

**STRANGER THINGS 3**

EPISODE #301

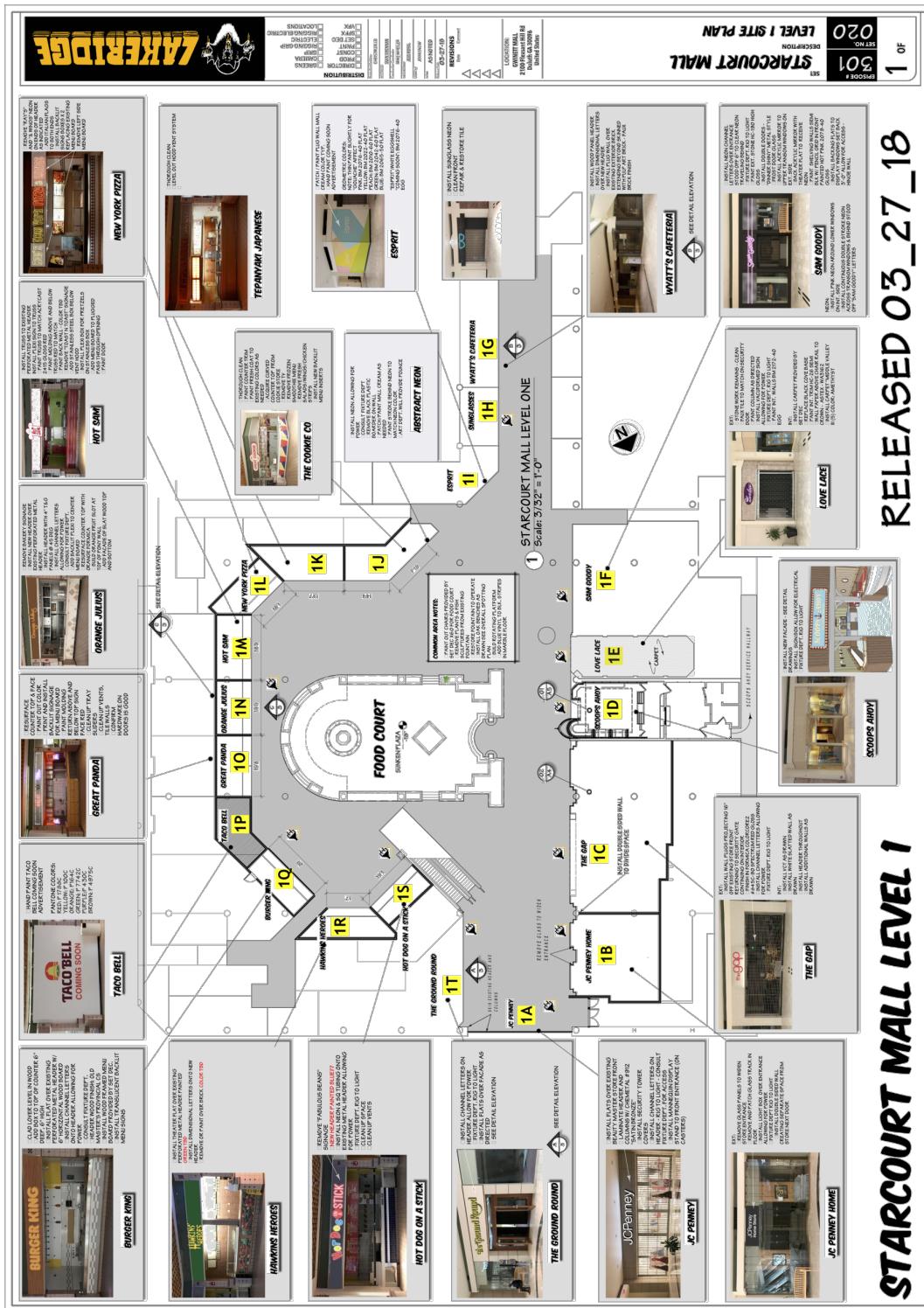
"CHAPTER ONE: SUZIE, DO YOU COPY?"

by

The Duffer Brothers

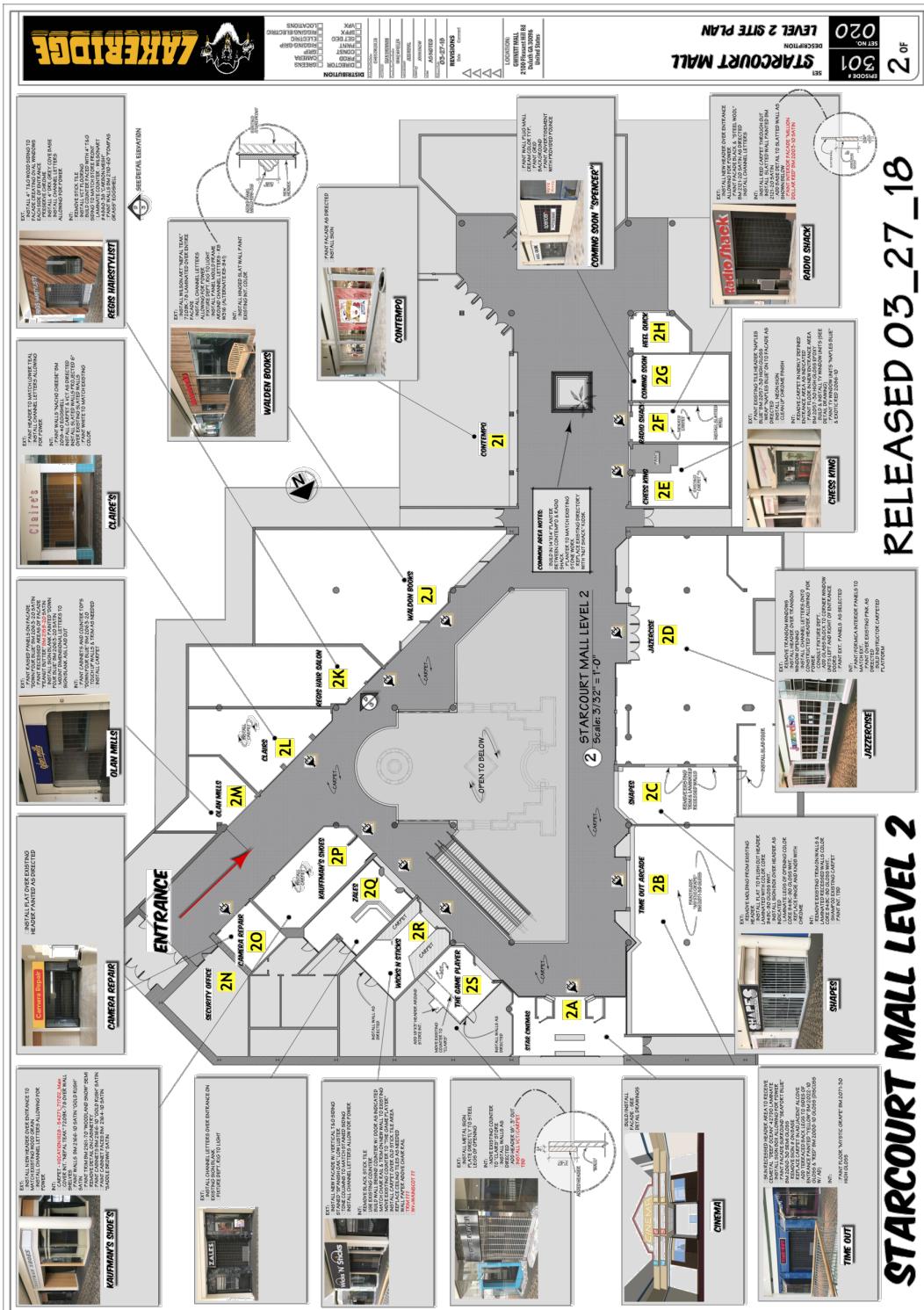
FINAL PRE-POST DRAFT

Floor plan is for reference only. Check with Art Dept. for updated versions.



RELEASED 03-27-18

STARCOURT MALL LEVEL 2



NOTE: Interior Starcourt Mall scenes include SHOP ADDRESS in parenthesis (see attached floor plan).\*

\* 2M is now FLASH STUDIO (formerly OLAN MILLS).

FADE IN:

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - RIFT LAB - DAY**

**CHYRON: JUNE 28, 1984**

A NUMBER of SOVIET SCIENTISTS, male, various ages, DRESSED IN MILITARY HAZMAT SUITS are busy preparing THE KEY for a major test. The Key, about the length and size of an ICBM, resembles a jet engine. It sits in the center of the large room.

WORKER #1 ascends a ladder beside the Key, TURNS SOME SWITCHES on a NEARBY control panel. The action triggers a WARNING ALARM.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - OBSERVATION ROOM - ON GOING**

Overlooking the Key is the OBSERVATION ROOM. An ARMED GUARD is standing at attention at the entrance. TWO HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICIALS: GRIGORI, tall, muscular, mid-30s, and MAJOR GENERAL STEPANOV, 60s, are supervising the test. They are standing before the CONSOLE in front of the OBSERVATION WINDOW. FOUR SCIENTISTS, male, various ages, wearing LAB COATS and THREE SOLDIERS, are in position around the room.

TWO MEN: LEAD RUSSIAN SCIENTIST, late 40s, and DR. ALEXEI, early 30s, enter the room. The Lead Scientist is nervous about the test. He's carrying a SILVER CASE that CONTAINS TWO IDENTICAL KEYS - not unlike the keys used to launch nuclear weapons. Dr. Alexei and the Lead Scientist each take a key and move to opposite ends of the console. The two men LOCK EYES, NOD, AND TURN THEIR KEYS SIMULTANEOUSLY.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - RIFT LAB - ON GOING**

The Key powers on. The TURBINE spins, GENERATING AN ELECTRICAL CURRENT and BRIGHT BOLTS OF ELECTRICITY. GEARS and OTHER MOVING PARTS along the massive machine come alive. At the other end of the machine, a POWERFUL ENERGY BEAM FIRES AT ITS TARGET: An entrance to THE RIFT.

THE CONTACT POINT GLOWS and begins to TEAR A VERTICAL GASH in the stone wall. From within the fissure, VINE-LIKE GROWTHS snake out.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - OBSERVATION ROOM - ON GOING**

There's a palpable sign of relief. Dr. Alexei and his boss exchange a smile. Standing between them, Grigori and Stepanov aren't as enthusiastic.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - RIFT LAB - ON GOING**

The gash is getting bigger and more vines are emerging. But something is wrong.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - OBSERVATION ROOM - ON GOING**

The room begins to VIBRATE - at first it is barely noticeable, but within seconds the shaking gets the attention of everyone.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - RIFT LAB - ON GOING**

The scientists around the Key, still uniformed in hazmat suits, slowly back away. Around the room, EQUIPMENT SPARKS. Overhead LIGHTS shatter.

The energy beam sputters. An INVISIBLE FORCE pushes the beam back. The GASH CLOSES. The beam RETRACTS and the machine's electrical current dies out. The Key slows to a stop. It's QUIET. *Too quiet.*

SUDDENLY, ELECTRICITY SURGES from the machine. Massive BOLTS OF LIGHTNING spit out. Hazmat suits can't protect the men surrounding the Key. The scientists MELT from the inside, out. Within seconds they are a pile of goo. Only those in the control room are spared.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - OBSERVATION ROOM - ON GOING**

The Lead Scientist is worried. Stepanov is angry.

**INT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - RIFT LAB - ON GOING**

Stepanov, followed by the Lead Scientist, Dr. Alexei and Grigori, descend the stairs from the Control Room. Stepanov, emotionless, steps over SMOLDERING BODIES and other DEBRIS and makes his way over to the wall.

Stepanov presses his hand against the wall next to the gash, which is now completely sealed.

LEAD SCIENTIST  
 (in Russian)  
 Comrade General.  
 (forced smile, worried)  
 We are close. You can see. You can  
 see our progress. We just need more  
 time --

JUST THEN, Grigori grabs the man by the throat - lifting him several inches off the ground. The Lead Scientist struggles, but it's no use. Grigori is just too powerful a soldier. Stepanov, emotionless, walks past Grigori and the struggling Lead Scientist. The Major General stops and faces Dr. Alexei - who's a few feet away.

STEPANOV  
 (in Russian)  
 You have one year.

Stepanov walks away.

DR. ALEXEI  
 (in Russian)  
 Yes, Comrade-General.

Grigori drops the lifeless body of the Lead Scientist.

#### **EXT. SOVIET MILITARY INSTALLATION - DAY**

It's cold and snowing. Stepanov and Grigori emerge from a FACILITY BUILT INTO THE SIDE OF MOUNTAIN. The two men walk to a waiting HELICOPTER at a nearby helipad. SEVERAL ARMED SOLDIERS are in position and on duty. Blowing proudly in the cold winds: **THE FLAG OF THE SOVIET UNION.**

CUT TO:

#### **OPENING CREDITS**

EFFECTS IN:

#### **INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

#### **CHYRON: ONE YEAR LATER**

From a BOOMBOX on El's dresser, the song: **"NEVER SURRENDER"** by **COREY HART** plays. EL and MIKE are sitting cross-legged on the bed making out. Mike stops, mid-kiss, to sing along:

MIKE  
(emphatically)  
And nobody wants to know you now  
...  
(imitates guitar break)  
Nobody wants to show you --

EL  
Mike. Mike, stop. Stop!

El tries to silence Mike's beautiful rendition of *Never Surrender*, but he carries on.

MIKE  
So if you're lost and on your own ...      EL (CONT'D)  
Mike! Stop!

MIKE (CONT'D)  
You can never surrender!

EL  
(laughs)  
Stop!

MIKE  
What, you don't like it?

EL  
No!

The couple share a smile and lock eyes before resuming the make-out session.

#### **INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - LIVING ROOM - ON GOING**

JIM HOPPER is sitting in his EASY-CHAIR, eating TOSTITOS from the bag, and dipping them in a JAR OF SALSA. MAGNUM P.I. is on TV, but Hopper isn't really paying attention. He's more concerned about what's happening in his daughter's room with that ... that smug sonofabitch, Mike.

Hopper leans back in his chair, making sure El's door is open -as per the rules. The door is, in fact, slightly ajar, but Hopper sees Mike and El kissing.

HOPPER  
Hey!

El and Mike break apart a moment before El TELEKINETICALLY SLAMS SHUT THE DOOR.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
Hey!

Hopper frantically gets up from his chair. It's a slightly comical sight - Hopper has put on some considerable weight since we last saw him.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
Three-inch minimum! Leave the door open three-inches!

Hopper gets to El's door but is unable to open it. *Her powers.*

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
El, open this door!

He struggles momentarily before he's able to open the door.

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - EL'S BEDROOM - ON GOING**

Hopper sees Mike and El sitting innocently and reading at opposite ends of the bed.

*Nothing to see here.*

MIKE  
What's wrong?

**EXT. FORESTED ROAD - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Mike is riding his BICYCLE and using his WALKIE-TALKIE HEAD-SET to communicate with El.

MIKE  
My God, that was priceless! Did you see his face?

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - EL'S BEDROOM - ON GOING**

El is lying back on her bed. She has a HANDHELD WALKIE TALKIE.

EL  
It was like a tomato!

**EXT. FORESTED ROAD - ON GOING**

MIKE  
Yeah, a fat tomato!

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - EL'S BEDROOM - ON GOING**

EL

I wish I was still with you.

MIKE (O.S.)

I know. Me too.

**EXT. FORESTED ROAD - ON GOING**

MIKE

But I'll see you tomorrow, all right? First thing.

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - EL'S BEDROOM - ON GOING**

EL

Tomorrow.

El lowers the walkie talkie and smiles.

**EXT. STARCOURT MALL - ESTABLISHING SHOT (L2) - LATER THAT NIGHT**

BUSTLING PEOPLE coming and going from the massive new mall in Hawkins. Mike ENTERS FRAME riding his bike up to the front entrance.

**EXT. STARCOURT MALL - FRONT ENTRANCE (L2) - ON GOING**

Mike rides over to the BIKE RACK where LUCAS SINCLAIR, MAX MAYFIELD and WILL BYERS are waiting.

LUCAS

You're late.

MIKE

Sorry!

LUCAS

Again!

WILL

We're going to miss the opening.

MIKE

Yeah, if you guys keep whining about it. Let's go.

LUCAS  
 (mockingly)  
 If you guys keep whining about it.  
 Nyeh-nyeh-nyeh.

MIKE  
 Just please stop talking, dude.

**INT. STARCOURT MALL - ENTRANCE (2N - 2P) - MOMENTS LATER**

Mike and Lucas come through the doors first, followed by Max and Will.

LUCAS  
 Let me guess -- you were busy.  
 (mocking smooching)

MIKE  
 Oh yeah, real mature, Lucas.

Lucas continues his relentless assault.

LUCAS  
 Oh, El, I wish we could make out forever, and never hang out with any of our friends.

MAX  
 Lucas, stop.

LUCAS  
 Will thinks it's funny.

WILL  
 (chuckling)  
 Because it is.

They round a corner and head to the ESCALATORS (2P - 2Q).

MIKE  
 Yeah, it's so funny that I want to spend romantic time with my girlfriend.

LUCAS  
 I'm spending romantic time with *my* girlfriend.

Lucas puts his arm around Max AS THE CAMERA CRANES UP TO REVEAL MORE OF THE BUSTLING MULTI-LEVEL MALL.

CAMERA TILTS DOWN revealing the FOOD COURT.

INT. STARCOURT MALL - CROWDED ESCALATOR - ON GOING

The friends are making their way down the CROWDED ESCALATOR.

**INT. STARCOURT MALL - (1C) - ON GOING**

Mike bumps into a woman.

MIKE  
Sorry! Watch it!

ERICASINCLAIR  
Yeah, watch it, NERD!

ERICA SINCLAIR, 10, Lucas' baby sister, is sitting nearby with FOUR FRIENDS, girls, same age, EATING ICE CREAM. Without stopping to chat, Mike, Lucas, Max and Will walk by Erica and her friends.

LUCAS  
Isn't it past your bedtime?

ERICA SINCLAIR

LUCAS  
Psycho!

ERICA SINCLAIR  
Butthead!

Now separated by several dozen feet, the war of words gets louder as they each try to one-up the other.

LUCAS  
Mall rat!

# ERICA SINCLAIR

## Fart face!

Lucas BLOWS RASPBERRY. Clearly, he lost *this* battle.

MAX  
(grabs Lucas' arm, leads  
him away)  
Oh, now that was mature.

Mike, Will, Lucas and Max enter **SCOOPS AHOY ICE CREAM PARLOR (1D)**.

**INT. SCOOPS AHOY (1D) - ON GOING**

SCOOPS AHOY is a NAUTICAL THEMED ICE CREAM PARLOR. It's a part of the large Starcourt Mall Food Court. Staff of Scoops Ahoy, keeping with the theme, wear a SAILOR UNIFORM.

Mike, leading the way, marches up to a young woman behind the counter: ROBIN BUCKLEY, 18, sharp, intelligent, totally enjoys making fun of her *dingus* colleague. Mike taps the SERVICE BELL REPEATEDLY, disregarding Robin's presence. Robin glares at Mike and calls out to her colleague.

ROBIN

Hey, *dingus*, your children are here.

Behind Robin, is another counter. A SLIDING PLASTIC WINDOW opens. It's STEVE HARRINGTON, 18, who's working in the back room.

STEVE

Again? Seriously?

Mike gives Steve a DEAD-PAN LOOK before ringing the bell one last time.

**INT. STARCOURT MALL - SERVICE HALLWAY (1D) - ON GOING**

The service hallway runs behind the food court restaurants. It's normally used by staff and for deliveries. But today, like many days before it, Mike, Lucas, Will and Max are using it for a different purpose.

The REAR DOOR of Scoops Ahoy swings open. The four friends rush out and into the corridor.

STEVE

I swear, if anybody hears about this --

MIKE, LUCAS, WILL, MAX

We're dead.

Steve sighs before retreating, shutting the door behind him.

**INT. STAR CINEMAS (2A) - MOMENTS LATER**

Mike cracks a door open and peeks out.

MIKE

All clear.

He leads his friends from the service hallway and into a nearby MOVIE HOUSE. They pass by a poster on the wall: **BACK TO THE FUTURE**. And then another poster on the wall beside the door they walk through: **GEORGE A. ROMERO'S DAY OF THE DEAD. SNEAK PREVIEW.**

**INT. MOVIE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

The lights are DIMMED. PATRONS are already seated watching the previews - which have just ended. Mike, Will, Max and Lucas squeeze past to find their seats.

MIKE

See, Lucas, we made it.

LUCAS

We missed the previews.

MAX

(to Lucas)

Still made it, *fart face*.

Max shoots Lucas a coy smile while Lucas jokingly mocks.

Will opens his BACKPACK and pulls out SNACKS. He and Mike distribute them to Max and Lucas.

The MOVIE BEGINS and their focus turns to the film.

MOMENTS LATER the projector stutters before going dark. The CROWD CLAMORS their disappointment.

**INT. STARCOURT MALL - FOOD COURT - SAME TIME**

The LIGHTS GO OUT. The ESCALATORS GRIND TO A HALT. Complete loss of power all over the mall.

Erica and her friends are right where we last saw them.

ERICA SINCLAIR

What the hell?

**INT. SCOOPS AHOY (1D) - SAME TIME**

Steve and Robin are serving TWO CUSTOMERS, girls, 18. The LIGHTS TURN OFF.

STEVE

That's weird.

Steve walks to a light switch on the wall and FLICKS IT OFF AND ON REPEATEDLY. *Nothing.*

ROBIN

That isn't going to work, dingus.

STEVE

(sarcastically)

Oh really?

He continues with the flicking of the switch, but more rapidly.

**EXT. STARCOURT MALL - FRONT ENTRANCE (L2) - SAME TIME**

The CAMERA PULLS BACK as the STARCOURT MALL SIGN goes dark. As the CAMERA CONTINUES PULLING BACK, it reveals more of Hawkins. All over town, the lights are TURNING OFF - SPREADING OUTWARDS FROM THE MALL.

CAMERA SOARS before settling on:

**EXT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - ON GOING**

OVERHEAD VIEW, an abandoned factory on the outskirts of Hawkins. LIGHTS FLICKER OFF as CAMERA (VFX) DESCENDS THROUGH A CHIMNEY.

**INT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - ON GOING**

RATS scurry along the concrete floor. SCATTERED PARTICLES bounce and LIFT OFF the ground. They COALESCE in a DARK SWIRLING CLOUD. THE CLOUD SHIFTS AND GROWS. Dozens of RATS flee the immediate area. The PARTICLE CLOUD speeds TOWARD THE CAMERA BEFORE ENCLOSING THE VIEW IN DARKNESS.

**INT. STARCOURT MALL - FOOD COURT - MOMENTS LATER**

The LIGHTS COME BACK ON. The ESCALATORS START MOVING. Erica, still eating her ice cream cone, looks to her friend and shrugs.

**INT. SCOOPS AHOY (1D) - ON GOING**

The LIGHTS COME BACK ON. Steve, still by the light switch:

STEVE

Let there be light.

**INT. MOVIE HOUSE - ON GOING**

The projector comes back to life and the movie resumes. Much to the delight of the crowd. But not Will. As his friends and the patrons around him settle, Will becomes increasingly worried. GOOSEBUMPS form on the back of Will's neck. He REACHES BEHIND and places his hand over them.

**FLASHBACK:** The SHADOW MONSTER looming over HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL. It's TENDRILS ENTERING WILL'S EYES, EARS, NOSE AND MOUTH.

**FLASHBACK:** Will is STRAPPED TO THE BED inside Hopper's cabin. The MONSTER'S PARICLES stream out of his mouth as he SCREAMS IN PAIN.

**END FLASHBACK**

MIKE

Hey.

Will is jarred from his flashbacks.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You okay?

WILL

(looking nervously)

Yeah.

MIKE

Are you sure?

WILL

Of course.

*He's not.*

Will shifts nervously before turning his attention to the movie screen.

**INT. BYERS' HOME - JONATHAN'S ROOM - MORNING**

NANCY WHEELER snaps awake.

NANCY

Shit.

She checks her WATCH.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Shit, shit, shit, shit.

Beside her, JONATHAN BYERS wakes up, in a daze.

JONATHAN  
Wha -- what's wrong?

NANCY  
It's almost nine.

JONATHAN  
(shocked, confused)  
What?!

NANCY  
We forgot to reset the clocks. The  
power went out last night,  
remember?

Jonathan jumps out of bed in his underwear, rushing to put on a SHIRT. Nancy, by the mirror, is putting a SKIRT on. Jonathan FALLS trying to put on his JEANS.

**EXT. BYERS' HOME - BACKYARD - ON GOING**

From Jonathan's bedroom window, Nancy tosses her SHOES AND PURSE THROUGH. Then climbs out after them. She runs barefoot alongside the house, not stopping to put her shoes on.

**INT. BYERS' HOME - KITCHEN - ON GOING**

Jonathan comes out of his room buttoning up his shirt. At the KITCHEN TABLE is Will, eating breakfast. JOYCE BYERS is about to sit down until she notices Jonathan.

JOYCE  
Hey, hey, hey! Wait up.

JONATHAN  
Oh, no, I'll eat at work. I'm late.

He stops momentarily to face Joyce. Jonathan has Nancy's LIPSTICK KISS IMPRINT on his right cheek.

JOYCE  
Your cheek.  
(wiping off the imprint)

JONATHAN  
All right. I gotta run! See you later.

JOYCE  
All right.

Joyce joins Will at the kitchen table.

WILL  
Ugh. Gross.

JOYCE  
Well, I don't think you're gonna  
think it's gross when you fall in  
love.

WILL  
I'm not gonna fall in love.

JOYCE  
Okay.

Joyce notices something by the FRIDGE. She gets up from the table and walks over.

JOYCE (CONT'D)  
Hey. What happened here?

**BY THE FRIDGE**

Joyce crouches down and picks up fallen MAGNETS and PAPERS. She takes a moment to look mournfully at a PICTURE Will drew of BOB NEWBY, SUPERHERO. Using a MAGNET, Joyce secures the picture to the fridge. She briefly touches it before walking back to the breakfast table.



BOB NEWBY  
SUPERHERO

**EXT. FORESTED ROAD - MORNING**

Jonathan's clunky 1971 FORD GALAXIE 500 drives by.

**INT. JONATHAN'S CAR - ON GOING**

Nancy is applying make up.

NANCY

Can you please drive faster?

JONATHAN

Why, do you wanna break down? We're lucky this thing drives at all.

NANCY

I'm serious, Jonathan, I can't be late.

JONATHAN

You mean we can't be late.

NANCY

No, I mean I can't be late. They like you no matter what you do.

JONATHAN

Hey, they like you too.

NANCY

Yeah, they like that I'm a coffee delivery machine. They don't actually like me or respect me as a living, breathing human with a brain.

JONATHAN

Hey. Wait. You just -- you just gotta be patient, okay? They're set in their ways, you know? But ... once they realize what a gifted writer you are, they'll come around.

NANCY

I really don't need a Jonathan Byers pep talk right now. Can you just ... please drive faster.

JONATHAN

Okay.

**EXT. FORESTED ROAD - ON GOING**

As Jonathan's car drives by, it passes a YELLOW VOLVO coming from the opposite direction. The HENDERSON VOLVO.

**INT. HENDERSON VOLVO - ON GOING**

CLAUDIA HENDERSON is driving. DUSTIN HENDERSON is in the front passenger seat trying to raise his friends on his WALKIE TALKIE HEADSET.

DUSTIN

This is Gold Leader, returning to base. Do you copy? Over.

Dustin has just returned from CAMP KNOW WHERE '85. He's wearing a CAP and T-SHIRT proudly displaying the Camp's logo.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

This is Gold Leader, returning to base. Do you copy? Over?

*Nothing.*

Dustin is loosing his patience.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

I repeat: This is Gold Leader, returning to base. Do you copy? Over.

(louder now)

I repeat: This is goddamn Gold Leader --

CLAUDIA

Dusty!

DUSTIN

What!?

CLAUDIA

Relax! For goodness' sake.

DUSTIN

I'm in range. They should be answering.

CLAUDIA

You've been away a whole month, honeybun. Maybe they just forgot.

Dustin looks worriedly out his window.

**EXT. HENDERSON RESIDENCE - LATER**

The Volvo pulls into the driveway and parks under the CARPORT.

**INT. HENDERSON RESIDENCE - DUSTIN'S ROOM - DAY**

Dustin slams his DUFFLE BAG onto his BED. He sits wearily. Then, he notices YERTLE, his pet TURTLE, looking at him from its TERRARIUM.

DUSTIN

At least someone's happy I'm home.

Just then, a TOY ROBOT comes to life and WOBLES INTO THE ROOM. Then, the Robot is joined by R2-D2. Alarmed, Dustin rises to his feet. A TOY MONKEY STARTS BANGING ITS CYMBALS. A TRANSFORMER and TANK come alive and start APPROACHING Dustin. An ELECTRONIC DINOSAUR starts shooting SMALL DISCS at Dustin. A TOY STEAM TRAIN rumbles by Dustin's feet. The toys make their way out of his bedroom following the Robot. Dustin quickly looks around his room for something to arm himself with. He grabs the bottle of FARRAH FAWCETT HAIRSPRAY from his dresser.

**INT. HENDERSON RESIDENCE - HALLWAY - ON GOING**

Dustin carefully and slowly exits his room. The hairspray is at the ready - as if it were a gun. Dustin begins following the toys as they march toward the LIVING ROOM.

DUSTIN

(to himself)

It's just a dream. You're dreaming.

Dustin's finger is on the hairspray's trigger. He continues after the toy army.

**INT. HENDERSON RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME**

Max, Lucas, Will, Mike and Eleven stand pressed against a wall. Eleven's eyes are closed. BLOOD DRIPS from her LEFT NOSTRIL. Mike looks to her:

MIKE

(whispers)

Now.

El's eyes open. At that moment, the toys COME TO A HALT. Dustin, standing behind the army of toys, rushes over to R2 and picks it up. He quickly examines the toy before putting it down and then picking up the Robot leader.

IN THE BACKGROUND, WE CAN SEE Max, Will, Lucas, Mike and El slowly creeping up behind an unsuspecting Dustin. They're carrying a HOMEMADE WELCOME HOME sign and have NOISEMAKERS at the ready.

*Dustin has no idea.*

Max begins a silent countdown. 3 - 2 - 1.

At that moment: THEY BLOW INTO THE NOISEMAKERS. Dustin jumps to his feet, SCREAMS, TURNS AROUND, AND WITHOUT WARNING, SPRAYS LUCAS IN THE FACE with the Farrah Fawcett Hairspray. The others back away, covering their eyes. Lucas SCREAMS, which, oddly, sounds a lot like a little girl's scream.

#### **EXT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL - LATER**

It's a BEAUTIFUL SUNNY day. The OUTDOOR POOL is packed with CHILDREN and ADULTS. HOLLY WHEELER, 6, is playing MARCO POLO with a SMALL GROUP of FRIENDS.

Not too far away, POOL SIDE, KAREN WHEELER, wearing a ONE-PIECE SWIMSUIT and FULL FACE MAKE-UP is lounging with THREE FRIENDS. MOM #1 (blonde), MOM #2 (LIZ - black hair), MOM #3 (Jill - brunette). Karen SIPS A CAN OF NEW COKE from a straw and is reading a ROMANCE NOVEL. Just then:

MOM #1

Ladies.

(pushes down sunglasses)

She's coming down.

It's shift change for the LIFEGUARDS. HEATHER HOLLOWAY, 18, climbs down from the LIFEGUARD HIGHCHAIR and makes her way around the POOL DECK.

Karen and her friends put down their reading materials, and sit up straighter - adjusting HAIR and SWIMSUITS and checking their MAKE-UP. The mom's reposition themselves toward the LOCKER ROOM; Mom #1 checks her make-up in a COMPACT MIRROR.

MOM #1 (CONT'D)

And -- showtime.

(closes the compact)

The DOOR to the LOCKER ROOM SWINGS OPEN. BILLY HARGROVE emerges.

He's wearing RED LIFEGUARD SWIM TRUNKS and SUNGLASSES. His LIFEGUARD WHISTLE hangs around his neck and flows down his tanned, muscular chest.

Karen and the moms STARE at Billy lustily. Essentially undressing him with their eyes.

Heather shoots Billy a FLIRTY SMILE as she walks past, but he pays no attention to her - or the MANY OTHER WOMEN ogling him in his wake.

Looking across the pool, Billy notices an INFRACTION and BLOWS HIS WHISTLE.

A HEAVY-SET BOY, 10, is RUNNING ON THE POOL DECK. The whistle brings him to a HALT. Other PATRONS stop what they're doing. It's QUIET.

BILLY  
(yelling)  
Hey! Lard-ass!

The admonished boy looks embarrassingly at Billy.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
No running on my watch! I gotta  
warn you again, and you're banned  
for life. You wanna be banned for  
life, lard-ass?

Lard-ass nervously shakes his head.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Didn't think so.  
(blows his whistle)

The patrons continue about their day. Lard-ass sheepishly, and slowly, walks away.

Billy walks by Karen and her friends.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Afternoon, ladies.

KAREN & FRIENDS  
(in unison)  
Afternoon, Billy.

BILLY  
Dig the new suit, Mrs. Wheeler.

KAREN  
(seductively)  
Thank you.

Billy licks his lips, then climbs up into the highchair Heather was just sitting on.

Karen stares at Billy LECHEROUSLY. She takes a deep breath.

**EXT. DOWNTOWN HAWKINS - MAIN STREET - DAY**

Starcourt Mall has all but wiped out local businesses. BROWN PAPER covers the windows of closed shops. At the RADIO SHACK, a sign on the window encourages shoppers to: **VISIT OUR NEW LOCATION AT STARCOURT MALL!** The shops that still remain open have little to no foot traffic. UNOPENED MAIL, piled up at doors. The LAUNDROMAT, empty, lights off. A NEARBY UTILITY POLE: A posted FADED HOMEMADE FLYER: **SAVE DOWNTOWN! NO TO MALL. TOWN HALL TUESDAY 6:00PM. SAY NO TO STARCOURT!**

**EXT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - DAY**

BANNERS and SIGNS on the storefront window advise of a SALE.

**INT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - ON GOING**

Joyce is hanging a PROMOTIONAL BANNER in the storefront window. Hopper walks in, wearing his POLICE CHIEF UNIFORM. Hopper isn't here on business; he's here for advice. Again.

JOYCE

Hey.

HOPPER

Hey. You busy?

JOYCE

You're our first customer, so ...

Hopper DROPS HIS GAZE, and NODS.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

(scoffs)

What now?

**INT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - PRODUCT AISLE - MOMENTS LATER**

Joyce is PRICE TAGGING PRODUCTS. Hopper is sitting nearby.

HOPPER

And then El, she just ... slams the door. Right in my face.

JOYCE

Uh-huh?

HOPPER

You know, it is that smug  
sonofabitch, Mike. He's corrupting  
her, I'm telling you. And I'm gonna  
lose it. I mean, I am gonna lose  
it, Joyce.

JOYCE

(moving to a different  
aisle)

Just take it down, Hopper.

HOPPER

I need for them to break up.

JOYCE

That's not your decision.

HOPPER

They're spending entirely too much  
time together. You agree with me  
about that, right?

JOYCE

(price-tagging items)

Well, I mean, they're just kissing,  
right?

HOPPER

Yeah, but it's constant! It is  
CONSTANT! Okay? That's not normal,  
that is not healthy.

JOYCE

You can't just force them apart. I  
mean, they're not little kids  
anymore, Hop. They're teenagers. If  
you order them around like a cop  
then they're gonna rebel. It's just  
what they do.

HOPPER

Well, so what, I'm just supposed to  
let them do whatever they want?

JOYCE

No, I didn't say that. I think you  
should ... talk to them.

HOPPER

No. No. 'Cause talking doesn't work.

JOYCE

Not yelling. Not ordering. But talk to them. You know, like a heart-to-heart.

HOPPER

A heart-to-heart? What is that?

JOYCE

You sit them down and you talk to them, like you're their friend. I find if you talk to them like you're on their level, then they really start to listen. And then, you know, you could start to create some boundaries.

HOPPER

(deep in thought)

Boundaries.

JOYCE

Yeah, but, Hop -- it's really important that no matter how they respond, you stay calm. You cannot lose your temper.

HOPPER

Uh, maybe you could do it for me?

JOYCE

No.

HOPPER

(approaches Joyce)

Yeah, you could. You -- you could. You can come over after work. Yes.

JOYCE

No. It only works if it comes from you. But ...

(moves to the check-out counter)

Maybe I can help you find the right words.

Joyce grabs a NOTEPAD and PEN and begins to write.

Through the storefront windows WE SEE NANCY rushing by.

**EXT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - ON GOING**

SPEED WALKING, Nancy checks her WATCH. She's carrying a LARGE BROWN PAPER BAG. *Lunch for the men.*

**EXT. THE HAWKINS POST - MOMENTS LATER**

Nancy walks through the front door.

**INT. THE HAWKINS POST - RECEPTION - ON GOING**

Nancy reaches into the bag and pulls out some WRAPPED SANDWICHES. She hands one to the RECEPTIONIST, female, late 40s, who's TYPING.

RECEPTIONIST

Thanks, hon.

**INT. THE HAWKINS POST - OPEN-CONCEPT OFFICES - ON GOING**

Walking through the office, Nancy places A SANDWICH ON A DESK where a WOMAN, black, late 40s, IS TYPING. Nancy continues marching toward the DARK ROOM. Disregarding the ILLUMINATED RED LIGHT, warning that entry is prohibited, Nancy opens the door.

**INT. THE HAWKINS POST - DARK ROOM - ON GOING**

Jonathan is DEVELOPING PHOTOS when Nancy barges in.

JONATHAN

No, no, no, no! Nancy!

Nancy places A SANDWICH on a nearby table.

NANCY

Sorry!

She leaves, closing the door behind her.

**INT. THE HAWKINS POST - CONFERENCE ROOM - ON GOING**

SEVERAL SUITED MEN are sitting around a TABLE - a STORY MEETING. Nancy distributes SANDWICHES to the men, many of whom are SMOKING, DRINKING COFFEE AND MUNCHING ON DUNKIN' DONUTS.

TOM HOLLOWAY, early 50s, is the boss. He's leading the meeting. BRUCE, 40s, reporter, sarcastic and chauvinistic.

REPORTER #1  
How about something on Iran?

TOM  
I want something local.

BRUCE  
I hear there's a beauty pageant at  
the fair this year.

Nancy places A WRAPPED HAMBURGER on the desk beside Tom, then continues distributing lunch orders.

TOM  
Yeah, I'm looking for *above* the  
fold here, Bruce.

BRUCE  
Then clearly you haven't seen Lucy  
Lebrock, because I'm not sure  
she'll fit above the fold.  
(pantomimes having large  
breasts)

The other reporters LAUGH. Nancy places A WRAPPED HAMBURGER beside Bruce. Tom doesn't share in the laughter.

TOM  
Fellas! In six hours, we go to  
print. I need something real.

Bruce continues his rhetoric.

BRUCE  
Oh, I think they're *real*.

The men LAUGH. Nancy is about to leave the room, but stops at the threshold. Then:

NANCY  
What about Starcourt?

Silence overcomes the room. The men stare blankly at Nancy.  
After a BEAT:

NANCY (CONT'D)  
I -- I was just thinking. I mean, I  
know everyone loves the mall. But,  
how many small businesses have  
closed since it opened? Like, five  
on Main, at least. It's changing  
the fabric of our town, in a way --

Tom listens, half-heartedly interested. Bruce, however:

BRUCE

(opening the wrapper on  
his sandwich)

*The death of small town America. I like it. I like it a lot. But I think I've got something even spicier.*

(lifting the bun, showing  
Nancy)

*It's about the missing mustard on my hamburger.*

The men LAUGH.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

*You think you can follow the clues and solve the case of the missing condiment, Nancy Drew?*

Nancy forces a smile before retrieving Bruce's burger.

NANCY

Sorry.

She storms out of the conference room.

**INT. THE HAWKINS POST - OFFICE AREA - ON GOING**

WE SEE Nancy leave the room and WALK PAST THE CAMERA.

BRUCE

Look out, Phil. She might be after your job!

The men, once again, LAUGH HYSTERICALLY.

**INT. HENDERSON RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - LATER**

Lucas is at the sink FLUSHING HIS EYES.

LUCAS

Ow, ow, ow.

He stands up. Max is beside him.

MAX

Better?

LUCAS

Still stings.

He runs his fingers over his eyes, then turns his focus to Max.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
Is that a new zit?

Max's concern for Lucas turns to scorn.

MAX  
What is wrong with you?

She dunks Lucas' head in the sink.

LUCAS  
I was just asking!

Lucas' PATHETIC SCREAMS are drowned out -- literally -- under the tap water.

**INT. HENDERSON RESIDENCE - DUSTIN'S ROOM - ON GOING**

Will, Mike and El join Dustin in his bedroom. Dustin is showing off his INVENTIONS from Camp Know Where.

DUSTIN  
I call it -- the Forever Clock.

Dustin shows them a WOODEN/TIN contraption that RESEMBLES A WINDMILL. Strangely, there is no clock.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
All right? Powered by wind. Very useful in the apocalypse.

Dustin hands the device to Will.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
Then, I give you -- the Slammer.

It's a MOTORIZED HAMMER. He's engages the device, and pushes it toward El and Mike.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
(chuckles)  
Pretty neat, huh?

Dustin turns to his duffle bag.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
But *this*. This is my masterpiece.

He places the heavy bag on the floor. They all sit. Dustin unzips the bag.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
 I would like you to meet --  
 Cerebro.

The bag is full of PARTS. It resembles nothing at all -- other than a bag of parts.

MIKE  
 (confused)  
 What exactly are we looking at here?

Dustin's enthusiasm is contagious. His TOOTHLESS GRIN, beyond cute.

DUSTIN  
 An unassembled one-of-a-kind battery-powered radio tower!

He smiles brightly, while the others look bewildered.

WILL  
 So, it's a -- ham radio.

DUSTIN  
 (as a matter of fact,  
 like)  
 The Cadillac of ham radios. This baby carries a crystal-clear connection over vast distances. I'm talking North Pole to South. I can talk to my girlfriend whenever and wherever I choose.

*Wait, what?*

Will, Mike and El shoot each other a look. Then, in unison:

WILL, MIKE, EL  
 Girlfriend?

Dustin smiles and nods.

**INT. HENDERSON RESIDENCE - HALLWAY, LIVING ROOM - LATER**

Dustin, carrying his duffle bag, is leading the way. Following behind is Mike, El and Will.

MIKE  
 Wait, so her name is Suzie?

DUSTIN  
 Suzie with a 'z.' She's from Utah.

WILL  
Girls go to science camp?

DUSTIN  
Suzie does! She's a genius.

**LIVING ROOM**

MIKE  
Is she cute?

DUSTIN  
Think Phoebe Cates, only hotter.

Max and Lucas are still at the sink in the kitchen. Lucas still has his face under the running tap.

MAX  
What's going on?

Dustin, Mike, El and Will are on their way out the front door. Before leaving, Will responds to Max.

WILL  
We're going to talk to Dustin's  
girlfriend.

Lucas, eyes closed, lifts his head from the sink.

MAX	LUCAS
Girlfriend?	Girlfriend?

Lucas and Max rush out after the others.

**INT. SCOOPS AHOY (1D) - DAY**

Steve scoops a single DOLLOP of CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM ON A CONE and then hands it to his customers. TWO GIRLS, 18.

STEVE  
Alrighty, one scoop of chocolate.  
That's a buck-twenty-five. Anything else?

Girl #1 reaches into her purse. Girl #2 is enjoying her own ICE CREAM CONE. Girl #1 hands Steve MONEY. Steve notices the SHIRT she's wearing.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Whoa, *Purdue*. Fancy.

Clearly, it's a shirt from her soon-to-be school, PURDUE UNIVERSITY.

GIRL #1  
Yeah, I'm excited.

Steve works the REGISTER. His FLIRTING becomes clear.

STEVE  
Yeah, you know, I considered it.  
Purdue. Then, I was, like, you know  
what? I really think I need some  
real-life experience, you know,  
before I hit college, see what it  
feels like.

The teen girls shoot each other a look and share a smirk.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Kinda like, uh, I don't know, see  
what it's like to earn a working-  
man's wage, you know? Uh -- Oh,  
sorry.

The register malfunctions momentarily. More of a "Steve not paying attention thing", than an actual issue with the machine itself.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
I think that's, like, really  
important.

GIRL #1  
Yeah, totally.

STEVE  
Yeah, anyway, this was, like, so  
fun.  
(chuckles nervously, hands  
the girl her change)  
We should, kind of like, you know,  
I don't know, maybe hang out this  
weekend or --  
(drops the girl's change)  
-- oh, sorry about that.  
I don't know. Maybe next weekend or  
...  
...

GIRL #1  
Yeah, I'm busy.

STEVE  
Oh, that's cool. I'm -- I'm working  
here next weekend, so ... the ...  
following weekend's better for me.

This is unfamiliar territory for Steve: hot girls turning him down. It's a catastrophic disaster.

GIRL #1  
No. I'm sorry, I can't. Okay,  
thanks.

The girls walk away - leaving Steve speechless...almost.

STEVE  
I --- this is my first day here.

The girls leave the store without looking back. Steve is deeply wounded. He SIGHS.

Behind Steve, at the counter and from the backroom, Robin appears with a WHITE BOARD WITH TWO COLUMNS WRITTEN:

YOU RULE | YOU SUCK.

ROBIN  
And another one bites the dust.

Steve turns and faces Robin. Under the YOU SUCK column, there are already FIVE STRIKES.

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
You are oh-for-six, Popeye.  
(with a marker, draws the  
sixth line)

STEVE  
Yeah, yeah, I can count.

ROBIN  
You know that means you suck.

STEVE  
Yep, I can read, too.

ROBIN  
Since when?

BEAT

STEVE  
It's this stupid hat. I am telling  
you, it is totally blowing my best  
feature.

ROBIN  
Yeah, company policy is a real  
drag.  
(MORE)

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
 You know, it's a crazy idea, but  
 have you considered ... telling the  
 truth?

STEVE  
 Oh, you mean, that I couldn't even  
 get into Tech and my douchebag  
 dad's trying to teach me a lesson,  
 I make three-bucks an hour and I  
 have no future? That truth?

Looking over Steve's shoulder, Robin:

ROBIN  
 (pointing)  
 Hey, twelve o'clock.

Steve turns his head and sees FOUR TEEN GIRLS, 18, walk in.  
 He turns to Robin:

STEVE  
 Oh, shit. Oh, shit. Okay -- Uh,  
 goin' in. And you know what?  
 (takes off sailor hat,  
 throws it)  
 Screw company policy.

ROBIN  
 (dead-pan)  
 Oh, my God, you're a whole new man.

STEVE  
 Right?

Steve focuses his attention the girls, oozing confidence and charm, using nautical metaphors like a seasoned employee.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
 Ahoy, ladies! Didn't see you there.  
 Would you guys like to set sail on  
 this ocean of flavor with me? I'll  
 be your captain. I'm Steve  
 Harrington. Can I give you guys a  
 little taste of the Cherries  
 Jubilee? No? Anybody? Banana Boat?  
 Four people, four spoons?

Robin watches the train wreck-in-progress, walks to the whiteboard, and marks a SEVENTH STRIKE under the YOU SUCK column.

STEVE (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
 Share it in the booth? Anybody?  
 It's hot out there.

**EXT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - DAY**

Hopper's TRUCK is parked beside Joyce's PINTO.

**INT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - PHARMACY COUNTER - DAY**

Hopper is rehearsing his heart-to-heart speech with Joyce. Sitting opposite each other.

HOPPER

I know this is a difficult conversation to have -- but I hope you know that I care about you very much. And I --

JOYCE

Eye contact.

HOPPER

(sighs)

And I know that you...both care about each other very much -- this does not sound like me at all.

JOYCE

Just keep going. Come on.

HOPPER

Which is why I think it's important to establish boundaries...

(haltingly)

...moving forward...

(checks notes)

JOYCE

No looking. You know this. Come on.

HOPPER

So we can build an environment...?  
Uh ... where we ... all feel comfortable? And... trusted. And open.

JOYCE

(whispers, encouraging)

*Share our feelings.*

HOPPER

To sharing our feelings -- this isn't going to work. It's not gonna work.

JOYCE  
Yes it will! I promise.

HOPPER  
Maybe I'll just kill Mike.  
(sits beside Joyce)  
I'm the chief of police, I could  
cover it up.

Joyce tenderly reassures Hopper. She places her hand over his.

JOYCE  
You got this. I promise.

Hopper and Joyce lock eyes. Then after a BEAT:

HOPPER  
You wanna have dinner tonight? You  
can give me some more pointers.

JOYCE  
Oh ... I um ...  
(takes her hand away)  
I have plans.

HOPPER  
(looks away awkwardly)  
Okay, sure.

The DOOR BELL JINGLES.

JOYCE  
Oh, a customer.

Joyce goes off to help CAROL, 60s, a frequent customer.

JOYCE (CONT'D)  
Hey, Carol!

CAROL  
Oh, hi, Joyce!

JOYCE  
How are you? So good to see you.

CAMERA SLOWLY PUSHES IN ON HOPPER as he sits in deep thought. Joyce and Carol continue to talk.

CAROL (O.C.)  
So, Georgie has his thirteenth  
birthday coming up.

JOYCE (O.C.)  
Oh, my gosh, thirteen?

CAROL (O.C.)  
I know! And I'm a little lost ...

A slight smile and a sense of calm wash over Hopper.

**EXT. WEATHERTOP - DAY**

Dustin is leading Max, Lucas, Will, Mike and El up a STEEP GRASSY HILL known as WEATHERTOP. It's the highest point in Hawkins. Mike and El are holding hands while the others are carrying CEREBRO PARTS.

LUCAS  
Aren't we high enough?

DUSTIN  
Cerebro works best at a hundred meters.

MAX  
You know, I'm pretty sure people in Utah have telephones.

DUSTIN  
Yeah, but Suzie's Mormon.

LUCAS  
Oh, shit! She doesn't have electricity?

MAX  
No, that's the Amish.

WILL  
What are Mormons?

DUSTIN  
Super religious white people. They have electricity and cars and stuff, but since I'm not Mormon, her parents would never approve. It's all a bit ... Shakespearean.

MAX  
Shakespearean?

DUSTIN  
Yeah. Like Romeo and Juliet.

MAX

Right.

DUSTIN

Star-crossed lovers.

MAX

I got it.

Speaking of *star-crossed lovers*, Mike and El are purposely lagging behind the rest of the group.

MIKE

Hey guys!

The others halt and turn to face Mike and El.

MIKE (CONT'D)

This is fun and all, but, uh ...

(Mike taps his watch)

EL

I have to go home.

DUSTIN

We're almost there.

MIKE

Sorry, man. Curfew.

Mike takes El's hand.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Come one, let's go.

They start walking back down the hill, leaving their friends behind to set up Cerebro.

EL

Good luck.

Mike and El share a cute giggle.

DUSTIN

Curfew at four?

LUCAS

They're lying.

WILL

It's been like this all summer.

MAX

It's romantic.

WILL  
It's gross.

DUSTIN  
It's bullshit. I just got home.

BEAT

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
Well, their loss, right? Onwards  
and upwards. Suzie awaits!

Dustin turns and continues up the hill. Max and Lucas sigh in exhaustion and fall-in behind Dustin. Will turns to follow but hesitates. A LOOK OF DREAD OVERTAKES WILL'S PALE FACE. GOOSEBUMPS form on the back of his neck. He slides a hand ON TO THE BACK OF HIS NECK, then turns toward Mike and El.

DUSTIN (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
Will, come on!

Will turns around and hurries to catch up with his friends. In the grass, just beyond where Will was standing, SEVERAL RATES SCURRY ACROSS THE HILL.

#### **EXT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - DAY**

THOUSANDS OF RODENTS converge on the abandoned factory.

#### **INT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - DAY**

The rats scurry across the main floor, then down a GRATED STAIRCASE.

#### **INT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - BASEMENT - DAY**

The basement is dark. Rats cover the floor - many are DEAD. Some are WRITHING and SQUEALING. AS THE CAMERA SLIDES ACROSS THE FLOOR, WE SEE RATS BURSTING INTO PILES OF GOO. A rat's EXPLODING BODY GIVES WAY TO:

#### **EXT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL - DAY**

A SPLASH as Karen BACKSTROKES in one of the lanes. In the lifeguard HIGHCHAIR, Billy removes his SUNGLASSES and stares in admiration. A slight smile touches his lips. Karen's chest rises out of the water with each stroke. Billy seductively slips his whistle into his mouth.

Karen steps out of the pool. Billy approaches.

BILLY  
 Looking good out there, Mrs.  
 Wheeler.  
 (hands her a towel)

KAREN  
 Thank you.

BILLY  
 Perfect form.

KAREN  
 Well ... your form is amazing.

Billy chuckles.

KAREN (CONT'D)  
 I'm sorry, I mean, I've seen you  
 ... uh, teaching ... lessons.  
 Swimming lessons.

BILLY  
 You know, I could teach you, if you  
 like.

KAREN  
 Oh?

Billy move closer to Karen.

BILLY  
 I know all the styles. Freestyle.  
 Butterfly.  
 (raises a stick of gum to  
 his lips)  
*Breast-stroke.*

As he nibbles on the GUM, Karen drops the TOWEL.

BILLY (CONT'D)	KAREN
Oh.	Oh.

They both reach for the towel.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 You okay?

KAREN  
 I didn't think you ... I didn't  
 think you taught adults.

BILLY  
 Well, I offer more, uh, advanced  
 lessons to select clientele.

KAREN

Oh.

BILLY

Come to think of it, there is a good pool out at Motel 6 on Cornwallis. It's very quiet. You know, very private.

Karen looks around nervously. Billy and Karen are now just inches away from each other.

KAREN

Mm.

BILLY

Shall we say tonight? Eight o'clock?

KAREN

I'm sorry. I can't.

BILLY

Can't what? Have fun?

Karen flirtatiously laughs.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Mrs. Wheeler!

KAREN

I ... I just, uh, I don't think I need any lessons.

BILLY

Oh, you see, I think you do. I just don't think that you've had the right teacher.

KAREN

I, uh --

BILLY

It will be the workout of your life.

Karen meets Billy's gaze and smiles coyly.

#### **EXT. WEATHERTOP - LATER THAT AFTERNOON**

Dustin, Max, Will and Lucas make it to the top.

DUSTIN

Made it!

MAX

Yeah, it only took five hours.

WILL

Why couldn't we just play D&D?

LUCAS

I'm so thirsty.

Lucas drops what he's carrying, UNCAPS A CANTEEN OF WATER, and drinks. And drinks. And drinks. And drinks. Max stares at Lucas incredulously.

MAX

Did you seriously just drink the rest of our water?

Lucas spits some back into the canteen, then holds it's out to her with an innocent grin. Max shakes her head, then turns away.

**EXT. WEATHERTOP - MOMENTS LATER**

As the SUN SETS, the friends begin to built Dustin's Cerebro.

**MONTAGE OVER LIGHT SYNTH MUSIC, then:**

DUSTIN

(admiring his creation)

Impressive, right? You ready to meet my love?

MAX

Okay, sure

WILL

Yeah.

Dustin sits on the grass and picks up a MIC ATTACHED TO THE TRANSMITTER. Lucas, Max and Will gather closer to Dustin.

DUSTIN

(into the mic.)

Suzie, this is Dustin. Do you copy?  
Over.

RADIO STATIC

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
 (to the group)  
 One sec. She's probably -- she's  
 still there.  
 (into the mic.)  
 Suzie, this is Dustin. Do you copy?  
 Over.

RADIO STATIC. Lucas, Max and Will exchange skeptical looks.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)	LUCAS
(to Lucas)	Yeah.
I'm sure she's there. It's	
just --	

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
 It's around dinnertime --

LUCAS	MAX
Mm.	Yep.

DUSTIN  
 -- here.  
 (into mic.)  
 Suzie, do you copy? This is Dustin.  
 Over.

RADIO STATIC. The SUN is LOW IN THE SKY. But Dustin persists.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
 Suzie, do you copy? This is Dustin.  
 Over.

RADIO STATIC

**EXT. BYERS' HOME - FRONT YARD - NIGHT**

Joyce pulls in.

**INT. BYERS' HOME - FRONT ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER**

JOYCE  
 Hey, guys, I'm home.

Neither Jonathan nor Will are home.

JOYCE (CONT'D)  
 Guys? Hello?

**INT. BYERS' HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

**POV: INSIDE FRIDGE** as Joyce grabs some LEFTOVERS.

**INT. BYERS' HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Joyce transfers a piece of leftover LASAGNA on to a PLATE, then SPOONS PEAS along side it.

She sets the MICROWAVE to TWO-MINUTES, then engages it.

Joyce UNCORKS A BOTTLE OF RED WINE and pours a GLASS.

*Table for one.*

**INT. BYERS' HOME - LIVINGROOM**

Joyce sets the plate on the COFFEE TABLE, sits on the SOFA, and uses the REMOTE to turn on the TV. The show **CHEERS** is on. A rerun.

Memories come flooding back to Joyce. Her expression grows sad.

**FLASHBACK:** BOB NEWBY and Joyce are cuddling on the *same* sofa watching the *same* episode of Cheers.

BOB  
(laughing)  
They're funny, don't you think?

JOYCE  
(laughing)  
Yes.

BOB  
I just wish they'd get back together again already.

JOYCE  
Me too.

They kiss, then go back to watching the show.

**END OF FLASHBACK**

Joyce morosely cuts into the piece of lasagna.

**INT. BYERS' HOME - KITCHEN - SAME TIME**

CAMERA SLOWLY PANS from the living room and then settles on WILL'S DRAWING OF BOB NEWBY SUPERHERO. The fridge begins to vibrate. The ROCKETSHIP MAGNET holding up the drawing shakes briefly before everything on the fridge slides onto the floor.

**INT. THE HAWKINS POST - NIGHT**

Nancy, WEARING RUBBER GLOVES, is cleaning the mess left behind in the conference room.

PHONE RINGS on the DESK just outside of the conference room.

Alone in the office, Nancy pulls off her gloves and answers the phone.

NANCY  
Hawkins Post.

A FEMALE voice, INAUDIBLE.

NANCY (CONT'D)  
Um, hold on, I'm --  
(grabbing a pen and  
notepad)  
I'm sorry, can you repeat that?

Nancy writes: DORIS DRISCOLL. 4819 CORNWALLIS RD.  
DISEASE...RATS.

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

The BOOMBOX is playing: "CAN'T FIGHT THIS FEELING BY REO SPEEDWAGON." Mike and El are sitting opposite, on El's bed, making out.

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - HOP'S BEDROOM - ON GOING**

Hopper is on his bed hugging a PILLOW nervously. A lit CIGARETTE hangs from his lips. He's rehearsing his heart-to-heart.

HOPPER  
... why it's important to establish  
these boundaries -- moving forward,  
so that we can create an  
environment where -- you feel  
comfortable and trusted and open.  
Shit.

(MORE)

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 (checks notes)  
 To share our feelings.

Hopper sets the pillow aside and takes a drag from his cigarette.

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - LIVING ROOM - ON GOING**

Hopper slides back the SHEET SERVING AS HIS BEDROOM DOOR. He tucks his notes into his shirt pocket and walks to El's bedroom door (which is ajar precisely three-inches). Hopper knocks on the wall beside the door.

HOPPER  
 Hey.

ELEVEN (O.S.)  
 (calmly)  
 Yes?

HOPPER  
 Can I talk to you guys a minute?

El TELEKINETICALLY opens the door much wider.

**INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - EL'S BEDROOM - ON GOING**

The door swings open. Hopper stands at the threshold. Mike and El are sitting on different parts of the bed. Mike looks really disappointed.

HOPPER  
 (nervously)  
 Hi.

EL ('um, okay?') Hi?	MIKE ('go away') Hi.
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The SONG CONTINUES at near full volume. Shifting vulnerably, Hopper steps inside. He grabs a CHAIR and sits facing the bed. El scoots closer to Mike. Hopper glances nervously between the two. Mike and El regard him with confused looks. Hopper turns to the boombox and switches it off. He turns his attention back to Mike and El.

HOPPER  
 Um.

He rubs his lip. There is SILENCE. El pitches her head forward expectantly.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 What I, uh -- needed to say to you --  
 - What I wanted -- to say to you --  
 is that, um --

MIKE  
 (to El, jokingly)  
 Uh-oh. I think we're in trouble.

The two kids chuckle and Mike shoots Hopper a sly smile.  
 Hopper gapes at Mike.

HOPPER  
 No. Nobody's in trouble, okay? I  
 just, um --

Mike leans over and WHISPERS IN EL'S EAR (INAUDIBLE). El giggles.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 Uh --

El giggles again. Hopper GLARES at Mike. Then, after a BEAT:

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 (deadly serious)  
 You know what? Your mom called.

MIKE  
 What?

HOPPER  
 Yeah. She needs you home right  
 away.

A look of concern crosses El's face.

MIKE  
 Is everything okay?

HOPPER  
 No, I don't think so. It's your  
 Grandma.

Mike's face goes pale.

**EXT. HOPPER'S CABIN - MOMENTS LATER**

Hopper and Mike walk to Hop's truck.

MIKE  
 Is she dead?

HOPPER  
No.

MIKE  
Did she fall again?

HOPPER  
No.

MIKE  
Does she have cancer?

HOPPER  
No.

MIKE  
Then I don't understand. What's  
wrong with Nana?

They both climb in the truck.

**INT. HOPPER'S TRUCK - ON GOING**

HOPPER  
(yelling)  
Nothing! There's nothing wrong with  
Nana!

MIKE  
(incredulous)  
What?

HOPPER  
(calmer)  
But -- there's something very wrong  
with this *thing* between you and El.

MIKE  
You lying piece of shit!

Mike turns to leave the truck. Hopper locks the doors. Mike lifts the lock pin; Hopper pushes the button to lower it. Again. Again. Then Mike turns to Hopper.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
You're crazy.

He's got *that look*.

HOPPER  
Crazy?  
(his eyes widen)  
(MORE)

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 You wanna see real crazy? You  
 disrespect me again.

Fear washes over Mike.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 (chilling whisper)  
 Okay?

Mike is frozen with fear.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 Here's what's gonna happen. I'm  
 gonna drive you home. And I'm gonna  
 speak -- and you're going to  
 listen. And then, maybe -- maybe by  
 the end of it, maybe if you're  
 lucky, maybe -- I will continue --  
 to allow you to date my daughter.

Hopper turns to Mike who just stares at him.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 (raised voice)  
 Nod if you understand!

Mike nods vigorously. Hopper hits the gas and the truck speeds away.

#### **EXT. WEATHERTOP - NIGHT**

A FULL MOON provides the only light as Dustin continues his efforts to raise Suzie on Cerebro.

DUSTIN  
 Suzie, do you copy? This is Dustin.  
 Over.

RADIO STATIC

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
 Suzie! This is Dustin. Do you copy?  
 Over.

RADIO STATIC

Will, Lucas and Max are lying in the grass. Dustin is standing.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
 Suzie, this is your Dustin. Do you copy? Over.

RADIO STATIC

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
Suzie --

MAX  
(annoyed)  
Dustin, come on, she's not there.

DUSTIN  
She's there, all right? She'll pick up.

WILL  
Maybe Cerebro doesn't work.

LUCAS  
Or, maybe, Suzie doesn't exist.

DUSTIN  
She exists!

LUCAS  
She's a genius and she's hotter than Phoebe Cates? No girl is that perfect.

MAX  
Is that so?

LUCAS  
I mean -- you're perfect.

Max glares.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
I mean, like, per -- perfect in your own way -- in your special -- your own special way.

Max can't hold it in anymore. She LAUGHS.

MAX  
Relax, I was teasing.

Lucas nods nervously, but somewhat relieved.

MAX (CONT'D)  
I'm obviously perfect and Dustin's obviously lying.

Max stands up.

MAX (CONT'D)  
(to Lucas)  
Come on *Don Juan*.

Max and Lucas head off hand-in-hand

DUSTIN  
Where are you going?

MAX  
Home.

DUSTIN  
Well ... guess it's just you and  
me, Byers.

WILL  
Um ... it's late. Sorry. Maybe  
tomorrow we can play D&D. Or  
something fun. Like we used to?

DUSTIN  
(hurt)  
Yeah. Sure.

WILL  
Welcome -- home.

Will breaks into a jog down the hill leaving Dustin alone.

DUSTIN  
(to himself)  
Yeah. Welcome home.

DISTORTED RADIO CHATTER breaks the momentary silence. Dustin turns his attention to Cerebro. Rushing to respond, Dustin trips and falls to the ground.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)  
(into mic.)  
Suzie? Suzie, is that you?

A MAN SPEAKING RUSSIAN can be HEARD THROUGH THE STATIC.  
Dustin TURNS UP THE VOLUME. The RUSSIAN MAN CONTINUES TALKING WITHOUT TONE OR EMOTION.

**INT. SOVIET BUNKER - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - SAME TIME**

A RUSSIAN SOLDIER, male, mid-30s, WEARING HEADPHONES, is speaking into a TABLE-TOP MICROPHONE. He sits at a CONSOLE OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.

COMM OFFICER

(in Russian)

The silver cat feeds when blue  
meets yellow in the west. A trip to  
China sounds nice -- if you tread  
lightly -- The week is long --

The soldier REPEATS HIS TRANSMISSION. Dr. Alexei walks through the room, passing the soldier, and ascends a flight of stairs at the back of the room.

**INT. SOVIET BUNKER - ANTEROOM - ON GOING**

Dr. Alexei passes through the room where FIVE SCIENTISTS, male, various ages, are working. A RUSSIAN SOLDIER, male, late 20s, stands guard. Dr. Alexei opens a door and enters an OBSERVATION ROOM.

**INT. SOVIET BUNKER - OBSERVATION ROOM - ON GOING**

RUSSIAN SCIENTISTS, male, female, 30s, are hard at work. Dr. Alexei walks over to the observation window and stands beside a SCIENTIST, male, 30s, HOLDING A CLIPBOARD. The man looks to Alexei with a SHOCKED look. Their faces GLOWING BLUE, reflecting the LIGHT FROM WHAT WE ASSUME IS THE KEY. The new model Alexei was put in charge of making just one-year ago.

SCIENTIST

(in Russian)

Beautiful, isn't it?

Dr. Alexei nods in agreement then stares out the window. Expressionless. Inscrutable.

**INT. WHEELER RESIDENCE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

MONTAGE: Karen getting ready for her "swimming lessons".

- BLOW DRYING her hair.
- Applying GENEROUS AMOUNTS OF BLUSH AND MASCARA.
- Putting on PURFUME.
- LIPSTICK.
- TEASING HAIR.

Karen glances down at her BRIDAL RING SET with a conflicted expression. She slides both rings off and puts them on a TRAY on the counter.

**INT. WHEELER RESIDENCE - BOTTOM OF STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER**

Karen walks down, RED DRESS, WHITE HIGH HEELS. She stops at the bottom when she HEARS SNORING. She glances back at the NEXT ROOM.

**INT. WHEELER RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - ON GOING**

Karen comes into the living room and stops. Her husband, TED WHEELER, is sleeping in his LA-Z-BOY RECLINER. HOLLY WHEELER is slumbering peacefully on top of his chest. Karen glances away, looking guilty.

**EXT. CORNWALLIS ROAD - NIGHT**

Billy speeds down this DARK MISTY ROAD. He's driving his 1979 BLUE CHEVROLET CAMARO Z28.

**INT. BILLY'S CAMARO - ON GOING**

HEAVY METAL music plays. Billy breaks into a grin, then a laugh. He angles the REARVIEW MIRROR toward his face and looks into it.

BILLY

Hey, Karen. You don't mind if I  
call you Karen, do you?  
(grins)  
Good.

Just then, SOMETHING hits the windshield, CRACKING IT, and STARTLING Billy.

**EXT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - ON GOING**

Billy swerves into the lot of the abandoned factory and crashes to a stop.

**INT. BILLY'S CAMARO - ON GOING**

Billy's been hurt, but not too bad. His head is bleeding from above his left brow. He's slightly stunned.

BILLY

Piece of shit.

The RADIO still plays. Billy steps out.

**EXT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - ON GOING**

Billy staggers around to the other side of the car. He tries to open the badly dented door.

BILLY  
Dammit! Piece of shit!

He kicks the Camaro, before going back around to the driver's side. He slams the door. Steam is pouring from the engine. Billy notices the windshield. He touches the SLIMY, STICKY CLEAR SUBSTANCE where the windshield was struck.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
What the hell?

A SHRIEKING NOISE; SOMETHING scurries past. Billy looks around, then calls out.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Who's there?

He takes a few steps.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Hey! I said who's there!

JUST THEN, A FLESHY TENTACLE wraps around Billy's ankle and yanks him to the ground. The tentacle hauls him into the factory on his stomach. Billy tries to grab onto anything to stop.

**INT. ERIMBORN STEELWORKS - ON GOING**

SCREAMING, Billy is dragged the length of the factory floor. He manages to grab ahold of both sides of a DOORWAY FRAME leading to a staircase. Billy holds on for a few seconds before being dragged into the basement. SCREAMING.

SHRIEKING.

GROWLING.

WAILING.

THE END