SCENE 1: PRESENT DAY, STARTUP OFFICE

We hear a chorus of voices in the dark. As each line is said, an infographic poster illuminates.

MUSIC 01: “TIME FLIES”

ENGINEERS
TIME FLIES
DON'T BE LATE
OPTIMIZE
INNOVATE
SET YOUR EYES
ON THE FUTURE
NEVER LOOK BACK

The CEO of TimeCrunch stands in a spotlight in front of a powerpoint, giving a presentation.

CEO
EVER NEED ANOTHER HOUR IN THE DAY?
HAVE A WEEKEND THAT YOU FRITTERED AWAY?
IS THERE SOMETHING THAT IS HOLDING YOU BACK?
DON'T YOU WANNA CHANGE LANES
TO A SPEEDIER TRACK?
YOU COULD BE HAPPIER
YOU COULD BE MORE PRODUCTIVE
AND GET AHEAD OF THE CURVE
YOU COULD BE SAVVIER
UNLOCK YOUR FULL POTENTIAL
IT'S THE LEAST YOU DESERVE.

(gimmicky)
When you put on TimeCrunch, you get an extra five minutes per hour. A 26-hour day! How? I'm so glad you asked.

SOPHIE
This presentation is an embarrassment. The product isn't even functional!

CEO
Sophie, it's just a pitch. These angels want to invest in the idea and in us as people. It's about exuding confidence.
SOPHIE
I thought it was about developing a new technology. I’ve spent years on this algorithm and you’re reducing the physics of it to a science fair poster board. We need more time.

CEO
What we need is FUNDING. Once we get more money, you’ll have all the time you need.

SOPHIE
You can’t promise them something that doesn’t exist.

CEO
We wouldn’t have that problem if your little algorithm worked, now would we? Let’s go from the top.

SOPHIE
I want to present. It’s my idea and it’s my math.

CEO
Come on, Soph. You’re the brains, but I’m the face. Plus it would take forever to redistribute the talking points and teach you the choreography--

Before he can finish, SOPHIE launches into the pitch.

SOPHIE
YOU COULD BE HAPPIER
YOU COULD BE MORE PRODUCTIVE
AND GET AHEAD OF THE CURVE
YOU COULD BE SAVVIER
UNLOCK YOUR FULL POTENTIAL
IT’S THE LEAST YOU DESERVE.

SOPHIE (CONT’D)
When you put on TimeCrunch, you get an extra five minutes per hour. A 26 hour day. How? How? So glad you asked!

BASICALLY THE WATCH CAN MAKE
A TINY STRETCH IN SPACETIME

CEO
Don't say Spacetime--
SOPHIE
AND CALCULATE
THE MICRO-FLUCTUATIONS IN YOUR GRAVITY,
WITH RESPECT TO YOUR INERTIAL REFERENCE--

CEO
Whoa whoa, calm down, Sophie.
(to the rest of the team, dubious)
Guys, is that right?

ENGINEERS
(overlapping)
IT'S A LITTLE MORE COMPLICATED--
TINY VIBRATING STRINGS IN YOUR---
OKAY, PICTURE A BOWLING BALL--
YES, ACTUALLY SOPHIE IS RIGHT--
ACTUALLY, THINK OF IT AS A--
AND THE MATTRESS IS THE UNIVERSE--
FLUCTUATIONS IN GRAVITATIONAL--
AND THE WATCH IS A SPEEDING TRAIN--

CEO
Okay, hard stop on that. Sophie: no one cares about the math! Stick to the big picture! These
guys want to hear potential, not your jargony word vomit.

SOPHIE
I'm being thorough.

CEO
What you need to be is personable. Smart but not intimidating. Alluring yet approachable.
(Sophie looks at him skeptically)
Speak in broad strokes. Like...

CEO
(sweetly)
IT TAKES THE TIME THAT FLIES WHEN
YOU'RE HAVING FUN
AND SAVES IT UP FOR LATER!

SOPHIE
You’re bastardizing my idea. It’s not about “fun,” it’s about creating time for human progress--
CEO

Sophie, Sophie, Sophie… walk with me.

*(they move from the crowd)*

Where do you want to be in 20 years?

SOPHIE

Published and patented.

CEO

Great! That’s great. So-- think of this TimeCrunch pitch as a door. Once you go through it, there will be more doors. Soon you’ll be able to pick and choose which doors you want to go through.

SOPHIE

*(dryly)*

I understand how doors work.

CEO

I’m taking your seedling of an idea and growing it into something. What good is a thought if it never comes to fruition? I make dreams happen. And I can make your dreams-- all your ideas for things you want to create a better humanity-- I can make those a reality.

SOPHIE

Fine. But you’re not holding the door open for me; I’m opening it with you.

CEO

That’s a girl. Eyes, on the future! Tomorrow you’ll have time to fix the watch, but today, we just need you to smile and sell TimeCrunch. Remember the company motto:

CEO

TIME FLIES
DON'T BE LATE
OPTIMIZE
INNOVATE
SET YOUR EYES ON THE FUTURE
NEVER LOOK BACK

ENGINEERS

TIME FLIES
DON'T BE LATE
OPTIMIZE
INNOVATE
SET YOUR EYES ON THE FUTURE
NEVER LOOK BACK.

*The hustle slows behind SOPHIE, who stands in the spotlight.*

SOPHIE

I LOOK AROUND AND SEE
THE COMPANY I BUILT FROM SCRATCH
ALL MY RESEARCH AT THE CORE OF IT
SO WHAT’S THE CATCH?
THEY THINK I’M YOUNG
BUT I’LL DO SOMETHING UNFORGETTABLE
KEEP IT UP AND MY POTENTIAL IS INCREDIBLE
JUST IMAGINE:
UNIVERSITIES INVITING ME TO COME AND TEACH
MENTIONING MY MOTHER
IN MY NOBEL PRIZE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH
—"THIS ONE’S FOR YOU"—
STEPPING UP TO EARN MY PLACE
MY SPOT IN HISTORY
THAT NO ONE CAN ERASE
ALL THIS WORK IS WHAT IT TAKES.
I LOVE IT ALL—

—OF COURSE NOT EVERY MINUTE OF IT, BUT
FOR THE MOST PART I HAVE LEARNED TO LOVE IT, I
JUST FOCUS ON THE WORK AND
TRY TO GET AHEAD
NEVER MIND THE CONDESCENSION
FROM SOME MEN I COULD CARE TO MENTION
IT ONLY FUELS THE ENGINE

I THINK ABOUT HOW IT FEELS TO
FIND MY WAY BLIND THROUGH A
MIND-BENDING PROBLEM AND
WATCH IT UNWIND
I MEAN THE THRILL OF NOT KNOWING QUITE
WHERE THE LOGIC IS GOING BUT FIGHTING
FORWARD AND FORWARD TO FIND
THE BEAUTY IN THE NUMBERS
THE CODE IN THE MACHINE
THERE ARE PLANETS IN THE UNIVERSE
THAT NOBODY’S EVER SEEN, OR EVER WILL
AND STILL
THESE LAWS CAN TRACE THEIR PATH
I THINK IT MEANS THAT EVERYTHING
IS REALLY MADE OF MATH

SO I’M HEADING TOWARD WHATEVER LIES IN STORE
AND I’M HOPING THAT IT’S WORTH THE WAITING FOR
ON THE DAY THEY FINALLY ASK ME TO DO MORE
 THAN "SMILE AND SELL TIMECRUNCH."

CEO
Five minutes, people! Sophie: keep it to one metaphor, and no equations!

CEO/CTO (CONT'D)
ARE YOU READY TO CHANGE THE WORLD?
ARE YOU READY TO MAKE A SPLASH?
HERE WE SAY SOMETHING ABOUT SERIES A FUNDING --
ARE YOU READY TO RAKE IN THE GOBS OF CASH?
I AM SO PUMPED UP RIGHT NOW

SOPHIE
"IT TAKES THE TIME THAT FLIES WHEN YOU'RE..." --
THAT'S SO DUMB!
"DOES THE NAME EINSTEIN RING A BELL?"
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO, WHAT TO --
NO!
"THINK OF TIME AS A GARDEN HEDGE?"
"THINK OF TIME AS A BAR OF SOAP?"
"THINK OF TIME AS A MAGIC--" NOPE.

CTO (CONT'D)
I NEED A NAP

CEO
I NEED A DRINK

CTO
I NEED A SHAVE

CEO
I NEED A XANAX

SOPHIE
"FORGET WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT NEWTONIAN MECHANICS!"
CEO/CTO
(a pump-up routine)
NEVER LOOK BACK
NEVER MISS A STEP
NEVER LOSE A MINUTE
NEVER SKIP A BEAT
NEVER LOOK BACK
NEVER MISS A STEP
NEVER LOSE A MINUTE
NEVER SKIP A BEAT
NEVER LOOK BACK

SOPHIE (CONT’D)

I SHOULD BE ROCKETING
I SHOULD BE MOVING FORWARD
I SHOULD BE LEADING THE CURVE
I WILL BE LISTENED TO
I WILL BE RECOGNIZED AND
GET THE RESPECT I DESERVE!

CEO (CONT’D)
This is the real deal folks: investors are in the building.
(to SOPHIE)
I could use another five minutes.

SOPHIE
If the product was working, I could give that to you. Sorry buddy.

A beat.

A musical buildup, and we’re in the real pitch! Three investors sit downstage assessing the presentation.

CEO (CONT’D)
EVER NEED ANOTHER HOUR IN THE DAY?
HAVE A WEEKEND THAT YOU FRITTERED AWAY?
IS THERE SOMETHING THAT IS HOLDING YOU BACK?
DON’T YOU WANNA CHANGE LANES
TO A SPEEDIER TRACK?

SOPHIE
(to herself as CEO continues silently)
I WILL BE WATERSHED
I WILL BE INFLUENTIAL
INVENT A NEW PARADIGM
THEY’LL SAY ‘SHE THOUGHT AHEAD’
’SHE WAS A VISIONARY’
’SHE WAS AHEAD OF HER TIME!’
CEO
When you put on TimeCrunch you get an extra 5 minutes per hour.

SOPHIE
A 26 hour day!

CEO
But how does that work?

SOPHIE
THINK OF TIME AS A RUBBER BAND
PUT THE TIME-CRUNCH ON YOUR HAND
AND YOU'LL SEE THAT EVERY SECOND WILL EXPAND
MULTIPLYING YOUR TEMPORAL VECTORS--

CEO
Sophie, that's a little specific--

SOPHIE
THINK OF TIME AS A BARBER SHOP
ALL WE DO IS TAKE A LITTLE OFF THE TOP
BUT THEN WE GIVE IT BACK LATER, SO...

(whispered)
Sophie, stop!

SOPHIE
IT'S LIKE A SPEEDING TRAIN -- NO
LIKE A REVERSE VOLCANO
IT'S REALLY HARD TO EXPLAIN, OKAY,
BUT IF YOU'D JUST LET ME TAKE YOU
THROUGH THE MATH!

CEO
What Sophie's trying to say is--

SOPHIE
(writing on a whiteboard)
START WITH A BASIC DIFFERENTIAL EQUATION
MULTIPLY THE TERMS BY A RELATIVISTIC MODIFIER
SEE, IT'S LIKE THE VECTOR IS IN
THREE AND FOUR DIMENSIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY
CEO

(frantic, trying to shut SOPHIE down)
I think we should--

SOPHIE

NOW YOU CAN REPRESENT TIME
AS A SHAPE INSTEAD OF A LINE
AND DO OPERATIONS ON ITS MASS AND VOLUME

CEO

Sophie!

SOPHIE

(There's no stopping her now)
THIS IS REPRESENTED IN THE CODE,
OR RATHER UNDERLYING LOGIC OF THE
MOTHERBOARD, FATHERBOARD,
FIRST AND SECOND COUSIN BOARDS
CAUSING YOU TO STRETCH
IMPERCEPTIBLY TOWARD THE FUTURE
BORROWING A SECOND FROM A MINUTE
THAT HASN'T HAPPENED YET!

She breathes, recollects her thoughts.

CAN'T WE ALL AGREE THAT IT'S EASIER TO SEE
WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE EQUATION
AND FORGET ABOUT THE POETRY?
ANYONE?
JUST ME?

Awkward beat. The investors are perplexed.

CEO

YOUR GOALS ARE REALIZABLE

CTO

YOUR LIFE IS OPTIMIZABLE

BOTH

YOU'D BE UNRECOGNIZABLE
IF YOU JUST HAD
A LITTLE BIT MORE TIME!
A LITTLE BIT MORE TIME!
A LITTLE BIT MORE TIME!

CEO/CTO

NEVER LOOK BACK
NEVER MISS A STEP
NEVER LOSE A MINUTE
NEVER SKIP A BEAT
NEVER LOOK BACK
NEVER MISS A STEP
NEVER LOSE A MINUTE
NEVER SKIP A BEAT
NEVER LOOK BACK!

ENSEMBLE

TIME FLIES
TIME FLIES
TIME FLIES

SOPHIE

With the clever use of Special Relativity...

CEO

...you'll be on a moving walkway while the rest of the world trudges along. More productivity. More creativity. Genius in a bottle. Are you ready to change your life?

*The pitch ends with a flourish. Applause.*