woman, blocks his path with a clipboard. Beside her, two ATTENDANTS hold a disheveled SCREAMING MAN.

MCALLISTER
Can you admit this patient, Doctor Powell? They found him on the West Side Highway. Auditioning to be somebody's hood ornament.

POWELL
Why is he screaming?

MCALLISTER
He thinks if he stops the world will end.

POWELL
Not before Saturday night. I have Knicks tickets.

McAllister gives him a wry eye, as he signs the admitting paper. Just as he's about to escape, she hands him a second clipboard.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

POWELL
When he calms down I want to sit down
and talk to him.

MCALLISTER
And this is to boost Mrs. Archer's
Zoloft.

POWELL
I don't want to boost Mrs. Archer's
Zoloft. I want Mrs. Archer to get out
and get some exercise.

MCALLISTER
With who -- her personal trainer?
C'mon, Doc. I'm short-handed here.

Powell looks at the clipboard. Reluctantly writes the
prescription. As yet another clipboard is slipped to him.

MCALLISTER
Ed. Haldol. He bit Navarro's thumb
off, yesterday!

POWELL
I know, Betty. But Haldol's not going
to curb his appetite.

He hands her back her clipboard, leaves her with a wink.

POWELL
Maybe we should all start screaming.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE (MPI) - DAY

Powell enters hospital.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Powell releases a harried breath against the closed door -
then notices he shares the elevator with an ATTENDANT and a
PATIENT. The patient, SAL, a big, puggish, middle-aged bald
man gives Powell an evil eye.

SAL
You stink!

As the attendant waits with Sal, Powell obliges him with a
brief smile. As he exits, saying:

POWELL
Have a nice day, Sal.
A6  INT. MANHATTAN PSYCHIATRIC - HALLWAY

Powell moves past a ONE-WAY GLASS. Sees Prot in his room for observation, apparently looking at himself in the glass. Something about Prot -- perhaps simply his arresting appearance -- stops Powell. He stops to look at him. It is as if Prot is looking directly at him.

Powell stops a puzzled beat. Prot smiles.

CUT TO:

6  INT. MPI - CLINIC - DAY

CLOSE ON several X-RAYS and MRI SCANS of a CRANIUM as they're snapped into place by DR. CHAKRABORTY, the chief Clinical Physician. Harvard School has not dulled his affable Indian accent. He turns as Powell enters.

POWELL
Did they change out the one-way glass in the observation room?

CHAKRABORTY
No. Why?

POWELL
Because there's a guy in there -- I could swear he was watching me. What's wrong with him?

CHAKRABORTY
He arrived at Bellevue a month ago, suspicion of hallucinogenic intoxication - but found negative for substances of any kind. Blood values, EKG - all normal. No sign of concussion, no brain tumor, no temporal lobe epilepsy - no indication of organic abnormality whatsoever. However, after one month, amnesia and delusion have persisted.

He looks over his bifocals.

CHAKRABORTY
He claims to be...not human.
(clarifying)
A visitor from another planet.

Powell sits on a stool, studying the new transfer's FILE.

POWELL
They administered thorazine on this guy for three weeks at 300 milligrams a day - and he was unresponsive.
(MORE)

CONTINUED
POWELL (CONT'D)
(looks up at Chakraborty, skeptical)
How the hell can you be unresponsive
to 300 milligrams of thorazine? It's
impossible.

Chakraborty looks over his bifocals, at Powell.

CHAKRABORTY
That's why they've sent him to you.

Powell takes in Chakraborty's look for a moment. Then, with
a frown, looks back down at the FILE.

POWELL
Terrific. No I.D. No Missing Persons
reports matching his description ...

Then, baffled, Powell lifts up from the file ... a sheet of
notebook paper, handwritten in pencil, of the most astounding
alien-looking HIEROGLYPHICS.

POWELL
What the hell is this?

CHAKRABORTY
He had it on him.

Powell can't help let out a wry chuckle.

CONTINUED
POWELL
Let's hope extraterrestrials qualify for Medicaid.

A7 HALLWAY NEAR POWELL'S OFFICE
Navarro and Simms escort Prot to Powell's office.

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON
Powell speaks into his RECORDER. The file in front of him.

POWELL
Patient two eight seven ...
(checking the name)
calls himself ... "Prot."

His door BUZZES. Powell leaves the RECORDER running, gets up from his desk. He straightens his tie, puts on a professional face.

POWELL (CONT'D)
Come in.

Two attendants, NAVARRO and Simms escort ... PROT ... into the room. He wears the same denim shirt, corduroy pants and canvas shoes as we saw him in before.

He smiles, from behind his dark glasses, at Powell.

Navarro, a big, bearish Puerto Rican, reassures Powell with a nod, and a bandaged thumb's up.

NAVARRO
This one's gentle as a pussycat, Doc.

Powell, nevertheless, keeps a careful eye on Prot, who remains standing ... as Navarro and Simms exit, closing the door.

Powell motions to one of two CHAIRS.

POWELL
Won't you have a seat.

PROT
Have a seat, curious expression.

As they both slowly sit, Powell probes Prot's sunglasses.

POWELL
Is it ... too bright in here?

PROT
Quite bright - one of the first things a visitor to your planet notices.
7 CONTINUED:

POWELL
Ah hah. Well, let me introduce myself. I'm -
CONTINUED:

PROT

Powell regards him a moment, surprised.

POWELL
Good. You know where you are. (has to check the file again)
Now ... 'Prot' is it?

PROT
(correcting him, pronouncing it like 'goat')
Prot.

POWELL
I see. Well ... Prot. We're here to talk. I'm going to ask you some questions. If you feel like answering them, you may. (as genuinely as he can)
I want you to feel comfortable.

Prot reaches for a bowl of FRUIT on the desk beside them.

PROT
Thank you. May I?

Powell considers the request, a little wary.

POWELL
Please.

Prot picks an APPLE, admiring it.

PROT
Red Delicious you call this variety. My favorite.

Powell watches as Prot takes a bite with a rapturous sigh.

POWELL
I'd like to begin by asking if you know why you're here?

PROT
Of course. You think I'm crazy.

Powell stares, as Prot devours the apple, core and all.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (2)

POWELL
We prefer to use the term 'ill.'
(forcing a smile)
Do you think you are ... ill?

PROT
A little homesick, perhaps.

POWELL
(careful)
Really? And where is home?

From behind the dark wraparound glasses comes a celestial smile.

PROT
K-PAX.

POWELL
(studying him)
Kay-packs?

PROT
Capital K- hyphen - capitals P-A-X.
Roughly translated into your Roman alphabet.
(starting in on another apple)
K-PAX is a planet.

Powell contemplates the conviction with which this was just said. When Prot suddenly laughs:

PROT (CONT'D)
Don't worry - I'm not going to leap out of your chest!

POWELL
Oh, I'm not worried. It's just that I'm only familiar with nine planets.

PROT
(between bites)
Actually, there are ten, but that doesn't matter - I'm not from your solar system. K-PAX is about a thousand of your light years from here. Near what you call your Constellation LYRA.

POWELL
(raising an eyebrow)
Quite a ways. I'm curious ... how did you get to Earth?
PROT
That's somewhat difficult to explain.

POWELL
Try me.

Prot pauses from eating, trying to think of how to put it.

PROT
It's a matter of harnessing the energy of light.
(see Powell is not going to get it)
I know that sounds - crazy - to you. You beings are eons away from discovering light travel.

Powell watches ... as Prot raises a hand so that his fingers touch the hazy SUNLIGHT filtering through the window blinds.

POWELL
You travel at the speed of light?

PROT
Oh, no. We can travel many times that speed, various multiples of \( c \).
(laughs)
Otherwise, the trip here would have taken me about a thousand years, now wouldn't it have?

Powell tries to couch his puzzled amusement with seriousness.

POWELL
What if I were to tell you - that according to a man who lived on our planet, named Einstein, nothing can travel faster than the speed of light.

Prot looks at Powell, with an astute smile.

PROT
I would say you misunderstand Einstein, Doctor Powell - may I call you Mark?
(getting chummy)
What your Einstein said, Mark, was that nothing can accelerate to the speed of light because its mass would become infinite. Einstein said nothing about entities already traveling at the speed of light, or faster - at tachyon speeds.

Powell stares back at him, at a complete loss.

CONTINUED
POWELL
Tachyon ...

PROT
Entities traveling faster than the
speed of light are called tachyons.
You can look it up.

POWELL
(getting a little peeved)
Thank you, I will.

Prot watches Powell jot down something with his Montblanc pen.

PROT
I detect a note of skepticism, Doctor
Powell.

POWELL
Not at all. It's just that -- you
speak English so well, I'm amazed.

PROT
It's not a very difficult language to
learn. You should try speaking wxljqz-
p't.

Powell puts his pen down, even more amazed at the guttural
clicks and sounds that just came out of Prot's mouth.

POWELL
I'm a little confused. Maybe you
could explain to me, how it is -- as a
visitor from space -- you look so much
like me -- or any other Earth person?

PROT
(patiently)
Why is a soap bubble round?

POWELL
(perplexedly)
Why is a soap bubble round?

PROT
For an educated person, you repeat
things quite a bit, Mark. A soap
bubble is round because that is the
most energy-efficient configuration.
Similarly, on this planet I look like
you - on K-PAX, I look like a K-PAXian.

Powell has had just about enough of this.

CONTINUED
POWELL
One more question - Prot.
(glancing at the clock)
Why did you want to come to Earth?

PROT
(finishing apple #2)
Pure curiosity. I had never been to
a Class BA-3 planet.

POWELL
Class ... BA-3?

Prot regards Powell with a patient sigh.

PROT
Early stage of evolution, future
uncertain.

STAY ON POWELL, as he feigns a look of understanding.
A8 OMITTED

A8A EXT. POWELL HOUSE - EVENING

Powell enters house.

8 INT. POWELL'S HOME - SUBURBAN CONNECTICUT - EVENING

As Powell comes in, carrying a bottle of wine. He leaves his briefcase in the front hallway.

The house is well-to-do, art on the walls, a grand piano facing a woodsy patio.

Powell's daughters, NATALIE, 6, and GABBY, 9, sit trancelike in front of their PlayStation on a giant TV screen.

Powell scratches their heads, in greeting...

POWELL
Gabby, you do your homework?

Gabby nods, barely looking up. While Natalie presents her father with a grin, displaying a new gap in her teeth.

NATALIE
I lost another tooth.

CONTINUED
POWELL
Good. Maybe the tooth fairy will come tonight.

He leaves her with that, and a little smile, heads on toward the kitchen. Natalie, watching him go.

NATALIE
There is no tooth fairy. There's just you and Mom.

RA9  INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Powell carries the wine into the kitchen. Where RACHEL POWELL is busy taking the components of a reheated dinner from the oven, and placing it on the kitchen table which she has set for two. She is a vibrant woman, and it's clear she has taken pains with the meal.

RACHEL
Kids already ate.

She stops to kiss Powell. A deep, committed kiss.

RACHEL
How was your day?

POWELL
Train was late.

He turns to the counter, rolls up his sleeves, goes about uncorking the wine.

CONTINUED
POWELL
Six-fifteen didn't leave the station
until almost six-thirty.
(pours two glasses,
 remarking to himself,
 with half amusement)
Should've caught the nearest beam of
light.

She finishes tossing the salad, regards him, curiously.

RACHEL
You caught what?

POWELL
Never mind.

He places a glass of wine in front of her, with a smile. He's
really filled it to the top.

POWELL
How was your day?

She watches him gulp down half his glass of Pinot Blanc and
turn his attention to the mail on the counter.

RACHEL
Well - I sent in the deposit for the
house on the Cape for the last two
weeks of August - which works out
perfectly, since Gabby gets out of
camp on the fifteenth -

Powell regards her a moment, at a loss.

POWELL
Sent in a deposit? Damnit, Rache,
that wasn't a definite. We were just
talking - I said maybe. Maybe some
time in August looked clear.

A dispirited look crosses her pretty eyes ... as he turns back
to the mail, finding the new Journal of Psychiatry in the
stack.

RACHEL
Maybe we should start paying you for
your time. Do you have a family rate?

POWELL
Oh, look. They published my letter.

RACHEL
I had a talk with Natalie about being
in the after school program next year,
in case I go back to teaching.

CONTINUED
RA9 CONTINUED: (2)

RACHEL
(then feeling like she's
talking to herself)
And ... this morning ... my head fell
off, but I was able to sew it back on
with dental floss. Waxed, of course.

Powell stops flipping through the journal, turns to her.

POWELL
Dental floss? What?
(then, realizing,
apologizing)
I'm sorry, honey - I wasn't listening.

She just takes a sip of wine. Hungry, having waited for him.

RACHEL
I know. Come on, let's eat.

He sits down, brings the wine with him. Tries to make things
good again with a smile and a sigh.

POWELL
Train was late. I'm tired. And to
top it off, the city's dumping
patients on us ...
9  INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

Powell turns off the water, sits on the tub's edge, sleeve wet. Natalie, in the bubble bath, gives him the silent treatment.

As Powell tries to get her to look at him, he thinks a moment, laughs to himself, adopting a mock seriousness:

POWELL
Did you know ... that we live on a
Class BA-3 planet?

Natalie finally meets his eyes, with a bewildered kid's brow.

NATALIE
Why are you talking crazy?

10  INT. WARD 2 - DAY ROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON HOWIE, 30 years old, unkempt hair, thick wire- rim glasses covered with grime. He reads a dog-eared volume of the Time/Life Nature Library, eyes racing across the pages. Ernie sits with him at the same table.

About him, in the large DAY ROOM, we see the other charges of the ward. BESS, a skinny, dread-locked black woman with the saddest face, sits in front of the TV, watching a snowboarding segment. Russell is walking around with his bible. Sal sits alone coloring.

CONTINUED
10 CONTINUED:

Prot sits by himself, jotting notes into a GREEN NOTEBOOK.

    ERNIE
    Howie, I think you should talk to him.
    Go on -- Go on.

Howie, who has been stealing glances at Prot, slides over to Prot and brings him the pencil sharpener. Prot looks at it and uses it to sharpen his pencil.

CONTINUED
continuing:

HOWIE
You're really from ...
(points)
...up there?

Prot turns his dark glasses to the ceiling, but really beyond it, then back to Howie, with a discerning smile.

 PROT
Indeed. I'm from K-PAX.

Howie presses him further.

 HOWIE
What ... what sort of place is it?

 PROT
Well ... K-PAX is somewhat bigger than your planet. It is ... a beautiful world, as is Earth of course, with its infinite color and variety of life ... and we are circled by seven purple moons.

Sal, nearby, overhearing, comments to himself as he walks to art room.

 SAL

Ernie mutters the word "K-PAX" to himself, and again, trying it on for size.

Howie's thick glasses remain intent on Prot.

 HOWIE
Go on. Please go on.

Prot regards Howie's expectant face, obliging.

 PROT
Well ... K-PAX is especially lovely when K-MON and K-RIL are in conjunction. Those are our two suns, what you call AGAPE and SATORI -

Sal, with a laugh of derision, to himself:

 SAL
Man, whatever they got you on -- I want a dose.

 HOWIE
(repeating to himself, as if storing the information)
Agape. Satori. Two suns.
Sal, still painting, makes a face at Prot as Prot heads to library for a book.

SAL
Obiwan Loonobie.

Russell, who has been "preaching" as he paces.

RUSSELL
Take heed...that no man deceiveth... for many shall come in my name...

Prot brings a book about astronomy to Howie.

Russell pauses from his babbling, looks toward Prot.

SAL
(directed at Russell)
Satan, Lord, Satan, Lord -- fire and hell, fire and hell. Satansatansatan! Stink! Stink! Stinkeroo!

Prot gives Howie book.

Howie, ignoring Sal, intent on Prot, points to the alien hieroglyphics.

HOWIE
What's that? What language is that? K-PAX?

PROT
K-PAXian, yes.

SAL
Gotta know every little thing, don't you? Stink! Stink! STINK!

Now Ernie joins in.
Howie suddenly bolts for a BOOKSHELF. Flinging aside a World Atlas, he grabs an old Time/Life Book of Space, and starts rifling through it. Repeating "Agape ... Satori ..."

SAL
Don't mind him, he stinks, too. Gotta know everything.

Now, Ernie, who has been sitting fearfully on the far side of his bench, slides closer to Prot.

ERNIE
Does - does it rain there? On ... K ... K-PAX? Because I don't like rain.

 PROT
We have very little water, compared to earth - no oceans, no rivers, very little precipitation at all.

ERNIE
(relieved)
That's good ... I don't like water. You can drown in water.

SAL
Scared to death. He'd shit at his own shadow.

ERNIE
I'm - I'm scared of death. That's why I'm here. I know that. At least I'm not a real -
(makes a 'cuckoo' sound)
- like - like you!

SAL
Yeah? You know how bad you smell?

 PROT
Gentlemen, gentlemen.

His calm voice gets their attention.

 PROT
I have been studying your planet. And I must say this form of communication you call "shouting" yields no results. It is a primitive behavioral trait left over from your forest dwelling ancestors. Most advanced beings in the Galaxy abandoned this type of behavior millions of years ago.

Sal and Ernie look at Prot, then each other. Suddenly feeling strangely ashamed.
ERIE

Does it rain there? On ... K ...
... K-PAX? Because I don't like rain.

Prot smiles at Ernie, seeing his fear.

PROT

We have very little water, compared to
earth - no oceans, no rivers, very
little precipitation at all.

ERIE

(relieved)

That's good ... I don't like water.
You can drown in water.

SAL

(to himself)
Scared to death. He'd shit at his own
shadow.

ERIE

I'm - I'm scared of death. I know
what I am. That's why I'm here. At
least I'm not a real -
(makes a 'cuckoo' sound)
- like - like you!

SAL

Yeah? You know how bad you smell?
You smell.

Sal looks at the book. Prot gets up, walks over to put it
back in the bookshelf. But stops by Sal.

PROT

(whispers in Sal's ear)

I have been studying your planet. And
I must say this form of communication
you call "shouting" is a primitive
behavioral trait left over from your
forest dwelling ancestors. Most
advanced beings in the Galaxy
abandoned this type of behavior
millions of years ago as it yields no
results.

His calm voice has made Sal's demeanor change. Suddenly, Sal
is feeling strangely ashamed.

Prot goes to the TV room and watches Bess looking at TV.

Prot then sits in a chair outside the room and writes in his
green book.
11 INT. WARD - NURSE'S STATION - SAME TIME

Powell wears a mild frown, judging Prot through the WINDOW. As Nurse McAllister prepares her morning MEDICATION CART.

MCALLISTER
I don't see any meds for two-eight-seven - Prot.

POWELL
I haven't concluded whether it's psychotic or psychogenic. So ... nothing for now.

MCALLISTER
(looks into the day room)
He certainly has a way about him. Even up on 3 and 4 this morning, don't ask me how news spreads, everyone wants to meet the "alien patient."

Powell gives her a ridiculous look.

POWELL
Alien patient.

12 OMITTED

A13 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

DR. CLAUDIA VILLERS, Director of the Hospital, chairs a meeting of the senior staff, including Powell, Betty McAllister, Chakraborty and DR. WALTER FLEEN, as well as several RESIDENTS.

POWELL
...It just seems glib to call him a psychotic. That's a wastebasket diagnosis.

FLEEN
He thinks he comes from outer space. What do you think's wrong with him -- jet lag?

POWELL
How come he didn't respond to the Haldol?

VILLERS
Haldol can make you more psychotic. It's rare, but it happens.

FLEEN
I'd say try him on a newer, better agent.

CONTINUED
POWELL
They've already tried Risperidal.

FLEEN
Maybe Zyprexa.

POWELL
We don't even have a history on him. Look, I'm not saying that medication can't be a useful tool to help someone like this, but --

FLEEN
He might be a good subject for the betazaine protocol. The drug is in a clinical trial here --

POWELL
You want to experiment on him before we have a diagnosis.

FLEEN
You have some better idea?

POWELL
He's not a danger to anyone. How about getting to know him first?

FLEEN
You know, Mark, I think on some level it pisses you off that it's become so easy to actually help people.

VILLERS
The clinical trial requires consent, which means locating the patient's family.

[gestures to files]
How are we going to reach his family, Mark -- the Hubble telescope? In the meantime, we have ten new transfers to take care of this morning.

As everyone turns to a new file, Villers shoots Powell a look. As she turns to her file, Powell looks at her.

POWELL
You know, Claudia, maybe what's wrong with him is that he is.

VILLERS
Is what?

POWELL
From the planet K-PAX.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN PSYCHIATRIC - PARKING LOT - EVENING
(PREVIOUSLY SHOT AS SCENE 7AA)
Grey, brick institution behind wrought iron gates. Powell follows Villers to her car.

VILLERS
I know that look, Mark.

POWELL
Come on, Claudia. We don't even know what meds to feed him. He's not textbook amnesia, he's not textbook delusional - he's not textbook anything.

VILLERS
I read the police report on him, E.D.P., possibly violent.

POWELL
Oh, so now the police have credentials?

VILLERS
I'm just being an administrator. I like it when things run smoothly, especially my hospital. I sleep better at night.

She gets into her car. Then looks back up at him. Lets out a breath.

VILLERS
He better not be a problem. You watch him.

Powell smiles at her, shows his thumbs.

POWELL
Don't worry. So far the only thing he's bitten into is an apple.

CUT TO:
INT./EXT. THE 6:15 METRO NORTH - EVENING
(PREVIOUSLY SHOT AS SC. A8)

Powell, clutching his bottle of WINE in its paper bag, sits with the other COMMUTERS. Talking on CELL PHONES or absorbed with their PALM PILOTS...Nobody acknowledging another's existence...
Rev. 02/06/01 (2nd Yellow)

C13 CONTINUED:

Powell looks out the train window ... Cars clogging the Bruckner Expressway ... Boarded-up high-rises in the Bronx ... Graffiti ... Giant lips on a dot-com billboard.

Powell looks at the GIRL beside him -- a sexy girl in her twenties, bopping to the loud music on her WALKMAN as she gazes out the window.

POWELL (V.O.)
You know, I'd really like to kiss you.
Let's face it, you have an unbelievable mouth...I know it seems unlikely, but what is sex, anyway?
It's always a gamble. You know what they use to call the dice at the craps table? Bones. That's what sex is.
A roll of the bones.

The girl can't hear him ... An elderly WOMAN sitting behind Powell leans forward to eavesdrop ...

POWELL (V.O.)
Of course it would break my wife's heart and probably destroy what's left of my marriage. I'd just wind up feeling guilty and terrible.

Then Powell says out loud:

POWELL
But I'd do it. Let's do it!
(beat)
Just to feel...something.

The girl turns. Looks at Powell. Lifts off her headphones.

GIRL
What?

POWELL
Nothing.

CUT TO:

13 OMITTED

A14 OMITTED

AND

14
POWELL
What makes it unpleasant?

 PROT
(searching for just how to say it)
It's a ... painful procedure.
POWELL
(feigning seriousness)
Is the pain associated with
intercourse itself, with ejaculation,
or with becoming aroused?

PROT
It is associated with the entire
process. I am aware these activities
result in pleasurable sensations for
you humans. But for us, the effect is
quite the opposite. This applies for
both the males and females of our
species - and incidentally - for most
other beings around the Galaxy.

POWELL
Can you compare the effect to anything
I might be able to understand - like
a toothache, or - ?

PROT
It's more like having your gonads
cought in a vice, except we feel it
all over. To make matters worse, the
sensation is associated with something
like your nausea, accompanied by a
very bad smell. The moment of climax
is like being kicked in the stomach
and falling into a pool of mot shit.

Powell can't believe he's going along with this.

POWELL
Mot shit.

PROT
A mot is a being much like your skunk,
only far more potent.

POWELL
If the experience is so terrible, how
do you reproduce?

PROT
Like your porcupines. As carefully as
possible. Needless to say, overpopulation is not a problem for us.

Prot laughs. Then, as Powell watches, incredulous, Prot pulls
a pencil and a little RED NOTEBOOK from his shirt pocket and
starts jotting a note of his own.

POWELL
What - what are you doing?
PROT
You have reminded me of something to
include in my report.

POWELL
Your - report?

PROT
It's my custom to compile descriptions
of the various places and beings I
encounter throughout the galaxy.

Powell just sits there ... puts his own pen down.

INT. WARD 2 - MORNING

WE FOLLOW PROT, as he moves cheerfully through the ward. He
greets Nurse McAllister, who is readying her medication cart.

PROT
Good morning, Betty!

MCALLISTER
(with a look of surprise)
Good morning ... Prot.

He moves on, greeting Navarro, who is escorting a BABBLING MAN.

PROT
Good morning, Raul! Good morning,
Mr. Friedman!

Navarro gives him a cautious look.

NAVARRO
S'up.

Prot continues down the hallway, passing Maria, who wears a
red dress today, her hair teased up.

PROT
Good morning, Maria!

MARIA
(sultry accent)
I'm Vanessa.

Prot takes his notebook out, makes a curious note of this.
Then heads into the DAY ROOM where Bess sits, with her blank
expression, in front of the TV.

PROT
Good morning, Bess!
Bess remains staring at the TV. Prot waits, expecting her to reply. When she doesn't, he is not sure what to do.

ERNIE
She never talks to anybody. Afraid smoke'll come out of her mouth. Been here since she was a little girl.
(eyes Bess)
Shouldn't play with matches. Very dangerous.

HOWIE
(admonishing Ernie)
It was an electrical fire. Don't make up stories.

Prot's dark glasses linger on Bess...as she remains oblivious. He gives her a polite smile, and continues on.
15 CONTINUED: (2)

SIMMS
Come on, Doris, you know you have to
see the doctor. Look what I brought
just for you! All we have to do is go
see the doctor ...

A HAND appears from the room, takes the cake, flings it at
Simms.

SIMMS (CONT'D)
God damnit! Do that again and you go
up to Three!

MRS. ARCHER (FROM ROOM)
Oh, poo, poo, poo!

Simms, wiping frosting from his face, sees Prot.

SIMMS
Never ever comes out of her room. Ran
down Park Avenue naked as a jaybird
when her husband left her. Poor
S.O.B. I don't know how he put up
with her.

As Simms walk off, Prot, intrigued, moves closer to the room.

16 INT. MRS. ARCHER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MRS. ARCHER, a once glamorous society belle, sits at a table
next to her bed. She wears a bathrobe and sips tea from a
plastic cup, as if it were fine china. With impatience, she
rings a little silver bell.

Just as Prot peeks in her doorway.

MRS. ARCHER
The service here is atrocious!

 PROT
Good morning, you are Mrs. Archer.
Doris.

Mrs. Archer stares at him, his dark glasses, his smile.

MRS. ARCHER
You aren't the help ...
(flustered, fixing her
hair)
I wasn't expecting any gentleman
callers until this afternoon.

In a state, she checks herself in a silver compact, adding
some blush to her cheeks.

CONTINUED
16 CONTINUED:

PROT
You have set a place for two...

Mrs. Archer looks back at her table straightening it, a little defensive.

MRS. ARCHER
I'm expecting someone.

Prot regards her, strangely, looks around again, curious brow.

PROT
Have you been waiting a long time?

Mrs. Archer remains staring at him. Then clears her throat, politely. Hiding a vulnerable hitch in her voice.

MRS. ARCHER
Eleven years.
(then, head high again)
Some -- around here -- might call that crazy. I prefer...to call it romantic.

PROT
Romantic...

MRS. ARCHER
(sees his expression of unfamiliarity)
Like a waltz in the moonlight? A candlelight dinner? A sunset?

Prot smiles.

PROT
Ah, yes. On K-PAX, we have two suns. They rise together only once every two hundred years.
(as if faraway a moment)
Now that is a sight...

An enchanted smile cracks across Mrs. Archer's makeup. She pours him some tea in a plastic cup.

MRS. ARCHER
Won't you...won't you sit down?

17 INT. CLINIC - MORNING

Chakraborty, a strange look on his face, hands Prot's EYE CHART to Powell.

CHAKRABORTY
He most definitely has a sensitivity to white light. But...
(MORE)

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

CHAKRABORTY (CONT'D)

it is his range I think you will find
interesting.

Powell takes a disagreeably stiff sip of coffee, puts it down, taking the chart. Trying to decipher it.

POWELL

What am I looking at?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (2)

CHAKRABORTY
(pointing to the numbers)
He can detect light at a wavelength of
three hundred to four hundred
angstroms. Ultra-violet.

Powell looks at Chakraborty with some confusion. He peers at
Chakraborty, hoping for some kind of explanation from him.
Chakraborty hesitates:

CHAKRABORTY (CONT'D)
Of course ... Prot's explanation is
that ... due to his planet's peculiar
quality of light caused by its two
suns, K-PAXians are used to light
conditions much like our twilight most
of the time.

POWELL
What the hell are you saying, Chak?
I didn't think human beings could see
ultra-violet light.

CHAKRABORTY
They can't.

Powell, utterly bewildered, looks at Prot's eye CHART in his
hand. He tries to think. He squints up - at the lights in
Chak's office. It's bright in here.

A18 HALLWAY NEAR POWELL'S OFFICE

Powell walks down hallway toward his office. Worker opening
"mushroom lights" from boxes in hall.

18 INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Powell, with an intent look, unscrews a light bulb from a
lamp, replacing it with a dim NIGHT LIGHT BULB. He goes to
his other lamp, does the same. Then he closes his window
blinds. He looks around, satisfied. The room is dark ...
like twilight.

Mrs. Trexler watches him, strangely, as she files in the OUTER
OFFICE. She does not see Navarro leave Prot off at the door,
behind her. Prot walks in, unescorted.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

PROT
Good afternoon, Joyce. That is a
lovely configuration you are wearing.

Mrs. Trexler whirled around, startled. After a moment, she
allows herself to glance down at her frumpy sweater, skirt,
Dr. Scholl's shoes.

MRS. TREXLER
Thank you.
(an uneasy smile)
Macy's.

Powell comes out of his office, puts on a friendly face.

POWELL
Come in, Prot, come in.

He exchanges a glance with Trexler, leading Prot into his
office, closing the door.

She stands there a moment, then fixes her sweater.

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Prot stands there, surprised at first by the dark lighting in
the room. Then ... with a wide, pleasant sigh ...

As Powell observes him, intently ...

Prot reaches up and slowly removes his GLASSES.

PROT
This is much better. A lot like home.

Powell peers, for the first time ... at Prot's EYES.

They shine in the dim light, very much human - yet - very much
like some nocturnal animal. He plucks a papaya from the fruit
basket and takes a bite, sitting down, comfortably.

As Powell remains staring ... Prot takes out his red notebook.

PROT
I wonder if we might begin by my
asking you a question.

POWELL
Please.

PROT
Bess. She does not speak. Why is
that?

CONTINUED
Powell takes a moment, interested by the question. Interested that Prot would ask it. Prot tilts his head, curiously, as if trying to understand. Powell decides to stay with this, sensing he may be onto something ...

POWELL
You see, on our planet ... sometimes things happen to people and they just shut down. But enough about Bess ...

Prot sits there a moment. He thinks about jotting something down in his notebook. But then, just closes it, tucks it away.

Powell moves over to his window, peeks out the blinds at the snarl of traffic on Amsterdam Avenue, people hustling here and there. He brings an eye back to Prot.

POWELL
I wonder if you might tell me more about your home?

PROT
What would you like to know?

POWELL
Well ... did you have a job on K-PAX?

PROT
(finding this funny)
No one has a "job" on K-PAX. Really, Mark, is it that difficult to understand? On K-PAX, if something needs to be done, you do it.

POWELL
There must be jobs people don't want to do. Hard labor, cleaning public toilets? I mean, that's only human nature.

PROT
There are no humans on K-PAX.

POWELL
Ah, I forgot.

PROT
Besides, there's nothing that needs to be done that is really unpleasant. Look, you defecate, don't you?

Powell gives him a ridiculous look.

POWELL
Not as often as I'd like.
PROT
Do you find it unpleasant?

POWELL
(finding this even more ridiculous)
Sometimes.

PROT
Do you get someone to do it for you?

POWELL
I would if I could.

PROT
But you don't, and you don't think twice about it. You just do it. And it does have its rewards, right?

Powell resists the temptation to laugh.

POWELL
Okay, look, let's move on. Do you have family on K-PAX?
19 CONTINUED: (3)

Prot finishes the papaya, licks his fingers. Sensing Powell is up to something.

PROT
Things are not the same on K-PAX as they are on Earth, Mark. We don't have "families" as you know them. The idea of a 'family' would be a non sequitur on our planet - and most others, I might add.

POWELL
(tries to see past the smile)
Are you saying that ... as a child, you had no home to go to?

PROT
Exactly, now you've got it.

POWELL
In other words, you never knew your parents.

PROT
On K-PAX, children are not raised by their biological parents, but by everyone. They circulate among us, learning from one, then another ...

POWELL
(pressing him)
What about brothers and sisters?

PROT
No one on K-PAX has more than one child. There is little reason to, since the average lifespan of a K-PAXian is a thousand of your years.

POWELL
Do you have a child?

PROT
(quickly)
No.

POWELL
Do you have a wife waiting for you back on K-PAX?

Prot releases a tedious breath, as if not caring for the direction of this conversation.

CONTINUED
PROT
Mark, Mark, Mark. You haven't been listening. We don't have marriage on K-PAX - no husbands, no wives, no families - get it? To put it more correctly, the entire population is one big family.

POWELL
I see. What about a societal structure then? "Government?"

PROT
There is no need for one.

POWELL
What about laws?

PROT
No laws, no lawyers.

POWELL
Well then how does one know what's right and wrong on K-PAX?

PROT
(as if this were a stupid question)
Every being knows what's right and wrong.

CONTINUED
POWELL
But what if someone did do something wrong? Committed a murder? Rape?

PROT
Let me tell you something, Marko. Most humans subscribe to the policy of "an eye for an eye," "a life for a life." Most of your religions are famous for this formula, known throughout the Universe for its stupidity. Your Christ and your Buddha had a different vision, but nobody paid any attention to them, not even the Christians and Buddhists. So, no. On K-PAX beings do not kill other beings, but if they did there'd be no punishment. Apparently this is impossible for Earth beings to understand, but it's the secret of life, believe me.

POWELL
No crime, brutality, violence on K-PAX?

PROT
You humans. Sometimes it's hard to imagine how you've made it this far. Crime is less popular than sex, even. There's simply no need for it.
CONTINUED: (5)

Powell remains staring at Prot ... feeling the thread of reality slipping away again ...

EXT. POWELL BACKYARD - CONNECTICUT - MEMORIAL DAY

CHICKEN, HOT DOGS AND CORN SIZZLING ON AN OUTDOOR GRILL.

A swing hangs from a giant spruce. Natalie and Gabby are being chased by their cousin, JOSH, 10, around the big yard.

Powell, lost in thought, watches over the grill. As Rachel comes up, snaps her fingers in front of his face, playfully. Then gives him a kiss.

RACHEL
Where were you just now?

Powell just gives her a frustrating smile, and puts the corn on a platter, handing it to her.

RACHEL
Kids! Wash up!

Powell knocks back his glass of wine, leaves it by the grill. And follows her across the yard, with a second platter heaped with hot dogs and chicken - almost tripping over SHASTA, a golden retriever, who is being chased under the back porch.

POWELL
Josh, don't tease the dog!

He sets the platter down on a PATIO TABLE - at which sit his sister ABBY, late-thirties, and her husband, STEVE, a burly, bearded fellow.

POWELL (CONT'D)
Here we are.

Napkins are opened, and hungry "Ooohs" evoked. The kids join them at the table. As they all sit down and start eating, Abby and Rachel eye each other, before Abby addresses her brother.

ABBY
I'm not taking sides here but we're going to kidnap you to get you up to the Cape.

POWELL
(to Abby, but with a smile to Rachel)
I see my wife has been talking.
Rachel gives him a mischievous little smile back.

POWELL
(changing the subject)
Steve, how was the drive from
Princeton?

Steve wipes corn off his mouth, his voice a friendly Tennessee
drawl.

STEVE
Not too bad.

ABBY
We stopped off to see Michael.

Powell meets Abby's eyes. There is tension between brother
and sister.

POWELL
That was nice of you. Quite a detour.

ABBY
It was his birthday.

POWELL
I know it was his birthday. I sent
him a card with a nice, big check. As
usual.

Abby exchanges a glance with Rachel, who stays out of it.
Abby looks back at her brother, lets a beat pass, can't help
herself:

ABBY
You know, it wouldn't kill you to pick
up a phone once in a while and talk to
your own son.

Powell catches a look from his two young daughters.

POWELL
Thank you, Abby. By the way, I put
him through Dartmouth - he knows how
to pick up a phone, too.

RACHEL
(trying to diffuse things)
I was thinking of inviting him for
Christmas.

POWELL
He goes to his mother's for Christmas.
He won't come here.
ABBY
How do you know? When was the last time you asked him?

POWELL
Am I on the couch, here, sis?

Abby says no more. And Powell does not give her the satisfaction of taking this any further. They continue eating. After a moment, Powell turns to Steve, thoughtfully.

POWELL (CONT'D)
Steve, I have an unusual favor to ask.

STEVE
What can I do you for, Doctor B.

POWELL
Well ... I have a patient who seems to know something about your field.

RACHEL
You have a patient who's an astronomer?

ABBY
(puts her arms proudly around Steve's girth)
I beg your pardon, Full Professor of Astrophysics as of next month.

RACHEL
Steve - congratulations!

POWELL
Congratulations, Steve.

STEVE
Thank you, thank you.
(then, curious)
So who's this patient of yours?

POWELL
(wipes corn off his hands)
He claims to come from a planet he calls "K-PAX."

NATALIE
KayPacks?
The KIDS laugh, repeating the funny name several times.

POWELL
Says it's a thousand light years from here, near the constellation Lyra.

CONTINUED
STEVE
Big head, green? About this high?
(puts his hand at 3 feet)
I think I know the guy.

As they all laugh, Powell remains mildly serious.

POWELL
No, no - he's very convincing.

Rachel, Abby, Steve, and the kids stare at him.
Powell views them, with an embarrassed laugh.

POWELL
I mean – of course, he's human! He's just ... the most convincing delusional I've ever come across.
(to Steve)
And I'd like to prove to him that this - K-PAX - is a figment of his imagination.
(pours himself some lemonade)
If I can do that ... then, maybe I can find out who he really is.

ABBY
Am I hearing right? The great Doctor Powell needs help with a patient?

Powell just gives his sister a tired look.

Steve scratches his bushy beard.

STEVE
Constellation Lyra, hmmm. Sure - I can give you a whole bunch of questions to ask your fella.

INT. WARD - MORNING

As Powell hurries down the hallway with Nurse McAllister.

MCALLISTER
I don't know what's wrong. All his books and papers and everything are spread out over his desk, like always. But he's just -

They get to the ONE-WAY MIRROR, look into the DAY ROOM, to see HOWIE, just sitting calmly, gazing out a window.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

MCALLISTER (CONT'D)
- sitting there.

Powell stares at the peaceful Howie, in utter amazement.

POWELL
Did someone change his medication?

MCALLISTER
No. I gave him his regular, Anafranil, point two hundred fifty milligrams.

POWELL
Well, something's wrong with him. An obsessive compulsive doesn't just sit there looking out the window.

INT. DAY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Powell enters. Slowly approaching Howie, he notices that Howie's glasses are, for the first time, clean. And through them, Howie remains gazing, with fixed purpose, out the window.

POWELL
Howie?

HOWIE
Good morning, Doctor Powell.

Powell leans down to squint out the window with him.

POWELL
Howie ... what are you looking for?

HOWIE
The bluebird.

POWELL
(takes a moment with this)
The bluebird?

HOWIE
Bluebird of happiness. Prot told me to find the bluebird of happiness.

Powell's expression changes.

POWELL
Prot ... told you?

Howie nods, his eyes not leaving the gardens and brick walls of the gated hospital grounds outside.

CONTINUED
22 CONTINUED:

HOWIE
It's a task, the first of three. I
don't know what the other two are,
yet. He'll tell me.
(smiles, proudly)
If I complete all three, I'll be cured.

Powell's look tightens.

23 EXT. HOSPITAL - GROUNDS - DAY

Shrubs and flowers line the high, old brick walls. A fountain
bubbles. Attendants slowly walk patients along the paths.

Ernie stands under a tree, taking deep breaths. As Prot
coaches him, reassuringly.

PROT
Maintain breathing. That's it. You
see? There are none of these "ammonia
particles" you are worried about. For
one thing, I would be able to see
them - and I don't.

Ernie, breathing, manages a nervous smile - then spies Powell
marching across the grass toward them.

ERNIE
Uh-oh. Winged monkey at two o'clock.

Prot turns, curiously, as Powell marches up.

POWELL
Excuse us for a moment, Ernie.

Ernie looks from Prot to Powell. Then, fearfully, up at the
sky. He scrambling backwards across the lawn, up the veranda
steps, and into the refuge of the hospital.

While Powell views Prot with an aggravated breath.

POWELL (CONT'D)
It's one thing to take an interest in
your fellow patients - it's quite
another to make them think you can
cure them!

Prot regards Powell, baffled at his angry tone.

PROT
You seem overly upset, Mark. To
borrow a phrase from Raul - you need
to "chill."

(MORE)
PROT (CONT'D)  
(with a smile)  
For your information - every being has the capability to cure themselves. This is something we have known on K-PAX for millions of years.

POWELL  
Listen to me! On this planet, I am a doctor. You are a patient.

PROT  

POWELL  
(in a burst of anger)  
It is not your job to cure Howie or Ernie or Maria or anyone. It's mine!

PROT  
Then, why haven't you cured them yet?

As Powell stares at Prot, fishing for a reply -  
Prot carefully takes out several folded NOTEBOOK PAGES, hands them to him.

PROT (CONT'D)  
By the way, here are the answers to the questions you gave me. I hope you find them to your satisfaction.

Powell, left with nothing to say, just takes the pages.

24 INT. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY OBSERVATORY - NEW JERSEY

Steve scratches his beard, mystified, as he looks over Prot's NOTEBOOK PAGES. Behind him, we see a giant telescope and a vast array of digital instruments and computers. He speaks on the phone:

STEVE  
I don't know what to say, Mark. This is ... pretty wild stuff.

25 INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - SAME  
Powell leans back in his chair, with a confident smile.

POWELL  
Gibberish, huh?
INT. PRINCETON OBSERVATORY - SAME

Steve's expression says otherwise, as he examines Prot's neat HANDWRITING on the pages spread out before him.

STEVE
Well ... not exactly. See - your patient indicates his planet "K-PAX" orbiting an eclipsing binary star system, Agape and Satori, near the constellation Lyra.

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - SAME

Powell straightens up in his chair, skeptical, phone to ear.

POWELL
Okay, so he could have read about it somewhere.

INT. OBSERVATORY - SAME

STEVE
That's the funny thing, Mark. Not really. You see ... except for my boss, Duncan Flynn, who's one of the foremost astrophysicists in the world, and maybe - two or three of his colleagues - nobody knows much about the possibility of planets in this star system yet. It hasn't even been reported in any journals.

He looks around the observatory, lowering his voice into the phone, with a shrewd smile:

STEVE (CONT'D)
Tell me, honestly. Duncan put you up to this? You know, like a joke?

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - SAME

STAY ON POWELL - as he holds the phone. He attempts a little laugh, unwilling to believe what he's hearing, then glances into the outer office at Mrs. Trexler, who looks up from her work at him, oddly.

POWELL
It's ... no joke, Steve.
(then, grasping)
You wouldn't happen to know of any missing astrophysicists would you?
30 INT. OBSERVATORY - SAME

Steve shakes his head, laughs.

STEVE
Can't say I do.
(then, seriously)
But there's one or two around here
who'd sure like to meet this fella of
yours.

31 INT. POWELL HOUSE - STUDY - EVENING

Powell scribbles on a pad, stymied, as he listens over
headphones to a CASSETTE RECORDER. He ejects a tape, puts in
another. We see that it is labelled Prot - Session 7.

Thick MEDICAL VOLUMES lay open around him ... Psychogenic and
Retrograde Amnesia, Amnesia/Historical Case Book, and the
bible of clinical psychiatry - the DSM, Diagnostic and
Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Powell flips through
the DSM. Pausing a moment ... at the chapter on Post-
Traumatic Stress Disorder. He runs his finger over the CASE
HISTORIES ...

THE PIANO DRIFTS IN from the doorway. He rubs his temple,
distracted by it. He gets up.

32 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Rachel and Natalie sit at the piano. Natalie tenuously
plunking out London Bridge is Falling Down, while Rachel, with
a teacher's patience, guides her along.

RACHEL
A - D - B - G - repeat -

They both glance up, seeing the study door shut. Rachel's
eyes stay on it for a thoughtful moment ...

33 INT. STUDY - SAME

Powell sits back down. Puts his headphones back on. Finally,
he just punches the tape machine off, rips his headphones off.
Closes all the big books. In utter frustration.

Then, his eye catches - the TELESCOPE standing by his picture
window. He stares at it. And from the TELESCOPE ...

WE CUT TO:

34 OMITTED
INT. TAXICAB - NIGHT

C.U. ON the back of the TAXI DRIVER'S HEAD ...

IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR - WE SEE PROT, flanked by Chakraborty and Navarro.

Powell is in the front seat.

EXT. HAYDEN PLANETARIUM AND SPACE SCIENCE CENTER - NIGHT

As the TAXICAB drives up, dwarfed by the six-story SPHERE. A gleaming wonder of glass and metal that faces Central Park.

OMITTED

INT. HAYDEN SPACE CENTER - CONTINUOUS

As they enter. The place is empty. The visitors have long departed. A giant mobile of the solar system hangs four stories high. There are meteorites, and displays of space exploration and giant, backlit PHOTOS from the Hubble -- GALAXIES, NEBULAS, the now-famous GAS PILLARS at the edge of the known universe.

Navarro, amazed, never having seen anything like this himself, gives Prot a sly, little look.

NAVARRO
This your neighborhood, huh?

Prot takes it all in ... with a laugh of both wonder and familiarity.

INT. SPACE CENTER - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - IN A FEW MINUTES

Powell, a little anxious, shakes hands with the three astronomers Steve has brought. DUNCAN FLYNN, distinguished, white-haired, with a pipe -- and two others, DAVID PATEL and STUART HESSLER. They wear the intense eyes of men who have spent their lives looking to the heavens.

POWELL
Thank you, gentlemen, for doing this.

FLYNN
Thank you, Doctor Powell.
(holding up Prot's pages)
We'd like to get to the bottom of these notes as much as you would.

POWELL
I'll bring him right up.
INT. HAYDEN PLANETARIUM - IN A FEW MINUTES

As Prot enters through the double doors, with Navarro and Chakraborty.

We are in a HUGE, DOMED ROOM. Empty stadium seats all around. A formidable camera/computer projector rises from the center of the floor.

Navarro, amazed, has never seen anything like this himself. He takes a seat by the doors, with Chakraborty.

CONTINUED
Letting Prot walk slowly ... toward a semi-circular conference table hooked up with two state-of-the-art FLAT-SCREEN MONITORS at which sit Steve, Flynn, Patel and Hessler.

The men stare at Prot, not really knowing what to expect.

Powell quietly takes a seat by Chakraborty and Navarro. He catches Steve's eye, gives him a little nod.

STEVE
It's a pleasure to meet you, Prot.
Won't you ... have a seat.

Prot looks around, takes the chair in the center of the room by the projector, facing them.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I'm ... Doctor Becker. This is Dr. Flynn, Doctors Patel and Hessler.

PROT
How many doctors are there are on this planet?

Steve laughs, looks at his colleagues. He likes this guy.

Flynn motions to Steve, who walks over to the planetarium console and presses a button. The lights go dim. And on the DOME above them all ... is projected ... an astonishing SPLASH OF STARS. It fills our senses, as if we are actually there.

Chakraborty and Navarro lean back in their chairs. Navarro's eyes now as wide as his mouth, as he utters:

NAVARRO
Shit ...

Powell looks from the stars to Prot ... 

As Prot takes his glasses off ... gazing up - and around - at the IMAGE ... with a wide, breathless smile ... and a laugh, of both wonder and familiarity.

STEVE
(smiles at Prot)
Feel at home?

Flynn clears his throat, trying as hard as he can to treat Prot seriously.

FLYNN
We have found your notes quite interesting ... Prot.

(MORE)

CONTINUED
FLYNN (CONT'D)
And we'd like to ask you some
questions - if that's all right.

 PROT
Be my guest.

FLYNN
Good. Then I'll jump right in.

 PROT
Make sure you can swim.

Flynn attempts an awkward little laugh, looks at the others.

By the doors, Navarro, amused, repeats "make sure you can
swim" to Powell and Chakraborty, in case they didn't get it.

FLYNN
Yes, well. Let's start with this idea
of light travel, shall we? What can
you tell us about that?

 PROT
(smiles)
Nothing.

The scientists give each other dubious glances.

 PROT (CONT'D)
If I told you, you'd blow yourselves
up. Or worse, someone else. You'd be
surprised how much energy there is in
a beam of light.

They respond to this with tentative laughter. Steve takes
over, being friendly.

STEVE
Well, then, I wonder if you could show
us how this light travel works.

 PROT
How about a demonstration?

Powell's expression becomes uncertain. He catches a wary
sidelong glance from Chakraborty.

STEVE
(surprised)
That would be ... fine.

 PROT
Adios! Aloha!

He sits there with a wide grin.

CONTINUED
Steve views him with uncertainty.

STEVE
When are you going to ...

PROT
I'm already back.

The scientists can't help let out a couple of belly laughs.
Steve regards Prot, shrewdly.

STEVE
Where I come from, that's called the
fastest gun in the West routine.

PROT
(imitates his Tennessee
drawl, with equal candor)
Well, I don't come from where you come
from, Dr. Becker.

More laughter.

Powell has to smile, a bit sadly, as he regards Prot, seeing
what a farce this is becoming.

When Flynn attempts to be serious again, perusing Prot's
notebook PAGES in front of him.

FLYNN
Prot, you've indicated in your -
notes - that your planet K-PAX orbits
the twin stars Agape and Satori near
the constellation Lyra. Frankly,
we're a bit mystified as to how you
 gained knowledge of such a planetary
system around these stars.

At the planetarium console, Steve presses another button - and
a huge INSERT OF A MAGNIFIED STAR SYSTEM APPEARS projected
against the dome of stars.

FLYNN (CONT'D)
This was taken from the Hubble. We
computer enhanced it, based on Doctor
Patel's readings from telescopes in
Chile and Hawaii. It is the clearest
picture we have of -
(cheks himself, regards
his colleagues)
- where you come from. What we'd like
... is if you could diagram on your
lightpad, the orbital pattern your
planet takes around this system.

CONTINUED
PROT
(delighted)
My pleasure.

He gets up, goes over to the lightpad, picks up the stylus there. Unsure, he looks back at the scientists. They nod. Prot makes a mark on the lightpad over the projector. He looks up. It appears as a scribble across the STAR SYSTEM. He shakes his head, erases it, then starts again, animated, looking up to the stars with every mark he makes.

The scientists lean back in their chairs with bafflingly amused expressions.

But as Prot's scribbles take shape up ABOVE THEM ... their expressions begin to change ...

For there ... projected over the STARS ... emerges a cogent, detailed DIAGRAM of what looks like a 4-PLANET SOLAR SYSTEM around the two brightest stars. Complete with a grid of ANGLES and FORMULAS of relative distances.

Prot looks up, puts down the stylus, satisfied.

Flynn, slowly, takes the pipe out of his mouth.

FLYNN
Steven ... could you input that ...

STEVE
Already on it.

Steve has the Princeton Observatory database on line. As multiple STAR CHARTS and theoretical CHARTS appear on his MONITOR, he hurriedly inputs Prot's information from the DOME.

Powell looks from Prot's diagram to the scientists, confused.

POWELL
What - what's going on?

NAVARRO
(admiring Prot's work)
Looks like the real thing to me.

Flynn, Patel and Hessler get up from their chairs to crowd around Steve's laptop.

POWELL
Somebody want to tell me what the hell's going on?

The scientists watch, agog, as the monitor displays an exact replica of Prot's solar system.
Prot observes them, with a knowing chuckle.

**PROT**

I take it my calculations help explain the perturbations you've been seeing in the rotation pattern of your binary star - but have been previously unable to explain.

For a long beat, the scientists just stare at Prot, speechless.

**FLYNN**

How ... how could you know this? How could you ...

**PROT**

Every K-PAXian knows this. Doesn't every school child on Earth know your planet orbits your sun in an ellipse?

Flynn and his colleagues look at each other, stupidly.

---

**EXT. HAYDEN PLANETARIUM - STREET - IN A SHORT WHILE**

Prot sits waiting in the TAXI with Navarro and Chakraborty.

Powell and Steve stand on the sidewalk.

**POWELL**

What happened in there, Steve? I mean - he could be a savant. There are savants who have painted flawless copies of Rembrandts who couldn't even remember their own names. Steve, you don't believe this guy do you!?

Steve, with a look toward the taxi, confides to Powell:

**STEVE**

I don't know what I believe, Mark. But, I know what I saw. Tell you what I'm going to do ... I'm going to computer generate a star chart of the night sky as seen from the position of this planet K-PAX. Ask your man to draw one from memory. Then send it to me. If his matches mine - I guarantee you the government would take him off your hands.

Powell just stares, maddeningly, at his brother-in-law.
Rev. 11/20/00 (Buff)

40 EXT. POWELL'S PATIO - NIGHT


He turns, to gaze at his wife through the glass doors ...

She sits playing the piano very softly, as the kids are long asleep. He admires her back, her lithe beauty, the way she tucks a strand of hair back and turns the music page.

He gets up, comes into the -

41 OMITTED

A42 INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Rachel hears the patio door slide open, turns. They regard each other for a beat.

POWELL
Don't stop.

RACHEL
It's okay.

POWELL
Please.

RACHEL
There's a key stuck.

POWELL
We'll have to get that fixed.

He sits beside her on the bench. She shows him...

RACHEL
G below middle C.

POWELL
That's probably an important one, huh.

RACHEL
My old teacher -- I've told you about her --

POWELL
Hilda.

RACHEL
Right.

Powell smiles.

CONTINUED
POWELL
Hilda from the City Opera. With the
yellow teeth and the cat with the
stomach trouble. Who would fart in
four/four time.

Rachel laughs. Powell laughs.

RACHEL
Yes.

POWELL
With his tail going. Like a metronome.

RACHEL
Shut up. She was a very good teacher.

POWELL
As long as you like cats.

Their laughter subsides. Rachel looks away from Powell for an
introspective beat. Then turns to him.

RACHEL
She used to tell me, don't play the
notes.

POWELL
Don't play the notes?

RACHEL
Yeah. If you just play the notes,
you'll miss it.

They look at each other. On Powell,

CUT TO:
INT. WARD 2 - DAY ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON HOWIE. Seated at his post by the window. His eyes suddenly widen. And a smile of immeasurable joy spreads across his face.

HOWIE

Bluebird...

Ernie and Sal look up from a checker game. Russell stops muttering a Bible passage. Only Bess remains disinterested, in front of the TV.

As Howie jumps out of his chair --

HOWIE

Bluebird!!

He starts running from window to window -- jumping over tables, knocking over chairs.

HOWIE

Bluebird! Bluebird!

AT THE NURSE'S STATION - McAllister spots him from the one-way glass. She hastens into the DAY ROOM.

MCALLISTER

Howie?

He runs up to her, dances her giddily in a circle, over to the window. Where she looks out, surprised.

MCALLISTER

Oh, my...

He bounds out of the day room -- and down the CORRIDOR --

Shouting from ROOM to ROOM at the top of his lungs:

HOWIE

Bluebird! Bluebird!

Patients peek out of doorways with wide eyes and medicated smiles.

BACK IN THE DAY ROOM - Ernie turns fearfully to Sal.

ERNIE

Do -- do bluebirds bite?

SAL

No, they don't bike, stinkhead!

BACK DOWN THE HALLWAY

Howie, like a barefoot dervish twirls up onto a windowsill. He puts his face to the BARS -- shouting out, freely, euphoric, with all his might -- as sunlight kisses his face:

CONTINUED
42 CONTINUED:

HOWIE
BLUEBIRRRRRRR!!
43 EXT. MANHATTAN PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE - CONTINUOUS

MOVING UP - from Howie's shouting face, and WIDENING - to take in the other WARDS on the floors above. As pale FACES, some with shaved heads and hollow eyes come to the WINDOWS, looking out with suspicion and wonder ...

44 INT. WARD 2 - IN A FEW MINUTES

Navarro and Simms step off the elevator - into pandemonium.

Patients running out of rooms, up and down the corridors, some half naked, shouting "Bluebird! Bluebird!"

Navarro whips the walkie-talkie out of his belt, speaks quickly into it:

NAVARRO

Disturbance is on Two!
INT. CORRIDOR - IN A MINUTE

Powell barrels through two SWINGING DOORS and runs down the CORRIDOR, Chakraborty and the overweight Fleen trying to keep up with him. They hear CHANTING coming from down the hall ...

POWELL
What the hell?

We FOLLOW THEM into the DAY ROOM -

where the entire ward has erupted into an ecstatic chorus of "BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD, BLUEBIRD!" Patients are crowded around the windows, jumping up and down, some standing on tables to get a better look.

Fleen looks shaken.

FLEEN
It's mass hysteria ...

Powell eyes him, ridiculously. Nevertheless, trying to catch sight of somebody, anybody, in charge.

POWELL
Betty! What's going on?

McAllister turns from the window. She knows it's silly, but she wipes a tear and smiles, pointing out.

MCALLISTER
Look.

Powell regards her bafflingly - when Howie suddenly grabs him by the arm.

HOWIE
Doctor Powell! Come, see!

Disinclined, Powell lets himself be led to the WINDOW - to see, indeed - a beautiful, common BLUE JAY.

It flits, majestically, from tree to tree, chirping and pecking. Finally settling on a branch.

As Powell gazes upon it, in profound astonishment - Villers now wends her way through the commotion.

VILLERS
What's going on here, Mark?
(craning her neck to see)
What on earth is out there?

POWELL
Just a blue jay ...

She gives him a nonsensical look.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

VILLERS
A blue jay?
Powell opens his mouth to say something more. But instead, looks from the window - around, slowly - witnessing the unbounded hope and excitement on every patient's FACE.

POWELL
Just a blue jay.
He turns ... catching sight of Prot, who stands observing from the day room doorway. Their eyes lock for a moment.
Prot smiles at him.
And then ... Powell, to his absolute amazement, sees Mrs. Archer come into the day room! She looks around at the commotion with wide eyes, and the smile of a little girl. Taking hold of Prot's arm ...

Then Ernie approaches Powell.

ERNIE
Doctor Powell, can we go outside and look at it?

Powell takes a beat.

POWELL
You want to go outside, Ernie?

ERNIE
To look at it.

POWELL
Okay. Let's go outside.

Powell puts his arm around Ernie. As they head outside, he and Prot exchange a last look. On Prot,

CUT TO:

OMITTED

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - EVENING

STAYING ON POWELL, as he stands with all the other COMMUTERS on the Metro North PLATFORM, waiting for the 6:15 to Connecticut. Across the tracks on another platform, he watches a FATHER kid around with a young SON.

They are obviously on their way to a ball game, both wearing Mets caps. The father with a food cooler, the boy with a mit.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

PROT (V.O.)

First of all, Mark ... we make no
distinction between 'childhood' and
adulthood' on K-PAX - you can check
your notes ... 

A fleeting, wistful look crosses Powell's eyes, as he watches
father and son board a train. Prot's WORDS filling his head:

PROT (CONT'D; V.O.)
On Earth, children are encouraged to
play all the time. That's because you
believe they should remain innocent of
their approaching adulthood for as
long as possible, apparently because
the latter is so distasteful ...

Powell opens his briefcase, takes his CELL PHONE from its
pocket. He ponders it. Then fumbles through his wallet for
a phone number.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (2)

PROT (CONT'D; V.O.)
But on K-PAX, children and adults are all part of the same thing...

With indecision, he dials the number. Gets an annoying NO SERVICE BEEP. He moves back, up the crowded stairs. Tries again. Hand over his ear.

PROT (CONT'D; V.O.)
On our planet life is fun and interesting. There is no need for mindless games, either for children or adults. No need for lying, for escape into game shows, football, alcohol, or other drugs...

INT. AN APARTMENT - SAME TIME - EVENING

Has the look of being just moved into. Milk crate furniture, an electric guitar and amp, bicycle hanging up on the wall. A 21-YEAR OLD with a still boyish face looks up from the TV - as the phone rings.

He puts down his McDonalds dinner. His hair is cropped short, bleached. His eyebrow is pierced. The phone rings again. He gets up, walks over to it, answers it.

YOUNG MAN
Hello ... ?

INT. TRAIN TERMINAL STAIRS - SAME TIME

Powell calls on pay phone at Grand Central Station.

MICHAEL
Hello.

POWELL
Michael. Happy birthday. I forgot to call.

MICHAEL
Dad? Hey, how you doing?

POWELL
Good -- you?

MICHAEL
All right.

POWELL
That's good. How's your mother?
CONTINUED:

MICHAEL
Fine. I saw her 'bout a week ago.
She asked about you.

POWELL
Did she? Tell her I said hi. Listen,
my train's about to leave. I
just...wanted to say happy birthday.

MICHAEL
Okay. Take care. Thanks for calling.

POWELL
Okay. You too.

MICHAEL
All right. 'Bye, Dad.

CUT TO:

OMITTED

AND

AND
INT. WARD 2 - PROT'S ROOM - NIGHT

A narrow bed and a small metal table are the only fixtures. Prot sits at the TABLE in front of his grilled WINDOW, his glasses resting beside him. He looks up ... to a few STARS twinkling through the grill.

PROT'S POV. The stars visibly move across the cloudy heavens. Their faraway light fills his face. He closes his eyes, concentrating ...

and starts drawing DOTS, fast and furious, on the blank SHEET OF PAPER in front of him.

IN THE HALLWAY - Bess, roaming the halls, stops. In front of Prot's door. Through its small window ... she watches him. Her eyes silent, piercing.

BESS
(whispering)
I know who you are ...

IN HIS ROOM - Prot stops drawing for a moment, as if sensing her presence. Without turning around, he offers Bess a smile.

IN THE HALLWAY - Bess keeps staring at him. She doesn't smile. But there is an intent belief in her quiet voice.

BESS (CONT'D)
You're the bluebird.
INT. WARD 2 - HALLWAY - MORNING

As Prot walks down the hallway. Maria stands there in a white nurse's cap and gloves. He greets her with palpable good cheer.

 PROT
 How are we, today?

 MARIA
 (cheerfully)
 Just fine.

Prot walks on, pointing a finger at Navarro, who points a finger back at him.

 NAVARRO
 My man.

A furtive Sal gets his attention, with a "Pssst." Curious, Prot comes over. Sal glances up and down the hallway to make sure no one's watching, motions Prot into the ART ROOM.

INT. ART ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Patient artwork is all over the walls. Sal draws Prot closer, keeps his voice low.

 SAL
 About that light travel thing. I was wonderin' ... if you could maybe show me how to do that?
 (with desperation)
 I've put up with the stink in here for ten years. I sure would like to get out ... know what I'm sayin'?

 PROT
 (puzzled)
 Why have you stayed here so long, Sal, if this - stink - bothers you?

 SAL
 Ain't exactly my choice. My wife put me in here.

Sal picks up a brush, pretends to paint just to look busy - as he makes his voice even lower, eyes searching for any prying ears.

 SAL (CONT'D)
 See, I was the doorman at the Plaza.

 PROT
 The Plaza?
SAL
Hotel. Fifteen years. I opened the
doors for some of the fattest cats in
the world. Movie stars, financiers,
politicians, the movers and shakers.
You know the type. After fifteen
years ... that's when I started to
notice it ...

(considers Sal, unclear)
Notice what?

Sal pulls him closer, expression changing, nose scrunching -

SAL
The smell ... the smell!
(almost unbearable for
him)
God! What putrid, disgusting
stenches! No one could smell a
thing - except for me! I tried to
tell people - I tried! But nobody
would listen. Not even my wife. Not
even my kids.
(whispering now)
That's why they put me in here.
Because nobody wants to hear the
truth! And this place ... stinks
worst of all!

He looks right into Prot's dark glasses, with a sense of close
camaraderie.

SAL (CONT'D)
Except for you. That's why I knew ...
you'd be able to help me.

As Sal's lip trembles, Prot's own expression changes, as if
dwelling on Sal's plight. Then, his voice soothing:

PROT
You must smell the yort blossoms on my
planet, in a gentle breeze. Very much
like your sugar plums. Now that is a
sweet smell.

Sal views Prot's smile, hungrily.

SAL
I'd like to smell that. I'd like to
... go there. To your planet.

PROT
I'm afraid I can only take one person
back with me.

CONTINUED
Sal stares at him. His tough, round face breaking into a thrilled, clandestine smile.

SAL
I read you, pal.

Prot looks at him, sincerely.

PROT
Thanks, pal.

54 EXT. HOSPITAL GROUNDS - DAY

Prot sits, meditatively, in the garden.

As Powell approaches, something clearly on his mind. He observes Prot for a few beats, before sitting down next to him on the stone bench.

POWELL
I had my weekly session with Sal today. He says you're taking him to K-PAX.

(lets Prot absorb this)
In fact, I've heard from most of the patients on Ward Two. They all tell me they're going to K-PAX. I wonder if that's a wise thing to be promising patients in a psychiatric facility.

Prot knits his brow, with a problematic sigh.

PROT
No, no, no. I told them all very clearly. I would only be able to take one person with me when I return.

Powell blinks, not sure he's heard correctly.

POWELL
Return ...

PROT
No offense, Mark. I mean you've been very hospitable. Hospital - "hospitable" - get it? But my time here is almost up, and I can't wait to get back.

POWELL
Back ... to K-PAX?

PROT
Where else?

CONTINUED
POWELL
You're planning to return to K-PAX.

PROT
You are repeating yourself, Mark. Yes. I am planning to return to K-PAX.

Powell sits there, at a momentary loss for words. He lets out a flummoxed laugh.

POWELL
You'll have to forgive me, this comes as a bit of a surprise. But — when are you — planning on — ?

PROT
Well, first, I have to take a short trip up to some of your north lands — Greenland, Iceland, Labrador — to complete my report.
(consumes another strawberry)
Then, I'll be departing on July 27th.

Powell stares at him, stunned by the finality of these words. Trying to collect himself, he helps himself to a strawberry.

POWELL
Why — why July 27th?

PROT
Safety reasons. You see, I can go anywhere on Earth without fear of bumping into anyone traveling at superlight speed. But beings are coming and going from K-PAX all the time. It has to be coordinated —

POWELL
You're telling me you're "beaming" back to K-PAX on July 27th?

Prot just turns back to the fountain, with a smile of certainty.

PROT
At 5:51 a.m. Eastern time.

OMITTED

THRU

59
INT. POWELL'S BEDROOM - CONNECTICUT - NIGHT

As Powell wakes up in the dark, with a gasp, heart beating. Rachel sits up beside him.

RACHEL

Mark, honey, you were dreaming!

She smooths his face, puzzled. He turns to her, still breathing hard. Then, suddenly, jumps out of bed, wrestles on some pants, and hurries out of the bedroom.

Rachel quickly puts on a robe, following after him -

RACHEL

Mark. Mark, you're worrying me.

ON THE LANDING - Natalie comes blearily out of her room, having been woken up, sees her father bound down the stairs.

NATALIE

Where is Daddy going?

RACHEL

He just has an upset stomach, honey. Go back to bed.

Natalie, not convinced, watches her mother bound down the stairs after him.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS STUDY - IN A MOMENT

As Powell turns on the desk lamp and rifles through the cassette TAPES - until he finds the one he wants. Rachel watches him, with mounting confusion. As he pops the tape into the machine, dons headphones, rewinding - forwarding - until -

POWELL

Listen, listen - here it is!

He unplugs the headphones, so she can hear. As Rachel listens, she keeps her eyes, disturbingly, on her husband. His hair is wild, his eyes fixated.

POWELL (ON TAPE)

When did you arrive here on Earth?

CONTINUED
POWELL
Steve ... listen to me ... just sit on
it ... please ... I need ... I need a
little more time ...

A60 INT. POWELL'S BEDROOM - CONNECTICUT - NIGHT

As Powell wakes up in the dark, with a gasp, heart beating.
Rachel sits up beside him.

RACHEL
Mark, honey, you were dreaming!

She smooths his face, puzzled. He turns to her, still
breathing hard. Then, suddenly, jumps out of bed, wrestles on
some pants, and hurries out of the bedroom.

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He just has an upset stomach, honey.
Go back to bed.

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stairs after him.

B60 INT. DOWNSTAIRS STUDY - IN A MOMENT

As Powell turns on the desk lamp and rifles through the
cassette TAPES - until he finds the one he wants. Rachel
watches him, with mounting confusion. As he pops the tape
into the machine, dons headphones, rewinding - forwarding -
until -

POWELL
Listen, listen - here it is!

He unplugs the headphones, so she can hear. As Rachel
listens, she keeps her eyes, disturbingly, on her husband.
His hair is wild, his eyes fixated.

POWELL (ON TAPE)
When did you arrive here on Earth?

CONTINUED
Prot (On Tape)
Four years and nine months ago. Your years that is.

Powell turns off the tape, looks at her.

Powell
Four years and nine months ago! That will be five years to the date, on July 27th!
(seeing she doesn't understand)
The date he's leaving to go back to K-PAX!

She's more worried about her husband, than trying to understand.

Rachel
Mark ... what is the matter with you?

Powell
(impatient with her)
Don't you see, Rachel?

Natalie and Gabby now join her in the doorway, viewing their father with uncertainty.

Rachel
Mark ... it's two o'clock in the morning. What is this patient doing to you?

He looks at her, looks at his daughters, as if the answer was evident.

Powell
He's telling me that five years ago on July 27th - something terrible happened to him...some horrible trauma.

Rachel
What are you afraid of?

Powell
That he's planning to do something violent. To himself or someone else. I've got to get to him before that date.

Powell's family just remain staring at him...
A sunny day, the trees brilliant green. A flag flies above the front portico. Abby helps Rachel spread a tablecloth across a long picnic table. Steve pops a beer, smiles at the day. Natalie runs barefoot around the yard with festive streamers.

Powell stands at the top of his drive, looking up and down the street. As Gabby comes up to him, with a skeptic's brow.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

GABBY
Is the spaceman here yet?

POWELL
Hush! Do not call him that.

A CAR comes down the tree-lined street.

POWELL (CONT'D)
Here they are ... everybody just act
like yourselves, be normal.
(Natalie and Josh squeal
past him)
Kids - settle down!

As the CAR pulls into the drive, Rachel views it, cautiously,
from the yard. She comes over to her husband. Keeps her eyes
on it, as it rolls toward them ...

RACHEL
Gabby, why don't you take your sister
in the house ...

GABBY
Why, is he going to zap us with his
laser gun?

RACHEL
Just do it, young lady.

Gabby gives both her parents a pitiful look. As the car
approaches the head of the drive ...

RACHEL (CONT'D)
I can't believe I agreed to this.

POWELL
I've tried everything else. I want
him to spend the Fourth of July with
us, see if a normal family environment
might bring something out of him.

RACHEL
(an eye to him)
Since when did we become a normal
family?

POWELL
Rach - please.

RACHEL
I just feel ... uncomfortable.
POWELL
Not to worry. Mrs. Trexler's oldest
is a high school varsity wrestler.
And Betty McAllister's husband is a
black belt. So, I think we're covered.

Rachel puts on her best face, as the CAR comes to a stop ...

A big, muscle-bound 18-YEAR-OLD OLD with a buzzcut steps out
first, followed by Mrs. Trexler.

RACHEL
Joyce, how good to see you!
(they hug)
And can this be Danny?

Next out of the car are Nurse McAllister and her husband, DOM,
a real New York Italian.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Betty - I don't think I've ever seen
you out of uniform.

MCALLISTER
That's because I look like a Weight
Watchers "before" shot. This is my
husband, Dominic.

DOMINIC
Dom.

Trexler and McAllister look into the backseat of the car,
beckoning someone else out. A beat.

Slowly ... hesitantly ... Prot climbs out of the car. He
stands there. The trees reflected in his dark glasses.

Rachel stares at him. As Natalie, Josh and Gabby run up, she
grabs their hands tight, to hold them back.

JOSH
Wow, he looks like Data!

NATALIE
(rolling her eyes)
Oh, that's right, embarrass him.

Powell shushes them, furiously.

POWELL
Welcome, Prot. This is my wife -

 PROT
(smiles at her)
Rachel. Thank you for inviting me
here.
Rachel remains staring at his dark glasses. She doesn't know whether to extend her hand. Instead, she just smiles back.

RACHEL
How do you do.

Suddenly - the DOG runs out from under the house, and barrels straight for Prot.

POWELL
Shasta! No! Shasta!

But to Powell's surprise, Shasta wags her tail, flattening herself against Prot's leg as if he were a trusted friend.

In the next instant, to everyone's surprise, Prot falls to the ground, rolling, playing, even barking with Shasta.

Abby eyes Steve, who comes up behind her, utterly amazed.

STEVE
(mutters to her)
Damn dog's never liked anyone.

Before anyone can stop them, Natalie and Josh run over to join in the fray.

RACHEL AND ABBY
(simultaneous, horrified)
Kids!

Prot sits down on the grass, moves the kids onto his knees. He regards them, happily, and with gentle fascination.

Powell signals Rachel and Abby with his eyes, to relax.

PROT
(to kids)
Watch this.

Prot begins to "talk" to Shasta in remarkably accurate dog whelps. Even more remarkable, Shasta starts howling back.

PROT (CONT'D)
She says she does not like it when you hide her favorite shoe or sneak up on her left side - because she can no longer hear well in that ear.

The kids stare at him, in open-mouth disbelief.

NATALIE
No way.

Even Gabby the skeptic has to laugh in amazement.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (4)

As Prot resumes "talking" to Shasta - Powell is puzzlingly amused. He catches Rachel's eye - she is not so sure.

Dom, watching Prot, gives McAllister a look that says "this guy is the biggest wingnut I've ever seen." She cautions him with a nudge.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The grill sizzles. Everyone is seated around the PICNIC TABLE. As food is passed around, Rachel places a giant FRUIT SALAD on the table in front of Prot.

RACHEL
Mark tells me you don't eat meat. I think that's very healthy.

POWELL
Speak for yourself.

RACHEL
So, I made this fruit salad especially for you.

Prot just sits there, admiring the beautiful fruit. Then looks at Rachel, with such deep appreciation he does not know what to say. His reaction gets to her for a moment, she doesn't know why.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Go on, take as much as you like.

Prot digs in, taking spoonful, after spoonful - after spoonful. Until there is a heaping mountain of it on his plate.

As EVERYONE stares. The kids hold their hands over their mouths to not laugh. Prot glances up, gives them all a smile.

Everyone takes this as a cue to start eating, food is passed around. Dom, putting ketchup on his burger, pauses self-consciously a moment, as he watches Prot shovel in fruit salad.

DOM
So - what do they eat on K-PAX?

McAllister gives her husband a kick under the table.

 PROT
(mouth full)
Krees, likras mainly. But my favorites are our grains, drak, thon and adro - has a nutty flavor much like your cashew.

CONTINUED
Rev. 11/20/00 (Buff) 70.

61 CONTINUED:

DOM
(with an eye to
McAllister)
I see ...

Rachel gives Powell a poignant glance. She's never heard anything so outlandish said so convincingly.

AND WE CUT TO:

62 EXT. YARD - AS THE MAGICAL SUMMER DAY MOVES ON ...

Prot, lemonade in hand, walks across the yard, a tail-wagging Shasta at his side. WE SEE things through his DARK GLASSES now ... almost in moving snapshots ... Abby, pulling a prickler from Gabby's bare foot ... Mrs. Trexler smelling a flower ... Dom, giving McAllister a little smooch. Prot absorbs them all, smiling at everyone as he wanders ... through the open patio doors, and into the HOUSE.

McAllister shoots Powell a look. Powell considers a moment, then gives her a nod. McAllister follows Prot ...

63 INT. POWELL'S HOUSE - LATER

Prot wanders into Powell's den. Finds FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS there. Picks one up. It is a PHOTO of Powell's son, Michael, from a previous marriage. Rachel enters. Finds Prot there.

PROT
There is a picture of a young man -- where your other pictures are.

RACHEL
That's Michael. Mark's son. From his first marriage.

PROT
How many marriages has he had?

RACHEL
Just the two, so far.

PROT
So far?

RACHEL
I mean he's not out to set a world record.

PROT
(with photo)
He is not here today?

CONTINUED
RACHEL
No. He doesn't live with us, you know, he's away at college, and...

(beat)
Well, the truth is he and Mark don't talk to each other. I don't know why
I'm telling you this.

PROT
Because I'm a locked-up lunatic, so what could the harm be?

RACHEL
(chuckling)
Maybe. Maybe that's it.

Prot smiles. Then looks at the photo again and turns suddenly reflective...

PROT
Doctor Powell has been trying to teach me this importance you humans place on
your "biological connections."

RACHEL
(ruefully)
Do you think he means it?

PROT
You don't?

RACHEL
Do you know what a family is? You worry. They don't tell you that when
you decide to leave your single life behind...When they're throwing the
rice and dancing the tarantella...That there is no "biological connection" --
not the way you say it, like it's something concrete -- like a rope or a ligament. There's just this
desperate effort to hold on -- to hold onto them. And when you see someone
you love falling away -- falling -- and you can't hold on anymore...

PROT
Then?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (2)

RACHEL
You don't have a family?

PROT
We don't have families on K-PAX.

RACHEL
Then you don't know what you're missing.

PROT
What? Or who?

They exchange a look.

RACHEL
Let me get you another lemonade.

On Prot, as he watches Rachel exit. Then he notices a TELESCOPE in the study. Moves to it. Considers it a moment. Then he bends down. Lifts his sunglasses. Squints through the eyepiece. As he does, he lowers his scope. Focusing on something earthbound out the window...

And we see that it is Powell, at the far edge of the yard, that he has in his sights.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - IN A MINUTE

As Prot walks over to Powell. They stand there together under the trees. Powell takes a sip of beer. Prot noisily slurps his lemonade.

POWELL
Fourth of July.
(reminiscing)
I remember when Michael was a young boy, I'd take him to the fairground.
(another sip of beer, as the memory takes him someplace)
We'd spend the evening ... eating apple pie, watching the fireworks.

Prot turns his dark glasses to Powell.

PROT
Thank you for inviting me here, Mark.

POWELL
You're most welcome, Prot.

Just then, Natalie runs up, grabbing Prot's hand.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

NATALIE
Push me on the swing!

As she leads Prot off to the TREE SWING, Powell watches, circumspectly ... as Prot's fingers close so naturally and tenderly around hers.

Rachel comes out of the house, also watching ... carefully.

Prot picks Natalie up, sits her down on the swing. Making sure her hands grip the ropes.

PROT
Hold on tight now.

He pushes her, gently - playfully - a little higher, now. He ducks under the swing - comes back up. Making Natalie laugh. Her buoyant laughter bringing a big smile to his face.

As Prot walks over to Powell. They stand there together under the trees. Pow

CONTINUED
ON POWELL ... as he watches, struck by how familiar Prot is with Natalie ... as if he's pushed a swing many times.

Just then - Josh dashes out of the house in a bathing suit, and turns on the LAWN SPRINKLERS -

the water hissing up in jets around the swing -

The SOUND of it suddenly makes Prot stiffen. He looks around - visibly shaken - at the harmless spray of water. The hissing taking on an ominous quality.

Powell regards Prot, strangely, noticing the change in him.

Abby runs after Josh, angrily grabbing his hand.

ABBY
Why did you do that!?

Natalie slides off the swing, gleefully.

NATALIE
Let's run through the water!

PROT
No ... wait ...

He grabs her arm.

NATALIE
(frightened now)
Let go!

RACHEL
NATALIE!

Natalie breaks free, runs for her mother.

Around his DARK GLASSES, Prot's face fills with pain and dread ... watching Natalie run off.

PROT
No ... don't go ...

He starts after her ...

RACHEL
MARK!

POWELL
Prot!

At the same time Powell runs for him, Dom and Danny quickly take their cues. They rush Prot, bringing him down. But he struggles like a wild animal. His voice choked and inarticulate, as he keeps trying to reach for Natalie.

CONTINUED
PROT
Ddddddddd .... Nnnnnnnnnn!

Gabby watches, horrified, as ...

Danny, 180 pounds of varsity wrestler, is flung off. Leaving Dom, Powell - and now Steve - straining to hold Prot down.

DOM
God, he's strong as an ox!

POWELL
Betty, quick!

McAllister goes for her purse, uncaps a syringe.

Mrs. Trexler helps Danny up, viewing Prot with a mixture of fear and pity - as the others try and keep him down.

POWELL
Turn off the goddamn sprinklers!

In the struggle, Prot's GLASSES get knocked off. With a moan, he buries his face in his hands.

Abby finally gets the sprinklers off. Rachel clutches Natalie.

Powell, Dom and Steve stand up, slowly, carefully, dripping wet.

Prot remains on his knees, head to the ground. His shoulders shaking. Shasta licks him, whimpering.

He gropes on the grass, finding his glasses. Puts them on. Then lifts his head, a little disoriented. He gets up, brushes himself off. Bewildered by all the unnerved FACES staring back at him. Natalie, now afraid, hides behind Rachel.

Prot just smiles, sniffs the air -

PROT
Is that apple pie I smell?

He walks, unsteadily, towards the picnic table. He sits, serves himself a slice of APPLE PIE. Starts devouring it.

Rachel comes up to Powell, angrily.

RACHEL
Happy? I think you got through to him, don't you? I think you made your dent!

She throws the towel at him she has just dried Natalie off with, and walks away.

CONTINUED
Leaving Powell standing there. He stares at Prot ... not without excitement.

INT. VILLERS' OFFICE - DAY

Powell paces in front of Villers, at her desk.

POWELL
...He was pushing my daughter on a swing like he'd done it a hundred times before. Not like some alien from K-PAX. I saw him. He was connecting with something. Some kind of normal life...

VILLERS
That's not enough.

POWELL
You can't transfer him to the fourth floor. It'll kill him. Not now -- when I'm actually making some progress with him.

VILLERS
This is a violent patient.

POWELL
He's not violent. I think something violent happened to him. Prot wasn't going after Natalie to harm her. He was trying to protect her.

VILLERS
From the sprinklers?

POWELL
I don't know from what.

VILLERS
I need more to go on than a hunch. Otherwise--

POWELL
We need to regress him. Take him back into the past. Find out what happened and force him to confront it.

VILLERS
Hypnotize him? When did you last conduct a hypnosis session? Med school? Do you have any idea how risky it is to regress a patient like this one?
POWELL
It's his only chance.

VILLERS
Push him too hard and he could wind up
switching to an alter or worse.

POWELL
He has to be pushed. There's no
time. He says he's going back to
K-PAX on July 27th. That's three
weeks away. I think he could become
violent on that day -- hurt himself or
someone else --

VILLERS
You know what the problem is, Mark?
You're too close to this patient.
Everyone can see it but you.
(beat)
I'm transferring him to the fourth
floor. That's final.

Powell thinks a beat.

POWELL
Then you help me do it.

VILLERS
Me?

POWELL
You were right. What do I know
about hypnosis? A six-hour course
when I was a resident. You can do
this. You're the expert. There's
nobody better.

VILLERS
That's exactly why I won't do it.
I've seen what can happen.

POWELL
Please, Claudia.
(beat)
That's the whole point of seeing a
shrink, isn't it? -- that no matter
how crazy or screwed up your world is,
at least you're not alone.
(off her look)
I can't do it on my own -- I'm too
close -- fine, I admit it. Doesn't he
deserve at least one person on his
side.
CONTINUED: (2)

VILLERS
Mark, why choose this one to save?

He looks at her. It takes him a moment to say this.

POWELL
Because I feel like maybe...somehow he chose me.

On Villers, as she considers a beat,

CUT TO:

INT. WARD 2 - MORNING

Powell stands in the doorway of PROT'S EMPTY ROOM. Navarro and Simms stand there with him.

POWELL
What do you mean - he's gone!?

Navarro and Simms eye each other, extremely embarrassed, but extremely stumped.

NAVARRO
He's just...gone.

Powell shakes his head, unwilling to hear this. He marches over to a SECURITY MONITOR by the nurse's station, Navarro and Simms following on his heels.

A SECURITY GUARD is already rewinding the night's surveillance video for them. They all watch the MONITOR...on it, Prot appears walking down the hallway, and into his room.

NAVARRO
That's around six-thirty, after dinner. He goes in...

Powell keeps his eyes glued to Prot's door in the time-stamped video, as it is fast-forwarded. We SEE what Navarro relays:

NAVARRO
He never comes out. Seven o'clock this morning. He ain't there.

POWELL
Wait, wait - what was that? Go back.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

The security guard rewinds - plays - three seconds of STATIC appear on the screen - then the picture comes back.

SECURITY GUARD
(shrugs)
Happens sometimes with these old cameras. Or, could be the tape.

NAVARRO
He just - disappeared.

Powell looks at Navarro.

POWELL
That's bullshit!

A67 INT. DAY ROOM

He marches into the DAY ROOM, looks around.

POWELL
Has anyone seen Prot!?

Sal keeps his eyes on the checkers between him and Ernie.

SAL
He went up north for a few days.

POWELL
(squints at him)
North ... !?

Howie lifts his head, casually, from a book.

HOWIE
Greenland, Iceland, you know. He had a few more countries left to visit, before he could finish his report.

ERNIE
Don't - don't worry, Doctor Powell. He'll be back.

POWELL
(peering at Ernie)
How do you know?

Mrs. Archer gives Powell an obvious smile, over her Japanese fan.

MRS. ARCHER
Because he took his glasses with him, darling. When he returns to K-PAX - he won't need them.

CONTINUED
Powell views them all, ludicrously.

AS WE SMASH CUT TO:
INT. A STORAGE TUNNEL - LATE AFTERNOON

We're in the bowels of the hospital. It's pitch dark, save for the beams of several flashlights.

Powell, wearing an obsessed expression, plays his beam over broken Xerox machines and corroding file cabinets. A young SECURITY GUARD gives him a weary look.

SECURITY GUARD
We've checked every inch of this hospital, Doctor Powell. Nobody ever comes down here.

A 2ND BEEFIER SECURITY GUARD, down on his belly, flashes his beam into the last corner of the tunnel - illuminating a brick wall. He looks back at Powell, shaking his head.

Powell looks at them both, wipes a cobweb from his face.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, EMERGENCY STAFF MEETING - LATE DAY

McAllister, Chakraborty, Fleen, the rest of the gang, seated. As Villers stares - incredulous - at Powell, who stands.

VILLERS
Patients don't just escape from this institution. They don't just escape!

POWELL
(knowing how bad it sounds)
There's no evidence of escape ... but, obviously, I've notified the police, social services. They're taking it as a low priority since he has no clear record of being a public threat ...

VILLERS
(having heard enough)
I'm going to have a great time explaining this to the state board. We have psychotics up on Ward Four packing their sneakers because they think they're all going to K-PAX. Find him, Doctor Powell!

Powell nods, there's nothing he'd like better.

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Bleary-eyed, Powell sits at his desk, on the phone.

CONTINUED
POWELL
What about the city shelters? Have you checked ... no ... no, I'm not telling you how to do your job ... thank you.

He hangs up, looks through the doorway to his outer office - where Mrs. Trexler still sits.

Curiously, he gets up, shirt rumpled, tie loose. He walks over, observing her diligent face - as she scrolls through windows of lists and information on her COMPUTER.

MRS. TREXLER
Phil's old partner down at the 4th Precinct - who's now a detective - gave me a password to search their radio log.
(Shaking her head)
No police reports of anybody fitting Prot's description being picked up.

POWELL
Joyce, it's eleven o'clock at night and you're still here. I know why I'm still here - but why are you still here?

She laughs, as if this were a silly question, eyeing her DAY CALENDAR ... which already says JULY 17.

MRS. TREXLER
Doctor Powell, do you know how long it takes to search a database like this?

POWELL
That doesn't answer my question.

She turns from his pointed gaze, back to her computer. Then, pauses, to regard the PHOTO of her HUSBAND on her desk, fondly.

MRS. TREXLER
The other day ... when Prot came in, he asked me about Phil.
(Beat, still hard for her)
I said ... my husband was killed in the line of duty ten years ago. Prot looked at me with that, you know, alien, curious look. And asked me ... why I still keep a picture of him.
(a little quaver in her voice)
I told him ... because it reminds me of all the happiness we had together.
(MORE)
CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. TREXLER (CONT'D)
(beat, smiles)
The next morning there were the most beautiful carnations on my desk.

She wipes a tear from her cheek, looks up at Powell, in amazement.

MRS. TREXLER
Now how did Prot know those were my favorite flowers?

Powell looks at her, not even knowing how to respond.

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Powell, asleep, his head on his desk. A finger of SUNLIGHT streams in across the desk ... kisses his face. He squints, stirring, wakes up. Realizes he's been there all night.

He sits there a moment. Then, puts his hand into the beam of sunlight ... a funny sensation coming over him.

He gets up, quickly, follows the BEAM - out his office - into the HALLWAY. To a window. He peers out -

to the hospital grounds, below. Birds chirp in the early morning sun, dew is still on the grass. And on the bench by the fountain ... sits a solitary FIGURE.

Powell can tell from the back - that it is Prot.

EXT. HOSPITAL GROUNDS - IN A QUICK MINUTE

As Powell, tie loose, suit wrinkled, hair disheveled, races across the grounds to Prot, who hears him coming up, behind.

PROT
Doctor Powell, I presume.

POWELL
Where the hell have you been!?

PROT
Newfoundland, Labrador, Greenland, Iceland -

POWELL
Cut the crap! We've been searching for you for three days!

Prot regards Powell, not a little put off by his attitude.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

PROT
I believe I mentioned my taking a trip up north in one of our sessions, Mark. You really should keep track.

POWELL
Taking a trip!? (looks around, with a mad laugh, then back to Prot)
You're a patient here! You don't get out of here without a discharge. Nobody does! Nobody has, nobody ever will! And don't, don't give me that beam of light shit. Because I don't buy it!

Prot shifts his glasses away, somewhat confused and disturbed. As Powell sits down next to him. Powell's eyes remain intently, on him.

POWELL
What would you say - if I were to tell you that I don't believe you took any trip to Iceland, Greenland, or any place? That I don't believe you're from K-PAX. That I believe you are as human as I am.

PROT
I would say you were in need of a thorazine drip, Doctor.

Powell walked right into that one.

POWELL
Then, I appeal to your intelligence. Can't you at least admit the possibility that I might be right?

PROT
I will admit the possibility. If you will admit the possibility that I am from K-PAX.

Powell realizes, at this moment, just how much this "being" has gotten under his skin. It is also, at this moment, he senses his opportunity:

POWELL
Well, there is ... one way you could convince me beyond any doubt. Of course, I'd need your consent.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (2)

Prot's glasses meet Powell's eyes, unsurely.

POWELL
It's called hypnosis. It's more
like --

PROT
I'm familiar with the term, Mark.
After all, I have read most of your
medical books during my time here.
(beat, resistant)
I do not see the point.

POWELL
Well, let me tell you what your
alternative is. A trip to a place
where they'll stick a needle in your
ass every morning, which may - or may
not - leave you with a stupid grin on
your face for the rest of your days
here on Earth. Is that what you'd
like? Because - believe me - I'll be
forced to sign a transfer before July
27th!

For a long moment, Prot is silent. He looks, disquietly, out
at the birds and the trees and the high brick wall.

Powell's voice becomes gentle, earnest.

POWELL
I want to help you, Prot.

PROT
(smiles)
You have. You've provided me with a
place to stay while I write my report.
You've fed me. The fruit is
wonderful --

POWELL
I don't mean that kind of help.

The resistance on Prot's brow begins to cave, as he struggles
with Powell's request.

PORTER
Let me help you, Prot.

A long beat. Prot brings his eyes back to Powell.
CONTINUED: (3)

PROT
Nobody needs. Nobody wants. Nobody
on K-PAX misses me -- there would be
no reason to. But when I leave here,
I will be missed.

(beat)
A strange feeling.

POWELL
You don't have to leave, Prot. I'm
sure there must be some way for me to
help you...

(off Prot's look)
...to stay. As one of us.

Prot looks at Powell. Squeezes his knee.

PROT
I'll miss you, Doctor Powell.

Prot exits. On Powell, as he watches Prot enter the hospital.

CUT TO:

A72 INT. MONITORING ROOM - BEHIND A ONE-WAY-MIRROR - DAY

Chakraborty, wearing headphones with a mouthpiece, sits at a
heart and pulse MONITOR. A pulse rate beeps on it.

WE MOVE THROUGH THE ONE-WAY MIRROR INTO --

72 INT. SPECIAL EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Windowless, subdued lighting. Prot is reclined in a special
CHAIR. His dark glasses rest on his lap. A wire monitor is
patched to one wrist, and another to his chest, beneath his
shirt. Despite this, he looks comfortable.

More so than Powell, who, wearing a tiny EARPHONE, sits facing
him. Nevertheless, Powell keeps his voice calm.

POWELL
What we're going to be doing, Prot, is
kind of like - daydreaming. When you
daydream - you go into a natural
trance.

(MORE)

CONTINUED
A72  INT. MONITORING ROOM - BEHIND A ONE-WAY-MIRROR - DAY

Chakraborty, wearing headphones with a mouthpiece, sits at a heart and pulse MONITOR. A pulse rate beeps on it.

WE MOVE THROUGH THE ONE-WAY MIRROR INTO --

72  INT. SPECIAL EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Windowless, subdued lighting. Prot is reclined in a special CHAIR. His dark glasses rest on his lap. A wire monitor is patched to one wrist, and another to his chest, beneath his shirt. Despite this, he looks comfortable.

More so than Powell, who, wearing a tiny EARPHONE, sits facing him. Nevertheless, Powell keeps his voice calm.

POWELL
What we're going to be doing, Prot, is kind of like - daydreaming. When you daydream - you go into a natural trance.

(MORE)

CONTINUED
POWELL (CONT'D)
We're just going to help induce that
trance. Kind of daydream together.
Are you ready?

PROT
When you are.

POWELL
Good. I want you to keep your arms at
your sides and your legs uncrossed.
Focus your attention on the white spot
in front of you. Do you see it?

Prot looks at the bright CIRCLE on the otherwise bare wall.

PROT
Of course ...

POWELL
Good ... I want you to keep your eyes
on that spot ... don't take your eyes
off of it. You don't have to use any
effort to keep focused on that spot
... it's easy ... so just relax, keep
your eyes on that spot ... and keep
listening to my voice ... Do you
understand?

Prot's clear, dark eyes are fixed on the white circle. His
voice getting more relaxed.

PROT
Mark, you are talking to a K-PAXIAN ...

POWELL
(smiles)
I'm going to count from one to five.
At the count of three your eyes will
close and you will find yourself in a
very nice, deep, comfortable, relaxed
state of hypnosis. One, your eyes are
starting to feel heavy now. Two, I
want you to use your imagination.
Imagine small lead weights on your
eyelids making them heavier and
heavier. Three, keep your eyes closed
and let yourself go way, way down
deep.

Prot's breathing becomes deeper, eyelids getting droopy, head
beginning to tilt ...

A73 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME
Chakraborty eyes his monitors, carefully. Into his mouthpiece.

CONTINUED
A73 CONTINUED:

CHOAKRABORTY
Pulse forty bpm.
(attempting levity)
I'd be concerned if he were human.

73 OMITTED

74 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

Powell stays fixed on Prot.

POWELL
Four, let a wave of relaxation move
all through your body starting at the

top of your head pushing all the
tension before it as it moves down

your arms, through your hands and out

your fingertips. Down your legs,

through your feet and out your toes

into the air. All of your tensions

leaving your body as you go down even
deeper and deeper. And five, going

way way way down deep. You are now in

a relaxed hypnotic state and you can

hear everything I say.

75 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Prot's pulse beeps slow and steady on the monitor. Chakraborty rubs his chin, stares at Prot through the one-way glass.

76 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

Powell stares at the hypnotized Prot, waits a beat:

POWELL
Can you hear me?

A moment passes. Another. Then, Prot speaks ... lucidly, clearly, but as if through a long distance.

PROT
Yes.

POWELL
(relieved)
Good.

(then, carefully)
I'm going to count to three. When I get to three I want you to open your eyes. But you will remain relaxed.

One ... two ... three.

Prot's eyes open. They are as blank as the rest of his expression.

POWELL
How do you feel?

PROT
Like ... nothing.

POWELL
That's exactly how you should feel.

Now ... I want you to go back in time ... it is no longer the present. You are becoming younger. Younger ... and younger ...

Prot's brow knits. His eyes move, as if watching something.

POWELL
(watching, closely)
What do you see?

CONTINUED
75 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Prot's pulse beeps slow and steady on the monitor. Chakraborty rubs his chin, stares at Prot through the one-way glass.

76 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

Powell stares at the hypnotized Prot, waits a beat:

POWELL
Can you hear me?

A moment passes. Another. Then, Prot speaks ... lucidly, clearly, but as if through a long distance.

PROT
Yes.

POWELL
(relieved)
Good.

Prot's eyes open. They are as blank as the rest of his expression.

POWELL
How do you feel?

PROT
Like ... nothing.

POWELL
That's exactly how you should feel. Now ... I want you to go back in time ... it is no longer the present. You are becoming younger. Younger ... and younger ... 

Prot's brow knits. His eyes move, as if watching something.

POWELL
(watching, closely)
I want you to recall the first experience you remember. What do you see?

Prot makes a slight movement.

POWELL
What was that? What do you see?

CONTINUED
76 CONTINUED:

PROT
I see ... a casket. Silver ... with
a blue lining ...

IN THE MONITORING ROOM - Chakraborty sits forward, with avid
interest.

POWELL
Whose casket is it?

A man's.

POWELL
Who is the man?

Prot hesitates a moment.

POWELL (CONT'D)
Don't be afraid. You can tell me.

PROT
It is the father of a friend of mine.

POWELL
What is his name?

Prot's voice comes out soft, sing-song, like a little boy.

PROT
Not telling.

Powell regards him, confused, attempting:

POWELL
Is your friend a boy or a girl?

PROT
(squirming in the chair)
A boy.

77 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Chakraborty, watching, in amazement.

CHAKRABORTY
He's regressed ...

78 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

Powell, realizing he's talking to a child now, proceeds:

POWELL
How old is he?
CONTINUED:

PROT
Six.

POWELL
How old are you?

Prot makes an "I don't know" face, scratches his head. His entire body language has become that of a little boy.

POWELL (CONT'D)
What is your name?

Prot shrugs, again, as if not knowing.

POWELL (CONT'D)
Do you live with the boy?

PROT
(rubbing his nose)
Nope.

POWELL
Visiting him?

Prot nods vigorously with a wide, childlike smile.

POWELL (CONT'D)
Where do you live?

PROT
Way, far away.

POWELL
(trying another tack)
Do you know how your friend's father died?

PROT
(looking sad)
He had an accident ... where he worked.

POWELL
He was killed in an accident?
(as Prot shakes his head no)
He was hurt and died later?
(as Prot nods)
Where did he work?

PROT
At a place where they kill cows.

Powell cannot hide his excitement, knows he's onto something.

POWELL
A slaughterhouse?

CONTINUED
PROT
A place where they kill cows.

POWELL
Where is this place?

Prot begins to fidget uneasily in his seat.

INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME
Chakrabarty checks the monitor.

CHAKRABORTY
(heedfully)
Pulse just shot up ten bpm.

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME
Powell slows down, voice calm.

POWELL
Do you know ... where this place is?

Prot scratches his head again, fidgets, gives another "I don't know" shrug.

POWELL
Okay. I'd like you to move forward in time now ... 

Before Powell can say another word, Prot's eyes are already moving ... as if his whole body is in motion. He sits up straighter, older, demeanor changing.

POWELL
(watching him, intently)
Where are you?

PROT
Night time. We're in his house.

POWELL
The other boy's house?

PROT
Yeah. I want him to come outside.

POWELL
Why?

Prot lifts his eyes to the ceiling, with an expansive smile.

PROT
To look at the stars. That's where I came from, you know.
A80 CONTINUED:  

A long, slow look of discouragement comes over Powell's features. It is all he can do to hold it in. But then ... his expression changes, suddenly undersanding. He takes a stab:

POWELL
Is your name ... Prot?

PROT
Wow! How did you know.

B80 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Chakraborty, too, understands. Whispers into his mouthpiece.

CHAKRABORTY
Of course, Prot is an imaginary friend - invented by this young boy!
Powell, energized by the realization, continues:

POWELL
Where do you come from, Prot?

 PROT
From the planet K-PAX. It's in the constellation Lyra.

POWELL
You know all the constellations?

 PROT
Yup. Most of 'em.

POWELL
Does your friend know them too?

 PROT
Sure. After his Dad was hurt at work and had to stay home? They got a telescope. His Dad taught him all about the constellations. Only - 
(with a big sigh) - he's not interested in 'em right now.

POWELL
Why not?

Prot starts to fidget again, uncomfortable, squirming in his seat.

 PROT
Something happened. That's why he called me. He calls me whenever something bad happens.

POWELL
(understanding)
Like when his father died.

 PROT
That's right.

POWELL
What happened today?

 PROT
(lip trembling a little)
His dog was run over by a truck.

CONTINUED
80 CONTINUED:

POWELL
I'm sorry to hear that. How does he call you? How do you know to come?

PROT
Dunno. I just sorta know it.

POWELL
How did you get to Earth?

PROT
Dunno. I just came.

81 OMITTED

82 OMITTED

83 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Chakraborty, understanding ...

CHAKRABORTY
He's too young to have figured out light travel yet.

A84 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

Powell watches as Prot really starts twisting impatiently.

PROT
Can I go outside now?

B84 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

CHAKRABORTY
 cautoning
Read his body language, Mark. I don't think he wants to talk any more, today.

84 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

Powell hides his disappointment with a pleasant voice.

POWELL
Okay ... Prot, I want you to stay relaxed. Think about the stars. I'm going to start counting backwards now, from five to one. As I count ... you will become more and more alert.

(MORE)
POWELL (CONT'D)
On the count of one, I'll snap my
fingers and you will be wide awake,
and feeling refreshed. Five -- you're
starting to come out of it now.
Four -- you're becoming more alert.
Three -- you're even more alert.
Two -- you're starting to wake... And
one...
(snaps his fingers)

Prot's head bobs, like someone who's suddenly realized he's
fallen asleep. His eyes blink.

PROT
When do we begin?

POWELL
It's already over.

Prot eyes him, slyly.

PROT
The old fastest gun in the West
routine.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (2)

Powell just blows imaginary smoke from his fingers.

PROT (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Well, I hope it was helpful.

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - LATE DAY

Powell hovers around Mrs. Trexler, who is at her computer. His thoughts are racing ahead of him.

POWELL
Let's find the locations of all slaughterhouses operating in the United States. I mean, how many can there be?

MRS. TREXLER
(not having the foggiest)
I ... I don't know ...

POWELL
Eliminate the ones in or near large cities. Concentrate on small towns, rural areas -
(as if imagining it)
Someplace where you can see the stars.
(beat)
Joyce ...

He looks at her. And she can see that there is a desperation beginning to show in his eyes.

POWELL (CONT'D)
We've only got six days.

 POWELL'S FLOOR

Powell walks down hallway. Mushroom lights stand in hall.

INT. WARD 2 - PROT'S ROOM - DAY

As Prot gives Howie a nod and a smile, then turns back to writing in his red notebook.

Howie, with a purposeful smile, marches down the HALLWAY. He carries a stack of BLANK PAPER and a bunch of fat pencils.
87 INT. WARD 2 - DAY ROOM - SAME

There is an unspoken tension in the air. Sal plays solitaire, distractedly. Ernie sits, sneaking glances at the others around the room.

Mrs. Archer comes in, holds up two plastic CUPS, in a quandary.
MRS. ARCHER
Should I bring the crystal or leave it here? I suppose I won't really need it on K-PAX. I don't even know what they drink.

SAL
Dream on, sister. He can only take one of us with him. Why the hell would he take a stinker like you. He's taking me.

MRS. ARCHER
How dare you! I do not stink.

MARIA
(in street girl voice)
Fo'get it, ho. I'm the one's goin'!

ERNIE
(to Maria, with a timid but derisive snicker)
Yeah? Which - which one of you?

Howie suddenly plops the PAPER and PENCILS down on a table. He looks around, keenly, through his wire-rim glasses.

HOWIE
I've proposed an essay contest. To decide who will go with Prot. I've spoken with him. And he's agreed to read them all by July 27th.

There is the screeching of chairs as everyone comes over to grab a sheet of paper. Everyone except Russell and Bess.

HOWIE (CONT'D)
Russell?

Russell stands there, wringing his stringy beard, torn between his Bible and the stack of paper. He tentatively takes a sheet.

HOWIE (CONT'D)
Bess?

Bess turns slowly from the TV. Views the stack of paper, then her fellow inmates. For the first time, as she smiles, we see the depth of sadness and dejection in her eyes.

BESS
K-PAX sounds like too good a place. They wouldn't take somebody like me ...

She turns back to the TV.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED: (2)

HOWIE
Suit yourself.

Everyone suddenly shuts up, looks nonchalant - as Prot enters.
He takes note of them all, warmly, like they were family.
Russell, fingering his dog-eared Bible, slowly approaches.

RUSSELL
Would I ... would I get to take my
Bible to K-PAX?

Prot considers him. Sees how deeply the question is etched on
Russell's tormented brow. He gives Russell an assuring smile.

PROT
Of course, Russell.

Russell's features quiver with elation.

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Powell positions several orb-like LAMPS around the room. He
does so carefully, with purpose, as if setting a stage. He
turns them all on. Then goes over and flicks off the sterile
room lights.

He takes stock of the darkened room. Satisfied.

INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Chakraborty views the lights, and Powell, through the window.
Figuring there must be a method to his madness.

INT. MPI - EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Prot stares beyond the white circle, already in a hypnotic
trance. Powell begins, calmly, but with a hint of more
urgency.

POWELL
Last time you told me about your Earth
friend and his father's death. Do you
remember?

PROT
Of course.

POWELL
Good. Now, I want you to think back
again ... but not so far back as last
time.

CONTINUED
Prot slouches in the chair, limbs becoming gangly, adopting a teenager's insouciance. He chews imaginary gum. Then starts acting as if he's conversing with someone...

POWELL (CONT'D)
(witnessing this transformation, venturing)
Is your friend there with you now?

 PROT
Yeah.

POWELL
Can he hear us?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

PROT
What do you think? He's not deaf.

POWELL
(attempting)
May I speak with him?

PROT
He doesn't want to.

POWELL
Will he tell me his name, at least?

PROT
No way.

Powell hides his frustration behind his smile.

POWELL
Well, we have to call him something.
How about - Pete?

PROT
That's not his name, but whatever thrills you.

MONITORING ROOM - Chakraborty can't help a little chuckle.

POWELL
What year is it?

PROT
Nineteen eighty-four.

POWELL
How old are you?

PROT
A hundred and seventy-five.

POWELL
(getting an idea)
And how old is Pete?

PROT
Seventeen.

POWELL
(making light of it)
And he's still okay hanging around with someone from K-PAX? I mean, what do his friends think?

PROT
(shrugs)
They don't know about me.

CONTINUED
Tell me about Pete.

Prot pauses, as if conjuring Pete inside him. He puts on a complicated frown.

What happened? Is there a problem? (discerning)
Is that why he called you?

Prot nods.

What's the problem?

He has a girlfriend.

Powell searches Prot's face. It is the pinched face of a worried seventeen-year-old.

The problem is with his girlfriend?

Prot sighs, his frown intensifies.

She's ... pregnant. (lamentably)

He can see what's coming. Get married, have a bunch of kids, take the same job that killed his dad.

Does he blame her for this?

(taken aback)
No, no. He loves her. He just ... hates the chains people shackle themselves with. We don't have all that crap on K-PAX.

Powell sits back, stymied, presses on.

All right. Listen carefully ... I'm going to ask you to come forward in time again ... say two weeks ...

Prot sheds the worried seventeen-year-old face for a wide smile of solace.

What do you see?
A forest ... with lots of soft places to lie down, and fruit trees ... and all kinds of wonderful beings ...

POWELL (realizes, vexingly)
You're on K-PAX?

PROT
It's good to be home ...

POWELL (with frustration)
All right—let's come forward in time again. A year ... two years ...

PROT (as if seeing it)
On the planet Tersipion in what you would call the constellation Taurus. Orange and green everywhere ...

POWELL
Prot—what I'd like— is for you to come forward in time to your next visit to Earth.

Prot appears to be traveling through his head.

PROT
Of course. Uh, let's see ... no, still on Tersipion ... no, back on K-PAX. March.

(smiling)
Yes, your March. That delightful time in your Northern Hemisphere when the ice on the streams is melting.

POWELL
This is March ... of what year?

PROT
Ninety. According to your Earth calendar.

POWELL
And your friend Pete called you?

PROT
Not for anything in particular. He just wants someone to talk things over with now and then.

POWELL
Tell me about him now ...
Powell watches, in amazement, as Prot transforms his entire persona to reflect a lumbering docility.

    PROT
    He works. Same place his father and grandfather did.

    POWELL
    The slaughterhouse.

    PROT
    Yessir, the old butchery.
    (in disgust)
    He's a knocker.

    POWELL
    A knocker?

    PROT
    The guy who knocks the cows in the head so they don't struggle when their throats are slit. I know, barbaric, isn't it?

Powell considers him with a deep look, imagining this.

    POWELL
    Does he still live in the same town?

    PROT
    Outside of town. An old place he fixed up. It's not much, but it's got a couple of acres ... and trees, and a river.
    (smiles, imagining it)
    Reminds me a little of K-PAX, except for the river.

    POWELL
    Tell me ... did he marry that pregnant girl?

    PROT
    What a memory! Yes, they're married. But she's no longer pregnant. That was six years ago.

    POWELL
    I've forgotten her name.

    PROT
    S ... (stops, wary)
    I never told you her name.
CONTINUED: (4)

POWELL (taking a chance)
Can you tell me now?

INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Chakraborty sits forward, not knowing what to expect. He watches Prot's PULSE RATE beep steady ...

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

Prot sits there, shoulders rising and falling with several thoughtful breaths. Finally, quietly, he says:

PROT

Sarah.

ON POWELL, barely concealing his elation.

POWELL

Did they have a son or daughter?

Prot's eyelids squinch, fondly. Then, in a soft, tender breath:

PROT

Rebecca ... her birthday's next week.

STAY ON Powell a moment ... moved by this.
INT. POWELL'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Powell lies in bed, wide awake. He looks over at Rachel, asleep, curled away from him. A knit on her brow. He leans over, kisses her, softly enough that she doesn't waken...

INT. MPI CLINIC - EVENING

As Powell and Villers hurry off the elevator - Chakraborty is waiting for them. They head for the EMERGENCY ROOM.

VILLERS
What happened?

CHAKRABORTY
Howie tried to kill Ernie.

POWELL
What!?

They enter the EMERGENCY ROOM - to find Ernie sitting up in a BED, hands behind his head. A beatific smile on his face.

CHAKRABORTY
(reassuring him)
Not to worry. He is very fine.

ERNIE
I feel wonderful, Doctor Powell, absolutely wonderful!

POWELL
For God's sake, Ernie, what happened!

CONTINUED
99 CONTINUED:

ERNIE
My good friend Howie just about strangled me to death.

Villers and Powell stare at Howie, at a complete loss. As he throws his head back with a laugh, the red abrasion on his neck clearly visible.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
That old son-of-a-bitch, I love him!

VILLERS
(looks from Ernie to Chak)
I don't understand.

ERNIE
Oh, you should've seen it!
(excitedly)
I was asleep. You know - the way I like, with my hands tied and everything? He wrapped something around my neck, handkerchief or something - and tightened it up -
(with a crazy giggle)
- and there wasn't a goddamn thing I could do about it!
(then, almost trembling with excitement)
Well, when I stopped breathing -- he lifted me onto a gurney and ran me up here. They got me going again in a hurry - and when I woke up --

Ernie grabs Powell, with a look of revelation.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
You know what I realized, Doctor Powell? Dying - is something you have no control over. So why waste your life being afraid of it?

Powell sees the confidence in Ernie's eyes ... and begins to get an uneasy feeling as to who's really behind this.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
From now on? I'm gonna sleep on my stomach. I'll eat fish with bones - I'll - I'll swallow the biggest pill you can find! Bring it ON, BABY!

100 INT. WARD 4 - SECLUSION ROOM - EVENING

Windowless, padded walls. As the heavy door opens, Powell and Villers step inside ... they wear serious, careful expressions.

CONTINUED
Continued:

But Howie, sitting in the corner, calmly - cuts Powell a wide, proud smile.

Howie
I cured him. Didn't I? Prot says one more task and I'll be cured, too. (a big twinkle in his eye
And then it's ... bon voyage!

Villers' expression changes.

INT. WARD 4 - HALLWAY - IN A COUPLE OF MINUTES

As an ATTENDANT locks back the seclusion cell door and walks away. Leaving Powell and Villers standing there.

Powell brings his eyes to her. Villers' look is harsh, the weight of her authority behind it.

Powell
The hypnosis is working, Claudia. I know it. I'm this close. I just need -

Villers
This isn't just about Prot any more, Mark. It's about all the patients.

His eyes stay on her. Doesn't want to admit she's right.

Villers
Ultimately, they're my patients. So, now, I'm going to make a decision. And here it is. You've run out of time.

INT. WARD 2 ART ROOM - NIGHT

Powell stands in the ART ROOM, alone. He looks around, taking in all the paintings and the clay sculptures. Every single one of them ... depicts space travel. There are crazy planets ... bursts of stars ... and spaceships ... and beams of light ...

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Powell tears JULY 23 off his desk calendar - revealing JULY 24TH. He considers the new date, soberly. Crumpling the old one up, tightly, in his hand. He stares at the diplomas on his wall ...

Then comes into his OUTER OFFICE. Above Mrs. Trexler's desk, on the wall - is a MAP of the United States. RED PINS show the locations of slaughterhouses.
CONTINUED:

He stares at the dozens and dozens of red pins ... a flicker of fear in his eyes. Fear of failure.

POWELL
Tell me your name ... damnit, tell me your name!

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Prot sits hypnotized once more, a peaceful, blank expression on his face.

But Powell wears the weight of determination on his.

POWELL
I'm going to give you a specific date ... and I want you to remember where you were and what you were doing on that day. Do you understand?

PROT
Perfectly, my dear sir.

Powell takes a moment, prepares himself for what he is about to do.

POWELL
The date ... is July 27th. Nineteen ninety-six.

INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Chakraborty checks the monitors, beeping steady.

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME

There is no hint of shock or emotion on Prot's face. He only smiles.

PROT
I'm on K-PAX ...

Powell closes his eyes, ready to burst with frustration.

POWELL
Are you sure?

PROT
Quite sure, guv'nor. I am harvesting kropins for a meal. That is a fungi, something like your truffles. Big truffles. Delicious. Do you like truffles?

(MORE)

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

PROT (CONT'D)
(brow knitting)
Wait ... there it is ...

Powell regards him, keener now.

POWELL
What? Is it Pete?

PROT
Yes ... I feel that he needs me.
(beat)
Now I am on Earth. I am with him.

POWELL
With Pete?

PROT
Yes.

POWELL
Where are you? What are you doing?

Prot's face becomes blank, expressionless, almost alien-like. His voice that of an outside observer ...

PROT
By a river in back of his house. It is dark. He is taking off his clothes.

POWELL
(trying to follow)
Why is he doing that?

Prot's features tremble, as if a shiver passes through him.

PROT
He ...

IN THE MONITORING ROOM, the monitors beep steady ...

POWELL
He what? What is he doing?

PROT
He ... is trying to kill himself.

A look of revelation comes on Powell's face.

INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

Chakraborty, stunned, sits back in his seat.

CONTINUED
106 CONTINUED:

CHAKRABORTY
Jesus ...
(then, into his
mouthpiece)
Jesus, Mark ... we're not prepared for
this. I think ... I think you should
calm him down and bring him back.

107 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME
Powell hears, but chooses to ignore, too intent on getting
through to Prot, now.

CHAKRABORTY (OVER POWELL'S EARPIECE)
Mark, do you hear me?
Powell stares at Prot. His whisper intended for Chakraborty.

POWELL
Not now ... 

108 INT. MONITORING ROOM - SAME

CHAKRABORTY
Mark, with all due respect ... I have
to speak in an official capacity now.

109 INT. EXAMINING ROOM - SAME
Powell remains fixed on Prot. Knowing he's about to cross the
line.

POWELL
Why does he want to kill himself?

IN THE MONITORING ROOM, Chakraborty can't believe this. He
braces himself.

 PROT
Because ... something terrible has
happened.

POWELL
Has he done something, Prot? Has he
done something ... he shouldn't have?

 PROT
He doesn't want to talk about it.

POWELL
Do you know what happened?

 No.

CONTINUED
POWELL
No? Doesn't he tell you everything
that happens to him?

PROT
Not any more ...

POWELL
Prot, I'm trying to help him! I can't
help him, unless he tells me what
happened.

PROT
He knows that.

POWELL
Then why won't he tell me?

Prot's breathing grows heavy, fighting a visible shudder of
remorse.

IN THE MONITORING ROOM — Prot's pulse monitor starts beeping
rapidly.

Prot's voice becomes a sober whisper, as if glimpsing the
secret in the deepest place of his soul.

PROT
Because then ... you would know what
even he doesn't want to know ...

POWELL
Then you have to help him, Prot! Help
him tell me what happened.

PROT
He doesn't want to talk about it. Are
you fucking deaf?!

POWELL
But time is running out for him!

PROT
Time is running out for everyone.
(grimly)
He jumps in. He is floating ...

Prot's eyelids flutter, as if trying to keep a dispassionate
distance from what he is seeing.

INT. MONITORING ROOM

Chakraborty, with alarm, watches Prot's pulse rate keep rising.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

CHAKRABORTY
Pulse is up to a hundred and ten,
respiration's up to twenty-five! For
God's sake, Mark - BRING HIM BACK!!

INT. EXAMINING ROOM

POWELL
Save him, Prot! You are his friend,
you can save him.

PROT
I am his friend. That is why I won't
interfere ...

POWELL
Save him!

PROT
No! There is no chance ... the
current is too strong ...

He starts coughing, as if full of water. Slowly ... as Powell
watches, riveted ... Prot slips out of his chair and onto his
knees ... putting his arms around himself.

PROT
I ... cannot ...

He is shivering now. Shivering so violently that the shivers
come out his nose in snorts.

IN THE MONITORING ROOM - Chakraborty stands, spellbound.

POWELL
Listen to me, Prot. Listen to me ...
you've helped a lot of patients here.
You helped Mrs. Archer, you helped
Howie, and Ernie. I'm going to ask
you to help cure Pete. Let's call it
a - task. I want you ... to let me
speak to him.

Prot, kneeling there, shivering, snorting, shakes his head in
stiff resistance.

POWELL
If he's listening, I want him to know
he can trust me. I want him to know
... that if it was ... Sarah - or
Rebecca - he did something bad to -

Suddenly, Prot opens his eyes. He shakes his head, horrified,
as if Powell doesn't understand.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

PROT
N-n-n-n-n-n. No. He - he - he -

As Powell watches, in alarm now - Prot's features transform from horror into seething murderous rage -- into bottomless anguish.

PROT
Oh, God - Oh, God - Oh, God - Oh, God - Oh, God - Ohhhhhhh GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOD!!

IN THE MONITORING ROOM - Chakraborty tears his headphones off. Presses a CODE RED BUTTON on the wall.

Prot's SCREAM continues - tapering off into a sobbing animal-like wail. He kneels there, pressing his fists to his head, inconsolable.

Powell watches ... his alarm turning to a painful look, and finally, to one of profound compassion. He kneels down, picks Prot's glasses up from the floor. And Prot's notebook and pencil. Then ... puts his arm around Prot.

POWELL
It's okay, it's okay.

As McAllister rushes into the room, with a needle ready. And Navarro and Simms, with leather restraints. Powell, keeping hold of Prot, motions them back.

POWELL
(to Prot)
It's okay ...

Prot reaches out for Powell's arm, taking hold of it, taking his glasses ...

PROT
Yes, yes. It's okay.

Shakily, he puts the glasses on. And to everyone's surprise ... raises himself, ragaining his breath, looking around.

PROT
Five ... four ... three ... two ...
one. Yes, feeling fine. Feeling refreshed.

Powell just stares at him ...
INT. LATE TRAIN TO CONNECTICUT - DAY

Long gone are the Wall Street commuters. In fact, the only two souls on the deserted train car are Powell and a HOMELESS MAN.

Powell, wrung out, rides with an aimless look.

The HOMELESS MAN jabbers to himself, in a plastic Star Wars helmet and pink tights. Under a soiled trenchcoat, a faded sweatshirt reads: "Beam Me Up" ...

As Powell stares at him ... caught in the crazy loneliness of the man's babble ... his own full sense of failure hits him. Seized by the desire to do something, he fishes out his wallet to gives the fellow a dollar. But as he does -

PROT'S PENCIL falls out of his pocket - onto the train floor.

Powell looks down at it, surprised. A beat. His eyes narrowing ...

The pencil is blue ... whittled down almost to nothing from use.

Powell reaches down, picks it up. Curious ... then ... with an inconceivable look ...

On the side of the pencil, almost worn out, is a word and a half "The Salva ..." And underneath it, what looks like an area code ... "505." All the rest has been long sharpened away.
CONTINUED:

POWELL
I'm a son-of-a-

He scrambles to open his briefcase, goes for his cell phone—but the phone pocket is empty. He searches madly through the briefcase, checks his own jacket pockets. Must have left the damn phone at the office.

POWELL
Shit!

As the train squeals to a stop, Powell squints out the window with unfamiliarity. No matter. He just gets off -

EXT. RAISED TRAIN PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

Graffiti covers the platform. Powell has gotten off at 125th Street. He looks around for a pay phone. None. He runs down the metal stairs to the -

EXT. STREET UNDERNEATH - CONTINUOUS

This is Harlem. A radio booms rap from a Buick LeSabre on the corner. Several tough looking HOMIES hang around it. They view the white man with the briefcase, warily. Powell doesn't care. He makes a B-line for the -

PAY PHONE in front of an all-night grocery. He fishes coins out of his pocket, puts them in the phone. Holds the PENCIL up to the light to read the area code on it, and punches in a number ... waits ...

LONG DISTANCE OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)
What city please?

POWELL
Yes, yes - where is this!? Where am I calling - where are you?

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)
(carefully)
You've reached long distance information in New Mexico, sir.

POWELL
(can't believe it)
New Mexico! New Mexico!

The homies on the corner eye each other, not knowing what to make of Powell.

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)
What city please?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

Powell looks at the pencil, mouthing the letters to himself... S-A-L-V-A... then, realizing.

POWELL
The Salvation Army...

OPERATOR (OVER PHONE)
I'm sorry sir, what city?

A wild SHOUT escapes Powell. He hangs up. Thrusts more coins into the phone. Punches in another number, eyeing his watch, which says 11:30 p.m.

POWELL
Joyce! Can you meet me in the office in 45 minutes?

INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

Mrs. Trexler, hastily put together, sits at her computer. Powell looking over her shoulder.

MRS. TREXLER
There are a dozen Salvation Army stores in New Mexico -- Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Roswell -- wait a minute. There's one in Santa Rosa.

She looks up to her wall, at the MAP of slaughterhouses. Powell is right with her. As she moves her finger - to one of three RED PINS in New Mexico. The one stuck in a small town named Guelph.

POWELL
(squinting at the map)
Guelph, New Mexico. Looks pretty damn close to Santa Rosa.
(to Trexler, excited)
What's the biggest local newspaper for that region. Can we find that?

Trexler gets out of one web site - onto another, exploring. Her fingers flying. Powell's eyes glued to her screen.

Then... an amazed smile from Trexler.

MRS. TREXLER
The Guadalupe County Observer - covering Guadalupe County.

POWELL
(on a mission)
Bring it up.
MRS. TREXLER
(working as fast as she can)
It's a long shot.

POWELL
It's our only shot.

In a moment, before them, on the screen appears The Guadalupe County Observer.

MRS. TREXLER
We're lucky. They go back five years.

POWELL
(incredibly grateful)
Son-of-a-bitch. Let's go to July 27th, nineteen ninety-five.

It takes her a few interminable moments, but she gets to the front page of the JULY 27TH, 1995 edition. They scan down the FRONT PAGE HEADLINES on the computer screen ... nothing.

POWELL
Swap meet, forest fire, livestock sale. Damn. Wait -
(thinking)
Go to the 28th.

Mrs. Trexler punches up the 28th. The front page appears. Powell puts his finger on the screen -

POWELL
There!

Guadalupe County Observer, front page, July 28th, 1995, reads: "DEADLY ATTACK LEADS TO MURDER, SUICIDE FOR GUELPH MAN".

Mrs. Trexler puts her hand to her mouth.

POWELL
(reading it)
Robert Porter ... drowned ...

He lets out an incredible laugh. Plants a kiss on a startled Mrs. Trexler's cheek.

POWELL
His name is Robert Porter!

Mrs. Trexler looks back, troublingly, at the headline on the screen ... MURDER, SUICIDE ... not entirely sure.
INT. POWELL HOME - MORNING

Rachel, worried, hasn't slept, buttering Natalie's waffle and pouring herself some coffee - when the phone rings. She picks it up, quickly. Greatly relieved.

RACHEL
Mark, I've been so worried, where -
  (incomprehensibly)
You're flying ... to New Mexico?

EXT. ALBUQUERQUE AIRPORT - DAY

As a JET comes smoothly in for a landing ...

EXT. GUELPH, NEW MEXICO - DAY

Powell drives from airport to Guelph in alien landscape of New Mexico.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - GUELPH, NEW MEXICO - DAY

The SHERIFF, who walks with the gait and gait of a man used to his small town badge, flips through an old squeaky file cabinet.

While Powell sits against the edge of a desk, briefcase and coat in hand, waiting. The slow pace here is maddening. He can't help glance at the Cattleman's Bank DAY CALENDAR on the wall ... July 26th.

SHERIFF
I remember the case, all right. Just about the biggest thing ever happened in these parts.
  (eyes Powell, wryly)
We're not from New York City, you know.

He finds the file.

SHERIFF
Porter. Robert Porter. Here it is.

He looks through it, remembering, with a regrettable shake of his head. Walks over to let Powell take a look.

SHERIFF
Quiet type, I remember. Strong as a horse, though. Worked as a knocker. Lived 'bout twenty miles outside a' town, with his wife and child, sweet little girl. Wife was Indian.
  (beat)
Pretty much kept to themselves.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

Powell is amazed by something he finds in the file.

POWELL
Sarah. His wife's name was Sarah.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

SHERIFF
That's right. Good lookin' woman, too. Damn shame ... what happened.

He reaches for his hat on a hook, regards Powell.

SHERIFF
Got time to take a ride?

EXT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - DAY

As Powell stares up at the tall wooden STRUCTURE. It stands like a hellish, grinding furnace against the stark blue sky.

But to Powell, it is an affirmation of the truth. And as he lets out a silent laugh of awe, we WIDEN -

to take in the expanse of mooring ANGUS STEERS. Literally acres of them. The smell practically in our nostrils.

The Sheriff comes up, stands beside him.

SHERIFF
Yes, sir ... the old butchery.

Powell turns to him, astounded, at hearing that phrase.

SHERIFF
C'mon. I'll take you by the house.

EXT. PORTER HOUSE - DAY

As the Sheriff's CAR comes up a dirt road, to stop ...

at the RUINS of what was once an idyllic small farm. Powell climbs out of the car, slowly. Lets the place seep into his senses.

The Sheriff comes around the car, viewing the ruins, solemnly.

SHERIFF
Been empty. Nobody comes anywhere near here since ... all that happened. No living next of kin for the place to go to, anyway.

He takes his hat off, almost respectfully, and walks up the overgrown path. Powell following him -

up stone steps - into a HOUSE that is little more than pillars in the open air.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED:

A loveseat taken over by weeds, shards of dishes, a mirror, clumps of what were once books, toys ... is all that is left to testify that a family once lived here.

Powell's eyes fall, a moment, on the broken hammers of what was once a piano sound board ... as the Sheriff begins, grimly, quietly:

SHERIFF
Had detectives come from Albuquerque
try an' piece this one together.
Accordin' to the official story ...
Porter was at work ... when this
drifter, a Daryl Walker, came by the
house. Two-time parolee, lookin' for
trouble. Know what I'm sayin'?
Started out as a robbery. Wife and
daughter were out back ...

CLOSER ON POWELL ... he gazes out past the hinges of what once was a back door. He hears Prot's VOICE calling ... "Becky? Sarah?"

AND HE FLASHES ON:

PORTER'S FACE. But it is now ROBERT PORTER'S FACE. A happy, tired humanity on it as he gets out of his truck, overalls stained after a hard day's work. He waits for his daughter to run out of the house and into his arms. Waits ...

But he is met with an eerie silence. Perplexed, he heads up the stone path - and into the HOUSE.

SHERIFF (V.O.)
What we gather ... from forensics and all, was that - this Walker - brought both women back in the house at gunpoint.

FOLLOWING PORTER - his boots trudge up the stairs, face growing worried at the silence.

PORTER
Becca ... Saree?

His breathing becomes quicker, panicked, as he moves down the narrow hallway ... sees a doll on the floor ... an overturned watering can ... he comes to the bedroom ...

AS WE COME BACK TO:

POWELL'S EYES, wide, shaken, listening to the Sheriff ...

SHERIFF (V.O.)
Raped the wife. Then shot them both.

CONTINUED
POWELL FLASHES ON:

THE BEDROOM ... blood everywhere ... hands tied to bedposts ... naked legs splayed ... bare feet dangling over the sides of a bed.

ON PORTER ... witnessing this, eyes frozen. He wears the look of a man whose universe has, in one instant, shattered. And left him in the airless blackness of space. From deep within him comes a choking sound ... 

SHERIFF (V.O.)
Porter must've come home, found Walker still here ...

Porter staggers back into the hallway - to see WALKER. Who, scared, takes out a gun. Dazed, but with an animal-like reflex, Porter knocks it out of his hand. They struggle for the gun, like two grunting beasts until Porter ... with an inhuman strength, grabs Walker's wrists, and pins him to the wall. Then raises his other fist ... a savage look coming into his eyes. A look built up over a lifetime of meekness.

AND WE STAY ON PORTER'S FACE - as, with a final savagery - he sends the side of his fist into Walker's neck ...

SHERIFF (V.O.)
And then knocked the son'n'bitch like an Angus steer ...

BACK TO

POWELL - as he closes his eyes.

POWELL
God all mighty ...

SHERIFF
Snapped a grown man's neck like it was a twig.
(looks tightly at Powell)
Can't say I wouldn't've done the same.

The Sheriff puts his hat on, walks out, down the rubble of back steps. Powell follows him -

EXT. PORTER HOUSE - OUT BACK - DAY

As the Sheriff continues on, toward the trees, Powell lingers a moment. To view a withered vegetable garden. He approaches it, astonished ... to see ...

the remains of a LAWN SPRINKLER somehow saved from fire. It sits there in the grip of weeds, attached to a blackened hose.

CONTINUED
Along with the scorched handles of what's left of a child's jump rope. And as Powell stares at it...

AN IMAGE FLASHES ACROSS HIS EYES:

A beautiful young woman, long black hair shining in the sun ... and a little girl, much like Natalie. They jump rope barefoot, innocently, happily, in the spray of water.

THEN ANOTHER IMAGE:

Dusk. Robert Porter, staggering out of the house. He kneels down, trying to wash the blood off his hands in the sprinkler, sees the jump rope...

As Powell blinks the images from his mind ...

A FINAL ONE COMES TO HIM:

NIGHT ... Porter stands on the bank of a rushing RIVER. He stares, as if into nothing. Overalls spattered with the dried blood of both man and slaughtered cows. With one hand ... he rips off the straps, lets the overalls fall off him. With the other hand, he tears the shirt off his chest. Naked now ... devoid of any human expression ... he drops into the water ... letting it carry him away ...

SHERIFF (V.O.)
We found his clothes here. Probably where he jumped in ...

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Powell stares into the rushing white water. He and the Sheriff standing, carefully, on the bank. As the Sheriff continues, loudly, above the sound of rapids:

SHERIFF
This river's pretty treacherous, even in July. Got a hell of a current.

He looks downstream, thoughtfully, for a couple moments.

SHERIFF
Still ... I s'pose it might've been a mistake, officially, to list it as a drowning. Since the body was never found.

(beat, turns to Powell)
If that boy you got out there in New York is really Robert Porter ... I'd just as soon not know about it. You know what I mean?
CONTINUED:

Powell considers the Sheriff. Then the river. With a deep, poignant gaze.

INT. AIRPLANE - EVENING

The last glow of the western sun shines through a plane window ... onto Powell's scotch and peanuts.

He sits there, looking through a copy of the Sheriff's FILE bearing the label: "Porter" ...

There are grizzly photos of the crime scene ... driver's license photo of Robert Porter ... mug shots of Walker.
Glimpses of words from the report: "Forced entry ... 25 cm gash ... thorax to abdomen ... blood ... semen ... the deceased: Sarah Porter, Rebecca Porter ..."

Beside Powell, resting on his briefcase, is also an old high school YEARBOOK ... from Guadalupe High School, 1985.

Powell closes the file, with sober reflection, and looks out his window ... at the first stars twinkling in the darkening sky.

EXT. POWELL HOUSE - NIGHT

As a taxi stops in front. And Powell steps out, with nothing but his briefcase. The clothes on his back stick to him. He is bone-weary. But the sight of his home fills him with emotion.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - UPSTAIRS

Powell stands there in the doorway. Gazing upon his DAUGHTERS. Their angelic faces, as they sleep ...

He also notices Prot's star map ... the girls have tacked it up on their wall. It seems to fit right in with the twinkling moon and star wallpaper.

INT. POWELL'S HOME - IN A FEW MOMENTS

Powell steps quietly. The house is in some disarray.

Rachel lies on the couch in exhausted sleep, knots of worry on her brow. He kneels down, and just drinks her in with his eyes. Takes phone from her hand, which has fallen, and gently lifts it back onto the couch. Not wanting to let her hand go. He gets up.

CONTINUED
B125 CONTINUED:

She awakens, surprised that she'd fallen asleep. That tired. But when she sees him, she doesn't care. He's here now.

RACHEL

Mark ...

He holds her tight.

POWELL

Shhh, let me just hold you ...

RACHEL

I called Joyce - you didn't come home - you didn't call - don't ever do this again.

POWELL

(whispers into her hair)
I won't, I won't.

She wipes tears of relief from her face, then collects herself, anxious to hear -

RACHEL

What happened?

Powell sits up with her.

She looks up, at her husband. Sees the conflict on his face.

POWELL

I found what I was looking for.

CONTINUED
POWELL (CONT'D)

(beat)
To be truthful, Rachel ... I wish I hadn't.

He looks at her.

POWELL
Twenty-five years of practice under my belt. Never thought I'd say that.

It is then, he sees a NOTE by the mobile phone. He picks it up, curiously ... It says ... "Call Steve - Important".

(ALT) INT. POWELL'S HOME - IN A FEW MOMENTS

Powell steps quietly. The house is in some disarray.

Takes in Rachel. She lies on the couch in exhausted sleep, knots of worry on her brow.

He comes over, gently takes the mobile phone out of her hand. He holds onto that hand. Doesn't want to let go of it ...

It is then, he sees a NOTE by the mobile phone. He picks it up, curiously ... It says ... "Call Steve - Important".

INT. PRINCETON OBSERVATORY - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

(PREVIOUSLY SHOT AS SCENE 56)

Steve turns on a SPEAKER PHONE, around which sit Flynn, Patel and Hessler. Behind them are an array of COMPUTER SCREENS displaying STAR MAPS.

STEVE
I'm puttin' you on speaker phone, Mark. I've got the boys here.

Flynn takes the pipe from his mouth, leans toward the phone.

FLYNN
We've been admiring your patient's star map, Doctor Powell.

He looks down at Prot's hand-drawn STAR MAP. It looks like like scribbles and dots and swirls. A crude little arrow in the middle of the map points to a position labelled "Earth".

FLYNN
To be honest, at first it looked like just a bunch of scribbles and dots. (MORE)

CONTINUED
FLYNN (CONT'D)
(studying it as he speaks)
But then, we noticed — two spiraling
smudges in the left quadrant — in
relation to the position he indicates
for Earth.

He turns to another COMPUTER SCREEN on which Steve brings up
a real STAR MAP.

FLYNN (CONT'D)
On our map, that's supposed to be the
position of a neutron star called A45,
that we estimate is several times
smaller than our sun. Are you with me
so far?

E125 EXT. POWELL'S PATIO - NIGHT
Powell stands, mobile phone to his ear, unsteadily...

POWELL
Uh...

F125 INT. OBSERVATORY - SAME
(PREVIOUSLY SHOT AS SCENE 58PT)

Now Steve leans over to the phone again.

STEVE
See, Mark, the chart I generated was
for the night sky as we see it from
Earth — only transposed one thousand
light years to where K-PAX is supposed
to be. But ... I made a mistake. You
see, from one thousand light years —
we'd have a slightly different view of
A45.

He holds PROT'S MAP next to yet another SCREEN ... on which
there is a very large white star that seems to coincide —
exactly — with Prot's TWO SMUDGES.

STEVE
We've analyzed Prot's map and compared
the coordinates to the known star
field. Where we thought there was
only a neutron star, he has drawn what
appears to be a star and an accretion
disc.
G125  EXT. POWELL'S PATIO - NIGHT

Powell squints up at the night sky, then, into the phone.

POWELL
Accretion disc?

FLYNN
The data related to the stars in this area suggests the existence of a body of enormous mass.

AH125  INT. OBSERVATORY - SAME

(PREVIOUSLY SHOT AS SCENE 58PT)

STEVE
No, we're going to double-check with the Keck in Hawaii - but I'm pretty sure your boy just confirmed the existence of a suspected black hole.

Flynn moves closer to the phone, attempting:

FLYNN
Believe me, Doctor Powell, I know how crazy this sounds ... but, there is no way someone could guess this, or intuit a map like this - (no other way to say it) - unless he had actually been there ... to this planet K-PAX.

H125  EXT. POWELL'S PATIO - SAME - NIGHT

Powell, dazed. He lowers the phone for a moment. Even as we hear Steve talking through it -

STEVE (V.O.)
We can't sit on this, Mark. There are a lot of other labs that would love to make this announcement. You understand.

Powell raises the phone again. Doesn't know what to say into it, except -

POWELL
Steve, please don't do anything for a couple of days. I really appreciate that. Thank you for your input.

Powell looks at the starry night.
125 INT. HOSPITAL - WARD 2 - EVENING

ERNIE, wearing a PARTY HAT, blows a NOISEMAKER.

There are streamers everywhere. A festive BANNER strung across the day room reads: "BON VOYAGE, PROT!" The entire WARD is in party hats.

At a table, Howie is busy collecting "Why I Want To Go To K-PAX" ESSAYS. We see the handwritten titles, some in crayon, as they are put in a pile.

Howie looks up, surprised - as Navarro slips him an essay.

126 INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - EVENING

Powell looks down at the dog-eared cover of an old Guadalupe HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK, 1985. From Guadalupe County, New Mexico. It sits on his desk. He looks at it, thinking hard.

Then takes out a bottle of SCOTCH and two tumblers. Places them beside the yearbook. He pours himself a tumbler. Downs it. And just stands there, preparing himself, waiting ...

In a couple moments, his door opens. And Prot enters. Powell puts on a smile.

    POWELL
    Have a seat.

Prot eyes him, carefully, sitting.

    POWELL (CONT'D)
    All packed? Ready to go?

    PROT
    Quite ready. I travel light.
    (beat, smiles perplexedly)
    That's a joke. You humans have no
    sense of humor.

Powell lets out a delayed "I get it" laugh. Then, pours both glasses of Scotch. Prot, watches, with uncertainty, sensing Powell has something up his sleeve.

    POWELL
    I doubt Freud ever tried this. But -
    when someone's going away, we usually
    like to send them off with a toast.
    Scotch okay? Or would you care for
    something more - fruity?

    CONTINUED
126 CONTINUED:

PROT
(eyeing him)
I will try Scotch.

Powell picks up both glasses - leaving the yearbook there on his desk. He comes over, hands Prot a glass. Still unsure, Prot gets up, takes it from him. They stand there.

POWELL
Well ... here's to a safe trip.

Prot watches Powell drink. Then, after a moment's hesitation, does the same. Letting out a whistle.

POWELL
To tell you the truth, K-PAX does sound like a beautiful place.
(muses, pours himself a little more)
I'd like to see it some day. Think there's a chance?

PROT
You should see more of your world.

PROT
Mark...I want to tell you something.
(beat)
Something you don't know yet.

Powell waits, eyes riveted on Prot.

PROT
But we K-PAXians have been around long enough to have discovered...

As Powell's look turns unclear...Prot peers into his empty Scotch glass, with a solemn fatalism.

PROT
The Universe will expand, then collapse back on itself -- then expand again. It will repeat this process again and again, forever. What you don't know...is that...when the Universe expands again, everything will be as it was before. Whatever mistakes you make this time around, you will live through again on the next pass.

(a choke in his voice)
You will live through those mistakes again and again, over and over and over. Forever.

(MORE)
Rev. 01/22/01 (2nd Pink)

126 CONTINUED: (2)

PROT (CONT'D)
(looks up at Powell)
So, my friend, make sure you never
make a mistake you will regret
forever. As a matter of fact, you
should see more of your own family,
Mark. Invite your son for Christmas.

Powell, in surprise, swallows some more Scotch, coming around,
to sit - in his patient's chair.

POWELL
I just may do that, Prot.

PROT
You know what I've learned about
Earth? How much you take it for
granted. There's enough life on earth
to fill fifty planets. Plants,
animals, people, fungi, viruses, all
jostling to find their place.
Bouncing off each other. Feeding off
each other...
(beat)
Connected.

POWELL
You don't have that kind of connection
on K-PAX?

PROT
Nobody needs. Nobody wants. Nobody
on K-PAX misses me -- there would be
no reason to. But when I leave here,
I will be missed.
(beat)
A strange feeling.

POWELL
I want to help you, Prot.

PROT
Thank you, Mark, but I don't need your
help. I'm going home.

Prot pauses for a moment.

POWELL
You don't have to leave, Prot. I'm
sure there must be some way for me to
help you...
(off Prot's look)
...to stay. As one of us.

Prot looks at Powell. Squeezes his knee.

CONTINUED
I'll miss you, Doctor Powell.

They sit there, looking straight into each other for a beat.

Powell, sensing the moment has come, glances over at the yearbook on his desk. Then back at Prot.

Prot tries to read his expression...

Powell hesitates, just a moment too long...

Prot puts down the Scotch glass, stands up, burps.
PROT (CONT'D)
Oh - I have to finish my report.
(patting his pockets)
And I seem to have lost my pencil.

Powell regards him.

The YEARBOOK sits on the desk...

They stare at each other. There are two ways Powell could go here. But...something inside him makes him...just...take the gold Montblanc pen from his own pocket...and holds it out to Prot.

POWELL
Here, take mine.

Prot takes it, admiring it, grateful.

PROT
A much more efficient writing tool.
Thank you.

POWELL
Consider it a going away present.
PROT
Adios, my friend.

Powell watches him walk to the door. He senses the moment has come. It's now or never.

POWELL
I want to show you something, Prot.

He hastens over to his desk, grabs the manila envelope.

Prot's expression grows more unsure, as Powell opens the envelope, and takes out ... the Guadalupe High School Yearbook 1985.

He shows it to Prot.

CLOSE ON PROT ... he stares at the Yearbook ...

Powell watches Prot, intensely, waiting for a reaction ...

We, too, are waiting for a reaction.

An expression of immense sadness takes hold of Prot ... followed by immediate calm.

PROT
That is Robert Porter ... my dear Earth friend. You found him. I knew you would. Good work, Doctor Powell.

POWELL
(earnestly)
It's you, Prot. You and Robert Porter are the same person.

PROT
(with a laugh)
That is patently absurd. I am not even human.

POWELL
(trying)
At least admit the possibility.

PROT
I will admit the possibility. If you will admit the possibility that I am from K-FAX.

Powell has no reply to this.

PROT
Now, if you'll excuse me. I have a beam of light to catch.

Powell can only watch him walk to the door ...
126 CONTINUED: (7)

But, just as Prot is about to walk out, he pauses, looks back at Powell. Leaving him with a wise little smile.

PROT
Mark ... now that you've found him.
Take care of him.

And with that he walks out the door.

Powell stands there. A look comes into his eyes, half understanding. He finishes his Scotch ...

127 INT. WARD 2 - NIGHT

The Bon Voyage PARTY is in full swing. Cake frosting rings every patient's mouth, as a rousing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" is sung to Prot.

128 INT. NURSES STATION - SAME

Powell stands at the WINDOW, watching the festivities.

As Villers comes up, briefcase in hand, joins him there.

VILLERS
I'm transferring him to Stonybrook tomorrow. I'm sorry, Mark. There's just no way I could explain this to the state board review. The only reason I didn't do it sooner is - well, look -

She shakes her head at the spectacle.

VILLERS
- it would have upset the rest of them too much ...•

And with that, she just walks away, to the elevator, gets on.

CONTINUED
MCALLISTER (CONT'D)
Don't worry - he's not going anywhere. Now, get some rest.
Powell regards the clock on the wall: 10:56 P.M. He draws a reluctant breath.
POWELL
We've got seven hours, Betty. I'll be up in four.
He turns, tired, to the elevator.

TNT. DAY ROOM - SAME
As the SONG finishes with a loud cheer, Howie comes up, and with an air of formality, presents Prot with the ESSAYS. As everyone remains clapping - Sal suddenly rips off his party hat. His face angry, desperate. He shouts:

SAL
I can't stand this!
The room turns instantly quiet. Ernie, Maria, Howie, the others - all put their party whistles down, to look at him.

SAL (CONT'D)
(addressing Prot)
I demand to know. Which one of us is going with you.
Prot looks around. Seeing that Sal speaks for all. He smiles, as if he will miss every one of them.

PROT
I will tell you this.
(holding up the essays)
There's extra points for the one who goes to sleep first.

There is a mad scramble, as everyone dashes for their rooms. Maria leaves Prot with a tearful embrace.

In a few moments, Howie is the only one left. He walks over, eyeing Prot through his wire-rims. He clears his throat.

HOWIE
You never gave me my last task. What's my last task?
Prot tucks the essays away, whispers to Howie, significantly.

PROT
Stay here...and be prepared for anything
Howie is crestfallen. But as Prot pats him on the shoulder with a nod of implicit trust...something, slowly, comes into Howie's eyes. And he stands a little straighter, a little more important, with a measure of self-worth.
INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Powell enters. Emotionally and physically exhausted. It is then, he notices -

Rachel, sitting there on his couch. A couple of TAKE-OUT CARTONS in front of her. His surprise is so complete, he doesn't know what to say.

RACHEL

Chow fun.

At this moment, she is the most beautiful sight he has ever seen.

POWELL

(realizing)

From the place on Broadway -- with the ugly lanterns in the window.

She pats the seat next to her. He doesn't resist. She spoon feeds him a bite, and another.

RACHEL

The waiter always shouted at us.

POWELL

The fortune cookies never had any fortunes in them.

They share a laugh. Then, Rachel gives him a deep smile, holding up another bite.

RACHEL

We didn't need any. I knew my fortune that night. He was sitting right across from me.

Their eyes remain on each other. And Powell realizes how much this woman means to him.

POWELL

I hope he still is.

Rachel puts down the food. Leans forward. Kisses him.

As Powell's eyelids start to close, she gently lies him down, puts a couch pillow under his head ...
131 INT. WARD 2 - PROT'S ROOM - MUCH LATER

Prot sits straight and quiet, arms folded in his lap, holding his red notebook. His bed is neatly made, the room tidy. He just sits there as if waiting for a plane.

132 INT. POWELL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Powell, asleep, Rachel snuggled up to him. His wristwatch BEEPS.

He wakes up with a start. Waking her up. He tries to squint at his watch. Can't see it. Turns to his desk clock: 5:47 A.M.

POWELL

Shit!

133 INT. WARD 2 - SAME

Navarro sits in the hallway, posted outside Prot's door. An oxygen tank and respiration equipment stand with him.

He turns to Simms, posted at the fire escape door, and holds up a twenty dollar bill.

NAVARRO

Twenty says he goes.

At the SECURITY STATION - the guard checks his three MONITORS: Prot, sitting in his room. Hallway, Navarro stationed. Stairwell, empty. He glances up at the CLOCK. As it turns to 5:49 A.M. Then looks over to the nurses station.

SECURITY GUARD

Two minutes. Wonder where Doctor Powell is?

McAllister closes the book she's been reading, getting a little fidgety now. She picks up the phone.

MCALLISTER

I'll buzz him.
INT. HOSPITAL - EMPTY HALLWAY - SAME

Powell comes skidding around a corner, running as he puts his jacket on. He hits the elevator button.

As he waits, he is drawn to a window. He looks out, up - at the SKY. There is an electricity about it. A lone star twinkles in the dark purple pre-light of dawn.

Powell punches the button again, frantically. Then, just takes the STAIRS.

INT. WARD - SAME

The security guard eyes the clock: 5:50 A.M.

SECURITY GUARD
One minute.

On one of his MONITORS, Powell appears dashing down the stairwell.

SECURITY GUARD
Here comes Doctor Powell.

PROT, IN HIS ROOM - stands up. Takes his dark glasses off.

NAVARRO, IN THE HALLWAY - looks through Prot's door.

NAVARRO
He's movin'!

MCALLISTER comes out from behind the nurses station, alert.

PROT folds his glasses, sets them on his table. He faces his window ... as the first light of dawn comes through it.

Just as - POWELL bursts onto the WARD, from the stairwell door. He runs, whispering under his breath -

POWELL
Prot!

PROT'S ROOM - the rising SUN sends its first sharp RAY through Prot's window - and into Prot's EYES.

SECURITY STATION - the security guard glances at the clock, as the numbers turn to ... 5:51 A.M.

AND NOW, EVERYTHING HAPPENS AT ONCE

Mrs. Archer runs out of her room -

MRS. ARCHER
Wait for me, you fucker!

She collides with Powell, knocking them both down.

CONTINUED
Navarro turns away from Prot's door, to the commotion.

As Powell lifts Mrs. Archer back up, he looks past her - to see a blinding orange BEAM OF SUNLIGHT shining through the window of Prot's door.

The security guard looks to the MONITOR of Prot's room. Which has now gone to static ...

SECURITY GUARD
What the hell?

POWELL grabs Navarro's KEY RING. Runs for Prot's DOOR.

Blinded by the sunbeam coming through its window, he fumbles for the right key - gets it in the lock - opens the door -

STAY ON POWELL'S FACE - as his eyes search the room - the window - the table - walls - every corner. No trace of Prot.

POWELL
Son of a -

For an instant, a smile of disbelief flashes across Powell's features. Then his eyes lower ...

POWELL
Oh, God.

He kneels down ... to the BODY crumpled underneath the bed in a fetal position. Barely conscious, eyes half open with a dead, vacant look.

POWELL
Oh, God ...

Navarro and McAllister hurry into the room.

NAVARRO
Oh, man ...

INT. HALLWAY - IN A FEW MINUTES

THE PATIENTS, who have now woken up, gather in the hallway, murmuring curiously - as Prot is carried out of his room, past them, on a gurney. His eyes remain vacant, body rigid.

ERNIE
Who's that?

SAL
Beat's me. How'd he get in here?

MARIA
That's not Prot.

CONTINUED
136 CONTINUED:

HOWIE
Definitely not Prot.

Ernie notices the sun streaming through the day room windows. He smiles.

ERNIE
Certainly not. Prot's gone.

Maria looks around, as if sensing someone else is missing.

MARIA
Where's Bess?

The patients look at each other, then all around.

ERNIE
Where - where is Bess?

R137 INT. BESS'S ROOM - IN A MOMENT

As the patients all converge in her open doorway, staring ...

A pair of hospital slippers sit neatly by Bess's bed. And her HOSPITAL BRACELET, left neatly on her pillow.

SAL
(devastated)
He chose Bess.

Mrs. Archer's face trembles with envy.

MRS. ARCHER
Bitch.

An ebullient smile spreads across Ernie's face.

ERNIE
He took Bess...

Howie nods. It's true.

HOWIE
He took Bess.

MARIA
Good fo' you, homegirl!

Howie makes his way over to the bed. Picks up ... a piece of paper from Bess's pillow. On it ... is a crude, simple drawing of flames shooting out of a house. And a bluebird, flying away from the fire. And the WORDS: "I Have No Home".

HOWIE
(happily)
Bess went to K-FAX.
138   INT. HALLWAY - SAME

As Navarro and Simms solemnly pull the GURNEY into the ELEVATOR. And the elevator doors close ...

POWELL (V.O.)
Patient two eight seven. Robert Porter ...

AND WE DISSOLVE TO

139   INT. POWELL'S STUDY - DAY

Powell leans back in his chair, staring at the small recorder on his desk.

CONTINUED
POWELL (V.O.)
How I wish I could say that Robert sat up one fine day and said "I'm hungry - got any fruit?"

He looks down at Prot's RED NOTEBOOK, opens it to a title page, which reads, in pencil: "Preliminary Observations on B-TIK (Earth)."

Then, his eyes take him out his study window - where Rachel, Gabby and Natalie are planting a rose bush in the garden.

POWELL (V.O.)
Like most catatonic ... he probably hears every word we say, but refuses, or is unable to respond. Perhaps with patience on our part he will recover, in time.

R140 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - CACTUS GARDEN - DAY

WIDE SHOT, MOVING IN SLOWLY ...

on ROBERT PORTER, who sits in a WHEELCHAIR, blanket wrapped around him, hair rustling in a breeze. Powell, seated on a bench, reads a LETTER, aloud, to him ... *

POWELL
(having trouble reading
Howie's handwriting)
I like my new job at the library very much ... I like helping people find things ... except when they get impatient with me.

AS WE COME IN CLOSE NOW ...

Powell looks at Porter, whose gaze remains vacant. He continues reading the letter, anyway -- *

POWELL (CONT'D)
I went and visited Ernie yesterday at his Mom's house. Did you know, Doctor Powell, that Ernie's taking a test to be a crisis counselor? (laughs at the thought of this) Imagine that.

Porter remains mute.

POWELL
Look, Howie sent a picture.
R140 CONTINUED:

With a smile, he holds up a PHOTOGRAPH to Porter. Porter's eyes move, slowly, to the smiling picture of Howie and Ernie. But he registers no reaction.

Powell takes it back, tries to keep a smile. He goes back to reading the letter --

POWELL
Say hello to all my friends ... I miss them. And please let me know when Bess comes back because I want to know all about K --

He stops himself. Reflective a moment. Glances at Porter, troubling. Then, just folds up the letter, puts it in his pocket.

CONTINUED
POWELL
That's one thing we need to talk about ... Bess.
" Really worried about Bess. We've checked shelters, halfway homes, the police have come up empty ... it's as if she ... just disappeared. (looks cannily at Robert) July twenty-seventh. You wouldn't happen to want to tell me anything about that, would you, Robert?"

He's searching Porter's expressionless EYES.

POWELL
No? (with an earnest smile) Well, maybe it'll come to you. Whenever you're ready. I'll be waiting.

He gets up, gives Porter a pat on the shoulders. And takes the handles of the wheelchair. Pushing Porter on, along the path, through the park.

POWELL
Doctor, patient. Curious human distinction ...

141 INT. WARD 2 - DAY

WE TAKE IN THE DAY ROOM. As Maria gazes out a window. And Russell mumbles to himself, Bible in hand. And Sal and Mrs. Archer play a contentious game of fish.

POWELL (V.O.) By his own calculations, he is due again soon.

WE MOVE ON ... into the ART ROOM. Where Navarro, setting a new patient down at some watercolors, pauses, respectfully - to look at PROT'S GLASSES, which rest on a pedestal, like a shrine, facing the window.

POWELL (CONT'D; V.O.) The patients in Ward Two have no doubts whatsoever, nor some of the staff ... AND WE LOOK OUT THROUGH THOSE DARK GLASSES ... into the dancing sunlight ...

POWELL (V.O.) As for me ... well ... maybe Prot left me Robert Porter.
CONTINUED:

The SUNGLASS LENSES NOW FILLING THE SCREEN ... and the pinpoints of sunlight playing like a thousand twinkling stars...

POWELL (V.O.)
And a couple of other tasks.

R141 (ALT) INT. WARD 2 - ART ROOM - DAY

Powell walks, slowly ... toward PROT'S SUNGLASSES, which rest on a pedestal, like a shrine, with a "Do Not Disturb, Be Back Soon" sign. They face the window.

Powell stares at them for a long beat.

Then, looking around, seeing no one else is there, he bends down ... to LOOK THROUGH THEM ...

And as he does, WE SEE THROUGH THEM ... into the dancing sunlight ... the SUNGLASS LENSES NOW FILLING THE SCREEN ... and the pinpoints of sunlight playing like a thousand twinkling stars ...

A142 INT. GRAND STATION

AND WE ARE BACK with the OUT-OF-FOCUS CROWDS of Grand Central Station ... the FIGURES resolve into PEOPLE, rushing here and there ...
And now close on Powell, standing with his briefcase, searching for someone in the crowds...

We hear Prot, O.S.

Prot (V.O.)
Mark ... we KPAXians have been around long enough to have discovered a little something about the origins of the Universe that you don't know yet. But, I'll tell you.

Powell moves his eyes over the nameless faces, more intently, searching...

Prot (V.O.; continuing)
The Universe will expand, then collapse back on itself -- then expand again. It will repeat this process again and again, forever. What you don't know ... is that ... when the Universe expands again, everything will be as it was before. Whatever mistakes you make this time around, you will live through again. Over and over, forever.

A smile seizes Powell, as he's found who he's searching for...

Prot (V.O.; continuing)
So, my advice to you is to get it right this time around. Because ... this time ... is all you have.

And we see Michael. Coming out of a gate, duffle bag over his shoulder. Pierced eyebrow. He looks around, unsurely. Until he spies his father. He smiles, tentative.

They approach each other, through the crowds. Stand there, facing each other. Powell initiates a hug, halting at first, then warm, gripping his son around the shoulders.

And as the camera pulls back ... they walk off together, through a shaft of sunlight streaming down from one of the high, station windows ... and on ... to the Metro North gates ...

FADE OUT:

THE END