

ZATHURA

screenplay by
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based on the book by
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INT A CLOSET DAY

Hey look, it's one of those jam-packed toy closets that everybody had as a kid. A light bulb hangs from a single cord (somebody left it on), the walls are stacked floor to ceiling with stuff. One whole wall of shelves is board games -- Monopoly, Chutes and Ladders, Life, Candyland, Stratego, Snail Pace Race, Hi-Ho Cherry-O, Clue, the list could go on forever.

The credits roll while we relive our youth for a while, but then we notice something funny. It's a slice, a thin black horizontal line, right there between Battleship and Trouble. The line ripples, thickens in the middle, and emits a faint BUZZING sound.

Now the bulge in the middle of the black line grows and the thing is *swirling*, and that's weird, but not nearly as weird as whatever's coming through.

It's a nose. A human nose. And now eyes, covered with small round sunglasses, and a chin. It's somebody's face, trying to get a glimpse of what's on the other side of this black hole (wormhole actually, but that's for later). Now the whole head pops through, the head of a good-looking guy around twenty years old. He flicks his head once and the lenses on the glasses flip up out of his eyes. He looks around the closet, as if to make sure he's in the right place, nods to himself, flicks the lenses back down --

-- and pops back out the way he came. The wormhole immediately shrinks back to a horizontal line, but not for long, a moment later something *else* starts pushing its way into this dimension.

It's a box, the same size and shape as the others in the closet, but with an age and quality that make it distinct. It FOOMFS into place in the middle of the stack suddenly, making the top half of the stack leap up a few inches to make room. The stack sways and GROANS, almost tips over.

We move in closer. The new game is in a handsome handmade wooden box, must be about fifty years old. Carved letters on one edge read

ZATHURA
A Space Adventure

The stack stops swaying, the black line disappears, and everything is still again.

The new game awaits its players.

CUT TO:

EXT A BACK YARD DAY

DANNY BUDWING, six and three-quarters years old, sits cross-legged on the grass, staring to his left. He turns and looks to his right. Then his left. Then his right.

Sound creeps in and we hear the THWACK of ball on leather on each head turn. Danny follows the thwacks like a tennis match, left, right, left, right.

From behind Danny, we see what he sees -- DAD, in his late thirties, well okay, forty, and WALTER, Danny's nine year old brother. They both know baseball, that's for sure, healthy arms, good with the glove. They don't drop any.

Danny keeps watching -- left, right, left, right. He sighs, rests his chin on one hand. We move in tighter on his face, tighter still, that annoying "THWACK!" getting louder and louder, the high-spirited yells of his father and brother ("Nice catch!" "Great throw!" "Way to go!") rising up specifically to bug the crap out of him.

When he's all the way in close-up, Danny mutters the essence of his six year old viewpoint on life:

DANNY

Stupid game.

From offscreen comes his father's voice.

DAD (O.S.)

Okay, Danny, you're up!

Walter objects.

WALTER

I didn't get my whole turn!

DAD

Yeah, I counted, that was twenty-five.
That's what we said.

WALTER

That's not fair!

DAD

It's exactly fair. Come on, Danny,
time for your turn and then I gotta
work for an hour.

DANNY

Walter can have my turn.

CONTINUED:

WALTER
Hey yeah!

DAD
Hey no.

WALTER
He said!

DAD
Come on, Dan, let's just try a couple.

Danny sighs and picks up his glove. He marches across the grass of their modest back yard as to the gallows, passing his sweaty, athletic brother, who gives him a look.

Danny reaches the middle of the grass and pushes the glove gamely onto his hand. He hits it a few times, stares in his dad's direction. Takes a deep breath.

Dad tosses him one underhand, gently.

Danny closes his eyes, turns his head away, and hears the ball THUD to the grass. He looks back, sees the ball resting by his feet.

DAD (cont'd)
Almost! Good try!

Walter just barely *begins* to roll his eyes, but Dad catches him, holds out a finger in warning.

DAD (cont'd)
Uh uh.

Walter makes an innocent face. But Danny knows the score. He picks up the ball and throws it back to his dad, gets it almost all the way there.

DAD (cont'd)
Ready? Watch the ball, not me.

Danny nods, but keeps staring at his father.

DAD (cont'd)
Danny? The ball, Dan, not me.

Danny looks down, stares at the ball hard, Superman using x-ray vision.

CONTINUED: (2)

Dad tosses another underhand one, puts a little more on it. This one sails higher, Danny looks up, raises his glove, closes just one eye this time and the ball actually *hits* his glove, he opens his other eye in excitement, but the ball bounces off his glove and falls behind him --

-- where it's caught by a diving Walter, who has leapt in from the side. He rolls on the grass, holding the glove over his head, a spectacular snow-cone grab.

DANNY

(furious)

WALTER!

Danny hurls his glove at Walter as hard as he can, it hits his brother in the head.

WALTER

DAAAAD!

DAD

Danny...

But Danny storms off across the yard and into their house, a rambling old Victorian that's seen better days. The place is almost Gothic, it could either be very cozy or very creepy. Or both.

Dad sighs and looks at Walter -- did you have to do that?

WALTER

What?

CUT TO:

INT HOUSE - DANNY & WALTER'S BEDROOM DAY

This is the bedroom of two imaginative, busy kids, their interests wildly divergent. The walls are covered with posters, on one side, basketball players and athletes, on the other it's heavy on space themes. There's also a pair of pet geckos in a cage. They moved in fairly recently, maybe a couple months ago. Not everything is unpacked, but nearly so.

Danny lies on the far bed. He's curled up facing the wall, sucking his thumb, idly flipping the pages of a favorite book, brightly colored drawings of exotic and ferocious creatures.

He hears a CREAKING sound and whips his thumb out of his mouth, doesn't want anyone to see. Behind him, Dad comes into the room and sits on the edge of the bed.

CONTINUED:

DAD

Hello dere.

(no answer)

You know, when I was six years old I-

DANNY

(still facing away)

Six and three quarters.

DAD

When I was six and three quarters,
catching was hard for me too.

DANNY

It's not hard for Walter.

DAD

Walter is nine.

DANNY

So? He's still better.

DAD

Hey, look at me.

Danny does, reluctantly.

DAD (cont'd)

Walter is different. He's good at some
things, and you're good at some things.
And they're not the same. That's how
people are.

DANNY

He beats me at *everything*.

DAD

Danny, listen to me, because this is
important. You know how you always
want to make up games and pretend to be
characters and stuff like that? You
know what you have, Danny? You know
what you have that's just incredible?
An *imagination*.

INT HALLWAY DAY

Just outside the door to the bedroom, Walter lurks, listening to
them and licking a popsicle.

DAD (O.S.)

(still to Danny)

A *great* imagination.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DAD (O.S.) (cont'd)
An incredible, unstoppable, has-no-
borders *universe* of an imagination.

INT BEDROOM DAY

DAD
I'm amazed by the things you make up,
and, you know, I make things up for a
living, so I know what I'm talking
about. You're *great* at it.

Danny sits up and looks at him.

DANNY
Am I better than Walter?

INT HALLWAY DAY

In the hallway, Walter stops mid-lick, listening intently for
the answer to that one.

DAD (O.S.)
What?

INT BEDROOM DAY

Danny persists.

DANNY
Is my imagination better than Walter's?

Dad smiles and lowers his forehead against Danny's.

INT HALLWAY DAY

Walter leans in closer, straining to hear.

INT BEDROOM DAY

DAD
(whispers to Danny)
You're *different* than Walter.

INT HALLWAY DAY

Walter, frustrated, couldn't hear.

INT BEDROOM DAY

DANNY
See? I'm not better at *anything*.

He flops back down on the bed facing away.

CONTINUED:

DAD

You're not still mad, I can tell.

Danny sits up, looks at him.

DANNY

I won't be mad if we play Smash Brothers.

DAD

I have to work.

DANNY

Okay, read to me.

He thrusts a book at Dad.

DAD

I have to *work*.

Danny flops back down with panache.

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Dad comes down the stairs and into the living room, just as a football flies at his head. He manages to catch it.

DAD

Don't *do* that.

Walter, who threw the football, is in a chair facing the TV, which is tuned to Walter's favorite show, Sports Roundup.

The living room is just off the foyer, which has a tall central open area that leads up to a beautiful skylight in the roof.

Walter's finished his popsicle and is drinking a big glass of red fruit punch.

WALTER

Wanna play catch?

DAD

We already did.

WALTER

No, *football* catch.

DAD

I have to work for an hour.

CONTINUED:

WALTER
(sacrilege)
But it's *Saturday!*

The phone RINGS in the other room.

DAD
Tell me about it.

He tosses the football back to Walter and walks into --

INT OFFICE DAY

-- his office, a small room off the living room. He drops down at his desk, where an array of art supplies is laid out, an ad layout in progress. Walter's behind him, in the doorway.

WALTER
All you ever do is work.

DAD
Nice try.
(answers phone)
Hello?

WALTER
This is *so* unfair.

DAD
(into phone)
Hi. Yeah, can you hang on just one second? Thanks.
(to Walter, covering the phone)
I have a meeting this afternoon, Walter, and I have to be ready. Nothing I can do about it.

WALTER
(double sacrilege)
You're going *out?!!*

DAD
I'm going to a meeting. You'll already be at Mom's, she's picking you up at three.

WALTER
(confused)
We go to Mom's tomorrow.

CONTINUED:

DAD

No, today.
 (into phone)
 Just one more second, okay?

WALTER

But this is a four-day Dad week.

DAD

(fast)
 No, three-day Dad week. Four-day last
 week, four-day next week, three-day
 this week. Four-day Mom's house this
 week.

Walter sets his glass down dramatically.

WALTER

That's not fair!

DAD

(thinks)
 To whom?

WALTER

To anybody.

Pause.

DAD

(into phone)
 I'm sorry, Richard, can I call you
 right back? Two minutes.

He hangs up and slides his chair across the floor, gliding to a
 stop in front of Walter. He holds his son by the arms.

DAD (cont'd)

Walter, I love you. And no, it isn't
 fair, to anyone. But you have *got* to
 learn another sentence.

WALTER

Do you want to play catch?

DAD

I have to work.

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Danny has come down the stairs and wandered over near the door
 to the office. He lurks outside, listening.

CONTINUED:

WALTER (O.S.)

Ten throws.

DAD (O.S.)

I have to work!

INT OFFICE DAY

Walter is petulant.

WALTER

If Danny wasn't around, we'd have all
the time we wanted.

DAD

Well, Danny *is* around.

He turns around in his chair.

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Danny leans closer, outside the door, listening hard. Almost
unconsciously, he puts his thumb back in his mouth.

WALTER (O.S.)

How about five throws?

INT OFFICE DAY

Walter throws the football to Dad, who catches it instinctively.

DAD

I... how can I put this? Have to work.

Danny appears in the doorway, holding up two Nintendo remotes,
their cords dragging behind him.

DANNY

Dad, I'm ready to play Smash Brothers.

WALTER

(an overreacter)
What?! You told him you'd play Smash
Brothers?!

DAD

No, I didn't.

He throws the football back to Walter, to be done with it. He
is attempting to keep his patience. Walter catches the ball and
Danny points hysterically at this outrage.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

You're playing catch with Walter!

DAD

(rubbing his head)

Guys...

WALTER

He might, if you weren't here!

DANNY

(to Walter)

YOU ARE SO MEAN!

(to God)

EVERYBODY WANTS TO RUIN MY LIFE!

DAD

Guys, please...

WALTER

(to Dad)

You never keep your promises!

DANNY

(to Dad)

ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS WALTER!

Dad finally snaps.

DAD

THERE'S ONLY ONE OF ME! Okay?! I don't like this situation either, it sucks, is what it does, but it's the best we could come up with, so climb off my back and give me about two inches of space, will you please?!

They both just stare at him, wide-eyed. Walter sets the football down on a bookcase, as if to apologize for pushing so hard. Danny drops the remotes, starts to put his thumb in his mouth but catches himself and drops his arms to his sides, his lower lip quivering.

Dad feels horrible. He sits back down and stares out the window, takes a breath. When he starts talking he's still facing away from them. He talks softly.

DAD (cont'd)

Do you boys remember the time I ate that bad chicken they keep under the lights at the supermarket and I was sick all night throwing up?

(they nod)

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

DAD (cont'd)

And the next morning we had to get on the plane to go to Grandma's and I was still so sick I could barely stand up?

More nods. He turns around and faces them now.

DAD (cont'd)

Remember before we left, when I told you guys I needed you to grow up a few years, right then in that very moment, so that you could help me on the trip instead of me helping you? Otherwise we wouldn't make it?

(more nods)

Remember what happened?

Pause. Danny and Walter look at each other.

DANNY

We grew up?

DAD

There are some days, guys, when you gotta grow up all at once. I need today to be one of those days.

CUT TO:

INT BEDROOM DAY

SLAM! The door to their bedroom closes and Walter and Danny flop down on opposite sides. Bored. Mad. Not looking at each other.

Walter tosses the football, up and down, up and down, up and down.

DANNY

Please stop that.

Walter sighs dramatically and collapses into a chair next to the pet lizards' cage.

DANNY (cont'd)

Do you want to play Chutes and Ladders?

WALTER

No. You'll cheat.

DANNY

Stratego?

CONTINUED:

WALTER

You cheat at board games, Danny. I'm not going to play games with you ever again in my life.

INT OFFICE DAY

Dad drops back into his office chair. Rubs his face with his hands. Picks up the phone and dials.

DAD

Hi, sorry about that.

(pause)

No no, it's fine, I'm not meeting him till three-thirty, I can finish by then.

INT BEDROOM DAY

Danny, back to us, is rummaging through a toy chest, tossing out boring stuff, looking for something good. He comes up with two expensive-looking walkie-talkies, space themed. He turns one on, static comes out.

Walter turns around suddenly from the geckos.

WALTER

Excuse me, could you please put those back right now this minute? They belong to me.

DANNY

You never play with them.

WALTER

They're still mine.

Danny looks at him.

DANNY

Why are you so mean to me?

WALTER

I'm not mean, Danny. I'm in third grade, I have a girlfriend. You know how Dad said we have to grow up? Well, this is what it looks like.

Danny holds out one of the walkie-talkies invitingly.

DANNY

Play astronaut?

CONTINUED:

Walter heaves a theatrical sigh and takes the radio.

CUT TO:

INT OFFICE DAY

Dad is shuffling through the layout materials on his desk, talking on the phone.

DAD

We might want to allude to it in the copy, but the shot plays so strong I wouldn't-

There is an angry SHRIEK from upstairs. He looks up at the ceiling.

DAD (cont'd)

So strong I wouldn't want to, uh...

Still from upstairs, he hears the bedroom door BANG open --

WALTER (O.S.)

DAAAAAAD!

-- and feet THUDDING on the stairs.

DAD

(trying to wrap up fast)
...we'd be foolish to change at the eleventh hour. Uh, can I call you back one more time real quick? Small domestic emergency here. No, I know. I know. Not a problem. Okay. Okay. Thanks.

He hangs up the phone just as the door to the office bursts open to reveal Walter, holding one of his walkie-talkies in his hand. He displays its newly broken antenna like a prosecutor showing a murder weapon.

WALTER

LOOK what he did!

DAD

I was on the phone.

WALTER

He breaks *everything!*

Danny is behind him, hands shoved in pockets, ashamed.

CONTINUED:

DANNY
... was an accident...

WALTER
He is *such* a baby!

DAD
Walter...

DANNY
I'm NOT a baby!

WALTER
He breaks all my stuff --

DANNY
... said it was an *accident*...

WALTER
-- he can't catch a ball --

DAD
That's enough.

WALTER
(whirling on Danny with a
flourish)
And he still sucks his thumb!

DANNY
YOU SHUT UP!

Livid, Danny grabs Walter's football from the bookcase next to the door and hurls it at Walter's head as hard as he can. Walter ducks --

-- Dad's eyes pop wide, he lunges for it --

-- but the ball sails past his outstretched fingertips, SMACKS into the glass of red fruit punch Walter left on the desk --

-- *and spills all over the layout.*

Dad leaps to his feet.

Walter GASPS.

Danny's face turns white.

DANNY (cont'd)
I'm sorry!
(no reply)
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY (cont'd)

I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry
I'm sorry I'm sorry!

Dad doesn't reply, just stares down at the desk, defeated, as the ruby-red fruit drink seeps into the layout materials.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Walter and Danny sit next to each other in the middle of the couch, watching guiltily as Dad pulls on his jacket, gets his wallet and keys, etc.

DAD

It's ten minutes to the office, I just have to grab the duplicates from the art department and I'll come right back.

DANNY

You're gonna leave us alone in this creepy old house?

DAD

It's not creepy, it's just old.

WALTER

Why'd we have to move here, anyway?

DAD

Potential. This place is gonna be fantastic.

WALTER

I like Mom's house better.

DAD

Well, so did she, and now it's hers.

He catches himself, realizes some bitterness crept through. He softens.

DAD (cont'd)

Look, Mom's house needed even more work when we first moved in. I fixed that one up, and I'm gonna fix this one. Look at that stained glass skylight, must be a hundred and fifty years old. All the woodwork... I love this place, I wouldn't pick any other house in the whole universe.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

Well we don't want to stay in it alone.

DAD

You won't be. I'll wake Lisa.

DANNY

NOOO!

WALTER

Are you *crazy?!?*

CUT TO:

INT LISA'S ROOM DAY

LISA is sixteen, pretty, and angry, even while sleeping. Which she is right now. Only a fool would wake her up.

DAD

Lisa, wake up.

He hurries into her bedroom and throws open the curtains.

DAD (cont'd)

I need you to watch your brothers.

Lisa rolls over and looks at him through one open eye.

LISA

What time is it?

DAD

Quarter to two. You've been asleep for fourteen hours.

LISA

Don't you have anything better to do than sit around and time how long I sleep?

DAD

(will not be drawn in)
I have to go out for half an hour.

LISA

I can't help you. I have a date tonight.

CONTINUED:

DAD

That's not for six hours. Look, I'm not asking you to enrich their lives in any way, just keep an eye on them and make sure they don't set the place on fire. Okay?

(no reply)

Okay?

LISA

I'm not deaf.

DAD

Thank you.

He walks out. Lisa gets out of bed. She goes to the window and looks out at the beautiful day. Below, she sees Dad come out the front door and walk towards his car. She yawns --

-- and yanks the drapes shut. She grabs her iPod and turns it on loud, puts on her Bose noise-reducing headphones and a sleep shade. She flounces back under the covers, rolls over and faces the wall.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Danny and Walter are on the couch in the living room. Alone now. Walter gets up, flops into the chair in front of the TV and flicks it on, right back to Sports Roundup.

Danny stares at him.

DANNY

All you care about is TV.

Walter holds the remote out and turns up the volume.

DANNY (cont'd)

I hate this guy. Can we watch SpongeBob?

WALTER

SpongeBob is for babies.

DANNY

You used to like it.

No answer, Walter just turns the TV up some more.

CONTINUED:

DANNY (cont'd)

(a curse)
Tartar sauce.

He sits and thinks for a very long moment. He stares off into space. The gears are grinding away behind those blue eyes. The big wheel of a great imagination starts to turn.

Danny gets up and walks out of the room.

INT BEDROOM DAY

Danny's rummaging again. He's bent over the big chest, toys flying out left and right.

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Danny comes back into the living room with two baseball gloves and a ball. He drops them on the floor in front of him. He stands there, hoping Walter will notice him. Walter doesn't.

DANNY

How 'bout if you and me play catch?

WALTER

(eyes on TV)
You and I. And no.

Danny still stands there, frustrated. Waiting for Walter to look at him.

But Walter won't.

Danny picks up the ball and tosses it gently into the chair next to Walter. Never taking his eyes off the TV, Walter picks it up and drops it on the carpet, rolling it almost back to Danny in a most un-catchlike manner.

Undeterred, Danny picks it up. He tosses it again, a little bit harder. Walter sees it coming and takes his eyes off the tube just long enough to catch it. Again, he drops it on the carpet.

Danny marches forward and picks it up again, goes back to where he was. He looks at Walter, frustrated.

Walter just stares at the TV, eyes glazing over.

The baseball hits Walter in the head.

WALTER (cont'd)

OW!

CONTINUED:

DANNY
(sensing his imminent
destruction)
I'M SORRY I'M SORRY I'M SORRY I'M
SORRY!

WALTER
You're DEAD, you little fungus!

Danny takes off. Walter bolts out of the chair.

Danny races up the stairs two at a time and runs down the
upstairs hallway.

Walter covers the stairs three at a time and closes in.

INT BEDROOM DAY

Danny runs into their bedroom and slams the door behind him.
There's no lock so he pushes against it as hard as he can.

But Walter's right behind him, now he's pushing on the other
side of the door.

WALTER
Open up, Danny! You're only making it
worse!

He's shoving, Danny's shoving back, but it's a losing
proposition, Walter is stronger and heavier and the door's
coming open so --

-- Danny jumps back, hiding behind it as it swings open. Walter
tumbles into the room and Danny races around the door and --

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

-- back down the stairs. He hears Walter THUNDERING behind him,
turns and runs down the hallway toward the kitchen --

-- but sees a flash of Walter through an open doorway, circling
around ahead of him to cut him off in the kitchen.

Danny turns the only way he can and finds himself at the top of
a flight of stairs that lead to the basement. There is a closed
door at the bottom.

IN THE STAIRWELL,

Danny hesitates at the top, staring down at that doorway
fearfully, that is the *last* place in the house he wants to go.

CONTINUED:

WALTER (O.S.)

DANNY?! I'M GONNA FIND YOU, DANNY!

Danny takes two steps down the stairs. Then two more. He stares at that closed door, at the streaks of uneven light coming from under it. He freezes, trembling.

WALTER (O.S.) (cont'd)

What's the matter, Danny?

Danny whirls around, sees Walter standing at the top of the stairs, staring down at him triumphantly.

WALTER (cont'd)

You're not scared of the *basement*, are you?

DANNY

No!

WALTER

Three year olds are scared of basements!

Danny bounds up the stairs, shoving Walter back against the wall. Walter lunges for his foot and grabs it --

INT HALLWAY DAY

-- and Danny crashes to the floor in the hallway, knocking into a bag of golf clubs leaning up against the wall in the corner. The bag falls, the clubs spill out, and Danny wriggles free.

He leaps to his feet and heads around a corner, into the back hall.

INT BACK HALL DAY

Danny races into the back hall, just ahead of Walter. He throws open a door at the far end, revealing the game closet we saw in the opening.

INT GAME CLOSET DAY

Danny darts inside and starts to pull the door shut behind him but Walter gets a foot in. The door SMACKS into it, Walter HOWLS in pain, yanks the door open all the way --

-- and SLAMS into Danny, knocking him to the floor, OOFING the wind out of both of them. Walter sits up and pins Danny's arms with his knees.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

I DON'T WANNA BE WITH YOU ALL THE TIME,
I WANNA BE WITH MOM AND DAD ALL THE
TIME!

WALTER

Yeah, well that ain't ever gonna
happen.

And with that he rolls off of Danny and faces the other way,
chest heaving.

Danny lays there for a moment, staring up at the swinging light
bulb.

He sits up, brushes a few tears from his cheeks. Neither of
them speaks. Too tired to fight anymore, too mad to talk.

Danny looks up, at the wall of games in front of him. He
notices something. He furrows his brow.

He stands up, runs his finger up the games, past all the
familiar ones, and stops at one in particular. Zathura.

Danny cocks his head, curious.

DANNY

Hey. Hey, Walter.

Walter is every bit as upset as Danny was, but the tears on *his*
cheeks are the last thing he wants his brother to see. He gets
up and walks out.

DANNY (cont'd)

Come back and look at this!

WALTER (O.S.)

(completely uninterested)
Look at what.

DANNY

Well you gotta *look*.

Walter ducks his head back in as Danny wrestles the Zathura box
out of the stack. The games on top start to fall, but Walter
steadies them.

DANNY (cont'd)

Wow.

The cover of the box is carved with space stuff, old school
rockets and starfields.

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY (cont'd)

It's a space game! I didn't know we had it!

WALTER

Looks dumb and old.

DANNY

I like it.

WALTER

Yeah, it's for babies like you.

He turns and walks away, leaving Danny alone.

Danny looks down at the game in his hands. His eyes shine.

DANNY

Cooooool.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Walter is slumped in the chair in front of the television, watching his show again. Behind the comfy chair, Danny sits cross-legged on the carpet by the window, the box in front of him. He opens it.

There isn't much inside, just a folded game board, a pair of dice, and a few game pieces -- a rocket ship, an astronaut, a robot, a green lizard-lookin' guy, that sort of thing. The design is decidedly retro, a late fifties look. Everything is well-worn.

Danny flips the lid over, looking for the instructions. Printed on the inside of the box in large letters it says "The Rules," but we don't get a long enough look to read them.

DANNY

Hey, not too many rules! Read these to me later?

No answer from Walter. Danny opens the game board. It's a starfield, like on the front of the box, with a path of colored squares leading to a large purple planet labelled "Zathura."

Danny looks through the game pieces, picks out the rocket ship. He places it on the earth, which seems to be the starting spot.

DANNY (cont'd)

First one to the purple planet wins, I guess.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DANNY (cont'd)
(to Walter)
Will you play with me?

WALTER
(eyes on TV)
Of course not.

DANNY
I won't cheat.

WALTER
Yes you will.

Danny sighs and rolls the dice. He gets a four. He moves the rocket ship four spaces along the path, and when he places it on the fourth square --

-- a buzzing sound comes from the board.

Danny's eyes widen as a small white card pops out of the edge right in front of him with a smart little CLICK.

He looks at the board again, doesn't touch the card yet. He picks the board up and looks under it.

DANNY
Where are the batteries?

Walter ignores him. Danny takes the card and looks at it. It has a big Z on one side, words on the other. Danny furrows his brow. Tries reading it.

DANNY (cont'd)
"Meet... meaty... meeter shoe... meat
or shoe..."

OVER WITH WALTER,

His view of the television is suddenly blocked by Danny's face.

DANNY (cont'd)
Read this for me?

He holds the card out in front of him. Walter sighs and takes it.

WALTER
"Meteor shower, take evasive action."

DANNY
What's "evasive action?"

CONTINUED: (2)

WALTER

It's when you get out of the way of something.

Danny looks around, takes one step to the side. Looks around again.

DANNY

What exactly am I supposed to get out of the way of exactly?

WALTER

I don't know, all it says is-

He looks back at the card for further information, but stops mid-sentence. There's a small, smoking hole right in the middle of the card.

WALTER (cont'd)

Huh?

He bends down and peers more closely at the hole. Through it, he can see another hole, also small, also smoking, in the floor between his feet.

He looks up, sees a matching hole in the ceiling directly above the card.

WALTER (cont'd)

Oh... wow.

Up above them, they hear a RAT-A-TAT sound on the roof.

WALTER (cont'd)

It's a hail storm!

DANNY

It's not hail!

He grabs the card and waves it in front of him.

DANNY (cont'd)

IT'S METEORS!

BAM! BAM!

There are two sharp raps on the roof, then --

BAMBAMBAMBAMBAMBAMBAM!

-- a furious POUNDING, like a thousand golf balls hammering down on them. Danny and Walter SHOUT to one another, but their words are lost under the cacophony.

INT LISA'S ROOM DAY

We can hear the POUNDING in Lisa's room too. But Lisa is in the isolation tank, sleep shade on, headphones blaring. Still, she must sense it, because she reaches down, spins the wheel on her iPod, and cranks the music even louder.

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

The skies outside the window suddenly go dark, plunging the room into gloom. Walter stumbles to the wall and flicks a light switch.

ZZZZZZZZ-CRASH!

A golf-ball sized meteor SMASHES through the ceiling, BLASTS right through the coffee table in front of Danny, and CRUNCHES through the floor below it, burrowing deep out of sight.

Danny leaps back.

DANNY
*TAKE ERASIVE ACTION, TAKE ERASIVE
ACTION!*

He does, which consists of running around in circles.

But it doesn't seem to be a bad plan, as one golf-ball sized meteor after another SMASHES through the ceiling and craters in the floor. They seem to be landing right behind Danny no matter where he goes.

Walter staggers backwards, bumps into the TV set (which is still on), leaning against it for support.

Above them, a low whistle rises higher and higher, sounds a lot like a falling bomb. Walter looks up in horror; Danny, still leaping around the room, looks up too, through the beautiful stained glass skylight above them.

The whistle gets louder and louder, a dark shape approaches fast, and --

-- a huge meteor, six feet across, shatters the skylight into a million pieces!

The meteor plummets downward into the house at an angle, SMASHES through the wall that divides the living room from the foyer, and Danny and Walter leap out of the way as it crushes the television. Actually, "pulverizes" is more accurate, it turns Sports Roundup into so much sports dust.

CONTINUED:

Walter and Danny land on the living room floor a few feet on either side of the crater. Everything goes quiet as the meteor shower stops and the dust settles. They sit up, chests heaving.

DANNY (cont'd)

Told you. Meteors.

In shock, Walter looks at the giant meteor that is now buried in their floor. He looks up, through the jagged hole in the foyer ceiling where the skylight used to be. Outside, there's a night sky, brilliantly dotted with starlight.

WALTER

Dad is gonna *kill* us!

He looks around at the other windows, notices there are starfields outside them too.

WALTER (cont'd)

How'd it get so dark so fast?

Danny looks up too.

DANNY

Wow. *Outer space!*

WALTER

It's not outer space, Danny. It's nighttime.

DANNY

I don't know, Walter. Night never looked so... *close* before.

WALTER

We must have got knocked out or something. We got turned unconscious for a while and now it's night, and that's what happened.

DANNY

(still looking out the windows)
I don't think so...

WALTER

What are we gonna tell Dad?

DANNY

The truth! The game did it!

WALTER

Your game?

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

It's not *my* game.

WALTER

Well it isn't mine!

DANNY

I'm gonna put it away!

Quickly, he shoves all the pieces back in the box and SLAPS it shut.

INT GAME CLOSET NIGHT

Danny races into the game closet, pulls the chain on the light bulb and shoves the game back into the stack, any place he can find, then kills the light and SLAMS the door.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Danny comes back into the living room, joins Walter on either side of the big meteor which is buried in their floor.

WALTER

Okay, then.

DANNY

Okay.

WALTER

That's over with.

DANNY

Yep.

Pause.

WALTER

How long did Dad say he'd be gone again?

DANNY

Half an hour.

WALTER

Okay, so we tell him there was this big meteor and it hit us and we got knocked out and that's what happened. Right?

DANNY

Right.

(pause)

I have a question.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

What?

DANNY

If he said half an hour, and it's
nighttime now... where is he?

Walter doesn't have an answer for that one.

DANNY (cont'd)

Or... where are we?

Slowly, they both turn and look at the front door.

They walk toward it. Walter reaches for the knob --

-- and pulls it open slowly.

There's no outside there anymore. At least, not the one they expected. It's as if the front door has opened up directly on the outer reaches of the solar system, like the view screen of a spaceship, if they had such things. The planet Saturn is clearly visible ahead of them, its icy, brilliantly colored rings lit up like a billion jewels.

Walter's jaw drops and he teeters on the edge of the door frame. Danny reaches out and grabs his belt, pulling him back inside. They stand there, staring in amazement out the open door.

DANNY (cont'd)

Cool! We're moving!

He reaches out and flicks on the porch light to get a better look. As they watch, Saturn draws closer, they travel through the jade-colored crystals of its outermost ring.

WALTER

H-How did we get here?!

DANNY

(shrugs)

Some sorta space engine.

WALTER

How come we can breathe?

DANNY

(shrugs)

Some sorta space air.

WALTER

What are we gonna eat?

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

(shrugs)

Some sorta space nuggets.

WALTER

Somebody's following us!

DANNY

Where?

Walter points and Danny looks in that direction. Indeed, a ship has appeared on the horizon, a Buck Rogers-style space cruiser moving closer and closer.

WALTER

What do they want?

DANNY

How should I know?

The ship is closer still, clearly headed straight for them.

WALTER

Turn off the light!

Danny reaches out and flicks the porch light off. They swing the door shut and go to a window, peer out between the blinds.

The ship changes course slightly, missing them, but its ominous dark shape ZOOMS over the broken skylight, the vibration of its rumbling afterburners RATTLING the windows.

WALTER (cont'd)

That was close.

He looks out the window again.

WALTER (cont'd)

This isn't a dream, is it? This is really happening.

DANNY

Well, duh.

Walter looks around at the wrecked house with new awe.

WALTER

We are in so much trouble.

(an idea)

We gotta call Dad!

He runs to the phone and picks it up, but of course there's no dial tone.

CONTINUED: (3)

WALTER (cont'd)

It doesn't work!

DANNY

Well, duh.

WALTER

Should I get Lisa?

DANNY

Don't you think we have enough problems?

WALTER

This is really happening.

Danny sighs and sits down, waiting for Walter to go through whatever it is he's got to go through.

DANNY

Let me know when you're ready to do what we have to do, Walter.

WALTER

Do?

DANNY

Yeah, do. How do you think we're gonna get home?

WALTER

I don't know.

DANNY

Well, what got us here?

WALTER

No, we can't... we can't...

(thinks)

We have to-

(thinks some more)

We have to-

He can't come up with anything. Finally facing facts --

INT GAME CLOSET DAY

-- the door on the game closet opens slowly, spilling light on the Zathura box. Danny and Walter stand outside staring in, backlit by the bright light from the hall.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

We have to play your stupid game.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

CLOSE ON a big purple blob, the drawing on the game board that represents the planet Zathura.

DANNY (O.S.)

First one of us has to get here...

Pulling back slowly from it, we find Danny and Walter, sitting cross-legged on either side of the game board. Walter has the box lid in his hands and is reading the rules, Danny is bent over the board.

DANNY (cont'd)

... and then somehow it sends us back...

Danny moves his finger from the planet Zathura back to earth.

DANNY (cont'd)

... home.

WALTER

(reading)

"Roll dice. First to Zathura wins."

DANNY

That's what I just said.

WALTER

"Once the game has begun it will not end until there is a winner."

Danny picks up the dice and holds them out to Walter.

DANNY

Guess you'd better go, then.

Snapping out of it, Walter tosses the box lid aside.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

Wait a minute, this is crazy. You expect me to believe that just because you rolled the dice and started this stupid *board game*, just because of that our house, I mean, our house, Danny, I am talking about a *HOUSE*, for God's sake, that it's somehow flying through *OUTER SPACE* toward a planet called *ZATHURA*? And you *ALSO* expect me to believe that the only way we can get ourselves and this *FLYING HOUSE* of ours back home is if we keep playing and move these dumb, cheap little *GAME PIECES* around this dumb, cheap little *GAME BOARD* and *THAT* will get us home? You expect me to believe *THAT*?!

DANNY

Yes.

Walter stares at him for a moment --

WALTER

Okay, I'm the rocket ship.

-- and picks up a game piece.

DANNY

No, I'm the rocket.

WALTER

Okay, I'm the astronaut.

DANNY

Your go.

Walter puts the astronaut piece on earth, picks up the dice and rolls them around in his hand. He looks back over his shoulder, at the planet Neptune, which they can see approaching through the windows. He starts to roll, then stops himself and looks at Danny.

WALTER

You're not gonna cheat, are you?

DANNY

I don't cheat! Anymore.

WALTER

Cause even though we're in space, I still don't like being cheated on.

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

Okay.

WALTER

Okay.

He starts to roll the dice again, but notices the look Danny is giving him.

WALTER (cont'd)

What are you smiling at?

DANNY

You're playing a game with me, Walter.

Walter rolls his eyes and tosses the dice. Danny checks it out.

DANNY (cont'd)

Ten. Figures. You're gonna win, you always win. I'll move you.

WALTER

I'll move me.

DANNY

(counting with him as he moves)
One, two, three, four, five, six --

WALTER

-- seven, eight, nine, ten.

He puts the astronaut on a blue square. The board BUZZES and a card pops out in front of him. Walter takes it. He holds his breath and moves it sloooowwwly up in front of his eyes, cradles it in the palm of his hand, lays eyes on it --

-- AND SCREAMS AT THE TOP OF HIS LUNGS!

Danny leaps to his feet.

DANNY

WHAT WHAT WHAT?!?!?!

WALTER

I'm just yankin ya.

DANNY

(sits back down)
You are so not hilarious. What does it say?

CONTINUED: (3)

WALTER

(reading)

"Your robot is defective."

From the hallway outside comes the sound of rattling metal and a steady CLANK CLANK CLANK.

Both boys leap to their feet, staring at the source of the sound. A shadow falls on the floor in the hallway, growing larger. It's a very scary shadow, all hyperextended arms and claws, and it's growing, growing --

WALTER (cont'd)

DANNY!

DANNY

WALTER!

-- growing, *growing* --

WALTER

WHAT?!

DANNY

I DON'T KNOW!

WALTER

ME NEITHER!

-- they grab onto each other as the shadow completely fills the hallway outside the door, this thing must be absolutely --

-- well, turns out it's tiny. A shiny metal robot about a foot tall rolls into the doorway and stops.

Danny and Walter laugh in relief.

WALTER (cont'd)

It's just a toy.

The robot's upper body rotates toward them. Its eyes light up, faint red search beams come on and scan the room. The beams pass over Danny without stopping, but then they fall on Walter and fixate --

-- on the card he still holds in his hands.

ROBOT

EMERGENCY.

Walter drops the card as if it were on fire.

CONTINUED: (4)

WALTER

No no!

ROBOT

EMERGENCY.

WALTER

No it isn't! There's no emergency!

ROBOT

ALIEN LIFE FORM. ALIEN LIFE FORM.

DANNY

Walter, he's talking about *you*.

ROBOT

MUST DESTROY.

WALTER

(trying to act tough)
 Okay, very funny, Robot, don't make me
 come over there and kick your-

Walter stops as suddenly, the robot begins to *grow*, fast, the best transformer you've ever seen. Its lower section extends, its arms telescope out, twenty-four additional layers of metal shielding WHIP-WHAP-WHIP around its midsection, its head quadruples in size, whole metal sections unfurling from within. In about five seconds, it stands six feet tall and four feet wide.

DANNY

Tartar sauce!

WALTER

Stop saying that!

DANNY

It's from SpongeBob!

WALTER

It's annoying!

The robot's clawlike hands extend, SNAP open and shut several times quickly.

DANNY

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!!!

They bolt in opposite directions, just as twin turbo jets on the back of each of the robot's feet suddenly spit blue flame and the robot rockets across the floor toward Walter.

CONTINUED: (5)

He lunges out of the way just as the robot SMASHES into the wall behind where he was standing.

It pivots around.

ROBOT
ALIEN INVASION. MUST DESTROY.

Walter turns to face the robot, which takes off again, straight at him. Walter leaps, lands on the back of the couch, and it tips over, Walter on top of it.

DANNY
WALTER! WHAT DO I DO?!

Walter's too busy to answer, now he's stuck underneath the overturned couch.

WALTER
I'm stuck!

Across the room, the robot has driven itself completely into the far wall and is using a pair of spinning circular saw blades to extract itself from the dry wall and broken joists.

Walter pulls on his foot, harder, harder, trying to get free. Danny lunges toward him, but --

WALTER (cont'd)
NO! Stay back!

Danny does, helpless and not happy about it. Across the room the robot pivots, its red beams search for Walter again --

-- Walter pulls himself free and somersaults backwards, rolling out of the way as --

-- the robot BLASTS across the room, SMASHING into the couch, sending feathers flying everywhere.

Walter jumps to his feet, breathing hard. This can't go on much longer. He looks around frantically for something, anything, thinking, thinking. He sees a door out of the corner of his eye, out the corridor near the kitchen.

WALTER (cont'd)
(to Danny)
The basement door! Open it! We'll
lock the thing in there!

DANNY
Right!

He turns and starts toward the door, then stops and turns back.

CONTINUED: (6)

DANNY (cont'd)
Really? The basement?

WALTER
Danny!

The robot is pivoting toward Walter.

DANNY
How about if I open another door?

WALTER
DANNY!

DANNY
All right, already!

Danny races out of the room. Walter turns toward the robot.

WALTER
Hey. Hey *Robbie*.

The robot's torso whips around, light speed, finds Walter, and fixes its beams on his chest.

WALTER (cont'd)
Yikes.

INT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

Danny stands at the top of the stairway to the basement, staring down at the door. Behind him, he can hear chaos as the robot takes off after Walter again.

WALTER (O.S.)
Danny!? Is it open?!

Danny takes a deep breath and runs down the stairs to the basement door. He reaches up, puts one hand on its deadbolt lock. Starts to turn it.

But he can't. He turns and looks up at the top of the stairs.

Above, he sees Walter go running past the doorway SCREAMING, followed a second later by the robot, blue turbojets spitting flame as it pursues him through the house.

There is a tremendous CRASH from the kitchen. Danny winces.

WALTER (O.S.) (cont'd)
Really gonna need that door open, Dan!

CONTINUED:

Danny turns, determined, *definitely* gonna do it this time. He reaches up to the door, puts his hand on the deadbolt, flicks it to unlocked, puts his hand on the knob, turns that too, hey, this is going well, he's got some real momentum here, he turns the doorknob, pushes the door open a crack --

-- gets one peek into the murmuring blackness of the basement --

-- and SLAMS it shut. Couldn't do it. He turns and races up the stairs as fast as he possibly can.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

Danny bursts out of the stairwell and heads for the living room. The robot can be heard SMASHING around in the other room.

WALTER (O.S.)

DANNY?!

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Danny races back into the living room and drops to his knees in front of the game board.

DANNY

Maybe if I go it'll end your turn!

He snatches up the dice and rolls, gets a six. He moves, fast.

INT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

Walter appears at the top of the basement stairs, breathless, and looks down at the closed door.

WALTER

Danny!

He races down the stairs, three at a time, toward the door at the bottom.

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

The game board BUZZES, spits out a card, Danny snatches it up and leaps to his feet.

He tries to read the card but can't.

DANNY

(intensely frustrated)
I don't know what this means!

We zoom in fast on the words, maybe he can't read, but we can, and what we read says:

CONTINUED:

*YOU PASS TOO CLOSE TO TSOURIS 3
GRAVITY INCREASED.*

Danny hears a low WHOOSH sound and turns. Through the windows, he sees a massive orange planet so dense it HUMS as they pass it.

DANNY (cont'd)

Oh my.

INT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

Walter turns the handle on the basement door and pushes it open wide, revealing the blackness beyond. He turns to race back up the stairs --

-- and stops dead in his tracks. The robot is at the top of the stairs.

No way out.

WALTER

Whoops.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Danny, still staring at the card, looks up, feeling funny.

Truth is, he looks funny too, he seems shorter and wider, like somebody went and changed the lens on us.

But it keeps going, he keeps shrinking, getting rounder and rounder until he is approximately the size and shape of a large beach ball. And heavy too, the living room floorboards underneath him GROAN and CRACK from his greatly increased weight.

He speaks, with an extremely low voice:

DANNY

Oooookkkaaay, soooo noooooowww I
knnnoooowwww.

From the other room, he hears Walter SCREAM his name --

INT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

At the top of the stairs, the robot's eyes glow red.

Walter looks down in horror as the red beams find their mark on his chest.

CONTINUED:

WALTER
DANNY! I'M TRAPPED!

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Danny calls out in his newfound baritone.

DANNY
I'mmmmm coooooommmingggg, Waaaalterrrr!

Danny swings his chubby little beach ball arms once, twice, three times, wobbling like a weeble --

INT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

-- the turbo jets on the robot's feet spit blue flame --

-- Walter covers his eyes and SCREAMS --

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

-- and Danny comes *rolling* out of the living room, CRYING OUT a massive war cry as he thunders down the hallway, CRACKING and SPLITTING the floorboards as he goes, a great big heavy six and three quarter year old bowling ball with the specific gravity of Tsouris 3.

The robot's torso pivots, it looks straight at this rolling menace, its eye beams focus on him, but it's too late, there's no stopping Danny now, he SMASHES into the robot --

-- it goes flying off the top step --

IN THE STAIRWELL,

-- and sails, ass over teakettle, down the stairs.

Walter sees it coming and hits the deck. The robot somersaults right over him and SMASHES to the cement floor of the darkened basement.

Walter SLAMS the basement door and throws the deadbolt.

UP IN THE HALLWAY,

Bowling-Ball-Danny keeps rolling, end over end, caroming off the walls of the hallway away from us.

DANNY
(each time he hits the wall)
Ow. Ouch. That hurt. Ow.

CONTINUED:

He rolls right over the golf clubs that tipped out of the bag earlier, bending them like crazy, sending them flying in all directions. He bounces off a wall at the far end and rolls through a doorway, out of sight.

Walter comes bounding up out of the basement stairwell.

WALTER

Danny, that was *awesome!*

No answer.

WALTER (cont'd)

Danny?

DANNY (O.S.)

Hhhheeeellllpppp mmmmmeeeee!

Walter goes down the corridor toward the sound of the voice --

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

-- and finds Danny in the living room, where he has rolled into a corner, upside down. Still a bowling ball.

DANNY

(still low voice)

Diiiiidd I geetttt hhhiimm?

WALTER

You sure did, Buddy.

He goes to pat Danny on the back, can't quite find where it is, exactly, and sort of polishes a spot on him instead.

WALTER (cont'd)

You were terrific.

DANNY

Thhhhaannkkksss.

Outside the windows, the dense orange planet, Tsouris 3, recedes into the distance.

As it does, Bowling-Ball-Danny slowly begins to revert to normal size and shape. Legs pop out of the sides of the bowling ball, then arms, then his head, and in a few seconds he's his regular self, flexing his fingers to make sure they're all there.

Danny and Walter look at each other.

DANNY (cont'd)

I'm hungry, Walter.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

Look, I'm afraid to say this, but I don't think we have a choice. We need help.

CUT TO:

INT LISA'S ROOM NIGHT

Cut to Lisa, still in bed, eyeshade on and music blaring. The boys stand over her in her darkened bedroom, staring down at her. She's unaware of their presence.

DANNY

That's not what I call help.

WALTER

She might know something.

DANNY

She doesn't know anything.

Walter leans over and pulls one of the headphones off Lisa's ear.

WALTER

Lisa. We need to talk to you.

She pulls the eyeshade off one eye and stares at them.

LISA

What'd you break?

WALTER

We're playing this board game that turned real and sent us all into outer space and we don't know how to get back to earth.

DANNY

Plus we're hungry.

LISA

Order a pizza.

DANNY

They won't deliver here.

LISA

Call Domino's.

DANNY

Trust me.

CONTINUED:

LISA

There's peanut butter in the fridge.

DANNY

Only crunchy.

LISA

Mix it with Jello.

DANNY

That's gross.

LISA

So?

WALTER

Will you guys forget the food?! Lisa, we have a *problem* with this *game*!

LISA

Quit.

WALTER

It won't let us! We're hundreds of thousands of miles from earth and there's a real, actual robot in the basement that really, actually wants to kill me!

LISA

Oh my God, you poor thing, that's horrible. Okay, give me a few minutes to figure this out. Go back downstairs and I'll be right there.

They don't move.

LISA (cont'd)

Go on, it's cool. I'm on it.

Reluctantly, they head out of the room.

LISA (cont'd)

Hey, can you grab the door real quick?

They close the door. And as we knew she would, Lisa pulls the sleep shade back on, lowers the headphones, and rolls over to face the wall.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

Outside the door to her room, they look at each other. She's obviously not going to do a thing to help them.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

Now what?

DANNY

(thinks)

Macaroni and cheese?

CUT TO:

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

The kitchen is just about the only room in the house that is relatively intact. Over at the stove, Walter studies the directions on the side of a box of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese.

WALTER

I've seen Dad do this a million times.
It can't be that hard.

He takes the packet of cheese and sets it aside, then pours the contents of the box into a pan of boiling water on the stove. He looks at it, gives it a bit of a stir. He stirs a touch too hard and a few drops of water splash up onto his hand.

WALTER (cont'd)

Ouch.

He turns the flame down a bit.

WALTER (cont'd)

Danny, I want you to be very, very careful, this is boiling water. You could hurt yourself very badly.

Danny has carried the Zathura game board into the kitchen and sets it up carefully on the table.

DANNY

It's your roll, Walter.

Walter sighs and takes the dice Danny holds out to him. He rolls a nine, moves that many spaces. The board BUZZES and a game card pops out.

WALTER

(reading it)

"You are visited by Zorgons."

DANNY

What are Zorgons?

They rush over to the window and look out into space. No ship is visible, just a vast empty starfield.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

(shrugs)

Who knows. Some kind of rash? We'll find out when they get here.

He goes to the stove and checks the pot. It's not boiling anymore, so he turns the flame back up.

ON THE STOVETOP,

the blue gas flame WHOOSHES higher. That's a hot one.

OVER AT THE WINDOW,

we see a tiny speck in the distance, looks like it could be a spaceship. It banks hard, turns and heads toward the house.

Danny doesn't see it, though, he's sitting cross-legged on the counter staring out at the stars wistfully.

DANNY

What do you think Zathura's like, Walter?

Walter looks out at the stars too.

WALTER

I don't know.

DANNY

Guess.

WALTER

Well, if you get there you win, so it's gotta be good. Maybe it's, like, your wish comes true, whatever your wish is.
(warming to this)

So maybe if I won I'd get to play catch with Dad whenever I want as much as I want and he wouldn't get tired or have to go to work or anything stupid. And I'd never have to quit or give up turns because it'd be-

He stops, seeing the look on Danny's face. He realizes what he's implying.

DANNY

Because it'd be just you and Dad.

WALTER

I didn't say that.

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

And I wouldn't even have been borned.

WALTER

Danny, that's not what I said.

An awkward silence falls. Finally:

DANNY

What do you think Dad's doing right now?

WALTER

(thinks)

He, um, he... well, I don't know, why do I have to do all the thinking all the time? What do you think?

DANNY

I think he drove up to home and our house was gone and so he went and he got Mom and then they went and made the government give them a space ship and they're chasing us and almost caught up to us right now, Mom and Dad both in the same rocket.

WALTER

Yeah. And then Mom'll tell Dad he's driving the ship too fast. They'll fight and split up and we'll be stuck here forever.

Danny looks at him piercingly. Walter looks back at him, trying to put on an innocent face.

WALTER (cont'd)

What?

DANNY

You. Are. So. Mean.

WALTER

Look, I just-

There is a splash and HISS from the stove behind them, the macaroni boiling over. Walter rushes over and moves the pot, revealing the blue gas flame, which is turned up all the way.

From the flame, we turn and look out the window, noticing something they do not --

CONTINUED: (3)

-- that *ship*, and it's closer now, close enough for us to see it's the one that followed them before, when they turned on the porch light. It's approaching slowly but steadily.

OVER AT THE COUNTER,

Walter dumps the finished macaroni into a strainer in the sink.

WALTER (cont'd)

What do you think Zathura's like?

Danny, still sitting on the counter, just shrugs. He unwraps a whole stick of butter and tosses it in.

WALTER (cont'd)

Come on, I told you.

Walter opens a milk carton and pours in a splash.

DANNY

Okay, I think? I think it's like this place? It's like this place, where, this place where bullies aren't allowed to even go. And the guy who invented evil gets in really big trouble. And when Kobe shoots he never misses, and when I play a game I don't always have to be the worst one at it, and you and me and Mom and Dad and even Lisa all live in one house together, and you probably don't think there's any place like that in the entire universe, Walter, but I do, and you're gonna make fun of me for it so that's all I want to say about that.

What started out beautiful and hopeful has, in the end, made him sad. He rips open the cheese packet, too hard, sending cheese dust flying all over the place. Most of it goes into the concoction.

Walter looks at him. Puts a hand on his shoulder.

WALTER

You can have my dessert.

Danny, looking over Walter's shoulder, doesn't respond. Instead, his jaw drops and his face goes pale.

DANNY

I'm not hungry anymore.

CONTINUED: (4)

Walter looks at him, puzzled, then whirls around, following Danny's line of vision.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW,

that nasty-looking spaceship has pulled up right alongside the flying house and is measuring its pace. Bizarre guttural SQUAWKINGS are blasting from external speakers, somebody's trying to tell them something in tones so loud the windows rattle.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN,

DANNY

It's that ship that was following us!

WALTER

ZORGONS!

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW,

the barrel of a cannon emerges from a porthole on the side of the ship and points right at them.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN,

WALTER

RUN!

Danny scoops up the board game and the boys take off, running out of the kitchen and into --

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

-- the living room, but by the time they get there the Zorgon ship has already banked around the house and pulled up in front of the big picture window.

The boys SCREAM, cut off.

WALTER

TARTAR SHIT!

DANNY

YOU SAID THE S WORD! I'M TELLING!

WALTER

WHO CARES?! WE'RE DEAD!

Outside, a white hot light glows from within the laser cannon and a ball of searingly bright light fires out, headed straight for the house.

CONTINUED:

WALTER (CONT'D)

TAKE COVER!

He grabs Danny and they dive into the only place that looks remotely like cover -- the fireplace.

The photon blast SLAMS into the chimney at the top of the house. Walter looks up, sees a cascade of bricks dropping right towards them.

WALTER (cont'd)

TAKE COVER SOMEPLACE ELSE!

They both dive out of the chimney just before the bricks CRASH to the hearth where they were crouching.

OUTSIDE THE WINDOW,

the laser cannon adjusts its aim and fires another blast at the house. Danny and Walter throw themselves to the floor and cover their heads. The blast --

INT UPSTAIRS BATHROOM NIGHT

-- EXPLODES through the wall of the upstairs bathroom.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Back in the living room, a spray of water springs from a new hole in the ceiling. Danny and Walter uncover their heads and look out the window. The Zorgon ship is zipping around them, searching for an angle of attack.

WALTER

I wish you'd never picked up this stupid game!

DANNY

I'm not the one who rolled Zorgons!

WALTER

I wouldn't have if you hadn't gotten us into this in the first place!

The loudspeakers kick in again, the Zorgons BARKING commands at the house in unintelligible tones.

WALTER (cont'd)

Roll the dice! Go your turn and maybe they'll stop!

Danny and Walter are cowering under the window ledge, the only place they're unseen by the ship outside.

CONTINUED:

Walter army-crawls across the floor and scoops the dice off the floor, then crawls back and shoves them in Danny's hand.

Danny grabs the dice and hurls them. They bounce across the floor and land on the game board, come up five.

The board BUZZES and spits out a card.

Walter crawls out into the floor again and pulls the card out of the board. The Zorgon ship levels another blast, this one SLAMS into the side of the house but does not break through.

Walter crawls back and shoves the card at Danny, next to the big living room picture windows. The Zorgon ship wipes past, revealing a white speck visible in the distance outside the window, a white speck that's growing larger.

WALTER (cont'd)

What does it say?!

DANNY

(squinting at it)

"Rest on standing Astroturf!"

WALTER

Huh?!

The white speck, unseen by either of them, is larger still. It's a human form, tumbling straight for their window.

DANNY

"REST ON STANDING ASTROTURF?!" I don't get it!

WALTER

(reaching for it)

Oh, let me!

DANNY

(holding card away)

I know how to read!

WALTER

Danny, let me read it!

DANNY

No, it's mine!

Danny squirms away, but Walter grabs him and pins his hand to the floor, pries his fingers open and reads the card.

WALTER

"Rescue stranded astronaut!"

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

What stranded astronaut?

BOOM BOOM BOOM!

They whirl and see the white speck we've been watching, but it's no longer a white speck, it's an ASTRONAUT in a space suit, a square pack strapped to his back, a propulsion system he controls by squeezing right and left handles on which he rests his hands, little bursts of power that control his speed and direction.

WALTER

Who is it?!

DANNY

How should I know?!

The Astronaut keeps POUNDING on the window.

WALTER

We have to let him in!

DANNY

No we don't!

The Astronaut tries to open the window, to no avail.

WALTER

It could be Dad!

DANNY

It could be a Zorgon!

WALTER

He's trying to tell us something!

Walter leans closer to the window but he can't see the astronaut's face through the reflective visor on his helmet, he just sees a big, distorted image of himself.

DANNY

Walter! Get away from there!

The Zorgon ship, still not giving up, BLASTS past them, behind the Astronaut, sending him cartwheeling away from the window, swept along in their wake, out of frame to the left.

For a moment, it's silent. The boys look at each other. Maybe he went away?

DING DONG.

CONTINUED: (3)

He didn't go away. He's ringing the doorbell.

DANNY (cont'd)

Who's that?!

WALTER

Who do you think?! I'm gonna let him
in!

He starts to get up, but Danny yanks him back down.

DANNY

Are you crazy?!

WALTER

He could die out there!

But their argument is cut short by a RATTLING sound over at the front door.

The doorknob is turning!

They draw in their breath --

DANNY

Did you lock the door?

WALTER

Who locks their door in outer space?

-- and a second later the front door BANGS open, SLAMMING up against the wall, revealing the Astronaut in full glory.

But upside down. He squeezes his handles and his propulsion pack HSSTS on one side, rotating him counter-clockwise to an upright position.

Now he squeezes both handles and bursts forward, floating into the center of the entry hall and THUDDING down on his boots as the house's gravity takes hold of him.

He pushes the door shut behind him and turns toward the boys.

They cower in the corner, no idea what to make of this guy. He takes three steps toward them, reaches up and takes off his helmet, revealing a good-looking young guy around twenty. His face is familiar to us, it's the face --

-- that delivered the Zathura game to the closet in the opening!

Of course, the boys don't know that. The Astronaut shakes his shaggy hair out of his eyes and looks around the room in amazement, drinking it all in with a look of wonder on his face.

CONTINUED: (4)

He sees the boys.

ASTRONAUT
Which one of you rolled me?

KA-BOOM!

Another Zorgon blast shakes the house to its foundations. The Astronaut flops himself onto the floor and wriggles expertly out of his space suit, revealing a pair of ill-fitting jeans and an old, torn oxford shirt.

He crawls over to join the boys in the corner.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)
Come on, who was it?!

Wide-eyed, Walter points to Danny. The Astronaut turns and looks at Danny and his eyes fill with emotion.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)
You're a sight for sore eyes, Kid, I'll tell you that.

DANNY
I'm... I'm Danny.

ASTRONAUT
Thanks, Danny.

WALTER
Who are you?!

ZORRCH! A photon blast cuts through the wall and obliterates Walter's favorite easy chair, reducing it to a pile of ash.

ASTRONAUT
First things first. Right now you have a serious Zorgon problem to deal with.

WALTER
What do we do?!

ASTRONAUT
Only one thing we can do -- hide.

DANNY
It won't do any good! They'll explode the whole house!

The Astronaut looks at Danny. Just the sight of the little kid seems to fill him with glee.

CONTINUED: (5)

ASTRONAUT

Exactly. We're going to hide the house.

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

Danny and Walter crouch on the kitchen floor behind the Astronaut, who's rummaging through the cabinet under the sink. They talk fast as the RUMBLING Zorgon ship circles outside the windows.

WALTER

What do they want?

ASTRONAUT

Zorgons are lizards, cold-blooded, so they're heat-seekers. Even the tiniest spark of warmth draws them like moths. They fly all over the galaxy looking for things to burn up.

WALTER

Why don't they go burn up their own planet?

ASTRONAUT

They already did. But that's not the worst part. The real problem is their appetites -- they never stop eating. Besides burn things, all they do is eat, sleep, and make more Zorgons.

He finds what he was looking for -- a can of EZ-Off oven cleaner.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Ah hah.

WALTER

Wh-what do they eat?

ASTRONAUT

They're carnivores.

DANNY

(sighs in relief)
Well, that's good.

WALTER

That means they eat meat.

DANNY

So?

CONTINUED:

ASTRONAUT
Dude -- you're meat.

Danny GASPS.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)
(to Danny)
You. Turn off all the lights and
electrical appliances.

Danny runs off to follow orders. The Astronaut turns to Walter.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)
You, kill that flame on the stove.

Walter turns, sees the still-lit burner on the stove.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)
Burning gas, that's probably what
brought 'em in the first place.

WALTER
Right!

ASTRONAUT
And then hit the pilot light on the
furnace.

He takes the can of oven cleaner and hurries toward the door to
the living room.

WALTER
What's a pilot light?

ASTRONAUT
(over his shoulder)
In the basement. Little blue flame
under the big heater. Just blow it out
like a candle.

WALTER
Um...

The Astronaut stops, waiting impatiently.

ASTRONAUT
Yeah?

WALTER
Well... there's a robot in the basement
who wants to kill me.

CONTINUED: (2)

ASTRONAUT
(nods sympathetically)
Yeah, I been there. Try to avoid him.

And he leaves. Walter turns and flicks off the burner on the stove.

CLOSE ON the blue flame as it's extinguished.

INT HALLWAY - UPSTAIRS NIGHT

Danny runs down the upstairs hallway, turning out the lights one by one.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The Astronaut hurries into the living room and searches around in the rubble, looking for something in particular. He comes across a small wooden box and his eyes light up.

He flicks it open, revealing a stash of fireplace matches.

INT STAIRWELL NIGHT

Walter walks nervously down the stairs toward the basement door as a photon BLAST hits hard somewhere in the house.

He reaches for the doorknob. His hand shakes, he's about to do it, but he gets another, better idea. He races back up the stairs.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

Walter runs down the hallway to a gadget on the wall at the far end -- the thermostat.

He turns it down, way down, below fifty.

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

In the basement, the bright yellow flame under the furnace THUNKS out. But the blue pilot light burns on.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

Walter gives himself a little smile for his ingenuity. Danny runs up beside him, out of breath and scandalized.

DANNY
The Astronaut Guy's wrecking our couch!

They turn and take off.

INT Foyer NIGHT

They come running around a corner and into the foyer to discover the Astronaut is, indeed, wrecking the couch. He's holding the can of EZ Off in one hand and a lit fireplace match in the other, turning the thing into a flame thrower.

He sprays the couch with the fiery concoction, the fabric catches and bursts into flame.

WALTER

Hey, that's Dad's nap couch!

ASTRONAUT

(to Danny)

Open the front door!!

(to Walter)

Give me a shoulder here!

Danny runs to the door and flings it open as the Astronaut ducks down behind the couch, puts his shoulder up against the part of it that has not yet caught on fire, and pushes hard. Walter joins in and together they shove the thing all the way across the foyer and out the front door.

EXT OUTER SPACE NIGHT

Here's a good image -- the house, plummeting through space. Suddenly a burning couch comes flying out its front door and sails off, weightless, blazing into the black void.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Danny, Walter, and the Astronaut stand in the open doorway, watching as the burning couch sails off into the distance.

ASTRONAUT

Go on, follow... follow...

THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR,

they see the Zorgon ship keel over to starboard and turn to follow the flaming projectile. They watch as it disappears into the vast reaches of space. The Astronaut sighs in relief.

ASTRONAUT

You have no idea how close that was.

Walter and Danny both look up at him.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

Who are you?

CUT TO:

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

Back in the darkened kitchen, the door opens on the freezer section of the refrigerator and the Astronaut shines his flashlight inside. His eyes fall on something and light up.

ASTRONAUT

Oh, sweet memory...

He reaches in and pulls out three half-finished pints of Ben & Jerry's, a package of Eggo waffles, and a box of Haagen Dazs vanilla almond ice cream bars.

He SLAMS them down on the kitchen table and sticks his head in the fridge.

WALTER

What are you doing?

The Astronaut emerges from the fridge with a big squeeze bottle of Hershey's Syrup and opens the cupboard over the dishwasher.

ASTRONAUT

I'm going to put that ice cream in a bowl, cover it with chocolate and candy, and then I'm going to eat it. All of it.

He finds a bag of M&Ms and a long sleeve of Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. Beneath the counter he locates a mixing bowl.

Back at the kitchen table, the Astronaut assembles his concoction, starting with a layer of waffles.

DANNY

Are you doing this to keep Zorgons away?

ASTRONAUT

I'm doing this because it might be another twelve years before I run into my good friends Ben and Jerry again.

He piles the ice cream into the bowl and douses it with the Hershey's Syrup. Danny watches enviously.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

You know, I never got my dessert from lunch.

ASTRONAUT

Dig in.

DANNY

Well... the truth is I never actually ate my lunch.

ASTRONAUT

Like I care.

He tosses Danny a spoon and Danny grins enormously at this anarchy.

WALTER

Okay, look. Seriously. *Who are you?*

ASTRONAUT

When I was a kid, there were things I'd ask my parents and they'd say, "I'll tell you when you're older." This is one of those things.

DANNY

(eating)

I hate when they say that.

ASTRONAUT

Don't be so excited to know things. Once you do, sometimes you wish you didn't.

He plows a massive spoon of ice cream into his mouth, salts the bowl with M&Ms.

WALTER

Well, how'd you get here?

ASTRONAUT

(gestures to Danny with his spoon)

He rolled me. Good thing, too. Maybe I can help you finish the game.

DANNY

(ice cream all over his face)

We can finish on our own.

CONTINUED: (2)

ASTRONAUT

Yeah, you're doing great. Robot in the basement, Zorgons snapping at your heels, you cheat, and Wingy McWhine over here has an attitude problem.

WALTER

I do not! That's not fair!

ASTRONAUT

See, there you go, complaining about everything.

(goes back to the cupboard)

Is there a Kit Kat around here someplace?

(back to topic)

Fly around the universe in a lousy game for a decade or so and then tell me what you have to complain about.

He finds a Kit Kat bar, rips the wrapper off, and takes a bite. Relishes it.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

These haven't gotten any worse.

DANNY

So you're gonna play the game with us?

ASTRONAUT

No, *you're* gonna play. I'll help, but I can't join in. I'm already in a game of my own. It's complicated.

DANNY

Well, why don't you just finish the game you're in?

ASTRONAUT

I can't.

DANNY

Why not?

The Astronaut stares at him for a long moment, his face hard and set. Finally:

ASTRONAUT

I just can't.

He picks up his ice cream and carries it with him toward the living room.

CONTINUED: (3)

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Come on, let's get going.

And with that he walks out. Walter and Danny look at each other, then follow him.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

An overhead shot, above the game board in the entrance to the ruined living room. Walter, Danny, and the Astronaut sit down around the board, preparing to play. Danny and the Astronaut are on the living room side of the board, Walter, on the other side of the board, is technically sitting in the foyer.

The Astronaut picks up the dice.

ASTRONAUT

Whose turn is it?

WALTER

Mine.

The Astronaut holds the dice out to him.

ASTRONAUT

Roll 'em big, Kid. Get us all out of here.

Walter nods with purpose and takes the dice. He rolls them around in his hand and is about to toss them --

-- when he stops. He looks down at the board. His astronaut game piece is only two squares ahead of Danny's rocket ship.

WALTER

That's funny.

DANNY

(innocent)
What?

WALTER

I thought I was farther ahead of you.

DANNY

(super innocent)
No. I'm there. That's like it was.
Go ahead, it's your turn.

WALTER

Are you sure?

CONTINUED:

DANNY

Positive. Uh huh. Yep.

He looks up, notices the Astronaut is just staring at him.

DANNY (cont'd)

What? It was.

The Astronaut continues to stare.

DANNY (cont'd)

Um... unless... I don't know... maybe somebody... accidentally kicked the piece... accidentally... or something.

He puts his rocket ship back where he belongs, eight or nine spaces behind.

DANNY (cont'd)

By accident.

The Astronaut gestures to Danny to come toward him. They lean in together and the Astronaut whispers in his ear.

ASTRONAUT

Let me give you a tip about this game, Small Person. You don't win it. You *survive* it. Got it?

DANNY

Um. Okay.

ASTRONAUT

Attaboy.
(to Walter)
Go ahead.

Walter rolls. A six and a five.

WALTER

Eleven. Awesome roll!

As he moves, Danny rolls his eyes in annoyance.

DANNY

(imitating Walter)
"Awesome roll."
(to the Astronaut)
Is he annoying or *what*?

ASTRONAUT

(looks at Walter)
Well... I'm sure he doesn't *try* to be.

CONTINUED: (2)

WALTER

... nine, ten, eleven.

He puts the rocket ship down on a blue square. The board BUZZES and a card pops out in front of him. Walter takes it and reads.

WALTER (cont'd)

"Command room loses..."

He scoffs and tosses the card on the board.

ASTRONAUT

What's it say?

WALTER

It's stupid.

Danny picks up the card and squints at it, doing his best.

DANNY

"Command room loses art-art-artface-force-ar-ti-fi-" This is like a fifth grade word!

ASTRONAUT

Can I have a look at-

DANNY

Ar-ti-face-ell... "Artificial!" I got it!

ASTRONAUT

(reaching out for the card)
Let me just take a-

DANNY

(slaps his hand away)
"Command room loses artificial gr-gra-GRAVE?" Loses grave? That's scary.
No wait...
(looking up)
What's the last word, Wal-

But Walter has vanished, he's no longer sitting across from him.

DANNY (cont'd)

Walter?

The Astronaut, next to Danny, is looking up at the ceiling, a big grin on his face.

ASTRONAUT

Oh yeah. I remember this one.

CONTINUED: (3)

WALTER (O.S.)

GRAVITY!

Danny drops the card and looks up. In the foyer, Walter is spread-eagled against the second floor overhang like a runaway balloon at a birthday party.

WALTER (cont'd)

"Command room loses artificial gravity!" I've got no gravity! Danny, they took my gravity!

Danny stares at him in shock -- and a little impressed.

DANNY

Cool!

ASTRONAUT

Isn't it?

WALTER

It is *not* cool! It is not cool at *all!*

ASTRONAUT

Oh, don't be a baby.

DANNY

(to the Astronaut)
But how come *we're* not floating?

ASTRONAUT

(shrugs)
It said command room. The entry there must be the command room.

WALTER

Will you get me down from here?!

ASTRONAUT

Relax, little astronaut, I'll find some rope.

He turns and heads out of the room, in no great hurry.

WALTER

Don't just *stand* there, Danny! Do something!

DANNY

Like what?

Walter is slowly drifting across the ceiling, despite his best attempts to claw at it to stay in place.

CONTINUED: (4)

WALTER

I don't know, grab me!

DANNY

Well I can't come in there, I'll float too.

WALTER

Reach for me!

Walter holds one hand down low, Danny stands on his tiptoes and jumps to try to catch it, but Walter's too high up. Danny keeps jumping, but their hands can't reach.

WALTER (cont'd)

Jump higher!

DANNY

You jump down here!

Good idea! Walter twists himself around so his legs are beneath him and pushes off the second floor overhang. As he is weightless, a strong push from his legs is far more oomph than he needs and he blasts off the ceiling --

-- slams into Danny, knocking him to the floor --

DANNY (cont'd)

OOOF!

-- and bounces right back up to the ceiling, which he SMASHES into --

WALTER

OOOF!

-- and bounces back to the floor, a bit softer, but still moving plenty fast to slam into Danny, who is knocked to the ground again just as he's trying to get up.

DANNY

Knock it off, Walter!

Walter BOUNCES into the ceiling for a third time.

Danny looks up, notices for the first time that if Walter slips out from under the overhang, there's nothing but open space between him and the broken skylight three floors up, the one the meteor crashed through when they started the game.

WALTER

Okay, Danny, when I bump into you this time --

CONTINUED: (5)

DANNY

Uh, Walter --

WALTER

-- I want you to tackle me, got it?
One --

DANNY

Walter --

WALTER

TWO THREE!

He pushes off the ceiling and shoots downward, SMACKING into Danny, who throws both arms around him. But Walter's momentum is too strong and he bounces off Danny, shoots back up toward the overhang, caroms off a light fixture --

WALTER (cont'd)

OW!

-- and goes carthweeling right out from underneath, into the open space beneath the skylight.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

From the second floor landing, we see Walter fly up through the foyer, SCREAMING, feet first. Feet, legs, torso, head, outstretched hands all fly up through the open space toward the broken skylight above.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

DANNY

WALTER!

He strains but can't see out from under the overhang, can only hear Walter's voice, faintly, receding as he calls out for help.

DANNY (cont'd)

HANG ON WALTER, I'LL SAVE YOU!

INT UP AT THE SKYLIGHT NIGHT

Walter is still tumbling upwards, headed straight for the hole in the ceiling and deep space beyond. At the last second, he just manages to grab hold of a roof joist sticking out of the jagged edge of the hole in the roof, which saves him from sailing out into the blackness, but unfortunately --

EXT HOUSE - OUTER SPACE NIGHT

-- he's still dangling upside-down over the house as it moves through outer space. The house motors along like Dorothy's in the tornado, the little boy hanging upside-down out the hole in the roof, holding onto the broken joist with one hand, SCREAMING at the top of his lungs.

INT TOP FLOOR NIGHT

Danny races up the stairs onto the second floor landing and runs over to stand beneath the hole. He stares up at Walter and puts his hands on his hips, furious.

DANNY

Walter, get back in this house!

WALTER

I'm not doing it on *purpose*, you bozo!

DANNY

You're gonna get in trouble.

WALTER

Throw me something and pull me down!

DANNY

Right!

Danny looks around for something rope-like, can't see anything.

DANNY (cont'd)

What am I supposed to use?!

WALTER

Throw me something with a cord on it!

DANNY

Right!

He spots a lamp on a hallway table. The outlet is a ways away and the lamp is plugged into an extension cord, so there's a good ten feet of length. He unplugs it.

DANNY (cont'd)

Catch!

He tosses the lamp and the extension cord up at Walter. Once they pass over the railing and are in the foyer's airspace they're weightless too, so they fly straight up at him pretty easily.

So easily, in fact, that the lamp THUNKS off Walter's head --

CONTINUED:

WALTER

OW!

-- and keeps right on going, out into space. Walter nearly loses his grip; in fact, one hand slips off the joist and for a moment he's just clinging to the house by a few fingers.

He regains his hold.

And his temper.

WALTER (cont'd)

Danny, throw me something with a cord
on it *AND HOLD ON TO THE OTHER END!*

DANNY

Right! Good point.

WALTER

Are you *trying* to be an idiot?!

Danny stares at him, burning with rage and embarrassment.

Suddenly, a coil of rope comes tumbling up from beneath, unfurling as it rises straight up toward Walter. It shoots up through the broken skylight.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The Astronaut is standing at the edge of the living room below, holding the other end of the rope, which rises up through the foyer in front of him.

ASTRONAUT

GRAB ON!

INT UP AT THE SKYLIGHT NIGHT

Walter throws both hands around the rope and holds fast.

WALTER

I GOT IT!

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

In the living room, the Astronaut starts hauling Walter down, fast, hand over hand.

INT UP AT THE SKYLIGHT NIGHT

Walter is suddenly yanked back into the house, hard and fast, and he **SMACKS** his head off the ceiling.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

Ow!

He goes shooting downward, BANGING off the second floor railing right in front of Danny.

WALTER (cont'd)

Ouch!

As he keeps getting pulled downward, Danny leans out over the railing, yelling furiously.

DANNY

I hope it hurt!

INT FOYER NIGHT

Walter BANGS into the edge of the overhang, KNOCKS into the skylight --

WALTER

OW, I said OW!

-- and the Astronaut, visible now at the edge of the living room, keeps hauling him in, as fast as he can. Walter drags upside-down across the underside of the second floor overhang, crosses the threshold into the living room --

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

-- and THUDS to the living room floor at the Astronaut's feet, where gravity is normal. The Astronaut drops the rope on top of him.

Walter claws it off himself and looks up at the Astronaut, angry.

WALTER

You didn't have to be so *rough* about it!

ASTRONAUT

You didn't have to be so mean to your brother.

WALTER

He almost got me killed!

ASTRONAUT

He was doing the best he could.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

Yeah, well it wasn't good enough! As usual!

ASTRONAUT

What is the matter with you? Why do you have to put him down? How does that help you?

WALTER

He drives me crazy, I can't help it if I lose my temper once in a while!

ASTRONAUT

Once in a *while*? Try a couple dozen times a day.

WALTER

Ah, what do you know about it. He's a clumsy little spazz, and this time he almost got me killed.

Danny tromps back into the room.

DANNY

You shut up, Walter!

WALTER

Make me!

DANNY

I don't make trash, I just... um...
(can't remember the rest)
I throw it, um... in the trash.

WALTER

Good one, Danny.

ASTRONAUT

That's *enough*! Both of you guys. Now be quiet and sit down before I lose *my* temper and throw you both out the skylight.

They do. He holds the dice out to Danny.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Roll.

Walter and Danny look at each other. What's *his* problem?

CUT TO:

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

Meanwhile, up on the second floor landing, we see a door at the end of the upstairs hall swing open suddenly.

Lisa comes out of her room.

Well, *stomps* out of her room would be a more accurate way of putting it. She's half asleep and all pissed off, still got her iPod on and her sleep shade, now pulled up over one squinting eye. And she's muttering.

LISA

... any sleep at all... freezing my *ass* off...

She's headed directly to something on the far wall, not looking up, down, or sideways, so focused is she. She exhales pointedly on the way, and her breath comes out in a big puff of steam. Must be getting awfully cold in the house.

LISA (cont'd)

(seeing her breath)

... my *God*... living like *animals*...

She reaches the far wall and squints through her one light-adjusting eye at the thing she's come out to find.

The thermostat.

LISA (cont'd)

... forty-eight degrees?... what are we, *savages*?

She reaches up and spins the dial all the way to eighty-five. Immediately, we cut to --

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

-- the basement, where the furnace is. Right above the still-lit pilot light, there is a low WHUMPH as the gas jets HISS to life and a lake of bright orange flame erupts.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

Lisa nods in disgruntled satisfaction, turns around, and shuffles back to her bedroom, MUTTERING under her breath the whole way.

She reaches the door, goes inside, and SLAMS it shut behind her.

INT LISA'S BATHROOM NIGHT

Lisa comes into the bathroom and turns on the shower. Time to get ready for her date. She hits a boom box on the counter, spins a CD, and cranks up the volume.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The dice tumble across the Zathura game board, come up a three and a one.

DANNY

Four. Lame. As usual.
(counting off the spaces)
One two three four.

The board BUZZES and Danny snatches up his card. He reads it, slowly, moving his lips silently as he reads.

Danny's eyes widen. His jaw sets. He's mad.

Walter and the Astronaut look at each other.

WALTER

Well?

ASTRONAUT

What's it say?

No answer from Danny, but his hand starts to tremble with rage.

The Astronaut reaches out and takes the card and reads it.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Bummer.

Now Walter takes it and reads out loud.

WALTER

"Lose map of galaxy, go back six spaces." Whoops.

(to Danny)

Want me to move your piece back for you?

Danny whips his glare over to Walter, if they were laser eyes Walter would be dead.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

(imitating him)

"No I do not want you to move my piece
back for me."

ASTRONAUT

(to Walter)

Hey, no gasoline on the fire, if you
don't mind.

(to Danny)

Deep breaths. Hold it together. Only
a game. We play together, maybe we all
get to go back home. Okay?

Danny leans forward, takes his piece, and moves it back six
spaces, SMACKING it down hard on the board with each move. Then
he sits back, arms folded across his chest, breathing hard
through his nose. Walter and the Astronaut are wincing, waiting
for the explosion, but it doesn't come. After a few moments,
they begin to relax.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Okay. Okay, good.

(to Walter, under his breath)

Go. Quick.

Walter rolls the dice, they come up nine.

Danny's forced nose breathing gets even louder, he sets his jaw
harder. But still he doesn't explode.

WALTER

Nine. One two three four five...

Walter reaches a fork in the path. Both routes are equidistant
to Zathura.

WALTER (cont'd)

Which way do I go?

ASTRONAUT

It's your choice. But if I were you
I'd go this way.

He points to the path to the right. Walter counts off the
squares on that route.

WALTER

Yeah, I could...

He counts off the squares on the path to the left.

CONTINUED: (2)

WALTER (cont'd)

But if I go this way I land on a star.

He points to a square, one of the only ones on the board with a drawing on it -- it's a bright star, brilliant fiery rays shooting out from all sides.

WALTER (cont'd)

Star looks good. What do you think?

ASTRONAUT

Like I said. Your choice. But I'd go the other way.

WALTER

Why?

The Astronaut holds his gaze for a long moment. This is very important to him, but Walter can't for the life of him figure out why.

WALTER (cont'd)

Well, I like the star.

(moves his piece)

Six seven eight nine. Hey, I'm *far!*

Only a few more and I win!

Even LOUDER breathing from Danny, who is like a volcano with its crater plugged up. The Astronaut holds out a calming hand.

As Walter lands on the star square, the board BUZZES and spits out a card. Walter takes it and reads.

WALTER (cont'd)

"Shooting star. Make a wish as it passes."

He looks up at the others, thrilled.

WALTER (cont'd)

Wow, *cool!* I get a wish! I get to make a wish and have it come true and everything! This is the greatest, I get whatever I want, I can have anything, I can-

Finally, the top blows off the volcano. Danny leaps to his feet, SHOUTING.

DANNY

I HATE THIS GAME!

CONTINUED: (3)

WALTER

Oh boy, here we go...

ASTRONAUT

Hey, calm down, you're doing fine.

DANNY

No I'm not! I always lose! He does *everything* better than me!

WALTER

Don't be stupid, Danny.

ASTRONAUT

Don't call him stupid!

DANNY

(to Walter)

You're stupid! This game is stupid!
Our whole stupid family is stupid and
I'm sick of it and I hate it!

ASTRONAUT

Danny, please sit down.

DANNY

No, I won't play! You can't make me!

WALTER

Just play the game, already, I want to
go home.

DANNY

I don't! I don't want to go home if
you're there!

WALTER

Oh yeah?! Well I feel exactly the same
way!

DANNY

I HATE THIS GAME! I HATE YOU!

WALTER

(jumping to his feet)

*I HATE YOU RIGHT BACK, YOU LITTLE
CREEP!*

Danny bends down, hooks both hands under the game board --

ASTRONAUT

DANNY, DON'T!

CONTINUED: (4)

-- and flips it upside down into the air. Game pieces and cards go flying everywhere.

WALTER

HEY!

Danny storms out of the room and races upstairs. They hear his feet BOOMING down the hall, then the door of the bedroom SLAMS in the distance.

Suddenly, the living room gets very bright, brilliant even. Walter and the Astronaut turn and squint out the big picture window. There's a huge glowing fireball headed straight for them, fast.

WALTER (cont'd)

What is it?!

ASTRONAUT

It's your shooting star.

WALTER

I get my wish now, don't I?

The Astronaut is staring at him intently.

ASTRONAUT

The moment it passes. Yeah.

Walter goes to the window and stares outside, eyes wide, an idea forming in his mind that is every bit as dark as the star is bright. The shooting star is just fifteen seconds away now.

The Astronaut steps up beside him.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Don't do it, Walter.

WALTER

Don't do what?

ASTRONAUT

Don't wish what you're thinking.

The shooting star's closer, they can start to hear it now, a hot SIZZLING WHOOSH growing louder and louder. Ten seconds away.

WALTER

You don't know what I'm thinking.

ASTRONAUT

Maybe not, but I can tell it isn't good.

CONTINUED: (5)

Walter reacts, he *is* thinking something awful, but he still won't look at the Astronaut. The star is just five seconds away now.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Don't do it, I'm telling you, no matter how good an idea something seems like when you're mad, it isn't, please, you gotta believe me on this one.

Walter looks at him, thinking, the Astronaut's words resonating with him. But then he looks back at the star, his face glowing in its brilliant light. He's transfixed.

The Astronaut grabs him, but Walter keeps staring out the window.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

This isn't a game you can play alone!

With a CRACKLING WHOOSH, the star passes directly by the living room windows, its brilliant light washing the whole room hot white for one spectacular moment --

-- and then it's gone.

As the room returns to normal, it's as if Walter comes out from under a spell. He shakes his head to clear it, and turns away from the window.

The Astronaut looks at him, hushed.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

What did you wish?

WALTER

I can't tell you.

ASTRONAUT

What did you wish?!

WALTER

You know the rules about wishes. It won't come true.

The Astronaut grabs him by the arms and spins him around.

ASTRONAUT

Walter, tell me what you wished!

WALTER

No.

CONTINUED: (6)

The Astronaut lets him go, turns and looks upstairs.

ASTRONAUT

You did it, didn't you?!

He takes off for the stairs.

INT STAIRWELL NIGHT

The Astronaut bounds up the stairs, three at a time.

ASTRONAUT

Danny?!

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

The Astronaut reaches the top of the stairs and races down the hallway.

ASTRONAUT

DANNY?!

No answer from the other end. He reaches the door to the boys' room, closes his eyes and murmurs a silent prayer --

-- and throws open the bedroom door.

INT WALTER AND DANNY'S ROOM NIGHT

The Astronaut stands in the doorway to Walter and Danny's room and looks everywhere at once.

There's no one in the room.

He comes inside, looks all around. Nobody.

His shoulders sag.

ASTRONAUT

Oh God. Oh Danny.

He drops onto the bed.

DANNY (O.S.)

Ow!

The Astronaut leaps to his feet, looks down at the bed, his face lighting up.

ASTRONAUT

Danny?!

CONTINUED:

DANNY (O.S.)

Leave me alone.

The Astronaut drops to the floor and looks under the bed. Danny is wedged underneath, thumb stuck in his mouth. He doesn't bother to remove it, just talks around it.

DANNY (cont'd)

I wanna be alone.

ASTRONAUT

DANNY!

He grabs hold of the kid and hauls him out from underneath, stands him up on his feet --

DANNY

Hey!

ASTRONAUT

He didn't do it!

-- and pulls him in close for a big hug.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

You're here, you're really here!

WALTER (O.S.)

Hey, there it is!

Walter races into the room and picks up a regulation size NFL football that has suddenly appeared on his bed.

WALTER (cont'd)

My wish came true! Awesome!

The Astronaut turns and looks at it. There's some scribbling on the side of the ball.

ASTRONAUT

That was your wish? A Brett Favre autographed football?

WALTER

Yeah! Check it out!

DANNY

Are you crazy?! You coulda wished us home! You coulda wished the game over!

CONTINUED: (2)

WALTER

Well, I was under a lot of pressure!
(points to the Astronaut)
He was yelling at me!

DANNY

What were you yelling at him for?!

WALTER

(to the Astronaut)
Yeah, Bozo, *who are you*, anyway?!

CUT TO:

INT WALTER AND DANNY'S ROOM NIGHT

Walter, Danny, and the Astronaut sit in a corner of the darkened bedroom, huddled together, lit by the starlight streaming in through their window. They speak in hushed tones.

ASTRONAUT

Twelve years ago, I sat down to play this very same game with *my* brother. We were fighting a lot back then, he was a little fungus, is what he was, and when the game started things got even worse.

DANNY

Just like us.

ASTRONAUT

Yeah. Well, as the game went on I got madder and madder. And I landed on the star space, the same one Walter just landed on. And... you know how you get sometimes, it's like you're not in charge of what you're thinking in your own head?

WALTER

Yeah.

DANNY

Definitely.

ASTRONAUT

I was so mad that when that star passed, I made my wish. And my wish was...

He looks down, can't bring himself to say it.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

What? What was it?

The Astronaut looks up at Danny and there are tears in his eyes.

ASTRONAUT

I... I wished my brother had never been born.

Danny draws in his breath. He looks at Walter skeptically, wondering if Walter too had the very same thought.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

But as soon as I did it, I felt horrible. I tried to roll again, I thought maybe I could land on another star and wish him back, but the game wouldn't let me go -- because *it wasn't my turn.*

(to Walter)

That's what I was telling you downstairs. There are some games you can't play alone.

He wipes some sweat from his forehead.

DANNY

Why was he telling you *that*, Walter?

Walter blushes and looks away.

ASTRONAUT

But then I found you guys. See, the universe is like a big maze -- it's filled with back doors and passages and shortcuts. I think they're called wormholes. After a few years trapped inside this game, I started exploring them. That's when I found the wormhole that led into your house, this house. You see, Zathura didn't just *end up* in your game closet. I put it there.

He wipes more sweat from his cheek, it's rolling down him.

DANNY

For us to find!

ASTRONAUT

I figured if I could get you to play, maybe I could get back into the game, find a way to get my brother back, and get us both out of here.

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

(to Danny)

And then you rolled me. Thanks, Bud.

WALTER

So what do we do now?

ASTRONAUT

We go downstairs, we put the pieces back where they belong, and we finish this thing, once and for all. No more cheating, no more arguing, all you guys have to do is roll the dice a few times, I'll help you fight off whatever comes out, and then maybe all of us can go home. Deal?

DANNY

Deal.

WALTER

I still don't get it. Why us?

ASTRONAUT

Hey... is it getting warm in here?

They look at each other. The Astronaut reaches up and wipes his brow -- he pulls back a palmful of sweat.

He looks at Walter, concern creasing his brow.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

You blew out the pilot light on the furnace, right?

WALTER

Um...

ASTRONAUT

YOU BLEW OUT THE PILOT LIGHT ON THE FURNACE, RIGHT?!

WALTER

You know, there *is* a killer robot down there.

ASTRONAUT

YOU BLEW OUT THE PILOT LIGHT ON THE FURNACE, RIGHT?!?!

CUT TO:

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

The Astronaut races out of the bedroom and tears ass down the hall to the thermostat at the far end. He checks the reading.

ASTRONAUT

Eighty-five?!

He spins the dial back down as far as it will go.

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

The bright orange flames under the furnace in the basement WHUMPF out again.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

The Astronaut whirls around to face the boys, who have followed him out of the bedroom.

ASTRONAUT

Which one of you did that?!

DANNY

Wasn't me!

WALTER

Lisa! It had to be!

ASTRONAUT

Lisa?

WALTER

Our sister! I'm gonna kill her!

ASTRONAUT

I'm gonna help you.

They turn toward the other end of the hallway and head for Lisa's bedroom, but stop in their tracks when they hear --

-- a THUNK from downstairs.

WALTER

(whispers)

Did you hear something?

DANNY

(whispers back)

No. I only heard a thunk.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

That's what-
(oh, never mind)

He looks at the Astronaut, exasperated.

WALTER (cont'd)

You see what I put up with?

ASTRONAUT

Shh!

He holds up a hand for quiet. He creeps toward the stairs, slowly.

The boys follow, even more slowly. They start to descend. Up ahead, they see the Astronaut reach the bottom of the stairs and stop.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Awww..... shucks.

WALTER

What is it?!

He and Danny take off down the rest of the steps. They reach the base and stop too, staring into the living room, which is --

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

-- completely empty.

We're talking *totally* empty, no furniture, no drapes, no pictures on the mantel, not even a rug. It's like the Grinch was here.

As they stand there staring in shock, a chunk of brightly colored glass falls to the floorboards at their feet and SMASHES.

They look up to the broken skylight, where it came from, and out the hole in the roof. But they can't see the stars through it anymore, what they see instead is a hatchway on the underside of a spaceship that has landed on their roof.

And through that hatchway they can see two pairs of scaly, green, lizard-like legs, still dangling down into the house. The legs slither up through the hatchway, pulling their scaly, green, lizard-like tails up after them.

ASTRONAUT

Zorgons!

CONTINUED:

The hatchway irises shut, the ship accelerates and lifts off the roof.

The Astronaut and the boys rush to the picture window and watch the Zorgon ship as it hits the afterburners and banks away from the house, headed out into space.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

That stuff won't last them long.
They'll be back, and more of 'em.

WALTER

Then we've got to hurry up and finish
the-

He stops in the middle of his sentence. The Astronaut looks at him. So does Danny. As one, they turn away from the window and look into the living room again.

From across the room, we see the vast expanse of empty floorboards. Besides three people, there is *nothing* in that room.

WALTER (cont'd)

The game!

DANNY

It's gone!

ASTRONAUT

They took it.

DANNY

Why do they want the game?!

ASTRONAUT

They don't know it's a game, all they know is it catches fire. They're going to burn it up.

WALTER

If they haven't already!

On either side of the Astronaut, Danny and Walter slide down the wall and collapse into a sitting position on the floor, staring in shock and dismay. *Now* what do we do?

DANNY

We're never getting back home.

ASTRONAUT

No, no, no, this is no big deal.

CONTINUED: (2)

WALTER

We'll never see Mom or Dad again.

ASTRONAUT

You think this is hard? This isn't hard. Fighting off sand sharks under the carpet in your dining room, *that's* hard. This? Piece of cake.

WALTER

What are you talking about? We can't get back without the game, the Zorgons have the game, and they're *gone!* We'll *never* be able to find them!

ASTRONAUT

Then they'll just have to find us.

CUT TO:

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

CRACK! The Astronaut swings a kitchen chair down on the edge of the counter as hard as he can, smashing it to bits. He picks up another and SMASHES that one to smithereens too, does the same with a third, tossing the pieces onto a pile he's making near the big French doors that lead outside.

INT DAD'S OFFICE NIGHT

CRASH! Danny and Walter tip over the big bookcase in Dad's office and an ocean of paper spills out onto the floor, all the projects he's worked on for the past few years.

They scoop up as much of it as they can carry and head into the kitchen --

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

-- and hurl it all onto the pile on which the Astronaut threw the broken pieces of chair, which are now burning.

Immediately the small fire gets bigger. The Astronaut throws open the French doors and they all step back and look at it.

Not a bad little blaze.

ASTRONAUT

More.

They fan out.

MOMENTS LATER,

CONTINUED:

stuff starts raining down on the pile. Pillows. Boxes of cereal. Anything remotely combustible.

The three guys step back. This fire's really getting there.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

More!

INT LISA'S ROOM NIGHT

SLAM! The door to Lisa's room BANGS open, revealing Walter and Danny. Lisa is in the bathroom behind them, blow-drying her hair, now dressed in a Juicy track suit. She sees their reflections in the mirror.

LISA

HEY!

She whirls around. The boys are in her closet, rifling through her stuff.

LISA (cont'd)

What do you think you're doing?!

Walter and Danny look back at her over their shoulders --

WALTER

We need to burn your clothes.

-- and head for the door, carrying huge armloads of Lisa's stuff.

Lisa is so stunned she's paralyzed for a moment, staring after them as they leave.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Walter and Danny come BANGING down the stairs carrying Lisa's clothes and head for the kitchen. A few moments later, Lisa TROMPS down behind them, livid.

LISA

YOU ARE SO GOING TO DIE!

But the boys are already gone. Lisa stomps down the hall toward the kitchen, shaking her head and muttering dire threats under her breath.

She reaches the swinging kitchen door, pushes it open --

INT KITCHEN NIGHT

-- and recoils from the intense heat of the bonfire inside.

CONTINUED:

LISA

OH MY GOD!!!

She's just in time to see Walter and Danny throw her clothes on the blaze.

LISA (cont'd)

YOU IDIOTS SET THE HOUSE ON FIRE! YOU
ACTUALLY SET THE HOUSE ON FIRE!

They turn and look at her calmly.

DANNY

Duh.

WALTER

Duh.

LISA (cont'd)

THE FIRE EXTINGUISHER, WHERE'S THE FIRE
EXTINGUISHER?!

She starts ripping through the cabinets, searching for it.

LISA (cont'd)

WHY DID YOU SET THE HOUSE ON FIRE?!

DANNY

To attract Zorgons.

LISA

WHAT THE HELL ARE ZORGONS?!

WALTER

Oh, so *now* you're interested.

Suddenly the Astronaut BANGS through the opposite door of the kitchen carrying a bunch of sheets and tablecloths. He throws them on the pile and kicks open the second French door.

The flames and smoke billow outside.

LISA

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!

The Astronaut looks at her and draws in his breath, about to tell her his story --

ASTRONAUT

Take too long.

-- then changes his mind and goes back to work.

LISA

WHAT IN GOD'S NAME IS GOING ON AROUND
HERE?!

CONTINUED: (2)

WALTER

We told you once. It's not our fault
if you weren't listening.

DANNY

Board game. Outer space. Can't get
home.

The fire is growing ever larger and Lisa still can't find the
fire extinguisher.

LISA

I gotta get you out of here!

She grabs hold of the boys and hustles them toward the door,
over their objections.

INT Foyer NIGHT

Lisa runs across the dining room, both boys in tow, headed for
the front door. As she approaches the foyer the boys cry out.

WALTER

Not that way!

DANNY

Lisa, wait!

But she doesn't listen. She crosses over the edge of the room,
into the foyer --

-- and all three of them go weightless, cartwheeling over and
over into the gravity-free space.

They start tumbling upwards, toward the skylight above, they
SCREAM, then they hear a loud GRUNT from behind them and turn
around just in time to see --

-- *the Astronaut*, running at top speed across the dining room.
He launches himself right at the edge of the foyer, sails
through the air like a missile, and SLAMS into the three of
them.

The Astronaut's momentum changes their path, they fly across the
rest of the foyer, cross the border into the living room --

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

-- and SLAM to the floor with a collective GROAN. The Astronaut
rolls off and hurries over to the window.

Lisa looks up at her little brothers, eyes wide.

LISA

Things are getting weird around here.

CONTINUED:

WALTER

Lisa, when you sleep late, you miss a lot.

ASTRONAUT (O.S.)

Zorgons!

The boys jump up and hurry over to the picture window, where the Astronaut is staring outside at *two* Zorgon ships that are hovering in front of the house.

EXT HOUSE IN SPACE NIGHT

Outside the house again, we see flames billowing out the open kitchen doors, where they are immediately sucked up into nothing by the greedy emptiness of space. The sucking gains momentum, pulling huge chunks of the fire right out of the house and into space. Soon there won't be anything left.

But here's another problem -- now there are *two* Zorgon ships outside the window.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Lisa joins the three guys at the window.

LISA

What are Zorgons?!

ASTRONAUT

Space lizards.

WALTER

They wanna burn us and eat us.

DANNY

Walter rolled 'em.

WALTER

Stop blaming me!

SLAM! The whole house rocks as a Zorgon ship SLAMS into it from below.

ASTRONAUT

They're coming in from below!

SLAM! The house rocks back the other way as a ship lands hard on the roof.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

And from above!

CONTINUED:

The Astronaut and the boys run to the edge of the foyer and look up through the broken skylight. The hatchway to the Zorgon ship is back, it irises open and a dark shape slithers out of the ship, THUDS to the carpet on the second floor landing, and crawls quickly out of sight.

Lisa GASPS.

Now a *second* dark shape slithers through the iris and THUDS to the carpet up on the second floor. Overhead, they hear lizard feet SCURRYING across their floor.

LISA

The basement! We can lock 'em out,
come on!

She races out of the room, expecting the others to follow her, but they're all distracted.

DANNY

Which ship's got the game in it?!

ASTRONAUT

I don't know! But these two got here
first, which means they were the
closest, so it has to be in one of
them! All we have to do is-

WALTER

Wait!

He looks in the direction Lisa went, her words finally sinking in.

WALTER (cont'd)

Did she say basement?

They all GASP.

INT HALLWAY NIGHT

Lisa races down the hallway, calling back over her shoulder.

LISA

COME ON, YOU GUYS, HURRY!

She hears THUNDERING feet as they approach, assumes they're following. She reaches the door to the basement stairs and throws it open, starts down the stairs as the others appear at the other end of the hall.

WALTER

LISA, WAIT!

CONTINUED:

ASTRONAUT
DON'T GO IN THE BASEMENT!

DANNY
NOT THE BASEMENT!

INT STAIRWELL NIGHT

BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM, Lisa's feet pound down the steps that lead to the basement.

LISA
GUYS COME ON, WE'LL BE SAFE IN HERE,
HURRY, HURRY!

She reaches a hand out for the door.

The Astronaut and the boys are approaching, we can hear their SHOUTS.

Lisa flicks the lock on the door.

The guys appear at the top of the stairs and race down toward her, ALL SHOUTING AT ONCE. The result is an incomprehensible jumble of words, "basement," "don't," "robot," "killer," "all Walter's fault," but taken all at once it might as well be Babylonian.

Lisa throws open the basement door --

-- REVEALING A SIX FOOT KILLER ROBOT WITH GLOWING RED EYES.

Pretty much everybody SCREAMS. They turn to flee --

-- but at the top of the stairs, TWO ZORGON LIZARDS appear! This is our first good look at them, and even though they're silhouetted by the light from the hallway, they're still hideous, green, scaly, scary things.

And they each hold a ruby-handled, blood-encrusted broadsword, waving it menacingly and BARKING guttural Zorgon threats.

Pretty much everybody SCREAMS.

Yep, they're doomed for sure, stuck on the stairs, killer robot below, killer lizards above, no way outta this one.

ROBOT
ALIEN LIFE FORM. MUST DESTROY.

The robot's red beams fall squarely on Walter's chest --

CONTINUED:

-- but suddenly the beams *SHIFT*, they shift and they split, they land on two *new* targets --

-- the Zorgons, standing at the top of the stairs!

ROBOT (cont'd)
ALIEN LIFE FORMS! MUST DESTROY!

The robot's turbojets *BLAST* and he takes off like a guided missile, flying straight up the stairs.

Lisa, the Astronaut, and the boys drop to the stairs as the robot *SHRIEKS* over their heads.

The Zorgons bolt out of there, headed back toward the living room, and the robot *SLAMS* into the wall where they stood.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The overmatched Zorgons race back into the living room and *BARK* up at the ceiling, to their shipmates above. *TWO ROPES* appear, thrown down through the iris in the bottom of the ship.

The Zorgons grab hold and climb frantically, *BARKING* and *SNARLING* up at their shipmates to pull them up.

The robot appears in the doorway of the living room. Its tentacle arms shoot out, its heavy metal claws *CLAMP* down hard on the Zorgon tails and bite in.

The Zorgons *SCREAM* in fury and pain.

The robot's turbo jets blast to life, the robot *ROCKETS* across the room, its arms telescoping in as it *SLAMS* into the Zorgon tails.

Lisa, the Astronaut, Danny, and Walter appear in the doorway, amazed and grateful and staying the hell back.

FRANTIC SCREAMS come from the Zorgons as they're rapidly pulled back up through the hole, the robot still clamped onto their tails.

Walter and the Astronaut rush over underneath the hole, just in time to see the Zorgons and the robot pulled all the way up into the belly of the Zorgon ship. The hatchway irises shut and the ship blasts off.

Lisa and Danny run over to the window and see the Zorgon ship fly away into deep space, twisting and turning, barely in control as the robot wreaks whatever havoc it's wreaking inside. Two problems flying away at the same time.

CONTINUED:

ASTRONAUT

One ship down --

Loud ROARS rise up from the basement, reminding them that they still have intruders. They whirl in that direction.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

-- one to go. And we'd better hope that's the one that took the game. Hide someplace, I'll check it out!

He takes off toward the basement and they take off in the other direction.

CUT TO:

INT GAME CLOSET NIGHT

Shadows move under the crack in a door. Walter, Danny, and Lisa are all crammed into the game closet, huddling on the floor with the lights out, waiting for the Astronaut to return.

They're holding their breath, trying not to make any sound. Living in a house taken over.

A pair of feet move past, but they're not human -- Zorgon feet. Another pair of lizard feet meet the first pair, now soft Zorgon BARKING can be heard outside. They're looking for the humans.

Danny is terrified, sucking his thumb again. He sees Lisa looking at him and pulls it out of his mouth, doesn't want to get busted. Lisa, softening, slides over next to him, takes his hand --

-- and pushes his thumb back in his mouth.

Danny moves close to her and twirls her hair with his free hand.

The Zorgon feet move away. They all exhale.

WALTER

(whispering)

What's taking him so long?

LISA

(whispering back)

What's that guy's name, anyway? He's kind of a hottie.

DANNY

Shhh!

CONTINUED:

They freeze again. Footsteps approach, stop outside the door. The knob turns, the door opens --

-- and the Astronaut slips inside. He closes the door behind him and drops to the floor, gesturing to them all to lean in closer.

ASTRONAUT

(an urgent whisper)
Zorgons everywhere. Mostly in the basement, they're looking for us all over. But I saw the game.

WALTER

Where is it?!

ASTRONAUT

It's close. They've got a furnace ship backed up to the storm cellar doors and they're filling it up with junk to burn right now. The game is on the pile, just inside their ship.

WALTER

(starts to stand)
Let's go get it!

The Astronaut pulls him back down.

ASTRONAUT

We'll never get past the stairs, there's a half a dozen Zorgons right at the bottom. They nearly caught me.

LISA

Okay, I don't even, like, *want* a turn in this game. It's exhausting.

ASTRONAUT

Listen to me. The pile of junk the game is on is right underneath the laundry chute. We could lower somebody down with a rope, they grab the game and we pull 'em back up before the Zorgons know what hit 'em.

WALTER

Uh...

LISA

Well...

CONTINUED: (2)

ASTRONAUT

Someone small.

They all look at Danny.

CUT TO:

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

CINCH! Close on a rope as it is tied around Danny's waist. All four of them are standing at the end of the hallway on the second floor landing, next to a tiny door that is the access to the laundry chute. They all speak in hushed voices.

DANNY

Not fair, not fair, not fair, *SO* not fair I can't even believe it!

The Astronaut finishes tying the knot securely.

DANNY (cont'd)

We are talking about the *basement* here, people!

ASTRONAUT

You're gonna be a hero, Danny.

DANNY

I'm gonna be toast on a rope!

LISA

Shh!

She's standing at the railing, looking downstairs, where Zorgons can be heard patrolling the living room, their clawed feet CLICKING off the floor.

Walter bends down in front of his brother.

WALTER

Danny... I can't do this. You can. You're the man, buddy.

Danny looks at him and smiles. He likes the sound of that.

WALTER (cont'd)

(chanting)
Go SpongeBob, Go SpongeBob, Go
SpongeBob...

CLOSE ON Danny's ankles as the Astronaut picks him up by the legs. Walter and Lisa take his front end, they flip open the door to the laundry chute and feed him gently into it.

INT LAUNDRY CHUTE NIGHT

Looking up through the laundry chute from the bottom, we see Danny's head poke inside. Then his chest. Then he bends and wriggles and gets his whole body into the chute, facing down toward us.

He looks down. The chute seems to go down forever, toward a blazing bright spot at the bottom.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

Walter, Lisa and the Astronaut hold the rope. Just Danny's feet are visible, upside-down in the mouth of the laundry chute.

ASTRONAUT

(a whisper)
You okay?

Danny's voice comes from offscreen, echoey in the metal laundry chute.

DANNY (O.S.)

I'd rather be watching TV.

ASTRONAUT

Here we go.

He begins to lower the rope.

INT LAUNDRY CHUTE NIGHT

Danny begins to drop down through the laundry chute, shaking his head and muttering the whole way.

DANNY

It is very, very, very, very, very,
VERY hard to be the youngest.

Down below, the opening onto the basement is getting closer. He can hear fires CRACKLING and Zorgon feet CLICKING on the cement floor, can see shadows moving.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

Up on the landing, Lisa is standing lookout at the railing while Walter and the Astronaut continue to lower Danny. Suddenly she crouches, as the shadow of a sword-wielding Zorgon falls on the wall behind her -- a patrol down in the living room.

LISA

(whispers)
Get down!

CONTINUED:

Walter and the Astronaut get low.

LISA (cont'd)

Don't move!

They all freeze. They follow her gaze, look up at the Zorgon shadow on the wall above them. It turns, looking in all directions.

INT LAUNDRY CHUTE NIGHT

Danny has stopped, not yet at the bottom. He wriggles, trying to move again.

DANNY

Hey. Why'd you stop?

He twists around, trying to look up at them.

DANNY (cont'd)

Come on!

He hits the side of the laundry chute, two dull BOOMS.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

The BOOMS echo across the second floor landing. The shadow of the Zorgon on the wall turns abruptly toward them.

Everybody's eyes widen.

ASTRONAUT

Lower him! Fast!

Walter and the Astronaut start lowering Danny faster.

On the wall, the shadow of the Zorgon starts getting smaller, a sign that he's actually approaching, moving away from the light that's casting his shadow.

LISA

It's coming up the stairs!

INT LAUNDRY CHUTE NIGHT

Danny's moving again, fast now, the opening is just below him, he passes through it --

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

-- and his head appears, upside-down, out the bottom of the laundry chute.

CONTINUED:

From Danny's point of view, we see the basement upside-down, and you know, even if there weren't Zorgons in it, it would be an awfully creepy place. It's cement floored, cement block walls on half of it, earthen over at the other end. There are a pair of storm-cellar doors that are flung open on the far side. A Zorgon furnace ship is backed up to them, white-hot flames raging within. A conveyor belt has been thrust into the basement through the doors, it feeds stuff from the house directly into the furnace.

Danny is dangling upside-down near the washer and dryer, seven or eight feet over the top of a large pile of junk.

He squints past the conveyor belt, into the belly of the Zorgon ship. There, on top of a pile of the stuff already stolen from the living room, is the Zathura game box, intact.

Danny's eyes widen.

Suddenly a ZORGON HEAD appears right underneath him!

Thankfully, the Zorgon doesn't look up, doesn't see the human six year old suspended just a few feet over his head.

The Zorgon scoops up more junk from the corner of the basement, carries it over to the conveyor belt, and tosses it on.

INT STAIRS TO SECOND FLOOR NIGHT

A pair of Zorgon feet climb slowly up the stairs to the second floor.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

Lisa sees it and crawls over to the Astronaut.

LISA

It's coming!

ASTRONAUT

Get out of here, both of you! Hide!

They hesitate.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

Go!

They scamper away across the second floor. The Zorgon's head, and the tip of his blood-encrusted sword, are just visible coming up the top of the stairs.

The Astronaut lowers Danny fast, hand over hand, the rest of the way down.

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

Danny drops the last distance into the basement all at once, THUDDING to the floor. He wriggles out of the rope loop around his waist, looks around fast, and darts toward the conveyor belt, staying low.

The Zorgons don't see him, they're clustered around something on the far side of the room, BARKING and SNAPPING at each other. The something in between them is SQUEAKING, maybe moving, but we can't see it.

Then it's not squeaking anymore.

Yuck, we realize. They're eating. Tearing something apart with their claws. The occasional bone flies over their shoulder and skitters across the cement floor.

Danny reaches the conveyor belt and looks ahead. In the Zorgon ship, he sees a Zorgon with a shovel scoop up a bunch of stuff and throw it on the conveyor belt.

The Zathura game is right on top, and now it's moving straight toward the fire.

The Zorgon turns and walks away. No time to think about this one, Danny straightens up in front of the conveyor belt --

-- and hops on. He moves quickly out of the basement, feeding right into the belly of the Zorgon ship.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

Zorgon feet come to a stop on the second floor landing. But there's nobody up there.

There is, however, a rope, conspicuously tied to the railing, leading down into the laundry chute.

The Zorgon steps forward to the rope, studies it. What does this mean?

INT ZORGON SHIP NIGHT

Danny crawls quickly across the conveyor belt and into the Zorgon ship. The basement is still visible behind him, through the open doors of the storm cellar. The game is ahead of him, five feet from the flames, then three, then one.

Danny lunges forward, stretching himself out all the way, grabs hold of the game just as the box starts to smolder, its tip just touching the searingly hot flames of the blast furnace.

CONTINUED:

Danny rolls off the belt just as his piece of conveyor belt feeds into the furnace and the blaze ROARS even higher.

Danny lands on the floor with a loud THUNK --

-- the Zorgon on the other side of the room whirls around to see what the sound was --

-- but Danny's hidden behind the conveyor belt, so he sees nothing. He turns away again.

Danny leaps back onto the conveyor belt, game tucked securely under his arm, and fights his way upstream, headed back into his basement.

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

Danny comes back into the basement, hops off the conveyor belt, and freezes, making sure the Zorgons on the other side of the room are still busy eating.

They are.

He crabwalks across the floor to where he came in. He reaches the rope, still hanging out of the laundry chute. He grabs hold with one arm and HISSES up into the chute.

DANNY

Pull me up! Hey you guys, *pull me up!*

He tugs on the rope a few times, to get their attention.

INT SECOND FLOOR LANDING NIGHT

Up on the landing, the Zorgon who was staring at the rope jumps back in alarm as it bounces in front of him, pulled by Danny from below. This thing is alive!

The Zorgon BARKS at the rope, raises his sword --

-- and cuts right through it with a single slice.

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

Danny is still tugging on the rope.

DANNY

Come on, I don't have all-

The rope suddenly goes slack and falls out of the chute, dropping into a useless pile of hemp at his feet. He's not getting out that way.

CONTINUED:

DANNY (cont'd)

Whoops.

Something SKITTERS to a stop at his feet. He looks down. It's a bone.

He looks up. Across the room, half a dozen Zorgons, backlit by the raging inferno outside the storm cellar doors, are looking right at him.

DANNY (cont'd)

Double whoops.

They stare.

DANNY (cont'd)

Hi!

They ROAR.

DANNY (cont'd)

Or not.

He takes off across the basement as fast as he can.

The Zorgons take off after him.

But Danny is little, and little means maneuverable. He lets loose a truly brilliant broken field run -- he leaps over the laundry basket, he bounces off the front of the washer, he cuts a circle around the water heater, he dives over a pile of paint cans, all the while leaving slipping, GROWLING, flailing Zorgons trying to catch up with him.

He hits the bottom of the stairs and bounds up them as fast as he can, SHOUTING toward the top.

DANNY (cont'd)

WALTERLISA OPEN THE DOOR SOMEBODY OPEN
THE DOOR I'M COMING OPEN THE DOOR!!!

He nears the top as the Zorgons reach the base of the steps. He BANGS into the door and turns the handle, but it's locked.

INT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

The basement door handle RATTLES back and forth, we can hear Danny's muted SHOUTS from the other side, but that door ain't budging.

A SHADOW falls over the door, a great big scary shadow of something at the top of the stairs. The something starts down toward the door, descending, headed right for it.

INT BASEMENT NIGHT

Danny is BANGING on the door as hard as he can, the Zorgons are climbing the stairs behind him, slow with their taloned reptile feet, but inexorable.

Suddenly the doorknob turns, whatever that shadow on the other side was heard Danny and wants him, the door swings open --

-- and Lisa grabs hold of her brother and hauls him out of the basement.

Danny falls to the stairs as Lisa SLAMS the door on the snarling Zorgons, locks and bolts it to be sure. Danny holds up the game board.

DANNY

I got it!

LISA

That door won't hold long! Come on!

She grabs him by the collar and hauls him to his feet.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Lisa and Danny come racing into the still-empty living room at the same time as Walter and the Astronaut, who race in from the other side.

Seen from overhead, they all hit the ground and slide to a stop in a pile in the middle of the room, where they immediately start setting up the game.

We've seen this shot twice before, first with just Danny and Walter, then with the Astronaut as well, and now all four of them, grouped around the board to play a simple game.

ASTRONAUT

Spaces, get on the right spaces! You remember where you were?!

WALTER

I was on the star!

DANNY

I was here!

WALTER

(thrusters the dice at Danny)
Your turn!

CONTINUED:

LISA

Go! Go!

INT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

The basement door CRACKS as Zorgons SLAM into it from the other side, the hinges strain. They're going to come through.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The dice bounce across the board and come up eight. Danny turns to the card slot --

-- but no card comes out!

DANNY

No card! There's no card!

WALTER

It's broken! They broke it!

He stands up and SHOUTS at the picture window, through which they can see a Zorgon ship hovering outside.

WALTER (cont'd)

YOU BROKE IT, YOU MORONS!

In answer, the Zorgon ship fires a photon blast at the house. It SMASHES through the big plate glass window, shattering it and spraying glass everywhere.

EXT HOUSE IN SPACE NIGHT

And that's not even the worst of it. Outside the house, we see that there are now at least a dozen Zorgon ships who've come to join the party. They're circling the house in big lazy arcs, mosquitoes around a porch light.

More and more and more specks are visible on the distant horizon. This is not going to end well.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Walter, Danny, Lisa, and the Astronaut are flat on their stomachs, covering their heads from the falling debris as the house is attacked.

DANNY

Why isn't there a card?!

ASTRONAUT

Are you sure it's your turn?!

CONTINUED:

Walter grabs the dice and rolls. Still nothing.

WALTER

Well it's not *my* turn!

DANNY

But nobody else is playing!

The Astronaut's eyes widen as he realizes something.

ASTRONAUT

Of course...

He grabs the dice and rolls, gets a three. He reaches out and takes hold of Walter's astronaut piece, moves it quickly --

WALTER

Hey, that's my piece, *I'm* the astronaut!

-- *and the board spits out a card!*

Danny and Walter GASP.

WALTER (cont'd)

But how can that be?

ASTRONAUT

I'm still playing my game!

The Astronaut snatches up the card and reads it. His eyes light up.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

"Hit time warp. Go back three spaces and repeat last turn."

He moves his piece slowly back three spaces, which of course lands him right back on the wishing star.

Immediately, they all wince from a blinding light that is shining through their windows. They turn and look.

A shooting star is approaching, exactly like the one that Walter wished on.

The Astronaut stands up, transfixed, unable to believe what seems to be happening. The star is just ten seconds away.

ASTRONAUT (cont'd)

A shooting star...

CONTINUED: (2)

SLAM! Walter looks up. Another Zorgon ship has landed on the roof and he can see the dark shapes of Zorgon pirates wriggling through the open skylight.

The shooting star is just a few seconds away.

WALTER

Make a wish!

DANNY

Hurry!

The star is just two seconds away.

The Astronaut steps forward toward it, closes his eyes, and makes his wish, softly, to himself.

ASTRONAUT

I wish I had my brother back.

The star passes the house with its hot SIZZLING sound and the light turns brilliant, blinding, they all turn away and cover their eyes as it washes the entire screen white for a second.

Finally it passes and the light fades, they all turn back toward the windows as they are slowly able to see again, and when they see what they see is --

-- an *EIGHTEEN YEAR OLD KID* standing in front of the windows!

The Astronaut's jaw drops.

So does pretty much everybody else's.

KID

I feel weird.

The Kid looks around, just as confused as everybody else, trying to figure out where he is. He looks down at his own hands, flips them over once or twice as if they're new to him. He sees the Astronaut, who has tears running down his cheeks.

ASTRONAUT

Danny?

KID

Walter? Is that you?

The Astronaut rushes forward and throws his arms around the Kid, pulling him into a tight embrace.

CONTINUED: (4)

YOUNG DANNY

You can play next game.

KABOOM! The front door of the house EXPLODES off its hinges, hit by a Zorgon blast. Grown Walter and Grown Danny hit the deck, now all five of them are back around the game board.

YOUNG WALTER

(to Grown Walter)

Why didn't you tell us before?

GROWN WALTER

I was ashamed.

(to Grown Danny)

I'm sorry, Danny. I didn't mean it.

YOUNG DANNY

(to Young Walter)

Did you happen to notice I end up taller? Just thought you might want to notice that.

WHOOSH! The fire in the kitchen has gotten out of hand, it explodes through the swinging door, setting the dining room on fire. They've got to get out of here.

GROWN WALTER

(to Grown Danny)

Go, you little fungus, it's your turn!

LISA

A twelve! You need a twelve!

KAWHUMP!

The entire house is rocked by a blast from a Zorgon ship. They look up and see that the entire roof has been ripped off.

GROWN WALTER

HURRY!

Grown Danny picks up the dice --

GROWN DANNY

Come on twelve, come on twelve...

-- and hurls them onto the board. They fall and roll.

EXT HOUSE IN SPACE NIGHT

One of the circling Zorgon ships directs a FIRE BLAST at the top of the house and it bursts into flame. They're going to destroy this thing right here, right now.

INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT

The first die lands, it's a six, everyone's eyes dart to the other, which bounces --

EXT BASEMENT STAIRWELL NIGHT

The Zorgons in the basement SMASH through the door at the bottom of the stairwell, it CRACKS right in half and the lizard-things pour through, heading up the stairs.

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

-- the die falls, spins around twice, and settles --

-- ON A SIX!

GROWN DANNY

TWELVE!

He BANGS his rocket ship piece over the squares all the way to Zathura, SMACKS him down in the center of the purple planet.

Young Danny leaps to his feet, SHOUTING, the way he sees it, if Future Him wins, then damn it, he wins.

YOUNG DANNY

*He got a twelve! I mean, I got a
twelve! I mean, WE got a twelve!!!*

The Zathura board spits out its last card, all the way out this time, it spins onto the floor and the slot SNAPS shut with finality. Young Walter snatches up the card and reads it.

YOUNG WALTER

*"Take nearest black hole back in time
to planet earth!"*

They all look down and see that they're sitting in the middle of a black disk which is rising up from the living room floor, moving quickly up their bodies, erasing their bodies.

As Zorgons pour into the living room and flames consume the walls, the hole rises fast, past their waists, up to their heads, which just float there for a second, just long enough for their disembodied heads to SCREAM, then we get sucked into the hole too, we dive right into it --

INT BLACK HOLE NIGHT

-- and, in the elongated black space of a wormhole, we see Lisa, tumbling, SCREAMING.

CONTINUED: (3)

KID (cont'd)

What happened? Two seconds ago I was
me and now I'm... I'm *big!*

Young Walter looks at Young Danny as they both figure it out.

YOUNG WALTER

Oh.... wooooowwww.

LISA

What did they call each other?

YOUNG DANNY

(to Young Walter)
He's you!

YOUNG WALTER

(to the Astronaut)
You're *me?*!

ASTRONAUT

I'm you.

Young Walter looks at Young Danny, pointing at Grown Danny.

YOUNG WALTER

And he's you!

YOUNG DANNY

You are?!

GROWN DANNY

I am?

LISA

Wait a minute, who's who?

YOUNG DANNY

This one's me grown up and that one's
Walter grown up!

LISA

OH MY GOD AND I CALLED HIM A HOTTIE!

YOUNG WALTER

Ew!

LISA

If he's him and he's you, then who's
me?!

Young Danny puts a sympathetic hand on her shoulder.

CONTINUED:

And next to her are Young Walter and Grown Walter, stretched out like crazy, tumbling head over heels through the backside of the universe. They're elongating and spinning around and around each other, and Grown Walter is getting younger as we watch, shrinking.

The same is happening with Young Danny and Grown Danny, they're spinning together, becoming one, like a piece of yarn twirling itself back together, we go in tight on Young Danny's face as the two faces meld together, and he's still SCREAMING and then --

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

-- we pop out, but we're still tight on Danny's face and he's still SCREAMING, but he's sitting on the living room floor now, and the living room is brightly lit like it was at the beginning, sunlight and trees out the window, and Walter's sitting with his back to Danny like *he* was at the beginning, slumped in the chair in front of the TV set, that dumb sports show playing again.

Danny stops screaming and looks around, *completely* disoriented. He looks down.

His rocket ship game piece is resting on the planet earth again. Walter's astronaut is back in the box, as are the lizard guy and the robot. The board is spread out in front of him, and Danny's got the dice in his hand, holding them out over it, ready to roll his first roll.

He turns, his hand frozen in mid-air, and looks at Walter in the chair.

DANNY

Walter?

Walter turns around slowly and stares at him. Walter's eyes are as wide as saucers.

WALTER

Don't. Roll. Those. Dice.

Veeeeeeerrrrry carefully, Danny places the dice back in the game box. He stands up and backs away from the board.

Walter gets up out of the chair. They stare at the board for a second, then at each other.

DANNY

I DID IT!

WALTER

YOU DID IT!

Danny hurls himself at Walter and tackles him, they both fall backwards onto the carpet.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

I won a game, I finally won a game!

He's hugging Walter so hard they're both rolling across the carpet.

DANNY (cont'd)

And I didn't cheat or anything, Walter, maybe it took me twelve whole years but I didn't have to cheat and I won I won I won!

Walter wrestles Danny off of him and they roll around on the floor, but it's playful this time, Walter is laughing, they're both laughing --

-- when Dad hurries through the door.

DAD

I distinctly remember asking you guys not to kill each other.

DANNY

DAD!

They both get up and hurl themselves at their father, each tackling a leg, and now he goes down to the carpet and all three of them are down on the floor, rolling around like crazy people. Danny and Walter talk at the same time, a mile a minute.

WALTER

Dad there was this game we played this game and it sent the house into outer space and everything got wrecked and we almost had to stay in it forever and we saw ourselves grown up and-

DANNY

It was so scary there were these lizard guys and we went through a black hole and I'm the one who stole the game back from the Zorgons I did it by myself and everything and-

DAD

Wow, sounds like fun! Hey, your mom's gonna be here any minute, go grab all the books and games and whatever you wanna take to her house, it's almost three!

And he gets up and heads upstairs, WHISTLING.

The boys stop wrestling and look at each other, realizing there's no point in telling Dad later, or anyone else for that matter, no one would ever believe this.

CONTINUED: (2)

DANNY

But you and me know, right?

WALTER

(nods)

You and me.

CUT TO:

EXT HOUSE DAY

A car pulls up in front of the house and HONKS twice. MOM gets out and comes around to the sidewalk. She waves, friendly, at the front door --

INT HOUSE DAY

-- where Dad waves back, standing in the open doorway. He turns, bends down to help Danny put on his backpack.

DAD

Got everything, buddy?

DANNY

Yep.

DAD

Attaboy. I'll miss you, Kiddo, but I'll see you on Wednesday.

Danny is having trouble zipping his jacket, so Dad helps. He brushes Danny's hair out of his eyes. Walter hurries up, zipping his own coat, backpack already on. Dad kisses him.

DAD (cont'd)

I love you.

(kisses Danny)

And I love you too, exactly the same amount.

Walter and Danny head out the door, walking down the sidewalk toward his mom, who waits smilingly at the car.

As they make the short walk from one parent to another, Walter looks at his brother.

WALTER

I've been thinkin', Danny. Maybe we only get Mom half the time and we only get Dad half the time... but we get each other all the time.

Danny looks at him and smiles.

CONTINUED:

DANNY

Good thing, too.

We pull back across the yard to take in the whole scene -- Dad standing in the doorway, Mom waiting at the car, and the two little boys walking down the sidewalk, closing the space between.

Just when the moment is in danger of becoming sticky-sweet, Lisa comes steaming out of the house, jammed-up backpack over her shoulder. She looks a wreck, hair all over the place, eyes as big as dinner plates, dark circles under them.

She cuts a swath around the boys, holding a hand out to them as she passes -- don't even start with me, we will never discuss this.

She blows right past her mother, gets in the front seat, and SLAMS the door behind her, staring off into space. Still in shock.

Mom bends down and looks at her through the open window.

MOM

Lisa, I never I thought I'd say this,
but you should get some sleep.

CUT TO:

INT LIVING ROOM DAY

Dad's in the living room now, cleaning up the mess that follows in the kids' wake. He sees some brightly colored something on the floor behind the couch. He goes and looks at it. It's the Zathura game board, still spread out where it was. In the excitement the boys forgot to put it away.

Dad sits down, curious, and looks at it. Doesn't remember this one. He picks up one of the game pieces, the astronaut. Puts it on planet earth. Picks up the dice and --

-- checks his watch. Whoops, late for the meeting. He tosses the game piece and the dice back into the box and puts the board in on top of them.

INT TOY CLOSET DAY

A door opens on the jam-packed game closet and Dad flicks on the light. He finds a sliver of room in the stack of board games and shoves Zathura in with the rest of them. He looks fondly at the games, pulls the chain on the light bulb and we --

CUT TO BLACK.