

# THE BECKONING

Written by

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FADE IN:

**SPACE.**

MARY (Female, 26) is drifting away, alone in the vast and infinite cosmos, surrounded by darkness... The Milky Way is far...

WIDE SHOT: No sound. Sudden FLASHES OF: A comet passes. |A supernova explodes and ends the life in a solar system.| A red Star | The Milky Way brings us back to Mary and from her eye the Universe exists and returns to her!

CU: tries to grab an extremely small object floating centimeters from her eyes... a flock of hair... She goes to touch it. It is human... She frees it, and it goes away to the Milky Way in her direction.

More objects come... it's an ear... an arm... a full leg... And millions of body parts, members and organs, frozen-burned by the Space, drifting. A dreadful ocean of different body parts with Mary in the center.

WIDE SHOT: The few stars begin to collapse, finishing in darkness... and a red light gets stronger. It engulfs the Universe and everything in it... All is pulled towards it. It's hunger never-ending. Its existence, infinite...

**CUT TO IMAGE:**

**INT. UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - DUSK**

**TEACHER (O.S.)**

330 million light years in diameter, in a Universe that encompasses billions of galaxies. And then we have this abnormality.

INSERT: Picture of the Boötes Void on the projector in class - A big spherical region of empty space in the Universe. No stars in it, only darkness.

**TEACHER (O.S.)**

Discovered in 1981 - The Boötes Void is a perfect vacuum, containing barely any galaxies. It is the largest known void in the Universe.

Mary is a student in the beautiful large 19<sup>th</sup> century auditorium, with no more than fifty students.

**TEACHER (CONT'D)**

It's fascinating how we have a region full of almost nothing. Defies even the best explanations I believe.

**STUDENT (Male)**

It could be the same theory that is thought about Tabi's star. A Dyson Sphere. Maybe a very advanced civilization with enough technology could steal the light, amassing vast quantities of energy: A Kardashev Scale Type III civilization.

**STUDENT (Female)**

I think something in that void is radiating dark energy and pushing all the galaxies out. Like a black hole.

**TEACHER**

Black holes pull objects, not push them away.

**MARY**

Galaxies merge together all the time drawn by their mutual gravity. It's possible that the Boötes Void is just the combination of two voids that have merged.

(looks at first Student)

Not *aliens*.

**MARY'S CLASSMATE**

(whispers)

Nice one, countrygirl.

**MARY**

(To classmate)

What? I just think that relying on hypothesis and not dealing with the truth is a setback.

**TEACHER**

Logic is a fine weapon Mary. But it shouldn't blind you to other possibilities.

(BEAT)

Specially now: I was just inform that CERN's new project was approved. Their new lab is just a few hours from here. We think they found something.

The class gets excited.

Teacher looks at Mary with a smile, as he knows she has the brightest mind in class, although still too strict:

**TEACHER**

(looking at MARY)

Just to finish: Science has always been built on hypothesis. A scientist is free. Free to question, to doubt, to observe what is there, and what is not.

(beat)

First we dream, and then we build.

The class finishes.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT**

It's late. Mary leaves the University Library, she is the only one still in there. She opens the door with her student fob.

Goes to the Bus stop.

The post lights illuminate the wet streets with a tense orange light. Mary is waiting at the bus stop, next to her is a PUNKGIRL (25) with her headphones and full of tattoos, pendulums and necklaces. Everything around them is quiet and empty, only a moth appears and disappears in the white light of the bus stop lamps.

Mary looks at the starlit sky. No moon. A falling star quickly passes seconds before the bus arrives.

They enter, first PUNK GIRL and then Mary.

**INT. BUS - NIGHT**

The Bus DRIVER (old 50's, fat and Afro-American) is on the phone looking at his family picture and quickly letting them stay after checking their bus-card passes.

PUNKGIRL sits on the front of the bus.

**DRIVER**

(phone call)

The weather seems nice tonight.  
I'll be home in an hour. Put  
Allie to sleep ok?

Finishes the call. The bus is completely empty, only with an ASIAN MAN (18) reading the book "Lord of the Flies" in the dark corner, and a HOMELESS man (35's) in the last seats, he is little happy-drunk and dressed like a junky.

**HOMELESS**

(yells)

COMPANY!

**DRIVER**

(angry)

Hey, I told you already! I'll let  
you stay only if you remain  
quiet! Don't disturb mah  
passengers.

Mary opens her notebook full of formulas, and sits in the middle of the bus, at the window: facing the hollow dark road. Some of the pages have little stars drawn in them.

She touches one and stops herself, closing the notebook in some angst.

The bus continues its way... away from houses and gardens. On the sidewalk, a MAD MAN (80's) walks sluggishly talking to himself.

Next Stop: Enters a BUSINESS WOMAN (30), while typing on her phone.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

You're late!

**DRIVER**

(serious)

No, you're early.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

(typing on her phone)

Funny.

**DRIVER**

Damn right it's funny, so let's keep your schedule.

BUSINESS WOMAN sits in the middle of the bus.

The DRIVER starts the engine when a Kid (SEBASTIAN, 12 yrs) knocks on the bus doors. He comes running.

**SEBASTIAN (O.S.)**

Wait, wait!

**DRIVER**

1,61 for you Kid.

He pays and sits next to Mary. The bus continues its way into the forest. DRIVER turns on the Radio.

**MARY**

(to Sebastian)

Do you want the window seat?

**SEBASTIAN**

Nah, no need.

**MARY**

It's kind'a dangerous for a kid to catch the bus alone this late.

**SEBASTIAN**

It's just as dangerous for a girl.

**MARY**

(smiles)

Your parents know that you're here?

**SEBASTIAN**

My dad knows. But he sleeps all day.

**MARY**

What about your mom?

Sebastian looks at the stars, from the window, as if avoiding the question.

**MARY**

I'm sorry. I didn't mean...

**SEBASTIAN**

It's ok. Everybody dies.

Mary touches her silver ring in the ring-finger on right hand. But stops herself in the next second. They're both looking at the stars from the window.

**MARY**

Being busy helps.  
You know, you are looking at the past.

**SEBASTIAN**

I know, is like one big cemetery.  
Do you think that all those stars are the souls of those who passed away? Like they are still looking at us. That thought feels nice.

(turns to Mary)

You're Mary, right?

**MARY**

How do you...?

**SEBASTIAN**

It's there, written in your notebook. I hate Math.

**MARY**

(smiles)

It's quantic physics.

**SEBASTIAN**

I'm Sebastian by the way.

Sebastian pulls out a Batman comic book and makes himself more at ease with Mary.

They get deeper into the forest.

The radio is interrupting with *static*. DRIVER punches the RADIO, and it starts working again.

INSERT - Radio: The hours change suddenly. NO TIME

BUS P.O.V: The large endless road continues after the forest in a straight line to the horizon, a fine line between the floor and the open night sky. The orange light

on the road is disappearing as the bus continues; the light posts are getting darker, showing signs of deterioration and becoming deformed like burnt metal. They go on in the open landscape, until the only light is the bus itself and a very small red star in the middle of the horizon, bigger than all the others.

The road goes on forever into both directions: The star and the darkness behind them.

**JUMP CUT TO:**

PUNKGIRL Wakes Up. The bus has STOPPED!

Outside there is only darkness.

No Road...

**PUNKGIRL**

What is this? Where are we?

**DRIVER**

(nervous)

Don't move!... We must be stuck in... something... Try not to alarm them.

DRIVER tries to start up the engine. There is enough gas and everything seems working perfectly, but the bus remain motionless in a normal position.

**DRIVER**

(ON HANDY RADIO)

*\*This is a temporary stop due to a malfunction in the system. Apologies for the inconvenience, and please remain seated.\**

**HOMELESS**

Lovely.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Excuse me!... Excuse me! But, will it take long?

DRIVER points to the sign: "DON'T TALK WITH THE DRIVER".

The Radio and GPS goes off.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Great!

DRIVER is angry. Tries to call.

INSERT - DRIVER'S phone: The call is on, but there's no sound from the other side.

**PUNKGIRL**

Maybe if we go out...

DRIVER interrupts her, raising his palm in parallel to the floor, afraid that the bus might sway.

**DRIVER**

(whispers)

Quiet! No one moves from the seat!

DRIVER and PUNKGIRL cannot see any road holding the bus.

PUNKGIRL looks to the passengers and returns to him.

**PUNKGIRL**

Tell them, sir.

From Mary's window there is no light out there. She gets up from her seat and goes to the DRIVER.

**MARY**

Are we lost? Maybe I can help...

**DRIVER**

(yells)

STOP! Go BACK TO YOUR SEAT!

The bus does not move, or swing while Mary walks. She looks outside:

MARY POV:.....there is no road, no sidewalk, no trees, anything. Only darkness and a glitter orange/red light from the little star on the horizon.

All the rest of the passengers go to the front. Except ASIAN MAN, who is still reading his book.

They got shocked.

There is nothing to hold the bus!

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Where is the road? What does this mean?

PUNKGIRL gets up and runs all the curtains.

**MARY**

Let's remain calm and think. The bus wouldn't remain in this position if we got stuck and hanging in a cliff. Besides, we are really far from the ocean.

**DRIVER**

I don't know what happened... suddenly we had no light and... I thought this was some kind of blackout in the area.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

A road don't disappears like that, old man!

**MARY**

Just tell us what you saw before...this...

DRIVER repeats each physical movement he did before while driving:

**DRIVER**

I had my both eyes on the road, it was like there! Then I looked at the dashboard to see the gas... I changed to the 5<sup>th</sup> and... I... I can't remember.

**MARY**

Everyone please remain calm, there must be a perfect explanation for all of this.

**SEBASTIAN**

(calm)

Or maybe we are all dead.

The bus remains motionless.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

(looks for hidden cameras)

Oh, I know what this is! I get guys!. Very funny... You almost got me! Nice reality (show) but you can cut now!

PUNKGIRL runs the last curtain: More Darkness.

**PUNKGIRL**

Guys... GUYS! This is all around us.

Mary tries to look for a piece of land, through the window.  
But she only finds vast space of darkness.

Everybody returns to focus. PUNKGIRL, BUSINESS WOMAN and  
DRIVER tries to connect their phones and tablets.

**MARY**

Perhaps if you try to contact the  
central...

**DRIVER**

It's pointless... The phones  
doesn't work. Any electronic  
device works.

INSERT - BUSINESS WOMAN phone: No Signal...  
No time: --:--

- HOMELESS and BUSINESS WOMAN:

**HOMELESS**

(teasing)

It seems we're staying here for a  
long time... Not that I have  
anywhere important to go. Nice  
job driver man!

(BEAT)

Hey, now that we're stopped, you  
mind if I go to the loo?

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

(hysterical)

Is this all a joke to you? Do you  
value anything at all?  
You know... some of us have  
important stuff to do, a life!

**HOMELESS**

Hey, going to the loo is a vital  
part of life ok?

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

We should be reaching the  
Armstrong road by now!

**HOMELESS**

Doesn't seem like the Armstrong road, to me. I don't think we're getting there.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Shut up! You lunatic!

HOMELESS change his seat and gets closer to BUSINESS WOMAN, getting himself in front of her.

**HOMELESS**

What did you say?

(gets closer)

You don't remember me, do yah?

Shame. I remember you... pink dress, curly blond hair. Such a pretty cute evil creature.

BUSINESS WOMAN looks closer at HOMELESS. She remembers.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

You... That was... 4<sup>th</sup> grade?...

**HOMELESS**

Yap. Good times. Interesting turn of events hey?

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Choices.

Homeless gets angry.

**HOMELESS**

Oh No, not choices! Not all of us were born in a *golden* crib.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

(insulted)

I didn't...

**HOMELESS** (interrupts)

You had everything you wanted. Spoiled by the parents, loved by the colleagues. I wonder if you ever had any hardships at all? I mean, college was fully paid right? Broken families can't really afford them.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Just stop playing victim. You could have earned a scholarship or God forbid, take a blue collar job for all its worth. Besides, last time I checked this was still a man's world!

**HOMELESS**

(smiling)

It's so easy to point fingers. You wouldn't last a day in my life. And trust me, it's just as worthless as yours. But maybe you're right. Maybe there should be someone to clean the shit your kind leaves behind... and must be a one big pile.

BUSINESS WOMAN turns her head and gets silence.

**DRIVER**

Could you please both shut up!  
I'm trying to think here!

(to all)

Everybody, just go back to your seats!

Everybody sits, this time in different seats in the middle of the bus, closer to each other.

DRIVER returns to the GPS and opens it to change the batteries... nothing. Brings his tools, and opens the radio and walkie-talkie, for a manual connection with the central.

Everybody remains in silent. Some scared, others just confused.

**PUNK GIRL**

This must be a dream...

She points to the red star in the horizon.

**HOMELESS**

Uuuh, I like that! I used to have drug-dreams before... Maybe this time we are all having the same dream!

**DRIVER**

Hmpf... One says dream, the other drugs... Either I'm having a nightmare or one hell of an Overdose.

**PUNK GIRL**

Collective thoughts, collective dreams. This is proved by science! It's like our minds could have stumbled upon each other while sleeping. We're sharing the same dream.

**MARY**

Oh common, we should focus on trying to find solutions for this and not in childish theories people invent to concealing their *empty minds*.

**PUNKGIRL**

(angry)

Do you have a better theory, *smartass*?

DRIVER finishes his repair. The bus moves!

It gets unstable. Everybody PANICS for seconds, until it finishes.

The bus is Motionless again.

All the lights go off: headlights and inside lamps.

**SEBASTIAN**

Lights off.

Even the ASIAN MAN's mini portable book lamp trembles and goes off while he reads.

**ASIAN MAN**

We should try to open one window.

**HOMELESS**

Oh look, he speaks!

He walks to the window, but Mary stops him.

**MARY**

I'm not sure about that...

Outside is too dark, too much to be normal...

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

You prefer to wait, doing nothing?

**MARY**

I'm just saying that perhaps we should analyze the situation first... We don't know what is out there... It could kill us.

**SEBASTIAN**

There's nothing to analyze. It's dark, and we're caged in here.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

I vote to open the window! Who's with me?

Mary looks at the DRIVER, still with his tools.

**MARY**

(to Driver)

You have no idea what you're doing, do you?

DRIVER throws his tools into the box and concedes. Mary looks towards the others and shows an expression of defeat. ASIAN MAN opens one of the windows. *Slowly*. Everybody is starring in a semicircle.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Well, at least we have some air... Now what?

**SEBASTIAN**

Put your hand off!... I'll do it.

**MARY**

SEBASTIAN, no! Someone else should go.

**DRIVER**

Don't look at me.

**HOMELESS**

Oh, ok. I'll put my hand off. Finally, being useful for society, right? I guess this is my most productive day.

Everyone looks in an expectant gaze.

HOMELESS prepares himself, he stares the complete darkness trying to find courage.

Inhales, and finally puts his hand out, slowly.

...Nothing happens...

**HOMELESS**

I feel nothing.

Everybody relaxes for a moment. Except BUSINESS WOMAN!

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

You're feeling it wrong!

She pulls HOMELESS in and puts her hand off.

HOMELESS is serious for the first time.

**HOMELESS**

Do you hear it?

**MARY**

No... hearing what?

**HOMELESS**

Precisely... No wind! No temperature...Nothing!

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Open the doors! OPEN the doors!

Everybody runs to the front of the vehicle, where the DRIVER is.

**DRIVER**

No! It's mah bus, mah responsibility! No one will open any door during the trip.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Open the damn doors, now!!!

**DRIVER**

No one leaves this bus without mah permission! Do you hear me?

**PUNK GIRL**

One of us should go and open the hood. Then you could try the ignition.

**DRIVER**

And you don't tell me how to do my fucking damn job! You're weirdo.

The group approaches the bus doors.

**DRIVER**

If you ain't gonna stand down, I'm gonna make you stand down!

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

You don't decide what my choice is! This is *my* life.

DRIVER looks at her with a hesitant expression, but eventually calms down.

**DRIVER**

Your funeral...

DRIVER presses the button.

The doors OPEN.

Everybody gets closer to the doors, except the DRIVER who remains in his seat looking down.

SEBASTIAN is the first in line. He gets near out between the open doors and tries to speak:

**SEBASTIAN (MOS)**

Hello?

No Sound.

Mary pulls him back. They look down. - *No floor.*

**SEBASTIAN**

How deep do you think it is?

**HOMELESS**

Let me try something.

HOMELESS approaches the entrance with his old cellphone, he puts a polyphonic SOUND and stretches his arm to prepare to let it fall down.

He drops it... It stops ringing immediately while falling, and disappears in the darkness... into the *void*... into the vast **nothingness!**

They stand for some moments.

PUNK Girl and BUSINESSWOMAN open the little emergency door over their heads.

POV: The *Sky* is complete dark with almost no star.

HOMELESS and ASIAN MAN go down to the floor and look under the bus. Again, *Nothing*... There's nothing holding them! DRIVER closes the doors.

PUNKGIRL stares the red star as before, but more scared. SEBASTIAN and Mary are still staring at the Void, through the closed doors.

**SEBASTIAN**

Are we... *flying*?

**MARY**

Not flying, *suspended*.

WIDE ANGLE OF THE BUS IN THE VOID:(ZENITAL ANGLE/LOW ANGLE): The bus is working but motionless, suspended in a place with no floor, only darkness and some stars around it, and a tiny glitter of Red-orange light from a distant star in the horizon.

**CUT TO:**

**BLACK.**

**NEXT SCENE: Many Hours Later.**

Everybody is asleep, now in the middle of the bus, all more close do each other.

BUSINESS WOMAN is the first one to wake up.

INSERT - Timer in Cell Phone: --:--  
Timer in Tablet: --:--

No Time. She looks at the window. Still darkness.

All the others start waking up.

**SEBASTIAN**

I'm hungry..

Mary shares her cookies with him, from her bag.

**HOMELESS**

Uhhh. Do you have more?

**MARY**

It's a child..

**HOMELESS**

So? I'm homeless.

Mary gives him an energetic bar.

**HOMELESS**

Thank *YOU*.

Eats.

Some of them return to sleep.

**FADE TO BLACK:**

**NEXT SCENE: MANY MORE HOURS LATER:**

They're still waiting in the endless night.

BUSINESS WOMAN is getting extremely anxious and stressed:

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

I'm sick of this. It's like she said!  
It's a dream, like she said. Look!  
There's no time. I just have the  
feeling that is long. Maybe I'm in a  
coma... Yes... Oh I'm brilliant!

(BEAT)

I know how to leave from this, very  
quick, very quick!

**MARY**

What? What are you talking about?

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

I just need to force myself to  
wake up.

(nervous laugh)

Simple isn't it?

Everyone is confused, attentive at what is happening.

BUSINESS WOMAN starts to ramble in paranoid.

**MARY**

You're just tired...

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

...And I know that! Exactly! You are *me!* My conscious.

BUSINESS WOMAN picks one of the DRIVERS tools from the floor.

**PUNK GIRL**

What are you doing? Stop! We're awake. This is real.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

It seems real. But it doesn't make sense... So it's not. I have stuff to do, I can't lose more time with this.

Gives her the tool.

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

Just *kill me.*

**PUNKGIRL**

No! That's homicide. Forget what I said, please! It was just an *Idea.*

**HOMELESS**

It finally happened. She lost it!

BUSINESS WOMAN looks at the doors, and goes for it. All the others try to stop her, except ASIAN MAN.

**PUNKGIRL**

STOP HER!

**BUSINESS WOMAN**

STAND BACK! My life will not be dictated by this. You have no idea what I've been thru to be where I am. You are all here, judging: You couldn't spend even one day in my life. Do you have any idea what is to work 20/7

**BUSINESS WOMAN (CONT'D)**

just to keep everything from  
crumble? Avoid ruin, to be  
something.

BUSINESS WOMAN opens the doors.

**MARY**

NO!

BUSINESS WOMAN let herself fall from the bus, but looks at  
them seconds before, with a look of regret in her eyes.

PUNKGIRL YELLS and HOMELESS is petrified.

TOP SHOT: BUSINESS WOMAN disappears in the void.  
No Sound.

**MARY**

How... Why...?

Everybody stays quiet, staring the open doors.

**ASIAN MAN**

Whatever you said, it wouldn't  
make a difference.

Everyone separates again in different seats, alone from  
each other.

Mary takes a moment to herself. For the first time she's  
confused, and cries. She's putting everything in doubt.  
PUNKGIRL looks at the star again, like it pulls her.

The red star seems just a little bigger.

HOMELESS looks at the void where BUSINESS WOMAN fell, and  
stares with a deep expression that translates:

- *Death, the ultimate equalizer.*

**ZOOM IN(TO) :**

**BLACK (VOID)**

**To be continued..**