

## Black Ignite

- What drew you to this event? \*

Hearing more black voices in design!! I love this concept and am excited to see, hear, and connect with so many examples of black excellence in design.

- What is the working title of your talk? \*

What it means to be a responsible designer OR

Exploring what it means to 'Extend Reality'... to ensure we are extending the right reality... OR  
Becoming a TechnoWizard: A Brief Intro into my Journey to Change the World and other  
Arcane Arts

- What is your ignite talk about? \*

~~My talk is about the importance of the ethical, scientific, sociological, and other considerations to think about as people who will be responsible for designing the future. I want to discuss what it means to be a designer in the 21st century working with emergent technology. How to be a good ancestor so that the technologies and progress of today does not come at the expense of tomorrow.~~

How do you create sufficiently advanced technology? How do you invent magic? How do you close the opportunity gap and digital divide between black communities and new technologies? How do you make a positive impact in the world while coming from layers of disadvantage? In this talk, I introduce people to my Journey to Become a TechnoWizard, where I share how I've lived through poverty, depression, generational adversities, and more, all while holding the torch of ambition, big dreams, and afrofuturism in my quest to massively change the world for the better.

- What are your goals in doing this ignite talk? \*

I want to introduce people to the beauty of broad intersectionality, magical thinking, afrofuturism, multipotentiality, philosophy, psychology, and so much more.. I want to give people a crash course of my journey to become a technowizard to inspire people into embracing their full potential, no matter how eclectic, weird, or seemingly incompatible. My goal is to motivate folks into becoming more of themselves, exposing themselves to more diverse ideas, and to design with principle, not just passion.

~~My goal for this talk is to introduce people to the critical need for understanding ethics, philosophy, and psychology (among many others) when deciding to become a designer. People need to understand that many of our problems today are a direct result of a lack of actionable empathy, scientific understanding, and strategic risk mitigation from those who designed technologies without thinking of the consequences.~~

I want people to walk away from my talk with the realization that technology is not neutral, design must be done with principles, and that history has much to teach us about how to build a better future.

- Why should your talk be picked? \*

There are plenty of success stories, and even sobering anti-success stories, but there are not many (I don't think) that share what it's like to not know if you are a success... to feel like a failure and yet still be so fortunate.. To encompass such a wide variety of experiences, that refuses to be constrained, and that is far from linear. We hear all the time that success is not linear, but what does that really look like?

I submit my journey to show that part of the process.

I have no idea why you should pick my talk. 🤪 I'm sure there are many folks who have a much more clear cut presentation. My journey has been a messy amalgamation of successes, failures, and plateaus across more areas than I can adequately explain in a brief amount of time. But I hope that picking my talk will expose people to ideas and paths that they may not have ever considered or realized was possible. Plus... it will help me grow my own brand. 😊

~~There are not enough people talking about not just the ethics of design, but the importance for new and veteran designers to have a (self-paced) background in philosophy, psychology, ethics, and more to advocate for users...~~

~~As an emergent technologist working with virtual reality and who has talked to or studied technologists in XR, AI, biotech, and more, I believe I can offer a unique approach to the design space.~~

~~We need more conversations about how to design a better future, and about having a more holistic approach to designing experiences, so that we can live in a more magical and egalitarian world.~~

- What's your cultural background? \*

I am a 2nd/3rd generation Haitian-American who has struggled with poverty all my life, buoyed by my ambitious dreams to invent magical technology. I live at the intersection of black culture, haitian culture, and seventh-day adventist culture; all rolled in with spiritualism, opting out of college, startups, futurism, pansexuality, and so much more...

- Just out of curiosity and so we can help amplify are you using the money you win for something in specific? \*

I will likely use the money to support some of my projects around building a virtual commune, creating a platform for good information, and/or content creation. I also may just use it to support my family as we continue to claw ourselves out of poverty.



# My Talk

## Version 1 - Rough Outline

### Childhood Dreams

- Inventing Hovercars
- Reading Books
- Watching/playing games
- Discovering science and technology

### Facing the World

- Poverty
- Depression
- Failure
- Heritage

### Career

- Year Up
- Fortune 500s
- Startups
- Design

## Version 2 - Detailed Outline

### Intro - Warnings and Table of Contents

- 5 minutes is too short (been trying to figure out myself through a 120 page book, hundreds of articles, videos, and audiojournal podcasts...)
- My ambitions wont let me do normal stuff.. Gonna get weird and experimental: music and animations
- I am transparent, get personal, and existential (beware TWs)
- Stripped down version at [\(link\)](#)

### Prologue - About my early childhood, parents, and cultural background

- Abusive father, ran away with mom
- SDA grandparents, Haitian church life
- Step dad, strained relationship

### Act 1 - Childhood Dreams

- Hovercar origins
  - Getting an F

- Legos
- Scifi Shows (Magic School Bus, Jetsons, Back to the Future)
- Reading books and playing games
  - Delving into the land of Fantasy
  - From the Bible to Science
  -
- Nerding out with school
  - Enjoying school
  - Great teachers
  - Great friends, loosely connected
- Realizing my poverty
  - Always having to move
  - Am I homeless?
  -

Intermission:

- 

Act 2 - Facing the world

- Forcibly Opting Out from college
  - All or nothing, Questbridge
- Discovering Technology
  - Startups, SV, and Tech Visionaries
- Finding Love
  -

Intermission:

- Dancing and music

Act 3 - Convergence

- Afrofuturism and panafricanism
- Virtual Reality and Arcade Operations
- Discovering Design
  - User Experience
  - Psychology
  -

Resolution - Identity is a constellation. The Journey is a retroactive star map...

- My identity (and yours) is more than even you know... Its more than just 1 or 2 or 10 or 100 things... its millions and trillions of ideas
- The Journey is mostly us looking backwards and cherry picking things that we feel/think brought us here. But really literally everything brought us here...
  - There's consistent things... key things that become our 'North Star'
  - There's patterns that we give names and forms to...
  - But at the end of the day its all made up...

### **Version 3 - Written script draft**

#### **Prologue**

My earliest and only early childhood memory is of being starved for yet another night. I clung to my winnie the pooh blanket as my younger brother slept, and my mother's despair crept through the door... My next memory was running out of that dark trailer with nothing more than my blanket in one hand and my brother clasped to the other, spirited off by my grandfather.

The next string of memories are connected more fluidly: living with my Haitian immigrant grandparents who were devout Seventh Day Adventists.

But the continuity of my memory really began with another night I was spirited away... this time with a black American man who suddenly became my new father for reasons that still elude me to this day...

#### **Act 1**

In third grade, I decided to invent hovercars. The inspiration came from getting an inexplicable F on my morning assignment where I drew a flying bus reminiscent of the Magic School Bus. I was always a good student and had no idea why my earnest attempt was swatted down so carelessly. But I became obsessed with the idea ever since. I exclusively read fiction books usually, but this led me to pick up books around maglev trains, which lead me to electromagnetics, then eventually renewables, then quantum, relativity, and so much more.

Around that same time, I was gifted a box of legos and used them to try and develop prototypes and explore all manner of exotic builds, from spaceships to buildings and more.

I was a nerd at heart. I read every interesting-looking book in my library. Delving into so many fantasy worlds, that it bled into my imagination and I couldn't stop seeing magical vistas superimposed over the real world. I yearned for those epic adventures and explorations... for those heroic stories... But I also found sparks or even whole bonfires of that magic in this world too. In the quirks of nature and the ferocity of human history, in the complexity of life and the interwoven systems of technology. I was inspired.

I found amazing stories in everything from the Bible to Harry Potter (much to the chagrin of my church community with the latter); from school textbooks to even my less favorite genres on my AR sheet. I was lucky enough to have mostly great teachers, quite a few of which I still

remember sparking curiosity in their subject area thanks to their teaching styles and interesting assignments. Perhaps it was the 'Gifted' status which put me in more intimate classrooms with other creative students.

By 9th grade, I already knew what I wanted to do when I grew up. I wanted to be an engineer/businessman/architecture. I wanted to invent hovercars and rebuild cities/buildings to accommodate them. I wanted to shift the world away from these ugly gas-powered monsters to these elegant flying vehicles that utilized biomimicry and renewables to make it seem like people were flying through the air on stingrays and space whales.

But as fun as learning was in school... it was always a lonely endeavor for me. My family moved dozens of times growing up and I rarely ever stayed in the same school for more than 2 or 3 years at a time. I made good friends. I still remember (and have the notebook of) the fictional world we created with some of my elementary school crew. But those ties naturally fell apart when I moved to yet another new school. As a perpetual new kid and a dreamer, as a haitian-american and Adventist, I always felt like an outsider. I didn't know much pop culture stuff. I wasn't allowed to watch the same TV programs or listen to the same music. Much of my home life was going to church, or playing/dealing with a large family (5 siblings, 2 parents in a strained marriage, a revolving door of pets as well as people we stayed with or who stayed with us). But as a result of the International Baccalaureate program, I found myself hanging around the same group of people, many of which became friends at varying levels. I even used to talk with 1 or 2 of them very extensively about my dreams and goals and ideas...

## **Act 2**

But through it all... I was depressed... not clinically so, we couldn't afford to go to doctors, and mental health clinicians were not even in the conversation. But I always felt cycles of apathy, self-hate, low self-esteem, and so on in my adolescent years. So much so that I never believed my folks when they said this girl or that girl had feelings for me, I thought such an idea absolutely ridiculous. The only thing I had going for me was my ideas... and those ideas never went anywhere outside of school assignments and intense research sessions. A point my dad loved to remind me of... with good intentions.

I know it was meant to be a passing of wisdom when he said things like "My dad used to always tell me, you're so smart that you're dumb.." or "I was just like you, so you should listen to me.." or "You're book smart but not street smart.." and so on.

I began to realize the sheer idiocy of the world. Of society for creating an oil-dependent society that was polluting the world just as quickly as it was 'progressing' it. Of schooling for how many students and teachers outside of advanced classes never got to enjoy the process of learning. Of myself for having so many 'big ideas' and being so 'smart' yet never able to actually make any money or even the smallest bit of impact in the world... a thought that haunts me to this very day.

I realized the reason that my family was always moving around... for why we ate the same thing for months on end sometimes... for why we did not have clothes that weren't hand-me-downs and

why we had so many instances of our light or water or gas going out... for why there was no way I'd get into college unless I got a full-ride scholarship: because we were poor.

It was in the early years of highschool that I was exposed to the reality of our financial situation.

That I noticed the strained communication between my parents. That I contextualized the lack of 'things' in my life that it seemed most other kids had.

It was this growing sense of despair that drove me to cling to my childhood dreams like a new safety blanket. I wielded my ambitions like a sword and shield. Fighting back my depression and cynicism and protecting myself from becoming jaded and hopeless about the world.

As the world was getting eaten by software and everyone was getting smartphones or home computers or consoles... I was getting deeper into books. Not even many of the new stuff, whatever was available in my not-so-great school's library, or whatever I could find online for free. I vacillated between depression and ambition. After hearing about kids like the African boy who lived in a place with no running water or electricity but built functional robots with scrapyard materials and got into MIT... I knew that I was not enough. My already fragile ego was shattered.

### **Act 3**

I didn't get into college. Despite being a finalist in one of the most prestigious scholarship opportunities, and getting acceptance letters for 3 out of my top 5 first-choice schools, I wasn't able to cover the enrollment fee... and I didn't qualify for enough financial aid to cover the other half of my tuition/fees due to family debt/credit problems... Despite being a top student, I wasn't enough. My already tenuous dreams shattered...

But I patched them back up and kept going. I figured I'd take a gap year. Make money, explore the world, learn languages I never picked up for some reason before, and come back refreshed (and more appealing as an applicant). I sold knives for my first job, it was weird but surprisingly engaging. But once again, I realized the depth of my poverty. My entire network was people that were also impoverished. I was a good salesman, but I felt bad trying to sell things (no matter how great) to people who had more pressing needs. Then I found the Year Up program. I got in by the skin of my teeth. Twas there that I learned about the people at the center of these changing times. I learned about the existence of Fortune 500s and tech startups. This reignited my dreams. Inflated them to stratospheric levels. I realized that I was thinking too small and too far Hovercars? That was a far future idea that wouldnt even solve major problems. I needed to solve poverty, hunger, climate change, depression. And I would do so through technology and software, not just engineering.

But as I worked at these companies and began trying to play the startup game, I realized yet another area that I was deficient: I wasn't a coder... I wasn't a magnetic salesman either. I could neither master the arcane arts of creating digital magic, nor did I seem to possess the enchanting demeanor of a so-called 'visionary'.

Still I persisted, but by this time, I began to see deficiencies, not just in myself, but in the system... the system of college, of the workplace, of technology, of society...

So I delve now into history, into political theory, into philosophy, into psychology... I wanted to understand why. Why is the world like this? Why am I such a failure? Why are black people more likely to be poor? Why are people so disconnected? Why can't I make any sort of meaningful progress on my dreams?

At the same time, I fell in love. A girl that my folks said liked me... actually did... who happened to be one of the few people who I felt free to share much of my dreams and thoughts with back in highschool. Despite my failures and inadequacies and insecurities, she loved me. Despite my lack of status, formal education, income, or even self-confidence, she loved me. And once I got my head out of the fog of depression, once I allowed myself to feel and express love in turn, I found so much to love about her too. It was that love that empowered me to really make lasting progress on myself. To work through my solitude and inadequacy. Through my anger and pessimism. To maintain a hold on my dreams, but also to persist in figuring out how to manifest them.

And so I made plans. I began to move more strategically, more opportunistically. I opened myself to redefining my path as one that would reveal itself so long as I kept myself open to it and kept growing as a person. I found the first VR arcade in my region and turned it into one of the highest rated arcades in the world. Its still just a small shop... barely profitable. And yet by working there I realized the importance of micro experiences. I crystalized all of my sky-high thoughts about the world and saw how it was these everyday experiences that was the foundation of those bigger systems. It was the unfamiliarity, nay the fear of using technology in older people, especially amongst people of color... it was the fact that most people did not think to read directions in which made their experience harder... it was the paralysis of choice that I noticed stopped people from enjoying themselves... it was all these experiences that I realized was at the heart of the problem with technology and society and so on.

My dreams refined.

I figured I'd try to study code again... but then I learned about design, and saw how it was the manifestation of everything that I experienced thus far. Through design, I saw the failures of systems and societies and technologies. Through design, I saw the convergence of philosophy and psychology and history into services and interfaces. Through design, I saw how the magic of technology could be created and experienced.

Somewhere along the way, I donned the cape of TechnoWizardry... just a funny way to capture all that I experienced. To remember the dream and the ambition, the magic and the technology, the far out ambition and the everyday practicality, the seriousness of solving big problems and the levity of my own ineptitude.

## **Fin?**

What does any of this have to do with design? With being black? I don't know. Everything?

Nothing? I am still trying to figure it all out...

All I do know is that we each have life stories just as confusing and detailed and curious. Perhaps you have done better at summarizing it.. Taking the high points and weaving a concise tale. But just as Robert Frost warns us... all of that is an illusion. Its you embellishing and arbitrarily cherrypicking certain details that feed into your self-image. Maybe that's fine.

But always remember that its just one small fraction of the true story. Your identity is more than a designer or a professional or black person or any singular story. It is a rich tapestry of threads so diverse and diffuse that picking out one, two, or ten things is like pointing to a handful of stars and saying thats all the sky holds.

In reality, you, I, and everyone else is a constellation: a nebulous pattern that is arbitrary in nature, only as distinct as you perceive it to be. Your path is a map of the sky leading to and from destinations unseen. Thus every part of your identity can change. Every keystone on your journey could be another. We are so much more than what others say we are, or even what our own conceptions of ourselves say we are. We can be anything. So choose something interesting, fun, and ambitious. Choose something that sparks curiosity and drives you to constantly learn more and do more and be more. That's one being a design means to me. That's what being black means to me. That's what ignites me to be me. What ignites you?

### **Elements to loop into my story:**

#### Elements of Identity

- Being haitian
- Being american
- Being adventist
- Being first-born (being a brother and a son)
- Being a nerd
- Being a student
- Being an athlete
- Being a professional
- Being black
- Being a futurist
- Being a coder
- Being an intern
- Being a manager
- Being ambitious
- Being a dreamer
- Being a reader
- Being a doer

- Being an entrepreneur
- Being a lover
- Being a loner
- Being a writer
- Being a podcaster
- Being pessimistic
- Being a youtuber
- Being a gamer
- Being an afrofuturist
- Being a designer

#### Elements of the Journey

- Becoming a Haitian-American
- Becoming a Christian
- Becoming an atheist/agnostic
- Becoming a scientist
- Becoming an entrepreneur
- Becoming a content creator/influencer
- 
- Becoming a trillionaire
- Becoming a technowizard
- 

### **Version 3.5 - Am I...?**

#### Prologue

- Victim or Survivor?
- Selective Memory or Traumatized?
- First born: Burden or Hope?

#### **Act 1**

- Haitian or American?
- Adventist? Christian?
- Naive child or Young genius?
- Outsider? Nerd? Loner?

My earliest memory was of sitting in the darkness clinging to my blanket, a feeling of absolute despair in the air. I still wonder if I am a victim of abuse or not...

I remember the night we ran away to my grandparents' place and I didn't speak the language... I still wonder if I am Haitian or not. Am Haitian or American? What does it mean to be both?

I used to pretend I was a plane in the sky in pre-school, was that the start of my dreams, or was it the flight from darkness earlier on?

Along the way I adopted the name of TechnoWizardry, twas a constant in the sky...

Once upon a time, there was a boy who dreamt to fly.

Through science or magic, it mattered not, so long as he flew beyond the sky.

He fought to invent this mighty power, through Lego and code and thought;

But poverty was a bitter foe, it imposed a mental rot.

Yet through courage, grit, and a thousand prosaic fables, this boy became a man.

Fueled by passion and ambition, with egoistic altruism in mind, he resolved to fight depression.

He sought to build a better world, a better future: fulfilling and truly free.

Thus he stands, big dreams in hand, at the altar of TechnoWizardry.

Ever learning and building, he seeks to help those inventing magical technology.

So long as they are sound of mind and kind in heart, he yearns to sojourn with a diverse party of heroes.

Oh ye of patience and virtue, my story thus unfurled,

Dost thee have need of me, in thy epic quest to save the world?

These milestones you see? These signposts along the way?

Mere afterthoughts, illusions of

Just pieces of who I choose to be.

My journey. My identity.

Like stars in the sky, each event in our life is like a boiling cloud of gas, more energetic than it appears and shedding light upon the darkness that is the unknown beyond our purview...

But as time goes on, we move from that life and that sun becomes a star... still shedding light but now more distant, the space between you increasing with time...

We are the constellations, we are the sky.. Even the constellations we identify are ever-changing and moving.

Our identity is that which resonates... a journey in retrospect...

## **Presentation formatting (Needs to fit into 20 slides, 1 bullet per slide?)**

### **Version 4 - Prose**

#### **Prologue**

Darkness. Cut by oppressive light seeping in from the ...

A boy clutches his Winnie-the-Pooh blankie as oppressive despair emanates from the crack in the door as his baby brother slumbers heedlessly beside him...

Darkness. In motion as the boys are rushed to a safety they didnt know they needed with their mother at the helm.

Darkness. Recessed into the seams of memory as the boy peeks out from his mother's skirts to meet family he didn't know he had in a language he didnt know he should speak. Life was relatively better for a time after that. Days spent in couch tents with his cousin and brother, running through pews on weekends, and round classrooms on weekdays. Soaring through mostly clear blue skies.

Darkness. Creeping back as his mother moved in with a new man, much louder, yet much subtler with the heavy blade of oppressive light. Life *was* after that...Days spent with new siblings, donning responsibility during the night and observing during the day. Flying through mostly dark starry skies.

#### **Act 1 - Childhood Dreams**

- Despite all my hardwork and 4.0982GPA, I couldn't get the full-ride scholarship I needed to attend college. The despair nearly crushed me. But I couldn't stop dreaming, plotting. I figured I'd get what I needed selling knives... but I didn't live near the type of people who had the luxury to invest in kitchen sets, no matter how great. Eventually I found Year Up, where I learned about how the startup/corporate world was full of college drop-outs making billion-dollar, world-changing technologies!

## Version 5 - Basic

(Concept: Every slide has a picture of the night sky alight with stars, each slide picks out a star and shows the many stars that make up that galaxy (via thoughts/experiences fading in/out of the background of that slide). Each Act outlines the stars I picked out to show a Constellation. At the end, I bring all this together to make my point...)

Intro (30 secs)

Welcome to my Journey to Become a TechnoWizard! Or at least a brief intro into my ambitions to Change the World, and other Arcane Arts...

- What you are about to experience is a crash course to a life that I've been trying to understand and map out over the last few years in hundreds of blogs, podcasts, and even an autobiography.  
'Tis but a sliver of my story.
- My life is a nebulous mess. But I'm a transparent person and love zooming into insane levels of detail. So fair warning that its gonna get personal.

Prologue - Earliest Memories (30 secs)

- They say your early childhood determines a lot about who you become, well the earliest memory I have is of clinging to my Winnie-the-Pooh blankie in a dark room lit by a cracked door from which oppressive silence wrung.  
(Slide of a kid in a dark room with a blanket. Background has thoughts fading in and out of sight like stars in the sky or fish in an ocean: Am I a child of abuse? I remember being so hungry... Did he ever hit my mom? I don't remember his face or his voice... They say I look like him. His family is so nice. His mom hasn't seen him in years.. )
- I next remember my mommy taking my brother and I away from that place forever to live with my grandparents who spoke a language I never learned.  
We lived and played with my cousin; went to church every Saturday.  
I pretended to be a plane in preschool, but was a bully in kindergarten.  
In 1st grade we moved in with a new man I now call my father.  
(Slide of a woman running away with two kids. Thoughts fading in/out: How old was I? How old was she? Did she have a choice? She said it was like an arranged marriage? Did my grandfather feel guilty? Did he ever apologize? My mother is strong. What does my brother remember? We had another brother who passed, why don't I remember him? Am I a bad brother for not remembering? Why can't I get along with my step-dad? Is it his fault or mine? Am I unfilial because I don't love him? Am I ungrateful?)

### Act 1 - Childhood Dreams (1 min)

- In 3rd grade, my teacher gave me an F on a journal assignment where I wrote about coming to school on a flying bus as my ideal morning.  
Ever since then I've been obsessed with inventing hovercars.  
(Slide of my journal assignment with the letter grade. Thoughts:
- The first book I remember reading was Hank: The Cowdog, but I got into Harry Potter soon after. My grandparents didn't like that, but I also read the Bible so they couldn't say much. I even read about electromagnetics to feed my dreams to invent hovercars.  
(Slide of these books. Thoughts:
- 3rd - 5th grade was the longest I've ever been in one school. I enjoyed my friends, my teachers, and even the crazy leaky house we shared with other families. It was there where I invented magic with my Legos, building flying cars and spaceships.  
(Slide of legos. Thoughts:
- Rude awakening.  
In 9th grade I discovered our poverty. No matter, I knew that when I got into college, I could become the modern day Edison or Henry T. Ford. But I feared I was more like Tesla in his latter years: broke, paranoid, and delusional.  
Which came first, puberty or depression?  
(Slide of my room on Winview. Thoughts:  
Either way, I began hating everything: my dad, my religion, my situation, myself, and the world.

### Act 2 - Facing the World (1 min)

- It all had to change. My ambitions grew alongside my bitterness.  
But all anyone saw was an optimistic, multi-talented student. I was voted 'Most Likely to Become the President'.  
(Slide of my HS pics. Thoughts:
- I couldn't get into college due to generational debt..., but I had hope. Maybe after I made a name for myself during a Gap Year... Then I discovered Fortune 500s and Tech Startups started by college drop-outs. College was a scam. I knew This was my path. I just had to network. Build out my skills. Start a startup!  
(Slide of my YU graduation. Thoughts:
- During that same time I fell in love with a girl I accidentally friendzoned back in highschool when I hated myself too much to believe I could be loved. But as my confidence grew, so too did our relationship.  
(Slide of my SO. Thoughts:
- Yet my incompetence kept me awake at night. My poverty crescendoed from the bets I took taking internships for equity. My lackluster coding skills and weak stomach for sales/marketing didn't help either. To this day, I live with my parents. I'm not sure if I'm helping them more or they me. Does it matter? I'm still a failure.

(Slide of attempts at coding and more. Thoughts:

### Act 3 - Convergence (1 min)

- But my ancestors weren't! I discovered the rich history of the Haitian Revolution, and pre-colonial Africa. Centuries of golden-age kingdoms dating back thousands of years into pre-historic glory. It was evidence that life could be different. We could be different. Better.  
(Slide of African kingdoms and Haitian flag. Thoughts:
- Maybe I wasn't a failure, After all, I worked as a VR receptionist then became the manager in 6 months. I improved our customer experience, earning 500+ 5\* ratings making us one of the highest rated arcades in the world! I was more than a dreamer, I had practical skills.  
(Slide of the arcade. Thoughts:
- I realized that many of society's problems were here by design. Through bad design. Because faulty systems make people suffer. From apps to housing. From new technology to poverty. From government to economy. There aren't enough people designing the world we live in to reflect the world we could thrive in.  
(Slide of my videos learning things. Thoughts:
- Over the last 2 years I've been learning what it means to be a designer. I didn't have access to the best resources, but I've been fortunate enough to find mentors and peers to teach me how to build better systems with science and strategy.  
(Slide of my About page? Thoughts:

### Fin.. For now (30-45 secs)

- I still don't quite know who or what I am. Yet I know a lot about what made me. I believe identity to be a story we tell ourselves. That story is crafted by paying attention to the lights that shine most bright when we look back into the night sky of our minds at any point in time. ~~That identity often seems impenetrable, eternal, even bestowed from above. But that identity is self-proclaimed and ever changing.~~  
(Slide zooms out each of the above as constellations, representing my identity... )
- The way we weave that story is the journey we create in our minds as to how those billions of lights paint a picture. Our journey seems inevitable. Perhaps it is. But it is also completely made up. We could connect those dots in any other way and get a whole new story.  
(Slide traces the path I took uncovering these constellations, representing my journey... )
- I am so many things. So are you. I am a Technowizard (in training). Just because. It excites me to design sufficiently advanced technology indistinguishable from magic.  
(Slides show... ?
- What stars and galaxies make up your identity? How have you mapped your way through it to define your journey? Would you like to explore together, as we all try to build a better world?  
(Slide of Elements of Identity and Journey)



## Version 6 - Prosaic ([Thanks to Soteria!](#))

### Title (15 Secs)

- Welcome to my Journey to Become a TechnoWizard! Or at least a brief introduction into my ambitions to massively change the world for the better, and other Arcane Arts... But of course, this mosaic is but a sliver of my story.

### Intro (30 Secs)

- 1 - There is something about the dark expanse of space. An endless, formless, impenetrable void of black that makes whole galaxies naught but pinpricks of light, swallowed up by the astronomical distances of time.
- 2 - It is from this most primordial darkness that all things came to fruition, life as we know it sprung from the depths of our Universe. All of its beauty, all of its terrors, and even all of us. Every atom in our body, billions of years old.

### Prologue (30 Secs)

- 3 - My earliest memories were formed in darkness. I was clutching my Winnie-the-Pooh blanket, staring at the light spilling through the trailer's bedroom door. I remember how the oppressive silence wrung, the pit of hunger that plagued me, the tension in the air.
- 4 - I remember how dawn broke the night as my mother fled with my brother and I into the home of my grandparents. I can recount going to church, being immersed in a rich culture, fond fun with cousins galore, and eventually being brought to live with a new father and step-sister, by cover of night again, coincidentally.

### Act 1 (1 min)

- 5 - My new, fused family moved around a lot without going far, but it was all an adventure in my mind. A mind overflowing with imagination thanks to school library books; from Hank: the Cowdog to Harry Potter to the Bible and even books on Trains, it was all fair game.
- 6 - 3rd - 5th grade was the longest I've ever been in one school. I enjoyed my friends and teachers, except that one morning where we were given a journal prompt and I wrote about a flying bus, even drew a picture. I got an F! Maybe I misunderstood the prompt, but I was obsessed with hovercars ever since.
- 7 - Or maybe it was how many times our cars broke down that ignited my obsession, but I fed it greedily nonetheless. With the magic of Legos, I could already build flying cars and spaceships, I just needed to know the science and engineering to make it a reality.
- 8 - But in 9th grade, I realized stability wasn't supposed to be a luxury. I discovered we've been living in poverty. Regardless, I figured I would rectify this by going to college and becoming the

modern-day Edison or Ford, but I feared I was more like Tesla in his latter years: broke, paranoid, and delusional.

#### Act 2 (1 min)

- 9 - I was suddenly battling puberty, poverty, and existential depression with the eldritch power of ambition. I bitterly wanted to slay the world for its evils. But all anyone saw was an optimistic, multi-talented student. A Quiet Storm brewing.
- 10 - Despite all my hardwork and 4.1GPA, I couldn't get the full-ride scholarship I needed to attend college. The despair nearly crushed me. Eventually I found Year Up, where I learned about how the startup/corporate world was full of college drop-outs making billion-dollar, world-changing technologies!
- 11 - During that same time, I fell in love with a girl I accidentally friendzoned back in highschool when I hated myself too much to believe I could be loved. But as my confidence grew, so too did our relationship.  
Yet...
- 12 - My incompetence kept me awake at night. My poverty crescendoed from the bets I took taking internships for equity. My lackluster coding skills and weak stomach for sales/marketing didn't help either. To this day, I live with my parents. I'm not sure if I'm helping them more or they me. Does it matter? I'm still a failure.

#### Act 3 (1 min)

- 13 - But my Ancestors weren't! I discovered the rich history of the Haitian Revolution and pre-colonial Africa. Countless golden-age kingdoms, innovations, and wisdoms dating back thousands of years flowed through my veins. They showed me that no matter the hardships or uncertainties— we could not only survive, but thrive.
- 14 - Maybe I wasn't a failure, Afterall, I worked as a VR receptionist then became the manager in 6 months. I improved our customer experience, earning over 500 five-star reviews making us one of the highest rated arcades in the world! I was more than a dreamer, I had practical skills.
- 15 - I realized that many of society's problems were here by design. Through bad design. Because faulty systems make people suffer. From apps to housing; new tech to content; government to economy. There aren't enough people designing the world we live in to reflect the world we could thrive in.
- 16 - Over the last 2 years I've been learning what it means to be a designer. I didn't have access to the best resources, but I've been fortunate enough to find mentors and peers to teach me

how to build better systems with science and strategy. Furthermore, I've been refining my ambitions into a brand.

Fin (1 min)

- 17 - I still don't quite know who or what I am. Yet I know a lot about what made me. I believe identity to be a story we tell ourselves. That story is crafted by heeding the lights that shine through the darkness. The iron core of those stars are the perseverance, passion, love, and so on that powers you.
- 18 - Our journey seems inevitable. Perhaps it is. But it is also completely made up. We could connect those dots in any other way and get a whole new story. By walking in what we love, what makes us happy or at least curious, we create our own constellations.
- 19 - I am so many things. I am a Technowizard (in training). Just because. It excites me to design sufficiently advanced technology indistinguishable from magic. Because I want to make the world a better place. Because I'm a failure, impoverished, and ambitious. I am the sum of my ancestor's wildest dreams. I am everything and nothing all at the same glorious moment.
- 20 - As you peer back into the night sky of your own life, what stars and galaxies make up your identity? How have you mapped your way through the dark expanse to define your journey? Would you like to explore together, as we all try to build a better world?

End Title (15 Secs)

- Follow me @ElijahClaude across the internet! I document my journey on my YouTube, and my Newsletter: The Journal of TechnoWizardry

Thanks so much for attending today!! Bye-byeeee