

"DIASPORNAUTS" PILOT: ON THE BLOCK

COLD OPEN

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

It's still dark. Clothes are strewn everywhere. Unidentifiable gadgets and toys, relics of boyhood, litter every surface. The bed is empty. An alarm starts playing.

MUSIC CUE: Chill, building into a loud, excited beat. It's a pump up jam (example: "Ballin" by Mustard, Roddy Rich).

INT. METAL BATHROOM - MORNING

CLOSE - A foggy mirror.

Face mostly obscured, AKIDA vigorously scrubs at his hair with a curling sponge, spiking it in various, comical configurations. Eventually, a suitable shape springs into being. The music begins to pick up speed.

CLOSE - A holographic bubble.

It pops into existence at Akida's eye-level. The text scrolls across its surface in Matrix green: "BIG DAY." Akida's grin is enormous. The beat drops out and the chorus starts.

INT. FUTURISTIC METAL HALLWAY - MORNING

Akida sprints by, shrugging on a ratty Flak Jacket. He nearly bowls through KEEL and EDEN as they step out of the sliding doors to their rooms. He leaves the ground to bounce between the walls in an impressive feat of parkour.

AKIDA

Sorrycominthroughgottago - LOVEYOU!!!

Keel, the youngest of the Waites, snarls. In baggy clothes with eye-obscuring hair, Keel is the picture of artistic angst, the least interested in literally everything ever.

EDEN

Way too early for this.

Eden, the eldest, is allergic to responsibility but addicted to drama. She hasn't found a hill she wouldn't die on, but her actual ability to follow through is... questionable.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

MYA and LU are in a room filled with plants and terrarium bubbles of various sizes. A huge, central window looks out

onto a colorful cityscape: Lights and colors are everywhere across futuristic, holographic billboards and flying objects. There's also trash everywhere, and half the signs appear to be broken. Like if Detroit threw up on New York.

Lu frantically switches between a number of alien-looking cooking devices, dumping slurries of vegetables(?) and proteins(?) into lunch boxes filled with steaming rice. He slides the boxes to the side, with dozens of them stacked like bricks on the kitchen counter. Mya sips at a mug of tea on a large, low couch. She is simply vibing, enjoying the feeling of light on her face. The plants around her seem to rise and fall gently with her breathing. Her face snaps to a well-worn frown at the noise from the hallway.

LU

Your son is awake, sounds like.

Lu barely glances up from his work. A knowing smirk sits on his face as a third arm suddenly unfolds from his prosthetic leg to organize the lunch boxes into a new stack. He begins to observe one of his boxes from different angles, scrutinizing before tilting his head up in a gesture of pride. His single, robotic eye shifts through a kaleidoscope of colors and then clicks several times. he's taking pics for his food blog. The images appear on tiny, holographic screens floating near his temple before slowly disappearing. He's very much feeling himself.

MYA

My son? I didn't make him by myself.
And why is he only my son when he's
like this?

LU

(packing lunches into a strange,
glowing portal in the wall)
Happy? Excited? Engaged with his life?
Don't be so defensive, baby. You did a
great job getting him prepared, and
now the little Ion Drive is ready and
and raring to go. (pause) But you did
make him a lunatic all by yourself.

Mya laughs from the couch, visibly relaxing into the rhythm between them. Her hands are shaking on the mug of tea.

MYA

I wasn't the one who got him into G-
Ball. You know how many head injuries
he took? You're out of your mind if

you think -

LU

Oh, come- G-Ball is *perfectly* safe. I told you, his head was always lumpy. It's your lumpy-headed genes from your lumpy-head daddy-

A loud crash interrupts the conversation. A cloud of dust and debris floods out of the hallway as Akida barrels through the living room, vaulting the couch easily.

AKIDA

WINDOWS DOWN!!!

The window flickers in a static-y effect an instant before Akida flings himself out of it at full speed. He whoops with joy as he falls. There's also a fair amount of screaming, metal on metal, and breaking glass. Lu stays quiet.

MYA

...oh yeah, totally natural head shape.

AKIDA (OS)

STUCK THE LANDING! I'LL FIX THAT LATER! I OWE YOU A NEW SPACE-APPLE CART!

EXT. THE BLOCK - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

The massive cityscape rests under a sky of inky black, deep space. Then, the Block- a colossal city built on the sides of a cube mounted on a set of huge, spider-like legs. The mining colony is home to aliens and humans, coexisting and passing through in a riot of mixing cultures and commerce. A cloud of tiny spacecraft and miniature satellites orbit the station like a cloud of flies as locals run, fly, climb, and drive across the surface under artificial gravity.

END MUSIC CUE.

END COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

TITLE: On the Block

INT. HANGAR BAY - DAY

Tech teams and vehicles are moving in every direction. There's a thick coating of grime, dust, and oil on most surfaces. Several glowing portals, like the one in the Waite kitchen, are on the wall. People pull tools and objects from them. On a far wall, fitted into a docking station swarming with floating maintenance platforms, stands all 250-ft of THE MANSA.

CLOSE - THE MANSA - CONTINUOUS

Essentially a tank with arms and legs. Heavy and squat. It's built to take hits and little else. Its body is festooned with boxes to store mined material. One arm is a huge drill mounted on a hydraulic piston. Several missile pods full of blast charges litter the legs and back. Smaller weapons/tools dot its frame. It's asymmetric, cobbled together from odds and ends. It's definitely not child-proofed. For safety reasons, children probably shouldn't even look directly at it. The "chest" is flowered open, revealing a large cockpit where AKIDA sits, hooked up to various wires and screens.

INT. MANSA'S COCKPIT - DAY

Akida is dressed in a black and olive green space suit. On his head is a helmet with a thin, black face-shield down. The helmet is dented in a few places. Several screens in the cockpit are cracked. Some wires are patched with random bits of cloth or simply exposed ends. These definitely shouldn't just... be like that. Akida is unconcerned.

AKIDA

(Mumbling to self)

OK, so that's good, fuel is good,
extra drill bits, main thrust is
green, yada yada, some stuff about
overheating, whatever, and then we
just -

Akida yanks a metallic button from the back of his neck, maybe a bit too aggressively, and stabs it into a port. A screen on the peripheral of the cockpit flairs to life, auto-cycling through several menus until a list of names begins to slowly scroll. Given the symbols and pictures of bands, this is apparently some kind of music playlist. Akida selects "Drill to Drill to."

MYA (OS)

Akida, do you hear me? I can see your PLUG was just synched with the cockpit data. I'm just gonna go ahead and disable its audio playback so you won't be distracted...

A holographic screen pops up just above the interface at Akida's peripheral. The static fuzz resolves itself into his mother's face. *Note: Hereafter, all mention of screens refers to these small, holographic displays, unless otherwise stated.*

Akida continues on with his systems check, hiding his irritated face by pretending to shove some exposed circuitry back into place. Another screen pops up on the other side of the cockpit, directly in front of Akida's face- Oh joy, Eden is assisting in the Comms Center today. Great. Good. Excellent.

EDEN

Pfft, busted. I know you weren't about to have the whole bridge listening to straight dumpster juice today.

Akida's skin begins to steam with irritation, fogging his helmet. He grits his teeth to keep the irritation out of his voice.

AKIDA

When you pilot, you can pick the music. OH WAIT -

Eden adopts a similar expression, maybe it runs in the family? The siblings are practically breathing fire through the holo-link. Their mother's face is growing annoyed.

EDEN

Whatever Oil Stain, you know you're just lucky I let you have that hunk of junk. Basically a flying brick anyway. Second born, *second best*.

A third screen springs to life, a different color and border from the others. Lu is chiming in, before things get out of hand.

LU

Eden, don't distract your brother. Y'all playin too much already. This is *work*. Or do I need to remind you that

people's lives are on the line?

AKIDA

(Snarky)

Yeah, Eden. I'm just out here, workin' myself to death, trying to haul my 400 tetra's *for the Block*. While you just in there, cutting me down. You must feel real sorry for yourself. You know I just think-

EDEN

Are you serious, I-

CUT TO:

INT. MISSION CONTROL BRIDGE - DAY

It's more of a derelict, outdated computer lab. Control panels in dozens of different styles and states of repair, are dotted around a room in little islands. In the center, at a massive screen showing views of an asteroid field swarming with miners, is MYA. One section of the screen shows Akida in the cockpit. Her fingers dig deeply into the material of her arm chair.

EDEN sits at a bank of computers haphazardly wired into the wall, off to Mya's right. She's in an overstuffed swivel chair. Several lights on the computer display blink in tandem with ones on her cranial implants. She's wirelessly synched to the station. She hunches sheepishly in her chair, only barely daring to look back at Mya.

Lu is nowhere in sight, but there's another man here, with a younger boy in tow. This is the odd-ball "uncle" to the Waite family, DR. HANNIBAL LOGOS and his long-suffering assistant, MARSEILLES "MARS" ROVER.

MYA

Your father gives you an inch and you take a mile. Now I gotta worry about y'all two fighting over comms and makin us look a fool in public.

Her annoyance shifts, pinning Logos idling near the room's entrance. He's absentmindedly picking his nose. Gross.

MYA

You two can make yourselves useful in the lab today. I'll be handling command personally until further

notice. Don't make me come down there,
and I'll even let you on the hangar
deck again.

Logos brightens at the idea, an excited glint in his eye.
Mars blanches.

LOGOS

(giddy)

Of course, fearless leader! Whatever
you desire.

(to Mars)

Come along, Mars, we have some
atomization tests to run on a most
promising set of wind chimes.

MARS

(exhausted)

Please sir, you've gone threw six sets
of them, you can't possibly-

LOGOS

NONSENSE BOY! Sixth time's the charm!
And my lucky number is *seven* if it
isn't.

Mars' face is a weeping mess, begging for help as he's
dragged from the room. His eyes cry out to Eden, who
playfully shrugs. Mya is unsympathetic to his plight, but
seems mildly pleased to get rid of Logos.

Mya quickly cycles through several segments on the large
screen with a flick of her wrist. She locates Lu on the
screens, encased in a spacesuit, modified to accommodate his
prosthetics. One of his arms is operating a huge claw-like
appendage to move asteroid rock into containers. Miners
around him are using hand drills to bore further into the
rock. His free hand is to his ear, enabling him to use his
comms.

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - DAY

CLOSE - LU

LU

(to Akida)

The men will watch your back out
there, but remember, they've only got
small arms, a few ARM suits, and few
blasting packs. If anything major
happens, accident or attack, it's all

on you, no back up.

Small screens, identical to those in the Mansa's cockpit, are floating near Lu's cheek. The eye he used to take pictures in the kitchen is now solid blue in color.

MYA

Your "boys" should be too busy working to do much of anything for him. It's his job to help them, not be another job altogether. You and yours might let it slide, but *I* will not. He knows better.

Lu frowns but stays silent. The comment cut a little deeper than intended. He takes a deep breath before continuing his work.

INT. MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Mya sits in her chair, tension filling the room as Eden hunches in her seat. On the larger display, Lu's comms screen blinks away abruptly. Eden's eyes drill into the screen, avoiding her mother.

AKIDA

(placating)

Mom, er - Ma'am, I've got this. I did all the simulations, with perfect scores, and our test flights all went fine. I'm all set, okay?

Mya relaxes somewhat, her shoulders slowly relaxing as her head falls back in the chair. She lets out a long breath. Has she always been so tired? A lot is riding on this.

MYA

(exasperated, but clearly affectionate)

Yes, baby, of course you are. Good luck.

INT. MANSAS COCKPIT - DAY

CLOSE - Akida in the cockpit, excitedly hitting buttons and plugging in additional cables.

MUSIC CUE: Slow build into a drill beat. The tempo should match the growing excitement of a first flight and the brazen confidence of a teen in way over their head.

AKIDA
 Alright, disengaging supports.

INT. HANGAR BAY - SAME TIME

The large structures holding the Mansa in the wall of the Hangar give a metallic groan as they fold away. More tethers and maintenance arms move away as the floating tech platforms drift off in search of other work.

AKIDA
 Hitting runway!

The Mansa's enormous feet hit corresponding attachments on a built-in runway. With its feet locked in place, motorized systems begin to accelerate toward a slowly-forming green portal. Sparks begin to geyser up where its feet scrape against the track of the runway, a high pitched scream rising as the huge machine accelerates forward.

INT. MANSА COCKPIT - SAME TIME

CLOSE - Akida's face inside his helmet.

His fingers fidget on the controls. A drop of sweat rolls down his temple. We can hear his heartbeat, a fast thump in our ears that begins to slow as he breaths. Each breath is labored, tired. He's nervous. Scared. This is it.

Somewhere, inside, he finds himself. A wide grin splits his face nearly in half.

AKIDA
 LET'S HIT IT!

END MUSIC CUE.

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - DAY

From a distance, we can see the whole of the asteroid field floating above The Block. There's peace here, the glittering metropolis and the silent stones above in infinite, black space.

Suddenly, a twinkle of light, just above the tranquil city, shatters the stillness. There's a *thunderclap* of engines as the Mansa blasts into existence in the asteroid field, thrusters at full burn, racing between debris.

As the Mansa roars past, several miners float in smaller, crab-like mechs. Some are eating within their car-sized

suits. The containers for their food are identical to the ones Lu was filling in the kitchen.

EXT. THE BLOCK, STREET LEVEL - SAME TIME

KEEL sits among a group of human and alien youth, tagging the top of the structure with graffiti... that *moves*? They're probably good kids at heart. Keel looks up suddenly, seeing the streaking light of their sibling's first solo-flight.

KEEL

(sigh)

Enjoy it, soldier boy. Hope it's worth it.

INT. MISSION CONTROL - DAY

Mya slumps forward in her chair, massaging her temples. Eden awkwardly swivels to face her mother. She picks at her hair, one of the few natural parts of her head left, nervously.

MYA

Aaaaaand, he's already wasting fuel. He doesn't even *need* full thrust to accelerate! The junkheap handles like a dying animal, harder to slow it down once it accelerates too fast. He better-

EDEN

(anxious)

Mom, don't you think we should let him have a couple minutes? We're not hurting right now for money, and it's his first day. He's just excited.

MYA

First of all, we're always short on everything as far as you're concerned. Second of all, your brother can have *fun* when he's not working. Third of all, you're not up here to get onto me. You're at that desk to make sure nothing sneaks up on us, young lady.

Eden dejectedly swivels her chair back to the sensors, checking a series of screens displaying colored dots- unit positions. Her mother has definitely struck a nerve. Her fingers play with one of the antennas replacing her right ear. Lu's screen pops up next to Mya's temple, as opposed to part of the larger screen, indicating that the audio is

excluding Eden.

CLOSE - MYA'S FACE

LU

Mya, I ran the diagnostics myself. Been quadruple-checking the entire frame for cycles. Logos hasn't even been near it since `Kida started simulations. It's O-K.

MYA

I know, I know. `Kida can handle it. I'm just so... uh, I just feel like I'm holding a lot together right now.

LU

Well, I'm right here. It doesn't need to be all on you.

MYA

I know. I didn't mean to-
(sigh)
I just need a minute, I'm sorry.

LU

...ok.

His screen blinks away.

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - DAY

The Mansa is not a machine for precision handling. The full thrust is decent, but the angled thrusters for curved paths or quick re-orientation are weak and ineffective, even when they work. The frame is wide and boxy, so precision twists to avoid obstacles are out of the question. The cornering is trash, the brakes more a suggestion.

Akida makes the metal goliath look downright *graceful*. Unorthodox use of the left arm, a colossal claw for crushing and carrying ore, allows Akida to grapple onto asteroids and swing between them. Spinning the entire machine gives him greater freedom to engage the main thruster at full power at different angles. His liberal use of the right arm's piston drill as a club or fist to obliterate errant debris he can't avoid helps fill in the gaps. Akida is in a permanent state of disorientation and spatial confusion. Most pilots would vomit. No one has ever told Akida this. He's decided he enjoys the feeling.

EXT. WEIRD ASTEROID - DAY

Still careening through space, the Mansa finally comes to a halt on an oddly colored asteroid. The entire structure is stark white, more like petrified wood than the traditional dirty ice and metal of the others in the field.

As the Mansa comes to a halt, bolt-like clamps hammer into the asteroid, giving greater stability. To the right of the goliath is an unidentifiable shape jutting from the asteroid's surface. Does it appear mechanical in some way? Something definitely made intentionally, not just a random piece of stone.

AKIDA

(out of breath from cheering)

...Now what is that?

There's a series of beeps over the comms.

EDEN (OS)

We've got a hit on the scanners. It's probably just more debris, but there's a lot of it incoming.

MYA (OS)

Enough to need shields?

EDEN (OS)

Can't tell yet, too far out. It's metal for sure, but everything out there is.

MYA (OS)

Keep eyes on it, but it's probably nothing. What is your brother doing?

The Mansa's claw arm works at the edges of the artifact, trying to dig it free. Over the shoulder of the mech, a gathering SWARM of small lights coalesces. Are they getting closer? Akida should probably be paying attention to those.

AKIDA

Almost got - it - !

The lights are *definitely* getting closer. As the Mansa is still distracted, the tiny lights combine into roughly human-sized SPACECRAFT. Each is spherical with small openings for weapons and thrusters. Each is of similar design but slightly unique, some sporting tiny arms, conventional melee weapons or comically-oversized, random ornaments. There are easily

hundreds of them.

A chunk break off and form a loose fist shape that *smashes* the Mansa off the asteroid. Metal screams as the Mansa spins out of control, Akida's shocked exclamations echoing. He should really be more perceptive.

MUSIC CUE: Dark and intense. Akida is in real danger here, and the tone should match (example: "Visions of Bodies Being Burned" by clipping).

EDEN (OS)

INCOMING - It's ELOKO, a mid-size swarm!

MYA (OS)

Guess first day is right in the deep end- Akida, stabilize your spin and get in there, your father is handling evacuation.

In the background, we can see the miners pulling up carts and equipment, fleeing from the oncoming swarm. A few, those in the handful of smaller mechs, move more slowly, shepherding those without such protections and pulling along groups that cling to mobile platforms. They're not fighters, and they know it, but they're all the Mining corps have if the Mansa fails.

INT. MANSА COCKPIT - SAME TIME

CLOSE - AKIDA

He struggles to right himself, his breathing haggard. Sweat pours down his face. His helmet is fogging slightly, and several screen displays appear to have been knocked offline into useless static. He's doin' bad.

Mya's voice can be heard indistinctly, trying to get his attention. It slowly becomes more discernible as she speaks.

MUSIC CUE: It shifts into something grandiose and spiritual, gradually crowding out the other sounds of battle. The soaring choir helps Akida find peace in the turmoil and strength to continue (example artists: Big Krit, Kid Cudi).

MYA (OS)

`Kida! AKIDA! AKIDA! Remember, you were made for this! Calm down, get yourself under control. You've got this. YOU WERE MADE FOR THIS!

Akida can't reply, but his eyes snap open. Focused, determined. We hear his breath again, the pounding of his heartbeat. Both are slowing, background noise fading out. There's peace for a second. He slams a joystick forward!

END MUSIC CUE.

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - SAME TIME

Note: Refer to battle scene storyboard in the Pitch Bible.

The Mansa's boosters roar to life, the suit suddenly finding stability in a wild turn, bouncing off two more asteroids to slow to a more controlled drift. The swarming Eloko in their tiny suits form threatening shapes before coalescing into the outline of a demon's laughing face. This seems extremely one-sided.

The Mansa, undaunted, flexes. Steel plates and hydraulics rippling and bending like muscle. A warrior preparing for battle.

Boxy sections of its body flip open to reveal batteries of explosives. Several pins are jettisoned as well, opening additional thrusters. The piston DRILL whirrs to life, growling at the oncoming foe. The swarm is amorphous, easily dodging the drill and flowing over the Mansa like water, the small ships tearing off armor.

Immediately recognizing the ineffectiveness of the tactic, Akida switches plans, slamming the drill into nearby asteroids in heavy swipes that spray the Eloko with rubble, destroying the small ships like a Flak cannon. The swarm wavers, disoriented by the change in strategy, and Akida capitalizes by releasing hundreds of BLAST CHARGES from the Mansa's legs and back, creating a mind field around the swarm, detonating as they come too close, forcing them to compact to avoid damage.

Akida seems more capable than ever. The small machines begin to cluster together. Instead of making a new shape, they link together. Their exteriors form and bend to create angles until a much more advanced-looking machine, bristling with weapons, is made.

AKIDA (OS)

Ah. Well. That's less than ideal.

ACT TWO**EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - DAY**

Akida finds himself firmly on the backfoot, running from the brutal onslaught of the giant ELOKO MECH. He's hit multiple times, each time absorbing the damage with non-vital parts of the Mansa, showing off its incredible durability.

EDEN (OS)

Why did you let them combine?!

AKIDA

Gah, gee, I was just thinking it would save ammo and get me one of those cool concussions all the kids are talkin about - it wasn't my first choice.

Akida narrowly avoids a barrage of missiles. Each rocket is piloted by an individual Eloko that ejects itself from an escape pod at the last second.

MYA (OS)

Stay focused, we can still handle this. Blasting it will just let the parts re-form. You've gotta take'em all out at the same time!

Akida, still dodging, notices two large floating asteroids nearby with a narrow gap in between them. He begins to accelerate toward them.

AKIDA

Make a sandwich, gotcha!

MYA (OS)

What?!

Akida puts on an additional burst of speed, grinning madly. Somewhere between terrified and exhilarated.

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - SAME TIME

Akida flees for his life. Smoke pours from multiple points of damage on the Mansa. The Mansa turns to face the Eloko, still careening backwards toward the two massive asteroids.

It fires two GRAPPLING HOOKS from hidden compartments on its waist, securing itself to each as it flies in between them. The Eloko continue firing, getting closer by the second, forcing Akida to use the Mansa's left arm as a shield to ward

off incoming fire.

The two machines enter the gap between the asteroids. The grappling lines go taught, pulling the asteroids together, threatening to crush both mechs.

AKIDA

And that's how - I, uh, rock, smash
-robot... gah, didn't think of a cool
one-liner for this. BUT EAT IT ANYWAY!

The massive pillars of ice and ore slowly close around them. Each mech is giving their best. The Eloko pour on the heat, and the Mansa's left arm takes more and more damage.

In a final moment, an instant before they're both crushed, Akida *punches* a button. It fires the Mansa's LEFT ARM from the shoulder like a rocket! The impact shoves the Eloko back, trapping them in the closing jaws of the asteroids. There's a massive explosion.

INT. MANSА COCKPIT - DAY

CLOSE - AKIDA

He is *wrecked*. And filled with the joy of victory. The machine is falling apart around him, but he barely notices.

MYA (OS)

Alright `Kida, don't let it go to your
head, but you did good. What's the
damage, Eden?

EDEN (OS)

Uhhh, ya know, it's not as bad as it
COULD have been. Most of the armor is
definitely shot but nothing... too
important... is gone.

MYA (OS)

There's always welding work.
Maintenance is to be expected.

LU (OS)

Oh yeah, *just* welding, not like that's
hard, or anybody has to work late to
DO that.

AKIDA

I shredded metal out there. No way we
didn't get something good in the

salvage.

MYA (OS)

`Kida, you crushed most of them into scrap. We'll be lucky to pull anything valuable at all. Next time, maybe be a bit more delicate if you want trophies?

AKIDA

Aw, come on! I don't wanna walk away from my first day, empty-handed.

Then, Akida notices the edge of the ARTIFACT. It's still embedded in a chunk of rock. The larger asteroid was destroyed in the fighting.

AKIDA (CONT)

Wait! I think I found the perfect souvenir! This has gotta be worth something!

EDEN (OS)

Negative. I'm not reading anything online. It's probably just space junk.

MYA (OS)

You said *that* about the Eloko-

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - DAY

Akida pilots the Mansa closer, thrusters firing haphazardly, making the approach jerky and clumsy. The drill bit folds apart into a claw-like HAND, latching onto the Artifact and trying to lever it free again.

AKIDA (OS)

No way, I got a gut feeling.

MYA (OS)

`Kida, be careful, we don't know the stability of-

More wiggling as the claw digs deeper. Small sparks of electricity begin to come from the Artifact. It glows.

AKIDA (OS)

Almost, got it-

EDEN (OS)

Mom, whatever he's doin he might wanna

stop, something's just popped on the sensors...

Still more wiggling, but the shine is getting more intense. This is probably bad right? Akida's definitely gotta see this? Is he insane?

INT. MANSA COCKPIT - SAME TIME

AKIDA
-just a bit more

MYA (OS)
`Kida? There's something nearby, you may want to -

EDEN (OS)
Rising power levels, it might be a weapon?!

AKIDA
-aaaalmmmmooooostt...

FOR THE LOVE OF SPACE-DOG, GET OUTTA THERE KID, WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

MYA (OS)
AKIDA DOUGLAS WAITE YOU GET OUT OF-

EXT. ASTEROID FIELD - SAME TIME

A massive explosion can be seen throughout the field, emanating from Akida's location.

ACT THREE**INT. HANGAR BAY - DAY**

AKIDA is covered in small bandages for superficial wounds. Above him, the Mansa is barely recognizable. Before, it was formidable, massive, near indestructible. Now, it is a burnt out hulk, barely in reasonably sized pieces. Fixing it is beyond, unspeakably expensive. Akida is probably grounded.

The Waite clan, except for Keel, stand around them as hangar techs inspect damage and fetch supplies. DR. LOGOS and MARS are with them, picking at the machine and taking notes. LU seems relieved. EDEN looks worried. MYA is *livid*.

MYA

(mockingly)

"Mya it'll be fiiiiine, the boy is re~ady, you're just being overprotective. Stop being so cra-zy!"

LU

I never said you were being crazy-

MYA

Marseilles, please read the damage report again.

MARS

(reading from a holo-file)

Uhhh, basically all the armor is gone, 3 of the 4 heavy drill bits are unusable. All the charge packs are gone, legs are pretty toast. Half the thruster pods are gonna need some work. A BUNCH of system issues and, oh, the left arm was completely vaporized.

Logos makes his way toward them. The technicians give him a wide berth as he grins, slightly maniacally, at the Mansa's remains. He leans on Mya like a used car salesman. He's like a cat that ate a pet store of canaries. What could he possibly be so happy about?

LOGOS

So I'm cool to mount that railgun right? I mean, the weight issue is sorta moot now and there's plenty of room on the frame-

MYA

(barely contained fury)
 Why're you speaking? You shouldn't be
 allowed to have anything even
 resembling a tool near the Mansa!
 Chime in again and you'll eat that
 gun!

LOGOS

Well see, now you're just being close
 minded. I maintain that I could not
 have known the ricochet patterns of
 that shrapnel-

Mya's glare is often categorized as "cutting." This one is a
 blizzard of battleaxes.

LOGOS

(deflated)
 ...fine, fine, fine.

MYA

(to Akida)
 And you-

AKIDA

Mom.

MYA

Reckless, a complete disregard for
 safety, efficiency, *family*-

AKIDA

Mom, I didn't mean to-

MYA

Who *cares* what you meant?! How many
 times have I told you that *actions*
 speak louder than *words*. And your
actions took our greatest asset and
 totaled it worse in one outing than I
 have in my entire career! When your
 sister didn't want to pilot, I wasn't
 worried. I thought, `Kida is qualified
 to take over, he's got it. He's
responsible. And yet...

(Beat)

I don't know what you were thinking.
 All this for what, some space trash?
 Something to impress your little
 friends or something? I'm- I'm so

disappointed in you.

Eden looks away, mortified. Lu puts a hand on his wife's shoulder and she shrugs it away, angry.

AKIDA

No! I just thought, well... I just thought it would be nice.

MYA

Nice. Nice! Oh, we're saved. We won't have to cut rations next month to pay for repairs, because Akida got something nice. I shoulda never let your father convince me to-

MARS

Um, uh, Ms. Waite?

MYA

(long sigh)
Yes, Marseilles, sweetheart?

MARS

That thing `Kida- well, that was *recovered* from the explosion. It's, um, it isn't space junk.

MYA

I'm sorry?

HARD CUT TO:

INT. SPECIALTY LAB - DAY

The family waits in a smaller, even more cluttered area that passes as a lab. Most of the space is occupied by derelict mining equipment and half-cobbled-together daydreams Dr. Logos has conned Mars into helping him craft into barely functional future-hazards.

In the center of the room is a large table, flanked by sensor arrays and floating screens. The Artifact is completely dead now, the glow from before drained out of it. Akida pulls Mars aside.

AKIDA

(whispering)
Thanks for covering for me man, but how're you gonna pass the, uh, whatever it was off as something cool?

It def went up in the blast.

MARS

(whispering)

Bro, I think it was the blast.
Whatever it is went off like a bomb
when you touched it because I think it
was still holding whatever charge was
in it to begin with.

AKIDA

Uh, what charges up a big rock and
then flings it into space?

MARS

I think it might've been holding
charge since *before* it was in the
rock.

AKIDA

And how long ago was that?

MARS

A very long time. Way longer than
we've been alive.

AKIDA

What kinda battery can do that?

MARS

It's- well, we're not sure what it is.
But it's throwing off energy
signatures we've never seen before,
and it's sucking up every bit of power
we try to run through it.

Mya cuts in. She was definitely listening the entire time.

MYA

So it's a conductor of some kind?
Maybe a bit of a battery or engine, we
could sell-

LOGOS (OS)

SELL IT, ARE YOU INSANE?!

Logos storms toward them in a frenzy, an array of random
circuit boards and wires spilling from his arms. At the
thought of economic engagement, he drops a lot of it,
tripping over several pieces of junk to get into Mya's
personal space.

MYA

Oh, excellent, Logos is still here...greeeeat.

LOGOS

(gesticulating wildly)

BATTERY? ENGINE? NO, NO, NO, NO. This isn't just some cast off chunk of some Droguer trash barge or an automatic Sleech milker. This is the ULTIMATE. It might be the MOST AMAZING DISCOVERY THIS GENERATION!

CLOSE - ARTIFACT MASK

For the first time, we are given a real look at the Artifact. Still encased in stone in some places, there is an unmistakable face on it, similar to an orisha mask. Its coloring is a mix of browns, blacks, greens and golds. Burns and errant rubble make it difficult to discern how much of that is original.

MYA

Becauuuse???

LOGOS

Because it's a piece of our *birthright*. I have reason to believe that this may be a genuine artifact from HOME!

The revelation is a thunderclap. Mya is still skeptical, but Lu is utterly shocked. Akida is pumping his fist in excitement, grabbing an overwhelmed Mars in a brotherly headlock. Eden's face is a mix of awe and reverence.

Could it really be from *Home*?

FADE TO BLACK