

Film Presentation

Topic: Deep Space

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Masters in Design, Animation

By

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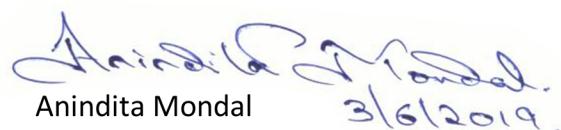
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Anindita Mondal
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Introduction

The first introduction to the Great Beyond to any child is a very crucial moment in their lives, because it is then that they learn of life and the vastness of the world they live in. It is then that they understand the beauty of the things that are 'out there' where you cannot touch, of things that existed long before they were born and that will stay long after they are gone and that fills them with a sense of scale even if they cannot fully wrap their heads around it.

In the terms of Jacques Lacan, it's at a very young age during the 'Mirror Stage' that a child first identifies himself from the concept of the "Other" and I closely relate it to our understanding of the universe. Of how we identify celestials based on how different they are from us instead of the similarities.

Most of my childhood days, like many others were spent on our Terrace with my brothers looking up at the sky. To us, the sky wasn't our limit, it was the beginning. We made stories of our adventures and people and of possibilities. We spent hours discussing and debating on theories and researches that we found in our books.

At some point we were hooked onto the lives of the scientists and astronauts who spent years and probably their entire lifetime hooked onto their researches of outer space. It was extremely humbling and sad that most of them are part of something huge, something bigger than themselves; and that when they began a project, they knew they wouldn't see half of them in fruition and that didn't bother them. Because the raw knowledge and understanding of our universe was not for them alone, but for the future of

humanity. It was the sheer altruism of these people that gave me an immense sense of hope and courage to do whatever I do for the entropy of the world.

Of course, as we grew older and got busier in our lives, us siblings found it tougher to fit stargazing into our schedule. We were in different cities, doing odd jobs, living difficult lives and there, in our immensely tight schedule, crept in a sense of boundary. Like being bound by the physical impossibilities of this world. Space and time became the biggest hindrance to our world of imagination and more often than none I caught myself daydreaming about the What Ifs.

What if we could transcend the laws of physics and fly where-ever we wanted? What if we could stop time and live a happy moment longer? What if we could be eternally there, loving the things we do, living the lives we wanted? What if we were free?

In my pages of animation, I found myself infinite. I found the blankness within the four boundaries of a page as a welcome to build stories of people whose lives were different than the rest. Of the 'me', who is different from the 'others'. Of the infinite vastness of Space and its infinite possibilities that are mostly hidden from us.

Because if there exists an object called a Black Hole in space that bends light so you can see the entire universe back and front in the same moment; there is very likely pockets where physics as you know it is turned upside down.

You just have to imagine it.

It was for a long time that I decided I'm going to be the one to do it.

Research

Phase I

The Philosophy of Space

Humans, animals, oceans, planets, distant celestial bodies, everything make up for what is quantified as Space. Every object occupies a certain amount of space and the distance that you travel through everyday is through the quantity of Space. So, with all things done and taken for granted, what is Space? Can it even be quantified? Is it the presence of all the matter as is known to man, or the absence of it?

The debate of understanding the concept of Space has been waging since centuries. With scientists and researchers following two predominant school of thoughts that are mutually exclusive to each other. Researches from physicists like Albert Einstein and mathematicians like Hermann Minkowski have theorized space and time as a unified continuum that justified the existence and movement of behemoth objects as well as micro matter like atoms.

This led to the birth of the twentieth century physical diaspora between the idea of 'relationalism' and 'absolutism' of Space. Also, it led to a debacle between German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz who looked at the nature of Space through theories of 'rationalism' and English philosopher Samuel Clarke, who was an ardent follower of Sir Isaac Newton and his theories of 'empiricism'. Their exchange of papers are recorded and published as 'A Collection of Papers' and is revolutionary in the study of the nature of Space.

Everything or Nothing?

While thinking of Space, there comes a varied hypothesis of would you consider all the elements of matter as well as antimatter as being one with it, or the absence, the void as being the hypothetical Space?

And if so, how farther do you have to go from yourself until you hit space? And how farther inside would you need to search within yourself to reach the infinite void?

Thus, follows the difference in understanding the nature of Space.

Relationalism

- Relationalism considers Space as the spatial relation between objects.
- It does not exist without the things it connects.
- Therefore, if nothing existed in our Universe, Space would cease to exist.

Absolutism

- Absolutism hypothesizes that Space is constant. It exists everywhere.
- It's a giant container that holds all things known and unknown.
- Everything moves in relation to it.
- If the Universe was destroyed Space would still remain.

Phase II

Phase II of the research started with reading into different studies and on-going projects that are taking place all around the world to give the film more of a grounded storyline.

It included latest missions from NASA, ISRO and the International Space Station (ISS) to include as a backdrop for the film. The idea was to show an emotional connect of a person who already belonged to the Outer Space and the relationship he had with down here. This led to an intrinsic study of the lifestyle and daily routine of people on the ISS.

The missions on board ISS are as follows:

- What effects does microgravity have on human beings and other living beings?
- Fire in Space
- Crew Earth Observation
- Solar Cells
- Heat Shields



The next part of the study went into understanding Space colonization. I wanted the story to push the character and in whole the humanity further into the depths of Space and what better reason would be than to find a better haven than what we already have. In case, if we gave into the nihilistic idea of 'life will only survive outside of Earth', there needs to exist an outside place that supports life from Earth and the closest possibility right now is Mars, ahead of Saturn satellite Titan. However, settlements in Mars pose a lot of problems and the basic needs that need to be addressed would probably be:

- Genetically engineered crops
- Nanotech to build, lightweight super strong construction material to support in low gravity.
- Dome cities to withstand minimum atmosphere.
- Time duration back and forth Earth, and so increased cost.
- Possible usage of asteroids as fuel zones.

The second most threat that could wipe out life on Earth that would probably lead to a huge funded research on Earth would be the lack of expendable energy and the search for an alternative thereof.

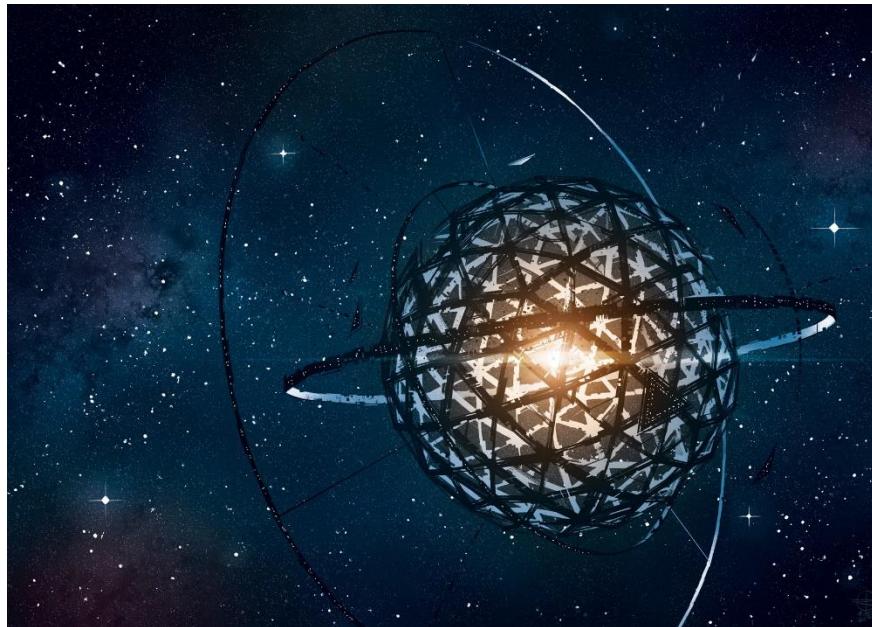
Scientists have already begun theoretical research on that and found that the biggest alternative source to unending energy is probably if you tap into the energy core of a full-sized star.

In 2005, Freeman Dyson hypothesized a megastructure that covers an entire star and tap into its power source. He named it the Dyson Sphere. The concept is far from becoming practical, but with rapid researches from the ISS going into finding a gigantic source of Stellar

energy in Space to power the entire planet, Dyson Sphere could very much be possible in the distant future.

The key factors that would make it a possibility are that:

- It would consist of a shell of Solar cells around the sun or any neutron star.
- Undetected to visible light telescope.
- Absorb all energy and re-radiate it out in Space.
- Cannibalize Mercury and harvest iron and Oxygen.



However, as of now the major shortcomings that need to be addressed would be:

- Gravitational stresses
- Location instability
- Currently no materials or engineering capabilities.

Then came the third important sector of colonizing space. Space traveling. There are tremendous possibilities of actual Earth like planets existing somewhere farther than our Milky way galaxy and the biggest hindrance is reaching there, collecting data and returning back in a single lifetime. Thus, Hyperspace.

Conceptualizing hyperspace would be the safest bet to travel at or near about light speed and that would make shorten the distance between our goals by lightyears.

- Possible only by unifying light and gravity.
- In Fifth dimension, there is enough space.
- Speed would stretch light into longer wavelength like Doppler Effect.
- Glow of universe, in microwave would become possible due to stretching of visible spectrum.

Thus, ended the search for possible reasons of Space travel for the film in the near future.

Analysis

After the research, the film needed its most important aspect: an inciting incident. It needed to have an emotional connect, a reason for everything to make sense.

I took back to my childhood, of always looking up at the skies, wanting to be a part of the cosmos. To break free of Earth's gravity and be weightless up there. So, I asked around people that if they ever get a chance to leave Earth, what would their reasons be?

Out of the general responses like they wouldn't need to work or study or because the planet is dying anyways; some responses I felt were important. Some one wanted to escape their families and societal pressure. Some one wanted to escape their ailments. Someone felt they would want to find out the hidden beauties out there that questioned our ideas of existentialism. Out of all these desires, there felt an innate need to escape and some how out there, in the nothingness were their answers. Thus, arose the underlying idea of Freedom. Everybody wanted to be free of something and that manifested as the physical need of being boundless.

The story needed to be a metaphor for the desire to be free and I realised it didn't need to be about a Space pilot at all or the research they are conducting in Space, that is secondary. The primary deal needed to simply be about a person who yearned to be out there. A person who always looked up into the emptiness and found everything. His sole reason of why he found his way up there. And ultimately, the struggle in his head. Of whether it was worth it to put everything at risk for that few moments of ecstasy.

The story ended up border lining whether it promoted 'Escapism' or not and somehow, I didn't feel it was important. I felt it should reflect on the audience's idea of which side of the coin you look at. Everything comes down to a choice. You get a million reason to want to come back to Earth, the very reason people want to escape are also the reason they can't and I guess that makes your choice surrealistic.

Ultimately, it boils down to the audience's rationalism of whether the character even needs to 'Escape'.

Story

Story Idea I

“What are you most afraid of, son?”

“I’m afraid of dying,” says a 15-year-old.

A sharp intake of breath.

“Well, everybody has to die someday.”

“But I’m afraid that once I’m gone, I’ll miss out on all the great things yet to be invented, space travel, living in another planet...”

“Is that so?” giggled the mother.

“I’m just worried that there will always be more things that I want to do.”

The mother chuckles.

“Don’t worry, you’ll get to do them all. Now close your eyes and get some sleep.”

The endless sea of asteroids float between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. The interesting part about the asteroids are that they are localized, they don’t travel far away in a path, they just sort of vibrate in an elliptical orbit stuck between two opposing gravitational pulls depending on which planet gets closer to them. Unfortunate news, you’ll never see them coming until it’s too late.

Amidst the sharp jagged rocks of the now Jupiter bound Asteroid belt, lies a wreckage. Huge amount of debris floats of a shuttle that is now in thousands of pieces. A piece of the hull still intact, lets you know that it belonged to the ISRO SCH (Search for Cosmic Hyperdrive) Mission.

And there, amidst all the wreckage, in a perfectly cocooned position, is a man.

He jerks his eye open and then starts coughing out vigorously in the limited oxygen supply he has. When he is done trying to reposition himself into life, he takes an account of his surroundings. His eyes widen in horror.

“Suit-06 to survivors, anybody copy? He asks frantically over the radio.

No response.

“Any survivors, copy?” he asks more times, each time a bit more anxious than the last. Each time a bit more disappointed than the last.

After about 10 minutes of trying to get to either survivors or the Earth base, it was clear that the satellite connection is either broken or Earth tried to contact them, didn’t get any response and thought everybody was dead. Great.

Nobody knew he was out there. Stuck, in an infinitely open space with no sense of direction. He had maximum of 15 minutes of oxygen in his suit after which asphyxiation would take the better of him. What should he do?

‘I don’t want to die,’ rang a violent thought and shook his entire body. He was scared to death. All alone, and overwhelmed. He started crying and then stopped. It consumed more oxygen, and created droplets that floated in his helmet, so he just curled up in a foetal position and tried to relax his breathing. The mission was very important to him but so was his life. He recalled the months of research he had given into trying to figure out a way to reach hyperspace. He was the one who figured out that beyond Jupiter there were recurring radiation patterns from stars or stellar particles that could indicate an opening to jump to hyperdrive. He was so excited about the discovery. He fought with people to be on this mission. And for what?

‘I need to live.’ And the moment he realized this, he remembered. Remembered that the shuttle had a spare escape pod neatly tucked in the docking area. Of course, every shuttle has an Off button. He prayed to god like he had never prayed before for that pod to be intact and in the vicinity, as he scuttled his way through the debris. Why did he even leave? That was such a stupid decision. He had a comfortable life back on Earth, why was he so ambitious? He remembered his childhood, when all he did was want to travel in Space. They were a poor family of five; parents, grandmother and an older sister. But they were a happy family and they had enough to be satisfied. But he had a hunger that was never quenched.

His father was strictly against him joining the Space program, but he never listened. His head was already far away in the stars.

As he pushed a sleeping bunk out of his way, he remembered the day his grandmother died. It was his entrance exam. His mother pleaded him to stay, bid grandma a last goodbye. But he didn’t. What had he said? “Everybody dies when it’s their time, why cry over that?”

He cried out loud remembering that and then quickly stopped again. When did he turn out to be such a mean person?

It was probably after his grandmother’s death when he truly became detached from his family. His father never spoke to him and his sister stopped after all the vain tries to make him come for her wedding. He didn’t care. He had much greater things to do. Much more than our single meagre lives would be worth. He needed space from his family and now he had it. Infinite space and no family.

The day he left for the mission, only his mother came to see him off. Her face was much smaller than he remembered from his childhood and much more wrinkled. Somehow through the years, she was still

proud of him and the fact that he done everything to realize his dreams.

“I’ll wait for you,” she’d said, without shedding a single tear. He didn’t say anything back; he knew that the time it would take for him to return back would outlive her. And now he was here, halfway through his mission, all alone and waiting for death. Stupid. Stupid. Nothing was more important than love and family, why did he think otherwise?

His breathing got rough with overexertion and he probably had a maximum of five minutes.

He swore to God that this time if he finds that pod, he’d surely make it back home and fix all the wrong doings he had done. And as if God had spoken, there it was! Neatly tied under the what used to be a docking bay, an Escape Pod.

He cried out in relief. With the last remaining breath he had, he crawled inside the pod, resealed the airlock and released his helmet. Fresh air rushed inside his lungs and he had never felt so real and so grateful before. They say a near-death experience reminds you of all the things that is truly important to you.

He smiled a bit and sighed.

‘Mother, I’m coming back home.’

He switched on the Engines and the thrusters. Then manually started to enter the path to Earth. Just then, a warning flashed in the screen ahead. He switched the display button on and his eyes grew wide and mouth fell slack.

“Stellar Radiation Detected.”

Story Idea II (Final Story)

Somewhere in Earth Orbit.

An ISRO shuttle hangs in the effervescence of the constant sunlight that glimmers through its blackened windows. Static resonates throughout its hull. Outside of that, there's nothing but the cacophony of silence.

The docking bay sucks the vacuum in and buzzes open as a man in his spacesuit stands at the edge; still as a statue. He has done this several times, but that doesn't stop him from being mesmerized by the vast eternity spreading out before him.

His in-ear radio springs to life.

"Base station to suit-08, what's the hold up, over?"

He gave a long sigh and answered back, "Suit-08 to base station, everything's fine, just preparing for take-off, over."

"You have done this so many times already, no need to panic," assured the radio, "Just retrieve the sample and we'll be on our way back."

"Copy."

The astronaut looks out at the SCD (Sample Collecting Device) some 100 Meters ahead, momentarily frozen in space. He takes another deep breath and carefully edges into the emptiness ahead. He had done it several times, but that didn't still take away the slight edginess he felt when his foot left solid.

He monitored his EVA air pack to direct his direction towards the SCD, calm and calculated. He plucked the SCD from space and checked the meter for any sign of a breech. None. Good, now all he

needed to do was fly back inside the shuttle and he'll be done for the mission. Back home.

He turned around. The shuttle floated ominously in front of him. Behind it, the half crescent of the Earth looked hauntingly beautiful in the morning sun, not that it had any impact outside of the atmosphere. He'll be back there in no time. Home. It's where he began. And it's where he is going to end up eventually. Tied down by the physics of the world. He recalled those moments in his childhood when he looked up in the sky and dreamt and hoped, that one day he is going to fly up to the sun. And now he is here.

It almost seems like a waste of time to leave.

The moment the thought rang through his mind, he got jerked back into reality with how the idea was so dangerous and stupid and at the same time so intoxicating. It was so simple. He had raced all his life to come here where everything met nothing, why should he race back the moment he has it?

He took a long look at the serpentine tether that connected him to the shuttle, the only connection to humanity, it was funny, it almost reminded him of an umbilical cord that connected him to his mother. His mother. The constant force in his life, the one who believed in his dreams more than he did himself. He closed his eyes and imagined the moment when he'd step out of the shuttle back on Earth. The only face he'd be looking for among the millions, would be the one streaked with tears the most.

But here, in the infinite nothingness, it almost felt like a waste not to fly. Moreover, his eternal curiosity that led him all the way up to here and a dash of Thanatos screaming behind his ears asked, 'What happens if you let go?'

He took a long breath from his limited Oxygen supply and then unhooked the tether.

"Whoa whoa whoa! What are you doing Suit-08?" Came a confused voice over the radio.

But he didn't answer. He was too excited to breath. He carefully hooked the link to the rear end of the SCD and rechecked it for its tension.

"Put the hook back on your suit!" half threatened half pleaded the voice.

"Just five more minutes, I promise."

Then he carefully let go of the tether, every second ringing in his ears with the rush of adrenaline. There were more voices this time, more frantic than the last, but he tuned them all out, his loud rugged breathing drowned every other sound. He needed Silence. This was the moment of truth.

Then he left Earth behind and turned back around. He notched the EVA air pack on to move forward and he just went and went until all the air was gone. But he had momentum, and without air resistance he would go for a long time. He looked out in front of him at the endless chasm of space that had no end, and it was so scary and so exhilarating.

And for the first time he felt free. There was no bone crushing gravity to hold him back. Every way was up. Every way was down. And when he tried to jump, he didn't fall, he flew. He could move anywhere he wanted and so he danced instead. He performed the dance of a lifetime. He found himself riding with the Great Bear, he found

himself swimming with the Hailey Comet and he could run with the speed of light.

But most importantly, he was free. And he wasn't scared. And he knew that when he was over, he would probably crumble down, but he will be everywhere and he will last for eternity.

-

"How long are you going to stare at the toy?"

12-year-old Agni looked up from the Spaceman Mercury figurine lying loosely on his lap. He could only turn his head a little more than 40 degrees from his place in front of the window. His mother came smiling and held the handles of his wheelchair.

"He can fly," he whispered.

"I'm sure he can. And now it's time for our walk." chimed the young woman while pulling his wheelchair from the window-side and rattled it out of the room.

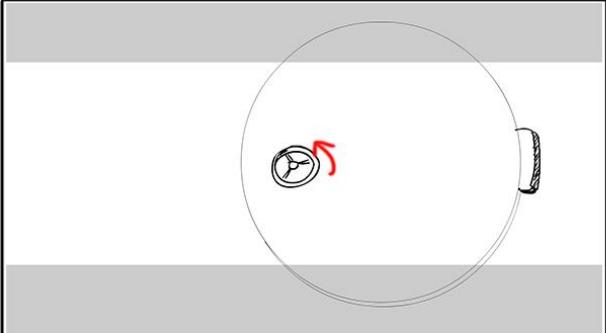
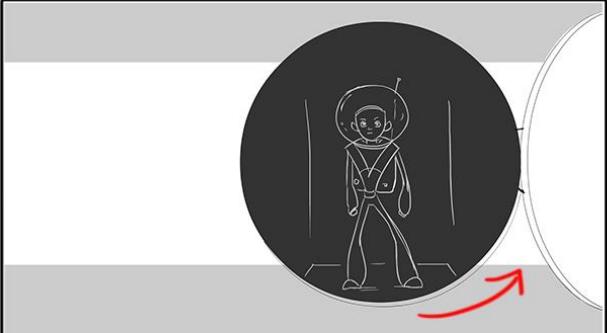
"Do you want to hear what he did in his mission today?"

"Absolutely."

She always loved to hear the stories Agni liked to concoct out of his toys. The figurine slid from his unanimated hands and landed on the ground.

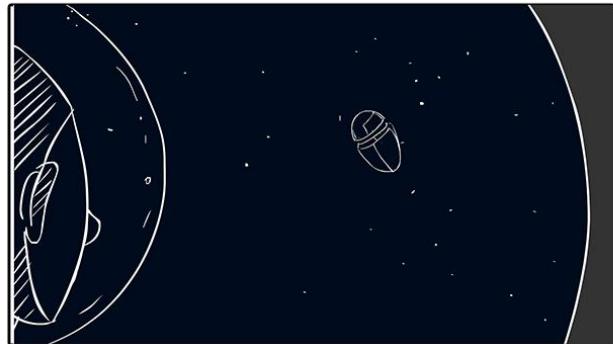
It was afternoon; the sunlight filtered through the window and cast a golden shadow into the entire room, all the way up to the forgotten Spaceman whose helmet glittered with dazzling light.

Storyboard

Scene: 1 Sh.1	Scene: 1 Sh.2	Scene: 1 Sh.3
		
Zoom into the Earth. V.O: Somewhere in Earth orbit.	Pan to right, reveal the space station. SFX: Static over radio.	Zoom into the ISRO space station. SFX: Static over radio.
Scene: 1 Sh.4	Scene: 1 Sh.5	
		
Close shot of the escape pod. Hydraulics in action. SFX: Air compressor release.. Door mechanism unlock.	Door whirs open. Suit 08 standing at bay. SFX: Door mechanism open, muffled thud.	Close up of Suit 08 breathing rapidly. SFX: Static over radio. Rough breathing.

Create your own at Storyboard That

Scene: 1 Sh6



OTS of Suit 08. Space pod floating in distance.
Over the radio: Base Station to Suit 08, what's the hold up?

Scene: 1 Sh7



Suit 08 breathes ruggedly.

Scene: 1 Sh7



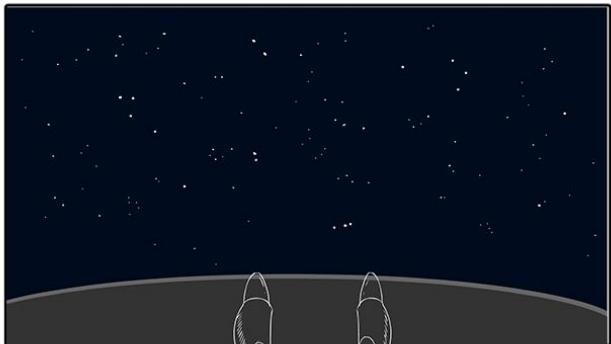
Suit 08 switches on the tethering and boot traction.
Suit 08: Suit 08 to Base Station, everything is fine, just preparing for the jump.

Scene: 1 Sh7



Suit 08 looks beyond the shuttle.
Over the radio: You have done this so many times already, no need to panic.

Scene: 1 Sh8



Over the radio: Just retrieve the bot and we'll be on our way back to Earth.

Scene: 1 Sh9



Close up. Suit 08 sighs.
SFX: sigh.b

Scene: 1 Sh10



SFX: Static over radio.
Suit 08: Copy.

Scene: 1 Sh11



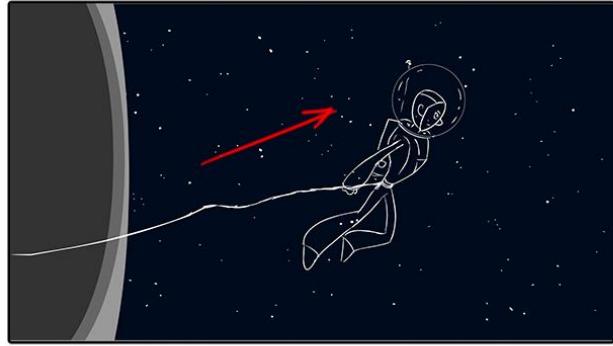
Suit 08 looks onto the void and prepares himself

Scene: 1 Sh11



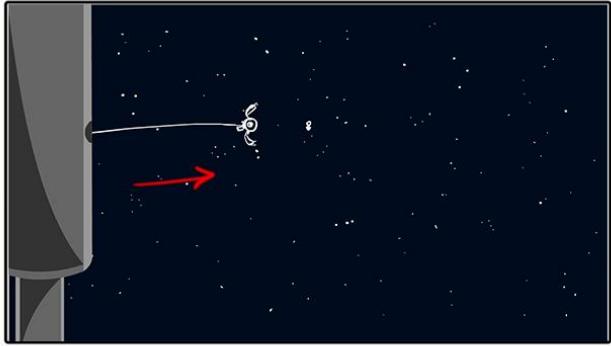
Suit 08 plunges into space.

Scene: 1 Sh11



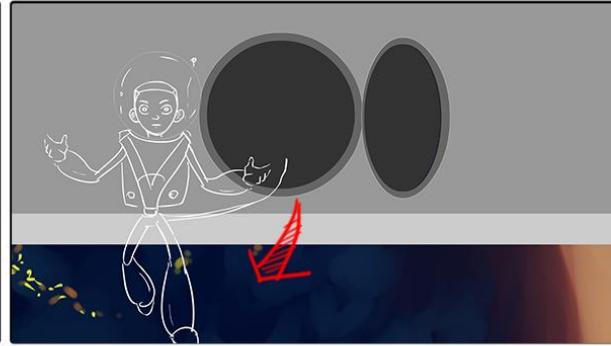
The air compressors on his back pushes him forward.

Scene: 1 Sh12



He floats towards the bot.

Scene: 1 Sh13



He floats away from the shuttle.

Scene: 1 Sh.4



Suit 08 bumps into the pod and comes to a halt.

Scene: 1 Sh.4



He grabs a hold of the pod.

Scene: 1 Sh.5



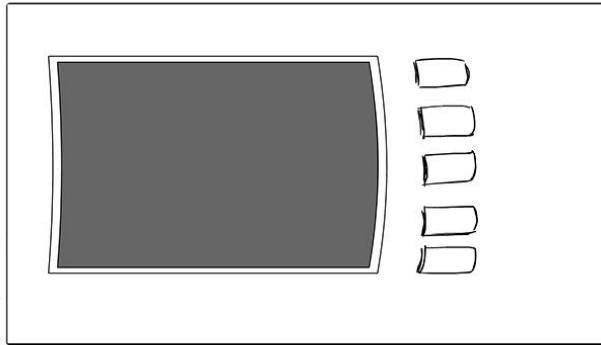
Suit 08 turns the pod around to reveal display on the pod's surface.

Scene: 1 Sh.6



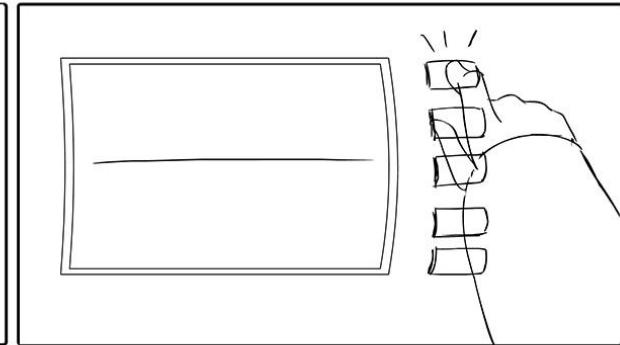
Zoom in to him holding his breath for information.

Scene: 1 Sh.7



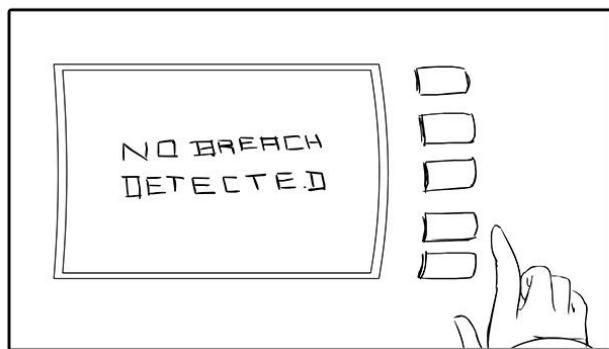
Display screen.

Scene: 1 Sh.8



He switches the screen on.
SFX: low click.

Scene: 1 Sh.7



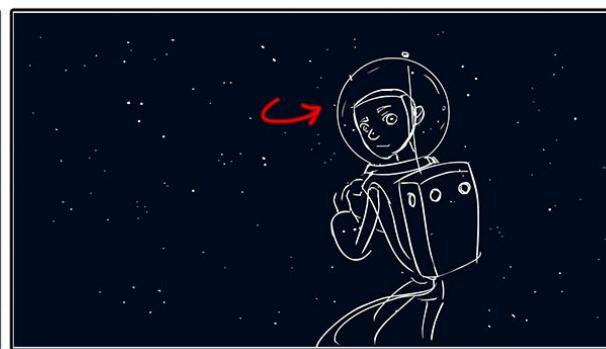
On display text: No Breach Detected.

Scene: 1 Sh.8



Suit 08 sighs a relief and smiles.
SFX: Sigh. Giggle.

Scene: 1 Sh.9



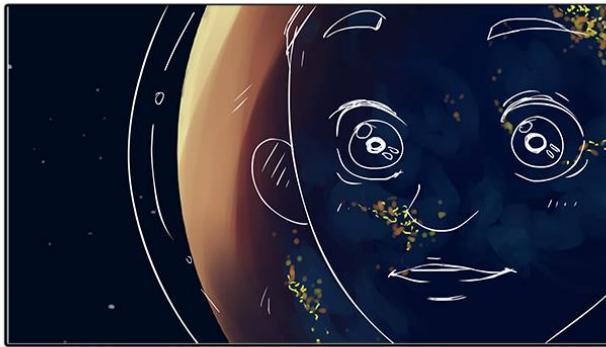
He turns around to look at the station and then at Earth.

Scene: 1 Sh.20



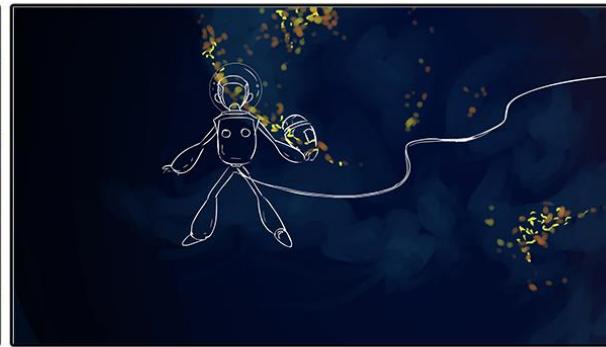
Focus shift from shuttle to Earth.

Scene: 1 Sh.21



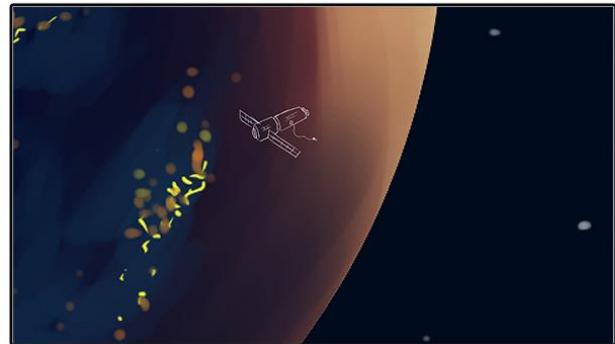
Close up of the reflection of Earth on his helmet.
SFX: exclamation of admiration.

Scene: 1 Sh.22



Suit 08 floats in the vacuum.
V.O: All my life, I found myself racing up to here. It's almost a shame I can't stay.

Scene: 1 Sh 23



Zoom out to reveal the scale of the shuttle compared to Earth.

Scene: 1 Sh 24



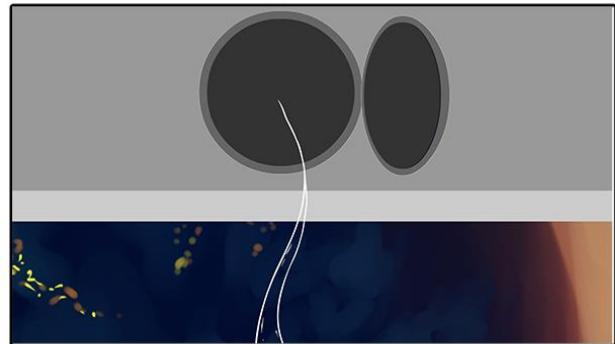
Suit 08 looks at the tether connecting to the station.
V.O: I want to stay!

Scene: 1 Sh 25



He looks up at the shuttle.

Scene: 1 Sh 26



The tether floats ominously in front of him.
V.O: What happens if I let go?

Scene: 1 Sh 27



Suit 08 breathes ragidly.
SFX: breathing.

Scene: 1 Sh 28



He then staarts laughing.
SFX: laugh.
V.O: It's so simple.

Scene: 1 Sh 28



He takes in a deep breath to calm himself.
SFX: sigh.

Scene: 1 Sh 29



Then he steels himself and looks down at his tether.

Scene: 1 Sh 30



Suit 08 unlocks his tether.
Over the radio: Whoa, whoa whoa, what are you doing Suit 08?

Scene: 1 Sh 31



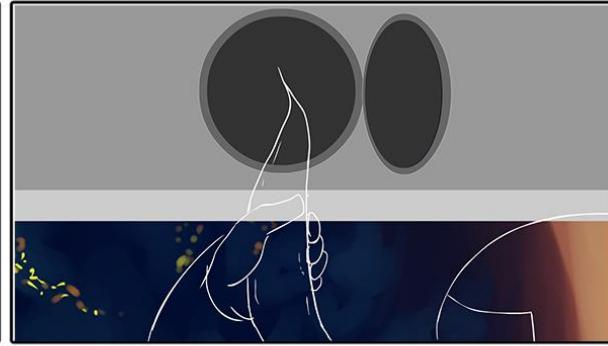
He hooks the tether onto the pod.
Over the radio: Put the hook back on your suit!

Scene: 1 Sh 32



He looks up from the tether.
Suit 08: Five more minutes, I promise.

Scene: 1 Sh 33



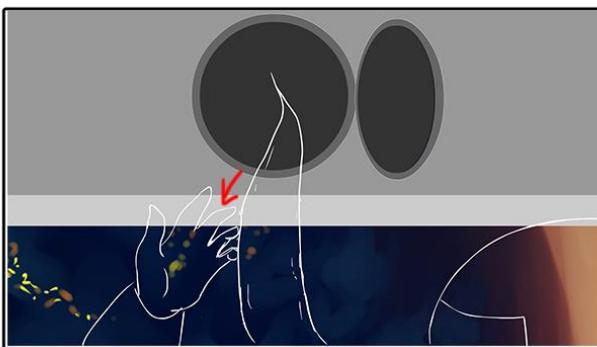
He looks onto the tether connecting him to the ship.

Scene: 1 Sh 34



He makes up his mind for one last time.

Scene: 1 Sh 35



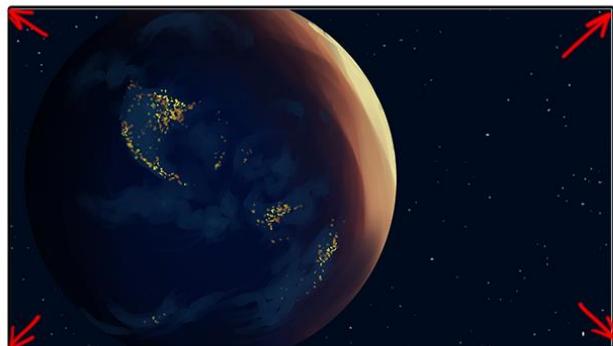
And then lets go of the theather.
Over the radio: What are you doing? Get back in!

Scene: 1 Sh 36



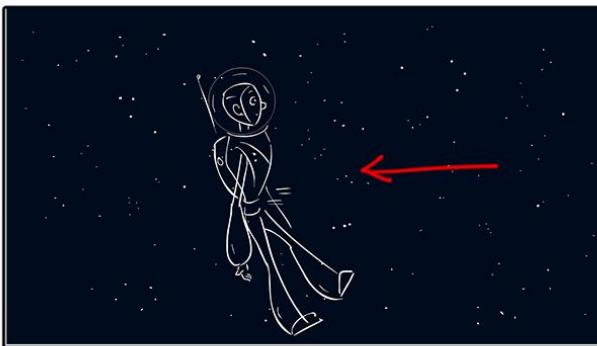
Suit 08 floats away from the station.
SFX: Muffled overlapped noise from the radio. Static.

Scene: 1 Sh 37



The Earth drifts away.

Scene: 1 Sh 38



He floats away from Earth as he looks at it for one last time.

Scene: 1 Sh 39



Then he turns back.

Scene: 1 Sh 39



The darkness reveals the brilliant light of the galaxy.

Scene: 1 Sh 40



Suit 08 takes in a sharp breath of amazement.
SFX: exclamation.

Scene: 1 Sh 41



He extends his hand and his helmet disappears.

Scene: 1 Sh 42



He breathes in the void.
SFX: breathe in.

Scene: 1 Sh 42



And then blows it out.
SFX: Breathe out.

Scene: 1 Sh 42



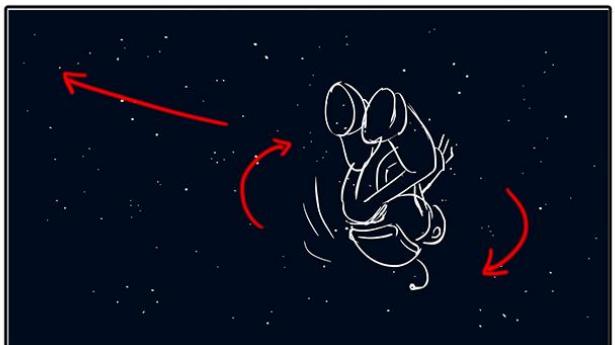
He checks his body movements which are now fluid.

Scene: 1 Sh 42



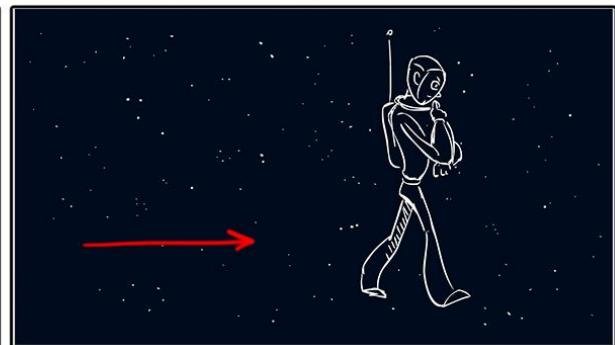
He stretches his legs for free movement.

Scene: 1 Sh 42



Then he does a back flip.

Scene: 1 Sh 42



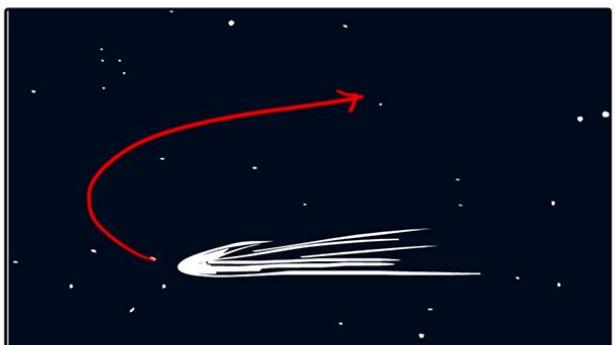
And a normal space walk without air pressure. He wonderes what he should do next.

Scene: 1 Sh 42



Then he gears up and races forward in light speed.

Scene: 1 Sh 43



Suit 08 literally becomes light.

Scene: 1 Sh 43



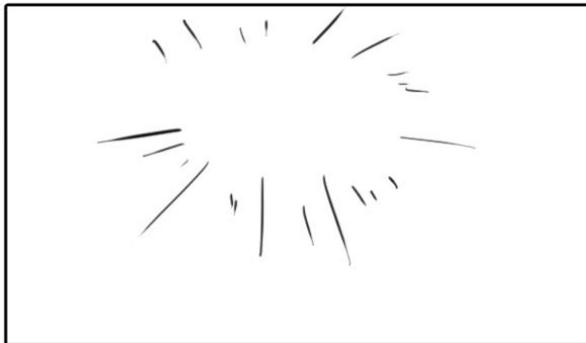
And races across the galaxy.

Scene: 1 Sh 43



He turns into a singularity.

Scene: 1 Sh 43



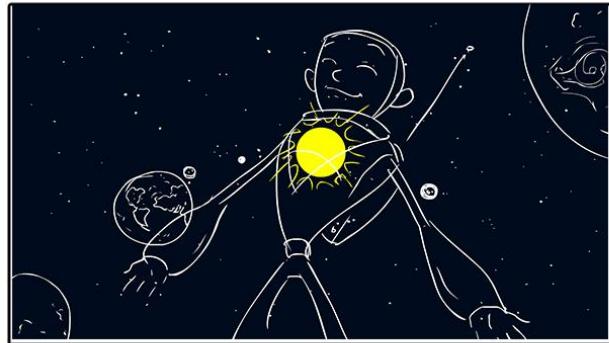
Then it erupts into stellar matter.

Scene: 1 Sh 43



The solar system moves around with a prominent constellation band glowing.

Scene: 1 Sh 43



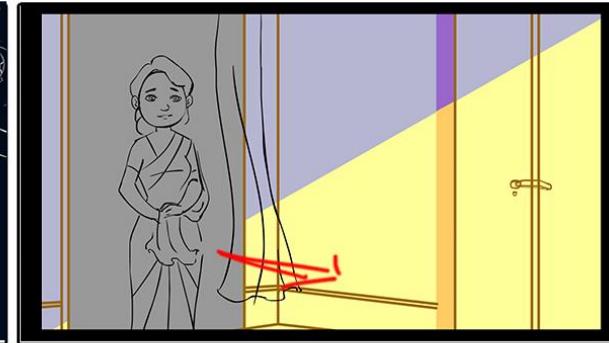
The constellation gives way to Suit 08 who is now larger than life.

Scene: 1 Sh 43



He tried to touch the sun, but gets called instead.
V.O: How long are you going to play with that toy?

Scene: 2 Sh 1



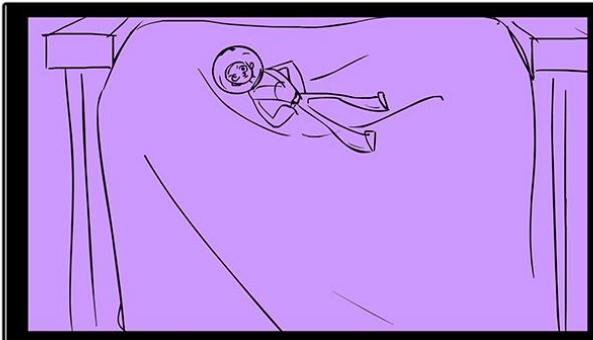
The mother walks in to the room, wiping her hands on her saree.

Scene: 2 Sh2



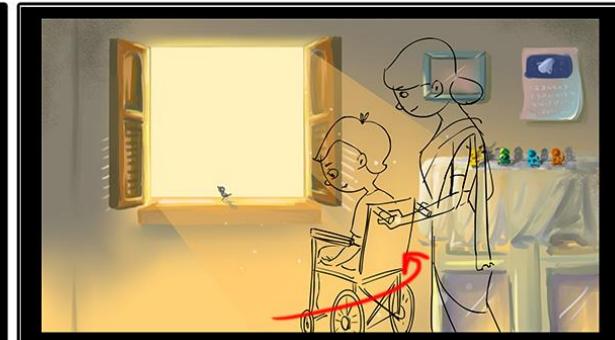
Little Agni looked at her startled.
SFX: Birds chirping. Cloth rustle.

Scene: 2 Sh3



A model of Suit 08 lies loosely on Agni's lap.
SFX: Cloth rustle.

Scene: 2 Sh3



Mother walks up to his wheelchair.
Agni: He can fly.

Scene: 2 Sh3



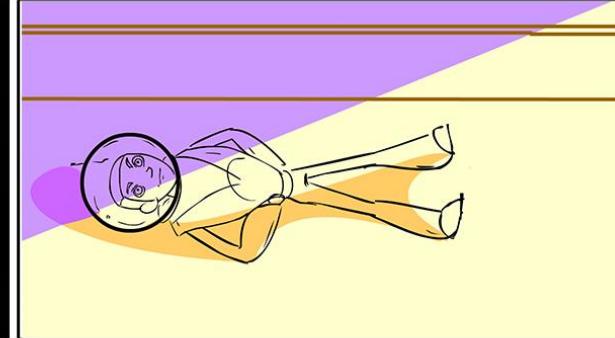
Mother pushes his wheelchair out of the room.
Mother: I'm sure he can. And now, it's time for our walk.

Scene: 2 Sh4



Agni: Do you want to hear about his adventure today?
Mother: Absolutely.

Scene: 2 Sh5



Suit 08's toy falls loosely on the ground and remains unattended as the sunlight covers it.

Visual Exploration

Style Inspirations



Song of The Sea (Tom Moore)



Rain Town (Hiroyasu Ishida)



Song for the Rain (Yawen Zheng)



Lost and Found (Shawn Tan)

Story Inspirations



One Small Step (Andrew Chesworth and Bobby Pontillas)

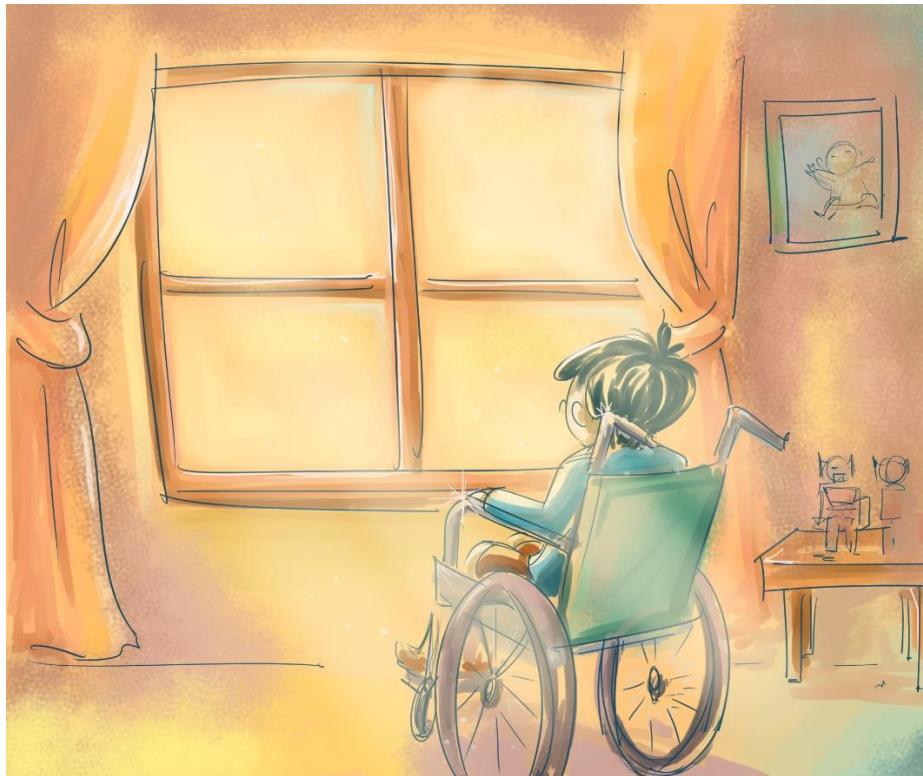


Burn Out (Cecile Carre)



Coin Operated (Nicholas Arioli)

Sketch Explorations



There are predominantly two locations in the entire film, the Space and the forlorn balcony of a child and while the atmosphere of the Space was something that could be created as illustratively as possible, the room of the child need to be set in a particular way. In just one imagery it needed to showcase the entire life of the child who is forced into a wheelchair.

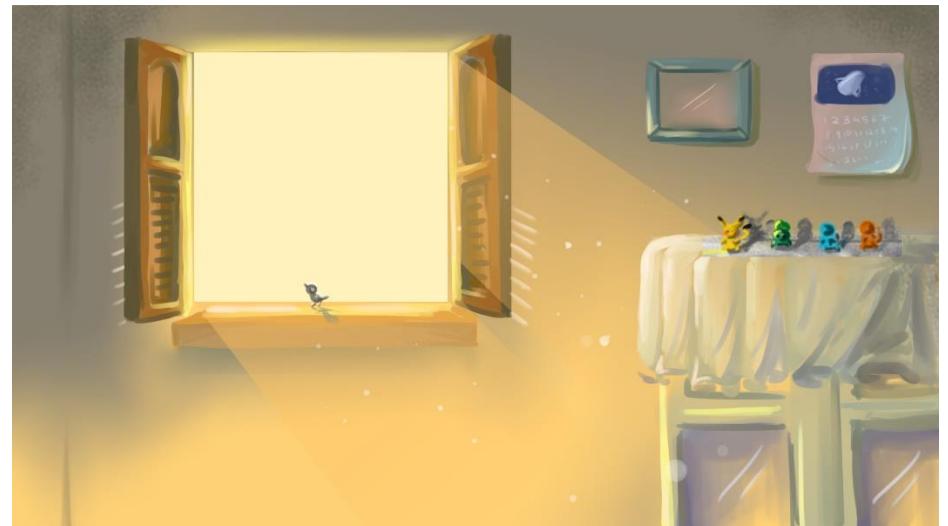


Stylization



Style 1

The part from the room needed to have a nostalgic and warm tone to it along with the sunset that marked the end of a day. It needed to be a stark contrast to that of the coldness of Space to make the character feel like there are good things to root for down here even with his ailments. It also needed to look like a story out of a child's mind. So the first iteration was to go for a more pastel color book effect with things smudging into each other and the heat of the setting sun.



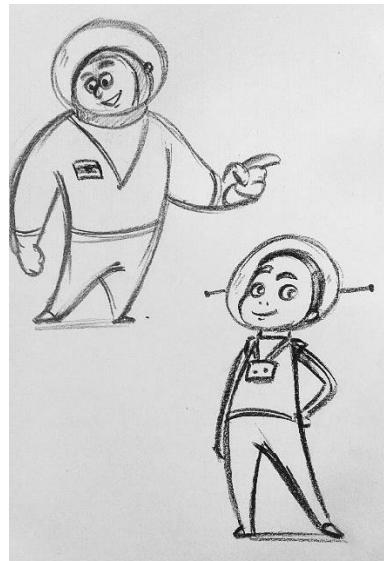
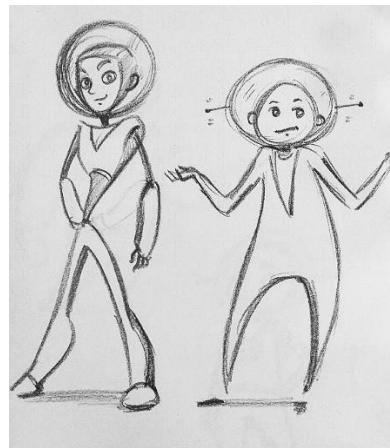
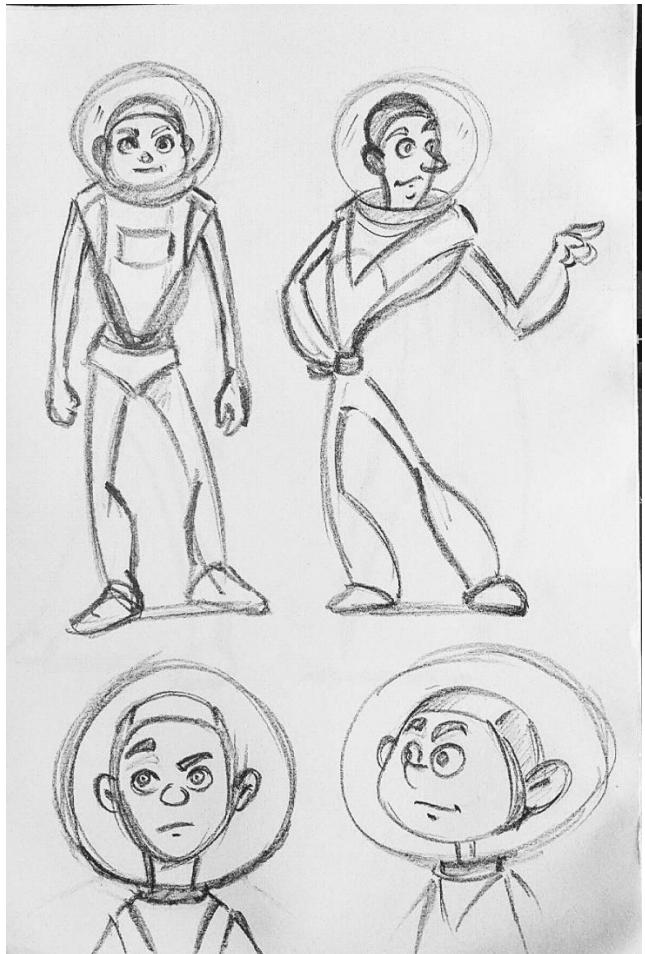
Style 2 (Final)

However, the pastel effect wasn't working owing to the fact that the room was in fact his reality and the Space only a figment of his imagination. So, I shifted to making the Space more colorful and pastel like, where as the room to be crisper and more realistic while still holding the idea of a summer memory to it. So, it had elements that you'd normally see inside a kid's room that are important to a child while having most of the other things eliminated.

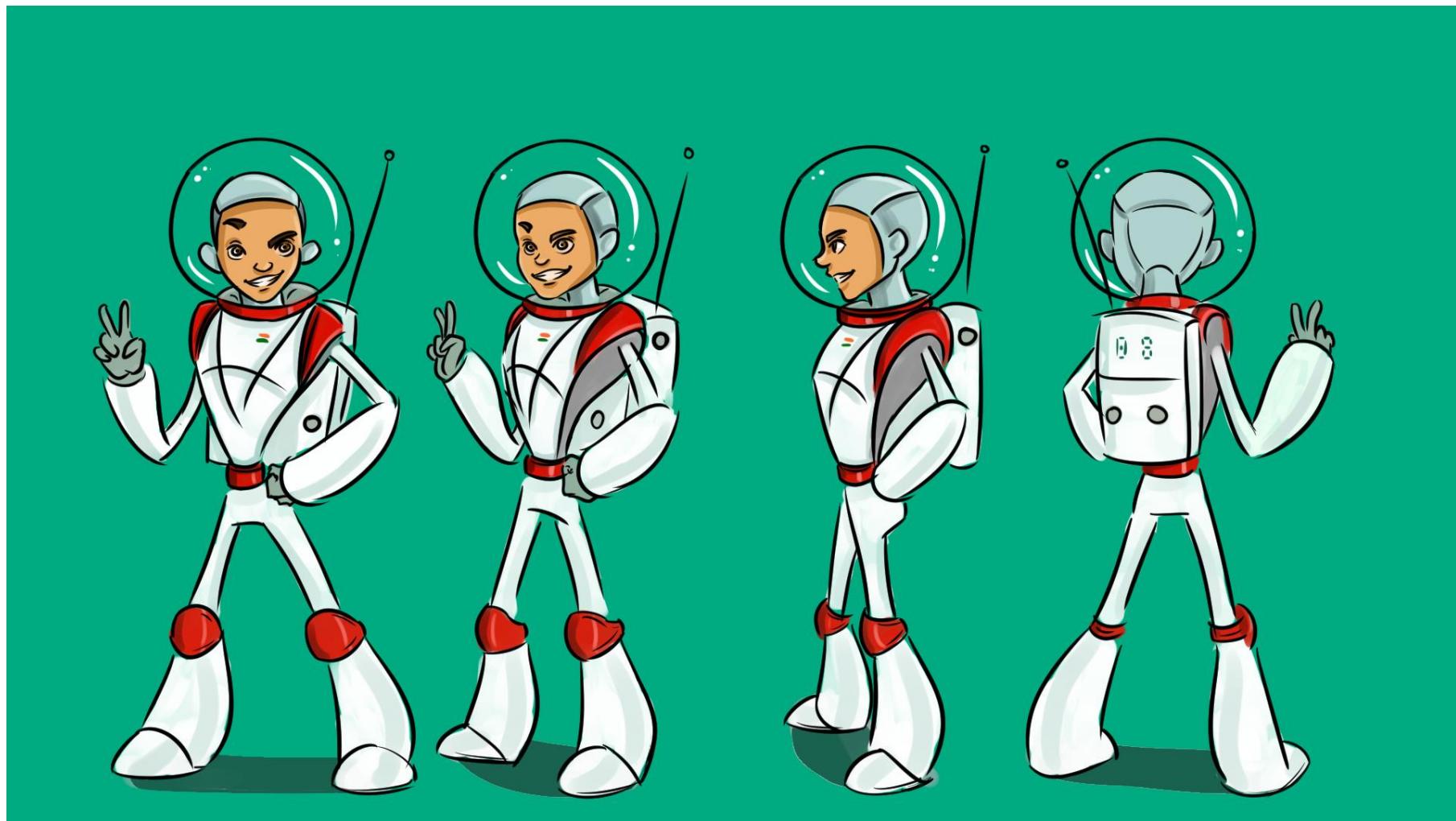
Also, I kept the outdoor vacant because it didn't seem to matter to the kid. His entire world was inside his room.

Character Explorations

Suit 08



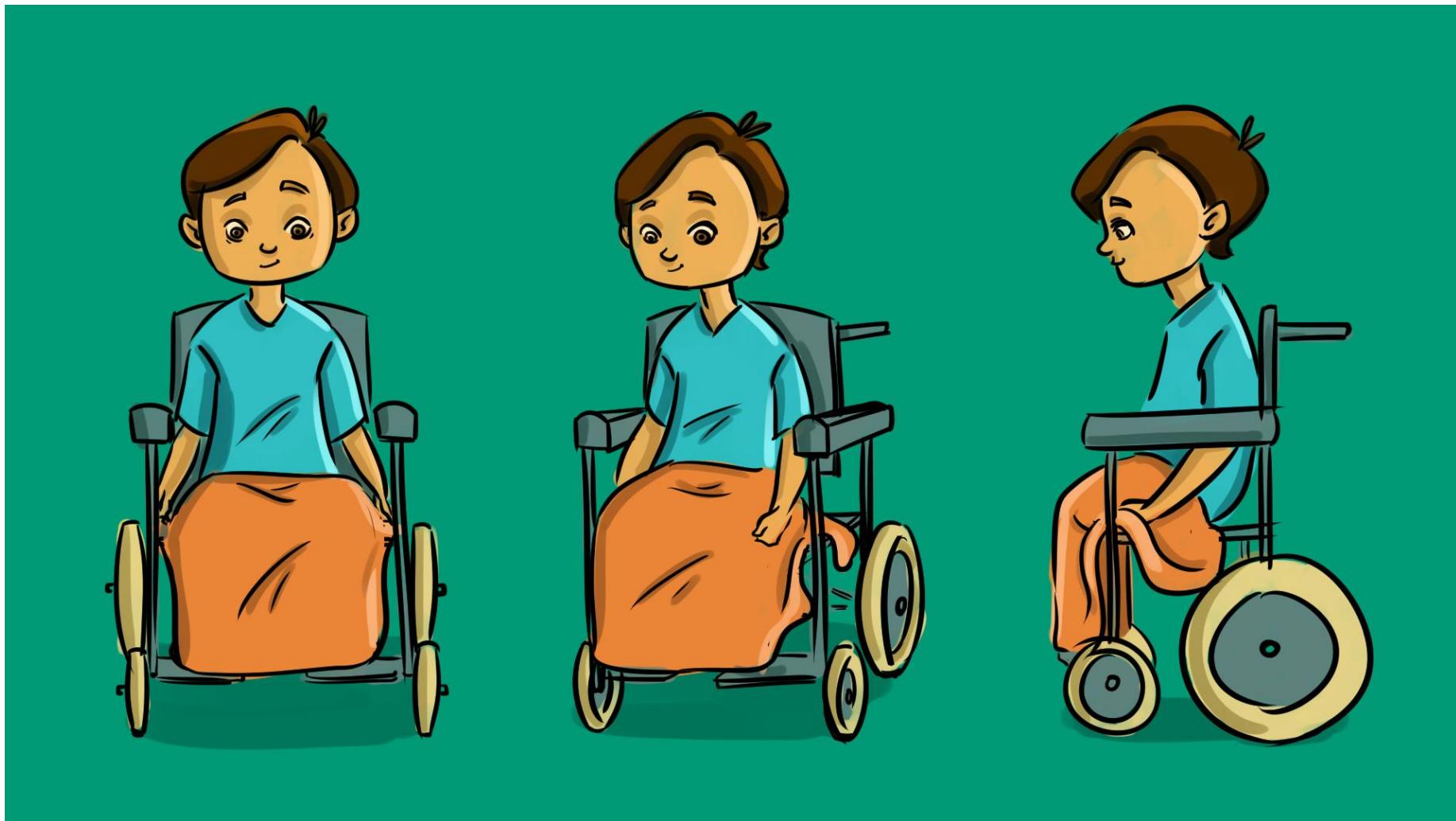
Final Character Design



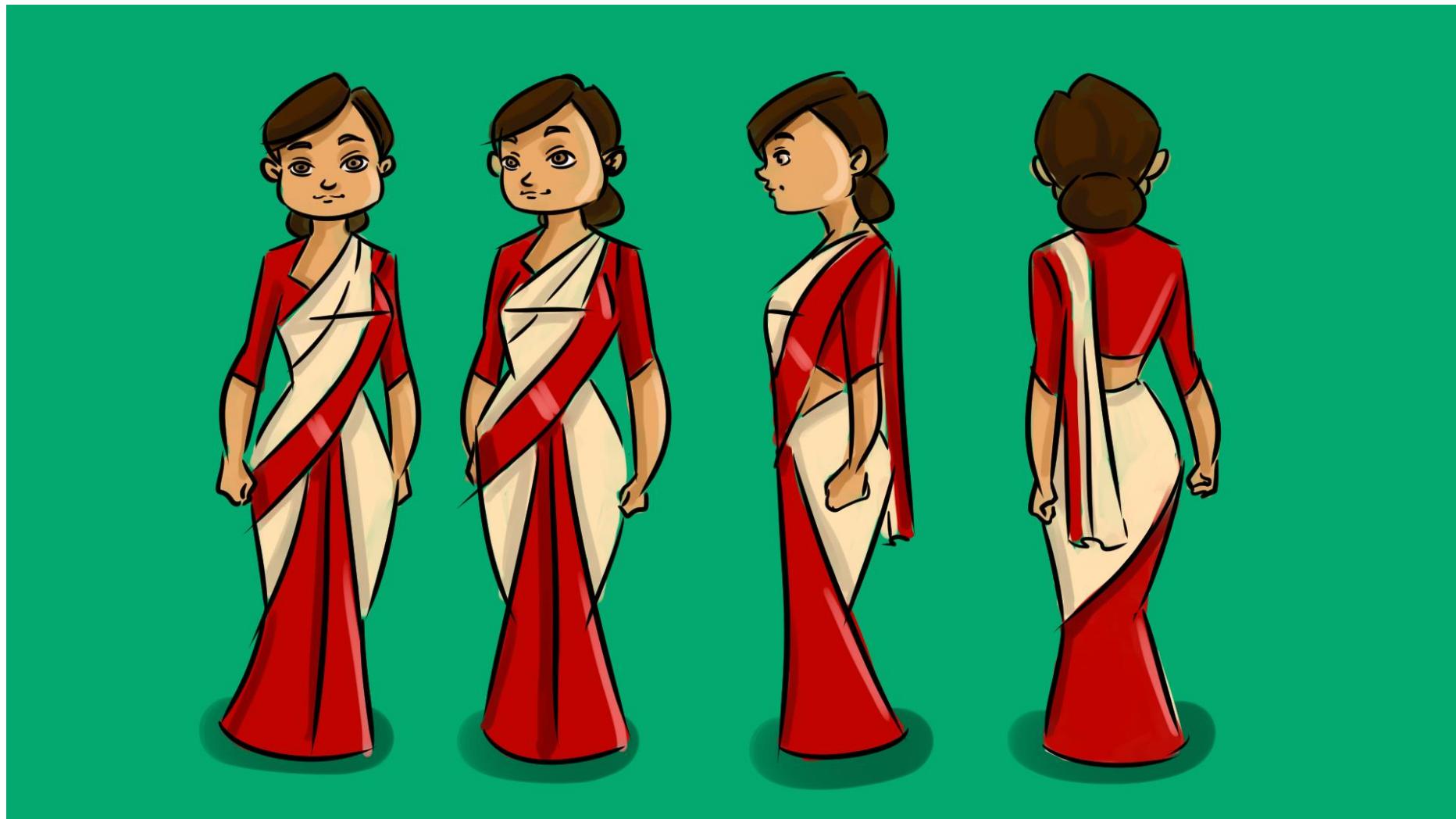
Expression Chart



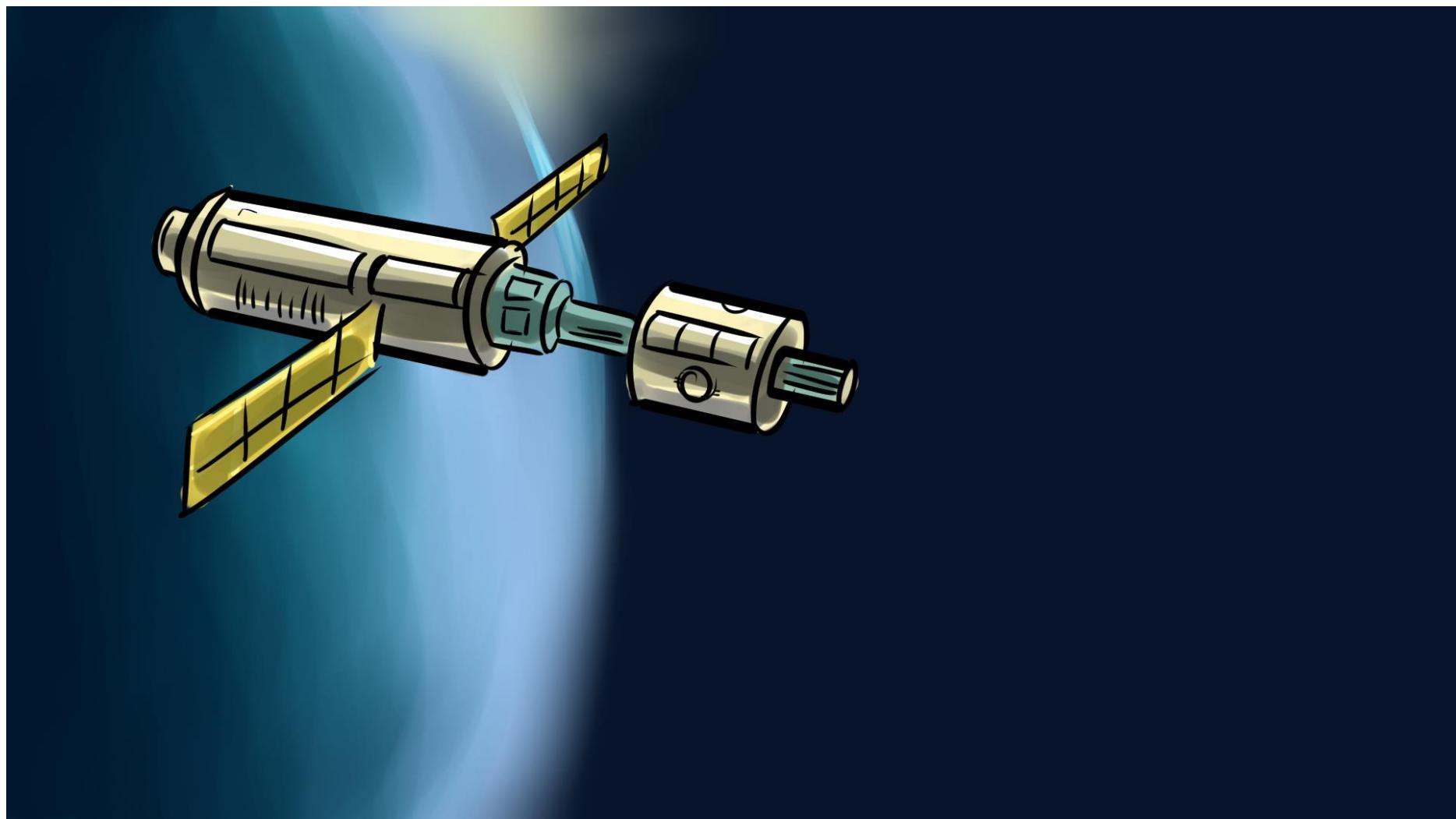
Little Boy



Mother



Space Station



Sound

Sound played a very important character in my film. I divided it into three primary sections.

The Foleys

Creating the Foley sounds was probably the toughest thing of the entire soundtrack. Keeping in mind that there is literally no sound in Space, it was a delicate task to figure out which of the sound effects to keep and which to remove. There needed to be a balance between what served the narrative of the film and what was extra and didn't make sense in the Silence of the space. Hence, SFX that mostly had to do within the overhead radio or inside the space shuttle were kept, the rest were eliminated.

The muted Foleys were mostly created in our college Sound studio while some were downloaded royalty free.

The Voice Over

Most of the talking that happens within the film is either in the mind of the protagonist or over the radio.

So, the radio conversations needed to be delayed and through static to give the impact of having a long-distance radio signal being interrupted by other waves. The voice of the Captain was the same as the child's mother since they were all figments of his imagination and so it was logical for him to associate her voice to that of an authoritative position.

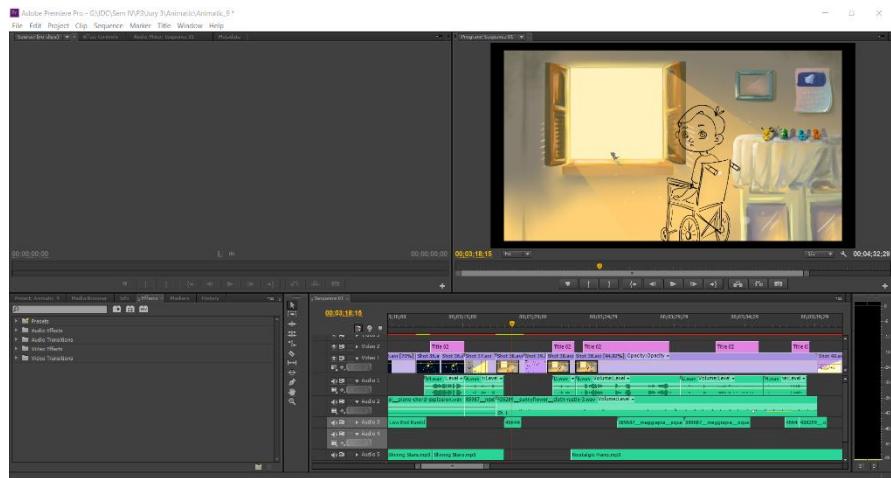
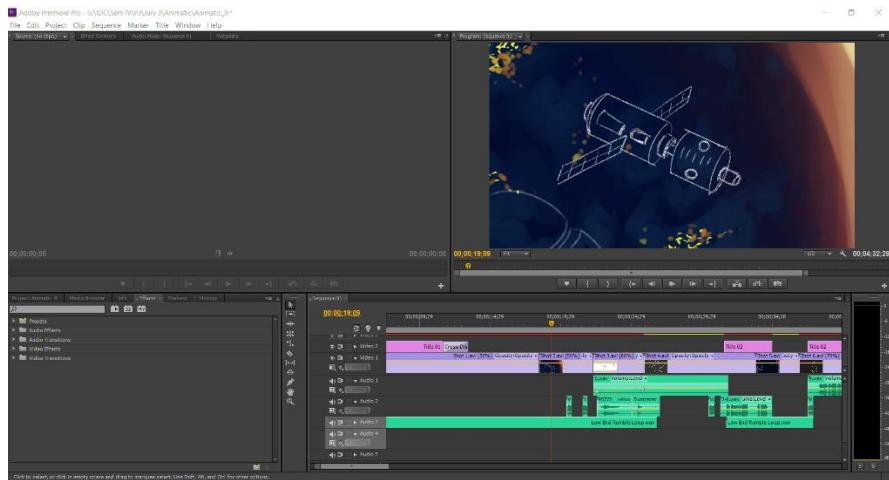
The Background Track

The film reverberates of a story of hope and despair. The scene in space transcends from a feeling of anxiety to a final decision that led to his freedom. So, the track needed to rise with ecstasy at this point only to give way to a moment of calm and maybe a hint of sorrow at the realization. I felt that the background track needed a very lazy summer afternoon like feel to it that ends with only one or two keys playing to it to give a somber tone to it. Like having being stuck in your reality while being kind of okay with it.

Animatic

After settling on the sound came the animatic, where I used the frames from the storyboard, created several keyframes in between and thoroughly timed it out. The animatic came to a lot of help in setting up the mood and the pacing of the film, because I realized that in places where I kind of wanted it to be a bit more emotional, I added a lot more cuts, and it looked fast paced.

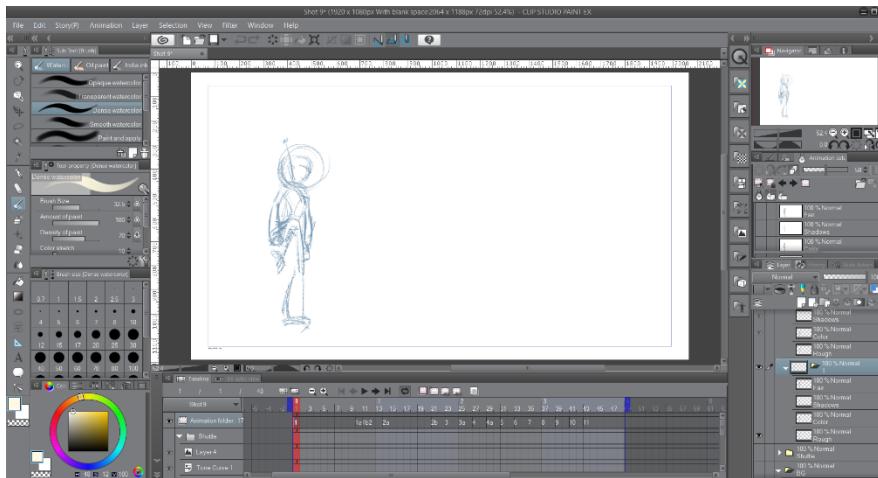
So, I had it eased out onto the part where the tension rose and I increased the beats of the sequence. After adding the soundtrack to it, I could finally visualize the story in time and how it would appear in real time as opposed to the idea of the reel I had in my mind while just making the storyboard.



Especially for the time lapse sequence, where he becomes stellar matter and then re-emerge larger than life was especially helpful because I could visualize how it'd look covering the expanse of space in a limited time, thus not following the Space time Continuum.

Animation

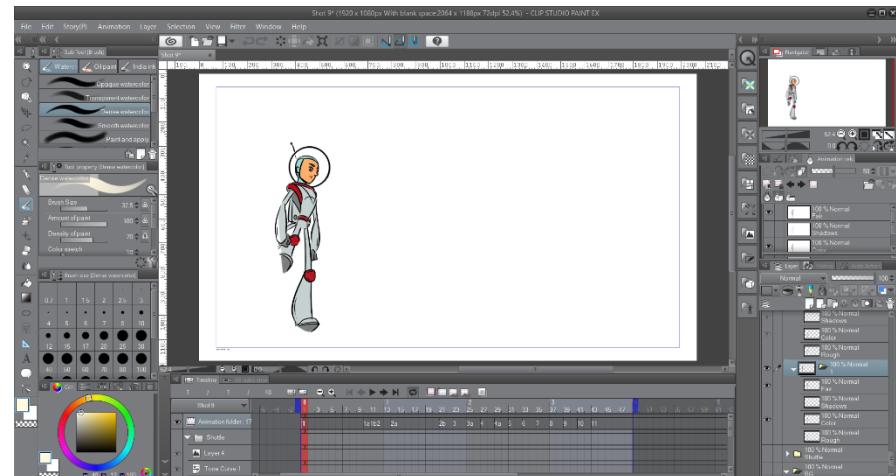
Then came the D-Day. The day I began my first animation, I had each shot separated out direction vise to ease up the props and mise-en-scene.



I began with the rough animation to fix out the acting and staging of the characters with respect to the scene. It helped in bringing the characters out alive and react with the background.

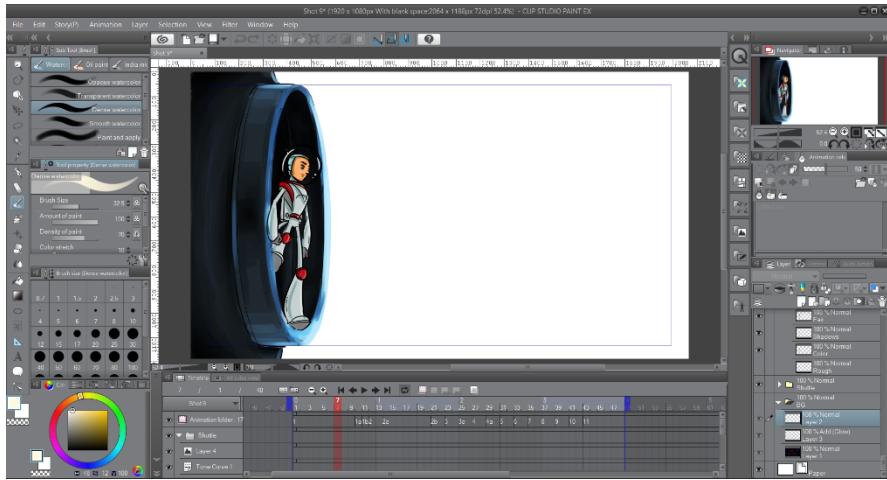
Then I went ahead with adding the finished background to it, and doing a match check to see if the characters fit the background. In this case, I wanted the background to kind of overshadow the character and his presence, in order to make him appear smaller than he already is and also in a thematic sense, his presence in the grander picture reduced.

I always prefer to work in Clip Studio Paint because it gives me a good space to shift between a vector and a raster mode. Also, the interface allows you to work in a traditional 2D environment along with the benefits of the digital world, so I feel at home working in it.



After that, I went ahead with completing the breakdowns and the in-between frames to make the animation crisp. The shots are all done in 12 frames per second.

Then came putting in the base colors of all the scene to make a seemingly workable film without depth and shadows. The contrast of a raster crayon like background with that of a vector solid character, I thought was quite welcoming because it felt more childlike and at the same time dreamy.



Finally, I completed the scene by adding highlights and shadows wherever necessary.



Post Production

The post production mainly saw the entire compositing of the films, down to adding atmosphere and blurs to the scenes. The shots with the sun required to add in some glow and lens flare while the room scene needed some diffused dust glowing in the sunlight to give that warm nostalgic feeling to it.

Some shots required a bit more pacing edits by tuning the linear narrative a bit here and there. After this, a session of color correcting the entire film and we were good to go visually.

Finally, a bit more tweaking the Foley in the sound department, adding reverb wherever needed, especially during those scenes where it needed to look a bit claustrophobic and induce anxiety, and we were ready.

Conclusion

This film was certainly very close to my heart. And ever since it was only a thought in my head, I was totally emotionally attached to it, because it brought to life very memorable moments of my childhood. Hence, at every stage that I would probably finish, I reworked on it, trying out ways in which I could make it better, ways in which I could make it worth the story.

It was a great deal of learning for me, right from preproduction all the way to final editing and it has seriously been a pleasure of mine to work with the story. Until completion, it would always haunt me. When I ate, when I slept, it stuck with me like a ghost needing retribution.

I hope I did justice to the film and I really hope it resonates with my audience and they feel what I tried to portray.

Ultimately, it comes down to what you take away from the film and I hope it's nothing but a sense of peace for having been made. And I'll leave the story to tell itself.

Thank You.

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Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future by Carl Sagan

Cosmos by Carl Sagan

Hyperspace by Michio Kaku

Artemis by Andy Wier

Sky Chasers by Amy Kathleen Ryan

Films

Rain Town

Song of The Sea

The Song for Rain

Lost and Found

One Small Step

Burn Out

Coin Operated