

A MACHINE FOR TIME

Written by

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INT. ART WALSH'S LIVING ROOM, 1965 - NIGHT

A small MUSIC BOX is placed on a table. It is adorned with two tiny figurines: a father and daughter dancing.

A man's hand winds up the music box. It begins to play a whimsical but sad waltz.

CHILD EDITH (V.O.)
Do you remember how we used to
dance?

In the room with the music box we see two people: a father and daughter - ART (30, trim but eccentric with a thick mustache), and CHILD EDITH, (10, bright and thoughtful).

We can't see them clearly - they are out of focus and only seen from the side. Art puts out his hand. Edith takes it, and together they dance around the room.

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY

A peculiar CLOCK, built from mechanical odds and ends, is mounted to the wall. It ticks to the rhythm of the music, as other instruments join in to create a moving soundtrack.

Other CONTRAPTIONS line the shelves. The workshop is full of strange inventions and machines of all sizes.

EXT. FARMHOUSE, 1993 (VHS INTERVIEW) - DAY

This is an interview, shot by on old VHS camera.

FRED (60) is being interviewed. He's dressed in plaid and smoking a cigarette. He speaks with a lazy midwestern drawl.

FRED
Some people throw around the word
"genius" just cuz someone talks
fancy and can do math. But Art
Walsh...he didn't have to talk
fancy. I guess he could probably do
pretty good math. Never asked him.

INT. DINER, 1993 (VHS INTERVIEW) - DAY

Another interview: BARBARA (55). She's a waitress, leaning across the counter and talking to someone just offscreen.

BARBARA
Used to come in here for a cup of
coffee sometimes, way back in the
day. He'd sit down, all fidgety.
(MORE)

BARBARA (CONT'D)

He'd ask for a pencil and a napkin and start drawing all sorts of doodles and ideas. Then he'd get all excited and run off, usually without even touching his coffee.

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY

As the music swells, the clock on the wall spins faster...

TIME IS PASSING

Light sweeps through the room. Dust gathers on all the inventions.

EXT. FARMHOUSE, 1993 (VHS INTERVIEW) - DAY

Fred continues his interview, pointing behind him at a group of horses drinking out of a long metal halfpipe.

FRED

That water trough over by the horses, it runs on an automatic pump, and it's heated in the winter and cooled down in the summer. Old Art made that, uh, decades ago, and it still works. I don't know the first thing about how he did it. And he never charged me a dime.

INT. DINER, 1993 (VHS INTERVIEW) - DAY

BARBARA

People used to say he never made a thing that didn't work. I just wish we knew what happened to him. I wish he'd of told us where he went.

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY

As dust covers everything, an OBJECT is revealed: tall, isolated, in the middle of the room, covered in a blanket.

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1965 - NIGHT

The dancing pair continues. The music box is winding down.

Child Edith takes a wide step, and she trips. The music box falls to the floor. The figurine of the father snaps off.

Art stops dancing. We see only his feet as he walks over to the fallen box. He picks up the pieces. Then briskly he walks out of the room.

Child Edith, left alone, silently watches after him.

INT. DINER, 1993 - DAY

We are no longer looking through the lens of a VHS camera.

The old CAMERA is shut off. YOUNG JON (30s, wearing glasses and a button-up shirt) is the one sitting across the counter interviewing Barbara. He nods his thanks to her.

He takes off his glasses to wipe them clean on his shirt.

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

It's now present day.

An older man wipes his glasses clean with his shirt, and then puts them on. This is JON (late 60s, with glasses, wearing a cardigan and slippers).

He sips on coffee, looking at a bulletin board mounted on his wall. On the board are pinned newspaper articles and photos, all referencing "Art Walsh."

He hears the sound of a bike chime from outside.

EXT. JON'S HOUSE - MORNING

Jon walks down the driveway of his small but luxurious home. He bends down to pick a newspaper that's been tossed there.

PAPER BOY

Hey, you're Mr. Prite! Didn't you used to own this newspaper company?

JON

That's right.

PAPER BOY

Wow! That must've been so long ago!

Jon glares at the boy, then glances at the newspaper. An article catches his eye: "TOWN PARK TO BE RENAMED."

JON

What's this? Why are they renaming the park?

PAPER BOY

What park?

JON
The Art Walsh town plaza. This here
says the Mayor's renaming it.

PAPER BOY
What's an Art Walsh?

Jon lets out a despondent sigh, and turns back to the house.

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Jon settles in to his couch with his coffee and newspaper.
The landline phone rings. Jon grunts, and goes to answer it.

JON
This is Jon Prite. (pause) What? Is
she alright? I'm on my way.

Concerned, he hangs up the phone.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

It's a small town hospital, no bigger than a large clinic.
Jon gets out of his car, then shuffles as quickly as he can
through the parking lot and toward the front doors.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - DAY

The nurse, SANDRA (40s) meets Jon near the front desk.

JON
Sandra, thank you for calling me.
What room is she in?

Sandra gives him a expectant look. Jon nods and reaches into
his pocket for a wad of cash and hands it over to Sandra.
The RECEPTIONIST watches the exchange with disapproval.

SANDRA
You know I can't tell you that.

JON
But I...I gave you cash.

SANDRA
And I called you, like you
insisted. But you're not family and
you're not her emergency contact.

JON
But...I'm her oldest friend.

SANDRA
And when she's discharged you can
talk to her.

Sandra shrugs at him and walks away from the desk. Jon sighs, finds a seat nearby and sits down.

The pregnant woman in the seat beside him nods a polite greeting. This is LINDSEY (30, with a no-nonsense attitude).

Jon watches a young man walk into the hospital: ARTHUR (30, cleanshaven, preppy and neurotic - maybe autistic; to be played by 'Art' actor). He carries some flowers.

While Arthur speaks to the Receptionist, Jon looks at him and sits upright, wiping his glasses to get a better look.

Lindsey stands up and storms over toward Arthur.

LINDSEY
Where were you? It's been an hour.

ARTHUR
I couldn't find a place to park.
Then I got lost in the parking lot.

LINDSEY
Lost? In the parking lot? I
shouldn't be surprised. Anyway...

Lindsey leans on the desk, speaking to the Receptionist.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)
This is her son. Can he see her?

RECEPTIONIST
Yes ma'am. She's in 12B.

ARTHUR
12B...

Arthur wanders away, gazing around helplessly. Lindsey grabs him, pulling him the correct way. Arthur follows dutifully.

Jon watches them. As soon as they are out of sight he stands up, trying to look inconspicuous, and follows after them.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Sandra meets Arthur and Lindsey at the door to Room 12B.

SANDRA
She's in dialysis right now. It
should only be a few more minutes,
and then you can go in and see her.

LINDSEY
Thank you.

Sandra goes into the room. Lindsey sits down in one of
several chairs. Arthur stays standing, looking bewildered
until Lindsey motions to a chair next to her. Arthur sits.

Cautiously, Jon approaches them and sits across from Arthur.

They all share an expectant glance. Lindsey narrows her eyes
at Jon, who clears his throat.

JON
You're Edith's boy, aren't you?

Arthur gives him a nervous sidelong glance, then looks at
Lindsey, whose returned look says "well, answer him!"

ARTHUR
Edith's...yeah. She's my mom.

Jon puts out his hand. Arthur shakes it.

JON
I'm Jon. Jon Prite. She
never...mentioned me?

ARTHUR
No...I don't think so.

JON
I've met you before. You were a lot
smaller then. I'm actually hoping
to see your mom. I'm still...still
trying to figure out what happened
to your grandfather. You look just
like him, by the way...

ARTHUR
My grand...who?

Jon and Arthur both look mystified.

LINDSEY
I'm sorry - how do you know Mrs.
Walsh?

Sandra emerges from the room.

SANDRA

Arthur? You can go in and see her.

Arthur nods curtly at Jon, then stands up and goes into the room, carrying the flowers.

Jon and Lindsey look at one another awkwardly.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Arthur walks sheepishly into the room, flowers in hand. An old woman is resting peacefully on the bed. This is EDITH. She is about 65 but thin, wasted away.

ARTHUR

Mom?

Edith opens her eyes. Seeing Arthur, she smiles.

EDITH

Arthur. I didn't think you'd have the time to come all the way home.

ARTHUR

For you, I made the time.

He places the flowers in a vase, and sits beside the bed.

EDITH

I made sure to dress up really nice for this occasion. My finest gown. No need to tell me how stunning I look. How about some *hors d'oeuvres*? They're delicious.

She holds up a tray of hospital food. Arthur furrows his eyebrows at her. She laughs.

ARTHUR

Oh, you're kidding. Good. I thought maybe the medications were...

EDITH

Bah! I may be a pile of skin and bones but I'm not losing my mind. That's coming with me to the grave!

Arthur spots something on a bedside table: a WRISTWATCH.

ARTHUR

I remember this. You gave it to me for one of my birthdays.

EDITH

It was broken, and I hoped you wouldn't notice. But you did, and you fixed it. You were five.

ARTHUR

It still works?

EDITH

Of course it does. Do you remember giving it back to me for Christmas? I said it was cheating to give back a present I'd already given, but you told me the watch wasn't the gift. The gift was your fixing it.

She sniffs, and wipes a tear out of her eye. Then she snatches the watch from him and puts it on her wrist.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Anyway, how's work?

ARTHUR

I'm busy there, all of the time.

EDITH

And how's Lindsey? Is she still healthy? Everything's on track?

ARTHUR

As far as the doctors say.

EDITH

Well, you'd better take good care. This is the only grandchild I'm ever going to know about.

ARTHUR

Don't say that. You're gonna...

He pauses, distracted by something she'd said.

EDITH

Gonna what? You're doing that thing where you get distracted, but I want to hear you say how I'm going to be just fine and live forever.

ARTHUR

A man out in the hallway mentioned my having a grandpa. You never told me about any grandpa.

Edith purses her lips knowingly. Annoyed.

EDITH

Man in the hallway, huh? If he offers you money, say no. If he asks you any questions, keep your mouth shut.

Arthur pauses, thoughtfully. Edith grunts, and hits the "CALL NURSE" button.

EDITH (CONT'D)

You're going to have to excuse me. Just because I changed your diapers doesn't mean I want you to do mine.

Sandra rushes into the room. Arthur stands up awkwardly.

EDITH (CONT'D)

If they let me out of here today, let's have dinner later.

ARTHUR

Yeah...yes of course.

EDITH

Bring a side dish if you could. And don't forget your wife.

ARTHUR

I won't forget my wife.

EDITH

You'd still better make a note.

Arthur backs out of the room and shuts the door behind him.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Arthur stands outside the door for a moment, deep in thought. Lindsey stands beside him and puts a hand on his shoulder. Arthur looks around - Jon is gone.

LINDSEY

Everything alright?

ARTHUR

Um, yeah. She's good. What happened to...

LINDSEY

I told him this space is for our family right now.

(MORE)

LINDSEY (CONT'D)

He insisted he's an old friend, but I'm guessing there's probably a reason your mom never talked about him.

ARTHUR

She didn't talk about a lot of things. And stupid me, I never thought to ask.

He sits down sullenly. Lindsey frowns, seeing that something is bothering him.

LINDSEY

He did leave this for you.

She reluctantly hands over a BUSINESS CARD. It's Jon's card, listing him as CEO of "The Raindust Chronicles." On the back, handwritten, is jotted a home address.

EXT. JON'S HOUSE - EVENING

Jon slowly gets out of his car. He walks to his mailbox, opens it, and sees that it's empty.

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

From a shelf, Jon pulls a large wad of paper: a MANUSCRIPT. The title: "THE HISTORY OF ART WALSH, INVENTOR EXTRAORDINAIRE, by JONATHON PRITE."

He flips to the last pages, which are left blank. A single tear falls out of Jon's eye, onto the blank paper.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. WORKSHOP, 1969 - NIGHT

The clock on the wall ticks away. Sparks fly past the clock, as we hear metal being cut.

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1969 - NIGHT

Two children: one is Child Edith, bored, a textbook in front of her. The other is CHILD JON (a little older than Edith), wearing glasses and writing in a notebook.

CHILD EDITH

He's not coming in tonight.

CHILD JON

He must be working on something really swell. I can't wait to see.

(MORE)

CHILD JON (CONT'D)
I'm writing a story about your dad.
It's for my journalism class.

CHILD EDITH
He said he'd look over my book
report, but it's due tomorrow.

CHILD JON
I could look over your book report.

CHILD EDITH
You don't think he forgot about the
father-daughter dance at school, do
you? I really want him to be there.
When you talk to him for your
story, can you remind him? Can you
make sure he's coming?

CHILD JON
Sure. I guess.

END FLASHBACK

INT. EDITH'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The house is very small, but homey and comfortable. Edith,
Lindsey and Arthur are in the middle of dinner.

LINDSEY
Weren't you worried at all?

EDITH
Worried about him walking and
talking late? No - he made up for
it in other ways. I'll tell you
what did worry me: he figured out
how to unscrew the air vents - with
a penny - before he ever said
"mama" or grew a tooth! I turned my
back for a second and he crawled
right down there to explore. And
what could I do? I couldn't fit
down there. It was winter but there
I was, freezing my patootie off
while I waited for an infant to
crawl out of the air vent so I
could finally turn the furnace on!

Lindsey is laughing fitfully, while Arthur listens
distantly, his mind a million miles away.

LINDSEY

Oh no! I take back what I said about hoping our kid is a genius. I don't think I can handle that kind of creative cruelty from a baby.

Edith stands up to clear plates.

EDITH

This one has always been a handful. Always will be, too.

LINDSEY

Here. Let me help you.

Lindsey stands up and starts gathering dishes off the table.

The PHONE rings from the other side of the living room.

EDITH

I'll get it.

She shuffles across the room to answer the phone. Lindsey leans in close to Arthur and kisses his cheek.

LINDSEY

Please don't be embarrassed. It's sweet to finally get an idea of how it was for you growing up.

Edith calls from across the room.

EDITH

It's for you, Arthur. It's your fancy computer techie work people.

Arthur smiles at Lindsey, and stands up.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Edith hands the phone to Arthur, then goes back to the kitchen. The women continue to ad lib in the background.

ARTHUR

Hello? Oh, hi. (pause) I'll probably be back next week. (pause) I told everybody I was taking a week off...or no, I might have forgot. But I did tell you my mom was sick. (pause) I understand. The project is on my mind all the time.

INT. EDITH'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lindsey puts her hand on her stomach.

LINDSEY

Whoo. Somebody's doing pushups on my bladder. Is this the bathroom?

Lindsey tries a DOOR near the kitchen, but it's locked.

EDITH

Oh no. That's...storage. Bathroom is down the hall.

Lindsey nods and walks down the hall. Edith turns her attention to Arthur's voice.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ARTHUR

I don't know what else to tell you, but I'm in Raindust to see my mom, and she's sick, and Lindsey's about to have a baby, and I'll be back at work soon.

Abruptly he hangs up the phone, breathing fast. He sits on the floor, overwhelmed.

He's at eye level with the old MUSIC BOX. It's on the coffee table, marked by multiple cracks and patches of old glue. The sight of it calms Arthur down.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. EDITH'S BACK PORCH, 2000 - NIGHT

YOUNG EDITH (30, thin but full of life) sets the music box on a table. POV shot: she looks toward camera, smiling.

END FLASHBACK

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Arthur crawls to the coffee table and picks up the music box. He winds it up. The music plays. Edith watches, smiles.

ARTHUR

Do you remember how we used to dance?

Arthur turns it over. On the bottom, a scratched note: "*With all the love that could ever be invented - your dad, Art.*"

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
I never noticed this. "With all the love that could ever be invented - your dad, Art." That must be my grandpa. Did he give this to you?

Edith's smile freezes. She turns back into the kitchen.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Mom? What's wrong with asking that?

Lindsey returns from the hallway, patting her belly.

LINDSEY
Oof. This little one can't get out of me soon enough. How did you do this for nine months?

Silence. Lindsey realizes she walked in on a tense moment.

Arthur walks to the kitchen, music box in hand.

INT. EDITH'S KITCHEN - DAY

Arthur hovers awkwardly for a moment, hesitating before speaking. Then he rants nervously.

ARTHUR
Mom, I don't think it's fair that you can talk about...talk about me as a baby, with all the stories about me pooping and crawling, but if I ask you a simple question, like "who is my grandpa", I don't deserve to get an answer.

Edith, overwhelmed, sits down and puts her face in her hand.

LINDSEY
Let's all sit down again and we can talk about...whatever this is.

ARTHUR
I...I'm gonna go for a drive.

LINDSEY
Arthur. We can't be grown-ups?

Arthur paces through the living room and out the front door.

INT. ARTHUR'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Arthur moodily drives his car through a rainy night.

His free hand is fidgeting with Jon's business card.

INT. JON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In his bed, Jon sleeps soundly, a book lying next to him.

The DOORBELL rings.

Jon stirs, and his eyes open. He looks at a clock: 11:44.

JON
Who the hell?

The doorbell rings again. Jon grumbles, slips on a robe and slippers, and stands up out of bed.

INT./EXT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jon shuffles to the front door and opens it. There he finds Arthur, standing in the rain but not noticing the wetness.

JON
Arthur Walsh?

ARTHUR
Hi, Mr. Prite. I don't know if you remember me, but I'm...

JON
Of course I remember you. Do you know what time it is?

Arthur looks around, just now realizing it's dark.

ARTHUR
Uh...sorry I don't have a watch.

JON
It's...fine. Come on in.

Arthur is ushered inside, dripping rainwater everywhere. Jon flinches at the mess, but kindly shakes his head and smiles.

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jon gestures to a barstool, and Arthur sits down.

JON
Can I get you some coffee?

ARTHUR
Uh, no thank you.

Jon starts up his coffee maker.

JON

Then I'll get me some coffee. I have to say, I'm very curious as to why you've stopped by. Does Edith have anything to do with it?

ARTHUR

My mom...doesn't seem to like you. But you said you're old friends?

JON

I've known your mother since before you were born. Before she came back to town. Before she left town in the first place.

ARTHUR

I don't know about any of that.

JON

So you really have no idea who your grandfather was?

ARTHUR

I thought, maybe you could tell me.

Jon smiles excitedly.

JON

Wait here. I'll be right back.

Jon walks out of the kitchen. Arthur looks around. Something on the refrigerator catches his eye: an old PHOTO. He stands up and walks around to get a closer look.

The photo is black and white and shows: ART, wearing goggles, holding a bizarre gadget and looking bewildered, standing beside CHILD JON, holding a trophy and smiling.

Jon walks back into the kitchen, with a stack of NEWSPAPERS.

JON

That's me. My story won first place in a county journalism contest. The story was about him.

ARTHUR

And that's...?

JON

That's Art Walsh. Seeing as I never had much of a father of my own...I looked up to him. I wanted to see him succeed.

Arthur turns his attention to the stack of newspapers. He looks at one headline after another:

"LOCAL MAN MAKES A SPLASH WITH A NEW KIND OF WATER PURIFIER"

"REST...ROOM? ART WALSH MAKES A PORTABLE TOILET!"

"ART WALSH TO MEET THE GOVERNOR"

"ART WALSH SAVES RAINDUST DURING HISTORIC WINTER WEATHER"

"ART WALSH: RETIRING OR FINALLY CRACKING?"

"ART WALSH HAS SPENT YEARS ON HIS LATEST INVENTION. COULD THIS BE HISTORY IN THE MAKING?"

ARTHUR

So my grandpa was an inventor. Tell me about him.

Jon pours himself coffee and sits down, wearing a big smile.

JON

Where to start? Some people used to say that the Wright brothers, Edison, Tesla and Einstein only had one advantage over Art Walsh: that they were born first. If they hadn't been, he wouldn't have left them anything to invent.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. DIRT ROAD, 1965 - DAY

It's a cloudy day. Art, seen from behind, walks quickly down the road. He's wearing a backpack and carrying blueprints.

JON (V.O.)

There was never a dull moment for Art. He was always planning, always scheming, never happy until he'd finished some contraption and moved on to the next.

It starts to rain on Art, getting his blueprints wet.

He grabs at a lever hidden under his shirt, and his backpack pops open. A spring-loaded umbrella shoots out and opens up.

INT. WORKSHOP, 1965 - DAY

Art lays beneath the frame of a torn-apart old car. It is nearly completely stripped, its parts scattered everywhere.

JON (V.O.)

When he wasn't building, he was taking things apart to see how they worked, and then finding new ways to put them back together so they'd do something completely different.

Beside the car is a contraption made from car parts, hooked to old TV, a radio and a hamster wheel (with hamster).

EXT. FIELD, 1965 - DAY

Art pushes something resembling a surveyor's wheel along the ground. An antenna sticks out of it.

Following him is a large wheelbarrow with a rotating blade. It is motorized, matching his pace and cutting a ditch in the ground, shoveling the dirt into its own bucket.

JON (V.O.)

The older he got and the more he worked, the more fantastic his creations became.

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

JON

And the thing that made him really special was that he never made anything that didn't work.

FLASHBACK RESUMES

EXT. LAKE, 1965 - DAY

Art sits in a wireframe vehicle with a mounted propeller. He's wearing a wacky-looking underwater suit and mask.

He takes a deep breath and propels the machine forward. It falls down into the water with a splash. It submerges.

A small CROWD watches from a distance, holding their breath.

Moments later, the machine erupts out of the water on the opposite end of the lake. The crowd cheers. Art puts both hands in the air victoriously.

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1965 - NIGHT

Art wears a clunky set of sensors on his arms, head and legs. A projector shines onto a wall-mounted screen.

Displayed on the projector is a large cartoon character. As Art dances and jumps, the character mimics his motions.

JON (V.O.)

Some of the things he made were useful. Some of them weren't. But he didn't care and, probably, couldn't tell the difference.

INT. CLASSROOM, 1965 - DAY

Sitting at their desks, the CHILDREN hold clipboard-like objects. Each clipboard is plugged into a mess of wires.

The TEACHER holds a strange book, covered in switches. She flips a switch, and the displays on all the clipboards change from math problems to diagrammed sentences.

JON (V.O.)

He never cared about money. Never took a penny when someone had a use for his work. But he wasn't humble either. He never missed a chance to show off a little, when he could.

Art stands in the back of the room, proudly watching as the students use his automatic notepads.

EXT. SIDEWALK, 1965 - DAY

A newspaper falls into frame. The headline reads: "NASA EXPRESSES INTEREST IN LOCAL INVENTOR."

JON (V.O.)

And whether he cared about it or not, his reputation grew and grew.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP, 1970 - DAY

Art's house is an eccentric but charming little piece of architecture. A WORKSHOP sits just beside it.

A CROWD has gathered outside the front gate of the fenced yard. Many have cameras and are clamoring to be let in.

Child Jon is there in the crowd, watching impatiently.

A PHOTOGRAPHER tries to reach through the front gate to unlock it, but a jolt of electricity zaps him and he pulls back his arm, startled. At that, everyone takes a step back.

JON (V.O.)

All the papers wanted his story.
Doctors and scientists and lawyers
came and went, trying to get
patents and blueprints and ideas.
But Art was a private man. He
didn't let anyone into his life he
didn't want there.

Art watches the crowd through the window. He pulls the
window shade down and retreats out of sight.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Dawn light shines through the window. Jon and Arthur are
still both hunched over the newspapers on the counter.

JON

I was the very first journalist to
cover his story. He was the reason
I started reporting.

He frowns and points to the photo on the refrigerator.

ARTHUR

How does his story end?

JON

Nobody really knows. That's the
thing. He was just...gone.

He hands Arthur a 1990 NEWSPAPER. Above a photo of Art's
house, the headline reads:

"ELDERLY LOCAL ECCENTRIC VANISHES WITH NO TRACE."

[Below, a less prominent article heading reads: "POWER SURGE
IN RAINDUST: THE BIGGEST ELECTRICAL FAILURE OF THE DECADE."]

JON (CONT'D)

I wanted to be the one to tell the
world all about his extraordinary
life, beginning to end. But there's
no end to tell. By the time I had
my own newspaper, it was too late.

ARTHUR

So the only things left of him are
his inventions...and, I guess, me.

JON
Funny you should mention the
inventions.

Jon beckons for Arthur to follow him out the back door.
Arthur brings the 1990 newspaper with him.

EXT. JON'S BACKYARD - MORNING

There is a very large SHED at the back of the yard, and Jon
leads Arthur toward it.

JON
See, your mom, she inherited Art's
estate. That was only a worthless
old house and his machines which,
by then, most everyone thought were
piles of junk. She was raising you
with nothing, and she would never
accept any money from me. I wanted
to help somehow, so I went to all
the estate sales and auctions.

He unlocks the door of the shed.

JON (CONT'D)
It took me a couple years, but I
bought them all.

He opens the door.

INT. JON'S SHED - DAY

The light reveals that the shed is stacked full of all the
strange mechanical contraptions.

Impressed, Arthur steps inside. Pushing the 1990 newspaper
into his pocket, he picks up one of the smaller inventions.

ARTHUR
There are so many.

JON
And they all still work.

Arthur flips a small switch and a small dome flips up,
filled with tiny spinning blades.

JON
Automatic haircutter.

ARTHUR

I wonder what he could have made nowadays, with technology and computers like the ones I work with. This is really everything he ever made?

JON

As far as I can figure, all the ones he didn't give away. Except... I've tried asking your mom about it so many times...but there's only one I've never quite...found.

ARTHUR

Which one is that?

JON

The last one. The big one. The one he was working on when he vanished.

The old clock ticks on the wall. Arthur see the time: 7:06.

ARTHUR

It's late! I mean, it's early. I mean, Lindsey has a check-up and I'm supposed to be there!

He runs out of the shed. Jon smiles self-satisfactorily.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. ART'S KITCHEN, 1969 (B&W INTERVIEW) - DAY

Another INTERVIEW: Black and White. A static shot focused on a device on the table. Voices are heard offscreen.

CHILD JON (O.S.)

Okay. It's going. You can start.

ART (O.S.)

It's...it's going? Alright.

Art walks into frame. He clears his throat, looks awkwardly at the camera, then puts his hand on the device. He flips a switch on it, and it emits a buzzing sound.

ART

This is a deterrent for insects. After I power it up, I just have to wait, seventy-four seconds or so...

CHILD JON (O.S.)
Mr. Walsh, could you start by
introducing yourself?

ART
Hm? I'm Art Walsh. Now while the
device is warming up, I extend this
antenna...

CHILD JON (O.S.)
Actually...would you mind turning
it off so you can start over again?
Maybe you can say your name first.

Child Jon steps into frame, correcting the bewildered Art.

CHILD JON
And, could you stand just, right
here? It will look better.

Art obeys, confused. Jon boldly switches off the device,
then runs back behind the camera. Sparks fly off the device.

CHILD JON (CONT'D)
Just...switching this off so you
can start again.

ART
Now it's...it wasn't warmed up all
the way. You shorted a circuit.

Art turns his full attention to the device and lays it on
its side, pulling a screwdriver out of his pocket.

CHILD JON (O.S.)
I'm sorry Mr. Walsh! Maybe, uh,
maybe you could talk about a
different invention instead?

ART
I need to fix this.

CHILD JON (O.S.)
Please, the school only let me
borrow the camera for a few hours.

Art ignores him, immersed in dismantling the device.

CHILD JON (O.S.)
Mr. Walsh?

Another voice is heard from offscreen.

CHILD EDITH (O.S.)
Daddy? I think we're out of peanut
butter for my lunch.

Art keeps his eyes on his work.

ART
You can make a bologna sandwich.

CHILD EDITH (O.S.)
I don't like bologna sandwiches.

CHILD JON (O.S.)
Hi Edith. Can you please be quiet
while I film?

Art shuts his eyes. Overwhelmed. Upset. Without a word, he
picks up the device and walks away. Offscreen a door shuts.

CHILD JON (O.S.)
Mr. Walsh!

CHILD EDITH (O.S.)
Daddy?

Child Edith walks into the shot, looking sadly after her
father. Then she looks toward the camera just as it cuts.

END FLASHBACK

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

An ULTRASOUND screen shows an unborn baby wiggling around.
Lindsey sits in the chair while Sandra performs the scan.

SANDRA
Any day now. Looking really
healthy. She's developing well.
Oh...did you know she was a "she"?

LINDSEY
I knew. My doctor at home told me.

SANDRA
Oh thank God. When I spoke to your
husband, he said he didn't know.

LINDSEY
I wanted to keep it a surprise.
That, and he doesn't seem to
really...care about finding out.

SANDRA
Mr. Walsh did say he'd be here. I
guess he had something come up?

LINDSEY
Yeah. I guess.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Lindsey walks out of the hospital. She spots a taxi, and
digs into her purse.

Just then Arthur's car swings wildly into the lot. It pulls
crookedly across two spots. Arthur jumps out, running.

ARTHUR
Lindsey! Oh good! I'm not late. I'm
not late!

Lindsey holds up her wristwatch.

LINDSEY
It was two and a half hours ago.

ARTHUR
Ah. I lost track of the time.

Lindsey strides angrily toward his car. He follows her.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Are you hungry? We can go to the
diner.

LINDSEY
I ate.

ARTHUR
I can drive you around town and
show you my old school, or the
library, or the tractor supply
where I had my first job...

LINDSEY
Just take me back to Edith's.

She sits in his passenger seat. Arthur goes around the car.

A SHERIFF (60, gruff and crusty) is standing by the car,
looking disapprovingly at the parking job.

SHERIFF
Is this your car sir? Do you think
maybe you could have done better
job parking it?

ARTHUR

Yes. Sorry.

Arthur rudely ignores the sheriff and gets into his car.

INT./EXT. ARTHUR'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Arthur drives the car down a narrow county road, while Lindsey sits in the passenger seat looking pointedly away.

ARTHUR

I won't miss the next appointment.

LINDSEY

The next appointment is the birth.

ARTHUR

Oh. Right. Well. I'll be there.

LINDSEY

I used to think it was cute: all those little gears turning in that head of yours. Usually it still is. But come on Arthur. You can't try, just a little bit, to be normal?

Arthur's face shows helpless frustration.

LINDSEY

I'm sorry. I do want you to be you. But I want you to be *here*, too.

ARTHUR

Is this...is this a breakup conversation?

Lindsey spins around to face him. She's a little surprised.

LINDSEY

A what? No! This isn't a...

Then she looks out the window again.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)

Arthur? I think you missed a turn. I had a feeling I should drive.

Arthur blinks a few times, then looks around, bewildered.

ARTHUR

I got distracted. But I recognize that road. I think I can get back this way.

He takes a turn onto a dirt road.

The car rumbles. Lindsey, bumped up and down, grips the handle above her door.

ARTHUR
Lindsey, I don't want...

LINDSEY
You don't want what?

Arthur stammers through the rest of his thought.

ARTHUR
...Us...not to stay together.

Lindsey nods, smiles bitterly, then looks out the window.

LINDSEY
Are you sure about this road? It's
a whole lot of nothing around here.

Arthur looks nervous. He takes another turn.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)
Are you lost? Just let me drive us
back to the main road...

Suddenly Arthur slams on the brakes, startling Lindsey.

He puts the car in reverse, and backs up several yards. Astonished, he looks out at a nearby isolated house. It's Art's house, odd-looking and decrepit.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)
What? What are we looking at?

Arthur opens the door and gets out of the car.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP - DAY

Arthur takes a few steps toward the property. A "NO TRESPASSING" sign is mounted on the fence.

Lindsey follows Arthur out of the car.

ARTHUR
This was my grandpa's house.

LINDSEY
Oh. So this is where Edith grew up?

Arthur's focus shifts to the workshop beside the house.

ARTHUR

And that...that was his workshop.

LINDSEY

I thought you didn't know anything about your grandfather.

ARTHUR

They usually demolish houses this old. I wonder why this is still here.

LINDSEY

Someone must still own the property. Maybe your mom?

Thoughtful, Arthur gets back into the car. Lindsey follows.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Edith knits a tiny sweater and hums to herself. She glances at her hand, notices that it's shaking, but keeps humming. The front door opens. Arthur and Lindsey come in.

EDITH

There you are. How was the check up? Arthur, where ever were you this morning?

ARTHUR

I...made a friend.

Lindsey sits down on a couch. Arthur remains standing.

LINDSEY

Otherwise, the check-up was all good news.

Edith holds up her knitting project.

EDITH

Good. Take a look at this! It might not fit right away, but it's a little shirt. I'll embroider it pink or blue, once we know more.

LINDSEY

That's gonna be so cute. Look at it Arthur.

EDITH

So. How long before you need to get home? You're more than welcome to stay here until the baby's born...

LINDSEY

We didn't really talk about that...it's wonderful of you to offer, but I might be more comfortable back home, and Arthur does need to get back to work...

Arthur seems distracted. After a moment, he goes back to the front door, to walk outside.

EDITH

Now wait. Where are you going?

ARTHUR

I'm...I'm going back out.

With that, Arthur leaves the house.

LINDSEY

Okay, I'm wondering if I should be worried now.

EDITH

It's Jon. It's got to be Jon.

Lindsey frowns.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM, 2000 - DAY

Child Arthur lays on a couch, deeply sleeping. Young Edith sits nearby, while Young Jon paces through the room.

YOUNG JON

He's a bright, bright kid. All of his teachers say so.

YOUNG EDITH

And he doesn't need you to keep looking out for him.

YOUNG JON

My point is he deserves better than Raindust Elementary. A bigger school could let him really shine!

YOUNG EDITH

I'm not sending Arthur anywhere.

YOUNG JON

I'll cover his tuition! I'll happily help you relocate.

(MORE)

YOUNG JON (CONT'D)
I don't mean to tell you how to
raise your son...I just want to
help.

Young Edith leans forward, focused.

YOUNG EDITH
We've done just fine on our own for
this long. You can't buy your way
into my life, or my family.

Jon seems insulted. He cleans his glasses out of habit.

YOUNG JON
I don't...I'm not... This isn't
just about you. Think about him.

He points to the sleeping Child Arthur.

YOUNG JON (CONT'D)
Your son can be so much more than
this town will ever let him be. I
don't want him to get forgotten
like your d...

Edith stands up and takes a step toward Jon.

YOUNG EDITH
Please don't invite yourself over
anymore, Jon.

Jon nods, reluctantly.

YOUNG JON
Okay. Okay.

He turns to go, but can't resist turning back one more time.

YOUNG JON (CONT'D)
Are you...are you ever going to
tell me about *him*, and the machine?
I still can't understand why you
won't.

Edith gives him a death stare and points to the door. Jon
nods, looking devastated. Then he goes out the front door.

Edith sits down beside her son. She smiles at him, then her
smile turns into a thoughtful frown.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S SHED - DAY

Clanking and banging noises come from inside Jon's shed.

Jon is on his knees, rummaging through the piles of old inventions. At last he finds what he's looking for: a chest. He opens it, revealing piles and piles of BLUEPRINTS.

He hears something: the doorbell, repeatedly ringing, from inside the house. He drops all the blueprints and stands up.

INT./EXT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jon answers the door. He's delighted to see Arthur.

JON

Arthur! Just who I was hoping for!

Excitedly they talk over each other.

ARTHUR

I saw his house and workshop!

JON

I found Art's old paper plans!

They pause, hesitate. Jon lets Arthur into the house.

JON (CONT'D)

Sorry. You go ahead. You're probably excited for a good reason.

ARTHUR

My grandpa's house. His workshop. It's still there.

JON

Not much to look at anymore, is it?

Arthur whips out the 1990 newspaper from a pocket, and sets it onto the counter.

ARTHUR

He was working on one last big invention when he disappeared.

JON

He worked on it for years.

ARTHUR

And how do you know it's not still in his workshop?

JON
Your mom cleared out all his things.

ARTHUR
And they all went up for auction and you bought them. But that last invention never showed up. Have you ever gone inside to check if anything was left behind?

Jon's eyes brighten.

JON
No.

ARTHUR
If my mom wanted to keep a secret from you, and from me...

JON
Maybe she never moved it at all.

Jon stands up, excited.

JON (CONT'D)
If we could find that invention...it could explain everything.

ARTHUR
Why would it explain everything?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S OLD STUDY, 1990 - NIGHT

Young Jon sits at a desk, typing away on a typewriter.

JON (V.O.)
It's true that I can't know for sure. But in the spring of 1990, just around the last time anyone ever saw Art, there was a power surge.

He looks up in surprise as all the lights in his house get suddenly brighter. Then the bulbs all explode.

EXT. BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF TOWN, 1990 - NIGHT

In a circular pattern, all the lights of the town go out.

JON (V.O.)
Knocked out half the local grid. It
made the newspapers. And can you
guess what was right in the middle
of the power outage?

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Arthur listens with intense interest.

ARTHUR
Art's workshop?

JON
Art's workshop. I think he turned
it on. And whatever happened
afterward is the reason he
vanished. Was he kidnapped? Did
someone want to stop his work? It
really all goes back to that
machine.

ARTHUR
So...let's go see it.

Awkward pause.

JON
The house is private property.

ARTHUR
It's in the middle of nowhere.

JON
Might be best to go in the dark.
Sun goes down in three hours.

ARTHUR
We'll need some tools.

JON
And rubber gloves, in case the old
fence is still electrified.

Both men leap to their feet, then pause.

JON (CONT'D)
If I can just clarify... Are we
breaking into your grandfather's
workshop?

ARTHUR

Yes.

With glee, Jon goes out one of the doors.

INT. JON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jon rushes into his bedroom and opens the closet. He digs around until he finds two all-black sets of clothes.

He lays the clothes on the bed. He chuckles bitterly to himself and shakes his head. Then he sighs.

He picks up the phone that sits beside his bed, and dials a number. Then he sits on the bed as the phone line rings.

JON

Hi, Edith. It's Jon. Prite.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Edith stands by her phone, on the other end of the conversation. Lindsey is behind her, listening.

EDITH

You just couldn't leave Arthur out of it, could you?

INT. JON'S BEDROOM - DAY

JON

Arthur needed to know. The truth is there aren't many years left for either you or me. Maybe for your son's sake, you'll reconsider telling me what I've asked you about? This is your dad's legacy.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Edith shows little emotion as she listens to Jon's plea.

EDITH

You'll try anything to get your little story, won't you?

She hangs up the phone.

Lindsey looks at Edith inquisitively. Edith can only sigh.

INT. JON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jon slowly hangs up the phone, and looks back at the black clothes on the bed.

JON

I tried.

He picks up the clothes and leaves the room.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP - NIGHT

The old decrepit house and workshop stand alone off the dusty road. There are no lights except the moonlight.

Jon's car rumbles slowly up the road, stopping at the fence. Jon and Arthur, in the black outfits, get out of the car.

Jon opens the trunk, and together they pull out crowbars and various other tools. They speak in whispers.

JON

What's the plan if it's in there?
Especially if it's too big to move
out?

ARTHUR

At least we can see what it is.
Maybe I can turn it on.

JON

That might cause another power
surge.

ARTHUR

Small price to pay, don't you
think?

They walk carefully to the fence. Jon, wearing rubber gloves, touches the fence with a screwdriver.

JON

Fence is powered down.

He reaches through the fence and unlatches the gate.

Turning on flashlights, they walk toward the house.

JON (CONT'D)

Still, be careful. People used to
say he booby-trapped the yard to
keep out curious folks once he got
older. I don't know if I believe
that, but you never know.

ARTHUR

Why are we whispering?

JON

Good point. There's nobody around for miles. Come on. This way.

Jon steps off the path that leads to the house and heads toward the workshop. Arthur follows.

JON

I didn't think I'd ever be back here, especially not like this. How does it feel? Are you excited?

ARTHUR

Considering I didn't even know my grandpa existed until yesterday...I don't know.

JON

Well I've never broken the law before. Just remember this was your idea.

ARTHUR

It wasn't my idea. It was yours.

They're nearly to the workshop now.

Jon steps on a PAVING STONE set in the overgrown lawn. He is surprised as the stone sinks into the ground, like a large button or lever. A loud clicking sound follows.

JON

What...

Suddenly, the stone SHOOTS up into the air, attached to the ground by a huge SPRING. It throws Jon up like a rag doll.

Arthur shines the light down at the ground. He too is standing on a paving stone that presses down and clicks.

Strips of siding spring loose from the house and swing toward Arthur's head.

His eyes widen and he puts up his arm, just in time for the slats of wood to smash into his arm, knocking him down.

Both men lie on the ground, groaning.

ARTHUR

I guess he did booby trap the place.

JON
So, don't step on the paving
stones.

Arthur raises his arm, and winces. Jon slowly stands up,
holding his head.

JON (CONT'D)
You alright?

ARTHUR
My wrist hurts. I'll be fine.

Just then, a roaring sound starts up near the workshop: a
generator firing up. Lights flash around the workshop, and a
loud alarm sound goes off.

JON
Holy shit. He rigged an alarm too.

ARTHUR
And it still works, forty years
later.

JON
We should get out of here.

Jon turns to try and run away. Arthur stands up, wincing in
pain, and keeps walking toward the workshop, shining his
flashlight on the ground to avoid the paving stones.

JON (CONT'D)
This is going to attract attention.

ARTHUR
So it's the only chance we're going
to get to see the machine!

Arthur, a determined, crazed look in his eyes, shoves the
crowbar into the door jamb with his uninjured arm.

Jon looks around nervously, then runs over to help.

With both crowbars in the door, they tug and heave, trying
to break it down.

JON
Jesus. He built things to last.

A brief interval of a siren is heard, and police lights
reflect off the walls of the workshop.

SHERIFF

(on loudspeaker)

Okay, kids, this is the police. You know this is private property. Come on out now.

Jon and Arthur both grimace, then laugh at their situation.

Finally, after one last heave, the door breaks. They pry it off its hinges.

Excited, they both climb inside the broken door.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

They shine their flashlights forward.

The place is completely empty.

Arthur paces the full perimeter of the workshop, shining his light at every square inch of wall and floor. Once he's gone all the way around, he stops and stares helplessly at Jon.

JON

This isn't at all how I imagined it would be in here.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP - NIGHT

The SHERIFF, along with a DEPUTY, escorts Arthur and Jon, both handcuffed, along the fence toward the police car.

SHERIFF

To be honest I figured it was gonna be a couple kids. Everyone else with an ounce of sense in their head knows the old fella collected junk and there ain't anything worth stealing here.

Arthur and Jon are pushed into the back of the car.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

But then again, kids are usually smart enough not to set off that big alarm of his, so I think you're dumber than them after all.

Arthur and Jon share a frustrated glance.

The doors are shut and the car drives away. Jon's car is left abandoned in the dust.

INT. JAIL OFFICE - NIGHT

A camera flashes.

Arthur stands against a wall, a blank look in his face as his mugshot is taken by the Deputy.

At a desk nearby, the Sheriff writes information down on a sheet. Jon sits across from him.

SHERIFF
Name and date of birth?

JON
Come on, Bob. Really?

The Sheriff is not humored.

SHERIFF
Has 'Jon' got an 'h' or no 'h'?

JON
It's actually Jonathan.

SHERIFF
Date of birth?

JON
September 7th, 1952.

SHERIFF
Finger.

He grabs Jon's finger and smashes it into the ink on his desk, then presses it onto the form for the fingerprint.

The deputy ushers Arthur to the desk. Arthur sits down and Jon goes over to the wall to have his mugshot taken.

SHERIFF
Your name?

ARTHUR
Um...Arthur. Arthur Walsh.

SHERIFF
Walsh, huh? Well damn. Last time I saw you, you musta been in high school. They do grow up so fast! What's your date of birth?

ARTHUR
April 19th, 1990.

Jon is listening to the conversation, as he's lined against the wall for his mugshot.

The Sheriff gets Arthur's fingerprints while he talks.

SHERIFF

You know, I first met your mom when you musta been a newborn. Yeah, she was having a tough time of it back then. Parole hearings and piss tests. Some people can't ever seem to turn out alright after that kinda thing, but she did. Good woman.

ARTHUR

What?

The deputy walks Jon back over.

SHERIFF

Alright, we're done here.

INT. JAIL HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

The cell door is shut, Arthur and Jon inside. The Deputy walks away down the hall, leaving them in silence.

JON

He called Art a junk collector. Can you believe that? Now, maybe I'm wrong for obsessing, but all of his work, and the machine...I can't help but think it's important.

Arthur winches and rubs his bruising wrist. Then he is distracted by his own thoughts.

ARTHUR

What was he talking about, when he said my mom had parole hearings and piss tests?

Jon hesitates and shrugs. He leans back on the cell wall.

JON

It's been a long time. Who can remember?

EXT. JAIL - MORNING

A car pulls up in front of the station. Edith and Lindsey both step out.

INT. JAIL HOLDING CELL - MORNING

Jon and Arthur have both fallen asleep in the cell.

The Sheriff and Deputy approach the cell door.

SHERIFF

Good news. You're gettin' bailed out already.

Arthur and Jon stir and slowly wake up.

Edith also approaches the cell, as the Sheriff unlocks the gate and swings it open.

ARTHUR

Mom?

SHERIFF

They're here for trespassing on your property, Mrs. Walsh. Were you planning on pressing charges?

EDITH

Silly boys. At this point I should. But no.

SHERIFF

Thank God. Less paperwork this way.

Arthur walks out of the cell, and stands face-to-face with Edith. They share a tense look for a moment.

EDITH

Lindsey's waiting in the car for you.

Arthur nods and walks away down the hall.

SHERIFF

Might want to get that arm looked at, son! Your boy seems like a fine young man. But he doesn't seem too bright.

As Jon emerges from the cell, he now faces Edith.

JON

Hi, Edith.

EDITH

This is a rare situation in which I'm going to gladly accept your money. Bail isn't cheap.

JON
Of course.

Edith steps away.

JON (CONT'D)
It was his idea!

EDITH
I'm sure it was. But unlike you, I
know when to encourage him, and
when to tell him "no."

Edith walks out of the hallway, and Jon slowly follows.

INT. EDITH'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Edith drives the car. Lindsey rides in the passenger seat while Arthur sits moodily in the back. They all ride in sullen silence.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Edith, Arthur and Lindsey sit on the couches in silence. Lindsey wraps Arthur's wrist in a tight bandage.

LINDSEY
How's it feel? You're sure you
don't want to go to the hospital?

Arthur grunts and shakes his head.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)
Well, at least this should keep it
from bending until you can see a
doctor back home. Speaking of
which...I'm going to start packing.

Without a word, Arthur stands up and storms through the house and out the back door.

EDITH
He does that when he's upset. I'll
take care of it.

She follows him. As she goes, she picks up the MUSIC BOX from the table. Then she walks out the back door.

EXT. EDITH'S BACK PORCH - DAY

Edith finds Arthur sitting, sulking on the porch swing.

Edith stands in front of him for a moment, observing. Then she sits beside him. Neither speak for a long moment.

EDITH

I think you deserve to know why I kept things from you.

Arthur looks at her, then looks down at his hands.

EDITH (CONT'D)

I always thought some things could be left alone. They'd never be noticed, never be missed. But all us parents make mistakes, I guess.

She looks at Arthur. He's still not responsive.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Come on. Even you have to admit I was a pretty damn good mom.

She smiles, but Arthur doesn't.

ARTHUR

You did always try to make me feel like I was normal. But I wasn't really. If I'd known I had a grandpa who was...smart, like me... I just wish you'd have been the one to tell me.

Edith shuts her eyes in resignation, and sighs deeply.

She winds up the music box and places it on the small table in front of them.

EDITH

Remember how we used to dance?

The music begins to play...

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. EDITH'S BACK PORCH, 2000 - NIGHT

Young Edith walks out onto the porch, where she finds CHILD ARTHUR (10 years old) sitting on the swing, sulking.

EDITH (V.O.)

If school ever got you down, or some kid said something mean, or you just didn't want to talk, I would have you dance with me.

Young Edith grabs Child Arthur by the arm and, playfully, tries to drag him off the chair. He resists.

EDITH (V.O.)
 And if you didn't want to dance,
 well...I would make you dance
 anyway.

Young Edith does a few clumsy twirls and makes a funny face that provokes a smile from Child Arthur. Then she reaches forward and plucks him off the chair.

They dance clumsily together until little Arthur is nearly doubled over with laughter.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. EDITH'S BACK PORCH - DAY

Present day Arthur is not amused by the memory.

ARTHUR
 Don't try to dance with me. That
 won't work right now.

EDITH
 I know. I probably should have
 talked with you more, and danced a
 little less. All I wanted was that
 dance.

A tear appears in Edith's eye.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1956 - NIGHT

Art dances with BABY EDITH, holding the baby and moving around in circles.

EDITH (V.O.)
 My father used to dance that way
 with me.

EXT. PUBLIC PARK, 1956 - DAY

Art pushes a mechanical BABY CARRIAGE through the park. He looks down lovingly at Baby Edith.

EDITH (V.O.)
 He'd raised me all alone. As far
 back as I recall, it was him and
 me, together. And we were so happy.

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1965 - NIGHT

Art and Child Edith dance, as seen in Scene 1. The music box falls to the ground, Art picks it up and walks away.

EDITH (V.O.)

At least, I thought we were.

EXT. CLASSROOM, 1965 - DAY

As the children sit and use their wired clipboards [as seen previously], we see that Child Edith is one of them.

She turns, smiling proudly, to look at Art at the back of the room. But Art isn't looking at her. He is watching all the devices. Child Edith turns back around with a sigh.

EDITH (V.O.)

His work was everything to him.
When he was working - and that was
almost all the time - he didn't
know that other people existed.

EXT. LAKE, 1965 - DAY

As the crowd watches Art drive his submerging vehicle into the lake, we see that Child Edith is among them. She's concerned and weary, not excited like the people around her.

When Art emerges from the lake, the crowd goes wild. Child Jon stands nearby, jumping up and down with excitement. Child Edith smiles, but it's a bittersweet smile.

INT. ART'S KITCHEN, 1969 - NIGHT

Papers lie in a mess all over the dining room table.

Art is scratching feverishly with a pencil, and crumpling up papers as quickly as he can write on them.

Peeping into the room is Child Edith. Her eyes are questioning, and she has a thousand things she wants to say. She doesn't want to interrupt. Art doesn't acknowledge her.

EDITH (V.O.)

Like any little girl, I started
asking questions and needing
answers. His head had gotten so
full, it didn't have any room left
for me.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP, 1969 - DAY

Art and Child Edith walk across their yard toward the workshop. Both are carrying boxes full of parts.

EDITH (V.O.)

I wanted to believe he still loved me. Maybe it was deep down inside, somewhere beneath the machines in his mind that never stopped turning. He had to still love me.

Art gets to the workshop. He opens the door and puts his boxes inside. Then he turns, takes the other box from Child Edith, nods his thanks, and shuts the door in her face.

She stands still, locked out of the workshop and alone.

EDITH (V.O.)

But he made that impossible to believe.

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM, 1969 - NIGHT

It's a school event, with dozens of GIRLS all dressed up.

Accompanying these girls are their FATHERS. The father/daughter couples are standing in a line. One by one, the couples break off into dance.

Near the back of the line, but standing apart, is Child Edith, wearing makeup and a dress. She keeps looking back at the door of the room...but nobody enters. She sighs sadly.

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1969 - NIGHT

Child Edith is sitting on the floor of the living room, wearing the same dress as at the school dance.

Makeup stains her face; she's been crying.

The music box is in front of her. She's holding it with both hands, slowly winding it up.

The front door opens. Art enters.

Child Edith lets go of the music box key, and it starts to play its waltz. She stands up and faces Art.

Art is deep in thought. He's holding a gadget and a socket wrench. He walks up to Child Edith, side-steps her, and passes right through the house, going out the back door.

Child Edith doesn't even look surprised or sad anymore. Her face is frozen in a numb, empty stare.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, 1970 - DAY

Art and Child Edith, suitcases in hand, rush through a crowd of people, making their way to the train platform.

EDITH (V.O.)

I was fourteen when I left with my father on the big trip to his very first science conference.

Art is moving fast - faster than Child Edith can move on her little legs. He gets ahead of her in the crowd.

Child Edith tries to keep up, but there are too many people. She loses sight of Art. The crowd closes in around her.

A train whistle blows.

EDITH (V.O.)

Maybe he got to where he was going, but I never did. He forgot me in a crowd. Right then, I knew I was on my own.

Child Edith stands rigidly in the center of the platform, surrounded by strangers.

Slowly she turns around, and she walks away.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. EDITH'S BACK PORCH - DAY

Arthur is fully invested in Edith's story. There's a tear in his eye. Edith's face is grim and hardened.

EDITH

So I ran away.

The wind whistles through the back yard as Arthur takes it all in. He's lost for words.

Awkwardly, he wraps an arm around Edith. This attempt at comfort is humorous and sincere. It makes Edith smile.

INT. EDITH'S GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

An open suitcase sits on the bed. Arthur, very carefully and methodically, is folding clothes and putting them inside.

Lindsey walks into the room behind him.

LINDSEY
We don't have to drive home yet, if
you don't want to.

Arthur's response is unusually heartfelt.

ARTHUR
You wanted to have the baby at
home.

LINDSEY
That doesn't matter so much. As
long as we're together for it.

ARTHUR
We will be. I've just been
distracted, and stubborn, and mom
doesn't need me sticking my nose
into her life anymore, either.

Lindsey lays her head on his chest, and Arthur kisses her
head. Then he goes back to folding his clothes robotically.

EXT. EDITH'S HOUSE - DAY

Arthur and Lindsey put their bags into their car.

Edith stands at her door, watching them. Lindsey walks over
and gives her a hug.

LINDSEY
Thanks so much for having us,
Edith.

EDITH
Psh. Don't thank me. You're the
ones who had to make that long,
boring drive.

LINDSEY
If you need anything at all, please
don't hesitate to call.

Arthur stands a little distant. He waves sheepishly.

ARTHUR
Bye, mom.

EDITH
Oh! I meant to give you this back.

She takes off the wristwatch, and tosses it to him.

ARTHUR

But I fixed it for you.

EDITH

That just makes it mine to give
back if I want. Go on. Drive safe.

Arthur puts on the watch. He sits down in the driver's seat, Lindsey in the passenger's, and the car pulls away.

INT. DINER - DAY

Coffee shoots out of an eccentric-looking coffee machine, into a coffee pot.

Nearby, Lindsey and Arthur sit across from one another at a booth. Their plates of food are mostly eaten.

LINDSEY

You're sure you don't want to stop
for the night somewhere?

ARTHUR

It's only a fourteen hour drive.
I've got my coffee.

LINDSEY

If you say so. I can always drive.

BARBARA, the waitress, is now an old woman of 80 or 90. Slowly she approaches the table and refills Arthur's coffee.

BARBARA

Is that all I can get you?

LINDSEY

Yes. Thanks.

Barbara bends down for a closer look at Arthur.

BARBARA

Why do you look familiar? Are you
related to someone?

Arthur shares a quick glance with Lindsey.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Huh. I'm gonna keep trying to place
where I've seen that face before.

Barbara hobbles away. Lindsey leans over toward Arthur.

LINDSEY

Did you want to talk...about...

ARTHUR

About?

LINDSEY

You spent a night in jail...

ARTHUR

Oh. Nah.

LINDSEY

Okay, if you're sure. I need to find the restroom. Be right back.

Lindsey stands up and heads to the restroom.

Arthur looks around, contemplating the walls of the diner. Hanging on the wall, among other old photos, is a picture of Art standing in front of the eccentric coffee machine.

Arthur's eyes widen a little, and he puts his head down, covering his head with his hands, overwhelmed.

Then, someone slips into the booth across from him.

ARTHUR

I'm ready to go if you are.

But it's not Lindsey in the booth. It's Jon, excited.

JON

I found them!

Arthur looks up, surprised.

ARTHUR

What?

JON

I saw your car parked outside. So glad I caught you. See, I was always more interested in the machines themselves, so I never took a really good look through his papers. But I did some digging!

Onto the table he dumps the large stack of PAPERS: blueprints, notebooks, scrap papers, etc.

Annoyed, overwhelmed but a little curious, Arthur glances at the top paper.

ARTHUR

Whatever these are, I'm not going to have time to... I have to drive home today... These are schematics.

JON

Not just any schematics. It's the blueprints for the final invention.

Arthur is intrigued. The plans are disorganized scribbles.

ARTHUR

These are a mess.

JON

He didn't exactly draw his plans for other people to see...

Lindsey returns to the booth. She hovers over the table for a moment before sliding in beside Arthur, glaring at Jon.

LINDSEY

Hi again.

JON

Good morning, Mrs. Walsh. Or, may I call you Lindsey?

Arthur keeps flipping through papers.

LINDSEY

We were getting ready to leave. Arthur has a long drive ahead.

JON

Drive? I was hoping he could at least have time to... He'll have better luck than me, figuring out what Art was working on at the end.

LINDSEY

Arthur's going to be very busy. His job demands most of his time, and he's about to have another significant time commitment.

Arthur is still immersed in the papers.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)

Arthur. Honey. I'm ready to go.

ARTHUR

Yeah. Almost. This is...huh.

Jon watches with excitement as Arthur's interest increases. Lindsey gives Jon a deadly stare.

JON

I wanted to bring you this, too.

He sets another wad of paper, his MANUSCRIPT, on the table.

ARTHUR

What's that?

JON

It's my book. Art's story. Not finished yet...obviously. But it'll tell you everything you might want to know. Everything I know, anyway.

Lindsey loses patience with him. She pushes the manuscript and some of the other papers back toward Jon.

LINDSEY

Mr. Prite. You've caused enough trouble. Have a good day.

Arthur's hand falls on the manuscript.

ARTHUR

It's alright. I'll take them.

Jon smiles then stands up.

JON

You still have my number?

Lindsey's angry glance persuades him to leave before Arthur can answer. Jon exits.

Lindsey puts her hand on Arthur's shoulder.

LINDSEY

I'll get our check. Are you ready to go?

Lindsey puts her hand up, to get Barbara's attention.

ARTHUR

Can you drive, so I can read?

Lindsey nods curtly. Barbara approaches with the check.

LINDSEY

Thank you.

BARBARA

By the way, I figured it out! You look just like someone who used to live around here. He was...ah, I can't remember his name. He was a mechanic, or maybe a...plumber? I can't quite recall. It's been a long time. Anyway, funny world.

INT. ARTHUR'S CAR (MOVING) - EVENING

Lindsey drives. Arthur rides in the passenger seat, focused on reading through the final pages of the manuscript.

JON (V.O.)

While it's true that Art was always a private individual who valued time spent alone with his work, during the years of his prolific invention he never shied away from crowds. He invited publicity, as if he wanted the world to see his creations. But at some point that all changed.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. ART'S HOUSE, 1970 - DAY

Once again we see Art looking through the window at the crowd of reporters gathered outside.

He pulls the window shade closed.

INT. ART'S KITCHEN, 1970 - DAY

Art takes a few steps into his house, and stares at a series of papers scattered over his dining room table.

After staring intently for a few moments, he brushes his arm over the table, knocking all the papers on the floor.

Art storms out of the house, slamming the back door.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP, 1970 - DAY

Art paces quickly from his house to the workshop. Once there, he goes inside and shuts the door with a loud bang.

We can hear the sound of bolts being drawn to lock the door.

JON (V.O.)

First he stopped showing off his inventions.

(MORE)

JON (CONT'D)

Then he stopped talking to people. Art shrank farther and farther from view until he would go weeks, even months at a time without setting foot outside of his workshop.

TIME PASSES.

Some in the crowd take photos, others talk amongst themselves. Child Jon is still there, impatiently watching.

The workshop is alive with noise. flashes of light and loud noises of machinery come from the inside.

SEASONS PASS. The trees change color. Snow appears and vanishes. Daylight alternates with night.

The crowd comes and goes with passage of time.

JON (V.O.)

Those months turned into years. Day and night he was in that workshop, making, what? Nobody knew. It was speculated that surely this was his magnum opus, his greatest invention that would change the world and cement his place in history. But excitement can't last forever when it's answered with silence. Gradually people stopped caring. In time, everyone forgot. Art never came out. He was all alone in that workshop, so nobody knows what it was he was making, or why, or if he ever finished it at all.

INT. WORKSHOP, 1985 - DAY

We see only Art's eyes. He is now OLD ART (70). He is focusing intensely, angrily, on something he is working on.

The light of sparks flying off machinery dances and glints across his face.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP - 1985 - DAY

The crowd thins completely. Now only Young Jon (grown from a child to a young man) is left watching the house.

He frowns, puts his notebook in his pocket and walks away.

END FLASHBACK

INT. EDITH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Edith lays in bed, her eyes open, staring at the ceiling. She rolls over, and a teardrop falls onto the bedsheet.

She notices the teardrop on the sheet. She contemplates it for a moment, then stands up slowly out of bed.

EXT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Edith hobbles into the living room. She looks back and forth, standing in the middle of the room. She's lonely.

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jon walks through the empty house, toward the counter. He sits down, reaches for a glass, and pours himself a drink.

He downs a second drink...and then a third.

He reaches for the 1990 newspaper on the counter, and crumples it. He frowns, then laughs, then nearly cries.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Edith, still standing in the living room, shuts her eyes.

She lifts up her hands, and gives a little curtsy.

Then she starts to dance with an imaginary partner. A warm, comfortable smile comes over her face.

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Helplessly, hopelessly, Jon faces his bulletin board and plucks the remaining Art Walsh paraphernalia off of it.

With a bitter, drunken smile, he crumples each photo, each article one by one, and tosses them to the floor.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In the middle of her dreamlike waltz, Edith suddenly stumbles. Her eyes shoot open and she gasps. She catches herself in the nick of time on the couch.

She stands there for a moment, catching her breath. She puts a shaking hand over her heart. She sits down slowly.

Then she looks across the room at the LOCKED DOOR.

Grabbing a paper, pen and envelope, she sets them on the coffee table and starts to write something down.

Out of her pocket she pulls a KEY, and sets it down beside the paper.

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jon takes a good, long look at the photo of himself as a child standing beside Young Art.

With a slight flinch, he drops the photo into the trash along with the other papers.

INT. ARTHUR'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Arthur closes the manuscript, looking thoughtful. Beside him, Lindsey yawns.

LINDSEY

I don't know, Arthur. How do you feel about taking a turn at the wheel?

Arthur looks down at all the papers in his lap, and sighs.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bags in hand, Arthur and Lindsey walk into the small room.

LINDSEY

This is okay. So, we lost a day, but I'm not the one with a job to get back to.

ARTHUR

Yeah.

Exhausted, Lindsey flops herself on the bed.

LINDSEY

I know I should shower and change, but I don't care. Are you coming?

Arthur has already laid out the papers on the motel desk.

ARTHUR

In a minute.

LINDSEY

Okay. We'll get an early start tomorrow...

She drifts into sleep, as Arthur stares at the blueprints.

ARTHUR

Art Walsh, what were you thinking?

Deliberately, he starts to separate the papers into stacks.

The messy scribbled blueprints start to take on a coherent shape as he lays out all the papers side-by-side.

He paces back and forth as time passes.

He pulls out a pen from his pocket, and makes occasional notations on the papers.

Soon the papers cover the entire inside of the room. Arthur frantically, excitedly solves equations.

Extreme close up on Arthur's face. His eyes narrow. Something is coming together in his mind. A realization. Suddenly, we and the camera zoom into Arthur's head...

INT. MACHINE OF GEARS

Gears turn. Steam whistles. Wires spark.

We're inside a metaphor of Arthur's brain.

We zoom through the clicking, turning machine as gears and parts begin to fit together...

INT. JON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The doorbell chimes.

Jon snorts himself awake. He glances at the clock: 2:47.

JON

Oh boy.

Groaning, he puts on his robe and slippers.

INT./EXT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jon opens the door. Arthur is standing outside. The full stack of papers, with the manuscript, is in his hands.

ARTHUR

It actually makes sense.

Arthur pushes himself past Jon and into the house. Jon takes a look outside: Arthur's car is there, but it's empty.

JON

Your timing is...just fine.

ARTHUR

First I thought, maybe I could write a program to simulate what the machine was, and I could test it virtually. But for one thing I would need my computer at work for that. For another thing, Art's workflow was such a mess, I can't duplicate it digitally without starting from scratch. He worked through it with nuts and bolts, with copper wire and car batteries. The only way to test his plan is to replicate his process.

Arthur has sat down on the sofa and started flipping casually through the paper plans. Then he pauses.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Where did your photo go?

JON

Oh...

Jon reaches into the trash to retrieve the crumpled photo. He also pulls out the 1990 newspaper.

JON

Not sure how it got there.

ARTHUR

Well, there's no materials list. As if he'd bother with one. I can gather more or less what he would have needed for each of the components referenced. Is there a hardware store? Maybe a junkyard? Where did Art get his materials?

Jon is taken aback, overwhelmed.

JON

Hold on, Arthur. Hold on. You want to build this machine?

Arthur looks up at Jon with some confusion.

ARTHUR

How else are we supposed to know what it does?

Jon's eyes widen with joy.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Lindsey stirs in the bed. She's still fully clothed from the night before. She yawns and looks around the room.

LINDSEY
Arthur? Arthur! Okay...

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Edith sits on the couch and stares out the window. The phone rings, going off several times before she notices and answers.

EDITH
Hello? (pause) Lindsey!...
He's...oh boy.

INT. EDITH'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Edith drives her own car, while Lindsey sits in the passenger seat.

LINDSEY
Thanks for coming for me, Edith. It wasn't a short drive.

EDITH
Gives me an excuse to get out.
Where else do I have to drive to these days?

Beat.

EDITH (CONT'D)
So you have no idea where he went?

LINDSEY
He didn't say anything, and he left in the middle of the night.

EDITH
That is the sort of dependability we've come to expect from him...

Edith's good humor doesn't sit well with Lindsey, who turns her head away and exhales angrily.

EDITH (CONT'D)
I know. He's not...easy.

LINDSEY
Sometimes, I'll look at him, and he'll actually look back.

(MORE)

LINDSEY (CONT'D)

There'll be something real there,
like he's concerned, like he cares.
But where does that come from? And
where does it go?

EDITH

I asked the same thing a million
times.

LINDSEY

I thought I knew what to expect
from him, but this...this is
getting to be too much.

EDITH

You can't ever *really* know what to
expect. You can only know one
person in your whole life, and
that's yourself. The minute you
think you have somebody else
figured out, guess what? You're
wrong. There's no equation for
people. We're never what we want
each other to be. It is lonely to
be with other people, but the only
other choice is to be alone. The
spark you sometimes see in Arthur's
eyes - it is real, and it's just as
much a part of him as the
neglectful boy with his head in the
clouds. But it's fragile.

LINDSEY

I don't know what you're trying to
tell me. Are you saying I should
keep trying and trying with Arthur?

EDITH

I would never tell you that. That's
a decision only you can make.

LINDSEY

Yeah. Yeah it is.

INT./EXT. JON'S SHED - DAY

The doors of the shed open with a creak, letting the light
spill in over the hundreds of inventions. Arthur and Jon
stand just outside, looking in.

JON

There's no chance of doing this
another way?

ARTHUR

Not unless you want to drive your little car to every dumpster and salvage yard in the county. I bet most of what I need is right here.

Jon seems visibly upset.

JON

But you don't have to... not *all* of them.

Arthur steps into the shed. He's holding some of the blueprints.

ARTHUR

Maybe. Maybe not. I won't know until I start. Now...copper wire.

He scans the stacks of contraptions, then finds one device made with wires. Arthur grabs it off the shelf and begins to pry it apart with a screwdriver.

JON

Not...not that one! It's one of my favorites.

ARTHUR

Why not this one? What did it do?

Jon steps into the shed, putting out his hands gently as if the little device were a living thing.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. PUBLIC PARK, 1965 - DAY

Art fits the same device around his head, and slides it over his eyes. Then he takes it off and holds it up proudly.

A few TOWNSPEOPLE stand nearby, watching him. They shake their heads apprehensively. Child Jon is there too.

JON (V.O.)

Art guaranteed that this would correct any vision impairment and get rid of the need for glasses. Nobody wanted to try it out, seeing as he wasn't a doctor, and we valued our eyeballs too much.

EXT. PUBLIC PARK, 1965 - DAY, A LITTLE LATER

A DOG sits patiently on the ground, while Art fits the device around its head.

JON (V.O.)

At the end of the day, he used the device on the next best thing.

Art flips a switch, and the device starts to hum and flash.

EXT. PUBLIC PARK, 1965 - DAY, A LITTLE LATER

The dog no longer wears the device. Someone throws a ball. The dog jumps into the air, catching it perfectly.

JON (V.O.)

The dog of course went on to achieve local fame due to his perfect catch accuracy, and even became the mascot of the high school baseball team, proving the device had worked!

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S SHED - DAY

Arthur sets down the device. He reaches for another machine and starts to strip the wires.

JON

No! Please no.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. ART'S KITCHEN, 1965 - DAY

This machine is sitting on Art's kitchen counter.

Into a funnel opening in the machine he pours a bowl of eggs and a basket of lettuce. The machine smokes and shakes.

JON (V.O.)

This one makes breakfast. You pour in your eggs, or your greens, or whatever you want, and it'll cook up a platter that looks, smells and tastes like pancakes and bacon.

Sure enough, a breakfast platter comes out of the machine.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S SHED - DAY

Arthur seems exasperated. He turns to another small machine.

JON

That was his automated book reader.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. ART'S KITCHEN, 1965 - NIGHT

Art mulls over some papers on his dining room table.

Beside him sits this machine. A BOOK ["The Time Machine"] is mounted in it. A small sensor scans over the page, and a little gramophone speaker protrudes from the machine.

The VOICE that comes out is sampled from Art's voice.

MACHINE'S AUTOMATED VOICE

There is, however, a tendency to draw an unreal distinction between the former three dimensions and the latter, because it happens that our consciousness moves intermittently in one direction along the latter from the beginning to the end of our lives.

The little machine turns the page on its own.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S SHED - DAY

Arthur takes a step toward Jon, giving an exaggerated shrug.

ARTHUR

What am I supposed to do, then? Do you even use any of these?

JON

I...I don't need to. But they were his. They're all that's left.

Arthur shakes his head and holds up the blueprints.

ARTHUR

And without *this*, they'll stay the only things left of him. This is our chance to walk in his footsteps and build what he built and find out what was so important to him and why!

Jon sets his jaw and clears his throat.

JON
You're right. They're all yours.

Arthur nods. Right away, he takes the screwdriver to the machines and starts tearing them apart.

Jon cringes and takes a step out of the shed.

Just then he hears the doorbell from inside. Seeing that Arthur is already enmeshed, Jon goes toward the house.

INT./EXT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jon answers his front door. He finds himself face to face with Lindsey and Edith.

EDITH
Where's Arthur, Jon?

JON
Arthur? Your son, Arthur?

LINDSEY
His car's here.

Beat.

JON
He may have...stopped by, earlier.

Edith pushes past, into the house.

EDITH
Just let me talk to him. Whatever you two are up to, I'll knock some sense into his head...

She looks around, seeing all the blueprints and photos and newspaper clippings scattered everywhere. She freezes.

JON
Okay, I promise you he came here on his own. I didn't call him, I didn't ask him to come back...

EDITH
What's all this? It's all his...you've been...

Jon realizes that she's stunned at all his collections.

JON

Edith...

She puts out her hand, entreating him to stay silent. She reaches for the 1990 newspaper sitting on the counter, and clutches it.

Lindsey walks to the back window.

LINDSEY

Is that him, out there?

Edith and Lindsey both look out the window. They see Arthur, hard at work, focused on his mechanical tasks.

JON

I don't know what you want me to say. He found something that made him...excited.

EDITH

And there's no stopping him now.

A tear rolls down Edith's cheek. She turns away to go.

EDITH (CONT'D)

It's time to go, Lindsey.

LINDSEY

But, Arthur...

EDITH

Go wait in the car.

Lindsey obliges and leaves the house. Edith sits in a barstool at the counter and looks at the old photo.

EDITH (CONT'D)

You want to hear something sad, Jon? I'll tell you how the story ends. (*pointing to Arthur*) How *his* story will end if he keeps this up.

Jon squints his eyes. He doesn't quite trust what sounds too good to be true.

JON

I'm listening. You're...you're finally going to tell me?

EDITH

The last time I saw my father was seventeen years after I left home.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP, 1990 - DAY

A car rolls up the dusty road, and stops by the fence.

Young Edith steps out of the back seat. She's especially thin and pale, dressed in a loose-fitting sweater, with her hair and makeup messy. She carries only a small purse.

The car's DRIVER yells after her.

DRIVER
Wait! Gas money?

YOUNG EDITH
Sorry.

DRIVER
We're twenty miles outside of town.
You said you'd have gas money.

YOUNG EDITH
I guess I lied.

She slams the door and flips her middle finger at the driver. The car spins its wheels and rolls away.

Young Edith faces the house. She breathes hesitantly.

She reaches over the fence to unlatch it. ZAP, the electric shock gets her.

YOUNG EDITH
God...damn it!

She violently kicks the gate, and it falls open for her. She calms herself and wipes her hair to the side of her face, then she walks up to the front door. She stares at it.

She turns around, changing her mind. But the car is far gone. There's no place else to turn.

She walks forward and knocks on the door.

A moment passes. She knocks again. There's no answer.

Annoyed, she steps off the porch and moves around the house, hugging the wall until she nears the workshop.

She doesn't see that OLD ART has appeared at the back door of the house, and he's watching her.

OLD ART
Please go away.

His voice is tired and old. But it catches Edith off guard. She spins around quickly, nearly falling over.

YOUNG EDITH
Oh! Hi. You didn't answer the front door, so I figured...

OLD ART
No visitors. Please leave me alone.

YOUNG EDITH
But...dad. It's me.

It takes a moment, but the spark of recognition awakens in Old Art's eyes. There's pain too.

They stare at each other for a long moment. Art stammers.

OLD ART
Would you...want some food?

YOUNG EDITH
Food, uh, sounds good.

He beckons for her to come inside.

OLD ART
Don't step on the paving stones.

She halts, her foot dangling above one of the stones.

OLD ART (CONT'D)
They'll knock you on your rear end.
Meant to scare away intruders.

Edith steps around it, and follows Art into the house.

INT. ART'S KITCHEN, 1990 - DAY

Old Art brushes aside piles of dusty mechanical items and sheets of paper from the dining room table. Then he places two old, chipped plates onto its surface.

Young Edith looks around. The house is a dusty mess.

Art opens the fridge. Inside is little more than beer, lunch meat and milk. Art reaches for the bread.

OLD ART
Do you still like bologna sandwiches?

Edith tilts her head in annoyance, and doesn't answer.

Art goes ahead and puts together two thin bologna sandwiches, and places one on her plate.

She stares at it for a moment with disgust. But then she gives in. She grabs the sandwich and hungrily wolfs it down.

Art watches her for a moment, his lips quivering.

YOUNG EDITH
So. What's new?

Art looks aside and shrugs.

YOUNG EDITH (CONT'D)
No new projects? No inventions
nobody ever thought about before?

OLD ART
There's been...one thing.

He stares down at his own sandwich.

YOUNG EDITH
Are you planning on eating that?

Art notices the sandwich, as if realizing what he's looking at. He nods and pushes it toward her.

Hungrily she starts on the second sandwich.

OLD ART
Will you be staying in town?

Edith doesn't answer as she finishes the sandwich.

OLD ART (CONT'D)
You're welcome to stay here, if you
don't have another place.

Edith coughs through the sandwich crumbs.

YOUNG EDITH
Of course I don't have another
place. Why do you think I'm here?

OLD ART
You wanted to come home?

Edith puts the last bit of the sandwich to the side, and then leans close over the table, arms crossed.

YOUNG EDITH

Okay. I'm wasting time with this "hi dad, how are you doing" bullshit. The last time we talked to each other I was fourteen years old, and the best you can do is offer me a sandwich?

Art nods slowly to himself, frowning.

YOUNG EDITH (CONT'D)

I'm not...not going to get angry though. Thanks for the sandwich. I haven't eaten in two days.

Art is clearly troubled, but mostly lost for words.

OLD ART

Glass of water?

YOUNG EDITH

That'd be great.

Art stands and fills a glass of water from the sink.

Edith spies the music box, covered in dust, sitting on the edge of the kitchen counter. She looks away.

The glass of water is set in front of her.

OLD ART

The machine I'm making; I've been working on it ever since you left.

He sits down across from her again. Talking about his work makes him warmer and more talkative.

OLD ART (CONT'D)

I had to stop working on anything else. I had to focus, you see. Some people did a lot of speculating. They came up with some real funny thoughts on what I might be making. One paper said it was a teleporting machine. I heard some folks thought it was a...a tiny house that you add water to, and it grows full size. Haha, ridiculous ideas.

He pauses a moment, chuckling. This annoys Edith.

OLD ART (CONT'D)

I was on the train after you'd... gone...and I got the whole idea for it. I skipped my conference and came right back home so I could put it together. It just got a little complicated, and it's taking longer than I expected. I still can't quite get it right.

YOUNG EDITH

So, I go missing, and the first thought on your mind is "I know what I'm gonna make next!" But hey, at least you skipped your conference for it.

Old Art frowns. He sees the music box on the counter. He smiles, reaches for it and holds it close.

OLD ART

I kept this. Every time I see it, it reminds me of you.

He starts to wind it up. Art places it on the table and smiles. The music begins to play.

Edith watches for a few moments, gritting her teeth.

She can't take it anymore. She throws her chair back and stands. She grabs the music box and smashes it against the table. Looking straight at Art, she smashes it again.

Horror fills Art's eyes. He doesn't understand.

Edith storms out of the room. Art looks after her, shaken.

INT. ART'S BATHROOM, 1990 - DAY

Young Edith runs into the bathroom and slams the door behind her. She shuts the toilet lid and sits down. She's shaking.

The music box is still in her hand. Disgusted, she opens her purse and throws the box inside.

She digs around inside the purse, and pulls out a SYRINGE.

Then she pulls back her shirt sleeve, revealing a series of scars on her inner elbow, some of them infected.

Then from her purse she produces a tiny bag, containing a dusting of white powder. She dumps powder onto a spoon, then takes out a lighter and starts heating the spoon.

There's a knock on the door.

Startled, Edith drops the spoon. The powder scatters over the floor. She falls to her hands and knees, muttering.

YOUNG EDITH

Oh no, no, you're shitting me.

The knock at the door is repeated, softly.

Edith scoops a tiny amount of the powder onto the side of her hand. Desperately she sniffs it. She shuts her eyes, then quickly packs the supplies back into her purse.

She stands up and opens the door.

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1990 - DAY

Old Art is waiting, hands in his pockets, outside the bathroom door as Young Edith emerges.

OLD ART

Did I say something wrong?

Edith glares at him, then walks past to the back door.

EXT. ART'S BACK YARD, 1990 - DAY

Young Edith steps outside. She takes out a cigarette and lights it. Old Art sheepishly joins her on the porch.

OLD ART

I never forgot about you. When you left...where did you go?

She takes a long draw on the cigarette.

YOUNG EDITH

Lots of places. I'm only here to ask you for money. I'm so...fucked up that my only option is to come back here and beg from...you.

OLD ART

Alright. I don't have much, but I can...

YOUNG EDITH

The least you could do, after being the world's worst father, was make it easy to hate you, so I'd feel fine demanding money from you. But you stand there like a helpless, clueless...whatever you are.

(MORE)

YOUNG EDITH (CONT'D)

I don't even know what you are. Are you a person? Do you have feelings?

OLD ART

I...do.

YOUNG EDITH

It's pointless. I don't want to talk to you, and you never wanted to talk to me. Nevermind.

She flicks away her cigarette.

She steps away. In her rush, her foot hits the paving stone.

OLD ART

Don't step on the...

The stone shoots up, knocking Edith flat on her back.

Art runs to Edith and, pushing the spring-loaded stone out of the way, puts his hand on her head.

OLD ART (CONT'D)

Damn. Damn. Are you alright? Does it hurt?

Edith sits up and starts laughing bitterly.

YOUNG EDITH

Of course it hurts. But this is the most affection I've seen from you since I was five.

Art suddenly feels awkward, and he moves away from her. His lips and eyes twitch. He forces himself to speak.

OLD ART

When you were younger, I thought a lot of things were important that weren't. Then you left, and I figured out how wrong I was.

YOUNG EDITH

A lot of difference that made. Did you even try to find me?

OLD ART

It wouldn't have mattered. I'd already done all the damage. So I came up with something better.

Bitter realization comes over Edith.

YOUNG EDITH

Oh. Is this what your big invention was all about?

Art nods earnestly. Excitedly, even.

OLD ART

I want to show you. It's not done yet, but I can tell you what it's meant to do.

He nods toward the workshop.

YOUNG EDITH

No!

Art can't help himself but blurt out his explanation, as if it's an exciting secret that's long been held inside.

OLD ART

It's a machine...that'll let me go back. It'll let me go back so I can change things, and be a better... dad.

Edith can't believe what she's hearing.

YOUNG EDITH

A time machine?

OLD ART

That's...a bit of a simplification. Not the most accurate term for it. But a machine...yes...for time.

YOUNG EDITH

To fix a relationship you spent fourteen years screwing up, you spend two decades inventing something to fix it for you.

Art stands up and goes to the door of the warehouse.

OLD ART

Let me show it to you.

Now Edith stands up.

YOUNG EDITH

I'm not indulging you.

OLD ART

But, I'm going to fix it all. I just need a little more time to finish it...

Tears come into Edith's eyes.

YOUNG EDITH

Am I one of your machines?
Something you can just fix?

Art stammers but can't say anything.

YOUNG EDITH (CONT'D)

A lot's happened while you've been in there. Your daughter, your little girl grew up. She made a lot of friends that weren't any good. She got stuck with some bad habits. She got pregnant with a kid she didn't want, so she got rid of it. Did you ever think you'd have a grandson? Because you did, but he's gone now, because the thought of raising a kid, when my only example of a parent was you, was too much of a nightmare. And then...then your daughter got sick. Really sick. It's something nobody can fix, even if I had a million dollars and the best doctors. So, I get to know what's gonna kill me, almost like I've got my own time machine to the future.

Art is too horror stricken to speak. He leans back against the workshop door. Edith lights up another cigarette.

YOUNG EDITH (CONT'D)

I tried never to put the blame on anyone but me. After all, it was my stupid, shitty decisions. But that was me lying to myself, because I've always known I blamed you.

OLD ART

Eddie. Oh, Edie.

YOUNG EDITH

I don't want your money anymore. I don't wanna think about you. Have fun working on your time machine.

She throws the cigarette at his feet and walks away.

Art sits on the ground, staring at the cigarette as it slowly burns out on the ground. His face is emotionless.

EXT. MOTEL, 1990 - EVENING

The sun goes down. A few birds chirp.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, 1990 - NIGHT

Edith sits on the bed, her knees at her chin. A burning cigarette is in her hand, but she's forgotten about it.

Her eyes are dead, staring straight ahead at something on the bed: the smashed music box.

Suddenly all the lights in the motel get brighter...then they go dark.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jon is dumbstruck, saddened by Edith's story.

Edith looks out the window at Arthur, who is still working feverishly in the shed, parts spilling out over the lawn.

JON

That was the last time you saw him?

EDITH

Not how you thought it would be, is it? If Arthur turns into my father, I'm going to blame you. I've done all I could.

Edith stands up and walks out of the house.

Jon watches her go, looking confused and ethically torn.

He walks to the back door, and looks out at Arthur. Then he turns, steps back to the kitchen, and pours himself a drink.

EXT. EDITH'S HOUSE - DAY

Edith pulls her car up to the house, where there is already a BLACK SUV waiting.

Edith and Lindsey get out of the car. They're surprised to see a stranger by the SUV. It's a SUITED MAN: black suit, tall, middle-aged and intimidating. He nods a greeting.

EDITH

Can I help you?

SUITED MAN

I hope you can. I'm looking for Arthur Walsh.

LINDSEY

Arthur's not in trouble, is he?

SUITED MAN

No trouble, unless we should be worried about his recent arrest. Should we be worried about that?

EDITH

About that? No.

SUITED MAN

Is he staying here? I would prefer to wait for him. May I?

EDITH

I don't let strangers in my house.

He holds up a government badge.

SUITED MAN

Understood. I represent a joint task force of the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of Science and Technology. I just need to check in on Arthur, and then I'll be on my way.

Edith thinks about this for a moment.

EDITH

Well I can't tell you when he'll be back. But you can wait.

She opens the front door, still eying him suspiciously.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

All three walk inside the house. Edith motions to a chair. At the same time, she realizes she's still holding the 1990 newspaper, and she drops it on the coffee table.

SUITED MAN

I appreciate your cooperation.

He sits down down rigidly, looks around. He picks up the 1990 newspaper and opens it.

Lindsey eyes the man suspiciously.

INT. EDITH'S KITCHEN - DAY

Lindsey and Edith walk together into the kitchen.

LINDSEY

Maybe he can just wait. Maybe you can just wait. But I can't. Whatever it is that's got Arthur distracted, I don't know what it is, or how to compete with it.

Edith sighs, and holds out her hand to "wait."

From her pocket she pulls the ENVELOPE. She opens it and takes out the key, which she uses to open the locked door near the kitchen. Lindsey tries to follow.

EDITH

No. You wait here.

Edith descends a flight of stairs, into darkness.

A few moments later she comes back up, carrying the mechanical BABY CARRIAGE. She shuts the door behind her.

LINDSEY

What's that supposed to be?

EDITH

My father made it for me. I used to push Arthur around in it too.

LINDSEY

I have a stroller already.

EDITH

That's not the point. What Arthur is...what Arthur needs, is to see work as his family, and family as his work. Do you understand?

Lindsey shrugs helplessly. So Edith points to the stroller, then puts her hand on Lindsey's belly.

EDITH (CONT'D)

If this is his project...if *this* is his project, then you won't ever lose him even if you try.

Lindsey smiles, then turns her attention to the living room.

LINDSEY

What *is* he doing here anyway?

EXT./INT. JON'S SHED - EVENING

Circuits, wires, nuts and bolts are scattered all across the grass. We can hear the sound of clinking and banging.

Jon walks across the grass, stepping carefully. He carries a plate of food, which he sets down inside the shed.

JON
Made you some dinner.

Arthur emerges, his hands and face filthy.

JON (CONT'D)
How's it coming?

Arthur unceremoniously starts cramming food into his mouth.

Jon looks inside, sees a heap of connected wires and pipes.

ARTHUR
It's not going to happen overnight.

JON
No. I didn't think it would. But
it's going well?

Arthur swallows his mouthful of food, and beckons for Jon to follow him inside the shed.

They both stand over the small pile of circuitry that Arthur has been working on.

ARTHUR
I usually build with computers.
When something is in my head, it
only takes a few minutes to
realize. All this is different. I
can...see it...but it comes
together so slowly.

His eyes are ablaze with crazed frustration.

JON
But...that was expected, right?

ARTHUR
It took him decades to build this,
and he knew what he was doing.

JON
How long will it take you?

Arthur stuffs more food into his mouth.

ARTHUR

At the rate the first power unit is going, the whole thing won't take more than six years. That's not counting fine-tuning the sensors.

Jon looks at him in disbelief. Arthur is serious.

JON

Six years?

Arthur nods, impatient but unconcerned.

JON (CONT'D)

Oh. Okay then.

Arthur grabs a tool and gets right back to work.

JON (CONT'D)

Do you have that kind of time?

ARTHUR

What do you mean?

JON

Well, you don't live here.

Arthur blinks a few times and realizes that Jon is right.

ARTHUR

Right. We could have all this shipped to me at home. I don't have much space, but maybe if we got a warehouse...but Lindsey might not like me spending money on that... You could rent me a warehouse!

Jon, overwhelmed, sits down in the doorway of the shed. He takes a long, hard look at the ruined machines around him.

JON

I think you should go, Arthur.

ARTHUR

Go?

JON

Yeah. Whatever the machine was...it's not worth this.

ARTHUR

Not worth what?

JON

Arthur...meeting you was just like watching Art Walsh at work again. And I thought...I thought I could use you to change the past. But for all the good he did, Art Walsh hurt someone too. I can't let you hurt her the same way.

ARTHUR

I'm just trying to finish what he started, and find out what happened to him. If my mom won't tell us, how else will we find out?

JON

Your mom went through more than you can possibly imagine, because of him. I know, because I tried to reach out to her after she ran away. She didn't want to talk to me or anyone else that reminded her of him. Eventually she did come back, but it was like a light had gone out. She was broken and fragile. I only cared about her because I hoped she'd tell me about that damned machine. But you were enough for her. I watched her turn her life around and become the most lovely, hopeful person I've ever known. I can't be a part of undoing that.

Arthur looks back and forth, helpless and confused.

ARTHUR

You're just gonna let all the work go to waste? I don't understand...

JON

Just go home, Arthur. Please.

ARTHUR

But if I can just figure out what it is...

JON

Please!

Slowly, reluctantly, Arthur steps out of the shed. Jon closes the door, refusing to make eye contact.

Arthur stumbles away through the back yard. Jon shuts his eyes, trying to keep from crying.

EXT. JON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Arthur emerges from the front door of Jon's house.

At that moment, the black SUV is pulling up to the driveway.

Lindsey steps out of the passenger seat. She's surprised to see Arthur, and she smiles as they make eye contact with one another.

The Suited Man pulls the mechanical baby carriage out of the SUV, and pushes it to Lindsey.

SUITED MAN

Mr. Walsh, I'm Bradley. McCormick sent me to check in on you and make sure you get back safely.

Arthur rigidly shakes the Suited Man's hand, but his face brightens when he sees the device.

ARTHUR

I remember this.

LINDSEY

Art made it for your mom. I was thinking, if we go home now, maybe you'll have time to build one like it for our...our little girl.

ARTHUR

Our little...girl?

Lindsey nods. With a smile on his face, Arthur walks toward his own car. Lindsey nods appreciatively at the Suited Man, and then gets in the car with Arthur.

Both cars pull out from the driveway, the black SUV following a ways behind the other.

A moment later, Jon comes out of the house. He looks down at the baby carriage that's been left behind.

JON

This one's new. I never knew about this one.

He examines it, prying and pushing. He flicks a hidden lever, and the baby carriage folds into a freestanding crib.

Jon laughs innocently, then sits down beside the contraption, his smile fading into sadness.

INT./EXT. ARTHUR'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Arthur drives his car on a lonely highway. Lindsey stirs in the passenger seat, asleep.

Arthur's eyes flutter, and his head bobs up and down. He lifts his head quickly, and gives himself a smack.

He looks at the car clock. It reads 5:36.

He glances at his wristwatch. The face reads 5:34.

ARTHUR

Fast.

He reaches over to adjust the car clock.

As he reaches, headlights illuminate his face. A car horn honks, and he quickly corrects the car.

He breathes deeply, then reaches for the dash clock again.

Arthur suddenly becomes thoughtful. He fixes his eyes straight ahead. His head tilts to the side and his jaw starts to work.

INSERT SHOT: IMAGES OF THE PAPER BLUEPRINTS.

Arthur's focus intensifies. His eyes look ahead but he's not looking at the road. He's not looking at anything.

As before, we and the camera zoom into Arthur's head...

INT. MACHINE OF GEARS

Again, we see the inner workings of his brain.

We zoom out through the gears, and they begin to look like a coherent, bizarre-looking clock...

Then, a LIGHTBULB turns on with a ding sound.

We hear a CRASH sound faintly in the distance.

EXT. HIGHWAY ROADSIDE - NIGHT

Arthur's closed eyes are all we can see. They are illuminated by firelight. His eyes shoot open. Arthur smiles, then laughs. He mutters to himself.

ARTHUR

I know what it is. I know what it is!

He pulls a pen out of his pocket. Then he feels around in his pockets, but finds they're empty.

So he starts frantically writing equations on his arm.

ARTHUR

It can work. I know it can work.

But then he hears a sound behind him. A faint cry.

LINDSEY (O.S.)

...Arthur...

The excitement fades from Arthur's face. As he looks at his hand, a drop of blood falls onto it.

He puts his hand to his head: beneath his matted hair is a pool of blood.

He stands up. He's dizzy, nearly falling over.

Behind him, his car is a WRECK. It has crashed into a telephone pole on the side of the highway. The engine is on fire. The driver's door is open. Lindsey is still inside.

Arthur drops his pen in horror, and rushes to the car.

Without a word, Arthur tries to open the passenger door. It's jammed shut. He sprints around to the driver's side.

INT. ARTHUR'S CAR WRECK - NIGHT

Frantic, Arthur unbuckles Lindsey's seatbelt.

Lindsey is half-awake, but murmuring incoherently. Arthur tries to pull her out, but her leg is stuck.

ARTHUR

Your leg is stuck. Lindsey. You need to lift your leg. Can you hear me? Lift your leg!

Lindsey's eyes open a little. She lifts her leg.

Arthur heaves Lindsey out through the driver's door.

EXT. HIGHWAY ROADSIDE - MORNING

Arthur drags Lindsey away from the wreck.

The car fire grows, consuming the front end of the car.

Once across the road, Arthur sits down and holds Lindsey tight. He starts breathing heavily, having a panic attack.

ARTHUR

Stupid. Stupid stupid stupid.

His eyes fill with tears of anger, and he makes a fist, which he uses to beat the uninjured side of his head repeatedly.

Lindsey's eyes open.

LINDSEY

Arthur. You crashed us.

ARTHUR

Lindsey. You're okay. You're okay.

He holds her tight, while the car burns behind them.

Just then the black SUV pulls up. The Suited Man jumps out.

SUITED MAN

Are you alright, Mr. Walsh?

Arthur is sobbing now, and he doesn't answer.

The Suited Man pulls out a phone to make a call.

INT. AMBULANCE (MOVING) - DAY

Lindsey is on a stretcher in the ambulance, hooked to an IV. A PARAMEDIC is hovering over her.

Arthur is in the ambulance with them. His head is bandaged.

ARTHUR

Can you tell me if she's alright?
Is the baby alright?

PARAMEDIC

I can only tell you so much right now, but we're getting her to the hospital as fast as we can. You need to rest.

ARTHUR

I shouldn't have been driving. If she dies...if she dies...

Lindsey, half-awake, reaches out and grabs Arthur's arm.

LINDSEY
You're not helping, Arthur.

ARTHUR
Okay. Okay.

Arthur nods, and curls up against the side of the ambulance. His eyes flutter. The sounds of his surroundings fade away.

INT. MACHINE OF GEARS

Arthur's thought process takes the shape of an enormous clock, ticking...then stopping and ticking backward.

INT. ARTHUR'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Arthur snaps awake, sitting up in a hospital bed. He's hooked up to a heart monitor. His head is bandaged and he's wearing a hospital gown.

Sandra the nurse is in the process of wrapping his arm.

SANDRA
Welcome back, Mr. Walsh.

With frantic urgency, Arthur looks at the notes he'd written on his arm. They are smeared, but mostly intact.

ARTHUR
No no, don't cover up my notes.

SANDRA
Your wrist is sprained. On top of that, you had a concussion. It was minor, but with the signs of exhaustion you're showing, we need to keep you here for a while...

Arthur tears his way off the bed and stands up.

ARTHUR
I need a phone.

SANDRA
But...where do you think you're going?

Arthur ignores her and walks out of the room.

A moment later he comes back in. He spots his pants draped over a chair in the room.

ARTHUR
Pants.

He doesn't grab the pants; he just reaches into the pocket and retrieves Jon's business card. Then he leaves again.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - DAY

Arthur, still slightly dazed, walks up to the front desk of the hospital. He leans against the desk and, somewhat rudely, addresses the Receptionist.

ARTHUR

Hey. I need to use the phone.

RECEPTIONIST

Is this an emergency call? There are phones for patients in the...

ARTHUR

I just...can I use the phone?

Arthur has already reached over the desk for the phone. Referencing the business card, he punches in the numbers.

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - DAY

The bottle of liquor is empty on the floor.

Jon is asleep, fully clothed, in the baby carriage. He's clutching the unfinished manuscript.

The phone rings.

Jon pulls himself up with a grunt and a moan. Eyes still half-closed, he stands and slowly picks up the phone.

JON

Hello?

We can barely hear Arthur's voice as he talks loudly and quickly on the other end.

ARTHUR (ON PHONE)

I got it figured out! I know what Art was trying to do! The machine! It's meant for time distortion!

JON

Slow down, Arthur.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - DAY

Arthur keeps speaking loudly into the phone, disturbing the Receptionist and everyone else nearby.

ARTHUR

Can you believe it? And in theory it's not unworkable. When you think about it it seems crazy but he was onto something - really onto something. What was it you told me? Everything he made always worked...

JON (ON PHONE)

When did you have time to figure this out? Where are you?

ARTHUR

I'm at...the hospital...

Arthur stops and looks around. He's been followed by both Sandra and the Suited Man. They're looking at him sternly.

Slowly he puts down the phone. He remembers where he is. His mouth falls open and the excitement vanishes.

INT. LINDSEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Arthur walks slowly into a hospital room. There, Lindsey is laying in a cast, heart monitor and bandages. She's awake.

ARTHUR

Lindsey...

She turns her head, giving him an angry glare.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

They...they told me you're alright. That the baby's alright.

LINDSEY

No thanks to you. You could have killed us this time.

ARTHUR

Yeah.

Arthur takes a step closer to the bed.

LINDSEY

No. Stop. I can't, right now.

ARTHUR

You can't what?

LINDSEY

Do it. I can't do it.

ARTHUR
Lindsey...

He stammers, utterly lost for words.

LINDSEY
Lindsey, what? If you have
something to say, say it.

He just stares at her, eyes wide.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)
Alright. Leave my room. This is a
break-up conversation.

Arthur's face freezes. In helpless disbelief, he backs out
of the room. He steps into the hall, out of view.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)
Arthur...

He pokes his head back into the room.

LINDSEY (CONT'D)
Nevermind. Nevermind.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Arthur stands alone, looking lost.

The Suited Man approaches, holding Arthur's clothes.

SUITED MAN
Mr. Walsh? Did you want these?

ARTHUR
Just...can I have a minute alone?

The Suited Man nods, hands Arthur the clothes, and steps
away. Arthur wanders farther down the hallway, vanishing
around a corner.

The Suited Man sits down, and pulls the 1990 newspaper out
of his pocket. He opens it up and commences working on a
crossword puzzle.

After a few moments he looks up, and glances at a clock.
Arthur is nowhere to be seen.

INT. LINDSEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Lindsey reaches for a remote control, and she turns on the
TV in her room.

An announcement sounds over the loudspeaker:

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
 Paging Arthur Walsh. Arthur Walsh,
 if you're in the hospital, please
 report to the front desk.

A moment later, the Suited Man appears at the door.

SUITED MAN
 Excuse me, Mrs. Walsh...did Mr.
 Walsh happen to mention if he was
 going out, and where he might be
 headed?

LINDSEY
 No...why?

SUITED MAN
 I'm sorry to bother you.

The man briskly walks away. Lindsey looks concerned.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

The Suited Man runs out the front doors, looking around at all the cars in the parking lot. There's no sign of Arthur.

EXT. JON'S HOUSE - DAY

Jon walks out his front door, and locks it behind him.

Just then, the black SUV pulls up out front. The Suited Man and Edith both get out. Edith rushes angrily at Jon.

JON
 Good morning.

EDITH
 You son of a bitch. Where the hell
 is Arthur?

JON
 Arthur? I was just going to go see
 him. He called from the hospital...

EDITH
 Well he's not there now. Nobody
 seems to know where he went.

JON
 Can't someone get in touch with
 Lindsey? She left with him...

EDITH

Do you know why he was at the hospital? He crashed, Lindsey got hurt, and now he's gone.

JON

Oh...God. Edith...

EDITH

And honestly, Jon, it's your fault. If you hadn't kept inserting yourself into my family's business...

JON

You can't put that on me, okay? I know, I'm sorry, I have been an ass. But I told Arthur, last night, I told him to give it up. I told him to leave with his wife.

EDITH

Oh, so thirty years too late you finally step away, and that makes all your interference alright?

JON

My interference has provided you with a home...

EDITH

You tricked me with that, buying up everything at the estate sales. I never wanted your money.

JON

It provided Arthur with an education...

EDITH

Once, just once I let you bully me into paying for his college, and you're gonna hold that over me?

JON

Well, without his education, he'd just be...

EDITH

What? He'd be what?

JON

He'd be stuck in a world that's too small for him, spinning his gears and cobbling together inventions out of junkyard scraps until everyone forgets about him.

EDITH

Don't use Arthur to make up for my father's failings.

JON

Your father deserved more. When he finally started to get the recognition he deserved, he gave it all up and hid in his workshop. All because...

EDITH

There it is. You blame me for running away, ruining his life.

Finally Jon loses his temper.

JON

I blame him! And sure, I blame you, and me, and this whole damn town! It's as if the world conspired to take an incredible mind and let it go to waste on a dusty shelf.

Edith doesn't respond. Jon calms himself down.

JON (CONT'D)

And you let it happen. For all those years you kept his story...kept him all to yourself.

The Suited Man steps forward and clears his throat.

SUITED MAN

I'm sorry. If we don't locate Mr. Walsh in a timely manner, I'm going to need to make some unpleasant phone calls...

Both Edith and Jon turn on the Suited Man.

EDITH

What's it to you, anyway?!

Edith suddenly goes limp, exhausted from the emotion. Jon and the Suited Man rush to catch her.

JON

Edith...

EDITH

I'm...I'm alright. Just tired.

The Suited Man checks her pulse.

SUITED MAN

She seems okay.

EDITH

Get me to the hospital. Not for me. I want to talk to Lindsey. And maybe Arthur will come back for her after all. That's all I can think. He'll come back for Lindsey.

The Suited Man helps Edith into his SUV.

JON

I'll follow along, then.

He gets into his own car.

INT. BLACK SUV (MOVING) - DAY

The Suited Man drives, with Edith sitting weakly in the passenger seat.

SUITED MAN

The fact is, Mr. Walsh has not been forthcoming with his employers at McCormick Virtual Designs about his sabbatical, and his absence has become a cause for concern.

EDITH

Concern, my ass. He's put eight years into that career. They can spare him a week to visit his mom.

SUITED MAN

Under normal circumstances, that may be true. McCormick Virtual Designs operates partly as a government contractor for high clearance scientific and security software. Your son - he left in the middle of a crucial project I am not at liberty to discuss. Has he discussed it with you or anyone else?

EDITH

No. And if he did, nobody would know what he was talking about.

SUITED MAN

Mr. Walsh is the only developer who can finish the project. Without him, it collapses and millions of taxpayer dollars go to waste.

Edith looks out the window, visibly impressed.

SUITED MAN (CONT'D)

His is a once-in-a-generation mind, developing technologies most people wouldn't think possible.

EDITH

Where have I heard that one before.

SUITED MAN

Do you, in fact, believe he'll come back to the hospital?

EDITH

Just wait with us. He'll be there. He'll be there.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - DAY

Edith weakly hobbles into the hospital, as the Suited Man walks behind her.

The Receptionist sees her and smiles warmly.

RECEPTIONIST

Mrs. Walsh! It's good to see you.

EDITH

It's good to walk in here on my own two feet for once.

Edith makes her way toward the hallway. The Suited Man approaches the desk.

SUITED MAN

Still no sign of him?

The Receptionist shakes her head.

INT. LINDSEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Lindsey is sitting up now, looking mostly recovered.

Edith appears at the door.

EDITH
Knock knock.

LINDSEY
I don't know where he is.

EDITH
And here I was just coming by to
talk about you. Arthur can wait.

Lindsey manages a smile.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Jon arrives in the hospital, looks down the hall and sees the Suited Man seated by a door.

Jon walks toward him, passing the open door to Lindsey's room. He briefly meets Lindsey's eyes, before passing the room and sitting down next to the Suited Man.

The Suited Man is once again playing the crossword puzzle in the 1990 newspaper. He's having some trouble.

JON
It's "Wells."

SUITED MAN
Did you see the clue?

JON
H.G. Wrote "The Time Machine." Kind
of a coincidence, considering...

He looks around, trying to find some source of small talk.

JON (CONT'D)
You know that newspaper, it was one
of my first editions. My company.

The man turns it over to see the front page.

SUITED MAN
Congratulations.

Jon spots one of the articles: "POWER SURGE IN RAINDUST: THE BIGGEST ELECTRICAL FAILURE OF THE DECADE," dated APRIL 21.

JON
Can I see that?

He snatches the paper away from the Suited Man.

He quickly scans the article. It mentions that the power surge happened on APRIL 19TH, 1990.

JON

Now, that *is* a coincidence.

Just then, Edith comes out into the hallway. She sees Jon and sits across from him.

For a moment they stare at each other tensely. Then Edith beckons for him to sit beside her. Jon leaves the newspaper with the Suited Man, and sits beside Edith.

EDITH

Lindsey told me, you weren't lying about telling Arthur to go home.

JON

No. I wasn't lying.

Edith reaches into her pocket and pulls out the small ENVELOPE. It says "Jon" on the front.

EDITH

Not for now. For later. The idea was to leave it for you when I die. But now seems good, too. It's my way of saying thank you. And sorry.

JON

For what?

EDITH

You really did want what was best for me and Arthur. Even if most of the time that's just because it also happened to be what was best for you.

Jon chuckles to himself.

JON

Art Walsh messed us both up, didn't he? I think...I think we both just wanted to be loved by him, in our own ways.

EDITH

Everyone wants to be loved. But we don't always know what it looks like when we are.

Edith shuts her eyes. Her breathing becomes erratic. Then she opens her eyes and sighs.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Jon. Go to my house. There's a music box on the coffee table. I want it here for when Arthur comes.

JON

For when Arthur comes...yeah, I can do that.

EDITH

In the meantime, I'm gonna check myself in. If I may be brutally honest, I feel like shit.

Edith stands up, and tries to wave down Sandra. But her eyes roll back and she collapses on the floor.

Jon leaps to help her, as does the Suited Man.

JON

Hey! Can someone help? Edith?

The nurses swarm, and sweep Edith into one of the rooms.

Jon watches with dreamlike horror.

INT. JON'S CAR - NIGHT

Jon sits down in his car, in the hospital parking lot.

He slowly pulls the envelope out of his pocket, and even more slowly opens it.

The KEY falls out onto his lap. His eyes widen as he starts to read the letter.

INT. JON'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Jon drives. The letter sits open on the seat next to him, but he holds the key between his fingers, fidgeting with it.

EDITH (V.O.)

Jon. This does not mean I've changed my mind. You're still a shithead for thinking you have any right to my family, or to my father or his work. I'm giving this to you because I need something from you, and I know you'll do the right thing.

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jon walks inside Edith's house, slowly pacing through the living room with something like respect.

The music box is there, sitting on the coffee table. Jon picks it up.

EDITH (V.O.)

To put it bluntly, I'm going to be dead soon. Arthur and Lindsey of course will inherit everything, but you need to make sure there's one thing they never see.

Jon turns his attention to the key in his other hand.

He looks around the living room and kitchen, making a mental note of all the open doors.

There's just the one door that's shut. Jon stares at it before approaching it.

EDITH (V.O.)

It's something that belonged to my father. You need to take it. I know you will because you can't help yourself. You need to keep it, or hide it, or smash it. Whatever you do, don't write about it. Don't show it to anyone. Pretend it doesn't exist. Arthur, especially, can never know. Those are my terms. Maybe you won't finish your story, but at least you'll finally know for yourself. I hope you get some peace of mind.

Jon puts the key into the lock of the closed door. His hand starts to shake as he turns the doorknob and pushes open the door. A dark stairway leads down to a basement.

Jon eagerly steps inside, reaching for a hanging light switch string on the way down. A single lightbulb turns on.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

The basement is dim. Scanning over the room, Jon is surprised to see stacks of baby items. There is an old crib, and baby clothes, toys, etc.

He keeps walking forward. There is a shelf with some other items on it: old overalls, old leather shoes. There is a pair of GOGGLES that Jon holds for a moment, curiously.

On a shelf alongside some of the toys is a faint square of discoloration, a sign that something had sat there for a long time. He holds up the music box; it fits in the space.

There's a discolored mark on the floor too: a square, fitting the footprint of the mechanical baby carriage.

Jon curiously opens the music box and winds it up a little.

The two little figures in the music box, both covered in glued cracks, dance together.

Jon turns around to aim his flashlight at the far back corner of the room: something is standing there in the dark. A seven foot tall object, covered by a blanket.

The music is still playing as Jon walks slowly and reverently toward the object.

He cautiously reaches for the blanket...and he pulls it down.

There stands the TIME MACHINE. It is tall and wide enough for a person to stand in - an eccentric puzzle of pipes, tubes, wires, nuts and bolts.

Jon's face is awash with awe and joy.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Edith, wearing an oxygen tube, sleeps peacefully, but her eyes twitch. She's dreaming.

The music box tune still plays...and it almost seems like Edith can hear it playing in her dreams.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. MOTEL ROOM, 1990 - NIGHT

Young Edith sits on her bed, staring at the music box just as we've already seen her. She reaches down and winds it up.

She frowns as the music goes on. She wipes her hand across her face, but tears appear in her eyes.

EXT. ART'S WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

Old Art has not moved since Young Edith had walked away. He's sitting on the ground at the door of the workshop, his knees folded up near his chin.

But now, he's crying. A tearful cough escalates into uncontrollable sobbing.

He takes a few deep breathes, steadying himself.

He lowers his head a little, and shuts his eyes.

He smiles through his tears, and whispers...

OLD ART

Do you remember how we used to
dance?

INT. ART WALSH'S LIVING ROOM, 1965 - NIGHT

Once again, for only a brief moment, we watch Young Art dancing with little Child Edith. They both smile.

EXT. ART'S WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

Old Art's smile fades and his frown returns. It's a resolute frown. He's made a decision.

OLD ART

I'm sorry I stopped dancing.

He stands up straight as an arrow, and opens up the workshop.

INT. WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

Old Art switches on the lights in his workshop.

We see the space in its full glory, populated by every one of his inventions.

In the middle of the room, surrounded by hundreds of metal parts scattered on the floor, stands the TIME MACHINE.

Art walks over to it. He lays a hand on it. He addresses it as if talking with a person.

OLD ART

I don't know if you're quite ready
yet. Maybe you won't even work. But
I can't wait any longer.

He flips a switch mounted to a circuit box on the side of the machine.

The machine comes to life. It buzzes, clanks and whistles. It's not the clean, efficient time machine of sci-fi, but a clunky conglomeration of mechanical and electrical parts.

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jon reaches cautiously for the switch. He grabs hold of it, and pulls it down.

The machine starts to whirr, shake and clank, as sparks shoot out and little lights blink.

FLASHBACK RESUMES

INT. WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

Old Art takes off his shirt and pants, dropping them on the floor nearby. Then he steps up the edge of the machine.

OLD ART

I promised I would fix us, Edie.
I'm going to dance with you again.

He steps inside.

Loud sounds of electrical charges and grinding gears. The machine rumbles and shakes. A blinding light shines out of it, washing the room in brightness.

PAUSE FLASHBACK

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jon looks around. He has nothing else in his hands but the music box.

His eyes brighten with excitement, he cautiously sets the music box on the floor, and pushes it slowly forward with his foot until it's inside the machine...

The noises get loud and the light blazes bright. Jon has to cover his eyes.

FLASHBACK RESUMES

INT. ART'S WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

The bright light goes out. The power shuts off and the room goes black.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, 1990 - NIGHT

Young Edith is surprised as all the lights surge and the power goes out in the motel.

END FLASHBACK

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jon is washed with bright white light, then suddenly plunged into darkness.

The basement entry lightbulb gets brighter, then goes out.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

While Edith still sleeps, all the lights in the room flicker, go out and come back on.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

The Suited Man looks up from his crossword puzzle as the lights flicker.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Jon looks down at the floor...the music box is still there.

He reaches down slowly, his fingers quivering. He picks up the box.

The glue marks and cracks are gone. The music box looks like it's new. But Jon doesn't notice the difference.

Instead, Jon looks slightly disappointed. He shrugs, smiles in resignation, and walks out of the basement.

INT. JON'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

As he drives his car, Jon can't keep his face steady: he twitches with short, suppressed bursts of laughter, alternating with near moments of crying.

INT. LINDSEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Lindsey is woken by the sound of TV static. The lights are still flickering in the room.

Sandra opens the door and pokes her head in.

SANDRA

Mrs. Walsh, I just want you to know not to worry about the lights. There's a power outage, but all the essential systems are on generators.

LINDSEY

Thanks. Is...is Arthur here?

Sandra shakes her head, and Lindsey sighs.

INT./EXT. JON'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Jon looks at the passenger seat, where the music box is sitting.

JON

Hmm. One more stop.

He turns the car sharply.

EXT. JON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jon pulls his car into his driveway, and he walks up to the house.

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Entering his house, Jon flips the light switch on. Nothing happens.

In the darkness, Jon goes straight toward the mechanical baby carriage.

He grabs it and begins to push it out of the kitchen, but then the OLD PHOTO, lit by a beam of moonlight, catches his eye. He moves closer to look at it one more time...

In the picture, Art is wearing the GOGGLES Jon had seen in the basement.

Jon looks closer. Then his eyes get wide. He looks at the baby carriage.

Jon's eyes open wide. He's had an epiphany.

He remembers voices repeating information we've heard:

SHERIFF (V.O.)

What's your date of birth?

ARTHUR (V.O.)

April 19th, 1990.

JON (V.O.)

...around the last time anyone ever saw Art, there was a power surge... I think he turned it on.

EDITH (V.O.)

The last time I saw my father was seventeen years after I left home.

Jon steps back in disbelief.

JON

No...

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. ART'S WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

Again we watch Old Art stepping into the time machine. It washes the whole room in blinding white light.

Old Art stands shirtless inside the machine. Lights dance across his skin, and strange noises sound around his head...

He smiles and opens his eyes.

When everything goes dark, Old Art is gone. But...our view only sees above where Art's knees had been. We cannot see the floor of the time machine.

INT. MOTEL ROOM, 1980 - NIGHT

Young Edith is sitting by the bed, looking over the music box, when the lights go out.

As if the power outage is a call to action, she stands up and takes the music box. She puts it into her purse, takes a deep breath, and strides out of the room.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

The workshop door is open. Inside all is dark and silent.

Young Edith runs inside the yard from the road, skipping around the paving stones to get back to the workshop.

YOUNG EDITH

Dad? Dad! I don't want to leave things like this. I want to talk.

She sees the open, silent workshop. She pauses, then continues slowly toward the building.

INT. ART'S WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

Young Edith steps inside. It's mostly dark.

There's the sound of a machine revving down, as it still gives off the occasional spark and jolt.

She sees the time machine in the glint of those sparks.

YOUNG EDITH

Dad? Are you in here?

There's no answer.

But there is another sound. A sound she didn't expect to hear: it's the noise of a CRYING BABY.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

The generators on the side of the workshop kick in. All the lights turn back on.

INT. ART'S WORKSHOP, 1990 - NIGHT

Young Edith looks around and shields her eyes as the lights turn on in the room.

Then her eyes focus and she sees:

On the floor, inside the machine, is a newborn BABY.

Young Edith looks back and forth, concerned and exhausted.

She tilts her head then, as if having a realization... She shakes her head and turns around, beginning to walk out.

Then she stops and turns back around. She stoops down and looks closely at the baby. It has the same eyes as Art.

Arthur is Art.

Edith puts a hand over her mouth in disbelief. Tears spring to her eyes. She collapses, falling into a sitting position.

After a few moments being frozen in disbelief, she slowly reaches a hand out toward the baby.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JON'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

All the lights turn on in Jon's house. Jon nearly falls over with his realization. He starts to laugh to himself.

JON

That's how it worked... Of course
it worked!

Then Jon suddenly remembers something serious, and his attitude becomes more urgent.

He stands up, clumsily pushing the baby carriage as he runs out of the house.

EXT. JON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Moving fast, Jon puts the baby carriage into his car, then he gets in and drives away.

INT. JON'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Jon has both hands on the wheel and he's driving fast.

JON

I know you're there. Please be there. Come on. Please be there.

EXT. ART'S HOUSE/ WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Jon pulls up to the old house. There are lights on inside the workshop, and the generator is running.

Jon pushes the baby carriage up to the fence, and gets zapped with electricity as he opens it. He laughs despite the shock.

He cautiously weaves his way past the paving stones, up to the door of the workshop.

He reaches for the handle. The door is locked. So he knocks.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

Please go away.

JON

It's me. Jon.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

What do you want?

JON

I...want to help with the machine.

A moment passes, then the door opens.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Arthur is looking exhausted. The workshop floor is covered in small electrical parts. Jon stops and gawks.

JON

Where did you get the parts?

ARTHUR

There's a refrigerator in the house. Water heater. Conduit. Lights. Or, anyway, there was.

JON
What about the blueprints?

ARTHUR
I don't need them. All in my head.

He goes back to the floor and continues his work. Jon pushes the baby carriage into the middle of Arthur's workspace.

JON
What are you doing, Arthur?

ARTHUR
I'm building it. I think my grandpa made it to go back and be a better father. It must not have worked. But I'll make sure it works for me.

JON
Art Walsh was wrong. He didn't need a time machine any more than you do. You have one. *Here.*

Jon indicates the baby carriage.

ARTHUR
That's just my old baby carriage.

JON
I see a time machine with two possible futures. In one future the seat is empty because, like lonely old Art Walsh, a father abandoned the people he loved; he decided it was easier to fix machines than to fix himself. In the other future, I see a smiling little girl, with a loving father who kept trying, again and again, to make sure people knew when he loved them, even when he didn't know how.

Jon looks at Arthur, who has tears coming down his face.

ARTHUR
I don't want to hurt anyone. But it's too late. I forget when I love people. Something is wrong with me.

Jon puts his arm around Arthur.

JON
There's nothing wrong with you, Arthur, and it's not too late.
(MORE)

JON (CONT'D)

Look at me - which of those futures
do you really want?

ARTHUR

I want the second one. The future
with the smiling little girl.

JON

That's all you need to say. If Art
Walsh had known it, it's all he
would have needed to say, too.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - MORNING

Jon's car pulls into the parking lot.

Arthur and Jon step out of the car. Jon is holding the music
box.

As he walks toward the doors, Arthur sees Lindsey, coming
out toward him.

For a moment they stop and look at each other. Then Arthur
steps forward and opens his arms.

ARTHUR

I know I'm not very good at saying
things like this...but I want to be
part of a family, with you. And
even when I get distracted...I
really, really love you. I want to
try to make you realize you're more
important than all my projects.

Lindsey nods, but she doesn't move forward to hug him.

LINDSEY

Thanks for saying all that, Arthur.
And thank you for coming back.

ARTHUR

Are you feeling better?

LINDSEY

I'm...I'm okay. They discharged me.
But you should go see your mom.

Arthur nods, as Jon comes up behind him. Jon and Arthur both
go into the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Jon and Arthur arrive at the door of Edith's room. Sandra greets them.

The Suited Man looks up, relief on his face to see Arthur.

ARTHUR

Is...is she...

SANDRA

Your mother has been stabilized.
She's in and out of consciousness.
She was awake just now...but
there's a possibility that one of
these times, she might not wake up.

Arthur nods slowly.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm sure that right now she would
love to see you.

Jon hands the music box to Arthur. Arthur glances at it curiously.

ARTHUR

Did you...do any work on this? I
thought I remembered it being
cracked...

Jon shrugs knowingly. Then Arthur takes a deep, nervous breath and walks into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Edith is drowsy but awake. She sees Arthur walking in. She smiles, though she has a hard time keeping her eyes open.

EDITH

I've never figured out how a person
can be so smart, and such an idiot
at the same time.

Arthur is a little confused.

EDITH (CONT'D)

I'm talking about you.

ARTHUR

Oh.

Edith gurgles out a laugh, and reaches out her arm.

EDITH

But...I knew you would be here. I didn't doubt it, ever. Come here.

Arthur comes closer. He sets down the music box, and Edith gives him a one-armed hug. For a long moment she holds him.

EDITH (CONT'D)

I want you to remember what I say right now: You were everything I needed you to be. You fixed what was broken, and I hope I did the same for you.

Arthur's eyes well up with tears. He pulls the wristwatch out of his pocket, and presses it into Edith's hand.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Oh...it's the machine for time you made for me.

Edith suddenly smiles. It's a wider smile than we've seen from her. She looks at Arthur.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Do you remember how we used to dance?

Edith weakly pushes herself until she's leaning on one arm.

ARTHUR

I don't know if that's a good idea.

EDITH

Don't make me pull you off the chair, Arthur.

Making a huge effort, Edith manages to barely stand up. Arthur grabs her around the shoulders.

Arthur looks down at the music box...but he doesn't have any free hands. So with no music, only the rhythm of the heart monitor beeps, he sways slowly, holding Edith in his arms.

Edith is on the very edge of consciousness.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Thank you for fixing it. I think we fixed each other.

ARTHUR

That's...that's good, mom.

Edith almost runs out of breath. She can only whisper...

EDITH
Did I ever tell you about Art
Walsh? My father?

ARTHUR
Yes you did.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. EDITH'S LIVING ROOM, 2000 - NIGHT

Young Edith runs through the house with Child Arthur slung over her back. Both are yelling and laughing.

INT. EDITH'S KITCHEN, 2000 - NIGHT

Young Edith sits at the table beside Child Arthur. They are doing coloring books together. Arthur reaches over and colors in Edith's book. Playfully, she colors over his.

He tackles her playfully.

EXT. EDITH'S BACK PORCH, 2000 - NIGHT

Child Arthur sits glumly on the porch swing.

Young Edith comes out of the house, carrying the music box. The scene replays as we've seen it before, with Young Edith pulling Arthur off the chair, inciting him to dance.

Child Arthur smiles and laughs. Edith's face fills with inexpressible satisfaction and peace.

INT. ART'S LIVING ROOM, 1965 - NIGHT

Again we see Art dancing with Child Edith in his living room, as we saw first at the beginning.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Edith is weak as she stands in Arthur's arms.

EDITH
I'm happy I got to dance again.

The machines start to beep frantically, and Edith slumps in Arthur's arms. Her smile never fades.

Nurses, including Sandra, rush into the room.

Sandra puts her hand on Arthur's shoulder.

With Sandra's help, Arthur slowly lowers Edith into the bed. The nurses all gather around, checking for vital signs.

Arthur steps back. Tears are in his eyes. She's gone.

After watching the nurses for a moment, he looks to his side. He's surprised to see Lindsey standing beside him.

He smiles at her through his tears.

She gives him a reassuring look, and then holds his hand.

INT. JON'S SHED - DAY

Jon packs all of the INVENTIONS, some disassembled and some intact, into boxes.

EXT. JON'S HOUSE - DAY

Jon walks out into his front yard. He watches with a smile as several WORKERS load all those boxes into a truck.

The truck's side reads: "RAINDUST HISTORY MUSEUM."

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Arthur again sits in a hospital room. He's smiling now, though tears rush down his face.

This time it's Lindsey in the bed. She's exhausted and sweaty, but breathing peacefully.

Sandra turns around, holding a BABY. She hands the baby carefully to Arthur.

Arthur takes the baby, at first overwhelmed and unsure how to handle it. He smiles with utter joy.

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jon looks at all the old newspapers and photos hung on the wall.

Confident, without guilt or hesitation, he takes them down and lays them carefully on the table.

Onto the wall, replacing the snippets, he mounts a large PLAQUE: "1997 JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR: JON PRITE."

He steps back and smiles proudly.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Several townspeople, including the Sheriff, Sandra, and Barbara, are gathered around an open grave. A casket is being lowered down.

Arthur is there with Lindsey beside him. Their baby is in the baby carriage.

Jon stands nearby. He watches the casket go down into the ground. He watches Arthur as the young man bursts into tears, requiring Lindsey to comfort him.

Jon smiles at the sight of the new family.

A LITTLE LATER

The crowd has disbanded. The ceremony is over.

Jon is walking back to his car. Arthur runs up behind him, trying to get his attention.

ARTHUR

Jon.

Jon turns around and stops walking.

JON

Arthur.

ARTHUR

I wanted to catch you before I left. We're heading back home today.

JON

I guess that makes sense. Your employers weren't going to let you stay gone forever.

ARTHUR

I'm surprised they didn't replace me after I took so much time off.

Jon glances across the cemetery: the Suited Man is waiting patiently by his black vehicle.

JON

That really surprises you?

ARTHUR

Anyway, I wanted to say...thank you. You helped a lot with everything.

(MORE)

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I'm happy I got to meet an old family friend like you.

Jon shakes his hand.

JON

I'm happy I got to meet you too.

Arthur smiles, still a little awkwardly, and turns to go. But he catches himself and spins around one last time.

ARTHUR

Oh, I keep forgetting to ask...did you ever find out anything more about the...the machine?

Jon just smiles.

JON

No. No I didn't. Should I let you know if I do?

Arthur shrugs.

ARTHUR

It doesn't really matter. I won't have time for that.

Jon looks relieved. But Arthur isn't done.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Instead when I have my work computer I might try troubleshooting the concept based on virtual simulations. I wasn't really supposed to tell anyone this, but it's a little bit similar to the project I've been doing at work. Don't tell anyone.

Jon doesn't know whether to frown or smile. The result is a combination of the two.

JON

I won't. Good luck.

Arthur walks away. Jon watches him climb into the Suited Man's SUV, along with Lindsey holding the baby.

JON

(whispering)

I hope it doesn't work.

He walks back to his car.

INT. JON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jon pours himself a drink. He sits with it for a minute.

He walks over to his TV.

He digs through a cabinet and finds an old VHS. He pops it into the VCR. A VIDEO starts to play.

Jon sets down his manuscript and flips to the end. He pulls out a pen and starts to write.

THE VIDEO RECORDING PLAYS

EXT. EDITH'S HOUSE, 1995 (VHS INTERVIEW) - DAY

It's the VHS footage of yet one more interview.

Young Edith is standing out by her mailbox. She doesn't seem particularly thrilled about the interview.

YOUNG JON (O.S.)

Would you be alright talking about what happened to your father, Art Walsh?

YOUNG EDITH

I don't think it's important to know what happened to him.

YOUNG JON (O.S.)

Why would you say that?

Edith thinks about the question. Her answer is sincere.

YOUNG EDITH

You think that the end of his story is the important part. But people's stories don't really have endings. When we spend our time looking for endings, we end up missing the beginnings and the middles.

YOUNG JON (O.S.)

What do you mean, that people's stories don't have endings?

YOUNG EDITH

A person's story keeps going because whether he likes it or not, he affected other people's stories, and that keeps going forever.

(MORE)

YOUNG EDITH (CONT'D)
Look, Jon, I have to get inside.
Arthur's probably awake from his
nap...

Edith turns to go back inside her house.

YOUNG JON (O.S.)
One last question! Do you know what
happened to Art's final invention?

She hesitates before she answers.

YOUNG EDITH
I wasn't around for the time he
spent making that, whatever it was.
But I have no reason to doubt what
everybody used to say about him.

YOUNG JON (O.S.)
And what's that?

YOUNG EDITH
That he never made anything that
didn't work.

INT./EXT. JON'S SHED - DAY

Jon opens the shed and looks inside.

The TIME MACHINE sits in the middle of the empty space.

Jon glows with admiration as he looks at it.

INT. BABY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Arthur puts his little baby into a crib. He kisses the baby
and sets it down.

The music box is playing beside the crib.

Arthur exits the room. Our view moves in on the music box.

We get closer and closer...the two dancing figurines become
more and more clear.

The closer we get, the clearer we see that the figurines are
actually OLD ART dancing with YOUNG EDITH.

Then we can see their faces. Peacefully they smile as they
hold each other, slowly stepping back and forth.

THE END