

STRANGER THINGS 3

EPISODE #303

"CHAPTER THREE: THE CASE OF THE MISSING LIFEGUARD"

by

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Final Screening Draft
July, 2019

FADE IN:

EXT. HOPPER'S CABIN - NIGHT

All is quiet. All but the FAINT SOUND OF MADONNA'S SONG "ANGEL" playing on El's YELLOW BOOMBOX CASSETTE TAPE-PLAYER/RECORDER.

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MAX and EL are having a pseudo slumber party. Just the two of them. *Girl's night*. The SONG CONTINUES and Max SINGS ALONG, using a HAIR BRUSH as her microphone. She's dancing without a care in the world.

El is sitting on her BED flipping through the pages of Max's stash of TEEN MAGAZINES featuring the cutest boy actors of the era: RICKY SCHRODER, ROB LOWE, JASON BATEMAN, and obviously RALPH MACCHIO.

El takes a particular interest in the glossy and super-trashy "SUPERTEEN". She opens it to the POSTER CENTERFOLD and clearly likes what she sees.

Smiling back at her is the famous and gorgeous RALPH MACCHIO. Posed comfortably, standing with his hands tucked into the front pockets of his rather TIGHT-FITTING BLUE JEANS, Ralph has PERFECTLY QUAFFED black hair, smooth bronze skin, and is WEARING A STYLISH BLUE AND BLACK SWEATER.

El GASPS and SMILES. Yes, she *definitely* likes what she sees.

Mike? Mike who?

Max STOPS SINGING ALONG TO MADONNA when she notices El blushing.

MAX
(chuckling)
Oh! You found Ralph Macchio.

Max puts the hairbrush-microphone on the NIGHT STAND next to El's bed and kneels.

EL
Macchio?

MAX
Yeah! He's the Karate Kid.
(air-karate-chop)
Hai-yah!
(laughs)

Max and El share a laugh.

MAX (CONT'D)
He's so hot, right? I bet he's an
amazing kisser, too.

Um, what?

El seems a little bewildered. Max gets up and sits on the bed in front of El.

MAX (CONT'D)
Hey, um, is Mike a good kisser?

EL
(shyly)
I don't know.
(beat)
He's my first boyfriend.

MAX
Ex-boyfriend.

Oh yeah.

That sucked the fun right out of the air.

MAX (CONT'D)
Hey, don't worry about it. Okay?
He'll come crawling back to you in
no time, begging for forgiveness. I
guarantee you, him and Lucas are,
like, totally wallowing in self-
pity and misery right now. They're
like,
(mocking crying Mike)
Oh, I hope they take us back.

This cheered up El up again, as ex-boyfriend-bashing usually does.

MAX (CONT'D)
God, what I wouldn't give to see
their *stupid* faces.

A sudden thought comes to El's mind. Max takes immediate notice.

MAX (CONT'D)
What is it?

El shoots Max a SLY SMILE.

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA PULLS BACK from a CU of the Yellow Boombox on El's DRESSER. We can HEAR STATIC coming from the speakers.

CAMERA REVEALS EL SITTING CROSS-LEGGED IN FRONT OF THE DRESSER. LOOKING INTO THE CAMERA, SHE PUTS ON A BLACK BLINDFOLD.

Max sits on the edge of the bed, opposite El - who's just finishing TYING THE BLINDFOLD BEHIN HER HEAD.

MAX
(excitedly)
Is this really gonna work?

El says nothing; just nods. Max can barely contain her excitement.

MAX (CONT'D)
Holly shit, this is insane!

EL
(interrupting, serious)
Max.

MAX
(serious now)
Yeah, quiet. I'm sorry.

BEAT.

EL TAKES A DEEP BREATH. We can HEAR DISTORTED VOICES as the CAMERA SLOWLY ZOOMS TO EL'S BLACK BLINDFOLD.

MIKE (O.S.)
What's wrong with me? What did I do wrong?

LUCAS (O.S.)
Nothing.

INT. THE IN-BETWEEN (MIKE'S BASEMENT) - NIGHT

As THE CAMERA TILTS DOWN from BLACKNESS we SEE EL OBSERVING from a distance. She's not wearing the blindfold. We're in Mike's basement, but it's not *really* Mike's basement. It's THE IN-BETWEEN. That's the safe space where El can go to spy, which is between her and her target's space. It's a BLACK VOID; no beginning, no end, no sky, and no ground - save for a THIN VEIL OF WATER; a kind of pseudo REFLECTIVE POOL.

WE SEE Mike lying on his back on the COUCH EATING DORITOS, Will IS SETTING UP "WILL THE WISE'S" D&D CAMPAIGN at a TABLE, and Lucas IS PACING BACK AND FORTH.

MIKE

What did I do wrong? What could I have done wrong?

LUCAS

Mike, do I have to go through this again?

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

EL

I see them.

Max gets up from El's bed and sits beside El on the floor.

MAX

What are they doing?

EL

Eating.

INT. THE IN-BETWEEN (MIKE'S BASEMENT) - NIGHT

Mike is doing what many heart-broken men do: stuffing his face with NACHO CHEESE DORITOS. The COFFEE TABLE littered with CANDY, EMPTY BAGS OF DORITOS, AND CANS OF NEW COKE - EMPTY, FULL, HALF FULL.

MIKE

I don't understand what I did to deserve this.

LUCAS

Nothing! Nothing! That's my whole point....you are the victim here!

El walks closer.

MIKE

I know. It's just, why is she treating me this way -- I don't know...

LUCAS

(exasperated)
Mike --

MIKE
 (demanding)
 What did I do wrong? WHAT DID I DO
 WRONG?!

LUCAS
 Mike...Mike, stop. Just relax.
 Relax. Okay?
 (beat)
 Stop asking *rational* questions.

El gets closer. It's a bewildering site to her. Think about it: to actually get an inside look at what boys are really like when they're alone together. To observe the human teenage male species in their natural habitat is a sight like none other.

MIKE
 I know, I know, you're right.

LUCAS
 Yeah.

MIKE
 Because women act on emotion and
 not logic.

LUCAS
 Precisely. It's a totally different
 species.

Lucas is a genius. Way more experienced than Mike at these things.

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

El and Max are sitting in the same positions. El's nose is bleeding. She is still blindfolded and relaying to Max what she is seeing and hearing in *The In-Between*.

EL
 They say we are *species*.

MAX
 (confused)
 What?

EL
 Emotion, not logic.

MAX
 (um, excuse me?)
 What?!

INT. THE IN-BETWEEN (MIKE'S BASEMENT) - NIGHT

El is still observing. Will is more focused on his campaign than talking about girls.

WILL
Guys, it's ready.

LUCAS
Will, not right now.

WILL
(a little angry)
They broke up with you. What else is there to talk about?

LUCAS
Tons.

MIKE
Yeah, we're trying to solve the great mystery of the female species.

Mike lets out a HUGE GUTTURAL BURP, which repulses El.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(chuckles)
Dude, you can smell the nacho cheese.

Oddly, Will is also disgusted.

LUCAS
(to Mike)
I got that beat.

MIKE
What?

WILL
Oh, no.

MIKE
No, Lucas, no.

Lucas LIFTS HIS RIGHT LEG and lets out a MASSIVE, SOMEWHAT TIME-CONSUMING, FART. El is taken aback; HORRIFIED, really.

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

El abruptly takes off her blindfold. We can HEAR THE FART ECHO FOR A MOMENT before El bursts out LAUGHING.

MAX
What, what happened?

El is now in full-blown hysterics. ROFLOL kind of laughing. Max doesn't know what's going on, but she starts laughing anyway. You know, the kind of laughing where you laugh just because your BFF is laughing although you don't know what's going on?

At that moment, the girls HEAR HOPPER'S TRUCK PULL IN THE DRIVEWAY.

EXT. HOPPER'S CABIN - NIGHT

The TRUCK comes to an abrupt stop.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (FRONT DOOR) - NIGHT

HOPPER comes stumbling in and closes the door behind him. He's seriously INTOXICATED. He's carrying the BOTTLE OF WINE he got from the restaurant. Hopper stops dead in his tracks. He can HEAR MUSIC coming from El's bedroom.

Mike is here.

HOPPER
(angry)
Hey! HEY!

Hopper knows, by now, that if there is music blaring from El's room it's a sure sign that she and Mike are making out...again! That is totally unacceptable to Hopper.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
(rushing to El's bedroom
door - which is closed)
When I say three-inches, three...

Hopper bursts through the door. Except...

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MAX
Do you knock? Jeez!

EL
Yeah! Jeez!

Oops. That's not Mike.

HOPPER
 (slurring)
 Oh, oh, oh, oh. Hey. I'm sorry. I
 thought that, uh --

MAX
 (annoyed)
 Mike's not here.

EL
 Max wanted to have...a sleepover.
 Is that...okay?

HOPPER
 (happy, lost for words,
 shocked)
 Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.
 (to Max)
 Your parents know about it?

MAX
 ("would you leave now",
 annoyed)
 Yup.

HOPPER
 Uh, yeah, it's cool. Yeah.
 (beat)
 That's -- that's really cool.

Awkward SILENCE, save for the SONG ON THE RADIO. Hopper is
 still standing at the door.

MAX
 Did you need something?

HOPPER
 (begins to leave and close
 the door)
 Uh, no, no. I'll leave. I'll just
 let you ... I'll leave you ...

Before finishing his sentence, Hopper closes the door.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (OUTSIDE EL'S DOOR) - NIGHT

Hopper stands idly and stares into a void.

It worked. No Mike.

A SLY SMILE, then a BIG GRIN.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (LA-Z-BOY) - NIGHT

After POURING HIMSELF A GLASS OF WINE, and TURING ON THE TELEVISION, Hopper flops down on his LA-Z-BOY RECLINER. He KICKS OFF HIS SHOES, CROSSES HIS LEGS and sits back. Totally content and very proud of what he'd accomplished. *Master Class in Parenting by Jim Hopper.*

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Max and El are sitting beside each other on the bed. In front of them is their very own, unique, SPIN THE BOTTLE GAME. A RED-COLORED GAME BOARD (about one-square-foot), A SIX-AND-A-HALF-OUNCE GLASS COKE BOTTLE as the spinner, and written on YELLOW PIECES OF CONSTRUCTION PAPER in BLACK MARKER, scattered around the edges of the board, are the names of the other players. STEVE, NANCY, MR. CLARKE, MR. WHEELER, DUSTIN, MRS. WHEELER, and the one El just finished writing: BILLY.

MAX

Ready?

EL

Ready.

El SPINS THE BOTTLE.

Around and around the BOTTLE SPINS. It comes to STOP at: MR. WHEELER.

EL (CONT'D)

Mr. Wheeler.

MAX

Mr. Wheeler.

MAX (CONT'D)

Ugh, boring.

EL

Yeah, boring.

MAX

Spin again.

El is about to spin, but --

EL

Against the rules?

MAX

We make our own rules.

Max and El share a chuckle before El spins the bottle.

Around the BOTTLE SPINS, until it STOPS at --

Billy. EL Billy. MAX (CONT'D)

Awkward.

Max sits up and walks to the dresser. She picks up the boombox and the black blindfold and brings them back to the bed.

MAX (CONT'D)
 Okay, look. I should just warn you, that if he's with a girl or doing something gross, just get out of there right away before you're scarred for life.

EL
 Max --

MAX
 No, I'm just saying, I'm serious. He's really gross.

EL
 Max!

MAX
 Okay. Shutting up now.

Max TURNS THE DIAL on the boombox to STATIC. EL PUTS ON THE BLINDFOLD.

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN (NEAR BILLY'S CAMARO) - NIGHT

At first, we see El standing in the BLACK VOID of The In-Between, alone. Then, she notices BILLY'S BLUE CAMARO idling with the HEADLIGHTS TURNED ON. The BLUE CALIFORNIA LICENSE PLATE (PCE 235) remains attached to the car, just under the driver's side headlight.

But, Billy is not inside the car. El approaches the driver's side of the Camaro. Without stopping, El walks along side.

We can see that The WINDSHIELD is smashed - a reminder of Billy's accident. El looks confused. CONTINUING WALKING she gets to the back of the vehicle. The TRUNK IS OPEN. We CAN HEAR A GIRL WHIMPERING.

Off in the distance, EL SEES SOMEONE KNEELING DOWN. It's BILLY. His back is turned to El. The PAINED WHIMPERING continues, but it's not Billy's voice. El begin to approach Billy from behind.

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

El's nose is STARTING TO BLEED. LEFT NOSTRIL (same as always).

EL
I found him.

MAX
What's he doing?

EL
I don't know.

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN (NEAR BILLY'S CAMARO II) - NIGHT

Billy is still kneeling; back turned to El. El is slowly approaching.

BILLY
Don't be afraid.

Who is he talking to?

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

EL
He's ... on the floor --

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN (NEAR BILLY'S CAMARO II) - NIGHT

Getting closer to Billy. But we still don't see who he's talking to -- the Whimpering Girl.

BILLY
It'll be over soon.

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

EL
-- talking to someone.

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN (NEAR BILLY'S CAMARO II) - NIGHT

El slowly approaches Billy and the Whimpering Girl.

BILLY
Just stay very still.

El STOPS five-feet from Billy. Billy STANDS as the girl's WHIMPERS AND GASPING FOR AIR BECOME LOUDER.

BEAT.

BILLY QUICKLY TURNS HIS HEAD AND LOCKS EYES WITH EL. TEARS fill El's eyes. She's not sad - SHE'S SCARED.

He can see me. He knows!

INT. ERIMBORN STEEL WORKS (BASEMENT) - NIGHT

It's clearer now. Billy is at ERIMBORN, in the basement, where the victims are FLAYED. The Whimpering Girl SCREAMS as we --

POV BILLY: Almost like a mirage, we see an image of EL FLICKERING; similar to what a TV channel does when it's experiencing some sort of celestial interference; like a SUNSPOT.

INT. ERIMBORN STEEL WORKS (BASEMENT) - NIGHT

GIRL (O.C.)
(crying)
Billy!

Billy TURNS HIS WHOLE BODY toward the mirage, his EYES WIDEN as he recognizes El.

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN (NEAR BILLY'S CAMARO II) - NIGHT

El is shocked. Frozen with fear. Billy and El lock eyes before --

GIRL (O.C.)
(screams!)

Billy FADES AWAY INTO A CLOUD OF SMOKE AND DUST.

INT. EL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In a panic, EL QUICKLY REMOVES THE BLINDFOLD and GASPS for air. Her NOSE IS BLEEDING; she is SHIVERING with fear.

MAX
(anxious)
What is it? What happened?

El, speechless, SHAKING, in shock, LOCKS EYES WITH MAX.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS

EFFECTS IN:

EXT. MIKE'S HOME - MORNING

It's raining. And windy. Very windy. Apparently a perfect day for TED WHEELER to be out MOWING THE FRONT LAWN. He is, however, WEARING A YELLOW RAIN COAT.

INT. MIKE'S BASEMENT - MORNING

Lucas is sleeping on one COUCH. Mike is also fast asleep on the other COUCH. But where's Will?

The SILENCE IS BROKEN by the SOUND OF MEDIEVAL MUSIC blasting from a small CASSETTE TAPE PLAYER/RECORDER.

Thanks, Will.

The sudden blast of FLUTES and VIELLES jolts MIKE and LUCAS awake from their slumber. Will is DRESSED IN A ROYAL PURPLE WIZARD COSTUME - complete with a STAFF taller than he.

LUCAS
(half asleep)
What are you *doing*?

MIKE
Yeah, Will, can you turn down the music?

WILL
Please address me by my full name.

MIKE
What?

Will BANGS HIS STAFF on the floor.

WILL
(yells)
My full name!

MIKE
Oh, my God! Okay, *Will the Wise*, can you please turn down the music?

WILL

(proud)

That is not music. *That ...* is the sound of destiny! I have seen into the future, and I've seen that today is a new day. A day -- free of girls.

LUCAS

(still half asleep)

What is *happening* right now?

MIKE

(tired, pleading)

Will, come on.

Will HOVERS OVER HIS D&D BOARD - still set up and ready from the night before.

WILL

A tribe of villagers are under threat from an evil force from the swamps of Kuzatan. (coo-zuh-tawn)

MIKE

Will, it's so early.

Will rises from hovering over the board.

WILL

Is it? Is it, *early*, Michael?

Huh?

Mike and Lucas shoot each other a look.

WILL (CONT'D)

Tell that to the villagers crying for your help; the children so frightened, they cannot sleep. Are you truly going to let them perish? Or are you going to come to their rescue and become the heroes you were always meant to be?

Lucas RAISES HIS HAND, like he's in a classroom and has a question for the teacher.

LUCAS

Uh, can I at least take a shower first?

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (BATHROOM) - MORNING

A hungover Hopper turns on the water. The SHOWER HEAD comes alive.

JUMP CUT: Minutes later, the shower turns off, and Hopper clears the water from his face. He rubs his eyes.

CUT TO:

Hopper, but the SINK, reaches for a bottle of EXTRA-STRENGTH BUFFERIN.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (LIVING ROOM) - MORNING

Carrying the Bufferin, Hopper leaves the bathroom, wearing only a TOWEL AROUND HIS WAIST. He's walking to the kitchen. Hopper opens the cap of the Bufferin and pops at least TWO PILLS into his mouth. As Hopper nears the kitchen, he THROWS THE BOTTLE ON THE TABLE - GROANING AND MOANING along the way.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (KITCHEN) - MORNING

Hopper gets to the FRIDGE, opens the door, reaches in and pulls out a GALLON OF MILK. No glass needed - he drinks right from the carton. A few GULPS, SLURPS AND BURPS LATER he sees a HAND-WRITTEN NOTE ON THE FRIDGE DOOR:

Gone to

Maxs

Sleeping Over

- El

At that moment, A KNOCK ON THE FRONT DOOR.

JOYCE (O.C.)
Hopper? Are you there?

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (FRONT DOOR) - MORNING

Hopper opens the front door to see a panic-stricken JOYCE BYERS.

HOPPER
(sarcastic)
Oh! Look who it is!

Joyce marches right inside and over to the fridge.

JOYCE
We need to talk.

HOPPER
Yeah, we do.
(slams the door)

Joyce, standing in front of the fridge, rifles through her PURSE.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
I haven't been stood up like that
since Alice Gilbert in the 9th
grade.
(starts putting on his
uniform shirt)

Joyce crouches down and empties the CONTENTS OF HER PURSE onto the floor.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
(annoyed)
What are you *doing*?

From the mess of purse contents, Joyce picks out SEVERAL FRIDGE MAGNETS. She ignores Hopper.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
Joyce?! Hello?!

JOYCE
Just watch.

Joyce tries to stick one of the magnets to the fridge door. But it just falls to the floor. She chooses a different magnet -- it, too, falls to the floor. Another -- the same thing happens. None of the magnets are sticking to the fridge door.

HOPPER
Okay, you're freaking me out.

Joyce picks up the HEART-SHAPED MAGNET and walks to Hopper.

JOYCE
You slipped on this, remember?

HOPPER

Yeah.

JOYCE

Yeah, it fell in the night. It lost its magnetism.

HOPPER

(sarcastic)

Oh, did it?

JOYCE

And the same exact thing happened at my house the day before.

HOPPER

Wow.

Hopper isn't in the mood to listen to this.

JOYCE

And I thought, "*Okay, that's weird.*" Right? Why are all these magnets suddenly losing their magnetism?

HOPPER

Uh-huh?

JOYCE

So, I went and saw Scott.

HOPPER

(like he knows)

Scott.

BEAT.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

(with a hint of jealousy)

Who's Scott?

JOYCE

(as a matter of fact)

Scott Clark.

HOPPER

Your child's science teacher?

JOYCE

He's pretty brilliant, actually. And I asked him, "*How is this happening?*" And he built this magnetic field using an AC transformer and plugging it into a solenoid. And with that solenoid, which basically --

HOPPER

(interrupting)

Slow down, slow down. I just want to get this exactly right, okay? You stand me up, no phone call, no apology, because you had to go to *Scott Clarke's* house?

JOYCE

(as a matter of fact)

Yeah.

Hopper SCOFFS and has a quiet CHUCKLE. Then --

HOPPER

You've outdone yourself, Joyce.

Hopper backs away and starts cleaning up the mess in his living room.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

You really have. No, you've outdone yourself!

Joyce is following closely behind.

JOYCE

Oh, come on, Hop, you're not even listening to me. Scott was able to demagnetize some of the magnets, and he thinks --

Hopper stops picking up. The two are now face to face again.

HOPPER

I don't care what Scott thinks!

JOYCE (CONT'D)

He thinks that a large-scale magnetic field could be built using some sort of machine or ... or experimental technology.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

(sarcastic again)

He's brilliant, isn't he? He's ...

(MORE)

HOPPER (CONT'D)
really ... brilliant. Is he single,
too?

Hopper walks away.

JOYCE
What if it's *them*?

The Russians.

Hopper STOPS at the doorway to the bathroom.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
To build a machine like this, you
need resources. You need
scientists, you need funding --
tens of millions of dollars.

| | | |
|--------|--------|--|
| Joyce. | HOPPER | JOYCE (CONT'D) It can't just be a coincidence, Hopper. It has to be them! |
|--------|--------|--|

HOPPER (CONT'D)
Joyce, stop.

Hopper walks to Joyce. They are face to face.

JOYCE
It has to be the lab.

HOPPER
It is impossible.

JOYCE
Well, then, prove it to me.

HOPPER
Prove it?

JOYCE
Yeah, take me back there.

HOPPER
To the lab.

JOYCE
(getting angry)
Yeah, I wanna go back.

HOPPER
Because some magnets fell of your
fridge.

JOYCE

Yes!

BEAT.

Hopper gives in. He knows Joyce is right.

HOPPER

Okay, makes sense.

JOYCE

(relieved that he
understands)

Thank you!

HOPPER

It makes sense. I'm sorry.

No he's not. It was all just an act.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

(mockingly checks his
wrist where his watch
should be)

I'm a little busy right now. But
I'm thinking we can maybe meet up
there, like tonight, like seven
o'clock?

Hopper backs away and heads for his bedroom.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

You know, of course, unless
something comes up -- which you
know, it will.

Hopper walks into his bedroom and CLOSES THE CURTAIN that
divides the two spaces.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (BEDROOM) - MORNING

Hopper starts getting dressed for work.

JOYCE (O.C.)

You know, after everything that's
happened, this is no joke.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (OUTSIDE HIS BEDROOM) - MORNING

Joyce is pissed off. She stands, exasperated, just outside
the "door" of Hopper's bedroom.

HOPPER (O.C.)
 No! I don't think it's a joke. I think, that when I asked you out, I think you got scared.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (BEDROOM) - MORNING

HOPPER
 I think you got scared, and now you're inventing things. You're inventing things to get worked up about so that you can push me away. Because God forbid any of us move on! Because that ... that would be ...
 ... (chuckles)
 I mean, that would be too much, right, Joyce? You know ... that would be too much, wouldn't it, Joyce?

No response from Joyce.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 (buttoning up his shirt)
 Wouldn't it, Joyce?

Nope. Still nothing.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN (OUTSIDE HIS BEDROOM) - MORNING

Hopper pulls open the curtain.

No Joyce.

EXT. HOPPER'S CABIN - MORNING

Hopper comes out the front door carrying his BOOTS. He's still not completely dressed, yet. But close.

HOPPER
 Joyce? Joyce?!

Just then, the DOOR TO THE TOOL SHED BURSTS OPEN. Out comes Joyce carrying BOLT CUTTERS and a LARGE BLUE PLASTIC FLASHLIGHT.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 What the hell are you doing?

Hopper sits on the stairs and begins putting on his boots.

JOYCE
 (determined)
 I need to borrow these.

Joyce doesn't stop to chat - she just walks past Hopper and back to her CAR. Hopper quickly tries to put on his boots.

HOPPER
 No, you're not going back there.
 Joyce!
 (he manages to get one
 boot on before standing)
 Joyce, you're ... not ... going ...
 back ... there ...

Clearly ignoring Hopper, Joyce gets in her car.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 (trying to put on his
 other boot while hopping,
 on one foot, his way over
 to Joyce)
 Son of a bitch!

EXT. QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - MORNING

Max and El are walking. They're on their way to Max's house.

MAX
 It's gonna start pouring soon. We
 should be at the mall, or, like,
 watching a movie or something.

EL
 You don't believe me?

They walk ACROSS AN ABANDONED LOT and onto CHERRY LANE.

MAX
 I believe you saw some super weird
 stuff, totally, but you said Mike
 has sensed you in there before,
 right?

El nods in agreement.

EXT. NEAR 4819 CHERRY LANE - MORNING

MAX
 So maybe it was just like that.
 Maybe Billy just ... *sensed* you
 somehow.

EL
But the screams.

MAX
Yeah, I know, but here's the thing -
- when Billy is alone with a girl,
they make, like, really crazy
noises.

EL
They scream?

MAX
Yeah, but, like ... happy screams.

EL
(frustrated)
Happy screams? What is happy
screams?

MAX
It's like ... I'm just gonna lend
you my mom's Cosmo.

They get to Max's house, STOPPING at the end of the driveway.
It's eerily quiet.

MAX (CONT'D)
His car's not here.
(turns to El)
You really want to do this?

El nods.

INT. 4819 CHERRY LANE (BILLY'S BEDROOM) - MORNING

Max opens the door and enters - slowly. El is close behind.

MAX
Why do I get the feeling we're
gonna find all kinds of wrong in
here?

The room is a mess. DIRTY CLOTHES are strewn about; the BED
isn't made; BEAVY METAL MUSIC plays on the RADIO; A PLATE
USED FOR AN ASHTRAY is sitting next to some CASSETTE TAPES.

Max walks to the NIGHT TABLE beside the bed. She OPENS THE
DRAWER.

PENTHOUSE MAGAZINES stacked neatly. There's has to be fifty
of them in there!

MAX (CONT'D)
 (disgusted)
 Ugh. Gag me with a spoon.
 (closes the drawer)

INT. 4819 CHERRY LANE (BATHROOM) - MORNING

El opens the bathroom door and SWITCHES ON THE LIGHT. Max is behind her as they both enter. The BATHTUB IS FULL OF WATER and EMPTY PLASTIC BAGS that were once filled with ice cubes. El stands over the tub.

Ice. He likes it cold.

EL
 Max?

Max stands beside El for a moment before reaching into the water and pulling out a bag.

MAX
 (holding the dripping bag
 up)
 Ice. It's just ice. It's probably
 for his muscles, or something. He
 works out like a maniac.

El's BREATH IS TREMBLING. El knows what the ice is really for. But she says nothing. El visually scans the room, but doesn't move. She notices some BLOOD on the DOORS UNDER THE SINK COUNTER.

EL OPENS THE DOORS and checks under the sink. She pulls out a SMALL GREEN GARBAGE BUCKET.

MAX (CONT'D)
 El, what is it?

El reaches into the bucket and pulls out a RED LIFEGUARD FIRST-AID KIT. Then ... a PLASTIC YELLOW MARINE WHISTLE ATTACHED TO A LANYARD. The whistle and lanyard are BLOOD STAINED.

INT. THE HAWKINS POST (DARK ROOM) - DAY

JONATHAN and NANCY are looking through the FRESHLY DEVELOPED PHOTOS that Jonathan took at Mrs. Driscoll's yesterday.

JONATHAN
 (handing Nancy a photo)
 You sure about this?

Nancy CHUCKLES.

NANCY
(playfully)
You really are your mother's son,
you know that?

JONATHAN
What's that supposed to mean?

NANCY
It means ... you worry too much.

JONATHAN
Huh.

Nancy leans in closer to Jonathan; smiling. They are a inches away from each other.

NANCY
(whispering)
I got this. Okay?

They kiss.

JONATHAN
(whispering)
Okay.

Nancy leaves the room. Jonathan stays behind - still worried.

INT. THE HAWKINS POST (BOARDROOM) - DAY

The paper's editor, TOM HOLLOWAY, reporter BRUCE, and OTHER REPORTERS (male, 40s), are sitting around the BOARDROOM TABLE having a STORY MEETING. Tom is looking through the PHOTOGRAPHS from Jonathan and Nancy.

TOM
(to Nancy - who is
standing near the door)
So, what exactly are we looking at
here? Is this the Driscoll lady's
stuff?
(hands the photos to
Bruce)

NANCY
No. No, see, that's the thing. I
mean -- listen, I thought she was
crazy too, but --

A VETERAN NEWSMAN (obese, early 40s), who just finished pouring himself a CUP OF DUNKIN' DONUTS COFFEE, interrupts Nancy while he makes his way back to his spot at the table.

NEWSMAN #1

She told me Johnson killed Kennedy.

The Newsman is referring to late president John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963, and his successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, who was the VP at the time.

The Newsman's comment gets a CHUCKLE from the other reporters sitting at the table. But Nancy continues, unfazed. She's really excited about the story and she wants to get it.

NANCY

But, it turns out, she's not alone.

Jonathan is standing within earshot of the boardroom. He can also see what's happening in the room.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Blackburn's Supply, Hawkins Farming, the Crawley's -- they've all had some supplies go missing, all in the past few days.

Bruce, the most misogynistic and chauvinistic reporter of the bunch, SIPS COFFEE FROM A PATRIOTIC-LOOKING USA BICENTENNIAL MUG, is eyeing Nancy suspiciously. He's no doubt concocting his next *zinger* with which to attack Nancy.

NANCY (CONT'D)

And it's not just fertilizer, it's pesticides, cleaning supplies, diesel fuel. And that's just from one day of calling around. I mean ... there's gotta be more.

But Bruce wants to clear a few things up. He puts down his coffee and picks up the pile of photos Tom handed him earlier.

BRUCE

(condescending, sardonic)

Okay, wait, wait, wait. Let me get this little *story* of yours straight. So, little rodents have gone cuckoo in their furry little minds and they're running around the town of Hawkins, dining out on chemicals?

NANCY

I know how it sounds, but --

BRUCE

(holds up a photo of a
cuckoo rat)

But you've got proof!

This elicits a HARDY LAUGH from the other men. Tom, is amused, but not laughing out loud.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

I mean, fellas, you gotta admit
it's a hell of a headline, right?
*"Hawkins Rodents Prefer Poison:
Nutjob Tells All."*

Another LAUGH from the men. But Tom, who serious now, interrupts.

TOM

Guys, that's enough!

The laughter subsides before Tom continues.

TOM (CONT'D)

I think this is ... big. Bigger
than one article. In fact, I think
this has got to be a book.

Nancy's eyes grow big. She's excited.

My boss love the idea!

TOM (CONT'D)

The Mysterious Case of the Missing
Fertilizer, a Nancy Drew mystery.

The men LAUGH.

Okay, so maybe he's not onboard.

Nancy isn't smiling anymore. Tom stands and grabs the pile of photos from Bruce.

TOM (CONT'D)

(serious)

Next time a call comes in, do what
you were hired for

(tosses the photos back to
Nancy)

and let us know, yeah? We'll decide
what's a story and what's not.

Heartbroken, Nancy picks up the photos.

NANCY
(quietly)
Okay.

She exits the boardroom as the men LAUGH.

INT. THE HAWKINS POST (OFFICE AREA) - DAY

A dejected Nancy exits the boardroom, and Bruce gives a parting shot.

BRUCE
Bye-bye, Nancy Drew!

Again, the men LAUGH.

Nancy walks by Jonathan, who's been watching the whole thing.

JONATHAN
Hey, it's okay. Nancy. Nancy!

INT. SCOOPS AHOY - DAY

ERICA SINCLAIR and FRIENDS are back for some free ICE CREAM. Erica stands at the CASH, RINGING THE SERVICE BELL CONTINUOUSLY. She's very impatient.

ROBIN has her back to the girls. She's studying a RUSSIAN-ENGLISH DICTIONARY and listening to the recording of the coded message on her WALKMAN. As she flips through the pages of the dictionary we can HEAR A MAN SPEAKING RUSSIAN. While at the same time, we can HEAR ERICA DEMANDING SERVICE.

Robin SIGHS, turns to face Erica, and removes the HEADPHONES. Erica gives a final few RINGS OF THE BELL, and then with a PHONY SMILE --

ERICA
I'd like to try the Peanut Butter-Chocolate Swirl, please.

ROBIN
(also a phony smile and chipper attitude)
No. No more samples today.

ERICA
(serious now)
Why not?

ROBIN
Because you're abusing our company
policy.

ERICA
(demanding)
Where's the sailor man?

ROBIN
Sorry, he can't help you. He's
busy.

ERICA
Busy with what?

ROBIN
Spycraft.

INT. STARCOURT MALL FOODCOURT (NEAR THE PLANTS) - DAY

Near some OVERSIZED POTTED RUBBER PLANTS, we find STEVE and DUSTIN "looking" for Russians. Steve, using the PLANTS AS COVER, has BINOCULARS. He's looking closely at GROUPS OF PEOPLE sitting in the DINING AREA of the food court.

DUSTIN
See anything?

STEVE
Uh, I guess I don't totally know
what I'm looking for.

DUSTIN
Evil Russians.

STEVE
Yeah, exactly. I don't know what an
evil Russian looks like.

DUSTIN
Tall, blonde, not smiling.

STEVE
Mm-hmmm?

DUSTIN
Also, look for earpieces, camo,
duffel bags, that sort of thing.

STEVE
Right, okay, duffel bags.

POV BINOCULARS: Scanning the CROWDS, Steve spots something. A "suspicious" couple out front of a SPORTSWEAR STORE. ANNA JACOBI (17) and MARK LEWINSKY (17).

BACK TO STEVE AND DUSTIN.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Oh, you've got to be kidding me.

DUSTIN
What?

POV BINOCULARS: Anna and Steve flirting with each other.

STEVE (O.C.)
Anna Jacobi's talking with that
meathead Mark Lewinsky.

BACK TO STEVE AND DUSTIN.

DUSTIN
Dude, if you're not gonna focus,
just gimme the binoculars.

STEVE
Aw, Jesus Christ, whatever happened
to standards?

POV BINOCULARS: Lewinsky is BASKETBALL AIR-DRIBBLING and THEN TAKES A 3-POINTER. This, clearly, impresses Anna.

STEVE (O.C.) (CONT'D)
I mean, Lewinsky never even came
off the bench.

BACK TO STEVE AND DUSTIN.

DUSTIN
Dude, you are the worst spy in
history, you know that?

Dustin grabs the binoculars from Steve.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
Besides, I don't even get why
you're looking at girls. You have
the perfect one right in front of
you.

STEVE
Seriously, if you say Robin again
...

DUSTIN
Robin.

STEVE
Don't.

DUSTIN
Robin, Robin, Robin, Robin,
Robin.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Stop! No. No. No. No. No.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
Robin.

STEVE
No.

DUSTIN
Robin.

STEVE
No.

DUSTIN
Robin.

STEVE
No, man, she's not my type. She's
not even ... in the ballpark of
what my type is, all right?

DUSTIN
What's your type again? Not
awesome?

STEVE
(sarcastic smile)
Thank you.

DUSTIN
(sarcastic smile)
Hm.

STEVE
For your information, she's still
in school. And she's weird. She's a
weirdo. And she's hyper. I don't
like that she's hyper. And she did
drama. That's a bad look. And she's
in *band*?
(disgusted)
No.

DUSTIN

Now that you're out of high school, which means you're technically an adult, don't you think it's time you move from primitive constructs such as popularity?

STEVE

Oh, primitive constructs? That some stupid shit you learned at Camp...Know...Nothing?

DUSTIN

Camp Know *Where*, actually. And, no, it's shit I learned from life.

STEVE

Hm.

DUSTIN

Instead of dating somebody you think is gonna make you cooler, why not date somebody you actually enjoy being around? Like me and Suzie.

STEVE

Oh, Suzie. Yeah, you mean, "*hotter than Phoebe Cates*." Yeah that Suzie. And, uh, let's think about, how exactly did you score that beautiful girlfriend?

(scratching his head)

Oh yeah. With *my* advice. Because, that's how this works, Henderson. I give you the advice, and you follow through. Not the other way around, all right, pea-brain?

EXT. MIKE'S HOME - DAY

It's dark. Cloudy. And still raining. Thunder rolls in.

WILL (O.S.)

Do you guys hear that?

(beat)

It sounds like ... thunder.

INT. MIKE'S BASEMENT - DAY

Mike, Lucas and Will are sitting at thea table playing D&D. Will is the DUNGEON MASTER. It's his campaign.

And he's so enthusiastic. A BOOMBOX plays MARCHING MUSIC to create an even more fantastic atmosphere for Will. He's put a lot of thought into this campaign.

WILL

But no, wait! That's not thunder.

Mike and Lucas, however, are not that enthusiastic. Like, not at all. BORED, actually. They're both very, very bored.

WILL (CONT'D)

It's ...

(slams down four-D&D
figures on the game
board)

... a hoard of Juju Zombies! Sir
Mike, your action.

MIKE

(looks to Lucas)

What should I do?

LUCAS

Attack?

MIKE

Okay, I attack with my Flail.
(rolls dice)

WILL

(checking what Mike
rolled)

Whoosh! You miss. Your Flail clanks
the stone, the zombie hoard lumbers
towards you, and ...

(rolls dice)

... the Juju bites your arm. Flesh
tears!

So boring.

WILL (CONT'D)

Ahhhhhhh! Seven points of damage.

MIKE

(mockingly sarcastic)

Oh no! My arm! Lucas, look, my arm.

Lucas SNICKERS.

Will is moderately taken aback, but continues the campaign - albeit will a little *less* enthusiasm.

WILL
 Sir Lucas, the zombie horde roars!
 Do you fight back or do you run?

Just then - the WALL PHONE RINGS. Mike and Lucas lock eyes on the phone with anticipation. Will stands immediately with his WIZARD'S STAFF.

WILL (CONT'D)
 (still in character)
 No! It's a distraction! A trap. Do not answer it.

Lucas and Mike put down their D&D BOOKS and rush to the phone.

WILL (CONT'D)
 (breaks character)
 What, no!

Mike gets to the phone first and answers.

MIKE
 El?
 (beat, then disappointed)
 No. Sorry, not interested.

Mike hangs up.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Telemarketers.

LUCAS
 Maybe we should just call them?

MIKE
 We can do that?

LUCAS
 I think so.

MIKE
 Yeah, but what would we say?

WILL
 (back in character)
 We'll say nothing! The Khuisar (coo-ih-czar) tribe still needs your help.

MIKE

(bored)

All right, then, I'll use my torch to set fire to the chambers, sacrificing ourselves, killing the Jujus, and saving the Khuisar.

(sarcastic)

We all live on as heroes in the memories of the Kalamar. (cal-ah-mar)

LUCAS

(low-key)

Victory.

(unenthusiastic high-five with Mike without looking at him)

That's it. Will's had enough.

WILL

Fine.

(throws how his staff and wizard hat)

You guys win.

(shuts off the boombox)

Congratulations.

MIKE

Will, I was just messing around.

Will ignores Mike. He takes off his WIZARD ROBE and begins gathering his things. Mike walks over to the table.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hey, let's finish for real.

LUCAS

Yeah.

MIKE

How much longer is the campaign.

WILL

(angry)

Just forget it, Mike.

MIKE

No ...

(to Lucas)

... you wanna keep playing, right?

LUCAS

Y--yeah, totally.

MIKE
We'll just call the girls
afterwards.

WILL
(yelling)
I said forget it, Mike, okay? I'm
going home.

LUCAS
But...come on, Will.

WILL
(brushing by Lucas,
shoving him out of the
way)
Move!

Will makes his way up the stairs. Mike follows.

INT. WHEELER GARAGE - DAY

The garage door is OPEN. It's POURING RAIN outside. The WHEELER STATION WAGON is parked in the garage. Will's BICYCLE is beside it.

Will comes out of the door and walks to his bicycle, Mike follows closely behind.

MIKE
You can't leave. It's raining.

Mike stands opposite Will.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Listen, I said I was sorry, all
right?

No response from Will.

MIKE (CONT'D)
It's a cool campaign. It's really
cool. We're just not in the mood
right now.

WILL
(still angry)
Yeah, *Mike*. That's the problem. You
guys are NEVER in the mood anymore.
You're ruining our party.

MIKE
That's not true.

WILL
Really? Where's Dustin right now?

Mike thinks, but doesn't know.

WILL (CONT'D)
See? You don't even *know* and you don't even *care* and obviously *he* doesn't either and I don't blame him. You're destroying everything, and for what? So you can swat spit with some stupid girl?

MIKE
(angry)
El's not stupid! It's not my fault you don't like girls.

Ouch. That one stung.

BEAT.

Mike realizes what he just said. He can see the hurt on Will's face. *We* can see the hurt.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(calmer, but unapologetic)
I'm not trying to be a jerk. Okay? But we're not kids anymore. I mean, what did you think, really? That we were never going to get girlfriends? We were just gonna sit in my basement all day and play games for the rest of our lives?

WILL
(nearly in tears)
Yeah. I guess I did. I really did.

Will gets on his bicycle and pedals away. In the rain. Head hanging low. Crying.

MIKE
Will...

EXT. WHEELER GARAGE - DAY

Will pedals way, leaving Mike standing alone.

MIKE
Will! Will come on!

EXT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (POOL DECK) - DAY

The pool is empty, save for a BEACHBALL floating in the deep-end. The rain dances off the water.

EXT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (POOL DECK II) - DAY

TWO CHILDEN (10) run PAST THE CAMERA, SPLASHING IN THE PUDDLES on the pool deck. We HEAR THEIR GIGGLES.

EXT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (FRONT ENTRANCE) - DAY

DOZENS OF (FORMER) POOL-GOERS (various ages, mostly young kids and teens) are running about. Some taking cover, others running to their PARENTS who came to pick them up. Some kids have RAIN COATS, others still in their bathing attire.

EXT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (BIKE RACK) - DAY

Max and El park their BICYCLES. Max is wearing a YELLOW RAIN COAT. El is wearing a RED RAIN COAT. They walk inside the building after parking their bikes.

INT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (MANAGEMENT OFFICE) - DAY

The Management Office is situated just inside the open-concept entrance of the building. It's a large space, with TWO WAIST-HIGHT COUNTER-WINDOWS where clients staff can interact with each other.

The POOL MANAGER (male, 30s) and a LIFEGUARD (female, 17) are sitting in the office flipping through MAGAZINES. The Manager is sitting in a CHAIR BESIDE A DESK, while the Lifeguard is sitting ON THE DESK. She's SIPPING A DIET COKE. The Manager is leaning his elbow *comfortably* on the lifeguard's lap. *He's flirting.*

Max and El come to the counter.

MAX

Excuse me?

Without looking up from his magazine --

MANAGER

(dry, monotonous)

No one in the water until thirty-minutes after the last strike. And don't try and argue with me.

(MORE)

MANAGER (CONT'D)

You want to get electrocuted, go climb a tree.

MAX

Yeah, we don't care, we're not here to swim. Or get ... electrocuted.

EL

We found this.

El holds up the RED LIFEGUARD FIRST-AID kit she found in the garbage bucket at Max's house. The manager looks up from his magazine, but is completely disinterested. The lifeguard beside him, takes a sip from her Diet Coke.

So what?

MAX

Does that belong to anybody here?

MANAGER

Oh yeah. That's Heather's. I'll get it back to her.

The manager still hasn't budged from his chair.

EL

We could give it back to her.

MANAGER

You could. 'Cept she's not here. Bailed on me today.

Max and El shoot each other a look. The manager is losing his patience.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

What is this? You girls want a reward or somethin'?

MAX

(just as sarcastic)
No. We're just ... Good Samaritans.

El notices the BULLETIN BOARD on the wall behind her. She walks over to it.

INT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (BULLETIN BOARD) - DAY

The neatly organized bulletin board (about 8-feet x 4-feet) is divided into two sections. On the right: GENERAL POOL AND COMMUNITY NOTICES. AMERICAN FLAGS, HAWKINS FORTH OF JULY PARADE and a LIGHTNING WARNING are the most obvious postings.

On the left: MEET YOUR '85 SWIM SEASON LIFEGUARDS. Under that heading are SIX PHOTOS. Under each photo is, PRINTED IN BLACK-INK CAPITAL LETTERS, THE NAME OF THE PERSON IN THE PHOTO. In order they are: (1st row) ADAM, KATIE, ZOE; (2nd row) BILLY, HEATHER, FREDDY.

El is immediately drawn to the bulletin board. We SEE HER WALK from the management office counter to the bulletin board. Max falls-in behind El. El's gaze is ONLY FOCUSED ON ONE PHOTO --

MAX

Heather.

The photo is indeed HEATHER HOLLOWAY (female, 17). The picture was taken on the pool deck earlier in the year. Heather is seen smiling to the camera. She's wearing a RED HAWKINS POOL LIFEGUARD ONE-PIECE SWIM SUIT. Around her waist is the RED LIFEGUARD FIRST-AID KIT. Around Heather's neck is the YELLOW MARINE WHISTLE and LANYARD.

MAX (CONT'D)

Do you think you can find her?

El looks over her shoulder to the management office. The manager is flirting with the lifeguard. He's not paying attention to El and Max.

EL SNATCHES THE PHOTO OFF THE WALL.

INT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (SHOWERS/LOCKER ROOM) - DAY

Max and El go from SHOWER STALL TO SHOWER STALL turning on the taps. They're flooding the locker room.

Water. El needs water to see The In-Between.

INT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (UTILITY CLOSET) - DAY

El finds a DIVING MASK and SILVER DUCT TAPE. She covers the mask with the duct tape; ensuring that no light can get through. She needs to be in complete darkness.

INT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (SHOWERS/LOCKER ROOM) - DAY

El is sitting CROSS-LEGGED on the FLOODED FLOOR. Behind her, the showers are still running. Max takes a seat on a BENCH next to El. El puts on the diving mask: her blindfold.

ON THE FLOOR IN FRONT OF EL is the photo of Heather.

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN - DAY

DARKNESS, REFLECTIVE SURFACE. We can HEAR SPLASHING FOOTSTEPS as we slowly approach a WHITE MAILBOX on a WOODEN POST. Not unlike the ones you see at the end of the driveways along a country road.

Underneath the mailbox is a PAINTED WHITE ADDRESS PLACARD WITH BLACK NUMBERS: 1438.

El approaches the mailbox and STOPS. She places her hand on the mailbox.

Then, in the distance, A RED DOOR appears. The FRONT DOOR OF 1438 (we don't yet see the street name). The DOOR COMES INTO FOCUS.

INT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (SHOWERS/LOCKER ROOM) - DAY

MAX

What do you see?

EL

A door. A red door.

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN (1438/RED DOOR) - DAY

El approaches the red door. She opens it. In the distance is a WHITE PORCELAIN-ENAMELED CAST IRON BATHTUB. El slowly walks to the tub.

INT./EXT. THE IN-BETWEEN (BEYOND THE RED DOOR) - DAY

El cautiously approaches the tub.

When she gets there, she looks in.

WATER AND ICE IS FILLED TO THE BRIM of the tub. She takes a closer look -- *what is that?*

JUST THEN - HEATHER POPS UP! El takes a step back; startled.

HEATHER

(gasping for air)

Help me.

SUDDENLY, Heather is PULLED UNDER. El SCREAMS and quickly reaches into the tub to save Heather. But the TUB VANISHES!

ON HER KNEES, El looks down. She CAN SEE HEATHER BEING PULLED INTO THE DARKNESS - REACHING UP TO EL.

El gasps, REACHING FOR HEATHER.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
(screaming)
Help me!

HEATHER'S POV: El is IN THE WATER REACHING FOR HER. We SEE AIR BUBBLES COMING FROM EL'S MOUTH AS SHE SCREAMS FOR HEATHER.

REVERSE POV: Heather sinks deeper and deeper into the abyss.

INT. HAWKINS COMMUNITY POOL (SHOWERS/LOCKER) - DAY

El rips off her mask, panting, frightened.

MAX
What happened? El?

It takes a moment before El gets her bearings back. El's NOSE IS BLEEDING. Out of breath, El collapses in her hands.

EXT. HAWKINS LAB (FRONT GATE) - DAY

A sign reads: RESTRICTED AREA NO TRESPASSING U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPERTY. But the sign isn't attached to any post or fence - it's half-buried in MUCK, WATER AND SAND. The once mighty HAWKINS LAB is now just a sorry-looking abandoned building. A fitting end to the site of so much torture, death and destruction.

EXT. HAWKINS LAB (FRONT ENTRANCE) - DAY

HOPPER'S TRUCK pulls up.

INT. HOPPER'S TRUCK - DAY

LOOKING OUT FROM THE BACKSEAT, Hopper reaches into the TRUNK AREA and takes the BOLT CUTTERS and the FLASHLIGHT from the back. Beside him: Joyce.

EXT. HAWKINS LAB (FRONT DOORS) - DAY

On the DOUBLE FRONT DOORS OF THE BUILDING are TWO SIGNS; IDENTICAL - ONE POSTED ON EACH DOOR.

WARNING: RESTRICTED AREA

This building has been declared a restricted area by authority of the Commanding Officer in accordance with the provisions of the directive issued by the Secretary of Defense. (Section 21, Internal Security Act of 1950.) Unauthorized entry is prohibited.

But Hopper is the Chief of Police.

The bolt cutters easily cut right through the CHAIN AND LOCK binding the doors together.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (LOBBY) - DAY

The doors swing open. Hopper is the first to come in. Joyce follows right behind him.

HOPPER
(mockingly)
Helloooooooooooooooooo?

Obviously, there is no response. The place is empty. The shattered windows are boarded up. The only light entering the lobby is that from the doors they just opened.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
Anybody home?

Joyce, holding the flashlight, slowly makes her way into the lobby.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
We come in peace.

Joyce gets to the spot where she saw Bob get killed. She pauses a moment.

FLASHBACK: SEASON TWO - EPISODE EIGHT. Joyce sees BOB NEWBY standing there. He's just safely made it back. It was a long run. He's out of breath. He smiles at Joyce.

SUDDENLY, he is ATTACKED BY A DEMO-DOG. We HEAR THE ECHO OF JOYCE'S SCREAM.

JOYCE (O.C.)
(screams)

Bob is getting brutally attacked. Torn apart by the beast.

BOB (O.C.)
Go!

HOPPER (O.C.)
Let's go!

JOYCE
(screams)

END OF FLASHBACK

ECHOES of Bob and Joyce's SCREAMS FADE AWAY.

HOPPER
Joyce!

Joyce is jolted out of her day-nightmare.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
You okay?

JOYCE
I'm fine.

No she isn't.

HOPPER
You wanna wait in the car?

JOYCE
I said I'm fine.

Hopper and Joyce walk to the NEARBY STAIRWELL.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (NEAR THE LOBBY STAIRWELL) - DAY

Joyce and Hopper round the corner and go through the double doors leading to the stairwell. The CAMERA TILTS UP TO A CCTV CAMERA MOUNTED ON THE WALL. The RED LIGHT is FLASHING.

Someone is watching.

CAMERA SLOWLY ZOOMS TO THE LENS OF THE CCTV CAMERA, UNTIL --

EFFECTS TO:

EXT. STARCOURT MALL FOODCOURT (NEAR THE PLANTS) - DAY

-- CAMERA ZOOMS OUT FROM THE LEFT LENS OF BINOCULARS. Dustin engaging in "spycraft". He's looking through the binoculars.

POV BINOCULARS: Scanning the CROWD OF SHOPPERS. We stop when we see A GOOD-LOOKING MAN, LONG BLONDE HAIR, WEARING DARK AVIATOR SUN GLASSES AND CARRYING A DUFFEL BAG.

Bingo! Evil Russian.

Back to Steve and Dustin.

DUSTIN
Target acquired!

STEVE
Where?

DUSTIN
Ten o'clock. Sam Goody's.

STEVE
Give me that.

Steve takes the binoculars and has a look.

POV BINOCULARS: We see the same Blonde Man. Not smiling. Definitely suspicious. Definitely must be Russian.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Shit!

Back to Steve and Dustin.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Duffel bag!

Steve lowers the binoculars and he and Dustin lock eyes.

DUSTIN
Evil Russian.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Evil Russian.

INT. STARCOURT MALL (ESCALATOR TO 2ND FLOOR) - DAY

The Blond Man ascends the escalator; visually scanning the crowd. SHOPPERS (various ages and genders) are keeping their distance. He walks the final few steps up and PAST THE CAMERA. About halfway down the escalator are Steve and Dustin RUNNING UP THE ESCALATOR trying to catch up to the Blonde Man.

INT. STARCOURT MALL (2ND LEVEL) - DAY

It's crowded. SHOPPERS (various ages and genders) everywhere. Steve and Dustin, weaving in and out of people-traffic, are closing in on the Blonde Man. He's calm, cool, and collected. Clearly a well trained Russian operative.

DUSTIN
Slow down.

STEVE
We're losing him.

DUSTIN
You're getting too close.

Steve bumps into a MAN (19) walking in the opposite direction.

MAN
Watch it, dickwad.

The Blonde Man stops and looks behind him. Steve ducks into a corner BEHIND A PLANT, while Dustin picks up the RECEIVER OF A PAY TELEPHONE BESIDE HIM and, into the phone, says --

DUSTIN
(monotone)
Hello. Yes. I am fine. How are you?

The skilled Russian agent, the Blonde Man, continues walking. *He didn't spot Steve and Dustin.*

INT. STARCOURT MALL (2ND LEVEL - WALDENBOOKS) - DAY

Steve and Dustin duck behind a STORE DIRECTORY AND FLOOR PLAN SIGN (the HUGE light-up ones) close to WALDENBOOKS. They keep a visual on the Blonde Man.

POV STEVE AND DUSTIN: The Blonde Man CASUALLY AND CONFIDENTLY walks into the JAZZERCISE STUDIO where about ONE DOZEN WOMEN (20s to 50s) are Jazzercising. The Blond Man walks to the front of the studio, resting his duffel bag on a table. He turns to face the ladies.

BLONDE MAN
All right, everyone, listen up!

That's odd. No Russian accent.

CUT BETWEEN STEVE AND DUSTIN'S REACTION AND THEIR POV

Steve and Dustin aren't quite sure what to expect. The Blonde Man unzips the duffel bag.

A gun? A bomb?

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
(takes off Aviators)
I just have one question for you.
Who ...
(reaches into the bag)
...is --

It's, it's...some sort of...machinery?

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
... ready to sweat?

The *Russian Agent*, the Blonde Man, pulls out a -- a -- BOOMBOX?

What the hell? He's no Russian Agent! The man with the beautiful blonde locks and cool demeanor is actually the Jazzercise coach!

The women CHEER!

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
Okay! That's right!

The Blonde Man FLICKS A SWITCH on the boombox and the song "WAKE ME UP BEFORE YOU GO GO" by WHAM! plays.

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
Let's start it nice and easy now!

The man unzips his BLACK JACKET to reveal his PURPLE TANK TOP and FINELY-TUNED, NICELY TANNED, AND VERY MUSCULAR CHEST AND BICEPS. He JIRATES his hips, eliciting an excited CHEER from the WOMEN - especially the OLDER WOMEN in his class.

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
Yeah, ladies! Warm it up.

Dustin and Steve look disgusted. Horrified, even.

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
Bring it down to your hips! Start feeling that burn -- everywhere, down to the loins, right?

Steve's disgust turns to DELIGHT as he watches the women ALMOST SEDUCTIVELY JIRATE THEIR HIPS AROUND AND AROUND. Steve's focus is now on the butts of the women.

BLONDE MAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Come on, ladies, show me what you got.

Now the Blonde Man is PUMPING HIS HIPS; IN, OUT; IN, OUT...

BLONDE MAN (CONT'D)
Slow now. Just isolate.

Dustin's reaction is pure HORROR.

BLONDE MAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Ooh, tip that up. That feels good!

INT. SCOOPS AHOY - DAY

Robin is sitting comfortably on the back counter. SHE'S LEANING against a wall and the SLIDING WINDOW to the back room. She is reading her TRANSLATED NOTES FROM A NOTEPAD in one hand, and has a DRINK in a SCOOPS AHOY CUP WITH A STRAW in the other.

ROBIN

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

(takes a sip from her
drink, places the note
pad in front of her, then
her cup)

Tread lightly?

(picks up the
Russian/English
dictionary)

There's a KNOCK. It's coming from the BACK ROOM and the DOOR THAT LEADS TO THE MAZE OF HALLWAYS behind the stores.

INT. SCOOPS AHOY (BACK ROOM) - DAY

Robin OPENS THE SLIDING WINDOW that she was leaning against and slides across the counter into the back room.

INT. HALLWAY BEHIND SCOOPS AHOY (I)- DAY

Robin OPENS THE DOOR. It's a MAN (30s) from LYNX TRANSPORTATION. He's wearing a DARK BLUE UNIFORM with the name LYNX TRANSPORTATION on the LEFT BREAST. And a DARK BLUE CAP with the name LYNX on the front. He's carrying a MEDIUM SIZED BOX.

DELIVERY MAN

Delivery for you.

ROBIN

(accepting the package)
Thank you.

Robin sets the box down behind her before accepting the man's CLIPBOARD AND PEN, and then SIGNS HER NAME FOR THE DELIVERY.

Her attention is suddenly drawn to the man's uniform. *The name.* She's fixated on it. The man shoots her a look. *What?*

After signing her name, she hands him the clipboard and pen, but doesn't take her eyes off his cap. We can tell that she's working things out in her mind.

DELIVERY MAN

Have a nice day.
(accepting the clipboard,
then walks away)

ROBIN

(lost in thought)
Yeah, you too.

INT. HALLWAY BEHIND SCOOPS AHOY (II) - DAY

The Delivery Man continues his rounds. He has a HAND CART STACKED WITH THREE BOXES. He WALKS TOWARDS AND THEN PAST THE CAMERA.

Robin hurries out of Scoops Ahoy and into the hallway. She watches the Delivery Man walk away. She notices the BACK OF THE MAN'S UNIFORM.

POV ROBIN: The FULL LYNX LOGO: **A SILHOUETTE PICTURE OF A LYNX INSIDE A HOLLOW CIRCLE ABOVE RED LETTERS: LYNX.** Under the word **LYNX** is the word **TRANSPORTATION.** Same as the front of the uniform, except on the back logo: the **Lynx silhouette.**

BACK TO ROBIN.

ROBIN

(quietly, to herself)
Silver cat? Silver cat!

INT. SCOOPS AHOY (CUSTOMER AREA) - DAY

Steve and Dustin are coming back from their mission. Disappointed with the outcome. *No Russians.*

STEVE

Hey Robin, you're not going to believe who Dustin thought was a Russian.

DUSTIN

You did too.

STEVE

No, I did not.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

You did, too.

Robin cuts between the two bickering friends and rushes out of Scoops Ahoy.

INT. STARCOURT MALL FOODCOURT (DINING AREA) - DAY

Robin runs into the CROWDED DINING AREA and steps onto a BENCH to get a better look at her surroundings.

ROBIN
 (to herself)
 A trip to China sounds nice.
 (looking around)
 A trip to China sounds nice.
 (looking around, visually scanning)
 A trip to China sounds nice.

POV ROBIN: Looking on the second level. Scanning the CROWDS, LEFT AND RIGHT CAMERA PANS, the STORES. We STOP at the restaurant: **IMPERIAL PANDA**. The logo includes a PANDA BEAR.

BACK TO ROBIN.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
 (louder)
 A trip to China sounds nice!

She checks her notes.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
 (reading from her notepad)
 If you tread lightly.

She scans around again.

POV ROBIN: Looking for anything that makes sense to her. CAMERA PANS LEFT AND RIGHT. Then, we STOP at the store: **KAUFMAN SHOES**.

BACK TO ROBIN.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
 If you *tread* lightly.

Another clue! Robin checks her notes again.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
 (to herself, but louder)
 When -- when blue and yellow meet
 in the west.

Robin looks around.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
When blue and yellow meet in the west.

POV ROBIN: SWISH PAN to the CLOCK ON THE WALL.

Situated under a HALF-MOON SHAPED WINDOW is the mall's clock. A ROUND **TURQUOISE** FACE; SMALL **RED BARS** TO INDICATE WHERE THE NUMBERS WOULD BE if there were numbers; AND LARGER **BLUE** AND **YELLOW** BARS ARE THE HANDS OF THE CLOCK. The LITTLE HAND: **BLUE**. The BIG HAND: **YELLOW**.

Current time: 2:22 PM. If the clock was a compass, the hands would be pointing towards the EAST.

ROBIN (CONT'D)
Meet in the west!

STEVE (O.C.)
Robin!

Steve and Dustin are standing beside Robin - but not on the bench that she's on.

STEVE (CONT'D)
What are you doin'?

ROBIN
I cracked it.

STEVE
Cracked what?

She hops down from the bench. She's now standing opposite Steve and Dustin.

ROBIN
I cracked the code.

EXT. THE HAWKINS POST - AFTERNOON

Pouring rain - still. It's not very busy in downtown Hawkins. The rain is only partially to blame for that.

INT. THE HAWKINS POST (LUNCH ROOM) - AFTERNOON

Nancy is MAKING COFFEE. And she's not happy about it. She opens one of the CUPBOARD DOORS --

A NOVELTY RUBBER RAT swings out. It's taped, by the tail, to the inside of the door. It briefly startles nancy.

BRUCE (O.C.)
 (laughing)
 Oh! There it is!

INT. HAWKINS POST (REPORTERS' DESKS) - AFTERNOON

Bruce is sitting at desk, FEET ON THE DESK. Newsman #1, leaning against a WALL NEXT TO BRUCE'S DESK, with a CIGARETTE IN HIS LEFT HAND, joins in on the laughter. They were sitting there watching Nancy the whole time. Waiting for her reaction.

BRUCE
 Careful. It might have rabies!
 (mimicking a rat chewing)

Newsman #1 breaks out in LAUGHTER.

INT. THE HAWKINS POST (LUNCH ROOM) - AFTERNOON

Nancy shoots the men a glare before removing the rubber rat from the door.

BRUCE (O.C.)
 Better get that thing outta here!
 You don't want it eatin' the tires
 off your car.

Nancy isn't paying attention to the men. She is looking at the rubber rat. *She has an idea.*

INT. THE HAWKINS POST (DARK ROOM) - AFTERNOON

The ROOM IS RED. Meaning, Jonathan is DEVELOPING FILM. The door swings open. It's Nancy.

JONATHAN
 Come on!

Nancy closes the door behind her. She tosses Jonathan the RUBBER RAT.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
 What this?

NANCY
 Proof.

JONATHAN
 Proof?

NANCY

They said they wanted proof, right?
So let's give it to 'em.

JONATHAN

A rubber rat?

NANCY

No. The real rat. Driscoll's rat.
You said yourself it looked sick.
We can take it to an animal control
center, they can run some blood
tests on it, figure out what's
wrong with it --

JONATHAN

Whoa, whoa, Nancy, slow down. Tom
didn't ask for proof. He asked us
to drop the story.

NANCY

That's because he didn't believe
us.

JONATHAN

Nancy.

NANCY

I'm right.

JONATHAN

That's not the point.

NANCY

Then what's the point.

JONATHAN

The point is that you should've
thought about that before you
talked to them. All right? They're
assholes, okay? I get it. But it's
just some stupid story.

NANCY

Oh, it's stupid?

JONATHAN

It's stupid to get fired over.

NANCY

No one is going to fire us.

BEAT.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 Look, if you don't want to go,
 that's fine. Just ... gimme the
 keys.
 (holds out her hand)

JONATHAN
 (holding out the car keys)
 You're relentless, you know that?

Nancy shoots Jonathan a sly smile.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
 Come on.

EXT. HAWKINS LAB - LATE AFTERNOON

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING. THUNDER CLAPS. It's an ominous setting.
 Still RAINING.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (CONTROL ROOM) - LATE AFTERNOON

Hopper, carrying his FLASHLIGHT, comes through the DOORWAY
 COVERED IN PLASTIC. The room is DARK. The OBSERVATION WINDOWS
 AROUND THE ROOM ARE SHATTERED. Joyce is following behind
 Hopper WITH HER OWN FLASHLIGHT. They walk through the control
 room and out to the CAVITY ROOM.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (CAVITY ROOM) - LATE AFTERNOON

Hopper and Joyce walk over to a SOLID CONCRETE WALL where
 there was once an OPENING TO THE UPSIDE DOWN. Hopper takes a
 closer look.

HOPPER
 Nobody's home. All the cavities
 have been filled.

He steps away from the wall, but Joyce stays - inspecting the
 wall closer. Looking, feeling for even the slightest anomaly.
 Hopper stops and turns to Joyce.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 I watched 'em do it, Joyce.

Joyce places her hand on the wall and closes her eyes.

FLASHBACK: Quick cuts from SEASON ONE:

- Joyce and Hopper in the same room when it was active.

- Walking with BIO-HAZARD SUITS on.
- Will trapped in the Upside Down.
- Joyce and Hopper trying to revive Will.
- Battles with the Mind Flayer and Demo-dogs.

END OF FLASHBACK

Joyce looks over at Hopper

HOPPER (CONT'D)
It's over.

Joyce walks away.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
It's over.

Joyce walks over to a ONE-LEVEL SCAFFOLDING PLATFORM nearby.
She sits.

JOYCE
I feel like I'm losing my mind.

HOPPER
You're not losing your mind. Not
anymore than I am.
(leans against a nearby
wall)
You know, the other day, I almost
shot Betsy Payne's dog, because it
came rushing at me from behind this
fence, and I -- I swear to God, I
thought it was one of those *things*.

BEAT.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
You know that I'm keeping a close
eye on things, right?

JOYCE
Yeah.

HOPPER
Because it's important to me. It's
important to me that you feel safe.
That you and your family feel safe.
I want you to feel ... like this
can still be your home.

Damn. Secret's out.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 What? You didn't think I'd find out
 about that?

BEAT.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 Gary called me. He said he's fixing
 up your house to put it on the
 market.

After a moment of reflection --

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 Kid's know yet?

Joyce looks away, shaking her head. Hopper walks over to
 where she is sitting. He sits down on the floor opposite
 Joyce.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
 After Sarah, I had to get away. I
 had to get the hell out of that
 place, you know? Outrun those, uh
 ... those memories, I guess. I mean
 why do you think I ended up back in
 this shithole?
 (soft chuckle)
 But you have something that I never
 had. You have people that know what
 you've been through. You have
 people that care about you. Right
 here. In Hawkins.

JOYCE
 You mean, people like -- Scott
 Clarke.

Hopper stares.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 That was a joke.

Now he gets it.

HOPPER
 Mmm.
 (chuckles)

A METALIC CLANGING breaks the awkward silence. Joyce and
 Hopper point their flashlights toward the sound. It's coming
 from somewhere beyond the Control Room.

JOYCE
What's that?

INT. HAWKINS LAB (ADJACENT HALLWAY) - LATE AFTERNOON

Hopper looks through the door and points his flashlight. HEAVY PLASTIC is covering the doorway. Hopper parts it with his free hand.

HOPPER
Wait here.

Hopper confidently enters the hallway.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (HALLWAY T-JUNCTION) - LATE AFTERNOON

Hopper gets to the end of the adjacent hallway and stops. He LOOKS LEFT: a hallway. He LOOKS RIGHT: a hallway. He chooses the RIGHT.

There's a SOUND OF A CREAKING DOOR HINGE. Hopper walks toward the sound and stops when he gets to the DOOR THAT MADE THE SOUND.

CAMERA PANS FROM HOPPER TO THE DOOR CLOSING SHUT. Hopper's flashlight is shining on the door. We SEE A SILHOUETTE of Hopper's GUN AND HE COCKING THE HAMMER BACK. We HEAR THE CLICKING OF THE GUN.

EXT. BYERS HOME - NIGHT

Lucas and Mike, on their BICYCLE, pedal up to the porch. It's POURING rain. They're both WEARING RAINCOATS. They drop their bikes and walk to the door. Mike bangs on the door.

MIKE
Will! Will, I'm sorry, man, all right? I was being a total asshole. Please can you just come outside and we'll talk?

Mike bangs on the door again.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Will!

Lucas walks to the window and looks inside. The lights are DIM.

INT. BYERS HOME (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

LOOKING AT THE WINDOW from the living room, we can SEE LUCAS LOOKING IN. POUNDING on the door continues.

MIKE (O.C.)
Hey, Will!

LUCAS
Come on, man! We're sorry!
(knocks on the glass)
Will!

EXT. FOREST (CASTLE BYERS) - NIGHT

Will's not at home because he's at his fort: CASTLE BYERS.

INT. CASTLE BYERS - NIGHT

Will is SOAKED from the bike ride to his fort. But Castle Byers is built well enough to protect its occupants from a downpour.

A SMALL BATTERY-POWERED lamp gives off a warm glow. Will is sitting quietly, flipping through the PAGES OF A COMIC BOOK. But he's not really *reading* it. His focus and thoughts are somewhere else. He THROWS THE COMIC DOWN and SCOFFS. Will looks around at his surroundings.

CAMERA PANS DOWN to a COMIC.

MIKE (O.S.)
Something's coming. Something
hungry for blood.

FLASHBACK: SEASON ONE - EPISODE ONE. MIKE'S BASEMENT. Mike, Dustin, Lucas and Will are sitting at a table playing D&D. Happier times. Before Will went missing.

WILL
What is it?

DUSTIN
What if it's the Demogorgan? Oh
Jesus, we're screwed if it's the
Demogorgan.

LUCAS
It's not the Demogorgan.

END OF FLASHBACK

Will looks at the PICTURES ON THE WALL BEHIND HIM. He notices a DRAWING OF WILL THE WISE. We HEAR MIKE'S YOUNGER VOICE.

MIKE (O.C.)
Will, your action!

WILL (O.C.)
Fireball!

FLASHBACK: SEASON ONE - EPISODE EIGHT. MIKE'S BASEMENT. The boys are playing D&D. Having fund again.

Will rolls the dice.

WILL (CONT'D)
Fourteen!

They've done it!

MIKE
(excitedly)
Direct hit! Will the Wise's
fireball hits the Thessalhydra!
(theh-sawl-hi-drah)

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. CASTLE BYERS - NIGHT

We can HEAR THE BOYS CHEERING ECHOES from that great night. The ECHOES FADE AWAY. Will looks to the TABLE where the lamp is. We SEE:

- A TOY TANK.
- MODEL GLUE and PAINT.
- A POPSICLE STICK PICTURE FRAME housing an OLDER PHOTO OF THE BOYS AT A SCIENCE FAIR. They're holding the 1st PLACE TROPHY. All smiles.
- A PICTURE OF THE BOYS IN HALLOWEEN COSTUME when they were GHOSTBUSTERS.

Will picks up the photo of he and the other boys taken last Halloween.

BOYS (O.C.)
(singing the Ghostbusters
theme)
Who you gonna call?

FLASHBACK: SEASON TWO - EPISODE TWO. OUT FRONT HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL. The Boys, LUCAS, MIKE, DUSTIN park their BIKES. Will is there already, waiting for them. They're all WEARING GHOSTBUSTERS UNIFORMS. They continue SINGING.

BOYS (CONT'D)
Ghostbusters!

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. CASTLE BYERS - NIGHT

Will stares into the picture. We still HEAR THE YOUNGER BOYS FROM THE FLASHBACK.

LUCAS (O.C.)
Egon!

WILL (O.C.)
Venkman!

Will's eyes FILL WITH TEARS as the ECHOES OF FUN FADE AWAY.

WILL (CONT'D)
Stupid.
(crying more)
So stupid.

THUNDER CLAPS outside. Will RIPS THE PHOTO IN HALF. THEN RIPS IT AGAIN. He THROWS THE PIECES TO THE GROUND. Will starts ripping down all the pictures on the walls of Castle Byers.

WILL (CONT'D)
So stupid.
(sobbing)
Stupid.

He grabs a nearby BASEBALL BAT.

EXT. CASTLE BYERS - NIGHT

Will comes out of Castle Byers. He takes a few steps back, SOBBING, takes one last look at his fort, and then STARTS SWINGING.

He SMASHES THE SIGN ABOVE THE DOOR: **CASTLE BYERS.**

Smashes the BRANCHES FORMING THE WALLS OF CASTLE BYERS. It begins to collapse.

Screaming. Sobbing. The sign FALLS TO THE GROUND. Will keeps SWINGING.

Will drops the bat, but continues dismantling the fort -
USING HIS HANDS.

Will loses the strength in his legs and crumbles to the mud
beneath him. He SOBS UNCONTROLLABLY.

His fort, destroyed. LIGHTNING FLASHES around him as the
downpour continues. Will sits in the mud, sobbing. His
childhood...gone.

EXT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME - NIGHT

Nancy and Jonathan run up to the front door. Nancy KNOCKS.

INT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME (FRONT DOOR) - NIGHT

LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW IN THE FRONT DOOR we can SEE JONATHAN
AND NANCY.

NANCY
Mrs. Driscoll?

EXT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME - NIGHT

Nancy knocks on the window again.

JONATHAN
She must not be home.

NANCY
She's an eighty-year-old woman and
it's pouring. Where else would she
be?

Nancy tries TO TURN THE DOORKNOB. It's unlocked!

JONATHAN
Whoa! What are you doing?

NANCY
Maybe she fell. Or something.

INT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME (FRONT DOOR) - NIGHT

Nancy opens the door and enters.

JONATHAN
Nancy!

NANCY
Mrs. Driscoll?

Jonathan doesn't come in right away. He stays on the porch.

JONATHAN
Seriously?

NANCY
Mrs. Driscoll?

Jonathan comes in and closes the door behind him.

INT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

THE ANALOG CLOCK ON THE WALL READS: 9:16PM. Nancy slowly walks into the living room.

NANCY
Mrs. Driscoll? It's Nancy! From The
Hawkins Post.

Jonathan is right behind Nancy.

INT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME (DINING ROOM) - NIGHT

Nancy and Jonathan continue to make their way through the home. The LIGHTS ARE ON, but there's no sign of anyone.

INT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME (BASEMENT) - NIGHT

LOOKING UP FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS: the DOOR AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS is slightly ajar. Nancy opens the door completely. She looks down the stairs into the DARK.

NANCY
Mrs. Driscoll?

INT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME (BASMENT II) - NIGHT

Nancy and Jonathan descend the stairs. Nancy ENGAGES THE LIGHT SWITCH AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS. Immediately they both notice the OPEN BAG OF FERTILIZER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BASEMENT FLOOR.

SUDDENLY: A PIERCING SQUEAL gets their attention. SNARLING, CHITTERING. It's coming from the other side of the basement - in the WORKSHOP.

They can't see it because of a wall. Nancy grabs a nearby HAMMER.

INT. MRS. DRISCOLL'S HOME (BASEMENT III) - NIGHT

Jonathan rounds the corner. He sees MRS. DRISCOLL hunched over a WOODEN WORK BENCH. Jonathan and Nancy STOP and stare.

Mrs. Driscoll is DEVOURING A BAG OF FERTILIZER! She sounds like a ravenous wild animal while she's eating.

NANCY
(can't believe her eyes)
Mrs ... Driscoll?

Mrs. Driscoll looks up. Her face and mouth are COVERED IN FERTILIZER. She SNARLS!

INT. STARCOURT MALL FOODCOURT - NIGHT

The mall clock above the foodcourt reads: 8:43PM. The BLUE HAND and YELLOW HAND are nearly perfectly aligned.

When blue and yellow meet in the west.

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (LOADING DOCK) - NIGHT

TWO HEAVILY ARMED GUARDS (male, tall, fit, early 30s), WEARING ALL BLACK UNMARKED UNIFORMS, watch as a TRANSPORT TRUCK reverses into the docking area.

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (ROOF) - NIGHT

Dustin, Jonathan and Robin are on the roof overlooking the loading dock. Dustin is observing through the BINOCULARS.

ROBIN
Look for Imperial Panda and Kaufman
Shoes.

POV BINOCULARS:

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (LOADING DOCK II) - NIGHT

A MAN IN A YELLOW RAINCOAT (20s) WHISTLING, is rolling a HANDCART STACKED WITH THREE BOXES. The TOP TWO BOXES ARE LABELLED: **IMPERIAL PANDA.**

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (ROOF) - NIGHT

DUSTIN
They're with that whistling guy,
ten o'clock.

POV BINOCULARS:**EXT. STARCOURT MALL (LOADING DOCK II) - NIGHT**

The Whistling Man's YELLOW RAINCOAT has the LYNX LOGO
imprinted on the back. The man STOPS.

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (ROOF) - NIGHT

STEVE
What do you think's in there?

DUSTIN
Guns? Bombs?

ROBIN
Chemical weapons?

POV BINOCULARS:**EXT. STARCOURT MALL (LOADING DOCK II) - NIGHT**

Guard #2 is standing nearby. He's not smiling.

Must be a Russian Agent.

DUSTIN (O.C.)
Whatever it is, they're armed to
the teeth.

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (ROOF) - NIGHT

Steve wipes the rain from his eyes.

STEVE
(sarcastically)
That's great.

POV BINOCULARS:

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (LOADING DOCK II) - NIGHT

Guard #1 uses his KEYCARD to unlock a set of SOLID STEEL DOUBLE DOORS. They open. Guard #2 stands nearby and the Whistling Man awaits with his cart to get into the building.

ROBIN (O.C.)
Hey, what's in there?

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (ROOF) - NIGHT

DUSTIN
It's just more boxes.

STEVE
(reaching for the
binoculars)
Lemme check it out.

DUSTIN
(refusing to give up the
binoculars)
No, I'm still looking.

They struggle over the binoculars.

STEVE
Lemme see it!

DUSTIN
Hang on!

The binoculars SLIP OUT OF DUSTIN'S HANDS. They fall to the ground, making a LOUD NOISE. This catches the attention of the Guards.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
Duck!

Robin, Steve and Dustin take cover behind the roof's ledge.

Guard #2 goes to investigate the noise. He READIES HIS MACHINE GUN.

Steve and Robin are scared. They're holding hands. They look at each other before quickly letting go.

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (LOADING DOCK III) - NIGHT

Guards #1 and 2 creep along the side of the transport truck.

GUARD #1
(in Russian)
Stay here! Watch the door!

EXT. STARCOURT MALL (ROOF II) - NIGHT

The DOOR bursts open. Guard #1 jumps out. He visually scans the rooftop.

Dustin, Robin and Steve are not there.

INT. STARCOURT MALL HALLWAYS BEHIND STORES - NIGHT

Dustin, Robin and Steve managed to get back inside before the Russian got to the roof. CAMERA FOLLOWS as the trio heads back to Scoops Ahoy.

ROBIN
I think we found your Russians.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (HALLWAY II) - NIGHT

Hopper appears from a corridor. His GUN is at the ready and his FLASHLIGHT is lighting the way.

A SOUND OF CLANGING METAL catches Hopper's attention. He starts moving quickly toward the sound.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (OFFICE AREA) - NIGHT

Following the sound, Hopper is lead into an OFFICE AREA. DESKS AND CHAIRS, left untouched for the last two years, still appear to be in use.

At the other end of the office area Hopper comes to a DOOR left slightly ajar. It's a MANGER'S OFFICE. He doesn't go inside.

HOPPER
This is Hawkins Chief of Police!
Come out with your hands up!

BEAT.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
You hear me --
(kicks the door open)
-- hands up!

INT. HAWKINS LAB (MANAGER'S OFFICE) - NIGHT

The door BURSTS OPEN, Hopper comes in. It's empty. But, a SLIDING GLASS DOOR at the FAR WALL of the small office is ajar. It leads to a LARGE BALCONY.

Someone was here.

Hopper walks to the door and shines his FLASHLIGHT outside.

EXT. HAWKINS LAB (BALCONY OUTSIDE MANAGER'S OFFICE) - NIGHT

No sign of anyone. The balcony is huge; easily 15-square-yards. There's a low wall around the perimeter that someone could have easily jumped over and fled moments earlier. It's only the second floor.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (MANAGER'S OFFICE) - NIGHT

THEN, a CRASH OF THUNDER and a FLASH OF LIGHTNING illuminates the office. And there, STANDING BEHIND HOPPER, is GRIGORI.

A fight ensues. Hopper drops his gun and flashlight.

Grigori gets the best of Hopper. His powerful blows to Hopper's back and ribcage wind the veteran cop. Grigori tosses Hopper around the office like a rag doll. Hopper manages to break free from Grigori's grip and swings. Grigori easily dodges the incoming punch then lands a kick to the side of Hopper's knee. Grigori kicks Hopper in the face, knocking him unconscious.

INT. HAWKINS LAB (HALLWAY II) - NIGHT

Joyce is retracing Hopper's footsteps. She has a FLASHLIGHT, but no weapon.

JOYCE
Hopper! Hopper!

INT. HAWKINS LAB (MANAGER'S OFFICE) - NIGHT

Joyce comes from around the corner. She sees Hopper lying lifeless where Grigori knocked him out minutes before.

JOYCE
Hopper!

He's not moving. He's alive, but passed out and injured.

The sound of a MOTORCYCLE ENGINE STARTING UP gets the attention of Joyce. She walks to the sliding glass door.

EXT. HAWKINS LAB (BALCONY OUTSIDE MANAGER'S OFFICE) - NIGHT

Joyce comes onto the balcony stops. She see's a man on a MOTORCYCLE drive away.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

In the distance a FIGURE APPEARS. Max and El. They're double-riding on Max's BICYCLE. They ZOOM PAST THE CAMERA.

EXT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The bicycle comes to a stop at the MAILBOX. The same WHITE MAILBOX that El saw in The In-Between. Below the mailbox: the ADDRESS MARKER: 1438. Heather Holloway's house.

The missing lifeguard.

MAX
Is this it?

El nods.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (FRONT ENTRANCE) - NIGHT

The BOLT LOCK DISENGAGES AND THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN. El and Max are standing there. El used her powers to unlock and open the door. Easy task for her.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (HALL) - NIGHT

El and Max walk into the hall and notice a large FAMILY PORTRAIT HANGING ON THE WALL. Heather, Tom and Tom's wife, Janet are smiling. It's clearly a PROFESSIONALLY TAKEN PHOTO.

MAX
This is her house.

EL
What?

MAX
Heather's house.

Janet's LAUGHTER coming from the dining room breaks the momentary silence.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (DINING ROOM) - NIGHT

Billy, JANET and Tom are sitting at the dining room table having dinner. Billy is being very charming.

BILLY
Isn't that cute, huh?

Janet, HOLDING A GLASS OF RED WINE, is laughing at Billy's jokes.

JANET
(to Tom)
He's so funny.

Their nice meal is interrupted. Tom notices the disruption first. Then Janet, then Billy.

BILLY
Max.

El and Max are standing in the living room, which is situated next to the dining room, staring in disbelief at the pleasant social gathering.

MAX
We didn't mean to ... barge in.

Tom puts down HIS GLASS OF WINE. He's not very happy about the intrusion.

MAX (CONT'D)
We tried to knock, but ... maybe
you didn't hear us over the storm.

Billy is concerned.

TOM
I'm sorry, who is this dripping all
over my living room right now?

BILLY
(chuckles, swallows his
food)
I'm sorry.
(sarcastically happy)
Janet, Tom, *this* ... is my sister,
Maxine.

Billy stands from the table. Janet is pleasantly surprised. Tom, though, is still not happy.

JANET
Oh!

Billy walks over to Max and El.

BILLY
What on earth are you doing here?

Billy is standing opposite El and max.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Is something wrong?

MAX
We just wanted to make sure
everything was okay.

BILLY
(fake concern)
Okay? Why wouldn't it be okay?

EL
Where is she?

BILLY
I'm sorry -- where is who?

Heather emerges from the kitchen carrying a TRAY OF FRESHLY
BAKED COOKIES. She looks - good as new!

HEATHER
Well, they're a little burnt, I'm
sorry --
(noticing El and Max)

BILLY
Heather! This is my sister, Maxine.
(looks to El)
And, I'm sorry, I did not quite
catch your name.

EL
El.

BILLY
El. Now what is it you were saying,
El? You were looking for somebody?

El looks over to Heather.

EL
I ... I saw ... you --

MAX
Your manager. At the pool. He said
you guys didn't come in to work
today, so we got worried.

BILLY

Heather wasn't feeling so hot today, so we thought we'd take the day off to nurse her back to health.

(looks to Heather)

But you're feeling just fine now, aren't you, Heather?

HEATHER

I'm feeling so much better.

El and Billy lock eyes.

JANET

Do you girls want a cookie?

HEATHER

(raising the cookie tray)

They're fresh out of the oven.

El and Max say nothing. They stare in disbelief.

EXT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (FRONT LAWN) - NIGHT

Billy is standing at the doorway as he watches El and Max leave. He closes the door, but continues to watch through the WINDOW. Billy's PUPILS ARE FULLY DILATED. He thinking.

Why does El look so familiar?

ECU: BILLY'S LEFT EYE. The PUPIL CONTRACTS as we:

QUICK CUTS between an ECU of BILLY'S LEFT EYE and **SEASON TWO - EPISODE NINE:** Several shots of El closing the gate. Then --

ECU: BILLY'S LEFT EYE. His PUPIL DILATES once again.

He knows.

EXT. CASTLE BYERS - NIGHT

Will is sitting in the mud outside of his destroyed fort. The HAIR ON THE BACK OF HIS NECK RISES. GOOSEBUMPS.

Will gets to his feet. He visually scans the surrounding forest.

I can feel him.

MIKE (O.C.)

Will!

LUCAS (O.C.)

Will!

Mike and Lucas EMERGE FROM THE DARKNESS OF THE FOREST and rush over to Will.

MIKE

What happened? Are you okay?

Will turns and faces Mike.

WILL

He's back.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

The RECORD PLAYER is spinning a classic ALBUM: DON MCLEAN'S AMERICAN PIE.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (DINING ROOM) - NIGHT

Janet, Tom and Heather are sitting at the table enjoying the FRENCHLY BAKED COOKIES. Billy walks in and sits at the table.

HEATHER

Is everything all right?

BILLY

Yes. Everything's fine.

JANET

Your sister really didn't want to stay?

BILLY

No. She's just not, you know, really a people person.

JANET

Well, I just don't like the idea of them out there in the storm like that.

TOM

Oh, they'll be fine.

Janet reaches for her glass of wine, but she misses and knocks the glass over.

TOM (CONT'D)

I told you to slow down on that wine, Janet.

JANET
(dabbing at the spill)
Yes, darling.

HEATHER
You okay, Mommy?

JANET
Yes, I'm -- I'm just ... feeling a
little lightheaded is all.

TOM
It's all that wine.

Heather and Billy lock eyes. But have to reaction.

JANET
I'm sorry. Um, if you'll excuse me.
I'm just gonna go upstairs and lie
down for a bit.

Janet stands and leaves the table. Heather and Billy lock eyes once again.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Janet takes three steps into the living room before FAINTING.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (DINING ROOM) - NIGHT

TOM
Janet!

Tom quickly stands from the table and rushes to the living room. Billy reaches down beside his chair and grabs the BOTTLE OF CHLOROFORM he used to spike Janet's wine. He unscrews the cap and pours some on his DINNER NAPKIN.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Tom steps out of the dining room to see Janet lying lifeless on the floor.

TOM
Janet!

He kneels beside Janet, shaking her. She's alive, but completely unconscious.

TOM (CONT'D)
Janet. Janet!

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (DINING ROOM) - NIGHT

Heather grabs the EMPTY WINE BOTTLE by the neck and stands from the table.

TOM (O.C.)
(panicking)
Call 911!

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Heather approaches Tom from behind. Tom looks to Heather.

TOM
(yelling)
Call 911.

Heather SWINGS THE EMPTY WINE BOTTLE

WHACK!

Tom falls flat.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (DINING ROOM) - NIGHT

Hearing the SOUND OF SOLID GLASS HITTING BONE AND FLESH, Billy stands from the table and makes his way to the living room.

INT. HOLLOWAY RESIDENCE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Tom, BLEEDING FROM HIS HEAD, stumbles as he tries to CRAWL AWAY. Billy hands Heather his DINNER NAPKIN. It's soaked in CHLOROFORM.

Heather kicks Tom in the back, sending him back down onto his stomach. Then she kneels down beside him and GRABS A FIST FULL OF HAIR FROM THE BACK OF TOM'S HEAD. She gets close to his face.

HEATHER
I'm really sorry about this, Daddy,
but it'll all be over soon, I
promise.

She cups her HAND AND NAPKIN OVER HIS NOSE AND MOUTH. His MUFFLED SCREAMS are futile.

Billy watches from behind. *Evil grin.*

THE END