

JERRY OF JUPITER

FADE IN:

TITLE:

INSPIRED BY ACTUAL EVENTS

EXT. MILKY WAY - JUNE, 13TH 1985

Jupiter reveals Earth.

INT. PLANETARIUM - AFTERNOON

A small planetarium. A four-story, rectangular building. A flat roof lined with planets around the rooftop. A giant, rotating Jupiter is lit above the marquee.

YOUNG JERRY, a dark-haired, twelve-year-old Caucasian boy, with thick glasses, stands at the front of an empty auditorium.

He's focused on the show in front of him as images of Jupiter fill a large, curved screen.

The red hot flares of the Sun reflect off of Young Jerry's glasses. He is entranced when the show stops suddenly.

OWNER, a fragile, elderly man in his eighties, turns the lights on.

INT. PLANETARIUM - CONTROL ROOM - SOON AFTER

Young Jerry stands curiously next to Owner. A 16mm projector sits on a counter. Owner runs 16mm film through it.

YOUNG JERRY

You can't shut down?

OWNER

You've been my only customer the last few months. Unless you can get a thousand people here yesterday, I'm afraid this is it. Why is this so important to you, kid?

YOUNG JERRY

It's just. Jupiter is such a beautiful idea. It means what I mean.

Owner pulls the film strip through the projector's film gate.

OWNER

When you put the film in here as usual, place two fingers here. Keeps the tension loose. Then close the gate and hit the lamp forward.

Jupiter lights up on the screen.

Owner turns it off again.

Owner pulls out the film reel, places it in a canister. Hands it to Young Jerry.

Young Jerry holds the 16mm canister in his clutches.

YOUNG JERRY

I'll do good with it.

Owner lowers himself to look Young Jerry in the eyes.

OWNER

I'm sure you will, kid.

Young Jerry gives Owner a lasting embrace.

EXT. PLANETARIUM - MOMENTS LATER

Young Jerry wears a backpack as he rides his bicycle away. Earphones over his ears. Walkman in his pocket.

EXT. NORTHERN CALIFORNIA - VALLEJO - AFTERNOON

Steep hills. 100,000 people. Suburbia.

Young Jerry rides his bicycle, coming to a peak, over-looking the city.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - SOMETIME LATER - RAIN

Young Jerry walks his bicycle.

He comes to a storefront where a radically impoverished elderly woman is talking to herself. She holds a cardboard sign written with letters that can't be made out.

People pass her by.

Young Jerry approaches the Old Woman. She is shaking.

EXT. HOME - SOMETIME LATER

A modest, single-story home.

Young Jerry walks his bicycle to the side of the house. The Old Woman follows him. He glances to the backyard where a small garden of rosebushes are in full bloom.

INT. KITCHEN - SOON AFTER

MAMA. Jerry's mother. Thirty-five sets the dinner table where Five-Year-Old, YOUNG EDWARD climbs into a chair. The Old Woman sits with them.

Young Jerry puts a rose in a vase on the table. He smiles at Mama.

INT. GARAGE - SOON AFTER

A two-car garage. A drafting table is in the corner with design blueprints in cardboard tubes resting against it.

PAPA, a medium build, late-thirties, black pants, white buttoned shirt, carefully draws a straight line. He sets the pencil down.

He pulls forward a small electronic transformer with a soldering iron resting on it. He solders an open wire to the electrical board when he notices Young Jerry standing there.

Young Jerry leans in to see what Papa is working on. Papa shuffles his pages to conceal the blueprint.

INT. KITCHEN - SOON AFTER

Mama, Young Edward and Young Jerry eat dinner at the table. Young Jerry drinks from a 16 oz. bottle of Diet Cola. The Old Woman sits with them.

A large TV is on in the corner. The evening news highlights the Cold War arms race. Missiles pointed at the sky. War planes on aircraft carriers, military marching.

NEWSCASTER

Tensions between the United States
and the Soviet Union rise over who
will control weapon sales to Iran.

Papa enters observing Young Jerry entranced as the images
reflect off his glasses.

PAPA

Turn that off.

Papa shuts the TV. Notices the Old Woman.

PAPA

We can't keep doing this, Jerry.
When you get a job and can help pay
for all this feeding we're doing,
you can do whatever you want.

Papa goes to the refrigerator. Pulls out a container of
orange juice. He closes the door revealing Young Jerry's low-
scoring report card pinned to it.

Papa hears the TV turn back on.

Young Jerry now stands in front of it. Horrified as a
nuclear mushroom cloud flickers on the screen.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

As Gorbachev calls for sweeping
reforms across the U-S-S-R, both
nations race to increase their
nuclear stockpile.

Young Jerry takes a step back from the TV, bumping into the
kitchen table.

Suddenly the TV shuts off. Papa pulled the plug.

YOUNG JERRY

It doesn't make sense.

MAMA

Sometimes we have to defend
ourselves.

PAPA

It's the way the world is.

YOUNG JERRY

I think of different things. We
can learn a lot from the Universe,
Papa. Like how Jupiter --