

INFINITY

by

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FADE IN:

A wide-winged blackbird soars in a cloudy sky. The bird swoops down to reveal below:

EXT. FAIRHURST MANOR - DAY

A sprawling red-roofed manor, magnificently large and built of brick and stone, nestles into forested mountain foothills.

The manor is a jumble of buildings, clustered and patched together into one grand expanse.

A tower, with a roof like an observatory, stands guard over the west side.

The bird soars down, past the tower. Windows are carved into the walls.

A man, dressed in a black suit and with a neat black beard, stares somberly out the highest window.

The blackbird flaps down to the lower walls of the manor. NORRIE, a woman in her energetic 60s, beats a rug on a balcony.

The flight soars past a long row of windows. A glimpse in a window shows ANDREW and ELLIE, brother and sister in their 20s, arguing.

The bird perches suddenly at the next window, which is open. White drapery flutters slightly in the breeze.

ELLIE (O.S.)

Where are they?

INT. FAIRHURST MANOR - DAY

SITTING ROOM

Just inside the window, MIRIA, Ellie's 5-year-old daughter, sits coloring on a rug decorated with blue flowers.

The room has a decayed elegance, with tattered wallpaper, wood trim stained dark over time, antique furniture, and

thread-bare carpet. Paint cans and tarps scatter across the room.

MIRIA

Miria concentrates hard on her work. Her coloring has neat edges and meticulous shading.

ANDREW (O.S.)

I don't know what you want me to say.

ELLIE (O.S.)

Anything, Andrew. At this point, I'd love to hear you say anything.

EXT./INT. SITTING ROOM

The bird ruffles its wings, then swoops down into the room, over Miria's head.

She looks up, startled. Her crayons fall to the floor.

ANDREW (O.S.)

I didn't...

The bird flies through the open door of the room into the hallway.

ELLIE (O.S.)

You're lying to me!

Miria jumps to her feet and rushes to the doorway to see where the bird has flown.

HALLWAY

Miria glances with a worried frown toward the arguing adults.

The bird careens around the far corner.

The voices fade as Miria makes her decision and scrambles down the hall to catch up with the bird.

The walls are lined with paintings, all ornately framed. Blank spaces and empty hooks show that paintings are missing here and there.

Miria turns several corners. The bird pops in and out of view, its wings flapping desperately against the ceiling and walls as it searches for escape.

Miria slows as the halls grow darker and quieter. She is small amidst the tall hallways and thick doors.

Suddenly, she stops and looks to her right.

In an open doorway, she stares into a reflection of herself on the far wall of a darkened room.

STUDY

Miria walks slowly through the doorway.

The room is a gentleman's study with a large desk at the center and numerous bookshelves. White sheets cover a stack of chairs in the corner.

Miria stares into a tall mirror propped against the wall next to the window. Her small reflection stares back.

Miria waves her fingers at the girl in the mirror.

MIRIA

Hi.

She notices in the reflection another gaze on her.

Miria turns quickly to see a tall portrait of an elegant woman on the wall opposite the mirror.

The woman's face is kind. Her dress is long and flowing, with a tight waist and long, puffy sleeves.

Miria takes a step toward the painting, mesmerized.

She frowns and turns to the wall on her right.

A man in a well-cut suit and a dark beard gazes at her with a hard and piercing stare.

Miria backs away from this painting, unnerved. She backs toward the silent, dark hallway.

With a rasping cry, the bird darts into the room, brushing Miria's head as it lunges toward the window.

Miria screams as the bird pounds itself against the glass.

She turns in a frenzy, stumbles back across the room, and falls into a group of chairs covered in white sheets.

The sheets entangle her as she screams.

Footsteps pound down the hallway and Ellie and Andrew run into the study.

Ellie gathers up Miria while Andrew opens the window to let the bird out.

The bird shoots into the sky.

ELLIE

Shhh, Miria, shhh, it's okay.

ANDREW

Is she hurt?

ELLIE

No, she's okay. Just scared.

Andrew wrings his hands as Ellie holds Miria.

When Miria is calm, Ellie looks up at Andrew. Her face is hard.

ELLIE

You can have it. This, all of this,  
I won't ask any more questions. Do  
what you want.

She gathers up Miria and walks out of the room with the girl's arms around her neck.

Andrew hurries after her.

HALLWAY

ANDREW

Ellie...

ELLIE  
(without turning)  
I'll tell Norrie I'm leaving.

Ellie takes a step, then stops and turns back.

ELLIE  
I'll call you when we get home.  
Good luck, Andrew.

Andrew watches her walk down the hall.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Rows of students huddle over papers on their desks.

A TEACHER sits at her desk at the front of the classroom.

The classroom door opens just enough for someone to motion to the teacher.

She stands and walks to the door. She stops to address the class before leaving.

TEACHER  
I'll be right back. Eyes on your  
own work while I'm gone, please.

She walks out and the room is deathly silent for a long moment.

Then the whispering begins.

Miria, age 14, concentrates on her Algebra test. She flies through the problems, neatly answering the questions with perfectly aligned x's, y's and coefficients.

The students near her watch enviously as she works.

A BOY smirks at his neighbor.

BOY  
Her brain is going to explode.

Miria hears, flushes red, and works faster.

BOY

I think it's getting bigger. Look  
it's pulsing!

Miria swallows hard and turns over her paper. The other students giggle softly.

Miria finishes the last problem.

The teacher walks into the room and the students snap back to their papers.

Almost immediately, the final bell rings. The boy drops his pencil in frustration.

Miria picks up her paper and grabs her bag.

Everyone files out for the day, dropping their papers on the teacher's desk as they exit.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

The bus is chaos.

Wads of paper fly back and forth, students scream in high-pitched squeals, laughter follows backpacks being tossed across the aisle.

Miria sits near the back with her head resting against the seat, eyes closed and the window above her as far open as it will go. The wind ruffles her hair around her face.

The bus slows to a stop and Miria opens an eye.

She jumps up, grabs her bag and works her way carefully down the aisle through arms and legs and backpacks.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING

Miria hops off the bus to the curb.

Her home is a squat brick structure with a square of four balconies surrounding a door with peeling paint. Beautiful college campus buildings are all around.

The bus pulls away as she runs down the sidewalk, up the steps, and into the front door.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWAY

The stairway is dark and rickety. Soda cans and food wrappers litter the hallway and a sign on one door reads "English Tutoring \$10".

Miria sprints up the stairs to the second floor.

Ellie's muffled voice grows louder, becoming clear as Miria opens the apartment door.

INT. MIRIA'S APARTMENT

ELLIE

We only have to draw a correlation  
between the weight of the particle  
and the energy levels to prove  
it's possible.

Ellie and DANIEL, Miria's father, are sitting on an old, lumpy sofa debating over a mess of papers scattered across the coffee table.

DANIEL

But that will never be enough to  
get approval for testing.

The apartment is tiny and half-unpacked moving boxes fill every corner. The kitchen and living room make up the main living area. A hallway leads past the kitchen to bedrooms and a bathroom.

Miria walks in.

DANIEL

My savior! Come tell your mother  
she's being unreasonable.

Ellie jumps up and covers Miria with a hug.

ELLIE

Ignore him. How was it? Any better  
the second day?

Miria groans and drops her backpack.

She collapses on the couch next to Daniel.

MIRIA

I'd rather tell you you're being unreasonable. What's she being unreasonable about?

DANIEL

Existence. Now tell us about school.

MIRIA

You went to school. I'm sure not much has changed.

Miria stands and walks to open the refrigerator.

Ellie and Daniel exchange a glance, then Ellie drops her papers on the coffee table.

ELLIE

Time for pizza.

MIRIA

It's only 3:45.

DANIEL

Then the place will be empty.

Ellie grabs her purse.

Daniel jumps up and guides Miria to the door.

Miria smiles as her parents push her ahead of them into the hallway.

INT. PIZZA RESTAURANT - DAY

Miria, Ellie and Daniel sit in a tall booth with college paraphernalia decorating the walls all around them. The lighting is dim and the music is loud enough to make them lean across the table to hear one another.

They devour a huge pepperoni pizza while they continue to discuss their research plans.

ELLIE

I just think that if we publish now, we'll be able to get some attention.

DANIEL

If we rush to publish before we have a solid theory, no one will take us seriously enough to let us run our tests. You know that...

ELLIE

The Dean will support us and maybe put us in contact with one of the labs. She hired us because of our research.

DANIEL

At this point, I doubt our paper would be accepted by any journal anyway.

ELLIE

We need to publish openly.

DANIEL

That does nothing toward tenure.

ELLIE

I hate academics.

Ellie and Daniel both take a bite of pizza and stare one another down.

Miria sets down her slice of pizza.

MIRIA

So, Mom, Dad.

DANIEL

Yes, Miria. Go.

MIRIA

You've been talking about this for five years now, and I've always wondered... When you do go to test this theory, and you will, how will you make sure you won't blow up?

ELLIE

We won't set off a bomb.

DANIEL

What makes you think we're going to blow anything up?

MIRIA

I saw this video online...

Ellie drops her pizza on her plate and holds up a hand to Miria.

ELLIE

Stop. Particle accelerators are not going to blow up the world. The internet is wrong.

MIRIA

I didn't think it was exactly right. But your test is more dangerous than the others, isn't it? Dad thinks so.

Daniel stops wiping pizza grease off his chin and looks up in surprise.

DANIEL

Did I say that?

MIRIA

You said it would take too much energy. Or something like that.

ELLIE

Our theory pushes the limits, it's true. But if - when - we get the chance to run tests, we'll take all the precautions we can think of, and some that might not even be necessary, to make sure it's safe.

DANIEL

Well, thousands of pounds of magnets smashing atomic particles together can never be exactly safe.

ELLIE

No, but it's discovery. So it's worth the risk.

Miria nods, then picks up her slice of pizza again.

MIRIA

Okay, I believe you. I just thought I'd check. You know, for when you do finally publish your paper.

Miria arches an eyebrow, grins, and takes a huge bite.

Ellie opens her mouth to respond, but Daniel cuts her off.

DANIEL

Let's get the check.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

The night is warm. They walk along a street of campus buildings lined with perfectly green lawns and hedge borders. Students pass by occasionally in groups or alone, enjoying the mild night.

Ellie receives a phone call and lags behind while Daniel and Miria walk ahead.

MIRIA

Which star is ours?

He points at a tree just ahead of them to the right.

DANIEL

That one, just above the highest branch.

MIRIA

Do you think it has a planet?

DANIEL

They say there's a planet around every star.

MIRIA

Do you think there's a girl up  
there pointing down at me?

DANIEL

I don't know. What if she's  
pointing up at you?

Miria pushes him.

MIRIA

Don't ruin my dreams with  
relativity.

Daniel laughs and drapes his arm around Miria's shoulder,  
pulling her close.

Ellie hangs up her phone and calls out to Daniel:

ELLIE

Daniel.

Daniel and Miria stop and turn around.

ELLIE

That was the Dean. Someone just  
published a paper online.

Ellie walks closer to them.

DANIEL

Okay, you're right. Open  
publishing is better.

Ellie grabs Daniel's shoulders.

ELLIE

It's a proof of our theory. It  
proves the concept of capturing  
energy from dark matter.

DANIEL

How can anyone have gotten that  
far already?

Ellie backs away, growing more excited.

ELLIE

I don't know. Apparently it's getting incredible feedback all over the world. The possibilities are huge. And...

MIRIA

What?

ELLIE

The Dean knows we have a working hypothesis. She must have called in about a thousand favors. They've opened a space for us at the Large Hadron Collider.

DANIEL

Geneva? They're letting us test at the LHC?

ELLIE

Immediately. We need to leave now. This is...this is everything.

They hug and laugh and celebrate.

Off to the side, Miria laughs at their exuberance, then suddenly stops.

Her eyes widen and mouth drops as she realizes something.

ELLIE

We have so much to do.

DANIEL

I'll call the team.

ELLIE

I'll look for plane tickets.

Daniel makes a call and Ellie begins tapping her phone as they speed walk away.

Miria follows, half grinning and half biting her lip.

DANIEL

Get out your suitcase, I've got news.

Ellie drops her hands to her side, stops and turns.

Miria nearly runs into her.

ELLIE

Miria, what am I going to do with you?

MIRIA

Isn't that what you always say?

ELLIE

Have you made a best friend in the last two days that you can stay with?

Miria raises her eyebrows and shakes her head.

Daniel hangs up his phone, realizes Miria and Ellie are far behind him and calls out:

DANIEL

What's wrong?

Ellie turns to him.

ELLIE

We don't have anywhere for Miria...

MIRIA

(calling to Daniel)

I'm going to go stay with Uncle Andrew while you're gone.

Ellie snaps back around to Miria.

ELLIE

Not a chance.

Miria rushes to explain her plan.

MIRIA

I have it all figured out. Four hours away by train. I can catch a cab in town. Norrie will be there to meet me so you don't have to worry about Uncle Andrew forgetting I'm coming. All you have to do is call. And buy me a train ticket. And give me money for the cab. Although I have some money saved up, so if I have to...

ELLIE

Not a chance.

MIRIA

Please!

Ellie turns and walks on toward Daniel.

ELLIE

See if you can get ahold of anyone from the department. There's got to be someone we can have Miria stay with while we're gone.

Miria runs to get in front of Ellie.

MIRIA

Mom, I don't know anyone you work with yet. I don't want to stay with a stranger.

ELLIE

You haven't seen my brother since you were five. He's as much a stranger as anyone here.

MIRIA

That's not my fault!

Ellie looks pleadingly at Daniel.

ELLIE

Dan...

Daniel opens his mouth, and then shrugs his shoulders.

DANIEL

It's not a bad idea.

Ellie gives Miria a pained look.

Miria bites her lip.

Ellie closes her eyes.

ELLIE

I'll have to call your school...

Miria squeals and hugs Ellie fiercely.

Ellie kisses the top of her head.

INT. MIRIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They walk in the front door, throw down their coats and jump right into packing.

Miria goes down the hall to her room.

MIRIA'S BEDROOM

She pulls out a suitcase from under her bed and throws clothes from her dresser into it.

She walks to her bedroom door and takes a careful look into the hallway.

She shuts the door quietly, then goes to her closet and pulls out a small shoebox from behind a pile of stuffed animals.

She places the box in her suitcase.

On the lid is pasted a black and white newspaper picture of Fairhurst Manor.

Miria piles more clothes on top of the box and continues packing.

The door opens a crack and Ellie pokes her head in.

ELLIE

Miria...

Miria looks up.

Ellie walks in the door and over to the bed.

She picks up a shirt and refolds it, placing it neatly back in the suitcase.

ELLIE

Call me every day, okay?

MIRIA

I will.

Ellie gives Miria a long look, then lifts her hands to her neck. She unclasps her necklace, a thin chain with a small diamond pendant set into a circle of gold.

ELLIE

Here, turn around.

Miria turns so Ellie can clasp the necklace around her neck. Miria touches it and turns back to face Ellie.

MIRIA

Your necklace? Why?

ELLIE

I found it there, when I was still helping your uncle fix up the house. I've always felt like it belonged there, but I never wanted to take it back. I guess it was waiting for you to bring it back for me. Miria, I...I wish...

Miria wraps her arms around her mom.

MIRIA

We'll all be back in a week.

INT. TAXI CAB - DAY

A taxi drives slowly on a winding paved road through a thick forest.

Miria leans against the window in the back seat, watching the forest flash by. It's turning to fall and the trees are just beginning to turn rich reds and oranges.

The cabbie speaks to her over his shoulder.

CABBIE

So I guess you're a relative? Not too many people ask to come out here.

Miria turns from the window.

MIRIA

I'm visiting my uncle.

CABBIE

Your uncle, eh? I haven't seen you before.

MIRIA

I haven't been here since I was little.

CABBIE

Can't say I blame you.

Miria opens her mouth to respond, but shuts it and turns back to the window with a bemused expression.

The cab slows and turns right onto a gravel lane.

CABBIE

Okay, here we go.

The lane winds around, trees closing in narrowly on either side. A fence lines the road, broken in places.

As the paved road disappears behind, the forest grows dimmer.

CABBIE

Watch now, we're almost there.

The cab slows and turns abruptly to the right.

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For more information about this script, please email [gwadholm@gmail.com](mailto:gwadholm@gmail.com)

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