

THE SUBTERRANEAN REJECTS

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE EDISON - EUROPA - DAY

A giant, futuristic space station sits tranquilly underwater. Its whirring engines keep it suspended, while multi-colored lights illuminate it in a dark, subterranean ocean.

INT. EUROPA EAST HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

ELAINE (16), dressed in punk-rock clothing and styling black and purple hair, walks through a brightly lit hallway covered in glass. Water surrounds her on both sides, as if she's walking through a giant, futuristic aquarium.

She passes an open auditorium. First grade students huddle around a VR presentation showing a massive underwater space station.

NARRATOR

In the year 2194, humanity left Earth behind and sought out new life on Saturn's ocean moon, Europa. The Edison is now our home. It holds a population of over 2 billion humans, several thousand species of animals, and over a million insects.

Elaine slumps down the hallway past the auditorium. In her right hand, she holds a small sheet of glass the size of a smartphone. On the glass, a word pulses red and reads: DETENTION.

INT. DETENTION - DAY

Elaine enters a classroom filled with white slab desks. Orange glowing orbs cover the ceiling, warming up the room with a dim, inviting light.

Elaine enters and shrugs off her bag.

ELAINE

Hello again, my fellow comrades.

Three other students sit at their desks, spaced out from each other.

JOSH (16), the curly haired class clown, lays back in his seat and stretches.

JOSH  
Whadja do this time Michaels?

ELAINE  
The youge [*usual*]. And I have a  
name fartface.

JOSH  
So do I.

ELAINE  
Fartface is a way better name than  
Josh.

JOSH  
(voice cracking)  
When are you going to stop wearing  
that to school?

ELAINE  
I don't know, when are you going to  
hit puberty?

JOSH  
Don't. I'm sensitive about it.

ELAINE  
Yeah?

JOSH  
I lost my voice making grunting  
noises during Ms. Collins sex-ed  
presentation. Hence the cracking.

ELAINE  
And the detention.

JOSH  
It was so worth it.

STEVEN, aka SWERVE, (17) the High School Underwater Football  
Running Back, sits up in his chair.

SWERVE  
Man, can you two shut up? Tryna get  
some sleep in here.

JOSH  
What's wrong Swerve? Too tired from  
last night's bender?

SWERVE  
Bruh if you tell anyone where I was  
last night I will beat your ass.

JOSH

I heard you broke into the Section  
19 car lot and hooked up with Macy  
Williams.

Swerve stands up faster than lightning.

SWERVE

What did I JUST say?

A calm, eerie voice speaks over a PA system.

PA VOICE (V.O.)

Please return to your seat.

The phrase repeats again and again.

SWERVE

You better not tell ANYONE about  
that shit.

NOVA, (16), a quiet, mousy girl sitting far away in the  
corner, turns toward Swerve.

NOVA

QUIET! Swerve get back before they  
give us more minutes. I wanna go  
back to class.

ELAINE

Why?

NOVA

It's whale day.

ELAINE

Oh my God really? Fucking *whale*  
day?

NOVA

Come on it's only once a month.

ELAINE

You can see them in the zoo like  
whenever you want.

JOSH

You must be mistaken. Swerve's  
mom's not stopping by the school  
today.

SWERVE

YOU DID NOT-

Swerve jumps up from his chair and RUNS toward Josh.

ELAINE  
(sarcastically)  
Don't do it.

JOSH  
Oh, he's going for it.

Swerve runs as fast as he can. The orange orbs in the room glow brighter. An electric shock SURGES from the floor.

ZAP. Swerve's body hits the floor with a THUMP.

ELAINE  
Love how we torture our youth.  
Bodes well for the future of  
society.

Swerve gets up, slowly.

PA VOICE (V.O.)  
Please, return to your seat.

Swerve limps back to his seat. He flips off the cameras in the room. He receives a lighter ZAP from the floor as Josh continues to laugh.

JOSH  
Come on man. I'm messing with you.  
You know I love your mom.

ELAINE  
Ok, enough.

The students sit quietly for a long moment. Swerve shakes it off. Nova twiddles her thumbs. JOSH draws a penis on the holographic surface of his desk.

ELAINE  
Don't you guys think it's a little  
weird that nobody's been to the  
surface in like, 200 years?

NOVA  
Probably because it's like negative  
300 degrees up there? And the  
surface is 15 miles thick?

ELAINE  
Ok smarty pants.

NOVA

It's not worth the resources.  
There's no life on the surface,  
just ice.

ELAINE

Yeah, but I mean it'd be pretty  
fucking cool if someone went back  
up.

NOVA

It would be dumb.

ELAINE

I think we should do it.

JOSH

What? You're insane.

ELAINE

Come on! Grow a pair. Any cruiser  
can get us there in like less than  
a day.

SWERVE

What about the ice?

NOVA

Yeah ok, I'm going to shut this  
idea down. Right now. Not  
happening.

ELAINE

There's like water plumes all over  
the surface. Easy, we can target  
them through a geolocation system.

JOSH

Ok, so, hypothetically, saying all  
of that is true. Where would we  
even get a ship?

ELAINE

Oh, well, I happen to have a  
cheating a-hole of a dad who runs  
the school and--

JOSH

Holy shit he's cheating on your  
mom?

ELAINE

Not relevant Josh.

Anyway his ship is state of the art  
and I'm pretty confident he'll be  
ocupado during tonight's underwater  
basketball game.

SWERVE

Nah man, I'm out. Gotta support my  
guys tonight at the game.

ELAINE

What are you, twelve?

SWERVE

They're my brothers for life. Gotta  
support. Besides. I'm not risking  
my scholarship over this.

ELAINE

Not important right now. Dude,  
you're like the best football  
player in our school's history. And  
this will make you famous. You'll  
be like Buzz Aldrin AND a famous  
football player.

SWERVE

Yeah, ok, I like that. Wait who's  
Buzz Aldrin?

NOVA

Ok. ENOUGH! I AM NOT ALLOWING THIS  
TO HAPPEN! Everyone just calm down,  
and CHILL. THE FUCK. OUT.

Nova hyperventilates, clearly not being chill at all.

ELAINE

You guys, I see you all in here  
like every day. Aren't you tired of  
the same shit? Nova, aren't you  
tired of no one noticing you? I've  
seen you look at Greg in Biology.  
Think about how much cooler you'd  
be if you went. Josh, don't you  
want your life to be something more  
than flipping burgers at Aqua Shack  
after you graduate? And  
Swerve...yeah never mind I know  
you're in. What do you guys say?  
Let's do this!

They all pause for a moment. Thinking it through. Taking it  
in. Swerve stands.

SWERVE  
Let's fucking do this. Bring it in.

The group stands up and huddles.

SWERVE  
On three. One..

JOSH  
Wait, what do we say on three?

SWERVE  
Huh?

JOSH  
You said on three, what do you want us to say on three?

SWERVE  
Uhh.

NOVA  
Oh my God.

JOSH  
We need a nickname.

ELAINE  
How about the Subterranean Rejects?

NOVA  
That's too long.

SWERVE  
I dig it.

JOSH  
I think it's cool.

SWERVE  
Okay. Rejects on three.

They put their hands together in a circle.

SWERVE  
ONE. TWO. THREE.

EVERYONE  
REJECTS!

ZAP. The floor swells with electricity as the four students fall backwards. They pick themselves up slowly and limp back to their seats.

JOSH

Ow. Ow.

ELAINE

Yeah, maybe next time. Just. Say it  
from our seats.

INT. PRINCIPALS OFFICE - NIGHT

Mr. Michaels' office sits quietly. Barely lit by dim light.

Suddenly the four students appear in the room as if they were wrapped in an invisibility cloak. Nova holds a holographic device that seems to be cloaking them from the cameras.

Elaine sneaks over to her father's desk. She scrambles around, opens a drawer, and finds a photo of her family next to what looks like a futuristic stack of condoms.

Her face flushes red with anger, she holds back tears, and CRUSHES the photo inside of her fist.

In the next drawer, she finds what she's looking for. A small, futuristic key shaped like an oval. Dad's backup.

ELAINE

Got it.

She quietly walks back to the group as Nova re-cloaks them.

INT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The students enter Mr. Michael's high tech ship. It's clean and spacious on the inside, like a giant tesla.

Elaine releases the oval over a small cylinder in the middle of the car. It floats and the ship's engine fires up.

The ships nav-computer boots up and smiles at Elaine.

COMPUTER

Good evening, Mr. Michaels.

ELAINE

Alright. Strap in everybody.

The ship blasts off at blinding speed, traveling upwards. It turns, exits through a giant vent and out into the ocean water.

I/E. SHIP - NIGHT

Elaine searches through a hologram that shows Europa's icy surface, looking for a plume or vent to exit from.

ELAINE

I dunno where to look.

NOVA

Here. Let me.

The hologram shifts to Nova's seat. She combs the surface slowly.

SWERVE

How do you know all this shit?

NOVA

I actually study? Plus my Dad's an oceanologist.

JOSH

A wha?

NOVA

He studies the surface and its effects on the ocean.

EVERYONE

Ohhhhh.

NOVA

Ooh. Found a big one. It's close.

Elaine enters the coordinates into the hologram.

COMPUTER

Estimated time of arrival: five hours, twenty minutes. Warning. Destination is not -

ELAINE

Override. Alright. Strap in.

The students strap into their seats as the ship lurches off into the water at breakneck speed.

As they leave, an alarm system blares from the Edison.

I/E. SHIP - FIVE HOURS LATER

Swerve and Josh are fast asleep in the back of the ship. Nova is huddled over a flat screen in the corner.

Elaine is curled up with her legs on the chair. A message beeps on a device around her wrist.

She opens it and a holographic message from her father plays:

MR. MICHAELS

Elaine, honey. Look, I'm sorry about what you saw in my desk tonight. Please come back. The Collective is on their way-

Elaine shuts off the message.

NOVA

Wait, what? What did he say?

ELAINE

Nothing.

NOVA

No, I'm pretty sure he just said THE FREAKING COLLECTIVE is on their way?

ELAINE

We'll be fine.

Josh and Swerve wake up. Nova opens up a hologram, searching for news of their departure. She pulls up a recent live news report. A female reporter stands outside of Europa High.

REPORTER

I'm here at Europa East High School where four students recently stole a cruise ship and are heading for the surface of the moon.

CUT TO:

MR. MICHAELS

I just want to say that I am fully responsible for what happened this evening, and will do everything I can to ensure the safety of our students. Elaine. If you're out there and you see this. Honey. Please come back.

REPORTER

Authorities say the Collective is traveling to the surface to retrieve the students.

We spoke with several of East Europa's brightest, to hear their take on this disturbing voyage.

CUT TO:

FOOTBALL PLAYER

Swerve! Fuck YEAHHHHHH! Hell yeah man you're a legend!

A group of football players swarm the reporter and shout in applause. The reporter motions the cameraman to cut away.

CUT TO:

GREG (16), Nova's crush, talking to the reporter.

GREG

Look, I don't know if it was a smart idea, but I think they're really brave. They're the first to go to the surface in what? 200 years? Nova, if you don't make it back, I just wanted to say, I always thought you were really cute.

NOVA

OH MY GOD WHAT?

REPORTER

As you can see, the students seem to be very proud of their daring classmates. Let's hope they make it back in one piece. Back to you Tim.

The students look at each other in astonishment.

ELAINE

It worked!

They celebrate for a moment. And then suddenly, a beeping noise.

Nova turns to the screen on her side, a giant object is approaching their location.

NOVA

Holy shit.

SWERVE

What?

NOVA

I don't know what this is. It looks like a creature. Almost as big as a whale.

JOSH

(in an Obi-wan voice)

That's no whale. That's the Death Whale.

Without warning, a large terrifying sea creature with sharp teeth lurches forward and CHOMPS down on the ship, lodging it in it's teeth.

SWERVE

I THOUGHT YOU SAID IT WAS A WHALE???

JOSH

I DON'T KNOW, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS I WAS JUST TRYING TO SOUND COOL!

Elaine tries to launch forward from the creature's mouth, but it's lodged tight in its teeth.

BANG

A torpedo strikes the creature from behind. A pod of small ships approach quickly.

NOVA

It's the Collective!

The creature releases its grip and chases after the ships. It swims at blinding speed, dodging torpedoes right and left, then swallows the group of ships instantly.

The students look on, stunned.

ELAINE

Uh. Okay. Okay.

SWERVE

Go! Go go go go!

Elaine turns the ship around and HURLS it forward as fast as it can possibly go.

Up ahead, the icy surface finally appears. Elaine aims for the open plume. The creature turns and swims after the ship.

JOSH

ELAINE GO FASTER!

ELAINE

I'm GOING! I'm going as fast as I  
can!

The creature gains on the team quickly. Just before it's  
about to swallow them whole, the ship BLASTS through the  
surface and into the freezing cold air.

The creature LURCHES out from the water right after them,  
trying to take a bite. Elaine maneuvers the ship and flies it  
sideways, just missing a chomp from the creature.

Before the creature even lands back in the water, it freezes  
solid and crashes onto the surface, shattering into a million  
pieces.

The ship quickly starts flashing warning lights.

NOVA

Elaine. We're losing power.

ELAINE

I know! I know!

Elaine steers the ship down and lands horribly, nearly  
crashing it onto the icy surface.

The students all breathe a sigh of relief for a moment.

JOSH

What the hell was that thing?

SWERVE

BRUH that THING almost ate us!

COMPUTER

Warning, losing power. Please  
retrieve life suits.

ELAINE

Shit.

Elaine flips a switch and hits an emergency button. Four  
futuristic suits drop from the ships ceiling. The students  
scramble to put them on.

EXT. EUROPA - NIGHT

The students exit the ship in their suits. They walk a few  
paces and take in the atmosphere.

Nova looks up into the sky. Jupiter looms in the air and engulfs them like a massive oversized sun. In the other direction, stars twinkle across the night sky.

NOVA

Wow.

The rest of the students turn and marvel at the beautiful scenery.

Elaine pushes a button on her suit, firing up the holographic device on her wrist. It's nearly out of power.

ELAINE

Well, we're all fucked. Might as well say a few last words for the history books.

The group huddles around her.

ELAINE

Hey dudes. We made it. It's uh, something else up here. Look, I just wanna say, to all the loners down there on the Edison. To all the geeks, and all the weirdos. You're not alone. There's a family down there for you somewhere. Keep looking. I'm glad I found mine just in time.

NOVA

Hi mom. Hi Dad. Sorry I didn't come home tonight. Oh, and hi Greg. You're hot.

SWERVE

Yo, Europa East. Sorry I'm not going to make it out next season. But I wanna thank my fans for all the support.

ELAINE

Josh, you wanna say something?  
Josh?

The group looks up. Josh isn't there.

JOSH

(From far away)  
Hey GUYS! GUYS! I found something!

The group spots Josh about fifty yards away. They run towards him.

When they arrive, Josh is standing in front of a small granite-like block the size of an outhouse.

ELAINE

What is it?

Josh approaches and SMASHES a glass cover over what looks like a giant button. He presses it. A door slides open, revealing a small, warmly lit platform.

A robotic voice speaks:

VOICE (V.O.)

Going down.

JOSH

Are you fucking kidding me? An elevator? They've got an elevator to the surface that nobody even knows about?

SWERVE

LET'S GOOOOOO. NATIONAL EUROPA FOOTBAL LEAGUE HERE I COME.

NOVA

Oh, thank God.

The group turns to Elaine. Tears are welling up in her eyes.

JOSH

After you, fearless leader.

Elaine approaches the elevator. She stands in front of the door.

ELAINE

We did it.

She turns back to the group as her eyes continue to well up. She puts her hand out.

Nova slowly follows and puts her hand in. Then Swerve. Then Josh.

They look at each other, and smile.

ELAINE

Rejects on three! One, two, three!

EVERYONE

REJECTS!

FADE OUT.