

FOOD ROCKET NEPTUNE

Written by

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EXT. PLANET NEPTUNE PICNIC SPOT - DAY

HARUKI and SARAH picnic on the vibrant planet of Neptune.

They're in a PICNIC SPHERE, a high-tech device that allows for habitable picnic conditions while visiting inhospitable planets.

Sarah watches Haruki prepare an elegant Japanese dish. She's captivated by his culinary technique - clearly a master chef.

SARAH

What are you making?

HARUKI

My specialty. Old family recipe.

Haruki blends ingredients together with artistry.

SARAH

What's in it?

She says cute and innocently. His hands tremble slightly.

HARUKI

It's a secret.

SARAH

I want to know your secrets then.

The intimacy simmers. His nervous smile is endearing, sweet.

A drop of sweat runs his neck. He displays a nervous fidget.

SARAH

Itadakimasu!

Haruki tenderly lifts up a bowl and feeds Sarah.

SUPER:

"MANY, MANY MEALS LATER"

SPACE. PLANET EARTH

Earth, a beautiful blue-green pearl in the Milky Way Galaxy.

A large CRUISE SPACESHIP leaves a huge orbiting space station. From one of the ship's portholes, HARUKI INOUE watches the pearl get smaller and smaller.

The Spaceship, floating like it's on a gentle ocean, reaches a MAGNETIC FIELD MACHINE (a form of very expensive galactic travel using magnetic quantum forces) and is pulled into the space-time continuum in a brilliant quantum flash!

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Now with a wedding ring, SARAH INOUE tends to NEPTUNE'S NOODLES, the shop they own in a bustling Tokyo district.

It looks quite trendy, but is currently empty.

Sarah goes over balance sheets, displayed on an OMNI-SCREEN, the personal communication device of choice for sentients.

The Shop's finances are dangerously close to red.

Sarah's tranquility is interrupted when ISAMU, the shop's dedicated sushi chef, suddenly bursts in out of breath.

SARAH

Isamu? What happened? What is it?

Isamu attempts to catch his breath; but the news is just too juicy to not try and rush out.

ISAMU

It's-a-Belly-Phoon!--And-it's-coming
this-way!

Sarah grasps the seriousness of what this means! A look of excitement and anxiety catches her off guard.

SARAH

Belly Phoon? Are you serious?

EXT. TOKYO STREETS - DAY

On the crowded streets of future Tokyo - a huge throng of sentients make way for BUCKAROO the BELLY PHOON, an alien that's all stomach and double the size of a human.

And it looks ready to eat!

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

On her Omni-Screen, Sarah starts up GALACTINET, an internet capable of finding information instantly across the galaxy by harnessing quantum forces to transcend any distance.

SARAH

Find. Belly Phoon.

The Galactinet completes her search request. An image of a generic Belly Phoon appears on the screen.

GALACTINET

Belly Phoons inhabit the Green Zone of Ocean-Space, on Limpox 9, a planet with dense gravity and rich in carbon-based biodiversity.

The screen changes to a diagram of the galactic evolutionary food chain with a Belly Phoon at the very top of the list.

GALACTINET

Belly Phoon are widely known to possess the galaxies largest appetites by a vast margin, capable of eating for weeks at a time.

Illustrations with animated diagrams of the Belly Phoon next to sentient species and their non-sentient counterparts.

GALACTINET

Be careful to express yourself quickly as a Sentient. Belly Phoon's are often not aware of the differences between evolved species of mammals, aquatics, mollusks, cephalopods and their counterparts lower on the food chain.

A HUMAN stands next to a CHICKEN and waves his arms madly while the poor chicken is *plucked* by the Belly Phoon.

SARAH

Oh my lord.

EXT. TOKYO STREETS - DAY

Crowds scramble to avoid the Belly Phoon. Across the street, a PUNK TEEN absorbed in digital music, doesn't see Buckaroo.

The Punk Teen turns when he feels a tap on his shoulder. He strains his neck to gaze past the giant stomach.

The Punk Teen is paralyzed with awe. The Belly Phoon licks his lips with an abnormally large tongue. Bares some teeth.

The Belly Phoon waves his stubby, little arm. The Teen sees the alien holds an ad for Neptune's Noodles.

BUCKAROO

(speaks very slowly)
Where. Is. It?

The Teen hesitates. Buckaroo's stomach GROWLS loudly and shakes the street. Drool drips from his mouth.

The Teen manages to meekly points down the street, saving himself from certain gastrointestinal doom.

The Neptune's Noodles' sign barely rises in view.

BUCKAROO

Thank. You. Sir.

The Belly Phoon smiles and shambles towards the noodle shop.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Sarah looks out the window.

There is panic and confusion as people run to gossip about the exceptionally rare tourist in their city. Sarah catches a glimpse of the exorbitant being. Isamu cowers nearby.

ISAMU

It's coming straight for us! What do we do?!

SARAH

We don't have much time. This fella's going to be very hungry. I have to talk to Haruki. With something this *big* we need to collaborate and decide together.

Sarah turns from the window. The shop starts to shake from the heavy footsteps getting closer and closer.

Isamu hasn't moved. Sarah pulls him away.

SARAH

What are you waiting for? We're going to be very busy. Get to work on prep.

ISAMU

Hai!

Isamu bows and runs for the cold storage. Sarah opens her Omni-Screen.

SPACE. PLANET UMI

The Cruise Spaceship travels across the galaxy at beyond the speed of light and reaches the Magnetic Field Machine that it was pulled to. It slows to a normal cruising speed.

INT. CRUISE SPACESHIP

Haruki sleeps in a first-class cabin. The SHIP AI (Artificial Intelligence) communicates through a shell-shaped speaker.

SHIP AI

Welcome to Umi. Galactic culinary center and home of the Umian culture of sentients. Our total travel time in temporal earth measurements was twenty-seven hours, eleven minutes.

Haruki slowly stretches and yawns. Magnetic Field travel can be quite tiring.

SHIP AI

We have fully exited the quantum magnetic field. Please feel free to turn on any personal communication devices and make your way to the concourse. Thank you and have a wonderful time unit.

Haruki reaches for his bags and puts on his jacket. He takes out his Omni-Screen and powers it up as he exits his cabin.

INT. SHIP CONCOURSE

The concourse is FILLED with travelers.

This slice of galactic amalgamation is chaotic. Everyone *blends* together and everyone *stands* apart with their own cultures, clothes, claws and colors.

Haruki makes his way through the throng of ocean-inspired aliens, humanoids, and actual humans as he struggles to listen to his Omni-Screen over the cacophony of the crowd.

SARAH (O.S.)

I can't do it alone Haruki. This... opportunity... come home... we need... need you... as soon as you get this!

Haruki is concerned as he joins a line of Oceanic-esque sentients waiting to enter Umi's Space Station.

INT. UMI SPACE STATION

Haruki has his Omni-Passport digitally stamped by a CRUSTACEOUS, a blue collar clam alien from a nearby planet.

The Crustaceous hands back the passport.

HARUKI

Thank you.

Haruki gives a polite bow that goes completely unnoticed.

CRUSTACEOUS

Next!

An EELER family, hyper eel aliens from a distant galaxy, push Haruki out of the way.

Haruki puts his passport away and heads onwards.

INT. UMI SPACE STATION BAGGAGE CLAIM

Haruki approaches. A Blue-Skinned HUMANOID OFFICER looks up.

HARUKI

Pardon me. I was told I could collect
my chef's knives here.

The Humanoid Officer hands over a generic Omni-Screen.

HUMANOID OFFICER

Fill this out.

SOON ENOUGH

Haruki has an ornate knife kit handed to him. Haruki bows again, he is quite polite.

INT. SPACE STATION SHUTTLE BAY

Haruki joins the bustling crowds of tourists, business class, and working stiffs in a crowded Shuttle Bay.

Haruki tries to call Sarah on his Omni-Screen. He searches for reception, not easy when you're many light years away.

VOICE

Haruki Inoue! Is that you!?

Haruki turns. He faces a huge BLUE-FIN SHARKER. It's his old pal JESTER. Haruki smiles when he sees the never sleeping predator of the Galactic Ocean and his big grinning teeth.

JESTER

Haruki. It is you. You look terrific.
Come on. I've got a taxi waiting.

Jester steers Haruki to a small submarine-like TAXI SHUTTLE.

HARUKI

I need to call my wife.

JESTER

You'll get better service on the surface. Too many ships coming in and out of the quantum field. She'll be fine without you for a little while.

The SHUTTLE PILOT, a humanoid with coral-like protrusions called a REEFOID, loads up his bags. Jester opens the door.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Sarah and Isamu stand behind the sushi counter.

Mouths wide open from shock.

Buckaroo is seated comfortably on the floor voraciously eating a smorgasbord of noodle dishes, sushi, and Japanese cuisine that could feed a family of twenty.

A growing stack of empty dishes behind him would feed another forty. The Belly Phoon's belly is swelling in size.

SARAH

He finished everything we served him.

ISAMU

Maybe he's getting full?

Buckaroo finishes off a plate of Squid Udon Noodles and dabs the corners of his fish-like mouth with a napkin.

Isamu smiles without confidence - could he be right?

Buckaroo reaches for a sushi order form and a pencil...

EXT. UMI - DAY

The Shuttle enters orbit over a beautiful blue-green ocean and heads towards a MASSIVE floating city.

INT. SHUTTLE - DAY

Haruki looks out a window. They are close enough that he can see the movement of a pod of alien whales.

REEFOID CABBIE

Welcome to Umi. Home of the universe's biggest ocean.

JESTER

First time?

Boats of all different sizes and shapes crisscross the waves.

HARUKI

Hai. I have heard a lot about it. It stretches on forever.

EXT. UMI CITY - DAY

The Shuttle passes over the fish and shellfish farms of the aquaculture community.

Small barn-like buildings and aquatic farming equipment move around on the outskirts of the floating city.

REEFOID CABBIE

Umians built themselves up from under the sea four thousand years ago. Umi City is the biggest surface city. Home to over eighty million sentients.

HARUKI

It's beautiful.

The Aquaculture Community changes to Suburbs.

JESTER

I've never been anywhere else that has such a close association with its ocean - its all there is here.

The Suburbs spread out over the ocean, creating individual communities separated by bridges and ferry lanes.

The Suburbs reconvene as they close in on the City Center.

Massive skyscrapers float close together in a huge hub. The Shuttle disappears into the city-scape.

INT. HUB - DAY

The Shuttle takes off. Jester checks the time.

JESTER

Quick, quick. Let's get going!

Haruki checks his Omni-Screen. He has clear reception.

HARUKI

You haven't changed. Always on the go.

JESTER

You know what they say - once a Sharker stops moving - he's as good as dead. Inside at least.

HARUKI

I have to call Sarah.

JESTER

My restaurant is close by. Come take a quick look and then call her.

Haruki frowns. He reluctantly puts his Omni-Screen away.

Jester smiles with a mouth filled with sharp teeth.

EXT. CORAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - DAY

Jester and Haruki cross a huge courtyard dedicated to elaborate coral fountain structures of all shapes and sizes.

JESTER

My place is just on the other side. Dining room has a great view of the Coral Fountains here and a sunset view of the ocean on the other side.

HARUKI

Sounds wonderful.

They pass a small crowd. Haruki pauses.

Jester carries on, doesn't notice he lost his friend.

Haruki looks to see why there is a crowd.

AN OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Is parked on the curb. It's called "*Tako's Food Rocket*".

TAKO the OCTOMAKI, an octopus alien species with four arms and four legs feverishly sets up his mobile food operation.

A menu board is in one arm.

Another arm opens the awning.

The third arm sets up prepared salads and bags of chips.

And the last arm cleans the front of the Rocket.

Tako displays passion for his work with enthusiasm and gusto.

TAKO

Opening in just a minute folks. Just a minute now.

HARUKI

Whatcha' cooking today?

Tako faces Haruki and smiles. He recognizes a fellow chef when he sees one. He taps his sign with a free arm.

TAKO

Finest home-cooked seafood this side
of the green zone! Want to stick
around and try some?

Haruki takes a step closer to the Food Rocket when a fin roughly squeeze his arm.

JESTER

Lost you back here. Don't waste your
time with these curb-side dives. The
food's very low class.

Jester pulls Haruki away. Haruki apologizes with his look.

The happy-go-lucky Tako enters his Food Rocket and waves goodbye with a free arm.

TAKO

Next time then.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT - DAY

Jester's Cove is a fine dining establishment of the highest quality in the universe.

It is not quite open for business and a CONSTRUCTION CREW works on the finishing touches.

INT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT - DAY

Jester gestures at his Gourmand Palace Extraordinaire!

JESTER

Jester's Cove - Fresh Seafood Dining
from *anywhere* in the galaxy!

Haruki is impressed.

Anyone would be with the grand, luxury scale of Jester's establishment. Jester leads Haruki on a tour.

JESTER

Just imagine! You crave salty clams
from Burgundy Bay in the Blue Zone!
We've got them! Fresh Monk Fish caught
that morning from the Aurora Moon Sea
in the Red Zone - we've got it. Every
day a changing menu with hundreds of
unique fresh seafood items from every
single corner of the galaxy!

Jester shows him a beautiful, intricate water tank display capable of housing thousands of fish - except it's empty.

HARUKI

Where do I fit in?

JESTER

Where do you fit in? Where do you fit in!? What a question to ask?

HARUKI

I owe you for helping me with opening my place but what do you need me for? Create a menu? Help hire a head chef?

JESTER

Come on. I'll show you.

Jester leads Haruki away from the stunning tank display.

INT. MEGA-KITCHEN

The Kitchen is as opulent as the restaurant. Haruki eyes dart around looking at the state-of-the-art cooking equipment.

JESTER

A restaurant like mine is going to succeed because of what?

Haruki takes his eyes off of a gorgeous multi-story deep sea fryer and looks at his friend to answer sincerely.

HARUKI

Fresh, local ingredients. Great service. Excellent recipes. And passionate cooking.

Jester clearly doesn't hear him and resumes his pitch.

JESTER

Exactly! We will have what others don't! This place will be the best because we will only serve the best.

Jester slows down his frenetic back and forth action long enough to put his fin around Haruki's shoulder.

JESTER

I want you to be a part of it, my friend. Partners. This will be the hottest place in the solar system. No! The galaxy! The universe! No! No!! The whole universe. What do you say?

Jester has trouble staying still, breaks his hold on Haruki.

Haruki opens his Omni-Screen to an image of him and his wife at the humble opening of their much, much smaller eatery.

HARUKI

That's more than a favor.

JESTER

You owe me a huge favor.

HARUKI

That's more than a huge favor.

JESTER

In three hours, a bale of hungry, influential, powerful Tortuosities will be here to decide whether or not to give my... *our* restaurant priority choice on fresh seafood.

HARUKI

Three hours? Are you crazy?

JESTER

You don't get it, Haruki. These Turtle Guys *run* the Magnetic Shipping Lines. It took a lot of favors just to get them interested. You can't just turn your back on them. We get them interested - we get priority choice on ALL the fresh seafood.

HARUKI

What happens if you lose their interest? Or worse, offend them?

JESTER

You don't gain control of all the major shipping lines in the universe without swimming in the deep end.

Haruki *does* understand what that means.

HARUKI

I need time to plan. A day. Two...

JESTER

We don't have time. I can't waste their time now. It's too late.

HARUKI

You really should have let me know before I cam all the way across the galaxy how serious this meal was. What do you plan on feeding them?

JESTER

Couldn't risk you saying no. Come on.

Jester takes Haruki to the giant cold storage unit built into the kitchen. He swings open the large double doors.

Inside is an endless sea of wonderful fresh produce.

Sorting out a large shipment is BOBBY, the world's best Sous-Chef MANATEETEE. Like all Manateetee's - Bobby is slow, deliberate, and exceptionally proud.

BOBBY

Boss.

Is his only acknowledgment as he continues his work.

JESTER

Is my special catch ready for tonight?

Bobby points over his shoulder with a big, meaty paw.

BOBBY

Round back. In the hydrogen chest.

Jester glides to a sleek HYDROGEN CHEST (really cold storage for highly perishable items and/or deep space travel).

Bobby glances at the mysterious human in his boss' kitchen. He raises a wrinkled brow.

Jester unlocks the Chest. Haruki peers in. It contains the galaxy's most exotic items. A turtle-alien cornucopia.

JESTER

We're going to knock them out of their shells. Who can resist your cooking and my charm?

He closes the lid.

INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Jester tries to focus behind his executive desk but he constantly fidgets and fusses.

Haruki remains still, sitting across from him.

HARUKI

All you want me to do is cook for them? With your ingredients?

JESTER

You're the best cook I know. Once the meal's done, they give me the contract my staff takes over and we're rich! Wish you would reconsider being my head chef but it's your choice.

Jester can't help but get up and dance happily around.

HARUKI

I have to call my wife.

JESTER

What's there to call about? You're going to be rich. One meal.

Haruki scowls, folds his arms. Jester knows that Haruki means business. Jester slides over his office Omni-Screen.

HARUKI

Thank you.

JESTER

I'll go check on some things. Big meal. We'll be rich. Big, big meal! Richer than the all the life in all the universe's oceans! Big meal...

The door slides shut behind Jester as he exits.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - NIGHT

Back in Tokyo, night has fallen. The crowds of curious onlookers have gone home. The streets are quiet.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - NIGHT

Sarah and Isamu are exhausted, sitting in a booth.

On the other side of the dining room, Buckaroo snores loudly. The alien sleeps sitting up.

Its belly has grown substantially in size.

SARAH

(whispering)

We better clean up.

They leave the booth and grab bins for bussing and gather huge stacks of dishes piled up around the Belly Phoon.

SARAH

You'll have to get up early and get to the fish market first thing.

ISAMU

Hai.

There is a loud RING from Sarah's Omni-Screen! She left it on the table across the dining room.

SARAH

Haruki.

She dashes over and quickly answers.

Isamu watches the Belly Phoon grumble lightly in its sleep. No response. Isamu signals that everything is okay.

Sarah nearly bursts into tears as she looks into the face of her husband - projected from millions of light years away.

When an Omni-Screen user calls another Omni-Screen user a life-sized holographic image is projected next to the screen.

SARAH

Where have you been? You should have arrived on Umi an hour ago.

She carries the Omni-Screen out the side door.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - NIGHT

Sarah sits on a bench in their garden.

HARUKI

I'm so sorry, Fish Cake. This is the first chance I've gotten to call.

INT. JESTER'S COVE EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

Haruki tries to touch the digital projection of his wife's cheek to comfort her. He frowns when it doesn't work.

SARAH

I was scared something happened.

HARUKI

I'm so sorry I didn't call sooner.

SARAH

It's okay Sticky Bun. Don't forget - I need you too. How's Jester?

HARUKI

Still always moving. Don't worry about that. Tell me what's so urgent.

Sarah gives a triumphant smile, eases Haruki's anxiety.

SARAH

Well, we have a special guest.

HARUKI

Is your mother there? Tell her hi!

Sarah laughs. Haruki is confused.

SARAH

It's not my mother. A Belly Phoon has taken a table in our restaurant.

Haruki is shocked!

HARUKI

A Belly Phoon? Really?

SARAH

It's crazy. He ate a week's worth of food in a day. When can you get back?

HARUKI

As soon as I can! Wow. How lucky.

SARAH

I know, right? He loves our food. Thinks he might eat for a while.

HARUKI

How are we paying for everything?

SARAH

We can last for a short while but it will put us into the red. More than anything, we need you to help cook. I need you.

HARUKI

If he's not happy. Food. Service. Anything. No one in the universe can make a Belly Phoon pay for a meal that it didn't enjoy. It's a risk.

SARAH

That's why I waited to talk to you first. We need to decide together.

HARUKI

What are you thinking?

SARAH

If you're here, we have got to go for it! The honor alone...

Haruki drums his fingers on the desk. Thinking.

HARUKI

(confidently)

Do it! Buy lots of food.

SARAH

Are you sure?

HARUKI

Feed that Belly Phoon everything you can! Ask Isamu to bring in his cousins to help out.

SARAH

We've fed him everything on the menu. At least five times.

HARUKI

(suddenly awkward)

Who made the Soba!?

Sarah pauses. She smiles.

SARAH

Except the Soba. We didn't touch it. Told him it's the chef's special dish.

Haruki looks ashamed. He covers it up quickly.

HARUKI

Well. Great. This is amazing.

The two laugh at their good fortunes. Pause. They look longingly in each other's eyes. There is true love there.

SARAH & HARUKI

I love you Sticky Bun/Fish Cake.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT - DAY

Jester oversees a group of CLAMDIGGERS - more blue collar aliens from the crustacean family who wear comically large boots. They lift a crucial piece of signage into place.

JESTER

Excellent. Left. No left. Left! Sorry.
Meant right. There. Perfect.

Haruki steps outside. Jester gives his sly smirk.

HARUKI

One meal.

Haruki folds his arms. Jester's grin gets larger.

JESTER

That's all I'm asking for.

Even though he's taking the offer, Haruki looks ashamed.

HARUKI

I need to ask you a favor. Sarah needs
help back on earth. Right away. Is
there any way you can pay me some now?

Jester sniffs the air unexpectedly. Must be a Sharker thing?

JESTER

Listen mate. I put everything I have
into this venture. I got nothing on
me. Get me through dinner and I'll
have something for you.

They sit there uncomfortably for just a bit.

JESTER

I know a good loan Sharker.

HARUKI

(under his breath)
Thanks.

Jester sways into a big grin.

JESTER

You know I would do anything for my
friends. Right?

INT. JESTER'S COVE KITCHEN - NIGHT

The ENTIRE Jester's Cove staff is in attendance as Haruki
paces back and forth. Behind him, Jester paces even faster.

Haruki inspects every SERVER FISHYSE, brightly colored fish
aliens that looking smashing in tuxedos, tops to tails.

He stares down every EELER LINE COOK, CLAMDIGGER DISHWASHER,
and HUMANOID PASTRY CHEF for any sign of stress or fear.

HARUKI

Soon, the slowest and pickiest eaters in the galaxy are going to enter the doors of *YOUR* place of work. They're going to enjoy *your* service. They're going to eat *your* food. We have one chance! One chance only. Get out there and make this the best dinner service anyone has ever seen!

The staff cheers at the motivational words as they break formation to attend to their assignments.

INT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The place is full of TORTUOSITIES and their mixed alien species entourages of bodyguards, assistants and guests.

Every shell is decked out in fine jewels. Every beaked mouth enjoys the finest spirits and delicate appetizers.

Server Fishyses dart regally through the crowd attending to every whim.

Haruki pokes his head out from the kitchen doors.

Jester pops up next to his friend.

JESTER

Haruki. You're a genius. They love it.
Ready for the main course?

Haruki nods and slips back into the kitchen.

Jester finds the MAITRE D - a Reefoid with aesthetically pleasing golden corral features.

JESTER

Dinner time.

THE KITCHEN

Haruki is a whirling dervish of creativity and leadership.

He finds himself next to Bobby and they laugh with each other as the cooking 'heats' up.

HARUKI

You're getting behind there big guy!

BOBBY

You don't know the strengths of a Manateete! We may be slow...

Bobby slaps down a perfectly executed dish.

BOBBY

But we can cook!

Haruki laughs as plates the same beautiful dish a second slower. He spins to the next station.

HARUKI

Looking great guys. A little more seaweed. This is table 24 and the salad is for one of Umi's elite.

He dances up to a dessert station and helps an exasperated Eeler finish a towering dessert with care and grace.

HARUKI

There you go. Like this. See? The sugar hardens as you pull away from the base. *Pull away.*

Haruki keeps up his frenetic pace around the kitchen.

There isn't a single disgruntled worker in the whole place.

A SHORT WHILE LATER

Things have slowed down. Haruki sees Bobby slip out the back door. He follows him and points to a Sous-Chef as he does.

HARUKI

Get me if there's trouble.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE LOADING AREA - NIGHT

Haruki finds Bobby at the end of the alley. The big guy is enjoying the moonlight and sipping a cold beverage.

HARUKI

Good work tonight Bobby.

Bobby smiles. Haruki sees the wonderful full moon.

BOBBY

Great, isn't it? Umi's moon. Keeps this great ocean always floating peacefully and full of life.

Haruki observes signs of the floating city around him.

HARUKI

You from here?

BOBBY

Nah. I'm a Red Zone guy. Came here for culinary school and didn't leave.

HARUKI

Do you miss your family?

Bobby smiles but doesn't answer. They enjoy the silence.

BOBBY

Enjoyed working with you tonight. You're one of the best chefs I've ever seen. You sticking around?

HARUKI

Have to get back home. My wife and my own restaurant need me.

BOBBY

Shame. Hate to see who Jester hires.

HARUKI

Can't be that bad. He knew me, right?

They laugh. Haruki pats his new pal on his broad back.

INT. JESTER'S COVE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Jester squirms in his Executive Chair across from two guests.

They are the MAGNET BROTHERS, SAUL and MANNY. A pair of very sharply dressed Tortuosities with many years between them.

Behind the Magnet Brothers are two Tortuosity BODYGUARDS.

JESTER

Did you enjoy your meal tonight?

Saul gives the faintest of satisfactory smiles. Manny just keeps on pouting with his reptilian beak.

JESTER

Excellent.

Jester jumps out of his seat.

MANNY

Are you prepared to agree to our terms? All our terms?

JESTER

Unconditionally. Sure. Of course. I got this under control. No fail. Gentlemen. Shall we sign?

Jester slides over a Legal-Screen that holds the contract.
The Brothers share a look. Saul reaches for the contract.

INT. JESTER'S COVE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Haruki and Bobby watch as the last speck of grease is cleaned up from the last hard to clean spot in the massive kitchen.

MICKEY, the Eeler looks to his bosses. Haruki nods.

BOBBY

See you tomorrow Mickey.

Mickey waves and darts away. He nearly runs full force into Jester in his haste to get out of the kitchen.

JESTER

Whoa, slow down there. No running in the kitchen. That's dangerous.

Jester's all big smiles as he approaches.

Bobby nods respectfully at Haruki.

BOBBY

See you around. Pleasure working with...

JESTER

Hold on. Hold on. I have big news. I want you both to hear.

HARUKI

I have to check on Sarah...

Jester looks ticked off. Bobby hesitates.

JESTER

Just hold on a shell-picking minute. Don't go spoiling my moment on me. I made the deal with the Magnet Shipping Company. We did it.

BOBBY

Terrific.

HARUKI

That's great. Now I can go home.

Jester circles them, makes a rage face when he goes behind them. And changes to scowls when he faces them.

JESTER

You can't just leave. Did you hear what I said? I need you.

HARUKI

One meal. That was the deal.

JESTER

I have a new deal for you.

HARUKI

I don't want a new deal.

JESTER

Do you realize what I had to agree to?

HARUKI

Jester. What did you do?

Jester stops behind Haruki. A brief look of paralyzed fear.

JESTER

The Magnet Brothers aren't a bank Haruki. They pull strings. Very long strings. And now I'm on one of them with a very sharp hook.

HARUKI

Now you have access to "the best". I'm sure you'll be fine.

Jester paces in front of the cooks.

JESTER

You're always doing this. Thinking of yourself. You owe me. You owe me big.

HARUKI

Maybe you should have asked me first instead of making a stupid decision. I'm going home. My wife needs me.

Bobby looks very uncomfortable as the two friends argue.

BOBBY

I'll see you later boss.

JESTER

No! Stay for a second. Haruki, don't do this to me. This is very serious.

HARUKI

My wife is important to me!

Jester blurts the first thing that comes to his mind.

JESTER

Well - I can't pay you. Find your own way home then.

Haruki angrily packs his knives in their sheath.

JESTER

I had to act fast.

HARUKI

I'm leaving.

JESTER

These guys mean business.

Haruki storms for the back entrance.

JESTER

I can do this without you. You're good - but you're not that good. I can do all the cooking my SELF!

Haruki slams the door on his way out.

A DEEP RUMBLING of an approaching rocket takes over the huge kitchen. Pots and pans rattle. Equipment shakes.

JESTER

Excellent. My first shipment is here!

Bobby reaches out a paw to catch a falling salt shaker.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE LOADING AREA - NIGHT

Haruki stares up into the sky. A massive SEAFOOD TRANSPORT SHIP slows its decent and lands on the Dock.

A TORTUOSITY TRUCKER with a very hard shell climbs out of the Cabin, holds a Company Omni-Screen.

TORTUOSITY TRUCKER

You da boss, Jester?

Haruki stiffens at the name. Jester dips in front of his very recently estranged friend and "accidentally" shoves him.

JESTER

Yes. That's me. Excellent! Our first shipment. Jungle Shrimp and Sulfur Prawns from the Admiral Cluster in the Blue Zone. Let's see them.

TORTUOSITY TRUCKER
Where's your tank?

Jester giddily glides over to his tanker connection.

He fumbles with the mechanism that attaches the Trucker's Container to his system. He gets angry at the complexity.

JESTER
Bobby, get over here. You do this. You know how to run it. Only the best ones. Only the best.

Haruki watches with frustration at his frenetic betrayer.

HARUKI
What are you going to do with all of this? You can't possibly use it all?

BOBBY
What should we do with the leftovers?

Jester scowls at his ex-friend.

JESTER
Throw it out. I won't serve trash.

Bobby sends squealing shrimp down the robotic apparatus.

Haruki watches huge batches get separated and shoot down a different tube ending at a city-block sized DUMPSTER.

JESTER
I'll start thinking of a menu for tomorrow's dinner. This is perfect! Look at the size of some of these. Only the best. Only the best.

Haruki stares at the dumpster. The amount of waste is gross.

EXT. TOKYO STREETS - DAY

A focused BUSINESSMAN walks with his ear glued to his Omni-Screen's voice modulator.

BUSINESSMAN
The increasing activity of transport seafood rockets should have no direct conflict with our shipping lines. Ridiculous! Get me someone in charge and call me back. I'm at lunch.

He opens the door to Neptune's Noodles in an overworked daze.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

The Businessman rolls a call and sits down at the counter.

Isamu feverishly creates sushi rolls of all shapes and sizes.

He sets the rolls out on the counter where they are picked up by Sarah or one of Isamu's THREE COUSINS.

The Businessman nods and grunts to another caller. He cups the Voice Modulator on the Omni-Screen.

BUSINESSMAN

Salmon Bento Box. I'm in a hurry.

So's Isamu. He pays zero attention to him.

The Businessman frowns and snaps his fingers.

BUSINESSMAN

Salmon Bento. Hello?

Isamu keeps on rolling sushi. Dishes come out of the kitchen the whole time as well.

ISAMU

Sarah. Customer at the counter.

Sarah breaks off from the food supply chain and puts her hand gently on the Businessman's shoulder.

SARAH

I can prepare lunch for you but it will be about an hour.

BUSINESSMAN

An hour! Are you kidding me. There's hardly anyone in this place.

He stands up and sweeps his arm around to make a point...

And that's when he notices Buckaroo.

SARAH

Our VIP guest is on his fifth lunch order and we are doing our best to meet his needs. In an hour I can...

BUSINESSMAN

Wow! Never mind. I get it. Good luck. Would you look at the size...

The Businessman stands in awe.

Buckaroo the Belly Phoon pauses to see if the Businessman is a catch of the day or just a tourist. He licks his lips.

The Businessman runs.

Buckaroo shrugs. His stubby little arms dig in for more grub even though it seems impossible for the arms to be effective.

The doorbell chimes.

MIMIC, an elderly, handicapped HAMMER-NOSE SHARKER and two kindly SEAL'A'FLUER ORDERLIES (from the seal family) enter.

The Orderlies make sure that Mimic stays in motion while constantly staying out of the reach of his sharp teeth.

SARAH

I'm so sorry sir. We might have trouble accommodating you for lunch.

Mimic looks directly at Buckaroo.

MIMIC

A mutual friend asked me to pay a visit.

SARAH

What? Who?

Mimic points to a framed version of the restaurant opening photo that they have on the wall.

MIMIC

Him.

Sarah looks very confused.

SARAH

Isamu.

ISAMU

Hai!

Isamu doesn't miss a beat with his cooking.

SARAH

Can you guys manage for a few minutes?

ISAMU

Hai-hai!

He slaps an expertly rolled Lobster Roll on the counter.

ISAMU
Double speed! Get our guest his food!

COUSINS
HAI!

SARAH
We can talk in the garden.

Sarah, Mimic and his Orderlies step outside.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES GARDEN - DAY

The immense shadow of the Belly Phoon dims the natural light of the Garden. Sarah motions to the bench.

SARAH
Please have a seat.

MIMIC
I prefer to stand.

The Orderlies take turns to move his body by small degrees.

MIMIC
It is my understanding your business needs financial assistance.

Sarah looks embarrassed. Financial stress is a very private matter for her.

SARAH
Haruki told you that?

MIMIC
It did come to my attention. Yes.

SARAH
Banks sees a loan for a Belly Phoon like an anchor on a boat with a hole in it and insurance companies won't swim within a mile of us.

MIMIC
This is a considerable risk. My understanding is it all depends on one factor. How good is your food?

The garden shakes with the rumbling ECHO of a monster BELCH.

INT. SWANKY UMI HOTEL - NIGHT

Haruki is exhausted when he enters.

A STARFISHMAN CONCIERGE quickly approaches with the airs of utmost professionalism in the face of bad news.

STARFISHMAN CONCIERGE

Mr. Inoue. I have to inform you that I have some rather unfortunate news.

Haruki sees his luggage behind the Concierge's desk. He reaches in his pockets for his room key and hands it over.

STARFISHMAN CONCIERGE

The payment method for your suite has been cancelled.

HARUKI

I changed my plans and I'm leaving sooner than I expected.

STARFISHMAN CONCIERGE

There must have been some kind of mistake with your checkout. I must insist on presenting you a bill for the room since we were unable to rent it out to another guest.

EXT. SWANKY UMI HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Haruki looks at his available funds on his Omni-Screen.

He sees only RED numbers.

EXT. PUBLIC ROCKET STATION - NIGHT

Haruki takes his turn at ticket kiosk.

He presses the button to translates everything into English. A few prompts later he discovers the price of a one way ticket to earth.

Even on public transportation it's a ridiculous amount.

EXT. CORAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - NIGHT

Haruki sets his luggage down and sits down on a park bench.

His Omni-Screen RINGS. Haruki smiles when his wife's quantum image appears on the screen.

HARUKI

Fish Cake...

SARAH

Sticky Bun. I miss you.

HARUKI

I miss you too. Much. Um. Well. Um.
How are things with our customer?

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Sarah gets excited by his question. Haruki's holograph looks very pleased to see his wife expressing such passion.

SARAH

You've got to see it! It's incredible.

HARUKI

He's really enjoying it?

SARAH

He loves it! This is so good for us
Haruki. We're so lucky.

Haruki turns away on the screen.

SARAH

What's wrong?

EXT. CORRAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD

Haruki wills his sadness not to overtake him.

HARUKI

I'm okay. I'm fine.

SARAH

When are you going to be home?

HARUKI

How long's the inventory going to
last? Did you use our savings?

Sarah's digital image appears closer as she leans in.

SARAH

Our savings were able to just barely
feed him today. Why? Is everything
okay? When are you coming home?

HARUKI

Everything's fine. My. My trip. I have
to stay longer.

SARAH

Haruki! You're not letting Jester swim
all over you again? He's very selfish.

Haruki catches a lump in his throat.

HARUKI

It's hard to explain. Can you handle things for a few more days?

Now Sarah looks very stressed out and concerned. She wasn't prepared for that kind of news.

SARAH

I need you. Today. Not in a few days.

HARUKI

I'm so sorry.

SARAH

Haruki...

She looks mad. Then her looks softens.

SARAH

Your associate came by.

He was not ready to hear that. A look of confusion spreads on his face.

HARUKI

My associate?

SARAH

He said you asked him to come.

HARUKI

A Sharker. Offering to lend us money?

SARAH

Yes. I thought you knew about this?

Something about his look tells us he didn't ask for the number. Someone else must have sent the Sharker.

HARUKI

What's he asking for?

SARAH

Half of our profits.

HARUKI

What did you tell him?

SARAH

I said no. Wasn't Jester going to give you money for helping him?

HARUKI

He will. When I'm all done.

The fishing net of lies has turned this conversation in strange and uncomfortable direction.

SARAH

Can you ask him for a front?

HARUKI

No. It's hard to explain. What do we lose if the Belly Phoon won't pay?

Sarah doesn't respond with words.

Haruki clearly understands that the answer is everything.

SARAH

Buckaroo really wants to try your Soba dish. That's our best dish by far.

Something unknown grips Haruki with fear.

HARUKI

Don't make it. Please. It is very important it's done the right way.

SARAH

Maybe now's not the time to delegate.

HARUKI

Please. Don't make it.

SARAH

We can do this. But I need you home.

HARUKI

I will be home soon. I promise.

He can't look her digital image in the eyes anymore.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES

Sarah can see the staff floundering around the increasing size of the Belly Phoon. A LOUD CRASH gets her moving.

SARAH

I wish you would come home Haruki.

She terminates the call.

EXT. CORAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD

The Omni-Screen goes blank.

Overhead, Haruki sees a large Seafood Transport Ship descends to the docking bay.

Haruki can't watch - or listen. He stares at his feet.

As he ponders his fate, eyes cast down - he SNIFFS.

He takes a bigger sniff. His nose crunches up, eyebrows furl.

Haruki stands up and sniffs for the source of the aroma.

He follows his nose through the Coral Fountain Courtyard all the way to a slapdash assortment of plastic chairs and a rickety condiment table next to...

AN OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

It's Tako's Food Rocket.

Haruki gets in line behind a motley group of SPACE SAILORS who are having a joyful, slightly inebriated time.

SPACE SAILOR 1

We lika. Like a four. I want four of the. Watcha call them?

TAKO

The house special!?

SPACE SAILOR 1

NO! The other one. The house special! Yeah. That's it.

TAKO

Four house special! Coming right up.

Haruki watches with immense respect for Tako the Octomaki as the alien spins around the interior of his cramped kitchen.

One arm grabs fish fillets.

One arm grabs the seasoning.

Another prepares four plates while the last arm gathers payments from a tipsy sailor.

In a final flourish, bam, four finished plates hit the counter. Haruki takes a big whiff - smells... interesting?

The Sailors grab the grub, sit at the makeshift dining area.

TAKO

What are you having tonight?

Tako finally recognizes Haruki.

TAKO

Hey! It's you. Got away from the stuffy fine dining and came for some real soul food, huh?

HARUKI

What's that you made them?

TAKO

Soulful sole food. House special. Broiled fresh sole fillets straight from Umi's Ocean with my very own special seasoning blend.

HARUKI

Can I try it?

Tako prepares the same meal with three of his arms while he gestures with his spare hand at Haruki.

TAKO

Got the recipe from my mom. She's my culinary inspiration. Can't tell you what goes in it, top secret, but I can tell you that...

They both get distracted by the roar of a Seafood Transport Ship approaching Jester's Cove. Tako notices it upsets him.

TAKO

Hey. Ever been to Nautilus? It's got the best scallops in the universe.

HARUKI

I've heard that.

TAKO

Thinking of heading there next. Got to keep moving with a rig like this. Can't stay in one place too long or folks get bored of my food.

HARUKI

Have you ever been to earth?

TAKO

Human, eh? Thought so. Hard to tell you two armed folks apart. Never been to earth. What amazing variety, huh? Chef's dream, from what I've heard.

The dish is ready. Tako slides it in front of Haruki. Tako watches with anticipation.

Haruki slowly takes a bite.

TAKO
What do you think?

HARUKI
You've definitely made this before.

He takes another bite. Tako nods affectionately.

TAKO
Been my specialty for a long time.

HARUKI
I can taste the love. It's good,
but...

TAKO
Come on, you can tell me. I love
hearing advice from other chefs. I can
take it.

HARUKI
Do you have any sea salt?

Tako nearly drops the pan he is holding in surprise.

TAKO
(laughs)
Oh my. Nearly lost my ink there. Sure.
Of course. Sea salt.

HARUKI
What if you tried brining the fish?
Bring in more of the saltiness of the
ocean. Enhance the natural flavors?

Tako puts both his right hands on his chin to think about that. He likes the idea.

TAKO
Care to explain?

HARUKI
Take your piece of fish. Use that big
pot there. Do you have? Let me see.

Haruki pokes his head in through the window of the rocket.

HARUKI
That big one over there. Fill it with
water and put in a cup of sea salt.

TAKO

Feel like giving me a demonstration?

One of Tako's arms pushes up the hatch on the side of the rocket. He waves Haruki inside.

INT. FOOD ROCKET - NIGHT

Haruki looks around the wondrous food rocket.

There's lots to admire about a small business owner who puts a rocket booster on his restaurant and travels the universe.

Tako observes as Haruki gathers up the tools he needs.

Haruki tests the seasoning blend.

HARUKI

Very nice. Seaweed base. Is that fish sauce from your home planet?

Tako nods.

Haruki prepares a brine. He gently oils a frying pan.

HARUKI

Normally, I'd brine it for an hour. In a pinch, you still have to let it soak for a few minutes. Oil up your pan.

Every step for Haruki in the kitchen is like watching a dancer move or an artist paint.

Nothing else exists but his passion and the ingredients.

HARUKI

Sole's terrific for a brine. Captures more of the flavor. Most sentients set it down skin first to crisp it. Start with the flesh. Seals in the flavor.

He gently drops the brined fish in the frying pan. Sizzle!

He quickly prepares a bed of fresh produce; local cabbage and succulently pickled beets.

The fish is flipped. He tests and retests the sauce.

He plates the food and presents it with a subtle, respectful bow to honor the food and the connection to the customer.

HARUKI

Hai.

TAKO

All that with two hands. Amazing.

Tako grabs the plate, a napkin, a knife and a fork and takes the first bite carefully into his big octopus shaped mouth.

Tako's eyes light up in delightful surprise.

TAKO

Oh my. Gosh. Wow. Oh my. Wow.

Tako puts down the napkin and the knife and grabs two more forks. Before he knows what hit him, the food's gone.

He puts the plate down and picks up the napkin, wiping his face clean with a wistful, dreamy look in his eyes.

TAKO

You're a genius. That was incredible.

HARUKI

It was your inspiring seasoning blend that made the difference.

TAKO

Never tried a salt brine before and I grew up in the ocean. Seriously. The fancy place that picked you as their head chef is one lucky establishment.

HARUKI

It didn't work out.

TAKO

You're unemployed?

HARUKI

More like stranded.

Haruki points out front where his bags rest on the ground.

TAKO

Wow. What happened?

HARUKI

I got tricked into leaving home to help someone I thought was a friend.

TAKO

Need a place to stay? This rig has an extra cot up front. Least I can do.

Tako is distracted by a CUSTOMER at his food rocket window.

CUSTOMER

What is that incredible smell? What are you cooking?

TAKO

That is my new salt brined fish. House special.

Haruki grabs his bags and puts them in the cabin portion of the Rocket. He takes an apron and stands next to Tako.

HARUKI

Should I start brining more fish?

A CROWD starts to form.

TAKO

You bet!

The duo start cooking for a growing late night crowd.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - MORNING

Haruki stretches and rolls out of bed. He makes his way back to the kitchen area of the Rocket.

Tako is up and about. He hands him a coffee.

TAKO

Feel like helping out for the lunch crowd?

HARUKI

Certainly, but first I'm going to go talk to the "friend" I told you about.

TAKO

You think that will help?

HARUKI

He owes me. I need to get home. Mind if I leave my things here?

TAKO

Be my guest. If it doesn't work, you've got a place in my kitchen.

Haruki sips his coffee.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT - DAY

Haruki watches a CLEANING CREW of ROBOTS noisily take away the block-sized Dumpster overflowing with wasted seafood.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE LOADING AREA

A massive Transport Ship unloads its cargo into the tanks.

Bobby sees Haruki.

He stops the device from separating the fish.

BOBBY

What are you doing? You can't be here?

Haruki looks uncomfortable - very uncomfortable, as he carefully forms his next few words.

HARUKI

I came to talk to Jester.

BOBBY

No man, you don't get it. He's gone into a feeding frenzy. Ever since you left yesterday, Jester's lost it.

HARUKI

What happened?

BOBBY

He took over as head chef and *ruined* dinner service last night. It was embarrassing. Late food. Burnt orders. Sand in *everything*. A total mess. He kept moving faster and faster and making mistakes.

HARUKI

He owes me for helping him.

BOBBY

He *blamed* you for everything. Kept telling everyone that the next time he saw you - he'd throw you in the ocean. The deep part. Without fins.

The loading door opens suddenly and Jester comes out.

Haruki quickly hides behind the Dumpster.

Jester's eyes are blood-shot. His fins are drooping. His never ending movements are slower. Harsher.

He sees Bobby standing around and his eyes get very angry.

JESTER

I don't pay you to waste time!

BOBBY

Sorry boss. Taking a quick break.

JESTER

No TIME! Get the stinking fish in the tank so the next batch can come in.

BOBBY

Yes boss.

(to Haruki)

Get out of here. Get off Umi.

Haruki starts by getting out of the alley.

EXT. CORAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - DAY

Haruki approaches Tako's Rocket. Tako updates his signage.

HARUKI

You've got yourself a Sous-Chef.

TAKO

Glad to have you on board.

HARUKI

Glad to help but I still have to get back home as soon as possible.

They get to work.

EXT. UMI SUBURBS - DAY

A happy-go-lucky MANSHRIMP in a SHARP SUIT kisses his wife and boards his personal jet-ski.

MANSHRIMP SUIT

See you tonight honey.

He pulls away from the pontoons, joins the morning commute.

The channels converge into bigger capacity waterways and the jet-ski joins the flow of a slow moving water freeway.

EXT. UMI BUSINESS CENTER - DAY

The Manshrimp Suit parks his jet-ski in a floating garage. He heads into a building with the other suits eager for a check.

INT. UMI OFFICE CUBICLE - DAY

The Manshrimp Suit taps on his Omni-Screen, absorbs himself in his work. The clock near his desk rolls away the hours.

A low *grumbling* disturbs the Manshrimp Suit from his work. He looks around. He refocuses on his work.

Low *grumbling*. Okay. He can't ignore it this time. He rubs his stomach. But it's only 11? Manshrimp Suit stands up.

In the BREAK ROOM, someone's eaten all the donuts.

At the VENDING MACHINE, there's an 'Out Of Order' sign.

INT. ELEVATOR

Manshrimp Suit acts nonchalantly when his stomach starts growling next to a Reefoid Parcel Guy.

MANSHRIMP SUIT

Oh. Wow. Sounds like thunder.

EXT. UMI BUSINESS CENTER - DAY

Manshrimp Suit notices a crowd of FOODIES congregating around an Ocean Blue Rocket parked next to the Coral Reef Courtyard.

EXT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - CONTINUOUS

It's only 11 and business is booming!

Tako and Haruki make a great team. Haruki's small tweaks to Tako's recipes are catching on and the buzz is electric.

Tako takes orders, preps sides, and serves beverages for waiting guests while Haruki works the cooking stations.

TAKO

What will you have?

Manshrimp in a Suit reaches the front of the line.

Tako hands a plate to a guest who doesn't wait to starting shoveling the food in.

MANSHRIMP SUIT

What's good?

The SATISFIED HUMAN tries to not spit out a mouthful of food.

SATISFIED HUMAN

Eber-y-ming.

MANSHRIMP SUIT

I'll try... hmm... house special?

TAKO

One house special!

HARUKI
Hai! House special.

Haruki preps the new order, organizes orders already cooking, and plates finished orders with samurai-like precision.

TAKO
I've got four hands and I can't do
what you do.

Haruki smiles to himself.

INT. JESTER'S COVE KITCHEN - DAY

Jester paces nervously around his kitchen. Back and forth. Bobby and the rest of the cooking staff stay out of his way.

JESTER
It's after noon and no orders. That's
unacceptable. Unacceptable.

Jester moves in front of Bobby, sways back and forth.

JESTER
Where are all the orders?

Bobby just shrugs his big shoulders; he doesn't know.

Jester hears sounds of camaraderie from the dining room.

JESTER
Excellent. Prepare for lunch service.
Only the best. Only the best.

INT. DINING ROOM

The beautiful live-catch tanks are stuffed full of colorful seafood. Certainly the best quality in the entire universe.

Standing next to the tanks are a FISHYSE SERVER and a MANSHRIMP BUSBOY. Each has a Tako's carry-out container.

FISHYSE SERVER
Try this tempura calamari. Wow.

MANSHRIMP BUSBOY
(snags a piece)
Thanks. I got the house special. Way
better than the stuff we serve here
for a tenth of the price.

They laugh at their fortunate food find. Neither one sees Jester approach quietly from behind.

FISHYSE SERVER

And that's including our "generous 10% employee discount".

Manshrimp Busboy sees the boss circling.

He tries to throw out his food without getting caught.

Too late...

FISHYSE SERVER

Hey! Don't waste that. I'll eat it.

The Fishyse Server sees the look on Manshrimp Busboy's face. She knows she's in trouble.

JESTER

Where did you get this?

FISHYSE SERVER

Outside. In the Coral Courtyard.

Jester grabs the trashed meal and storms outside.

EXT. CORAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - DAY

Lunch is very busy for the two cooks as they fill another batch of orders for the galactically diverse foodies.

Tako does a double take from the sales on his Omni-Screen.

TAKO

I take back my earlier offer of paying you by the hour!

Haruki stops his creative cooking flow. He looks at Tako surprised and a little hurt. Tako laughs.

TAKO

It is much more fair to give you a cut. I would never have made this much in a week and this is just lunch.

HARUKI

Hai.

In the crowd there's a disturbance. The crowd clears a path for Jester, looking more threatening than a deep abyss.

JESTER

Haruki!

Haruki hears his name uttered in malice. He puts down the kitchen tools and turns to face his nemesis.

HARUKI

Jester.

The air is thick with the salty smell of tension. Sentients use Omni-Screens to record, in case it's Galactinet worthy.

JESTER

What are you doing?

HARUKI

You stranded me, or did you forget?
You still owe me a ticket home.

JESTER

I owe you nothing! You're the one
stealing from me!

HARUKI

You've got the details wrong.

JESTER

This is my lunch crowd. You stole my
customers from me.

TAKO

These sentients choose where they want
to eat. Who do you think you are!?

HARUKI

They are happy with their choice.
Aren't you all?

The crowd CHEERS enthusiastically.

JESTER

Come dine at Jester's Cove! We are the
best! We have only the best!

Someone BOOS. The Blue-Fin Sharker turns a shade of deep red.

HARUKI

Would you like to try the house
special? It's on me.

Haruki serves a plate to Jester.

Jester angrily backhands the food. It splatters on a guest.

A very large guest - a burly CUCUMBERIAN Emergency Medical
Technician - the crankiest sea cucumber aliens in existence.

CUCUMBERIAN EMT

You best be getting out of here.

JESTER
This isn't fair.

The crowd senses the bully weakening and closes in. Jester gives up and storms out of the park. A big cheer goes up.

INT. JESTER'S COVE EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

A still red-faced Jester is on his office Omni-Screen. He talks to one of the Magnet Brothers, its the tough one Saul.

SAUL
It's going to cost you.

JESTER
I don't care!

SAUL
You're already behind on your...

JESTER
I'll take care of it. I promise. Just take care of them.

SAUL
Don't miss any more payments.

The screen goes blank.

EXT. CORAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - NIGHT

The Ocean Blue Food Rocket is closed up for the night. Overflowing trash cans mark the huge success they had.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - NIGHT

In the front of the rocket, Tako and Haruki toast with a celebration beverage.

Tako finishes a money transfer on his Omni-Screen.

TAKO
Did it go through?

Haruki looks at his balance. The numbers are green and healthy but a long way off from the price of a ticket home.

TAKO
I nearly took off from this planet. We could clean up here. The buzz is out.

HARUKI
I have to call my wife.

TAKO

Love the fresh air on Umi. No matter
where you go it still smells like
you're right next to the ocean.

Tako opens the hatch and disappears outside.

EXT. CORRAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD ENTRANCE - NIGHT

An ORANGE HUMANOID jogs with her matching pet GOLDFISHDOG
near the Coral Courtyard.

She notices VAMP, a mysterious TRENCH COAT lurker with an
arrow shaped hat, surreptitiously standing near the entrance.

The Orange Humanoid is frightened. She runs faster. The
poor little Goldfishdog drags behind on her leash.

Vamp stares at her with brooding vampiric eyes.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah feverishly works on a giant bowl of udon noodles.

She preps a ham-sized piece of fish-cake and chucks it on top
of the steaming broth.

SARAH

Order up!

One of the cousins hears the call and rushes to help.

They grab the sides of the big stew pot sized dish and
carefully carry the hot udon soup out to their customer.

As the kitchen doors swing shut, Sarah's Omni-Screen rings.

INT. DINING ROOM

Sarah hears the Omni-Screen and tries to move faster.

Hot liquid sloshes dangerously.

The Cousin screams out in shock.

Before she knows what's happening, the huge bowl of udon
noodle soup crashes to the ground and spills everywhere.

SARAH

No! Shucks!! Are you okay? I'm sorry.

COUSIN

I'm okay.

The Omni-Screen rings. She looks at Buckaroo, the Belly Phoon is *gigantic*. His back strains to break out of the ceiling.

ISAMU

Sarah. Where's the udon? Hurry!

SARAH

Soup's gone south. Stall him.

ISAMU

Sarah! Watch out!

The Omni-Screen rings. The ceiling starts to CRACK!

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - NIGHT

Haruki paces back and forth as he leaves a message.

HARUKI

Call me back when you can Fish Cake. I transferred you some money. Hopefully it will be enough for now. Jester... Needs more help. I'm coming home... but it might take me a few extra days. Hope everything is okay.

He looks very ashamed of not telling his wife the truth.

HARUKI

I have something I need to tell you.

At least he's trying to get closer to the truth.

EXT. CORRAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - NIGHT

Tako polishes panels on his rocket with three hands and his fourth hand holds a cleaning bucket.

He doesn't notice an inky black substance roll in like fog.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

A group of BELLY FANS crowd the streets near the shop. Everybody loves the sideshow atmosphere.

There are savory cakes, sweet bean paste, tempura-fried vegetables and American hot dogs in the mix.

Mimic and his Seal Orderlies haven't left the scene yet. They observe from a good position in the crowd.

The UNIVERSAL NEWS MEDIA has caught on to the story and have set up a base camp. Reporters and bloggers buzz like flies on a discarded meal.

Tokyo POLICE have been called in to handle the crowds.
They ALL hear the roof cracking and buckling.

POLICEMAN
Everyone stay back!

The crowds push forward against the blockades. A MINNOWEDMAN CAMERAMAN darts under the barrier for an up close shot.

CRACK!

The Belly Phoon, brimming with incredible bulk, busts right out of the top and side of the small noodle shop.

The crowd scatters just in time.

The Policeman grabs the Cameraman and pulls him to safety.

POLICEMAN
Watch out!

Sarah runs out the front door. A look of shock on her face. The damage is going to cost a lot!

Buckaroo slurps up a noodle trail. Smacks his lips.

BUCKAROO
I. Am. Hungry.

SARAH
I know. I know.

Buckaroo is getting restless. He tries to look around.

That causes more damage to the building. Sarah has to think fast. She runs back inside.

EXT. CORRAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - NIGHT

Haruki exits the rocket hatch. Tako polishes the rocket.

TAKO
How's the missus?

No answer.

TAKO
I had a pretty girl once. Lost her.
Sad really. I got cold feet.

Shakes his four feet. No answer.

TAKO
You okay buddy?

He sees his friend's look and becomes concerned.
However, they don't have time to talk about feelings as...
The whole area is filling up with inky black smoke.

TAKO
We've got company and I don't think
they're hungry.

Haruki snaps out of his funk.
Dark shapes step out of the shadows. They're surrounded.
Vamp steps forward. His arrow shaped hat covers his face.

VAMP
I've gotz a message for youz all.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Sarah runs for stairs in the back that connect to the adjoining apartment where she and Haruki reside.

SARAH
Get him something to eat. Anything!

Sarah dodges a falling beam and disappears up the stairs.

EXT. CORRAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - NIGHT

Tako and Haruki are badly out numbered.

A POD of GREY DOLPHOIDS, nasty teenager dolphin aliens with bad attitudes and gang clothes; wielding sticks, bricks and chains circle the rocket and await orders.

Vamp raises his hat just enough so that Tako and Haruki see the vampire eyes in inky shadows.

VAMP
Youz not welcome on dis planet
anymore.

Tako takes a brave step forward.

Two of the Dolphoids circle closer, weapons ready.

TAKO
I have a universal vending permit. I'm
not going anywhere.

VAMP

Yes youz are. Boyz.

With that command, the Dolphoids get to work.

They use the weapons to bang and bump dents into the Rocket.

Tako makes a motion towards them but stops when Haruki grabs one of his arms.

HARUKI

There's too many.

TAKO

They can't do this. Help! Help!

The Dolphoids laugh at him. Their obnoxious chittering drowns out Tako's calls for help.

With the black inky smoke no one can see the injustice.

A brick is thrown at a headlight. SMASH!

A knife scrapes a jagged scar over the colorful rocket.

TAKO

Stop it! Stop! Please.

There is desperation in his voice.

Vamp gives a signal whistle. The Dolphoids back off.

VAMP

Will youz leave?

TAKO

Get lost in a deep trench!

VAMP

Wrong answer.

Trench Coat makes another call, a deeper call.

Out of the shadows a WHALEDON, an eight foot tall land whale with a shaved head and a huge mouth steps into the clearing.

The Whaledon carries a huge, heavy anchor.

TAKO

Stay away from my ship.

The Whaledon lifts the anchor up high.

The Dolphoids hoot and holler in high-pitched squeaky laughs.

CRUNCH!

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Isamu tries to offer a whole side of raw tuna to the Belly Phoon whose back now sticks out of the side of the shop.

ISAMU

It's sashimi! Super fresh. Please.

Buckaroo reaches down his stubby arm and grabs the delicacy. He eats it in one quick motion.

ISAMU

Sarah. Help!

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES

Sarah runs quickly down the stairs - an ornate case under her arm. She points to a stew pot as she runs past a Cousin.

SARAH

Boiling water. Quick.

She runs outside.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES

Sarah waves to get the Belly Phoon's attention.

Buckaroo looks in her direction.

SARAH

It is tradition in Japan to serve our honored guests our tea ceremony. It will refresh your palate. Want to try?

Buckaroo leans in to get a closer look with his beady eye.

BUCKAROO

Tea?

SARAH

Japanese green tea. Very delicious.

Buckaroo nods that he will try it.

SARAH

Would you like to try the ceremony in our traditional tea garden?

Sarah indicates the quiet sanctuary adjoining her noodle shop. The garden is big enough to host the large guest.

Buckaroo slowly moves his body into motion. Pieces of the building crash down but the structure stays intact.

Sarah leads him out the new hole in the wall to the garden.

SARAH

Please. Have a seat.

The bench shatters into pieces as Buckaroo sits down.

Sarah starts the formal tea ceremony, calming everyone down.

The crowd of reporters, fans, and emergency workers watch on in rapt silence except for the clicks and whirls of cameras.

Sarah pours hot water into a tiny little cup.

Buckaroo watches her intently. Quite disconcerting.

EXT. CORRAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - NIGHT

One of the Rocket's BOOSTERS receives a blow from the anchor. SMASH! A huge dent renders the Booster useless.

HARUKI

We have to take off. Now!

The hatch opens up and both men scramble in.

VAMP

You're not welcome on Umi! Get lost!

The Dolphoids circle the ship.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako sits down at the controls. He powers up the ship.

BOOSTERS

The broken booster rocket sputters and spits out a tiny amount of energy. The working rocket comes to life.

The Whaledon steps back. The Dolphoids throw rocks and trash at the Rocket as it lifts off the ground and flies away.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki runs through the kitchen and makes sure everything is secured for take-off.

HARUKI

Get us out of here!

Haruki straps himself in.

EXT. CORRAL FOUNTAIN COURTYARD

Out of the range of the inky black cloak of darkness the Ocean Blue Food Rocket take off and leaves Umi behind.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

The supply chain is back in working order as Isamu and his cousins march a steady stream of cuisine to the garden.

Sarah stands in front of the heavily damaged restaurant with a, GILBERT BRULE, a SAFETY INSPECTOR. They stand next to Mimic and his orderlies who are listening in.

GILBERT

I will grant you a temporary licence to operate given the unique situation but you have to repair the damage.

SARAH

As soon as he's done eating everything will be fixed.

GILBERT

With these crowds out here, I can not allow that.

SARAH

It will cost a fortune and he's not done eating.

Gilbert jots down information on his Omni-Citation.

GILBERT

You're lucky I'm letting you cook in there. Fix it or I will shut you down.

Gilbert gingerly walks past Buckaroo to leave.

Sarah listens to Haruki's message. She angrily puts her Omni-Screen down.

MIMIC

Trouble?

She's embarrassed to have shared her reaction with him.

SARAH

It's fine.

MIMIC

I can get my crew to fix your place.

SARAH
Can't afford any debt.

Mimic nips at an Orderly that gets a little too close.

The Seal'a'Fleur barks in shock. Both Orderlies' arms sport many little bandages from shark teeth.

MIMIC
Perhaps we can make a deal for something else.

SARAH
What more could you want?

Mimic hungrily eyes Sarah and makes her squirm.

MIMIC
Did you know in parts of the galaxy, humans are considered a delicacy?

She does not like where this is going.

MIMIC
Human on a menu is *so hard* to find but I've heard they are quite tasty.

SARAH
I have to get back to work.

She hears Isamu shouting and rushes back inside.

EVERYTHING IS BLACK

The darkness of outer space with Tako's Food Rocket sailing peacefully through.

SPACE. FUEL STATION

Orbiting Umi is a large shell-shaped fuel station.

Rockets dock to the connecting fuel pumps while sentients in space suits drift over to the convenience store portal.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

A pale green AMOEBAJELLY, a formless Jellyfish perfect for zero-gravity work, runs a squeegee across the spaceshield.

Tako presses a button to activate an outer comm-link.

AMOEBAJELLY
What'll it be?

TAKO
Charge it up. Full power.

AMOEBAJELLY
You got it boss.

The Amoebajelly exits leaving the squeegee floating in space.

INT. FUEL STATION

Behind the Fuel Station counter a huge SLUG-LIKE THING cautiously watches as Haruki and Tako enter the shop.

The other CLIENTELE are a rogue's gallery of miscreants who avoid the red tape and high cost of Magnet Field Travel.

Tako sees what he's looking for. A section of cheap, one-function Omni-Screen's with a single purpose: SPACE-MAP.

TAKO
Here they are. From a couple cycles ago, but it should do the trick.

Haruki, distracted by the experience of the cantina-esque fuel station wanders the store's aisles.

He watches a blue-shelled BARNACLACKER, barnacle-man, top off a SLUDGY, the galactic ocean equivalent of a frozen drink.

TAKO
Do they have sea snail?

Tako peaks over Haruki's shoulder. He sees Bottom-Feeder-Punch, Rainbow Passion Trout and Grape Grouper; no Sea Snail.

TAKO
No snail. Too bad. You getting one?

He's an adventurous eater but not that adventurous.

HARUKI
What did you find?

Tako uses the digital controls to unfold the map. He finds Umi far off in one corner, near the edge of the green zone.

TAKO
Where's earth? Blue zone, right?

The sections of the map are broken up into three zones: red, blue and green.

The dividing lines form a peace sign.

Haruki finds earth - as far away from Umi as the map gets.

HARUKI

There.

Their shoulders slump. It's a vast distance.

They hear a gruff grunt from the direction of the counter.

Tako takes a look over his shoulder, the Slug-Like Thing is folding its arm-like appendages and looks pretty sour.

TAKO

Here are the Magnet Lines.

Tako presses a key on the screen. An efficient system of bright silver lines appears and links all the major planets marked on the map, akin to a major freeway system.

HARUKI

Can your ship handle Magnetic Lines?

TAKO

Even before that Whaledon loser took an anchor to my booster, I couldn't go more than one system without needing to cool my engine.

Tako hits another symbol and a smaller, vein like system of grey lines appear. There are hundreds of grey veins.

TAKO

What about the Retro Magnet Lines? I use these when I go between solar systems. We could use these, right? Takes longer but it beats walking.

Haruki looks out the window of the Fuel Station.

SPACE. PLANET UMI

Orbiting near the fuel station is the Umi Space Station.

Huge freighter ships, passenger liners, and ultra modern personal rockets float around the Space Station.

INT. FUEL STATION

The Slug-Like Thing makes a small movement towards the two chefs. It coughs again.

SLUG-LIKE THING

(sludgy voice)

No browsing.

Tako quickly folds up the digital map.

TAKO

Sorry. Sorry. They done on pump 4?

The Slug-Like Thing rings up the fuel. Tako transmits his Omni-Screen payment info.

TAKO

Add the map app to my screen. Thanks.

The Slug Thing processes payment then stops the transmission.

SLUG-LIKE THING

Have a nice day.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako settles into the pilot chair. Haruki sits next to him.

Tako unfolds the Space-Map App, now on his Omni-Screen.

He focuses in on the border between the red zone and the green zone. Umi is close by the border.

Just over the border, into the red zone is another planet, HACHI, connected by a Retro Magnet Line to Umi.

TAKO

With your talent and my equipment we can earn the money to get you home. And we'll keep moving. Each step will bring us closer to earth.

HARUKI

That could take a long time...

TAKO

You saw how we did as a team on Umi. Every planet with life has an ocean. Every ocean provides food. Most of it has to be good, right? If not, we can make it good.

Tako traces a path on the weaker grey lines.

The path goes through the red and green zones, enters the blue zone and makes its way to earth - deep in the blue zone.

TAKO

There's a lot of hungry sentients between here and earth. One or two stops a day. Take us a week?

Haruki contemplates it. He nods solemnly.

HARUKI

Once we make enough I take a shortcut
and go home by Magnetic Field.

TAKO

We'll check the prices every place we
go. Promise.

Tako amplifies a planet in the Red Zone.

HARUKI

I'll teach you some tricks on the way
too. Make you a better chef.

TAKO

Maybe you'll learn a thing or two from
me. First stop Hachi.

SPACE. PLANET HACHI

Tako's Food Rocket glides towards Planet Hachi.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki gathers information from his Omni-Screen while Tako
glides the Rocket towards Hachi's atmosphere.

GALACTINET

Hachi is home to the Sardinians.
Evolved aquatics with a vegetarian
diet. Hachi is a welcome tourist
destination for travelers seeking an
enlightened experience.

EXT. PLANET HACHI - DAY

The Ocean Blue Rocket maneuvers towards the planet surface.

They descend towards a large urban center.

The ambiance of Hachi is reminiscent of modern India - bright
colors, plentiful spices, densely populated cities with a mix
of modern and traditional buildings.

EXT. HACHI FOOD MARKET - DAY

Tako lands the ocean blue Rocket on a crowded street packed
full of SARDINIANS, pack animals, small vehicles and bikes.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - DAY

Haruki goes to the hatch.

HARUKI

Let's take a look.

TAKO

You go. The streets are packed. I'll stay here and get us set up. Find something fresh and easy to cook.

EXT. HACHI FOOD MARKET - DAY

Haruki steps out into the moving stream of Sardinians.

He tries to stop a Sardinian in coveralls.

HARUKI

Excuse me?

No luck. The busy being puts his fishy head down and walks past. Haruki turns to a Mother Sardinian with a Child.

HARUKI

Pardon me?

Same response.

Haruki doesn't know what to do? He looks around for anyone that might help a foreigner.

Across the street, on the banks of the mighty river - Haruki spots a Sardinian in white robes.

GURU MACHALI peacefully meditates in a lotus position.

Haruki approaches him.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - DAY

Tako is busy prepping dry goods, cleaning dishes and other chores - all at the same time when the BUZZER rings.

He stops long enough to open a Rocket Window.

A Sardinian TRINKET VENDOR grins at him.

TRINKET VENDOR

You want to buy?

The Vendor thrusts a crude pallet of bawdy beads in his face.

TAKO

No thank you.

Tako starts to close the window.

A second TRINKET VENDOR pushes his wares in the open window.

TRINKET VENDOR 2

You buy. Buy. Very nice. Take a look.

TAKO

No thank you. No.

Before he knows it, all kinds of vendors have noticed the Rocket and crowd his vehicle. They jam the open window.

Tako turns his back and tries to ignore them.

When one gives up trying to sell something of little value, two more fill in the space.

TAKO

No! No!

Tako has to use two arms to keep them from getting too eager.

EXT. HACHI FOOD MARKET

Guru Machali hums the ancient, universal chant OM.

Haruki respectfully waits. He doesn't have to wait long.

Guru Machali opens his eyes and gives a huge heartfelt smile.

GURU MACHALI

Welcome my friend.

Guru Machali springs up from his meditative pose with grace and ease. Before Haruki can object, they are hugging.

HARUKI

Hi?

Haruki resists at first, but finds it comforting so he pats the Guru on the back.

GURU MACHALI

You came to ask questions? You seek answers?

HARUKI

What do you like to eat around here?

Guru Machali blinks. Even a Guru can be stunned by an odd question. He laughs with deep, profound joy.

GURU MACHALI

Yes, my son. Life can seem to be about seeking nourishment. How beautiful? Follow me.

Guru Machali joins the crowd of Sardinians who reverently make way for him and his guest.

They pass Tako's Food Rocket. Haruki can see that Tako has all of his hands full with the school of trinket vendors.

HARUKI

You okay?

TAKO

Doing fine. Get some provisions and we've already got our lunch crowd!

Haruki laughs. Tako likes to look on the bright side.

GURU MACHALI

We feed on life in many forms. Friendship is one of many parts of our diet. A very important part. Hmm?

HARUKI

Say...?

GURU MACHALI

Guru Machali. Humbly at your service.

The narrow corridors of the food market are teeming with exotic towers of colorful spices, fresh vegetables of every variety grown on Hachi, and Vendors serving local delicacies.

HARUKI

Guru Machali, I see all kinds of food here. What do Sardinians enjoy eating? I'm trying to raise money...

GURU MACHALI

Money is a vehicle of service for servicing our universal vehicles.

HARUKI

Right? I'm from earth and my wife is home and we are trying to feed...

GURU MACHALI

Food is an energy of service for energizing our service to others.

HARUKI

Got it. Thanks. Anyway. We are here to cook... To *serve* the people of Hachi and I just want to know what you eat? What do Sardinians enjoy?

The Guru spins and faces Haruki. Haruki squirms.

GURU MACHALI

Service is a gift of spirit to give to the spirit of others.

HARUKI

I'm sorry. I don't understand.

The Guru laughs and steps to the side revealing a food stall with local dishes voraciously being consumed by the masses.

GURU MACHALI

To serve, to feed, to cook for Hachi - first please accept my gift.

Guru Machali points to a delicious sticky rice dish, wrapped in a local leaf. The vendor hands over two of them.

HARUKI

I'm not hungry.

GURU MACHALI

To cook for Hachi you must first eat like Hachi. Enjoy.

Haruki takes one of the leaves and unwraps it.

He smells the food cautiously. He watches the Guru take a big bite. Haruki shrugs - why not?

His eyes opens wide with instant craving. Three bites later the dish is gone.

HARUKI

That was amazing.

The Vendor hands him another one. He scarfs it down.

Guru Machali laughs, bits of rice fall from his beard.

GURU MACHALI

I thought you were not hungry?

HARUKI

It doesn't matter! This is amazing.

GURU MACHALI

You see how to cook for a Sardinian?

Haruki doesn't get it, he's still savoring the flavors.

GURU MACHALI

With love.

Guru Machali presses his hand gently to Haruki's chest and points to the tiny kitchen of the food stall.

Haruki sees a little OLD MAN SARDINIAN carefully and lovingly wrapping balls of the sticky rice.

He encounters a snag with a leaf, instead of throwing it out, he takes the time to work with his fingers to get it perfect.

GURU MACHALI

Now you understand. Excellent.

Haruki turns in an enlightening-induced daze.

HARUKI

Thank you Guru.

He feels a gentle hand on his shoulder.

GURU MACHALI

Also try tamarind and tumeric. Peas and carrots are in season. You can't go wrong with a stew.

Haruki laughs.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Back at the Rocket, Tako is having a heck of a time keeping the Trinket Vendors from invading his cramped work space.

He makes eye contact with a Vendor with cheap necklaces and picks out a blue one.

TAKO

If I buy one will you leave me alone?

NECKLACE VENDOR

You like? Only one credit.

TAKO

Fine. Deal.

Tako authorizes a single credit transfer.

The Vendor hands over the necklace and uploads the credit onto her very old Omni-Screen. She then pushes her whole tray of goods into the window.

Tako has to step back.

NECKLACE VENDOR
Buy another? Green? Gold?

TAKO
No. No more!

Vendors smell blood in the water, the frenzy gets crazier.

Tako screams in anguish and closes his eyes.

Suddenly the vendors part. The hands pushing goods through the window retreat. Tako feels the silence.

He opens his eyes and sticks his head out the window.

EXT. HACHI FOOD MARKET

The Trinket Vendors make way for Haruki, Guru Malachi, and a team of porters carrying produce to the rocket.

HARUKI
Get ready to cook Tako!

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

They perform their team cooking magic on the food of Hachi.

The Trinket Vendors turn into their first customers and clamor for the next delicious meal served from the Rocket.

Guru Malachi smiles and retreats. Haruki waves to him.

TAKO
Who was that?

HARUKI
Local food expert.

They get to work.

Haruki creates inspired recipes from the local ingredients but he doesn't try to copy the food that he saw. Instead, he creates new inspirations and lovingly serves each dish.

The atmosphere around the Rocket is magical. Hungry Sardinians enjoy the street food until the sun goes down.

Haruki stands and stretches. Tako peers out the window.

TAKO

Your expert's coming back this way.

From the direction of the food market Haruki sees Guru Machali guiding the Old Man Sardinian towards them.

TAKO

What can I get for you?

GURU MACHALI

What does the chef recommend?

TAKO

Two house specials!

HARUKI

Hai! Two house specials.

(whispers to Tako)

No charge.

Haruki prepares their meal and personally hands it to them.

He watches as the Old Man gingerly takes a bite. Chews. Swallows. Big smile! He dives in, finishes the whole dish with gusto. He gives Haruki a big thumbs up! Haruki laughs.

INT. TOKYO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sarah drops down on the bed from exhaustion. She looks defeated and frustrated. She calls Haruki. No answer.

SARAH

Sticky Bun. Where are you? I need you.

She ends the call. Closes her eyes.

EVERYTHING IS BLACK

Sounds of troubled sleep.

SARAH

(dreaming)

Sticky Bun.

Sarah tosses in her sleep.

A curtain flaps from wind coming through an open window.

A HUGE EYE peeks inside.

EXT. TOKYO GARDEN - NIGHT

Buckaroo stretches his massive bulk, yawns and lets out a deep, rumbling belch.

The belch creates a minor earthquake-like motion. Terrifying to think what would happen if he really let it rip.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES APARMENT

The vibrations wake up Sarah. She instinctively checks her Omni-Screen. Still no calls.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - NIGHT

Tako's Food Rocket is closed for business.

Haruki and Tako process the days sales - quite healthy. Tako figures out Haruki's cut and deposits it in his account.

TAKO

We made more today than we made on Umi. Who needs that stuck-up planet?

HARUKI

We should keep moving.

TAKO

Right. Right. Just saying. You know. We did good here. That's all.

HARUKI

We'll do better on the next planet!

TAKO

Hai!

Haruki holds his Omni-Screen. He sighs deeply.

Tako takes the hint and steps outside. There are sounds of a bustle and then...

TAKO

(fading away)
NO! I don't want any!

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES

Sarah stays knee deep in prep work during the call.

SARAH

The money you are sending barely covers our food costs. We have to repair the building or the health department will shut us down.

HARUKI

Is that Sharker still there?

SARAH

He wants to eat my arm, Haruki.

HARUKI

How much do we need to fix the damage?

She has a look that conveys "wrong answer buddy".

SARAH

He wants to eat my arm. My arm.

HARUKI

What? Like a cut? Filet? Or to fry?

SARAH

Are you serious?

He catches on that she's pissed.

HARUKI

Of course I'd never let him do that.

SARAH

Come home. I need you.

HARUKI

It's not that simple.

SARAH

Get on a cruise spaceship and come home. Now. Simple. You'll be here in just over a day.

HARUKI

But I'm not on Umi.

The truth slips out. Sarah is pissed.

SARAH

Where the heck are you?

HARUKI

I'm on my way home. It's taking longer than I expected.

Sarah hangs up.

EXT. HACHI FOOD MARKET - NIGHT

Tako's Food Rocket lifts off.

Chugging and sputtering noises comes from the broken Booster.

The other booster kicks in. The Rocket heads for space.

THE THREE ZONES

Blue, green and red - become part of the path of the Ocean-Blue Rocket as it travels through space.

The path it takes through the zones takes it closer to earth, deep in the Blue Zone. With many stops along the way like...

CORRAL REEF PLANET

The home of the Reefoids. Tako and Haruki cook long into the night around a popular night spot.

SANDY BEACHES PLANET

A planet built amongst beaches and small tropical islands.

In between gnarly waves, Haruki and Tako show their skills and adaptable menu to surfers of all sizes and shapes.

URBAN CENTER PLANET

Another stop at a bustling urban center built on large land masses similar to earth.

The different sentients dressed for business come and go during a busy lunch hour.

FRESH SEAFOOD MARKETS

Every planet the Ocean Blue Rocket visits has a fresh seafood market. Both of the cooks enjoy shopping and discovering the best seafood and produce each planet has to offer.

NEPTUNE'S NOODLES

Sarah and her team do their best. Buckaroo is almost too big for the garden now and yet they keep throwing food at him.

THE THREE ZONES

The Ship's progress is impressive.

It appears that they have made over half the way to earth since they left Umi.

The next stop shows up on the map - HARVEST MOON.

SPACE. HARVET MOON

Harvest Moon is one of the most beautiful habitable moons in the galaxy.

It is located in orbit around a Saturn-like planet that has seven rings of colorful, silky, ice particles.

GALACTINET

Harvest Moon is a habitable planetoid circling a hostile gas giant in the Blue Zone. Harvest Moon is known for its unique orbit which carries the sparsely populated planetoid through the gas giant's multi-colored rings.

The particles of the seven rings create a rainbow of colors and Harvest Moon's orbit carries the Mercury-sized moon through the rings once daily in its orbital cycle.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako and Haruki watch the incredible visual of Harvest Moon passing through the vibrant hues of the planet's rings.

A swirl of stellar colors and shapes form as the planetoid displaces the rings.

GALACTINET

Harvest Moon is known universally for the Rainbow Oyster. A truly unique seafood delicacy that evolved to use the icy rings as a part of their diet.

Outside, Harvest Moon leaves the rings and continues its regular orbit.

HARUKI

Ever heard of a Rainbow Oyster?

TAKO

Culinary school legend. Rarer than a Neuman Trench Salt Truffle. More expensive than a solid Gold Goldfish from the Hercules Lagoon.

Tako flies the rocket into the Harvest Moon's atmosphere.

EXT. HARVEST MOON - DAY

The Ocean Blue Space Rocket flies over endless oceans.

Similar to Umi. Instead of floating cities, there are large islands. The Rocket flies towards one of the larger islands.

EXT. HARVEST MOON VILLAGE - DAY

The Ocean-Blue Space Rocket lands in an open field next to a large island village.

Haruki and Tako exit the ship.

TAKO

Where is everyone?

It is strangely quiet around the village.

EXT. RAINBOW OYSTER HARVEST - DAY

Haruki and Tako find everyone at the edge of the ocean.

The indigenous are the OYSTERFELLERS - a race of Oyster People with knobby backs and spindly legs.

Men, women, children, the elderly, visitors, aunts, uncles, dogs, cats; everyone is off shore with baskets and shovels.

Sparkling oysters are in the baskets.

Rainbow Oyster collecting is a painstaking process.

Bend back, dig deep in the sand for the chance of finding one of the legendary delicacies. Repeat. It is back breaking.

Haruki sees GRANDMA PEARL, an Oysterfeller patriarch peeling carrots in the shade of a large tent.

HARUKI

Ma'am? What's going on here?

GRANDMA PEARL

Hello. Sorry, didn't see you folks. We don't get many visitors around here. Name's Pearl. Most call me Grandma. Whichever you like.

TAKO

Grandma Pearl, why's everyone in the ocean?

GRANDMA PEARL

It's Rainbow Oyster harvest. Big one. Important one. Been big for the past week now.

Grandma Pearl points to the water. A filmy coating of multi-colored space dust makes the reefy area look like a rainbow.

TAKO

How do you know when to harvest?

GRANDMA PEARL

When Harvest Moon moves through the ice rings the dust collects on the shores of our islands. That's when the Rainbows come to the surface.

TAKO

No wonder they are so rare.

HARUKI

Everyone works as an Oyster collector?

GRANDMA PEARL

Not usually. This is a first. Very prosperous time. Got a customer on the other side of the galaxy just waiting for every last oyster we get.

TAKO

They must really like them.

GRANDMA PEARL

We are happy they are so popular now. We agreed as a community that we better harvest as many as we can now or we lose our chance. All the other islands are doing the same thing.

HARUKI

Do they know how much they cost?

GRANDMA PEARL

Money is no concern to them. They want only the best. Only the best.

The phrase rings in Haruki's ears.

Haruki turns away from the scene trying not to think about the betrayal.

That's when he notices the huge Transport Ship with the Magnetic Shipping Lines logo in the shade just off the beach.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES GARDEN - DAY

Buckaroo has reached epic proportions.

Forget the garden. The garden is gone. He's now the entire garden by himself.

The food comes to him in a steady stream from the kitchen.

On the street, the crowd of curious onlookers has grown. The Universal Media has doubled their coverage.

Vendors work the crowd with street-eats, a photo booth, and T-shirts to mark the special occasion.

Mimic is never far from the scene.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES KITCHEN - DAY

The restaurant creaks and groans as Buckaroo's bulk presses against the walls. The building could collapse at any moment.

Sarah steadily prepare meals for their honored guest.

She hands the work off to the cousins and now the COUSIN'S WIVES who carry it on out.

ISAMU (O.S.)

Sarah!

SARAH

What?

ISAMU

Can you come out front please?

She look annoyed that her workhorse effort is interrupted. She pushes her way into the restaurant.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES

Sarah has her arms folded in a demanding way.

SARAH

What!?

Isamu, also in mechanical workhorse mode with the sushi steadily rolling out doesn't look up.

He takes a half second to gesture with his chef's knife.

Sarah looks to where his knife points.

Mimic is with his Orderlies, and PONZO, a blubbering Whaledon wearing Chef's gear, sharpens his knives.

SARAH

You brought your chef?

MIMIC

Ready to take my offer?

Ponzo examines the protein.

PONZO

Not a lot of meat on the arms.

Sarah throws her apron on the ground.

SARAH
I don't have time for this.

Ponzo tries to measure her arm. She snatches her arm away.

PONZO
Might get a small steak. Grilled?

SARAH
Will you stop looking at me like I'm
some piece of meat!

There is a deep rumbling that shakes the building.

Everyone forgets the current discussion.

ISAMU
What was that?

The chefs rush outside. The Orderlies try to rush Mimic out,
doesn't work quite so well.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES

The crowds of onlookers, security and media have backed up.

Sarah stands in front of Buckaroo. The rest gather behind
her. Buckaroo looks like he has slowed down his eating.

ISAMU
Maybe he's full?

He's definitely not eating right now.

He's trying to move.

EXT. RAINBOW OYSTER HARVEST - DAY

The large throngs of Oysterfellers continue their diligent
digging. Rainbow Oyster harvest is back-breaking work.

Grandma Pearl prepares lunch for the entire village.

She moves at her own pace but both men can tell it is a pace
that doesn't suit her age.

Tako scratches his chin in earnest thought.

TAKO
Should we?

HARUKI
Should we what?

Tako uses one of his arms to indicate the struggling woman.

TAKO
She could use a little help.

HARUKI
I don't. I don't know.

A carrot rolls out of the old woman's hands. She requires extra effort to retrieve it. Tako helps her.

HARUKI
I really have to get home.

TAKO
I see.

HARUKI
What?

TAKO
Nothing.

HARUKI
It's not easy cooking for hundreds of people but if we help her - then how are we going to make money?

TAKO
We have six arms between the two of us. I'm sure she would appreciate it.

HARUKI
Let's look at the map and see where we go next. Keep moving to earth, right?

Grandma Pearl finds her way back to her seat. That took a while. It is breaking Haruki's heart to see her like that.

TAKO
I get it. Can't use the talent for free. And you are one heck of a miracle worker in the kitchen.

HARUKI
She has hundreds of villagers that can help. Right out there!

The ocean is full of Oysterfellers breaking their backs to earn money for their village.

Tako steps towards Grandma Pearl.

TAKO

Excuse me, Grandma Pearl. Why don't you have any help with your cooking?

Grandma Pearl laughs heartily. She's moved onto potatoes. Same process of peeling each one by hand.

GRANDMA PEARL

We all do what we can, my son.

TAKO

You're cooking for hundreds. Wouldn't it make more sense to bring in a dozen of them to help you out?

Grandma Pearl puts down her peeled spud. She takes a break and looks at the two outsiders.

GRANDMA PEARL

Here in Harvest we all pitch in. Some more than others. If you intend to make me feel guilty for not being able to be out there helping with the harvest, well, I'm just not going to feel sorry for myself that way. They work until sundown. Whatever I get done, I get done. If I can get the carrots peeled and half the spuds done by then I don't feel like a useless old woman while the rest of my friends and family work hard to make our lives a little better. No sir, not going to feel guilty.

She takes the next spud with feistiness. Tako faces Haruki.

TAKO

Tough place to live. Constant hard work. Short breaks to enjoy time with your loved ones. Low pay. Lot like a chef, right? Haruki?

Haruki hides a tear; he can't show emotions, right?

TAKO

You okay?

HARUKI

I'm fine.

He clears up his emotions and steps toward the big piles of vegetables waiting to be prepped.

HARUKI

Grandma Pearl? Do you have an extra peeler? I'd love to help out.

Grandma Pearl is a little suspicious at first. She sees the genuine look in his eyes and smiles deeply.

GRANDMA PEARL

Bless your heart. Pull up a stool.

Before, Haruki and Tako dive into the mountain of hard work - Haruki looks at his Omni-Screen; no reception. Troubling.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Sarah leans way back to look Buckaroo in the eyes.

SARAH

Would you like anything else?

Buckaroo rolls his body to the right. Raises up one side.

And breaks wind with the fierceness of a hurricane.

The entire street shakes. Sentients lose their balance. Pieces of the broken building crumble and collapse.

Then the carpet bomb coverage from a week's worth of food for a small city causes massive gagging all around.

Only Sarah holds her ground. Delicately pinching her nose.

BUCKAROO

Want. Soba.

SARAH

No. The soba chef isn't here. Yet...

Buckaroo lets out a big sigh.

BUCKAROO

More. Please.

Sarah heads back to the kitchen but is interrupted by the Safety Inspector. Mimic and his Orderlies are close by.

GILBERT

A moment of your time.

SARAH

Don't have any.

He shows her an "official" order on his Omni-Screen.

GILBERT
I'm afraid I have to shut you down.

Sarah stops dead in her tracks.

SARAH
What? Why? You can't do this. It will
ruin his meal.

GILBERT
Your kitchen is at risk. Anyone
working in there is in danger.

On cue, a part of the building collapses.

SARAH
I need more time.

GILBERT
I'm afraid I can't do that. Unless...

SARAH
Unless what?

Gilbert makes a "grease the palm" motion.

Mimic circles in.

MIMIC
Do you need help?

Sarah looks away at the beady little shark eyes.

SARAH
What will it cost me?

Mimic quickly whispers something to Ponzo.

The Safety Inspector taps his Omni-Screen with a digital pen.

GILBERT
Well? Do we shut down now?

Sarah shakes Mimic to get his attention.

SARAH
Come on. What will it cost?

MIMIC
To save your business. It will cost
you... An arm and a leg.

And that is quite literal in this sense.

Sarah nods reluctantly, indicating she accepts.

One of the Seals slides something to Gilbert. The Safety Inspector makes a note on his Omni-Screen.

GILBERT

I'm giving you 24 hours to fix this.
After that, you will have to shut down
until all repairs are made.

SARAH

24 hours. No! That's not enough!

The Safety Inspector tosses out a smug look as he leaves. Ponzo talks casually with Mimic.

MIMIC

Human? Two ways?

PONZO

More meat on the leg than the wing.
I'll go work on a new menu.

SARAH

Not so fast! We're not done yet.

Sarah storms back into her crumbling kitchen.

INT. JESTER'S COVE KITCHEN - DAY

Early morning. The place is empty.

The back door opens and Bobby enters. He sets down his messenger bag in his locker and reaches for his chef whites.

That's when he notices something is not right. He looks around quickly, making sure there is no immediate danger.

Bobby surveys the kitchen.

This place is definitely out of order. Not ransacked, but a sweep of chaos has hit the area.

BOBBY

Yo! Anyone here?

No answer.

He hears a loud crash!

Bobby picks up a huge meat tenderizer.

INT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT

The dining room is worse than the kitchen. Complete disarray.

BOBBY

I want whoever is in here to know, I
am one armed and angry Manateetee.

No answer.

Bobby catches something fast moving out of the corner of his
eye. He turns and swings mightily.

And narrowly misses taking off Jester's head.

Bobby takes a deep breath and sets down the tenderizer.

BOBBY

You scared the frigging salt out of my
sea boss. What the heck are you doing?

Bobby notices the crazed shark's eyes. Jester's lost it.

JESTER

No time to explain. We have to be the
best. Only the best.

Bobby watches as Jester single-handedly attempts to rearrange
the dining room. The Sharker is not moving gracefully.

He staggers and stumbles. He starts a task and stops seconds
into it to move on to other tasks that he also abandons.

BOBBY

Boss?

JESTER

No time. No time. The first truck will
be here right away. No time.

On cue, the distinctive sound of a loud Ship approaching
fills the dining room.

JESTER

Only the best.

BOBBY

You got it boss.

Bobby moves like a sailor on a sinking ship.

He leaves the "captain" to his remodelling.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE LOADING AREA

Bobby frowns. He doesn't recognize the incoming ship.

BOBBY

Hey. You can't park here. I need this loading dock...

Something stepping out of the hatch makes him pause.

BOBBY

Hey, what's this all about?

Something hits Bobby over the head with a blackjack.

Bobby's lights go out and he doesn't get a chance to see black inky smoke pouring out from the strange ship.

INT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT

Jester moves a huge coat rack and in his feverish daze doesn't notice that he blocks one of the bathrooms.

JESTER

Okay. Perfect. Only the best. Perfect. Now what? Now what?

Jester steps back into the dining room. He sees Vamp standing in the doorway to the kitchen.

JESTER

Hey! We're closed.

He moves rapidly towards the nefarious figure.

He gets within feet of the him when the Whaledon Thug grabs him and holds him tight in his huge flipper-like arms.

The single worst fear for a Sharker - immobility.

The look in his eyes says it all. Instant terror. But he can't break the grip of the gigantic Whaledon.

The Pod of Teenage Dolphoids bust out of the kitchen with their tools of destruction.

The DOLPHOID LEADER looks at the very messy dining room and lets out a squeak of surprise.

DOLPHOID LEADER

This place is a dump.

Jester's eyes are huge with terror. To him, capture is as close to death as a locker next to Davey Jones.

JESTER

I'll give you anything. Anything!

VAMP

Youz late on your payment. Very late.

Vamp takes off his hat and adjusts his trench coat. The vampire eyes belong to a MARKERSQUID - the Galaxy's most notorious gangster Squids.

JESTER

You have to give me more time. Tell them I need more time.

VAMP

Youz don't have any more time.

Jester sobs. It's pretty pathetic, really.

JESTER

It's not my fault. My frien... chef ruined me.

Bobby staggers in holding a rag to his bleeding head.

VAMP

You have one day to pay. Or else.

BOBBY

Boss. They mean business.

JESTER

It's not my fault! It's Haruki's!!!

Jester has lost it. He starts to foam at the mouth. His eyes roll in the back of his head.

Vamp motions to the Whaledon to let him go.

DOLPHOID LEADER

What about us boss?

VAMP

Trash the place.

DOLPHOID LEADER

Someone already did.

VAMP

Trash it again.

DOLPHOID LEADER

You heard him boys.

Vamp puts on his coat and hat and nods at the Whaledon.

Jester drops to the ground in a heap - and frighteningly remains motionless. Cowering and whimpering.

The Dolphoid Leader hefts a brick in his hand.

DOLPHOID LEADER

I see something that ain't broke.

The beautiful and intricate fish tank - with only the best live fish in the galaxy inside...

SHATTERS

As a brick goes through it.

Colorful fish and seafood spill out from the rupture.

EXT. RAINBOW OYSTER HARVEST - NIGHT

The potatoes are peeled. The celery has been chopped. Stew pots are simmering. Grandma Pearl tastes one of the dishes. She gives Haruki the okay, the flavors are tasting great.

The sun sets.

The Oysterfellers head in from off shore.

Some of the men and women gather around the cooking tent. Others carry the day's catch to the transport truck.

A stately Oysterfeller hands off his catch. This is MAYOR OSTRAL, the spokesman for the village.

MAYOR OSTRAL

Grandma Pearl! What happened? Did you get help from Neptune himself?

Grandma Pearl smiles, her crooked teeth brimming with pride.

GRANDMA PEARL

Not Neptune but close. Boys, meet Mayor Ostral. Mayor - these boys sure know how to cook. And help.

She gathers her two helpers. Haruki bows deeply.

HARUKI

It is my honor to cook for you sir.

MAYOR OSTRAL

No formalities. Please. Mayor is merely a title. We are all equal here.

Mayor Ostra puts his hand out. Tako buoyantly pushes all four of his hands forward and shakes.

MAYOR OSTRA

Now I see how you got all this work done. What a nice surprise. Let us celebrate our guests and the gift they brought us today.

TAKO

We didn't bring anything?

MAYOR OSTRA

You brought us time to be together. More valuable than a Rainbow Pearl. Tonight we will treat you to our rainbow feast!

HARUKI

A feast! Please. We aren't worthy. Don't spend any extra because of us.

MAYOR OSTRA

There's a big supply chain in this galaxy and we only get a fraction of what they are worth. The rainbow feast is what we give our honored guests.

Before they know what is happening, Tako and Haruki are swept up in the revelry of an island tradition; THE RAINBOW FEAST.

INT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Bobby goes over to his boss after the thugs have left.

He gently shakes Jester. Jester's still alive but he's been immobilized and will never be the same.

BOBBY

Boss? You okay?

He shakes him again. Bobby looks very sad.

BOBBY

Should I call someone?

He gets up and goes to the kitchen with his Omni-Screen out.

BOBBY

(into his Omni-Screen)

Hey. Mickey. Yeah. Don't come into today okay? Call the boys. We got problems with the plumbing...

Bobby's voice trails away.

EXT. RAINBOW OYSTER HARVEST - NIGHT

Tables are brought down to the beach. Chairs are set out. All the wonderful food that Grandma Pearl had the two cooks help with is placed on the tables in family style dishes.

The meal lasts for hours.

As desserts are passed around, Haruki leans over to Mayor Ostra and gets his attention.

HARUKI

Thank you for sharing your culture and your festivities. It is an honor.

MAYOR OSTRA

Thank you for sharing your talents.

HARUKI

Cooking is truly my passion.

MAYOR OSTRA

I can tell. Don't tell Mother Pearl.

Grandma Pearl is enjoying Tako's animated storytelling that has a whole table riveted with laughter.

MAYOR OSTRA

But between you and me, her food has never tasted so good.

Haruki laughs.

The night continues.

After dessert, the townsfolk stand and gather at the water line. They hold hands, gather in family bunches, or just stand by themselves and gaze out over the ocean.

All the lights are put out.

The RAINBOW ICE PARTICLE SHOWER begins.

And it is absolutely BREATHTAKING!

Imagine a rainbow after a gentle shower and combine it with the vivid presence of a bright display of aurora borealis.

That wouldn't come close to what the Rainbow Shower is like.

The closest you could come to describing it with words is...

Life is connected and beautiful. Always. And this is proof.

The ice crystals and the colorful dust combine to produce a beautiful rainbow snow shower that is magical beyond words.

Haruki sheds a tear.

MAYOR OSTRAL

We work hard to live here because every night when we put down our shovels or turn off our stoves - this is what life rewards us with. And even if we only give ourselves this time to enjoy it, it's worth it.

Tako's mouth is wide open.

GRANDMA PEARL

No matter how many years I live, the thrill of life never leaves my heart when I get witness creation like this.

No more words are spoken.

The beauty of the magical moment says it all.

Lovers hold each other. Families hold hands. And everyone, everywhere shares in the wonder.

HARUKI

Sarah...

EXT. HARVEST MOON VILLAGE - NIGHT

Before they get on the Rocket, Mayor Ostra hands Haruki a large bag. In it, Haruki finds a bounty of Rainbow Oysters.

MAYOR OSTRAL

Please. Take these.

HARUKI

I can't.

MAYOR OSTRAL

You helped us out of the kindness of your heart. Now it is my turn.

And he won't take no for an answer.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - NIGHT

The Chefs board the ship. Haruki carefully stows the bounty.

TAKO

If we take these to the next inter-galactic seafood market and sold them at cost, we would have enough to travel to earth a dozen times.

HARUKI

What's the nearest planet with a space port and a large market.

TAKO

I get to visit earth! Life goal. Check!

They settle into the cabin chairs.

EXT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Late night. No one on the streets. City lights dimly light up the restaurant.

Jester, with a packed suitcase leaves his establishment.

From shadows, a Trench Coat with red, vampire eyes watches.

EXT. HARVEST MOON VILLAGE

Tako's Food Rocket begins takeoff.

The damaged booster sputters causing the Rocket to wobble dangerously. Passing Oysterfellers watch with concern.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako steels his focus. He gets the ship under control.

TAKO

Easy there. Come on girl.

INT. JESTER'S COVE KITCHEN - DAY

Bobby arrives for work carefully checking to make sure no one is ready to knock him out.

The kitchen appears to have been set up for business as usual. Bobby moves on to the dining area.

INT. JESTER'S COVE RESTAURANT

The kitchen doors swing shut. The echo is empty in the dining room. Everything has been mostly put back in order.

BOBBY

Boss?

The elaborate fish tank has been hastily repaired.

INT. JESTER'S COVE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Bobby knocks on the Executive Office door and enters.

BOBBY

Boss? What's on the menu today?

Empty. He sees something off center on the desk.

INSERT - Very messy hand-written note.

"Unexpected family emergency. Back in a few days."

INT. JESTER'S COVE KITCHEN

Bobby puts his bag away. He puts on his chef jacket with authority. He dials a number on his Omni-Screen.

BOBBY

Yeah. Mickey. Call everyone in.

(pause)

Yes I'm serious. We're doing things differently tonight.

Bobby looks like a uniformed warrior in his chef whites.

SPACE. HARVEST MOON

The other Booster kicks in and takeoff proceeds.

Tako's Food Rocket breaks through the atmosphere.

The damaged Booster sputters and causes the ship to veer dangerously off course.

The Rocket flies straight into the rainbow colored rings.

Brightly colored space dust swirls into the damaged booster and starts to choke the system.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki sits on a stool in the middle of the Rocket's kitchen.

He stares right at Sarah's recorded image, bringing a tear to his face. He's been very emotional lately.

SARAH

(recorded)

Where the heck are you Haruki? This is getting ridiculous.

Haruki talks to the machine like she can hear him.

HARUKI
I'm coming home today!

SARAH
(continues her message)
If you aren't back by dinner... I'm
leaving you.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah is hard at work in the kitchen. She has her Omni-Screen open to generic Soba recipes.

She tries to replicate her husband's recipe but is getting nowhere. Evidenced by the failed recipes discarded around her.

The building keeps threatening to fall down around her.

In the background, a gigantic Buckaroo powers through countless dishes.

EXT. SPACE

A Surface to Space TRANSPORT heads towards Space Station Umi.

INT. SPACE STATION TICKET COUNTER

Jester approaches the ticket counter. A ROBOT helps him.

ROBOT
Where are you travelling today sir?

JESTER
Earth. One way.

ROBOT
Very good. First class or business?

JESTER
Coach.

ROBOT
Sir, the recommendation for all Sharkers, especially Blue-Fin is to travel in at least business class. Earth is a very long voyage and Coach can be quite restrictive.

JESTER
I said coach.

The Robot processes his request without another word.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki tries to plead with the holographic recording.

HARUKI

I'm coming home! I promise!

SARAH

I'm trying make Soba. Hopefully he will like it. I don't know why you never told it to me.

(beat)

Sometimes, I wonder why I married you.

She knows why. But right now she's very disappointed.

The message ends.

Tako makes his way to the kitchen. He sits down. From his careful demeanor, it appears he overheard the message.

TAKO

What's so special about it anyway?

HARUKI

It's complicated.

TAKO

Soba? Flour, eggs, and water?

Haruki "pretends" to be focused on his Omni-Screen.

HARUKI

It's not the recipe that's complex. It's the reasons why I make it that are.

TAKO

I have four arms, I think I can see when someone is juggling something dangerous that they can't handle.

Haruki lets out a sigh. His body language already confessing.

HARUKI

Soba is the meal I made for her the day I proposed to her on Neptune. I knew I would be nervous so I didn't want to ruin the meal as well so I made something simple.

TAKO

Why not tell her how to make it?

HARUKI

It became an expression of how I felt in that moment. When I make it now, I get the same feeling. It's... It's... Hard to describe.

Tako is a romantic and feels how special it is.

TAKO

You have to tell her!

HARUKI

I can't tell her. She thinks I am an amazing chef and I'm just a fraud. I'm afraid if I tell her, especially now, I'll let her down and she will leave me because she will see my weaknesses.

TAKO

Everyone has flaws.

HARUKI

I can't lose her. I can't.

TAKO

You're being superstitious.

HARUKI

I can't take the chance.

No answer.

A loud explosion stops the quiet moment in its tracks.

TAKO

What in the ink was that?

Another loud explosion doesn't answer his question.

They rush to the cockpit. Red warning lights are flashing and warning buzzers blare out sounds.

A third loud explosion then the ship just stops. Dead still.

EXT. SPACE

The ship is covered in a swirl of rainbow colors.

A fourth explosion shows that the dust clogging the broken booster has caused the ship to stop dead in its tracks.

INT. CRUISE SPACESHIP COACH SEATING

A very crowded intergalactic flight to earth has families from many different oceans all laughing, crying and stressing out about their vacation to earth.

Stuck in the middle of the coach seating is Jester sandwiched between two chatty Whaledon Moms.

He stays motionless. And just seethes.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako toggles controls while observing the results on his Pilot's Omni-Screen.

TAKO

We lost all magnet power.

Emergency lights illuminate the two chefs.

TAKO

We're dead in the water.

HARUKI

No! We have to get to the nearest space station. Now!

TAKO

We're not going anywhere.

Tako sits back in his chair. He searches for a space mechanic on his Omni-Screen. Haruki gets very frustrated at the delay.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

After ruining another batch of Soba noodles when plaster from the crumbling ceiling drops in the mix, Sarah gives up.

SARAH

I need help. Where are you Haruki?

Outside, Mimic licks his lips in delight.

EXT. SPACE

A team of Amoeba-Jellies float around the Ocean Blue Rocket with space tools and repair parts.

Next to the Rocket is a TWO-TOW-MOON, a tugboat shaped spaceship for rescuing travellers in deep space.

The logo on the ship is "Maverick's Moon Tow" and slogan "if you're going to get stuck in outer space, better have a Maverick Moon close by".

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako and Haruki talk to LIONEL, the smooth-sailing, smooth-talking Manta Man Ray in charge of the Moon Tow.

LIONEL

Your booster engine is shot. Custom job - you'll need a rebuild. Two, maybe three weeks. I know a guy...

HARUKI

We don't have two weeks!

LIONEL

Calm down. I'm just doing my job.

He smiles at Haruki's desperate need. There is definitely something shady about this guy.

TAKO

How about you tow us to the galactic station near Tri-Coal Trench?

LIONEL

That'll cost ya.

TAKO

How much?

Lionel pretends to do calculations on a private Omni-Screen.

Haruki is impatient and storms off to the kitchen.

LIONEL

That's a four magnet-ton stop. Eight thousand just for the tow.

Tako's arms flail wildly at the shocking amount.

TAKO

That is robbery!

LIONEL

Suit yourself. We can detach and get on out of here. But I'll warn you, next moon tow is five days away.

Lionel knows he's got them by the barnacles.

Tako discreetly checks his bank account. Not even close.

EXT. JAPANESE STREETS - DAY

A haggard Jester uses a local map app on his Omni-Screen.

He travels towards Neptune's Noodles and realizes there is a huge crowd gathered. He wasn't expecting that!

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki is back. A small rainbow is in his hand.

HARUKI

This is worth five on the open market.

Lionel leans forward in his chair. His eyes sparkle.

LIONEL

What have we here?

Haruki pulls out a second rainbow oyster from a bag.

HARUKI

We'll give you two for the tow.

But this deal ain't over yet. Lionel fishes for more.

LIONEL

What am I going to do with two rainbows? Might as well just throw them out.

Haruki grabs the bottom of the bag and empties the few dozen rainbow oysters onto the ship's console.

HARUKI

What kind of service can we get for this?

Tako looks worried. Haruki gives him a 'trust me' glance.

Lionel thinks about it. A winged flipper scratches his chin.

LIONEL

Well, now that I think of it - I do have a spare, working magnet drive.

The day has been saved.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Mimic looks at his cohort Jester on the phone.

JESTER

What the mackerel is going on? I told you to go sabotage his restaurant.

MIMIC

Something more interesting came up.

He quickly motions for one of his Orderlies to close the screen when Sarah appears with arms crossed, determined brow.

SARAH

Arm and a leg. Deal. Can you fix my restaurant?

MIMIC

Certainly my dear. But where I come from, we accept payment up front.

His chef pulls out his big knife and sharpener.

Sarah hesitates. She wasn't thinking this part through.

SARAH

Wait.

MIMIC

Deal's a deal. I'm afraid.

Mimic and his allies advance on her.

The crowd is mesmerized by the Belly Phoon. She looks at a cop for help. He's too busy recording with his Omni-Screen.

She looks up and gets a hungry glare. She runs for her shop.

The butcher crew chase after her.

EXT. SPACE

The Amoeba-Jellies secure a large, modern magnet drive over top of the busted boosters. Lionel supervises from inside a Manta Ray shaped spacesuit.

LIONEL

(through intercom)

Perfect boys. Seal the right side.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki and Tako watch the repairs. All looks in order.

Haruki puts the bag of rainbow oysters in a secure case and puts the case into a compartment panel on the main hatch.

EXT. SPACE

Lionel sees the panel open. He takes his prize. Him and his float back to their vessel.

Something is not right. A bolt hasn't been attached properly.

Lionel pretends he doesn't see it.

He gives Tako a thumbs up that all is good.

The new engine roars to life.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Jester finds his way to the front of the crowd.

He overhears two Humanoids discussing the scene.

HUMANOID MAN

They did it! They broke the record for biggest meal served to a Belly Phoon!

HUMANOID FEMALE

Amazing! And he's not done. We should try to get a reservation now. This place will be impossible to get into.

The success is the final salt water in the open wound.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako gets adjusted to the new controls for the magnet drive.

TAKO

Hold on to your sea cap. We'll get to earth in two hours with this mod!

Haruki straps in. Tako hits the booster.

The ship lurches forward at faster than the speed of light.

MAGNET WARP

The Ocean Blue Rocket bends with the curve of space-time. It looks like it is stretching and pulling apart.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako and Haruki are plastered against their chairs.

HARUKI

Now I know why they put passengers to sleep at this speed!

Tako looks like he is on a roller coaster and is loving it.

TAKO

This is the only way to travel!

A metal on metal sound gets Haruki's attention.

HARUKI

What was that?

The sound happens again.

Then the ship does a hyper-speed lurch.

TAKO

Something's wrong.

As the words are spoken...

MAGNET WARP

The newly attached warp drive sheers off in mid-flight. The entire experience of travelling that fast instantly stops.

In the middle of the blackest part of space.

The ship jostles and sputters to a dead stop.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Sarah runs into her shop trying to escape from Mimic's crew.

She sees Isamu running out the door with an armful of California rolls.

SARAH

Isamu! Wait!

She's alone.

Until Mimic and his crew enter.

MIMIC

Not so fast. I believe we have a deal.

She runs for the cold storage.

Mimic's chef barrels after her, cleaver raised up and ready.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako pries his tentacled arms off the dashboard.

TAKO

Whoa.

HARUKI

What happened?

Tako checks some of his instrument readings.

TAKO

We got swindled.

A different, unnerving sound, like a tin can the size of a house being crushed resonates through the ship.

HARUKI

Can we get it started again?

Tako hits the controls. Just the whir of a dead engine.

HARUKI

Where are we?

TAKO

Somewhere between Harvest Moon and earth.

The crushing tin can sound happens again. And louder.

Tako tries the engine. Nothing.

Suddenly the entire cockpit is drenched in red light. Intense warning bells sound. An "Abandon Ship" graphic comes up.

TAKO

No! Oh no! NO!

Time slides to a standstill - the opposite of hyper travel.

Everything starts to slow down. And expand.

DEEP SPACE

The blackness of space looks distorted.

The back end of Tako's Rocket is caught in an immense shadow.

This is a black hole. And the chefs are being pulled into it.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Jester searches for something to cause chaos. He finds his answer when he stumbles across an industrial sized tub of Wasabi paste, fresh off a delivery ship.

A small crowd sees him lift up the fifty pound block of Wasabi and drag it past the protective police line.

JESTER

HEY!

Buckaroo looks down. Dinner or sentient - he can't tell.

That's when Jester uses the last of his strength to lift up the Wasabi paste and throw it into Buckaroo's open mouth.

Someone in the crowd screams.

CROWD VOICE

Wasabi bomb!

Mass panic erupts! Jester disappears into the crowd.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki still doesn't know what is going on but as he looks at the white expression on Tako's face - he knows its not good.

TAKO

We're trapped in the Tri-Coal Trench.

HARUKI

Do you have escape pods?

TAKO

I have a deep fryer and a six burner stove. This piece of rust didn't come with any escape pods.

To the aft of the ship, time-space bends in a peculiar way.

Memories of their past are seen around the kitchen as reality stretches out like a piece of salt-water taffy.

TAKO

It's not fair!

Tako is starting to freak out.

TAKO

It's not fair! We worked very hard!
Why is this happening? IT'S NOT FAIR!

Haruki is more worried about his friend than his existence.

HARUKI

Tako, calm down! Calm down!

Tako starts to cry.

DEEP SPACE

Outside, the ship is caught in a inky black vortex. It is devouring the ship slowly, but surely.

An odd spec of white light flickers in the void.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Buckaroo's face twists in an expression of surprise. Then the heat hits him like a sucker punch to the gills.

This is one of the hottest condiments known to savory foods and Buckaroo just at 40 gallons of it in one bite.

Buckaroo flails madly at the fire in his mouth.

He backs up into the fragile remnants of Neptune's Noodles.

He literally brings the house down.

INT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

So close to his prize, Mimic opens the door to the cold storage while his orderlies and his chef make a run for it.

Inside the empty cold storage, Sarah hits him with a tray.

Then the building crashes down on them.

Everything goes pitch black. Sarah disappears under a mountain of rubble.

SARAH

Haruki...

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

Neptune's Noodles gets destroyed as Buckaroo thrashes about.

The massive crowd panics.

In the maelstrom, Jester watches with a devilish grin. Jester does not notice tendrils of inky black smoke around his feet.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki thinks fast. He slaps Tako across the beak. Tako looks at him with a mixture of panic and confusion.

HARUKI

Lets play last meal.

TAKO

Last meal?

HARUKI

You have one day left to live. What's your last meal?

TAKO

Do you think this is the right time?

HARUKI

Time stops in a black hole. If it stops, we might as well be thinking about our favorite meal. Maybe we can be there forever.

The distraction works. Tako stops to think.

TAKO

Last meal...

HARUKI

I can tell you mine?

TAKO

My last meal would be Portofino Clams from Divine Alley with butter cream and beer battered striped sole.

In the reality jumble being pulled into the space-time warp, Haruki sees images of Tako as a youngster walking with his dad on a boardwalk on some distant planet.

TAKO

When I was ten, my dad took me to Divine Alley. Just me and him. He called me his little helper. I watched him fix up the old ships that they used there. I got to hand him tools as he fixed the engines and generators.

All of the things Tako describes play out in the space between reality and the void created by the black hole.

His dad is a rough and tumble looking Octomaki but one with a lot of care and affection for his young, eager son.

TAKO

When we finished he took me for the most amazing meal I have ever had in my life. He even let me have a sip of his Cluster-Grape Wine. We sat on a dock with newspaper for dishes. I have never been happier in my life.

And it shows in the montage.

THE BLACK HOLE

In the black hole looking out is like being stuck in a large, dark drain.

On the top of the drain where the ship is being sucked in, projection-like images play the actions that Tako describes.

Inside the black hole, luminescent figures appear.

They look like the bizarre alien-like organisms you find at the bottom of the ocean where light never reaches.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Tako closes his eyes and savors the memory. He sighs.

TAKO

What about you? What's yours?

Haruki smiles.

NEPTUNE

Haruki and Sarah picnic on the vibrant planet of Neptune.

They are safe in a picnic sphere.

Sarah watches Haruki prepare an elegant Japanese dish. She's captivated by his culinary technique - clearly a master chef.

HARUKI (O.S.)

My meal on Neptune was the best I have ever had. The look on Sarah's face when she tried the soba was.

(choking up)

Was... something I will never forget.

This recollection of the scene has glowing white creatures floating closer to inspect the memories.

HARUKI

Knowing I was going to propose was on my mind and made me more nervous than I ever remember being.

Haruki blends ingredients together with artistry.

HARUKI

I always will love her. More than anything else in the universe.

THE BLACK HOLE

The entire ship is caught in the curve of the black hole.
There are more white creatures approaching from the ether.

NEPTUNE

The intimacy simmers. His nervous smile is endearing, sweet.
A drop of sweat runs his neck. He displays a nervous fidget.

SARAH

Itadakimasu!

Haruki tenderly lifts up a bowl and feeds Sarah.

The glowing white creatures engulf the entire scene.

HARUKI

Closes his eyes. He is at peace.

FADE TO WHITE

THE BLACK HOLE

The curve of the black hole shoots them out the other side of
its orbit in a flash of white light.

FADE TO WHITE

Slowly regaining focus.

On a planet in the sky.

EXT. NEPTUNE

Neptune in the middle of earth's galaxy. A majestic planet.

White flashes flicker in front of the greenish planet.

HARUKI

Opens his eyes. He stares at Neptune through the window of
Tako's Food Rocket.

The ship is quiet. Tako snores softly in his pilot chair.

Haruki looks behind him. No distortion. No glowing white
creature. Just normal.

Haruki blinks to make sure he is real and not dreaming.

HARUKI

Tako! Tako! Wake up!

TAKO

What is it?

HARUKI

We made it! We're alive.

The red flashing lights are gone.

A new, orange light blinks on the dashboard.

TAKO

Where are we?

HARUKI

That's Neptune. Right there!

TAKO

We made it! We actually made it.

Haruki notices the flashing orange light.

HARUKI

Please tell me that's normal.

Tako looks at it. He's not worried.

TAKO

It's just a travel advisory.

HARUKI

Then let's get this ship moving. I've got to get home to Sarah.

They start the engines. Tako presses the orange button.

TRAVEL ADVISORY

Traveler's entering earth's solar system be advised, a travel warning has been issued for planet earth.

A video takes over Tako's Pilot-Screen. The video shows a familiar Tokyo street.

TRAVEL ADVISORY

A vacationing Belly Phoon was enjoying a record breaking meal at Neptune's Noodles in the Shorinju Prefecture of Tokyo when...

TAKO

Hey! That's your place. Oh...

He shuts up quickly as the image on screen shows the absolute destruction of Haruki's house and home.

TRAVEL ADVISORY

Witnesses described a...

(pause)

Wasabi bomb was thrown into the mouth of the Belly Phoon. Travelers are advised to take alternate routes past earth's magnet space while authorities search for a way to revive the distressed sentient.

Haruki takes over the ship's controls and heads for earth.

EXT. NEPTUNE'S NOODLES - DAY

The Ocean Blue Rocket lands in an open area of the street.

Neptune's Noodles is gone! In its place is a giant-size Buckaroo clutching its stomach and moaning.

No one stops the ship from landing right in front of the distressed creature. Everyone is still in shock.

Haruki steps out of the Rocket.

His heart drops to the ground when he sees the damage.

HARUKI

Sarah.

Called out softly. No answer.

HARUKI

Sarah!

No answer. The crowd starts to buzz.

A group of emergency workers discuss what to do. They don't seem to be getting anywhere.

HARUKI

Was there anyone in there?

A friendly-looking CRABIT in a police uniform addresses him.

CRABIT OFFICER

Sir. Please stay back. The area is still dangerous.

HARUKI

Have you seen my wife? She was in there!

CRABIT OFFICER

We are bringing in a spaceship crane.
It will be here in an hour. It's the
only way to safely move him.

HARUKI

Where is everyone who was in there?

The Crabit Officer points to a group huddled together. It is
Isamu, Isamu's wife and all of his cousins and their wives.

Isamu sees Haruki. He can't believe his eyes.

ISAMU

Haruki!

HARUKI

Where's Sarah?

ISAMU

It all happened so fast. One minute I
was running out to feed Buckaroo some
California rolls and the next thing I
know the building collapsed.

HARUKI

Where is she?

Isamu lowers his eyes.

ISAMU

She might. Be inside.

Haruki sinks to the ground.

Tako tries to put a reassuring hand on his friend's shoulder.
Haruki brushes it off.

In a panicked daze, Haruki stumbles over to the groaning
Buckaroo, still in the grips of a massive belly ache.

HARUKI

Get up!

Buckaroo only groans.

HARUKI

Get up! Get up! Get up!

Nothing.

BUCKAROO

Meal. Is. Bad.

There's a two-ton vomiting sound gurgling from Buckaroo.
Haruki slams his fists against the oblivious alien.

HARUKI

Get up!

He realizes he stands in the remnants of his kitchen.
Ingredients and equipment are strewn about.

The soul has drained out of him.

He grabs a mixing bowl. Flour. Buckwheat flour. Salt. Water.

HARUKI

First you take the flour and mix it
into the buckwheat.

He sits down on a crushed piece of his restaurant, talking to
himself. Tako helps shield people away.

HARUKI

When you pour the water in, I like to
think about holding your hand. Just
like I did when I fed you on Neptune.

One hand trails off to the side, rests on rubble. The other
carefully mixes the bowl.

HARUKI

Then I picture the look on your face
when I roll it into a sheet.

He does this on a piece of counter scattered about.

HARUKI

To chop the noodles, I imagine your
taste buds anxiously waiting.

Isamu sees what is going on. He digs in the rubble and
retrieves a chipped ceramic bowl.

ISAMU

(whispers to Tako)
Got any sauce?

Tako and Isamu switch places. Tako goes to his Rocket.

Isamu hands Haruki a chef's knife. He carefully cuts the
noodles into perfect, uniform strips.

Tako comes back with a bottle of sauce from his ship. He
hands it to Isamu. Isamu hands it to Haruki.

The sauce goes in the chipped ceramic container.

He carefully splashes a normal mouthful of noodles into it.

Sniff.

Sniff. Sniff.

Buckaroo's groaning stops. He sniffs the air.

His stubby little arms swipe at the air.

BUCKAROO
Hungry... Soba?

Haruki ignores the giant beast. Instead he lifts up the sauced portion of noodles and holds it in the air.

He is lost and doesn't know what to do.

The crowd silently watches him.

Buckaroo shifts his massive weight forward. The stubby little arms struggle to grasp the chopsticks holding the Soba.

BUCKAROO
Soba. Soba.

Haruki gives a defeated sigh and holds out the food.

Slurp!

Somehow the stubby little arms grab the chopsticks and direct the food into the mouth.

Buckaroo leans forward into a sitting position. He still covers the remains of Neptune's Noodles with his bulk.

Haruki hands over the bowl of noodles.

Slurp! Slurp! Slurp.

The ceramic bowl clatters to the ground.

SARAH (O.S.)
(feebly)
Haruki...

Quicker than the flash of a black hole slingshot, Haruki is brought back to life by the sound of his wife's voice.

HARUKI
Sarah! Sarah!

SARAH

Haruki.

HARUKI

Sarah, where are you?

Isamu hears her too.

ISAMU

She's alive!

The crowd reacts with nervous energy. Gossip starts to buzz. Omni-Screens grab the images and the audio.

HARUKI

(to Buckaroo)

Move!

Buckaroo looks around for something. He either didn't hear Haruki, didn't understand him, or he didn't care.

BUCKAROO

Soba?

HARUKI

MOVE!

BUCKAROO

So. Ba?

HARUKI

Move.

Buckaroo's stomach starts to ache again. He starts to lean back down where Sarah's voice came from.

HARUKI

Okayokayokay! Soba.

Haruki bursts into frenetic cooking action.

While tears stream down his face, he recites the recipe that has been stuck in his head for years.

HARUKI

2 parts flour. 8 parts buckwheat. 3 cups water. 2 pinches of salt. Stir ten times clockwise. Ten times counter clockwise.

Tako and Isamu watch him as he finishes a batch of noodles.

HARUKI

Isamu. Help.

ISAMU

HAI!

Isamu takes over and finely chops the noodles. Isamu's wife runs over with a ceramic bowl and serves the Soba.

Slurp!

Haruki doesn't stop. He starts another batch right away.

Tako follows his lead. Four arms mixing a larger batch.

The second round of noodles triple in quantity.

HARUKI

2 parts flour. 8 parts buckwheat.

ISAMU/TAKO

Ich. Ni.

An assembly line forms as the cousins rush over to help prepare and the cousin's wives rush to serve.

HARUKI

3 cups water. 2 pinches salt.

ISAMU/TAKO

San. Shi.

HARUKI

10 times left. 10 times right.

ISAMU/TAKO

Go. Roku.

Slurp.

Immense look of satisfaction on Buckaroo's face.

BUCKAROO

So. Good.

For the fourth round, Haruki and his team churn out ten full sized servings of noodles. The team counts down each step.

TEAM

Ich. Ni. San. Shi. Go. Roku. HAI!

Buckaroo leans forward. Isamu's cousin holds out the serving dish. She moves it away from him at the last second.

This forces Buckaroo to lean forward. He is still on all of the rubble, but he is at least giving some room.

The emergency workers can tell what is happening and they gather with gear waiting for enough room to go find Sarah.

TEAM

Ich. Ni. San. Shi. Go. Roku. HAI!

Ich. Ni. San. Shi. Go. Roku. Hai!

Enthusiasm is infectious. Sentients swarm forward to help.

Soon, there is a small army of Soba makers constantly feeding noodles to Buckaroo.

They manage to lure him out from the rubble of the destroyed shop. Rescue workers march in.

Haruki throws down his equipment and rushes in after them.

They find Sarah in the bottom of the destruction.

She survived the fall of the restaurant because when Mimic came after her, the machinery keeping Mimic moving seized up and created a strong barrier for Sarah to hide under.

Mimic, immobilized since the fall, is now a gibbering mess.

Sarah has been safe and out of harm's way.

She looks traumatized. Haruki rushes to her side.

She looks at him. Her personal pain doesn't stop her from an intense look of disappointment.

SARAH

Where have you been?

Haruki bows his head in utter shame.

HARUKI

I'm not worthy of your honor.

It sounds as cheesy in English as it does in Japanese.

The emergency workers wrap Sarah in a trauma blanket. They check her for signs of damage. Just scrapes and bruises.

SARAH

Why didn't you come home?

And suddenly the whole truth is on his lips and out the door.

HARUKI

Jester lied to me. He didn't have any money. I got angry at him and left. I was too ashamed to tell you.

This hurts Sarah visibly. She looks away from him.

HARUKI

Especially when we had such a big deal here. At first I thought I could get home fast but by then I had already started lying to you. Then I met Tako. And we started cooking our way back...

SARAH

You met a taco?

HARUKI

Hai. Tako. He helped me realize that not telling you how to make Soba was not because I was being proud. It was because I was afraid...

SARAH

What? Afraid of what?

His already prostrated form can't go any lower but it does.

HARUKI

I made Soba for us on Neptune because of how easy it is to make. And then you acted like it was the best thing in the world. I got scared that if I screwed up you wouldn't love me anymore and leave me.

Sarah's eyes soften. She understands what his heart says, even if his mind is racing through all the useless facts.

SARAH

You wouldn't tell me how to make Soba because you were scared of losing me?

Haruki braves a glance up at her.

HARUKI

I realized that I will always be scared of losing you because that is part of loving you. If that's the price I pay for loving you, then I never want to change.

The sweetest words ever spoken. Sarah melts.

SARAH

Oh Haruki.

She takes his hand. The emergency workers back off.

They step out of the rubble together.

Now it is Sarah's turn for a shock.

Hundreds of people are working together to create massive amounts of Soba like some symbiotic force of nature.

TEAM

Ich. Ni. San. Shi. Go. Roku. HAI!

It is awe inspiring.

Leading the field of amateur Soba noodle makers is Tako and Isamu. Tako is in a Zen-like state similar to Haruki at his finest. Four arms moving like sailboats on an windy ocean.

Buckaroo is rapidly growing in size.

He is now a baby Godzilla-sized monster.

SARAH

You taught them your recipe?

HARUKI

No reason to keep it a secret anymore.

Buckaroo is McLovin' it.

A Reefoid POLICE CHIEF lifts the *last* bag of flour.

POLICE CHIEF

We're running out of flour!

A FISHYSE SCIENTIST runs numbers on her Omni.

FISHYSE SCIENTIST

It won't stop eating.

The Soba supply chain is interrupted briefly. To prove the Official right, Buckaroo looks impatient then grabs a chunk of a building next to it and swallows it.

He grows in front of everyone's eyes. And he seems to not notice that he sucked back a half ton of concrete.

The community gathers the next batch of Soba before the alien can cause more damage.

Haruki and Sarah join the melee.

SARAH

How do we stop him from eating Tokyo?

FISHYSE SCIENTIST

If we can get him to the ocean then
the buoyancy of the water will let him
feel his stomach to know he is full.

HARUKI

There's not enough food!

SARAH

This is Tokyo! How can there be not
enough food!

HARUKI

There's not enough people to cook!

On that cue, the sound of a rocket booster approaching causes
everyone to stop and look up into the sky.

A honey colored rocket - THE YELLOW BANDIT BAKERY approaches.

From a LOUDSPEAKER on the yellow rocket a voice speaks up.

THE YELLOW BANDIT

Looks like you could use some help.

There is a cheer from the crowd as the service panels open up
and a trio of MANATEETEE BAKERS start slinging loaves of
bread into Buckaroo's open mouth.

The Yellow Rocket swerves before it gets too close to being
eaten but not before it gets Buckaroo's attention.

Buckaroo takes a few earth shattering steps towards the ocean
- some fifteen blocks away.

Haruki dashes over to a news crew.

HARUKI

Call all the food rockets! We've got a
monster to feed.

The Yellow Bandit keeps Buckaroo busy for the moment. Haruki
and his crew finish up the last of the Soba as the
ingredients they have run out.

Tako sees Haruki working the news cameras to get help.

TAKO

Haruki! Get the rocket! We've got food
on there.

HARUKI

House special coming up!

Haruki runs for the Ocean Blue Rocket.

In the sky, another three food rockets show up. Now it's a dog fight and Buckaroo needs a lot of kibble.

A human piloted rig serving pizza by the slice hurtles pies, box and all at the gargantuan gastronome.

A group Eelers with a panache for dim sum crashes the party hurling duck legs and sticky buns.

A green colored Rocket full of fish tacos swoops in.

On the horizon, more rockets are streaming in.

Back on the street, Haruki opens the hatch to Tako's Rocket.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET - DAY

Haruki sits down at the controls and powers up the ship.

He turns around when he hears the hatch open after him.

HARUKI

I've got it Tako. I've seen you do it
a bunch of times now.

Silence. No one there.

Da da. Da da.

Haruki lifts the Rocket off the ground. Four blocks away he sees the food battle intensify.

EXT. TOKYO STREETS - DAY

There are now two dozen food rockets of all shapes, sizes and cuisines flying around the head of MEGA-BUCKAROO.

MEGA-BUCKAROO

Mmmmmmmooooooorrrrrrreeeeeeee.

(beat)

Please.

The Godzilla-sized creature is being drawn to the ocean.

One Rocket gets a little too close and is forced to land when Buckaroo sheers off a wing and eats it.

Sentients on the street scramble to take cover.

Restaurants along the route set food outside. Tako, Sarah and the rest of Haruki's crew make sure the food is catered to the massive mouth.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Da da. Da da. Da da.

Haruki catches a glimpse of a fin when he looks over his shoulder. Then its gone.

DADADADADA!

Haruki spins around to catch the stalker in the act.

Jester has a laser pistol drawn and pointed at Haruki.

JESTER

Don't move. It's game over man. Game over.

EXT. TOKYO STREETS

Sarah dodges a heavy foot fall from Mega-Buckaroo.

She scoops up a huge container of fried rice that a vendor hands her and a Purple Burger Rocket takes it into the sky.

She passes Tako gathering up curry bowls from a Tokyo eatery.

SARAH

Where's Haruki?

TAKO

He went to get my rocket to help.

They both look over their shoulder from where they came.

Four blocks back, an Ocean-Blue Rocket careens wildly.

SARAH

Haruki!

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Haruki fights with the much stronger Sharker for control of the Laser Pistol.

HARUKI

Let go of me!

JESTER

You ruined me!

HARUKI

You ruined yourself.

The Rocket takes a sharp dive. Both Sentients crash into the control panel.

EXT. TOKYO SKIES

The Ocean-Blue Rocket flies dangerously close to the ground.

Sarah gasps. She runs where the trajectory takes the rocket.

The Rocket levels out and flies straight over the ocean. It steadies itself mere feet above the water.

INT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Jester has control of the Laser Pistol and control of the ship. Haruki pilots the ship at his command.

JESTER

You were selfish! I needed you. Why didn't you help me? Why did you destroy me?

HARUKI

You didn't respect me. You never respected me. I can't be a barnacle on your ship. I'm better than that.

JESTER

You call this disaster a success?

Jester indicates the action playing out on the ship's screen.

The Gourmet Catering Squadron nearly has Mega-Buckaroo to the ocean. One or two more fly-byes and he will be in the drink.

HARUKI

This is my own place. I am proud of it. I am proud of my home.

JESTER

You made me walk the plank on my own. Now you're walking the plank!

Jester slams a control button that makes the ship hover in one place. He roughly grabs Haruki by the collar and pulls him to the hatch.

EXT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

The Rocket hovers a few feet above the water.

JESTER

You want to be a predator? You want to know what the ocean feels like? Huh?

HARUKI

Don't do this Jester.

Jester keeps an eye on Haruki. The other he uses to guide his hand to tying a heavy cast iron skillet to a rope that he ties around Haruki's feet.

He uses another piece of rope to tie Haruki's hands.

JESTER

You shouldn't have betrayed me.

HARUKI

I never did.

EXT. TOKYO HARBOR

The ground crew and the aerial brigade bring Mega-Buckaroo to the edge of the harbor.

Tako sees the feet of the massive beast off balance. He knows that one last push will get him into the water.

He grabs the first thing he can find.

A huge plate of fresh caught calamari.

TAKO

Calamari? Eew! Gross!!

He looks away from his nominally-related edible brethren and hurls the dish into the sky.

Mega-Buckaroo catches just enough of a whiff of the food to reach out for it with his stubby little arms.

Everyone in Tokyo holds their breath as the alien teeters on the edge.

And falls in...

EXT. TOKYO HARBOR

A few blocks away Sarah has made it to the edge of the harbor. She has a direct view of Haruki in danger.

She see Jester pushing him to the edge.

SARAH

No!

EXT. OCEAN-BLUE SPACE ROCKET

Jester puts the Laser Pistol away. They both step out onto the hatch's lower piece - looks like a metal plank.

JESTER

Have fun swimming with the fishes!

He goes to push.

MEGA-BUCKAROO

Hits the ocean and instantly creates a minor tsunami wave.

THE WAVE

Overtakes the Ocean-Blue Rocket.

Sarah watches in horror as the real ocean blue swallows the artificial Ocean-Blue in a huge wave.

She loses sight of Haruki and Jester.

MEGA-BUCKAROO

Floats on his back in the ocean. He looks deeply satisfied.

He seems to be subtly shrinking in size. His meal is over.

MEGA-BUCKAROO

Check. Please.

He belches a deep, rich, and in Japan, very politely.

EXT. TOKYO HARBOR

Sarah sees the Ocean-Blue Rocket stabilize itself.

Haruki is trapped like a fish in a net, hanging from the side of a wing. The trap Jester set for him saved him in the end.

Speaking of Jester, he is no where to be seen.

But he's not safe yet. His hands are tied and he is struggling to keep his head out of the water.

Sarah dives in and swims like an Olympian out to him.

She lifts his head out of the water and puts his bound hands on the wing tip for support while she cuts the weight free.

Their kiss when he is free is deep, rich and very satisfying.

HARUKI

I love you sticky bun.

SARAH

I love you too fish cake.

They kiss again.

Their home and business is destroyed but you would never know from the school kid way they make out over the ocean waves.

EXT. DEEP SEA

Jester swims to a dark part of the ocean.

He knows he has lost but he still has safe haven.

He finds a hidden lagoon built in an abandoned submarine on the floor of the ocean.

A Shark Fin symbol shows both the threat and the kind of people who inhabit the dive.

He gets inside the ship and is barred from entering by a huge, rusty, ship door.

JESTER

Hey. Let me in! I need refuge!

A GRUFF VOICE answers with a question, not an open door.

GRUFF VOICE

Name.

JESTER

Jester. From Umi. I'm a Blue-Fin.

GRUFF VOICE

What's the password?

JESTER

I don't know the password! I just got to earth. I'm a Blue-Fin. Look at me!

From no where, black, inky smoke fills the antechamber.

GRUFF VOICE

No password. No entry. Go find yourself a sponsor.

JESTER

You can't do this!

No response. Except from behind. Red eyes appear in the dark.

EXT. TOKYO STREETS - NIGHT

Haruki, Sarah, Tako, and everyone involved with Neptune's Noodles stare at the gaping hole where the restaurant used to be.

Sarah hears a beep from her Omni-Screen. She checks it.

SARAH
Buckaroo left us a review.

HARUKI
What's it say?

SARAH
Five stars. Best. Meal. Ever!!! Three exclamation points.

HARUKI
(laughs)
Too bad we can't open for business.

SARAH
He paid his bill and left a great tip.
We can rebuild.

HARUKI
We could rebuild.

She can see he's thinking about something. She follows his gaze to the Ocean-Blue Rocket, parked safely back on land.

HARUKI
Or...

SARAH
What's going on in that crazy head of yours?

HARUKI
Tako? How much do you want for your rocket?

Tako looks shocked. Then honored.

A FEW DAYS LATER

Sarah and Haruki stand in front of a freshly painted Ocean-Green Food Rocket with a sign that reads.

"Neptune's Noodles II"

THE END