

"A WALK IN THE STARS"

An original screenplay

by

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WGAW-registered

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FADE IN:

EXT. SOPHISTICATED STREET - LONDON - NIGHT

A 40-ish GUY dressed in 80s glam-rock swishes down the street. Heads turn, eyebrows raise. He grins in response. He's either "endowed" or he's padded the front of his pants.

Spiky blond hair with blue-neon tips. Blue eyes kohled. Harley Davidson tank-top, pink snake-skin pants, lots of BLING.

He drinks from a Jack Daniels fifth, no effort to hide it. He's already well on his way to being sloshed. Happy-sloshed, as he raises the bottle to a couple of PRETTY CORPORATE TYPES, who giggle as he passes.

EXT. 80S GLAM-ROCK NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

ESTABLISHING SHOT. It's off a dark alley, in a deserted warehouse district.

Steven Tyler/Annie Lennox LOOK-ALIKES abound. They pour into the club, as GUNS N ROSES MUSIC pours out.

INT. 80S GLAM-ROCK NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Packed. Sexy. Liquor everywhere. Joints in evidence. Strobe lights flash over a live band on stage -- aging GLAMMERS singing their hearts out, in imitation of Axl and his pals.

Our Guy swaggers in. Staggers back at the SOUND, DENSITY, and SMOKE. Loses his smile.

Then grimly pastes it back on. (Is this guy on a mission, or what? This is supposed to be fun!) He sidles through the leathered, spiked, and tattooed CROWD.

A couple of WOMEN call out to him.

WOMEN

(Irish accents)

Hey, Brady, over here, you Beast,
you. Where ya been hidin'?

Agony flashes across our Guy's face. He shakes his head, points across the club, as if he's meeting someone. Grins, waves.

They smile and return to their drinks.

He cuts through the dance floor--a few BUTTS of both sexes grinding and bumping his, with Tempter/ress grins. Several "Hey, Brady's" from various DANCERS. He grins back weakly.

Finds a table, collapses onto it.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

Where the hell have you been, you
American Wanker! I missed you.

The WAITRESS plants a big kiss on his startled lips. Breasts loose in a bra-less tank as she bends over him, nearly losing the tray of drinks she carries.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

You deserve more and much longer,
but I haven't time now. Would you
like a pint?

Before he can answer, she takes one from her tray and sets it on a napkin. Places a shot in front of it.

An irate MAN seated nearby, mass of curly grey hair held at bay by a skull-and-daggers scarf, sees this.

SKULL-AND-DAGGERS MAN

Hey, Fiona, that was for our table.
We're perishing of the thirst over
here!

The Waitress glares at him.

WAITRESS

Don't be a bloody whinger, Frank,
or I'll drink the rest of these
myself.

She holds a shot-glass to her lush lips. Frank holds up his hands in horror. She grins, serves his table.

Our Guy chugs the shot and the beer, then glazes a bit. Looks around as if he's on a foreign planet.

The waitress sees this.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Brady.

He looks at her startled, wipes some sweat off his upper lip.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

You okay? You get some bad drugs?

He shakes his head. Thinks about it.

GUY

Been sick. Better now.

She studies him. Notices a BRUISE on one cheek, his lips a bit SWOLLEN. Some CUTS on the knuckles. He sees her gaze. Puts his hands beneath the table. She nods.

WAITRESS

Okay, Luv. I'll keep the spirits flowing.

She heads off. The Skull-and-daggers Man shouts after her.

SKULL-AND-DAGGERS MAN

And don't forget about--

The Waitress kisses her fingers and pats her sashaying butt. Our Guy laughs.

INT. 80S GLAM-ROCK NIGHTCLUB - LATER

Our Guy is dancing wildly, gyrating with anyone nearby. The music is louder if possible, the whole place in a frenzy.

His make-up is streaked. His tank is soaked. He grins deliriously, as if he's never had such a good time in his life.

Someone passes him a joint. He takes a drag, passes it on, stands grinning through clenched lips til he releases the smoke. Adds a new shimmy to his dancing--his PARTNER laughs.

EXT. WAREHOUSE AREA - LATER

Dark, deserted street. WHITESNAKE'S "Here I Go Again" can be heard from a few streets away. Muted street-lamps. Lots of wooden pallets, old paint cans, etc.

Low SOUND OF WEEPING.

Our Guy sits in a doorstep gut-weeping, head in his hands. He staggers to his feet, aimless, circles. Wants to go somewhere, can't think where.

Finally, he shakes his fist at the sky.

GUY

Murderer! Bastard!

He weeps.

GUY (CONT'D)
She trusted You! They both did!

Wipes his arm savagely across his wet face.

GUY (CONT'D)
You take everyone I love. Well, I'm
through with You. Do you hear me?
You're dead to me! Dead!

SUDDENLY, we realize our Guy is not alone. A MAN watches.

A 1970s-style SURFER DUDE, in his mid-fifties. T-shirt straining over ample belly, socks in sandals, faded surfer trunks. A guitar strapped across his back. A surfboard under one arm.

DUDE
(California drawl)
That guy is seriously messed up!

HOLD FOR A MOMENT as the Dude watches our Guy staggering in circles.

GUY
If You ever even existed at all!

He collapse-sits in the middle of the alley and weeps.

At this, a beautiful BLACK GIRL (25) steps out of the shadows to stand next to the Dude. She wears a red flame ice-skating dress and gold ice-skates.

GIRL
(English accent)
Too right you are! Poor bloke!

Without taking her eyes off our Guy, she speaks to the Dude. Casually.

GIRL (CONT'D)
Do you think it'd be alright if
I...

In long-suffering, Bill-Murray fashion, the Dude rolls his eyes. Knew this was coming.

DUDE
Sure, Kid, knock yourself out.

And with a subtle wave of the Dude's hand, our Guy is FROZEN, his fist up-raised in mid-curse.

THE GIRL'S FACE LIGHTS UP. She flicks on the BOOM-BOX she carries in one hand, sets it on the ground...

As RAVEL'S BOLERO booms out, she strikes a Flamenco Pose.

After a few dramatic SNAPS of her upraised fingers--

Another EYE-ROLL and SIGH from the Dude...

--The Girl skates madly off toward our frozen Guy.

BLUE-AND-GOLD SPARKS fly from her skates, but otherwise there's no sense of friction from ice-skates on cement.

The Girl makes an almost-graceful arc around our Guy--back arched, arms upraised, feet splayed, wobbles corrected--and then ZOOMS toward the Dude with an ear-splitting grin.

THE DUDE'S EYES LIGHT UP. Is she really going to make it this time?

The Girl hits a rough patch in the concrete and CAREENS off-screen, Lucille-Ball-style...

CRASH! BANG! MOAN!

A wooden PALLET skids toward the Dude's feet.

DUDE (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Hey, Kid, don't quit your day--

A couple cans of PAINT on the pallet tip and pour their bright contents all over his socks and sandals.

DUDE (CONT'D)
...job.

He stares down in disbelief.

A LOUDER MOAN from off-screen.

The Dude is torn between his feet, the Girl, and Tony, who has begun to move.

Sees a female GLAM-ROCKER passing by. "Waves" at her. The Glam-Rocker suddenly sees Tony--concerned look, heads over.

The Dude SQUELCHES OFF toward the Girl.

DUDE (CONT'D)
Better. Really. Good!

NEW VOICE (V.O.)
(overlapping)
--Good. Good. Good.

EXT. BUSY STREET - MOSCOW - DAY

An efficient man in his early 60s, EDMUND, beautifully dressed in Italian silk, gathers American and English-language magazines and newspapers from a large kiosk.

EDMUND
Good. Good.

He looks around. Finds another one.

EDMUND (CONT'D)
Excellent.

They all appear to have the same theme and similar pictures of a grinning AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN.

As Edmund pays and strides off, we can see the HEADLINES on the KIOSK:

FIRST PRIVATE CITIZEN TO WALK IN SPACE

SPACEWALK IN THREE DAYS! THE WORLD HOLDS ITS BREATH!

TONY CARSON TO STEP OUT INTO THE STARS

\$55 MILLION DOLLAR WALK! IT'LL BE A DOOZY!

INT. ELEGANT HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Russian excellence at its best. Palatial. Flowers everywhere.

The SOUNDS of someone moving around in the bedroom.

KNOCK on the door. No answer.

Edmund sticks his head in.

EDMUND
Mr. Anthony?

From the bedroom:

TONY (O.S.)

Come on in, Edmund. Have a cup of coffee.

Edmund enters. Lays the magazines and newspapers on the coffee table. Pours a cup from an elegant coffee service.

TONY CARSON (38) steps into the room, fastening a cuff-link. He's the man on the magazines and newspapers, and he's a stunner--handsome, wealthy, confident--what's not to like?

Tony carefully sets a couple ENVELOPES on the table, then pours himself a cup. Edmund studies him.

EDMUND

Nervous, sir?

Tony laughs. Shakes his head.

TONY

What about?

EDMUND

Well, its barely two weeks since the Mir Station's kitchen was ripped open by floating debris. It's become quite a problem, sir, this..."space junk," as they call it--

TONY

But they solved it. Sealed the galley off. You know all this. What is the problem?

Tony, suddenly restless, picks up the letters.

TONY (CONT'D)

I'd like you to give these to--

Edmund perseveres.

EDMUND

Even NASA is delaying its shuttle departure because of an electrical foul-up that they can't seem to--

TONY

And I'm going on a Soyuez rocket. Edmund, it either works or it doesn't. And if it doesn't...

Tony laughs, good humor regained.

TONY (CONT'D)
I won't know!

Edmund groans.

EDMUND
But I will...

Edmund starts, hadn't meant to say that out loud!

Tony looks at him. Edmund blushes. The "love that must not speak its name" has just appeared on Edmund's face.

Edmund ducks his head, scoops up the magazines and newspapers to hand to his boss.

TONY
Thanks...

Tony reaches out his hand to shake Edmund's.

TONY (CONT'D)
I mean it, Edmund. Everything
you've done for me. It means a lot
to me.

The magazines and newspapers slip out of Edmund's hands. He shakes Tony's hand.

EDMUND
You're welcome, sir.

Tony hands the two envelopes to Edmund, who reads the names on each. Soft, appreciative whistle from Edmund.

TONY
Yes, I thought you'd think so.
Please see that Allie and her
mother get them.

EDMUND
Of course, sir.

EXT. SPACE CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Tony stands in a corner answering questions from an excited INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORPS.

VLADIMIR (60), the leader of Tony's space team, stands in another corner, fielding questions.

TONY

Yes, I did talk with Jha. He was very disappointed not to be up there instead of me. Said his bad karma bit him in the butt this time, and no denying it.

The reporters laugh. One raises a pencil to ask a question.

TONY (CONT'D)

Yes.

AUSSIE REPORTER

Ian Kinchella of the Sydney Morning Herald. Coming in at the last minute like this, do you believe you got enough training?

TONY

(nodding toward Vladimir)
Vladimir's a great trainer. We had a tough two weeks--well, he had a tough two weeks--

Reporters laugh.

TONY (CONT'D)

But I'm confident that I'm ready...and that I know what I'm doing.

Tony points to another reporter.

SINGAPORE REPORTER

Jasmine Mouritzen of the Singapore Times. What in heaven's name does it feel like to be able to blow fifty-five million on a space ride?

TONY

Only forty million, Jha paid fifteen. And it feels...delicious!

Tony and the reporters laugh. He points to the next Reporter.

TONY (CONT'D)

Yes?

DAILY MIRROR REPORTER

I'm Peters from the Daily Mirror.
(flipping through his notes)
Your mother...

Tony stiffens.

DAILY MIRROR REPORTER (CONT'D)

It says that your mother was an astronomy buff. Did her love for space have anything to do with--

TONY

No.

DAILY MIRROR REPORTER

Well, I mean, perhaps her fascination--

TONY

I said, NO. Next question, please.

Tony turns to another reporter.

ISVESTIA REPORTER

Thank you. Tasya Krupin of Isvestia. Your brother Brady's recent--

TONY

Miss...?

ISVESTIA REPORTER

Krupin.

TONY

This is not a walk down Memory Lane, Miss Krupin, it is a space walk. Please stick to the topic at hand.

ISVESTIA REPORTER

It's just that his recent death in a flight accident--

TONY

(turning from her)

Thank you all. Now why don't we join Vladimir and find out how he plans to keep us from falling out of the sky and scaring the hell out of the Kazakhstanis.

The reporters laugh, join Tony as he heads off. Tony throws his arm around one of the reporter's shoulders.

TONY (CONT'D)
 You look like you've put on a few
 pounds, Barney...Why not give
 Edmund a call when he gets back for
 a free pass to my club?

All except for the Russian Reporter who stands rooted to the
 spot with a look that says: Rude American jerk!

MONTAGE: ROCKET LAUNCH, DOCKING WITH SPACE STATION, TRANSFER
 OF TONY INTO STATION, LOTS OF BACK SLAPPING, ETC.

INT. SHUTTLE - COMPRESSION COMPARTMENT - DAY/NIGHT

Tony is being strapped into his astronaut suit. Vladimir has
 his own suit on, except for the helmet. He's doing the last-
 minute checks on everything to do with Tony.

When all is ready, the two men shake hands. Tony leans toward
 Vladimir.

TONY
 Ten minutes. Alone. As agreed.

Vladimir nods. Sly smile.

VLADIMIR
 Ten million dollars for ten
 minutes...that seems fair. Now,
 don't forget to attach your cable
 immediately outside the door. If
 anything happens, your auxiliary
 air supply is good for two hours.
 So do not panic. I will be out to
 join you in ten minutes.

He laughs and slaps Tony on the back.

Vladimir joins the startled CREW MEMBERS (who had expected
 him to go out with Tony) in the hall, locks the door behind
 him. He gives Tony a thumbs up through the door window.

Tony grins. Gives a thumbs up. Turns to face the exit door.

EXT. SPACE SHUTTLE - OUTER SPACE - DAY/NIGHT

It is exquisite. Stunning. Magical.

Tony dangles from the shuttle ladder by one hand. One foot on the ladder, the other free over the VAST, GORGEOUS BLUE-AND-WHITE EARTH below.

His face alight with the glory of what he sees, of what he will soon walk out into...

What is it really like to be this rich that you can take this walk? His face says it all. MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE.

VLADIMIR, in the OBSERVATION WINDOW, smiles out benevolently.

Tony's body twists gently as he looks around in every direction. BEAUTY EVERYWHERE!

VLADIMIR (V.O.)
(filtered through headset)
Beautiful, yes? But don't forget to
attach your cable, Antony. I am not
out there to catch your hand if you
drift.

Tony ignores him. Keeps gawking.

VLADIMIR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(filtered through headset)
Quit fooling around. It is time.
Attach your cable now, Antony.

Tony flips the switch that turns off the sound inside his helmet.

INT. SHUTTLE - DAY

Vladimir looks amazed. Sound of DISCONNECTION BUZZ. He flips the switches. No contact.

EXT. SHUTTLE - DAY

VLADIMIR'S FACE in observation window. Frantic. Mouthing:
Attach your cable! Attach your cable!

Tony sees him. Smiles. Shakes his head. Takes a deep breath, and pushes away from the shuttle.

HORROR spreads across Vladimir's face.

EXT. OUTER SPACE - DAY/NIGHT

Empty, vast, wondrous...

Tony FLOATS UP into sight, close to the camera. Helmet first. Pure bliss on his face. Arms and legs relaxed, out-stretched.

If you're going to kill yourself, and you can afford it, this just might be the way to go!

WE PULL BACK to see more of Tony's body set against the vast beauty of space.

Floating serenely amidst the vast silences of--

SMACK! OOOMPH!

A FRIDGE crashes into Tony's back, hurtling him off-screen...

TONY (O.S.)
OH, SHIT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Tony's words continue to ECHO, as we MOVE UPWARD to reveal...

The SURFER DUDE looking off in Tony's direction.

DUDE
That guy is seriously messed up!

REVEAL THE GIRL next to him, now dressed in a bathing suit top and surfer shorts, carrying a flower-painted surfboard.

GIRL
Too right you are! Poor bloke!

She turns to the Dude, an eager questioning looking on her face. He starts to groan, when instead she asks:

GIRL (CONT'D)
What happened to him, Dude? Do you know?

The Dude looks at her, considering. Then waves his hand toward Tony.

THE SPECK RECEDING INTO THE DISTANCE STOPS... IS SUCKED VIOLENTLY BACK, with appropriate SUCKING SOUNDS AND ENERGY WAVES... Until Tony is once more below the Dude.

Tony stays FROZEN, EYES WIDE, still in his "oh shit" moment, fridge pressed against the back of his spread-eagled body.

The Dude looks at the Girl.

DUDE
What do you want to know?