

Watch Out For Falling Prices

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FADE IN.

EXT. A RURAL BUS STOP - MORNING

JACK is Black boy, aged 11. He wears a button-down shirt and shorts and carries a backpack. He is standing in front of the bus stop alone. Behind him is a massive forest. A short distance into the woods down a dirt road is a house with a porch light on. The sun is just starting to rise.

JACK (V.O.)

My name is Jack Smith. Waiting at the bus stop is my least favorite part of the day. I live out Oak Tree Road, which is just inside the two-mile limit for the school bus to stop and pick me up, so I have to ride the city bus. My mom, Dianne, always has to be at work at 6 o'clock. Dad works in California and I only see him once a year.

Jack looks down at his watch.

JACK (V.O.)

If I wanted to, I could walk over to Pine Crest Road and get on that school bus, but Joey Shimkis rides that bus and there's no way I'm riding on the same bus as Joey, he's a jerk and he always rags on me.

Jack tugs on the straps of his backpack to make sure they are secure. Then he cranes his neck to look up the hill to see if he can see the bus yet.

JACK (V.O.)

So my mom got me a city bus pass and that's how I ride to Richmond Middle School every day. Luckily for me, by bestie, Miles Thomas, rides the city bus, too. Miles had some trouble with Joey Shimkis, too, and his mom won't let him ride the school bus. So every morning at 6:45 exactly, the bus pulls up and I take a short fun ride to school. That morning the bus arrived at exactly 6:45, just like always.

The city bus pulls up as Jack is looking at his watch. The doors open and Jack gets on.

JACK (V.O.)

Jack climbs the stairs and slides his dollar bill into the slot.

INT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus driver wears a nametag that says "MIKE."

MIKE

Hey, Jack! You need a transfer?

Jack shakes his head no and walks to the back of the bus, slinging his backpack onto the seat in the last row. There are a half dozen other passengers on board this morning and Jack surveys them. First up is a large Black woman, ANNIE, who is blind. She is sitting right behind the driver, chatting with him.

JACK (V.O.)

That's Annie. She's blind. She's nervous a lot. I think I would be, too.

ANNIE

Is this my stop?

MIKE

No, Annie, I tell you every day that I'll let you know when we get to your stop. I'm not gonna let you miss your stop.

ANNIE

Well, you know, I never want to be one to miss my stop.

Across from the large blind Black woman was a really thin Asian man, MR. HANSO, who is at least 70. He stares at Annie with a grin.

JACK (V.O.)

That's Mr. Hanso. He's at least 100 years old. I think he's a retired ninja. But I've never seen a ninja that skinny.

Next to Mr. Hanso is a paper sack from Albertson's.

JACK (V.O.)

Albertson's is where Miles' mom works. But I'll bet there aren't groceries in that bag today. That bag has to be filled with various weapons that I've read about in the old Kung Fu magazines my Uncle Ronnie gave me. Throwing stars, nunchaku, darts, blowguns, maybe even a sai or two. And, of course, his ninja costume. How could any good ninja, retired or not, go in public without his costume?

EXT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus turns off the main road onto a side road that is an oval loop off of the main road and pulls up to the bus stop.

JACK (V.O.)

This is the end of the line. Miles lives here. After we pick him up, we leave Pine Way and go back down past my house again and into town.

INT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus door opens and MILES THOMAS steps onto the bus. Miles is the same age as Jack. He is a thin white boy with olive skin, black hair that is a little long and a little shaggy, Harry Potter-style glasses, an untucked horizontally-striped shirt, and navy blue shorts. He carries a backpack with the Transformers on it.

Miles pays his fare.

MIKE

Hey, Miles, you need a transfer?

MILES

No, sir.

EXT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

Miles begins walking towards the back of the bus, with a conspiratorial look on his face, as Mike pulls away from the station, completes the circular drive, and heads back the direction he came.

INT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

Once Miles gets to the back of the bus, he gives Jack an awkward high five and sits down holding his backpack close to his chest as he unzips it.

MILES
(whispering)
Wait till you see this. It's for
later.

Miles carefully opens the backpack where only Jack can see. Miles carefully shuffles past folders, a Harry Potter novel, and a Math book to uncover a Playboy magazine.

Jack's eyes go large and Miles quickly hides it again and zips up the backpack.

JACK
Is that your brother's?

MILES
Yep. He has so many of them, he
won't even notice that it's gone.
He told mom he reads them for the
articles...
(face grows to a big grin)
...but I didn't even notice it had
articles.

JACK
(also grinning)
Man, that's going to be so awesome!

A young Black woman in her 20s, SHERELLE, stares back at them from one of the middle seats on the bus. She obviously heard their discussion and is disgusted, but neither Miles nor Jack notice.

MILES
So, how's it hangin'?

JACK
A little to the left.

MILES
I don't really want to hear about
it, it's just a sayin'. Jerk.

JACK
Shut up!

MILES

So, who do we have on the bus today?

JACK

Well, so far, I've been watching the blind lady up front...

MILES

Dude, blind people freak me out.

JACK

(lowers his voice)

...and then the guy across from her. That guy has got to be a retired ninja.

MILES

Awesome! You're right, he looks like that guy in Kill Bill.

JACK

Yeah, the one with the long mustache!

MILES

That dude was awesome. He would so totally kick Chuck Norris's ass! Who else you got?

JACK

I don't know, that's as far as I got before you got on. I think you should come up with some. I came up with the excellent ninja idea!

Miles sits perplexed as he alternately stares at the other four passengers on the bus. He looks over at a college-aged white couple, CARL and NICKI. Carl has blonde hair and wears a black t-shirt and jeans, he rests his head on Nicki's shoulder. Nicki is a brunette who looks vaguely European. She wears a summer dress with a print of the Milky Way galaxy on it, boots, and lots of necklaces and bracelets.

MILES

Okay, this is easy. See those two freaks over there?

JACK

Yeah, sure.

MILES

They were up all night last night, getting' it on.

JACK

Ha, ha, ha!

(under his breath)

I don't even know what that means.

MILES

Yeah, I'll bet they're real
perverts! Like I'll bet that they
didn't just have...

(whispered)

...intercourse!

Jack giggles.

MILES (CONT'D)

I'll bet he even did...cunnilingus!

Jack explodes in laughter. Miles joins him.

JACK

Okay, okay, okay. That was pretty
good, but you still got two more to
go.

MILES

That's fine, I got it. The blind
lady is the wife of a former Nazi
muckety-muck who is here hiding out
from the authorities. And the
younger girl... that's Queen
Latifah!

JACK

(laughing)

Whatever! Do you even know who
Queen Latifah is? That girl is
skinny and young, Queen
Latifah's... uh... not. And why
would an old Black blind woman
marry a Nazi, that makes no sense!

MILES

(giggling)

Screw you, she's blind, so she
wouldn't even know he was a Nazi!
You come up with something better,
that's the best I could do!

Jack leans back against the seat and tries to think of something. The bus zips past Jack's house and comes to the top of the hill.

JACK (V.O.)

Miles and I love to play games to pass the boring time. My favorite game is Five Nights At Freddy's, but I don't like to play on the bus, it gets too bumpy and I don't want to drop my phone. Miles is better at games than me, he can think of jokes a lot quicker. But his jokes are kinda mean at times.

EXT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus comes to a screeching halt.

INT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

Looking in from the front window.

Mr. Hanso stands and stares out the front window. In short order all of the other adults join him.

ANNIE

What the hell is that?

MILES

(to JACK)

Let's go check it out!

The two boys hurry towards the front of the bus. The window is blocked by the adults, but the boys push their way through so they can see as well. Jack stops and stares. Miles' jaw drops.

MILES (CONT'D)

(mumbles incoherently)

Jack is staring out the window and isn't really paying attention to Miles.

JACK

What?

MILES

(louder than the previous time)

Saucers... They're supposed to be saucers.

CARL

What the hell are you talking about, kid?

MILES

(yelling now)

Saucers, dammit! They're supposed to be saucers! We've had hundreds of books and hundreds of movies about aliens invading earth! Many of them based on true stories! And they all have flying saucers! Not a single one of them talks about flying triangles!

CUT TO:

A close-up of Jack's face. His eyes close, as they do, the screen fades to black. Once they open again, we have switched sides to Jack's POV looking through the windshield of the bus.

JACK (V.O.)

I hope I'm dreaming.

(pause)

I'm not.

Dozens of small, triangle-shaped alien ships are buzzing in what seems to be a random pattern over the city. Every few seconds, another one of the ships lets loose with a blast of energy that decimates a car, building, pedestrian, or whatever else lay below it.

MILES

Saucers! Saucers! Saucers!

NICKI

Quiet down, kid. I'm trying to think here and I can't think with you crying about saucers.

Nicki keeps staring out the window.

NICKI (CONT'D)

There's some kind of pattern in what they're shooting at. I know these things, I study stats at the University and I see something going on there, but I just can't put my finger on it.

MIKE

I don't care what you see, the only thing I can see is that I'm getting the hell out of here. You people need to take your seats and grab ahold, cause this thing is going to be moving!

The passengers move as quickly as they can to seats near the front.

Carl sits next to Nicki and puts his arm around her shoulder.

Jack grabs Miles by the shoulders because he doesn't want to move.

Jack pulls Miles away from the window and helps him have a seat. Miles is still muttering about saucers and triangles.

ANNIE

What's goin' on out there? Why is that boy talkin' 'bout flyin' saucers?

MIKE

Not right now, Annie, I'll tell you when we're safe. Right now I got to get this thing turned around or we're gonna be toast. Some of them things are getting too close for my liking.

EXT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus slowly pulls forward and turns right on to Pine Crest Boulevard, another circular side street.

It pulls back out onto the main highway, going in the opposite direction, away from the alien craft.

The bus speeds away.

INT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The camera flies in through the front windshield in a continuous shot and pauses at each row of the bus while Jack's voiceover refers to each of the passengers, starting with Mike, who has a grim look on his face, but looks determined as he drives his passengers to safety.

JACK (V.O.)

I can't help it. I can't help but think. I wonder. I wonder what everyone else was thinking when they saw the last person they were ever going to see that wasn't on this bus, whether it be their wife and baby son...

The camera moves back from Mike to the first row of passengers, with Carl and Nicki on the left...

JACK (V.O.)
 ...to their fellow college
 students...

...and Annie on the right.

JACK (V.O.)
 ...to, well, the voices of her
 coworkers...

The camera continues to travel back to the next row, with the left containing Sherelle...

JACK (V.O.)
 ...to her brother...

...and Mr. Hanso...

JACK (V.O.)
 ...to, heh, his ninja trainees...

The camera continues to travel back to the next row, where Miles and Jack sit. Miles continues to mumble about triangles and saucers.

JACK (V.O.)
 (more solemnly as he looks
 over at Miles)
 ...to his mom.
 (pause)
 I miss *my* mom.

Jack looks out the window and then leans his head against the glass. He continues to stare as the forest rolls by. Everyone remains quiet.

Eventually, Jack lifts his head off the glass and speaks.

JACK
 How long have we been driving?

MILES
 Every one. Every thing. Every
 story. They all say the same thing.
 Flying saucers. Saucers. Not one of
 them talked about flying triangles.
 How could they all be wrong? Were
 they all making it up?

JACK
(grabbing Miles by the
shoulders)

Miles, I'm going to say this once.
If you don't listen, then I'm going
to do what they do in all those
movies and stories and I'm going to
slap you in the face. Shut up about
the damned triangles! We get it!
You're freaking out. Get over it
and snap out of it.

MILES
What? Oh, yeah, whatever. What were
you saying?

JACK
I was trying to figure out how long
we had been driving.

Miles looks at his watch.

MILES
My guess is about twenty minutes.
Yeah, about twenty minutes. Don't
you have a watch?

JACK
Well...

There is a loud bang and the bus lurches to the left. The
ride is bumpy as a tire has been flattened.

ANNIE
What the hell!

MIKE
Calm down, calm down everybody.
It's nothing major, we just got a
flat tire. Lucky we didn't flip
over.

Carl walks forward and begins talking to Mike.

CARL
Well we can't stop here! If we sit
here and wait, they'll come get us!
They'll get us!

MIKE
Calm down, calm down! Let me think!

ANNIE

Excuse me. I... I think we're only a few minutes away from the Super Walmart. We... we... we c-could go there.

MIKE

I think I can make it that far. Anybody got any complaints? Anybody got any better ideas? Guess not. Then I guess we're going to Walmart. Sit down, this is going to be a bumpy few miles.

EXT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

The bus jerkily moves forward.

INT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

MILES

(tugging on Jack's sleeve)
Dude. That lady said we were going to a Super Walmart. I thought the one out this way was a regular Walmart?

JACK

You're right, that's where we go to get Magic cards. It's definitely a regular Walmart.

MILES

Are they going to be open yet?

JACK

I doubt it. They aren't open all night like the Super Walmarts. I think it opens at like nine or something.

MILES

Then why are we going there?

JACK

Where else are we going to go?

EXT. WALMART PARKING LOT - DAY

The bus jerks into a Walmart parking lot. The parking lot is empty except for two cars.

The lights are off and the store is definitely closed. A family stands in front of the door, two parents and two children. The bus stops right in front of the door.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Mike turns off the bus and stands up, looking back at the passengers.

MIKE

Okay, everybody, let's get off the bus. My name is Mike. I don't really know what is going on here, but we best get inside and hide from those things. I don't think it's a good idea to leave the bus parked here, so I'm going to take it to a spot I know about around the corner that will keep it out of sight. The rest of you get out of sight yourselves. Somebody help Annie, she... well, she could use your help.

Sherelle walks up to Annie and brushes her elbow against Annie's hand as if she has led a blind person around before. The older woman takes her arm.

SHERELLE

Hi Annie, I'm Sherelle.

ANNIE

What's goin' on, Sherelle.

SHERELLE

I'm not quite sure, but I'll try and tell you what I can.

EXT. THE BUS - CONTINUOUS

Everybody files off the bus except Mike, who sits back down in the driver's seat. Jack and Miles are the last off the bus. Everyone scans the horizon in the direction of the town, but can only see unknown lights flashing.

MIKE

I'll be right back.

Mike shuts the door and the bus limps off.

MILES

We'll never see him again. The guy who says "I'll be right back" never makes it.

JACK

(pointing)

Who's that?

Jack is pointing at the family standing in front of the entrance. The mother, JENNIE, is a Puerto Rican woman in her mid-30s, she has lived life, but is a strong woman. JIM is approximately 40, a white male, attractive but serious. JULIE is 12, with dark hair, she wears jeans and t-shirt that says S.P.L.O.O.S.H. JOAN is 10 and wears a red dress with white polka dots. She has a death grip on a triangle-shaped pillow that has the face of Harriet Tubman on it.

Jim is banging his fist on the glass doors. The metal gates that cover the door are up, and there are some lights on inside, but not many.

Jennie has her arms around the girls. Julie and Joan are both crying and Jennie is visibly shaken.

CARL

How long you been bangin' like that?

Jim spins around quickly, bumping into his wife and knocking her off her feet. The two girls cry even louder.

CARL (CONT'D)

Sorry to startle you, but I want to know if we should take things into our own hands.

JIM

You didn't... you didn't startle me. We... we've, hell, we've been here probably....

They all turn around as they hear the screeching of tires as a pick-up truck speeds into the parking lot and pulls into the closest empty spot to the front door. Two teenage boys jump out and run up toward them. MICKEY is a tall, skinny boy wearing a red and blue jacket with a giant "R" on the left side. In the middle of the "R" is a small basketball and a small football. FRANK, his companion, is a little bit shorter, and much stouter, large, but not unhealthy.

MICKEY

(very animated)

What the hell are you people doing?

(MORE)

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Get inside before those things
come!

JIM

It's locked. We've been here for...
(looks at his watch)
...half an hour. I've been banging
on the door, but no one has
answered. There's a car over there,
in the employee section, but no one
has answered.

CARL

I'll take care of that.

Carl picks up the ash tray next to the entrance and throws it
through the glass doors, shattering them. Carl clears away
most of the broken glass and opens up the door.

CARL (CONT'D)

Let's get moving, people.

NICKI

What the hell'd you do that for?

CARL

Somebody had to do something.
(to Annie & Sherelle as
they walk through the
broken glass)
Watch your step.

The others follow.

INT. WALMART, ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

CARL

Hello! Anyone here?

Nobody responds. The lights are off and only the security
lights and one lone light from the back near the office keep
the place from being totally dark.

MICKEY

I guess we've got free reign, then.

Mickey and Frank take off running toward the food section.

CARL

I need a beer.

Carl and Nicki walk towards the back of the store where the refrigerator section is. The rest of the group follows in the same general direction.

JACK
I guess we better eat something.

MILES
Twinkies. I want Twinkies.

They head off for the snack aisle.

JACK
There they are!

Jack takes off running. Just as he reaches for a box, the swinging doors at the end of the aisle boom open.

MORTY, the Walmart's manager walks into the room. His shirt is half-untucked, his belt is unbuckled, and his hair is mussed. He's a white man in his late 20s or early 30s, slightly balding, slightly paunchy, slightly annoying. He has an awkward mustache.

Following behind him is a younger woman, FRANCINE, 18-22 years old, strawberry blonde hair, and a few visible tattoos, but who looks naïve, even as she's buttoning up her work shirt. She looks embarrassed.

MORTY
Hey, what the hell are you doing!
You can't open that until you pay
for it! Hey, what the hell are you
doing in here, we aren't even open
yet?

As Morty starts yelling, the rest of the refugees from the alien attack come running or walking towards him, with Jack and Miles coming in last. Carl walks in holding a Tecate.

MORTY (CONT'D)
How many of you are there? What the
hell are you doing in here? We
don't open for...
(looking at his watch)
...for another 25 minutes!

CARL
Are you serious?

Carl lifts the bottle of Tecate to his mouth and takes a drink. Nicki is nursing an open bottle of Gallo Blush.

CARL (CONT'D)
 You have no idea what's going on,
 do you?

MORTY
 What the hell are you talking
 about? I've been...
 (nervously glancing at
 Francine)
 ...busy.

Morty adjusts his tie, leaving it somehow more askew.

CARL
 Hey, man, are the TVs working in
 this place? Yeah? Come with me.

Carl and Nicki start walking towards the Electronics
 Department.

MICKEY
 Yeah.

Mickey and Frank follow Carl. Soon the others, do, too. Morty
 and Francine follow last, Morty with a look of disgust on his
 face.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The group walks up to the Electronics Department in a hurry.
 None of the TVs is on. Morty walks behind the register and
 unlocks the cabinet and pulls out a remote control.

Morty points the remote control at the camera and pushes a
 button.

A montage follows, cutting from news program to news program.
 All of the anchors wear a blue blazer with a red tie and
 white shirt, regardless of gender, except for the fourth one,
 who wears a red blazer with a blue tie and white shirt. At
 the end of each clip, the screen cuts to static.

INT. LOCAL 37 NEWS AT 9 STUDIO

Local 37 News at 9's ANCHOR is a white man with brown hair.

NEWS AT 9 ANCHOR
 We're coming back on the air after
 an interruption due to technical
 problems.

INT. CNN STUDIO

CNN's ANCHOR is an older white man with a beard and glasses.

CNN ANCHOR

The unidentified natural phenomenon is approaching your area. Please prepare accordingly. Please contact your local emergency services for evacuation routes and survival procedures.

INT. MSNBC STUDIO

MSNBC's ANCHOR is a pretty blonde woman.

MSNBC ANCHOR

Conflicting eyewitness reports concerning "little green men..."

INT. FOX NEWS STUDIO

Fox's ANCHOR is a pretty blonde woman.

FOX ANCHOR

Ladies and gentlemen, we interrupt our program of dance music to bring you a special bulletin from the Intercontinental Radio News. At twenty minutes before eight, central time, Professor Farrell of the Mount Jennings Observatory, Chicago, Illinois, reports observing several explosions...

INT. LOCAL NEWS 42 STUDIO

Local News 42's anchor is a mid-30s Black man.

NEWS 42 ANCHOR

Our top story tonight: four-alarm fire rages through downtown Buffalo. Also in the news: lunar shuttle heads for the sun, and certain disaster.

INT. UNIVISION STUDIO

Univision's ANCHOR is a Hispanic woman.

UNIVISION ANCHOR

(In Spanish)

What's the point? It's over! We're finished! We're...

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

All of the televisions now feature test patterns or static except for one, which is still broadcasting, with a grim looking BLONDE ANCHOR. The screen flickers and goes to static. An audible beep for dead air comes on before Carl turns off the TV. Everyone sits in shocked silence.

JACK

Well, that's the last of them.

MORTY

H-how... How long ago did it start?

MILES

Right after I got on the bus...

A small shard of glass falls and crashes to the floor from the front of the store, a piece of the broken front glass windows hitting the ground. A voice booms out from the entrance.

MIKE (O.S.)

Anybody here?

MILES

Mike!

MORTY

What?

JACK

He said it's Mike. The bus driver. He dropped us off here and went to hide the bus.

MORTY

Why would he do that?

CARL

If you can't figure that out, how can you manage a whole store?

MORTY

Shut up! I do a very fine job, thank you very much.

(MORE)

MORTY (CONT'D)

I'll have you know that this is the store with the seventh highest sales totals in the...

Morty trails off and everyone looks up. Mike has arrived. With him are two other boys about the same age as Jack and Miles. The first boy, JOEY SHIMKIS is a classmate of Jack and Miles, an 11-year-old white boy wearing a shirt that says "Who Farted." His friend, CARL LAY is a taller thin Black boy. Carl wears a shirt that says "Evanescence."

JACK

Crap.

MILES

Of all the Walmarts in all the world, Joey Shimkis had to come to ours. And he brought Carl Lay with him. It's the end of the world as we know it and I feel like I'm going to blow chunks.

MIKE

Hey, have you tried the television?

CARL

They're all out. We watched for a while, but they didn't really say anything useful. One by one, each station was taken out by those... UFOs. I guess that's what you have to call them.

MILES

(under his breath)

UFTs, I'd say.

JACK

Shut up, Miles, just shut up.

MIKE

What about the telephones?

MORTY

I'll check them out.

The manager walks over to a phone at the Electronics desk and picks it up. He hits the button a few times, but nothing seems to happen.

MORTY (CONT'D)

Nothing. Let me check in the back office.

Morty walks off. After a few seconds, Francine follows him.

MIKE

I found these kids at the next bus stop. They were all alone. Said they had been waiting for the school bus when... well, you tell 'em, kid.

JOEY

(emotionless)

Me and Carl were waiting at the bus stop with three or four other kids. One of those Martians...

MILES

(under his breath)

How could they possibly be from Mars, moron.

JOEY

(remains emotionless)

...came along and used his death ray to wipe out the rest of the kids at the bus stop. Me and Carl only made it because we leapt out of the way just like they do in the movies. You know, when there's an explosion and they jump and make it. We did it just like that. The other kids -- Shirley, Bart, Kevin and that exchange student -- they didn't jump. They didn't jump. Bart was talking on his phone, calling his mom or something like that. They didn't jump.

MIKE

It's okay kid, it's okay.

Mike puts his hand on Joey's shoulder. Morty and Francine slowly walk back.

MORTY

Nothing back there, either. Every phone in the place is dead as a doornail.

MIKE

Crap. What're we gonna do now?

Mike looks around at everyone, not really expecting a reaction of any sort.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

Everyone is seated on a variety of pre-assembled couches and chairs that had been moved to the Electronics Department from other parts of the store. The wall of televisions is mostly on, but the sound has been muted to kill the static or test patterns.

JACK

I can't believe that none of the national stations are on.

Jack flips through the silent channels with a remote control.

MORTY

It won't work.

Morty takes the remote out of Jack's hand and puts it back on the cashier's desk.

MORTY (CONT'D)

All of our TVs work on satellites and they don't seem to be working. If one channel's out, they're all out!

MIKE

Calm down, sir.

Mike gives Morty a hard look, then grabs ahold of the manager's name tag and turns it up so he can see it.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Look... Morty... the kids are just a bit frazzled right now, so, why don't you take it easy on them?

Morty pulls himself away and quietly walks over to Francine.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Everyone, why don't you go get something to eat and drink and come back over here and we'll talk it out.

People start to head back to the food area, but Morty jumps up.

MORTY

Just who the hell is going to pay for all this? You just can't take stuff without paying for it!

Mike takes another step towards Morty. Morty flinches.

MIKE

(disarmingly)

Don't worry about it, Morty, I work for the city. And I'd say at this point, I may be the highest ranking official left in the entire town. Why don't you just let the people get what they need? Bill, the mayor, I'm sure he'll take care of it.

MORTY

What if I don't want...

Mike takes another step towards Morty. Morty flinches again and takes a step back. He's clearly scared.

MIKE

(chuckling)

Calm down, Morty, I'm a lover, not a fighter. I ain't gonna hit you or nothin'. I can't speak for the rest of these people, particularly when hunger starts to get ahold of 'em. People are scared, nothin' calms down scared people like food. Let's not turn this into a problem. Here...

Mike reaches into his pocket and pulls out a card and hands it to Morty.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'll even let you take my city ID card and keep it until they pay you back.

Morty takes the card and looks at it and compares it to Mike's face. Morty puts the card in his pocket. He steps aside.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

Everyone is back in the Electronics Department sitting on couches and chairs, eating snacks and drinking beverages, most, even those who are underage, are drinking beer or alcohol. The youngest kids have more sugary beverages.

Morty is frowning. He and Francine are not eating or drinking. Francine looks hungry.

MIKE

Since we may be spending a lot of time together for the next... Well, we should at least know who we all are. I'll start. I'm Mike, I'm a bus driver by trade. I'm married to a beautiful woman named Christine and we have a four-year-old son, named Jyotis. My friend here, who obviously can't see, is Annie.

ANNIE

Hello, everybody. I'm supposed to be at work now. I'm sure they're all worryin' about me. They won't know what to do since I ain't there.

Carl touches Annie's hand.

MIKE

Annie, where do you work? I'm sure they are worried about you, the same way you're worried about them.

ANNIE

Sure I am, sweetie. I sure am. I work down at the Cherry, Inc, Telemarketers. I don't have to do nothin' but talk on the phone and that I can do just fine.

CARL

Sounds like a great job. Hey, everyone, I'm Carl. I'm a student over at the community college. I was studying drafting and stuff like that. I was gonna be an engineer. This is my girlfriend, Nicki.

NICKI

Why do you have to say it that way?

CARL

What way?

NICKI

You said 'was'.

CARL

What?

NICKI

You used the past tense! You still are going to be an engineer. This is all just a temporary setback. This isn't the end of the world or anything. We're all going to make it out of here and return to our normal lives!

CARL

(wounded)

Sorry.

MIKE

It's okay, Nicki, I don't think he meant anything by it. It's a natural way to deal with crazy things like this.

NICKI

Thanks, Mike. I'm sorry. I just can't believe this is really happening. One day you're in class studying to be a psychiatrist, the next you're hiding in a Walmart so the alien invaders don't get you. It isn't supposed to be like this. They never warned us about this.

JIM

Tell me about it. At least you don't have kids. How am I supposed to explain this to little Julie and Joan?

JENNIE

The same way you explain everything else, honey.

Jennie takes Jim's hand and holds it.

JIM

This is my wife, Jennie. I'm Jim.
(wrapping his arms around
his daughters)

These beautiful young ladies are Julie and Joan. We're just passing through. We're from Seattle. We were planning on visiting our family down in Springfield. We aren't going to make it on time. I wonder if everyone else made it okay.

JENNIE

I'm sure they did, honey, I'm sure they did.

MILES

Hey, everyone, remember me? I'm the kid who thought that the alien invaders were supposed to be in saucers. Yeah, my name is Miles and I am funky. This dork is my best friend, Jack.

JACK

Hey.

JOEY

Dork.

Joey and Carl snicker.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I was gonna be a star quarterback one day and now it's all ruined. Isn't that right, Carl.

CARL

You da man, Joey!

FRANK

You twerps don't even know what you're talking about. My man Mickey here is going to be the star from this shitty little town.

MICKEY

Only if I got you blocking for me, Frank!

Mickey and Frank tap their beer bottles together.

MIKE

Alright, Morty, we know what your name is and what you do. What's your friend's name?

Mike motions towards Francine. She looks expectantly at Morty.

MORTY

Her? That's Francine, she works on the registers.

MIKE

Nice to meet you, Francine.

Francine stays silent.

MIKE (CONT'D)

By the way, Morty, I think it was a good idea for you to keep the big lights off. We can see fine in here and we want to advertise our presence as little as possible. Who knows what might attract those things.

Mike exchanges a knowing look with Carl.

MIKE (CONT'D)

That only leaves Mr. Hanso and Sherelle, both of whom I already know, since they ride my bus every day. Why don't you to tell everyone a little about yourselves.

MR. HANSO

I am retired, but I used to be a ninja.

He winks at Jack and Miles, who burst out laughing.

MR. HANSO (CONT'D)

No, seriously, I used to work at my family's foundation, doing research. After I retired, my family moved here and opened a restaurant. The place was run by my brother up until he died last year. You know it, the China First over on Route 19?

Most people nod or murmur in assent. Morty doesn't. Francine does.

FRANK

Man, they had the best dumplings!

Mickey and Frank exchange knowing looks and tap their beer bottles together again.

MIKE

What about you, Sherelle, what are you up to?

SHERELLE

Well... I was going to school over at the community college.

Sherelle exchanges a glance with Carl.

SHERELLE (CONT'D)

But now I think I'm going to give it up. I'm pregnant. My husband, Georgie, he has a really good job at the factory and he can support us. I really want to stay home with the baby for a while.

Carl and Nicki exchange a look that isn't quite disapproving, but kind of is.

MIKE

Wow, Sherelle, you never told me that. I guess congratulations are in order!

SHERELLE

(smiling)

They are.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

The group has dispersed a bit. Most are no longer in the Electronics Department. Sherelle is sleeping on a lawn chair. Annie is sleeping on a couch. Awake and still in Electronics are Jack, Miles, Mike, Mr. Hanso, Carl, Nicki, Jim and Jennie.

JACK (V.O.)

Walmart gets boring pretty fast. We didn't know what was happening and we were too scared to go out and find out.

Jack, Miles and Mr. Hanso are sitting on one of the couches looking at the TV screens. Miles has the remote control and keeps trying to switch the channels, but he isn't finding anything.

MILES

Hey, Mr. Hanso, what was China like?

JACK

Yeah, I've only seen it on TV.

MR. HANSO

The first thing I must tell you is that my name is Mr. Han Sen. Not Hanso.

Jack and Miles exchange a look of shock.

MR. HAN SEN

The China I lived in was probably a lot like what it was to grow up here. There were differences, of course: movies, music, laws, language -- those were different. But I worked in an office, wore a tie, had a secretary, worked too much. When I was younger things were... worse, but we live in a better world now. Well, we did.

MILES

(disappointed)

So you were never a real ninja?

MR. HANSEN

I was a researcher. In China.

MIKE

Ninjas are Japanese.

MILES

Oh.

JACK

Everybody knows that, Miles.

MR. HANSEN

The name "Hansen" is ALSO Japanese.

Jack and Miles are both shocked.

On the other side of the Electronics Department, Nicki is sitting in a recliner reading "Cell" by Stephen King. Carl sits on a couch close to her.

CARL

(to NICKI)

What are you reading?

NICKI

This old Stephen King book.

CARL

(somewhat annoyed)

Really? What's it about?

NICKI

Umm... everybody's cell phones turn them into zombies.

CARL

Seriously?

NICKI

What?

CARL

That's what you're reading right now?

Nicki glares at him for a long time.

NICKI

Yeah.

Nicki opens the book up and goes back to reading.

Carl stands up and walks away.

JACK

(leaning in and whispering to Miles)

Speaking of reading, follow me.

MILES

Where are we going?

JACK

Free comics!

MILES

Oh, hell yeah!

Julie watches them walk away. Once they are out of sight, she grabs Joan's hand and follows Jack and Miles.

JIM

We never should have made this trip

JENNIE

What? Why?

JIM

(waving his hand at the sky)

All this?

JENNIE

What, so you think that this is only happening here?

JIM

Of course, why wouldn't it be?

JENNIE

Didn't you go to college?

JIM
(hesitant)
Yeah.
(covering up for his
ignorance)
Jeez, I'm just kidding.

JENNIE
Good, because I wouldn't want to
think that you thought that tiny
little Richmond Village would be a
strategic target for alien
invaders.

Jim gets up and walks away. Jennie neither notices nor cares.

Carl walks back into the Electronics Department, pouring a
bottle of red wine into a red Solo cup.

CARL
Here.

NICKI
What's that?

CARL
I got you a glass of Merlot.

NICKI
I'm not drinking any fucking
Merlot.

She takes a sip of the Tecate Carl left next to his chair.

CARL
Um... oh... is this because of that
movie?

NICKI
I liked that movie.

CARL
You liked Top Gun, too, I don't see
you flying jets.

Nicki looks directly into Carl's eyes, she isn't happy and
she's considering saying something. Instead, she opens the
Stephen King book in her lap and starts reading again.

INT. WALMART, PERIODICALS & BOOKS - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Miles stand in the comic book section, leafing through various comics. Miles is now wearing a Walmart greeter vest that he found.

MILES

Dude, check this out!
(holding up an issue of
the X-Men.)
You really can't beat Wolverine.
He's got to be the greatest
character ever written! People
always talk about Shakespeare and
all that crap, but Wolverine
would've sliced Romeo to pieces!

Jack is leafing through a Batman comic book.

JACK

Man, Wolverine's too good a
character. No matter what happens
to him, he can't be killed. Where's
the fun in that. Who wants to read
about some dude who has no chance
to get defeated, it takes all the
fun out of it. The X-dudes are all
pretty boring!

JULIE

(walking into the scene)
Jean Grey is the greatest comic
book hero of all time.

MILES

See, this girl gets it, why can't
you?

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Nicki is sitting sideways on a recliner, reading the Stephen King book. There are a few other people sleeping on couches, and Jim and Julie are engaged in a conversation.

As we see Nicki sitting in the chair, a hint of another person is seen. Disgusting chewing sounds can be heard.

After several seconds of the chewing, the obscured figure takes a step forward and we can see that his hand holds an open Kit Kat candy bar, with several sloppy bites taken out of it, the individual bars have not been broken up like normal people eat a Kit Kat.

Nicki looks up. She sees the person and can barely contain her revulsion.

We switch to Nicki's POV and see Joey. He is loudly, and with an open mouth, chewing on the chocolate bar. His lips are covered in chocolate and he previously, somehow, managed to smear chocolate on his forehead. His shirt is wet, as if he previously spilled some kind of beverage on it.

Joey leers at her. It's not clear if his look is one of lust or of something worse.

NICKI

Can I help you?

Joey gestures the Kit Kat bar at Nicki. As he talks, chocolate falls out of his mouth onto the floor. He takes no notice.

JOEY

You want some Kit Kat? Kit Kat is my favorite.

NICKI

No thanks, I'm full.

JOEY

I'll bet you'd look really nice eating a Kit Kat.

Nicki just looks at him for a second, not really sure the conversation is really happening.

NICKI

I hate Kit Kats. I always preferred cake and pastry.

Joey continues to leer at her, still holding out the Kit Kat.

JOEY

(with a disconcerting grin)

You sure? I know you want it. You'll love it.

NICKI

I said no. Learn how to listen.

Nicki closes her book, stands up and walks out of the Electronics Department. Joey watches her every move like a hawk. He continues to watch after her long after she has left.

INT. WALMART, PERIODICALS & BOOKS - CONTINUOUS

Julie walks up to Jack and extends her hand. Jack doesn't react at first, but then reaches out and awkwardly shakes her hand.

JULIE
(to Jack)
Hi, I'm Julie.

JACK
(sheepishly)
I know.

MILES
(bowing)
And I am Rhody Andester, the
Basketball King of Burundi!

JOAN
Shut up, Miles, you're an idiot.
We're in the same homeroom.
(to Jack)
Julie's my sister.

JACK
(under his breath)
I know.

JULIE
You're cute.

MILES
Hahahaha!

Jack blushes.

JULIE
(grinning)
Do you have a girlfriend?

JACK
No. I've never been in love.

JULIE
Whoa, hold your horses there,
buddy, I just asked if you had a
girlfriend, I didn't ask you to
marry me.

JACK
(bashful)
I know. I was just saying.

JULIE
(smiling)
That's what you were doing?

MILES
(to Joan, unaware that his
words could be offensive)
Why are you carrying around a
pillow with a Black woman on it?

Jack and Julie both have disgusted looks on their face. Joan doesn't notice.

JOAN
Nana gave me this pillow. It's my
favorite thing ever.
(she points at the
picture)
This is Harriet Tubman. Nana told
me that when she was alive, Harriet
was the bravest woman on Earth. And
that's what I am, the bravest woman
on earth.

JULIE
You sure are, Joanie.

Around the corner of the break at the center of the aisle, Joey walks up. He sees Jack and grins.

Joey looks at Miles and starts to laugh.

JOEY
Yeah, that's the right thing for
you to be wearing! You would've
ended up working here anyway!

Joan, holding her Harriet Tubman pillow in one hand, reaches out with her other hand and grabs Miles' hand.

JOAN
C'mon, I want to go color.

Joan drops Miles' hand and reaches and grabs a Hunger Games coloring book and a box of crayons from off the shelf.

Joan walks away, whistling. Miles follows.

JACK
Oh... Julie, didn't you say that
your dad wanted to see you?

JULIE
 I... uh... what...
 (her eyes go wide as if
 she has an epiphany)
 ...oh... yeah... let's go.

Julie grabs Jack's hand and they walk away quickly.

Joey stares after them, his jaw dropped and his eyes glazed over, as if he's not really there.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

Nicki walks in holding Stephen King book. She is animated. Mike, Carl, Jack and Miles are sitting around, reading or napping. Everyone else is spread out in various parts of the store.

JACK (V.O.)
 Nicki was the one who thought of
 the cell phones.

NICKI
 Hey guys!

Everyone looks up at Nicki.

NICKI (CONT'D)
 Why hasn't anyone thought about the
 cell phones?

JOAN
 My Nana hates cell phones. And she
 hates TV. When we go to her house,
 we never watch TV. We play these
 board games. But really old ones.

Mike shakes his head.

MIKE
 Good idea. I don't have one myself,
 but I'll bet others do.

NICKI
 I have one. So does Carl.

CARL
 Yeah, got it.

Nicki opens her cheap flip phone and dials 911. Carl does the same with his phone, which is identical.

Carl shuts his phone with a sigh and puts it back into his pocket.

Nicki hangs up and redials several times, coming up with nothing.

NICKI

Maybe if I try another number.

Nicki dials several more numbers, getting nothing.

On the third try, a look comes across Nicki's face like she got something.

Nicki screams and drops her phone on the floor, shattering it.

Carl runs over and puts his arm around her. Nicki's ear is bleeding.

NICKI (CONT'D)

I... I... It hurt. First there was nothing. Then there was this... this really high-pitched screeching sound. I could barely hear it at first, but then it kept increasing and it felt like my ear drum burst.

Nicki reaches up to her ear and looks at the blood on her hand.

MIKE

Are you okay?

Mike walks over and sits next to her on a couch, putting his hand on the shoulder opposite the one Carl is holding.

The rest of the group gradually makes their way back to the Electronics Department, having heard Nicki's scream.

CARL

Don't worry folks. Nicki here tried to use her cell phone. Bad idea.

Morty instantly reaches for the phone held on a clip on his belt. Carl reaches out and grabs Morty's arm before he can raise the phone to his head.

CARL (CONT'D)

I wouldn't do that if I were you.

MORTY

Why not, who the hell are you to tell me...

Carl points to Nicki's ear and the blood. Morty looks at the phone and then tosses it on the couch like it is a live rattlesnake.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

Two folding tables, with chairs have been set up, one for the adults and one for the children.

MR. HAN SEN
Breakfast... is served.

Mr. Han Sen has a rolling cart and he and Sherelle distribute big plates filled with eggs, potatoes, toast, and sausage.

Everyone is already seated and Mr. Han Sen and Sherelle join them once the food is on the tables. Everyone already has water or orange juice or coffee before them.

People start scooping food onto their plates as they talk.

At the kids table, conversation starts up after the adults sit at the other table.

MILES
How come Mr. Han Sen didn't cook it
in a wok? I thought he would cook
in a wok?

Joey giggles.

JACK
C'mon, man, nobody cooks eggs in a
wok!

JULIE
Miles, you have a lot to learn.

JACK
Yeah.

JOEY
(not with malice, but not
with much thoughtfulness,
either)
Who wants to learn about
foreigners? What'd be the point of
that?

FRANK
(looks at Joey disgusted)
Nah, I'm done with this.

Frank stands up and walks away, taking his food with him. He goes and sits on one of the couches by himself

MICKEY

(to Joey)

I've seen you around town before kid and I have to say, I'm getting pretty tired of you, so I'm only going to say this once. Shut up. If I'm around, you aren't allowed to talk. Get me?

Mickey glares at Joey for quite a while. Joey glares back at first, but eventually backs down and starts eating his eggs, looking down at the table.

Jack, Miles and Julie can't help but smile.

CUT TO:

At the adult table, the conversation is animated and contentious, but people are having fun and in good spirits, at least at first.

CARL

So here's what I'm thinking...

MIKE

(smiling)

Enlighten us.

CARL

I've been trying to figure out why the aliens are here. Why they attacked.

NICKI

That is the question of the day.

CARL

I've seen every sci fi movie ever, so I think I've got this figured out.

MIKE

Oh, is that all it takes?

MR. HAN SEN

If we are, in fact, in a movie, yes.

CARL

Well, they aren't nuking the planet?

SHERELLE

Would aliens even have nukes?
Didn't we invent those?

CARL

I mean any kind of nuking, not just our kind of bombs. If they wanted to just destroy us, this isn't how they'd go about it.

JIM

(under his breath)
So now you're the expert on aliens?

CARL

They're...
(quietly, so the kids
table can't hear)
...blowing up...
(back to normal volume)
...a lot of people, so it doesn't
make sense that it's some kind of
Matrix thing we're they're using us
as batteries...
(quietly)
...or food or anything.

Nicki smiles and puts her hand on Carl's leg.

CARL (CONT'D)

So, I figure it's gotta be natural resources. Obviously, I don't know which resources, it's too soon. But it's gotta be something they want and it sure doesn't look like it's us.

MIKE

(rubbing his chin)
That does make a lot of sense.

MR. HAN SEN

Maybe they're here to take us back to their planet?

MIKE

Yeah, but then, like Carl said, why are they killing people?

NICKI

So that's probably not the answer, but that's a good question. If they did want to take you back with them, would you go?

CARL
If I were sure they were friendly,
yeah.

MIKE
If I could take my wife, I'd be in.
If she wanted to go.

JIM
(grumpy)
I would never go.

FRANCINE
(under her breath)
I would.

MIKE
What about you, Jennie?

JIM
(frowning)
Not my wife. She would never...

JENNIE
(smiling)
Last time I checked my mouth works
just fine.

The women struggle to stifle giggles. Carl is grinning. Jim, chastised, shovels eggs into his mouth and remains silent.

JENNIE (CONT'D)
I'm pretty close to my mom. She's
from Puerto Rico, but she lives
here. At this point, I definitely
wouldn't go, even if my family
could go with me. But down the
road, after Nana's gone? After the
kids are out of school...

Looks over at Jim.

JENNIE (CONT'D)
Yeah, I'd go.

Jim fills his mouth with sausage.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

Frank steps forward with a look on his face like he has the biggest idea of his young life.

FRANK

Dude! If those things are coming here, shouldn't we be, you know, ready for them? This is Walmart, right, we've got guns!

Everyone turns and looks toward Morty.

MORTY

Umm... yeah, I guess you're right. I need to go get the key from the office. Why don't you guys meet me in Sporting Goods. I'm sure you know where it is.

Morty casts a rueful glance at Mickey and Frank and then walks away. Francine follows him.

Annie remains on a couch, sleeping. Sherelle sits nearby, reading.

JIM

(standing up)

I'm in.

Frank and Mickey eagerly raise their hands.

MR. HAN SEN

I long ago lost interest in weapons.

MIKE

I only use them when I need to. I don't need to... yet.

No one else expresses any interest. Morty walks away and Francine, Jim, Mickey and Frank follow.

MILES

(quietly)

Let's go get some more comics. Those dweebs will never let us shoot any guns.

Jack agrees and follows.

INT. WALMART, SPORTING GOODS - CONTINUOUS

Morty pulls out his keys and proceeds to unlock the cabinet that holds the guns.

MORTY

All we have is hunting rifles. We used to sell the good stuff, but freaking Obama made it illegal or something.

JIM

(frowning)

I only know how to use pistols.
Damn.

Jim walks away.

Morty pulls out a hunting rifle, checks it to make sure it doesn't contain a round in the chamber and extends it in Mickey's direction, but then pulls it back.

MORTY

You know how to use this thing? How do I know you aren't going to accidentally kill somebody?

MICKEY

(looks at Frank and they both laugh)

Dude, my dad's in the NRA, of course I know to use a rifle.

MORTY

Good to know.

Morty hands the rifle to Mickey. Mickey then hands it to Frank.

Morty pulls out another rifle and hands it directly to Mickey.

Mickey grabs it a little aggressively. His finger immediately goes into the trigger slot. Mickey turns to talk to Frank.

MICKEY

Can you believe this guy?
Thinking...

The gun goes off, the bullet flying harmlessly into the ceiling, where Mickey had it pointed.

Morty jumps, crashing into the gun cabinet, several guns fall out and he catches them, struggling to put them back. Once he does, he turns toward Mickey.

MORTY

I think I will hold onto the ammo for now.

(MORE)

MORTY (CONT'D)
(turns towards the gun
cabinet)
So you idiots don't kill me.

INT. WALMART, DRINK AISLE - CONTINUOUS

Sherelle and Annie are walking down the drink aisle. Annie is holding on to Sherelle's arm as they walk slowly.

SHERELLE
Okay, we're here, Annie. What were you looking for to drink?

ANNIE
Ooh, do they have Arizona tea?

SHERELLE
(continues walking,
scanning the shelves)
Let me look. Hmmm... yes! Here it is.

ANNIE
I want the mango one if they have it. I do love mango tea.

SHERELLE
They sure do.

Sherelle grabs the can off the shelf and opens it. She hands it to Annie, who takes a big sip.

ANNIE
What's that sound.

From the front of the store, they hear a repetitive beeping sound every few seconds.

SHERELLE
I hear it, too. It's coming from the front of the store. It could be anything. Let's quietly sneak up there and take a peek.

INT. WALMART, FRONT REGISTERS - CONTINUOUS

From the end of the drink aisle, Sherelle's head slowly emerges from around the corner, it'd be hard to spot her if you weren't looking for her.

From Sherelle's POV we see Francine who is behind a cash register and is scanning and bagging random groceries.

SHERELLE
C'mon, Annie, it's just Francine.

ANNIE
Okay.

Sherelle and Annie emerge from the end of the aisle.

SHERELLE
(to Francine)
Hello.

FRANCINE
(looks up, but not in a
friendly way)
I know what y'all think of me.

SHERELLE
What? Who? You know what who thinks
of you?

ANNIE
Hello, Francine.

FRANCINE
Hey.

ANNIE
(smiling)
It's very nice to meet you.

FRANCINE
I know what everybody thinks of me.
Me and Morty.

SHERELLE
Nobody thinks anything, Francine.

FRANCINE
I'm not as stupid as people think I
am. I can figure things out. And I
can hear what people say.

SHERELLE
And what do they say?

FRANCINE
I don't care what they say. They're
wrong. Sure, I've seen it, Morty
can be an asshole to other people
but, you know, he's never like that
to me. He treats me very well.

SHERELLE

All the time?

FRANCINE

Yes. He treats me like a princess. And I know, I know, I read a lot. I know we are supposed to want to be princesses anymore. But I've always loved princesses and I always will. It's my choice. And Morty makes me feel as much like a princess as I'm ever going to feel. So I love him. And he loves me.

SHERELLE

That doesn't sound so bad to me, Francine. He's not my type, but do what works for you.

ANNIE

Sounds pretty good to me, too. I don't go on a lot of dates. People don't know how to talk to me when they see me.

SHERELLE

Annie, you said you work in telemarketing?

ANNIE

Oh, yeah, down at Cherry, Inc. I love it, best job I've ever had.

FRANCINE

(she stops scanning and checking groceries and looks at Annie)

Why? What's so great about it. Working here...

(waving her hands around the store)

...sucks. If it weren't for Morty...

ANNIE

I like it because no one on the phone can see me. They just hear me. And they don't act weird. We just talk. Some of them are nice, some aren't, but that's normal. I don't have a lot of normal conversations in person.

FRANCINE

Yeah, I get that.

SHERELLE

I have normal conversations with my brother, Kevin. He's an architect up at some fancy firm next to the state college. Georgie, my husband, he works all day and when he gets home, he's too tired to talk much. I mean we have a lot of fun. We love doing puzzles. And he's doing most of the housework these days, now that I'm starting to show. But I want to talk to adults. I talk to Kevin two or three times a week. He was the one that convinced me to vote for Bernie Sanders. He knows a ton about politics.

FRANCINE

(with distaste)

Eww, I'd never vote for that commie.

ANNIE

I'm voting for Hillary. I've always loved Hillary!

FRANCINE

(smiling)

Okay... well, it was nice talking to you. I'm feeling a little less stressed out than I was. I'm going to go see what Morty is up to.

ANNIE

Bye, Francine!
(to Sherelle)
I like her.

INT. WALMART, SPORTING GOODS - LATER

In the camping section of Sporting Goods, Mickey stands near the back next to the swinging doors to the store room. He holds a wooden baseball bat and is running through practice swings.

About 40 feet away stands Frank. He has several cans of tennis balls at his feet, each opened. He has a ball in his right hand and a baseball glove on his other hand. He leans forward as if preparing to pitch in the ninth inning of the World Series.

JACK (V.O.)
That was when Frank and Mickey took
up the idea of Walmart baseball.

Off to the side, behind Mickey, Jack and Miles sit with
batting helmets on, watching the game.

FRANK
You ready?

MICKEY
Always, fool.

FRANK
I don't think you're ready.

MICKEY
I'm ready for destiny.

Frank winds up and throws a tennis fastball and nails Mickey
on the butt. Jack and Miles ooh and cheer.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Alright, smartass.

Mickey points the bat at Frank, calling his shot.

Frank pitches from the stretch this time and throws the ball.

Mickey swings the bat, sending the tennis ball right back at
Frank's head.

Frank ducks while throwing his glove hand up and catching the
ball. Everyone bursts into laughter.

MILES
That was the sickest thing I've
ever seen!

CUT TO:

Frank pitches and Mickey swings and misses.

JACK
Swing and a miss!

CUT TO:

Frank pitches and Mickey sends the ball into Ladies' Wear.

MILES
That's at least a double!

FRANK

Not if I'm playing left field, it's not.

CUT TO:

Frank pitches and Mickey foul tips a ball into the ceiling and it bounces up and down wildly. Everyone laughs and hollers.

CUT TO:

Frank pitches and Mickey blasts a shot that clears most of the store and bounces once before hitting the front door of the store.

The boys cheer.

MILES

(in an exaggerated voice)

Take a victory lap, sir!

CUT TO:

Frank pitches and Mickey blasts a shot over one of the nearby aisles, and the sound of breaking glass is heard.

The boys cheer even more loudly as we start to hear Morty's footsteps as he comes running towards them.

Morty appears, he is furious. Jack takes off his batting helmet, looking ashamed.

MORTY

Hey, hey, hey! What the hell are you guys doing!

Morty runs up to Frank and takes the tennis ball out of his hand.

Francine walks in, but hangs back.

MICKEY

(grinning)

We were playing Walmart baseball.

FRANK

Yeah, it's boring in here.

MORTY

(can barely contain his rage)

You freaking idiots! What kind of parents raised you?!

FRANK

Hey, we didn't mean anything by it.

MORTY

Who cares, you're blowing up my store!

MICKEY

Dude, we were just having fun. Why does it matter anyway?

MORTY

This stuff isn't free. I'm going to lose my job.

FRANK

It's the end of the world. Who cares?

FRANCINE

Don't say that.... don't say that!

MORTY

Do you want me to kick you guys out of here? I'll do it.

MICKEY

Out... there?

Nicki walks in as this exchange is going on.

NICKI

You won't do any such thing.

Nicki walks up very closely to Morty. Everyone else remains completely still during the exchange.

NICKI (CONT'D)

At this point, you have two choices, Morty.

Morty is disdainful of Nicki. He takes a step back as she gets closer.

NICKI (CONT'D)

You can be continue being an asshole and... then we have a problem.

MORTY

(shaken)

Who's "we"?

NICKI
 (bluffing)
 Keep being an asshole and you'll
 find out.

Morty takes another step backwards and is standing by Francine now.

NICKI (CONT'D)
 Your other choice, Morty, is you
 chill the heck out and we'll all be
 happy and safe until all this blows
 over.

Mickey and Frank giggle.

Nicki walks over to Mickey and takes the baseball bat from him. He gives it up willingly. Morty looks afraid.

NICKI (CONT'D)
 What's it gonna be, Morty?

Morty opens his mouth to speak and thinks better of it. He walks away without saying anything. A few seconds later, Francine follows.

INT. WALMART, ELECTRONICS DEPARTMENT - LATER

Sitting around are Mike, Mr. Han Sen, Nicki, Carl, Jack and Miles. The adults are drinking alcohol, the kids have sodas. Jack has a Yoo Hoo.

Nicki and Carl are regaling the others with the story of how they met.

CARL
 It wasn't a holiday or anything, I
 think it was just a pretty standard
 college party.

NICKI
 Lots of red solo cups filled with
 Miller Lite.

CARL
 We were playing beer pong.

NICKI
 Who were we playing against? Was
 it...

CARL AND NICKI
(simultaneously)
Gabby and Nate!

They look at each other and burst into laughter.

NICKI
I was so tired that night.

CARL
Because you stayed up all night
watching CSI.
(to the group)
She has seen every episode of every
version of CSI.

NICKI
It's true.

CARL
I like it, but I think she would
marry CSI if it proposed.

Nicki looks directly at Carl for a moment while he laughs
with the others.

NICKI
(under her breath)
I wouldn't say 'no'.

CARL
So Gabby and Nate are really messed
up. Everybody had been drinking for
so many hours we couldn't count.
And we all kept taking...
(looks to make sure the
kids aren't paying too
much attention)
..."smoke breaks"..
(uses air quotes)
...if you know what I mean.

NICKI
(laughing)
Jeez, even the kids know what you
mean.

CARL
Well, I'm only good when there are
a bunch of cups on the table. I
made like three shots early, and we
had only lost one cup. We were
doing good.

NICKI

Gabby and Nate kept getting distracted. They were slowing the game down a bunch.

CARL

Neither of us...
(gestures to himself and Nicki)
...was as drunk as they were.

NICKI

We were nowhere near as distracted as they were, it was getting annoying.

CARL

So Nicki does the coolest thing, while they're distracted, she sneaks over and puts the ball in one of their cups and then sneaks back. I saw what she was doing and I cheered. She joined in and Nate looked up and he wasn't any the wiser.

NICKI

(laughing)
Then we did it a second time.

CARL

And then I nailed the last cup, in the most random-ass shot ever.
(smiling)
It was a good shot.

NICKI

It was a *great* shot.

The both laugh and stare into each others' eyes.

CARL

I left the party at 4 a.m., after Nicki jumped in an Uber. Best night of my life.

NICKI

It was a good night.

CARL

It was a *great* night.

Jack walks up to Nicki and whispers something in her ear. She looks over at Miles, who is sitting on a chair staring at a test pattern and rocking back and forth.

NICKI
I'll be right back.

Nicki stands up and walks over to Miles.

Nicki grabs a chair, turns it around, and faces Miles.

MILES
(under his breath,
repetitively and
dronelike)
Saucers... saucers... saucers.

NICKI
(gently)
Hey, Miles, what's your mom's name?

Miles stops rocking. He looks up at Nicki's face.

MILES
(as if breaking out of a
trance)
Huh... what?

NICKI
Your mom? What's her name?

MILES
Oh. It's... it's Alexandra.

NICKI
That's a beautiful name.

MILES
(staring across the room)
It's my favorite name.

Miles turns the TV off. Then he stands up and walks over to the register. Nicki's gaze follows him.

Miles puts the remote on the counter. He nods his head approvingly.

Nicki smiles.

INT. WALMART, MEN'S CLOTHING - CONTINUOUS

Carl and Mike are walking through the Men's Clothing Department, casually looking at clothes on the racks, occasionally holding something up and looking at it or testing the size against their bodies.

Mike notices Carl fidgeting with something in his pocket.

MIKE

What you got there?

Carl says nothing, he's deep inside his own head.

MIKE (CONT'D)

That something special?

CARL

What? Oh... this? This was gonna be something special. But things have changed.

Carl holds up the box for a wedding ring.

MIKE

Yeah... things sure have changed.

CARL

No, they changed before...
(waves arms and looks up)
...all this.

MIKE

What do you mean?

CARL

I want to do better. I want to be better.

MIKE

Nicki?

CARL

Yeah. I love her to death, but she gets frustrated with me sometimes.

MIKE

Why?

CARL

I just don't figure out things as fast as she does.

MIKE

And that's a problem for you?

CARL

No, I think she's great. It just makes me feel bad. It makes me feel like I'm a burden. I hate that.

MIKE

Yeah, I get you. Let me tell you a story.

CARL

Sure.

MIKE

My wife is an amazing woman. She's Tiara Shockley.

CARL

Oh, wow, the news anchor! Good job!

Carl pats Mike on the shoulder.

MIKE

Yeah, from the first time I met her, I knew she was the smartest woman, hell the smartest person, I'd ever talked to, much less talked to me. I asked her out in that first conversation.

CARL

Jeez, that must have been nerve-racking.

MIKE

Not at all. I went in with the assumption that she wasn't going to be into me, so it took all the pressure off. I was bold. It paid off. She said yes.

CARL

Obviously.

MIKE

She was already dating someone.

CARL

Oh, damn.

MIKE

Yeah, it wasn't something super serious. And after a few weeks, she stopped dating him. I couldn't believe it for a while, so I hedged my bets.

CARL

What do you mean?

MIKE

Well, I was still seeing other women. I wasn't sleeping with anyone or anything like that, but I figured that a woman like that had many options. And you know what? I was right. She did have many options. And she chose me. Whatever I thought of myself, she chose me. And she's a smart woman. So I respect her choice.

CARL

Yeah?

MIKE

Yeah.

Carl looks at Mike for a second and then runs off to find Nicki.

Mike takes the shirt that he was looking at. Then he looks around, reconsiders, and grabs two more just like it and walks away.

INT. WALMART, DRINK AISLE - CONTINUOUS

Nicki is walking down the drink aisle perusing the shelves. She has a big grin on her face. She is looking for something in particular.

Nicki finds the Red Bull section and grabs a 32-ounce sugar-free can, opens it, and starts to drink it.

CARL (O.S.)

Nicki!

Nicki jumps, spilling a little of the energy drink onto her chin.

NICKI

Crap!

Nicki wipes her chin off, then rubs the hand on her jeans to dry it.

NICKI (CONT'D)
Don't scare me like that!

CARL
Sorry. I... I well, I'm bad at all this stuff. So just let me say what I need to say. Then you can smile, walk away, and think about it. You don't need to respond.

NICKI
(a little worried)
O-okay.

CARL
You know I love you. I say it all the time.

NICKI
(under her breath)
Well... not ALL the time.

CARL
Let me finish. I-I-I love you, like I said. But I'm still trying to figure out how to love you.

Carl looks down towards the ground to collect himself. He doesn't look back up when he continues.

CARL (CONT'D)
I know I don't say it much, but I, well, I appreciate you. Heck I admire you. I mean, sure, you're beautiful and all that, but that's not the important part. You're so smart. You're going places. You aren't made for a small town like this. I'm not...

NICKI
You're just fine.

CARL
No, like I know I'm not stupid. But I'm not on your level. I can't figure out things like you do.

NICKI
And you're... what... jealous?

CARL

What? No! Not in the slightest. I'm just not sure. I'm not sure that when you move on, if there's a part for me in the movie they're going to make about your life.

Nicki smiles, touches Carl on the arm, then walks away. She takes the Red Bull can and throws it underhand over the top of the aisle shelves.

MIKE (O.S.)

Hey, watch where you're throwing things!

Carl watches her walk away.

INT. WALMART, PERIODICALS & BOOKS - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Miles are back for more comic books.

Joey walks around the corner again. He gets an evil grin again.

JOEY

(laughing)

You guys must be in love, you're always spending so much time together.

JACK

Jeez, man, why are you always messing with me?

MILES

Yeah?

JOEY

(gets serious and scary)

You know why.

JACK

What, do you think I'm lying? Why would I lie about not knowing why you're such a jerk?

Joey steps up really close. Close enough to throw a punch if he wanted to.

Joey swats the comic book out of Jack's hand. Jack flinches, which makes Joey grin like a Cheshire Cat.

Miles stands stiff and says nothing.

JOEY
It's your dad's fault, fuckwad.

JACK
What are you talking about? My dad
lives in California.

JOEY
Now he does. But not when he ruined
my family he didn't?

MILES
Your family has always been ruined,
Joey.

Joey glares at Miles as if he's going to eat him like a late
night snack.

JOEY
(grabbing Jack by the
shirt)
My dad won't come back because your
dad spoiled my mom.

JACK
You're crazy, man, they went on one
date and that was that! And that
was last year!

JOEY
(getting angrier)
My dad won't come back.

JACK
I've never met your dad. Have you
ever met your dad?

JOEY
(on the verge of
exploding)
You don't talk about my dad.

JACK
Look, Joey, we don't want any
trouble. Things are rough right
about now and we're just trying to
make it through.

JOEY
I could give a shit!

Joey's face is now only inches away from Jack's face.

JOEY (CONT'D)

See, what you don't realize is that we ain't got to worry about anybody else now. All the grown-ups who gave a shit about you two are dead. My parents are dead. Your parents are dead. That means there ain't no rules no more. That means we can do whatever we want to do.

Joey punches Jack in the stomach. Jack collapses to the floor. Miles takes a step forward, but pauses, he's just too afraid to help out.

JACK

(mumbles inaudibly)

JOEY

(leaning closer to Jack)

What was that, dipshit?

JACK

I said you're a coward, Joey. That's what I said. You're scared shitless to fuck with somebody your own size, so you pick on small people like me and Miles. That makes you a coward.

JOEY

You little shit, I'm going to beat the living...

Nicki walks in, she can tell that something is going on, but she didn't see anything.

NICKI

How's it going, guys? Everything okay?

Jack stands up and glares at Joey.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Hey, why don't you and Miles take a walk with me? I was gonna go out back and have a smoke. Wanna come?

JACK

Yeah.

Jack walks towards Nicki, bumping his shoulder into Joey as he walks by. Miles follows.

JOEY

Don't worry, dipshit, I'll see you later. I've got nothing else to do. It's the end of the world, you know?

The look Joey gives Jack would chill a serial killer.

EXT. GRASS FIELD BEHIND WALMART - DAY

Behind the Walmart is a large grass field surrounded by a sparsely-wooded forest. Nearly 100 yards away, under several large trees is a picnic table employees use for smoke breaks. Miles and Jack follow Nicki to the table and the boys climb onto the table and sit with their feet on the bench.

Nicki sets the baseball bat down on the table and lights up a cigarette and looks at them.

NICKI

What was up with that guy?

JACK

He hates us.

NICKI

Why?

MILES

Because he has a small penis and, well, I can't speak for Jack, but I'm hung like a bear!

Everyone laughs. Then everyone quiets down, seemingly in their own thoughts.

Jack sits down on the grass, cross-legged looking towards the town and the few remaining alien craft flying around. Every once in a while, one of them blasts something on the ground.

NICKI

(under her breath)

He was gonna propose. How the hell is he ready for that? Can he even handle that?

Jack almost hears what she says and looks over at her. Then Jack whips his head toward Miles as he talks.

MILES

(under his breath)

Triangles, triangles, triangles.

Jack looks at Miles as if he might have actually heard what Miles said.

MILES (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Saucers, saucers, saucers.

NICKI
(shouting)
Wait a minute!

Miles and Jack jump like frightened Scooby Doo characters.

JACK
What is it?

NICKI
I think I finally figured it out!

MILES
What?

NICKI
Remember how I was talking about
the pattern I saw earlier?

MILES
No. What are you talking about?

NICKI
From the beginning, it seemed there
was a pattern in what the aliens
were shooting at.

MILES
(beneath his breath)
Saucers. They were supposed to be
saucers.

NICKI
Yeah, I couldn't make anything of
it at first. When we were watching,
what were they blowing up?

JACK
Office buildings. Hotels. The radio
station.

MILES
And the television tower.

NICKI
And cars. But only some cars, not
all of them.

JACK

Yeah. I saw it. What do those things have in common?

MILES

What? What are you talking about?

NICKI

They all have satellite signals or something like that! The office buildings and the hotel all have satellite television or Internet. The radio and television towers are broadcasting. And the cars...

MILES

Cell phones.

By the time Miles had said it, Nicki had already jumped to her feet.

JACK

Nicki!

Nicki runs toward the Walmart. Jack and Miles stand and watch.

A triangle-shaped craft descends and hovers about 100 feet above the Walmart. It powers up and sends a blast of energy that devastates the building.

The shockwave knocks Nicki to the ground, and she briefly loses consciousness.

FADE OUT.

EXT. GRASS FIELD BEHIND WALMART - LATER

From Jack's POV, we see through gradually opening eyelids the flaming wreckage of the Walmart. Another triangle-shaped spacecraft has joined the first above the Walmart. The two hover briefly before flying off in opposite directions.

Once the craft leaves, Nicki, Jack and Miles stand up and brush themselves off.

JACK

(oddly calm)

Nobody made it. Nobody made it.

MILES
(totally panicking)
Now what do we do! Now what do we
do?

NICKI
(determined, in control)
We run.
(looking at the others)
Are you two okay? Are you hurt?

MILES
Bruised and battered.

CARL
(looking at his elbow,
which is bleeding)
Nothing major.

NICKI
Then let's go.

Nicki turns and starts to walk into the forest. Miles starts to follow. Jack looks back at the Walmart.

JACK
Wait.

NICKI
Yeah?

JACK
The building isn't completely
destroyed...
(looks back at Nicki)
...I want to check. To be sure.

NICKI
Okay.

MILES
Not me, I don't want to see.

JACK
Then you wait here. We're going to
go see.

Jack and Nicki walk back towards the wreckage of the Walmart.

Miles stands watching them walk away. He gives up and follows.

They all walk across the field. Nicki goes to the right and Jack goes to the left. Miles just kind of hovers, even after he loses sight of them.

MILES
(singing)
Cause baby we got Baaaaad
Bloood...

JACK (O.S.)
They're alive!

Miles looks off in the direction that Jack went.

Nicki comes running past him headed towards Jack's direction.

Miles stands still, looking after Nicki. He runs after her.

Once Miles catches up to Nicki, he sees that she has already met up with Jack. Between them, they hold Joan's Harriet Tubman pillow.

JACK (CONT'D)
I found it about halfway between
the building and the woods.

NICKI
It's not burnt or damaged. That
means it wasn't thrown over there.
Show me where you found it.

Jack walks back the direction he came from. Nicki and Miles follow.

JACK
(pointing)
I found it over near that mud
puddle.

Nicki walks towards the puddle. She leans down and touches the ground.

NICKI
Carl's alive.

JACK
How do you know that?

NICKI
His shoe print is in this mud.

MILES
How do you know all of this stuff?
You're like Sherlock Holmes.

NICKI
(smiling)
Gil Grissom and Catherine Willows
taught me.

Nicki stands up and takes off all her loose jewelry and
tosses it on the ground.

NICKI (CONT'D)
Let's go. Carl's not local, he's
lost. Let's go find them.

MILES
How we know where to go?

NICKI
We go over the river and through
the woods.

MILES
What?

JACK
To grandmother's house.

MILES
What?

NICKI
Remember? Joan? The little girl?
She was talking about how her Nana
hated cell phones and TV and
Internet at all that? That would
have to be where they went, right?

JACK
Makes sense. I know where Nana
Vashti's house is. My mom used to
work with her when they were
younger. She points the house out
any time we pass it.

NICKI
Disco!

EXT. A SMALL TOWN STREET - DUSK

Nicki leads the way, with Jack following and Miles in the
rear, playing a game on his phone. They are walking down a
quiet street as the sun is setting. A few lights are on at
houses along the road.

The street lights come on.

Jack looks over his shoulder at Miles. After a second, Jack lags back and falls in step beside Miles.

JACK
What ya doing?

MILES
Playing Five Nights at Freddie's.

JACK
Awesome! Which one?

MILES
Four.

JACK
Is it any good? I haven't played it yet.

MILES
It's fun, but it's nothing to end the world over.

Jack giggles. Nicki laughs from a few feet away. Miles continues to play while talking.

MILES (CONT'D)
I'm just trying to play it while I still can.

JACK
Wait, what?

MILES
Well, I'm sure the triangle people have killed the Internet the same way they killed satellites and stuff. It wouldn't make sense to kill one and not the other.

JACK
But all you need is a phone charger. You don't need the Internet.

MILES
What about when the power goes off?

JACK
What makes you think that's going to happen?

MILES

That's what always happens. In every movie. The world ends and the lights go out.

A rock hits the ground near Jack and bounces harmlessly past him. Jack screams a little, more in shock than fear.

Nicki turns around and looks at Jack.

NICKI

(gripping the bat tightly)
Where did that come from?

JACK

(pointing to a house on the right)
It came from between those houses.

A second rock flies out from between the houses and limply hits Jack's leg after a few bounces.

Nicki holds the bat up high and runs in that direction.

Solitary footsteps can be heard running on fallen leaves. A bottle falls to the pavement and crashes. Footsteps can be heard running down the street before trailing off.

NICKI

(walking back)
Let's get moving. Seems we have a coward in the area.

JACK

Okay, I think we turn left up ahead. I'm a little unsure of the directions.

EXT. A CUL-DE-SAC - NIGHT

Jack is leading, the road they were following ends in a cul-de-sac. None of the houses have lights on. The one on the right is a three-alarm blazing fire.

JACK

I guess we were supposed to turn right back there.

MILES

Ya think?

EXT. A SMALL TOWN STREET - LATER

Nicki is leading. She stops and holds Jack and Miles back.

NICKI
Okay, we have to go another way.

MILES
Why?

NICKI
I'm certain I just saw one of the
flying saucers.

MILES
(under his breath)
Triangles, triangles, triangles.

JACK
Okay, I think if we go through
those houses, we can get there.

EXT. A SMALL TOWN STREET - LATER

Jack emerges from between two houses. Miles and Nicki follow.

They look up towards one end of the street, where the flaming wreckage of a car blocks most of the street.

Jack looks the other way.

JACK
Okay, it's this way.

MILES
Man, I wanted to take a closer look
at the burning car. Burning cars
are cool.

NICKI
Let's get off the streets. We can't
be sure if that was set on fire by
the aliens. Or by someone else.

Jack and Miles exchange a nervous glance.

EXT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They arrive at Nana Vashti's house, which is a small one-story house with a front porch that is covered in various flowers in flower pots with ornate, hand-painted designs on them. The shades are drawn but a tiny sliver of light can be seen through them.

They walk up the stairs and Nicki knocks on the door. No one answers, but a little scuffling can be heard inside.

Jack knocks this time. He holds the pillow in his other hand.

JACK
Julie! Joan!

NICKI
Carl!

Nicki joins in and they both knock on the door.

From inside, the door can be heard being unlocked and it opens, revealing Julie and Joan. Standing behind them is NANA VASHTI, a Puerto Rican woman with gray hair who is in her late 60s/early 70s. The girls smile and rush out.

NICKI (CONT'D)
Where's Carl?

NANA VASHTI
You must be Nicki, Carl's inside.

NICKI
Why didn't he come out?

NANA VASHTI
He's hurt.

Nicki nearly panics.

NANA VASHTI (CONT'D)
Don't worry, honey, it's nothing major, he just can't walk yet. And he needs to keep it elevated.

Nicki walks inside.

Julie walks really close to Jack and grabs his hand, smiling.

JULIE
Hi, Jack. I'm glad you made it.

Jack smiles and squeezes her hand. He looks down then over at Joan.

Jack extends the pillow to Joan. At first she doesn't react. Then she realizes what it is and her face goes insane with glee.

Joan grabs the pillow and hugs it close to her chest. Julie and Nana Vashti smile.

JOAN

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! I
thought I had lost it forever!

Jack's grin gets bigger.

Julie leans in and kisses Jack on the cheek. He blushes deeply.

NANA VASHTI

Everyone come on inside. You never
know what's out here.

The kids walk into the house. Nana Vashti looks around suspiciously and then follows them inside and shuts the door.

INT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The living room is dimly lit by candles. The walls are covered with folk art paintings, with both English and Spanish words on them.

Carl lies on the couch, his left leg is bandaged and elevated. Nicki is leaning over kissing him.

NICKI

What the heck happened to you?

CARL

You'll never believe it.

NICKI

What was it?

CARL

I stepped in a bear trap.

NICKI

(laughing)
Wait, what?

NANA VASHTI

Lucky for Carl here, I was a nurse
in the olden days.

(MORE)

NANA VASHTI (CONT'D)

He might have gotten an infection
or that broken angle might not have
been set right.

NICKI

Oh my god, that's horrible. I'm so
sorry, are you doing okay?

CARL

Yeah, Nana Vashti here has some
very good pain medication.

Nicki leans over and hugs Carl for a long time.

NANA VASHTI

Kids, come in the kitchen with me.
Let's give them some alone time.

Nana Vashti winks at Carl and walks towards the kitchen. The
children follow Nana Vashti out of the room.

NICKI

(jokingly)

So how'd you manage to step in a
bear trap? Seems a little unlikely.

CARL

I was out looking for the pillow.
Joan was really sad.

NICKI

And you went looking in a place
where they had bear traps? What,
were you looking in Jellystone
park?

CARL

Jeez, I was just trying to do the
right thing. You don't always...

NICKI

Hey...

CARL

...you don't always have to...

NICKI

Hey!

CARL

...treat me like...

NICKI

Hey, dipshit! Shut up!

CARL
 (wounded)
 Hey! What...?

NICKI
 Just, shut up for a second.
 (collects herself, then
 looks him in the eye)
 Yes. I will marry you.

Carl is speechless at first. Gradually he realizes what Nicki said and he begins to smile.

CARL
 But I didn't even ask?

NICKI
 Does that mean you weren't going to ask?

CARL
 (backtracking)
 Oh, no, no... I mean... yes. I mean... fuck... will you marry me.

Carl fumbles to pull out the ring.

NICKI
 Yes, you idiot. I already said yes.

CARL
 How did you know?

NICKI
 The aisles at Walmart? You know they aren't walls, right? Sound carries. Especially since I was in the dressing room right next to menswear.

CARL
 Oh.

He smiles. Carl and Nicki kiss.

INT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen is cheap and the appliances and counters are old and scuffed and faded, but it's impeccably clean.

Nana Vashti, Julie, Joan and Nicki sit around the table drinking hot chocolate with marshmallows.

Nicki is showing the engagement ring to Julie and Joan, who stare at it admiringly.

NANA VASHTI
They're gone.

JULIE
What?

NICKI
(waking up)
What do you mean?

NANA VASHTI
(looking out the window)
The ships, they're gone.

JOAN
(her pillow sits in her
lap)
Really? It's over.

NICKI
It's not over.

NANA VASHTI
I've been paying attention. We haven't seen a single ship or heard any of the sounds for more than two days. I don't know if they went home, but they've left here.

NICKI
Probably. But let's stay safe. Let's be careful.

NANA VASHTI
(smiling)
Of course. Wasn't suggesting anything else.

INT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - LATER

The room is dark except for one candle. Carl is sleeping on the couch. Nicki sleeps on a pallet on the floor next to the couch, made up of the back couch cushions. On the other side of the room Jack and Miles are sleeping in individual sleeping bags.

From outside a gunshot can be heard. Nicki bolts upright. Carl stirs.

A second gunshot is heard. The bullet can be heard splintering part of the porch when it hits.

Nicki stands up. Carl gets up on his elbows.

CARL
(groggily)
What was that?

Jack and Miles stand up. Nana Vashti opens the door and comes out.

NANA VASHTI
What's going on?

NICKI
Gunshots.

Nicki sits down and puts on her boots and laces them up.

CARL
What are you doing?

NICKI
I'm going to make it stop.

NANA VASHTI
But you don't know who's out there,
it could be dangerous.

NICKI
I know who it is. He's not
dangerous. He's just stupid.

Nicki stands up and walks into Nana Vashti's bedroom.

INT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nicki walks out of the bedroom carrying a backpack and her baseball bat. Julie and Joan have joined everyone else in the living room.

NICKI
(to Carl)
You're sure you're okay?

CARL
(drowsily)
Yeah, the medication has kicked in.
I don't think I'll be driving any
mules anywhere any time soon, but
I'm good.

Nicki leans in and kisses Carl. As she stands up, she admires the wedding ring. She walks out the door, closing it behind her.

INT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack and Miles sit on Nana Vashti's bed. They are playing Go Fish.

JACK
You got any fives?

Miles hands him a card. Jack gets excited and lays down his pair.

MILES
I'm bored. Why does the end of the world have to be so boring.

JACK
(ignoring Miles)
What about all those people at the Walmart? Do you think any of them made it out?

MILES
You mean other than that jerk, Joey?

JACK
Yeah.

MILES
(more jovial than he should be)
I don't know. Probably not.

JACK
I miss Mr. Han Sen. He was a cool guy.

MILES
Yeah, not bad for a chink.

JACK
(annoyed)
Why do you say things like that?
Why do you use such crappy words?

MILES
Don't worry, my dad says it. It doesn't mean anything, it's just a phrase.

JACK
(getting angry)
Oh, yeah?

MILES
Yeah.

JACK
You got any other phrases you like
to use?

MILES
I don't mean it like that.

JACK
(angry)
If you don't mean it, why'd you say
it?

MILES
Damn, I said my dad uses it, it's
no big deal.

JACK
Your dad uses it?

MILES
Yeah, I said that.

JACK
The same dad that is an asshole?

Miles doesn't respond.

JACK (CONT'D)
The same dad that drinks too much?
The same dad that spent the night
in jail that time for hitting your
mom?

MILES
(looking down, softly)
Yeah.

JACK
You want to be like him when you
grow up?

MILES
(soft, but with
conviction)
Heck, no.

JACK
You want to be like Joey?

MILES
Hell, no!

JACK
Maybe if you don't want to be like
him when you grow up, maybe you
shouldn't talk like him now.

MILES
I...

Miles trails off. He starts to cry.

JACK
I know you don't mean anything bad.
But it's still wrong.

MILES
(crying)
I think my mom is dead.

JACK
Yeah, I know.

The two boys embrace as Miles continues to cry. Suddenly, Miles breaks the embrace and wipes his eyes excitedly, as if he can't wait to get the next thought out.

MILES
Dude, your mom might still be
alive!

JACK
Don't mess around. What makes you
say that?

MILES
Nicki said the non-saucer aliens
were tracking satellites and such,
right?

JACK
Yeah.

MILES
And your mom works at Rogers'
Diner?

JACK
You know that.

MILES

That dude who owns the place,
Melvin? He hates computers and TVs
and satellites just like Nana
Vashti! I've heard him rant about
it over and over again. He sits out
back smoking that nasty cigar and
rants about things.

JACK

Yeah, I've heard him.

MILES

No way that place has satellite
stuff. I'm sure it's still there!

JACK

When does Nicki get back?

EXT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nicki walks away from the house, determined and in a hurry.

JACK (V.O.)

Nicki told me later how she found
Joey. She didn't tell me what she
did. But I never saw him again.

EXT. A SMALL TOWN STREET - NIGHT

Nicki walks down the street, moving away from Nana Vashti's
house.

JACK (V.O.)

She had listened closely when the
gunshots went off and moved towards
place she thought they came from.

Nicki crosses the street and walks in between two houses on
the other side.

Nicki continues walking until she is two blocks further over.

JACK (V.O.)

Joey's dumb. He didn't go that far
away. That's when Nicki found it.

Nicki bends down and picks something up off the ground. She
holds it up in the street light, which is still on. It's a
Kit Kat wrapper.

Nicki looks around at the nearby houses and sees only two with the lights on. Hearing music from the closest one, she walks carefully and quietly toward it.

Nicki walks up the steps to the house gingerly. She peers inside the window and can see Joey sitting on the couch, but notices that his back is pointed at the front door.

Nicki ducks back out of Joey's potential line of sight. She walks over towards the front door.

Nicki grabs a letter that is hanging out of the mailbox and notices that the name on the letter is "Adriana Rodriguez" and certainly not "Shimkis."

NICKI
(under her breath)
Little fucker stole a house, too.

Nicki gently tries the doorknob and finds that it isn't locked. She slowly opens it and quietly sneaks into the house, pulling the door close behind her, but not shutting it all the way.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

Joey sits on the couch eating stale Cheetos and drinking Mountain Dew. On the table in front of him are a stack of hardcore porn magazines with violent and fetish themes. Next to the magazines sit Joey's gun. Kit Kat wrappers are everywhere. A radio plays in the background, Limp Bizkit's "Nookie" plays on repeat.

His shirt and hands covered in Cheeto dust, Joey stands up and walks to the bathroom.

Joey goes in and pulls the door close but not shut. He pees.

After he pulls up his shorts, Joey walks back out of the bathroom and he shuts the bathroom door behind him.

Nicki is standing there. Joey jumps.

Joey reaches for the gun he thinks he has in the back of his pants, but he doesn't have it, Nicki cracks him on the head with her baseball bat.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Joey is tied up to a chair, his hands behind his back. His face is bruised. Limp Bizkit is no longer playing.

In front of him is a chair turned around backwards. Nicki sits on it, facing Joey.

JOEY
(quietly)
How did you find me?

NICKI
You're an idiot.

JOEY
(scared)
Are you going to kill me?

NICKI
(ignores the question)
Why have you been following us? Why were you shooting at us?

JOEY
I was just trying to scare those twerps.

NICKI
You like scaring people?

JOEY
(smiles)
Sometimes.

NICKI
How often do people scare you?

JOEY
(nervously)
...N-n-never?

NICKI
First time for everything.

JOEY
(even more nervous)
W-what do you mean?

NICKI
I heard you at the Walmart. I heard you say that since the end of the world is here, the rules don't matter anymore...

Nicki lifts Joey's gun up in front of Joey's face.

NICKI (CONT'D)
I could tell you don't know how to
use this.
(looks directly in Joey's
eyes)
I know how to use it.

Nicki cocks the gun, while moving even closer to Joey's face.

NICKI (CONT'D)
I heard you talking. But you're
wrong, the rules matter more than
ever. Do you understand me? Do you
get what I'm telling you?

Nicki puts the safety on the gun, stands up, and tucks it in
the back of her pants.

NICKI (CONT'D)
While you were busy eating Cheeto
dust off your fingers, I found the
key. I'm going to loosen the ropes
and then lock you in the house.

Nicki walks behind Joey and loosens the ropes, but not enough
where Joey can get loose without some effort. His feet stay
tied to the chair.

NICKI (CONT'D)
When I'm gone and you get loose,
then you go away. And don't let me
see your fucking face again or I'm
going to get all Rick Grimes on
your ass.

Nicki walks out of the room without looking back and shuts
the door.

Nicki leans her back up the door and quietly exhales, as if
releasing pressure.

INT. NANA VASHTI'S HOUSE - LATER

Nicki walks back in. She appears to be visibly shaken and
stressed out. Nicki takes off her backpack and sets it on the
couch. Jack stands impatiently, waiting to talk to Nicki, but
not wanting to interrupt her conversation with Carl.

CARL
Hey, Nicki, how'd it go.

NICKI

Don't ask. I don't want to go into it. But let's just say we aren't likely to see that little bastard again.

Jack stands near Nicki, bouncing on his feet like he has to go to the bathroom. Nicki finally notices.

NICKI (CONT'D)

(weary, but tender)
Hey, Jack, what's going on?

JACK

(nervously, but in a optimistic way)
M-Miles figured it out.

NICKI

(to MILES)
Figured out what?

MILES

Don't ask me, he's been dying to say it.

JACK

Miles figured out that the diner that mom works at doesn't have satellites. We don't think the aliens would have blown it up.

NICKI

You think she's still alive?

JACK

I have to find out.

NICKI

Okay, let's do it.

MILES

I'm coming, too.

NICKI

Okay, but everyone else should stay here. Carl is off his feet and we don't know what we might run into out there, so we should keep the group small.

Nicki picks up her backpack again. Then she pulls the gun out of the back of her pants, ejects the clip and checks to see how many bullets it has.

Nicki pushes the clip back in and tucks the gun away. She looks at Jack.

NICKI (CONT'D)
Let's go.

EXT. ROGERS' DINER - CONTINUOUS

Rogers' Diner is a long thin chrome-covered building with big open windows and a neon sign with the restaurant's name. The sign is on and the inside lights are on. Several cars are parked in front of the diner, but no one can be seen inside or outside the diner.

INT. ROGERS' DINER - CONTINUOUS

Nicki, Jack and Miles walk into the diner, with the counter and kitchen to the left and booths to the right. Food is on several tables, partially eaten. The grill is sizzling and is on. A faucet is running and sudsy water overflows from the sink. No one is here.

JACK
Hello... mom?

Miles quickly walks up to the counter and opens the pie case, grabbing a pie and a fork from the counter. He immediately starts eating it.

Nicki walks behind the counter and turns off the faucet. The others randomly look around the place. Jack knocks on each of the bathroom doors, but no one answers.

MILES
OMG, this is the best freaking pie,
I've ever had.
(looks over at Jack)
Sorry, man.

Miles puts down the fork and stops eating.

NICKI
Alien invasion will make you
cherish the little things.

MILES
No one's here.

NICKI
Is there anywhere else she might
have gone? A place she would have
gone if she left here?

JACK
I don't know. She never talks to me
about stuff like that.

NICKI
(putting her hand on
Jack's shoulder)
Are you okay?

JACK
Yeah. I want to keep looking.

MILES
Dude, your mom's badass, we'll find
her somewhere.

NICKI
What's out back?

Jack walks toward the kitchen door and towards the back. The others follow.

EXT. REAR OF ROGERS' DINER - CONTINUOUS

Everyone emerges from the restaurant, Jack the fastest. Behind the building is a small storage shed.

Inside the diner, the lights flicker and go out.

JACK
Mom! Mom, are you out here!

DIANNE
(muffled)
Jack?

The door to the storage shed creakily opens. DIANNE walks out, followed by a group of people from the diner.

DIANNE (CONT'D)
Jack?

JACK
M-m-mom? Mom!

Jack sprints towards his mom. Dianne emerges from the storage shed along with a COOK, another WAITRESS, and three DINERS.

They embrace like they never thought they'd see each other again.

JACK (CONT'D)
I never thought I'd see you again!

DIANNE

I knew I'd see you again, my little warrior.

They hug for a long time before finally letting go. Everyone looks at each other expectantly, but afraid to speak.

JACK

So what do we do now?

DIANNE

We get ready.

EXT. RUBBLE OF THE WALMART - DAY

Nicki, Carl and other adults are digging through the rubble recovering anything they can. Guns, ammo and other weapons are targets, but so are food and water.

JACK (V.O.)

Nobody was ready for the aliens.
How could we be?

Carl picks up a crossbow like the one Darryl uses on the Walking Dead and looks at it admiringly.

Nicki overturns a large piece of debris and finds the charred body of Annie. She shows Carl, who tries to suppress a tear.

EXT. RADAR JONSSON'S PAWN SHOP - DAY

The front of the pawn shop has letters that read "Radar Jonsson's Pawn Shop" on the glass window. Dianne leads a group of people, including Nicki, Carl and other UNKNOWN ADULTS, all carrying large duffle bags.

JACK (V.O.)

Phones, computers, satellites,
anything we used to talk to other
people was gone.

INT. RADAR JOHNSON'S PAWN SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Nicki walks over to the gun section and walks behind the counter. The others follow.

JACK (V.O.)

The New Pony Express. That was my
idea. We learned about it in Social
Studies and I always thought it was
really cool.

EVERYONE starts loading as much as they can of the guns and ammo into the bags.

INT. RICHMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Nicki stands over a map, writing pathways from Richmond to other nearby towns. Dianne, Carl and numerous other adults stand around in rapt attention.

In the background, younger people, including Miles, Jack, Julie and Joan are sewing American flag patches onto various jackets.

JACK (V.O.)

If my mom had known about it, she would have never let me. But I used to listen to this 2 Pac CD. He said these same words over and over and they stuck in my head. I said them at school sometimes. I hated that one word he said. Newer rappers say hitta on the clean versions, and I like that better. 2 Pac said "one hitta, teach two hittas, teach 4 hittas, teach more hittas." That's what we're doing.

EXT. RICHMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

A half dozen RIDERS mount horses out in front of the school.

Each rider is carrying a backpack and a rifle. One rider stuffs an envelope into there backpack and zips it up. The last rider mounts there horse.

Each of the riders heads away in a different direction, some staring going the same way before splitting down side streets.

JACK

We don't know when or if the aliens will be back, but they better have some new tricks up their sleeves. This time we'll be ready.

FADE OUT.