

SCOOTER MURPHY - SPACE MARSHAL

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

The faint sound of an ELECTRONIC TOY RAY GUN echoes down a quiet cul-de-sac. Every window in a two-story house is dark -- except one, where FLASHES OF LIGHT pulse in sync with the blasts.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

In silhouette: 10-year-old **TRESSA "SCOOTER" MURPHY** -- half-Black, half-Irish, all attitude -- tears around her dim bedroom. DUCKING behind furniture. VAULTING her hope chest. DIVING across the bed, pausing just long enough to fire her toy ray gun.

Each BLAST STROBES the room, giving us flickering glimpses of her in action. In her best tough-guy voice:

SCOOTER
Your time's about up, Emperor
Galax... you dirty dog!

She fires. In the flash: her NEMESIS -- **EMPEROR GALAX**, a formidable space alien looming in the corner.

The room goes dim. Silent. A high-pitched WHINE builds.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
Don't move! You're comin' with me,
Galax!

She FIRES and LUNGES like a linebacker. They CRASH into the closet with a TREMENDOUS NOISE.

The bedroom door OPENS. **DIANE** (Scooter's mother, black, early 40s, ER-nurse tired in a way that lives in the bones) stands BACKLIT in her scrubs, COUGHING through plumes of dust.

DIANE
Tressa Ann Murphy! You knock it off
this instant!

SCOOTER (O.S.)
Nice try, Galax! Your paralyzing
nerve gas won't free you this time!

Diane flicks on the light.

"Emperor Galax" is revealed: an OLD UPRIGHT VACUUM CLEANER. A wooden hanger duct-taped to the handle, wearing a garish plaid sport coat. The handle topped with a HOCKEY MASK, pipe-cleaner-and-tin-foil antennae glued on for the alien effect.

The vacuum hose has come loose and is WHIPPING around, SPEWING dust. Diane calmly UNPLUGS it. Silence.

INT. SCOOTER'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Scooter lies on the floor, "Emperor Galax" on top of her, buried under cords, hangers, and stuffed animals. Peering out from under a sweater draped over her head:

SCOOTER

Aw, Mom! I just about had him!
Why'd ya have to go and ruin it?

DIANE

Do you have any idea how late it
is?

SCOOTER

Us Space Marshals gotta be on duty
twenty-four seven! The fate of the
entire universe depends upon me!

Now we see Scooter's bedroom in full -- a riot of color. Rainbow string lights across the ceiling. A hand-painted banner: "SCOOTER'S HQ." Every surface LOUD, PROUD, and utterly HER.

Scooter STRUGGLES upright. She's dressed in a wild kid get-up: a "Star Wars"-style SPACE HELMET (closely-cropped PURPLE HAIR peeking out), FAUX-LEATHER COWBOY VEST with an EMBROIDERED RAINBOW across the back, TIN STAR BADGE, WESTERN GUN BELT with a PLASTIC RAY GUN, and LAVENDER MOON BOOTS.

Her nickname comes from the WELL-WORN SCOOTER she rides everywhere.

DIANE

Listen, Marshal. The fate of your
butt depends on how fast you get in
bed. I just finished a twelve-hour
ER shift, with a full moon, no
less. I have seen things a mother
shouldn't have to see.

SCOOTER

But --

DIANE
No buts. Math exam tomorrow. Move
it.

Diane untangles Scooter, LIFTS her to her feet, and PATS her gently.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Get to bed, Ms. Marshal.

Scooter strips off the costume and crawls under the covers in her street clothes. Diane exits. The door closes. Footsteps recede. A distant bedroom door clicks shut.

Scooter's eyes SNAP open. She stealthily slides out of bed and tiptoes to her desk. Her desktop MONITOR flickers to life, casting a blue glow across her rainbow walls.

Her desk is strewn with COOKIE CADET COOKIE BOXES -- "Skinny Mints," "Peanut Butter Poppers," "Cosmic Macaroons", "Doodle-Wackers" -- and a tumbler-sized SATURN BURGER soda cup.

She starts to BLOG.

Her words appear on screen as we hear her voice, whispering to herself:

SCOOTER (V.O.)
(whispering, typing)
Tonight was my closest attempt yet
to catch that evil space varmint,
Emperor Galax.

She swallows a cookie, SLURPS soda, keeps typing.

SCOOTER (V.O.)
I tracked the varmint across three
star systems, dodged asteroid
fields, and jumped the Sulfur
Swamps of Kepler-22b. Then Galax
released his Disintegrator Wasps --
giant chrome insects with laser
eyes and a bad attitude. Your Space
Marshal wasn't fazed.

Her eyes drift to a HAND-DRAWN STAR MAP taped beside the monitor -- constellations connected by colored yarn, each hand-labeled in messy kid handwriting: "Galaxia," "The Forbidden Nebula," "DO NOT ENTER (seriously)."

She digs out a SKETCHPAD buried under cookie boxes. Pages of aliens, meticulously labeled. "GALAX'S ROYAL GUARD -- weakness: ticklish." "BRAIN BEETLES -- very smart but very slow." She adds a few strokes to a half-finished sketch.

SCOOTER (V.O.)
New species identified. Codename:
Snork Troopers. Four feet tall.
Terrible breath. Weakness: still
investigating.

She types the final line with a flourish. It fills the monitor, underlined twice:

THE UNIVERSE IS IN GOOD HANDS.

She shuts down the computer and sits alone in the dark.

SCOOTER
(to herself)
Sometimes being Space Marshal is
the only time people listen to me.
Maybe the only time I really listen
to myself.

Through the window behind her, the vast night sky is still.
But not empty.

Outside, a **DRONE** hovers silently. Stenciled ID: "**#A113.**" It has been watching her the entire time.

The drone **URNS** and **STREAKS** across the countryside, vanishing into the darkness.

EXT. NSG COMPLEX - MINUTES LATER

The #A113 drone descends toward the **NATIONAL SPYING GROUP** -- an expansive, heavily fortified government compound in a secluded rural area. **HUNDREDS** of similar drones zoom in and out.

The drone glides past a nondescript sign:
NSG HEADQUARTERS: PEEPERS AND CREEPERS CAMPUS.

INT. MAIN SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NSG - CONTINUOUS

Drone #A113 **ZOOMS** through the corridors and into a cavernous room where **THOUSANDS OF SURVEILLORS** sit before glowing monitors. Every screen is active with ordinary citizens being watched.

Drone #A113 **SLOWS** and **DOCKS** on the desk of **T. DIRWELL** (geekish, mid-20s). His station is cluttered with Star Wars figures. He's bored senseless -- cheek on palm -- until something catches his eye. Suddenly enthused.

DIRWELL
Hey, Montamble! That wacky Murphy
kid is back online!

MONTAMBLE (also 20-something, equally bored) leaps up and
hurries over. They both CHUCKLE at the screen.

MONTAMBLE
Man. This kid has got some wild
imagination.

DIRWELL
Emperor Galax again. Where does she
come up with this stuff?

MONTAMBLE
Attack plans for Earth. What a
goofball.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEEP SPACE - NIGHT

Stars streak past as we hurtle through the cosmos -- past
satellites, planets, nebulae -- plunging into the darkness of
deep space with incredible speed.

EXT. PLANET GALAXIA - NIGHT

A mysterious planet emerges from the void. Passing through
its atmosphere and clouds, we descend over a massive compound
-- similar in scope to the NSG on Earth, but far more
futuristic and alien in design.

This is the **INTERGALACTIC SPYING GROUP (ISG) HEADQUARTERS** on
the planet GALAXIA.

INT. ISG COMPOUND - MAIN SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The layout mirrors the NSG on Earth -- but the workers are
ALIENS seated before HOLOGRAPHIC 3D screens. Instead of
watching citizens, they're monitoring the NSG workers and
their activities on Earth.

DRULE -- a slimy, gelatinous, SLUG-LIKE ALIEN -- sits at his
workstation. A **"NO SALT ZONE"** sign is taped to his monitor.
Over his desk, a 3D hologram of Dirwell rotates.

Like his Earthly counterpart, Drule is BORED -- cheek resting
on the "palm" of his tentacle. His singular EYEBALL suddenly
WIDENS. Anteater-tongue wipes it clean. Blink, blink.

DRULE
Hey, Fleebish! That Earth Space
Marshal is back online!

FLEEBISH (another bizarre alien) LEVITATES over. They both
read the blog, pointing at the screen in mounting panic.

DRULE (CONT'D)
She says she's gonna capture our
supreme leader!

The entire room goes DEATHLY STILL. Every alien turns.

FLEEBISH
We must notify the Royal Council.
NOW.

BACK TO EARTH.

INT. DIRWELL'S STATION - NSG - CONTINUOUS

DIRWELL
(still amused)
I got two questions for that "Space
Marshal" kid.

MONTAMBLE
Yeah - What's she taking, and where
can I get some?

They FIST-BUMP. High above the surveillance floor, a WINDOWED
OFFICE overlooks the operation. **CHIEF MATTHEW MARKLEY**, head
of the NSG, watches from the glass.

INT. CHIEF MARKLEY'S OFFICE - NSG - CONTINUOUS

Sleek. Steel. Marble. Three enormous screens dominate
Markley's desk -- transcripts of Dirwell and Montamble, and
Scooter's blog captured by drone #A113. The name "**EMPEROR
GALAX**" pulses red.

CHIEF MARKLEY
(to himself)
Galax. This can't be good.

He STABS the intercom.

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)
Get me Webster. NOW.

He SLAMS down the receiver.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHIEF MARKLEY'S OFFICE - NSG - LATER

A massive door opens across the darkened office. The shapely silhouette of **VERONICA WEBSTER** strides through. Slick. Self-assured. A femme fatale of the highest order.

BLACK LEATHER JUMPSUIT with red angular side panels. Long, talon-like RED FINGERNAILS. RED LIPSTICK against pale skin. Prominent canine teeth. Skyscraper stilettos, moving with acrobat grace.

Also visible on her jumpsuit collar, if we look closely: a small, subtle WEB-PATTERN embroidery. Just a whisper of what's underneath.

Her heels CLICK across marble. She reaches Markley's desk. He has his back to her, on his headset. She TAPS her nails. Once. Twice. Out of patience, she reaches over and DISCONNECTS his call.

Markley SWIVELS, tears off his headset, smirks up at her.

CHIEF MARKLEY

Gee. Hope the President isn't too upset I hung up on him.

VERONICA

He'll get over it. Get to the point, Markley.

CHIEF MARKLEY

I have an assignment for you, Veronica.

Veronica leans across the desk, GRABS his necktie, YANKS him nose-to-nose. Her canines catch the light.

VERONICA

That's "Ms. Webster" to you.

CHIEF MARKLEY

As you wish, Ms. Webster.

(beat)

You know the agency offers free anger management.

She releases his tie. He composes himself.

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)
This one requires your... unique
skills.

Markley walks around behind her. She stays perfectly still,
staring ahead. Cold as ice.

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)
(whispering in her ear)
I know you won't let me down.

VERONICA
Have I ever?
(glancing sideways)
And Matthew, darling -- either take
a step back, or invest in some
breath mints.

Markley retreats, discreetly checks his breath. Winces.

CHIEF MARKLEY
The fate of the entire world
depends on this.

VERONICA
So. Why else would you call for me?

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

Two next-door neighbor kids ride up on bicycles. **BRIAN** (12, Asian-American, glasses, nerdy, pudgy, and a bit clumsy) and **KATIE** (10, Asian-American, athletic, the brighter of the two by a country mile). They drop their bikes and continue up the walk. Backpacks. School-ready. Katie rings the bell.

INT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - FRONT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Diane answers the door -- still in her night-shift scrubs, coffee mug in hand.

DIANE
Hi, guys. Tressa should be down any
second.

She calls up the stairs.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Tressa! Brian and Katie are here!

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scooter is fast asleep, face down on her keyboard. A bit of drool. Cookie crumbs everywhere.

DIANE (O.S.)
Tressa! Time for school!

Scooter jolts awake, wipes drool, brushes crumbs, grabs her RAINBOW-EMBROIDERED BACKPACK.

INT. STAIRWAY - CONTINUOUS

Scooter nearly breaks her neck barreling down.

SCOOTER
Hey, guys! Let's go!

She starts for the door -- but Diane GRABS her backpack strap and PULLS her back.

DIANE
You know the drill.

Diane taps her own cheek, holds the pose.

SCOOTER
Mom!

A beat. Then Scooter reluctantly gives her a peck on the cheek.

DIANE
Better. You kids be careful and
have an awesome day.

Diane watches them go. Then, more quietly, to Scooter's disappearing back:

DIANE (CONT'D)
(to herself)
And come home to me. Please just
come home to me.

She closes the door.

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Scooter snaps open her scooter. Brian and Katie tease immediately. Katie taps her own cheek and leans into Brian, IMITATING Diane:

KATIE
(as Diane)
You know the drill, young lady!

Brian "fakes" a kiss on Katie's cheek.

KATIE (CONT'D)
(still as Diane)
You kids be careful and have an
awesome day!

All three crack up. Brian SHOVES Katie. She SHOVES him harder.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Mom said no roughhousing before
school, Brian!

BRIAN
You started it. You always start
it.

Together, they head out.

EXT. SCOOTER'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

Katie and Brian pedal; Scooter glides alongside on her scooter. They pass a UTILITY POLE. Tacked to it: a handmade "LOST PET" poster -- a poodle named "SCRUFFY."

The three ride on. The poster lingers behind them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - CONTINUOUS

The trio continues on toward school.

BRIAN
Hey, Scooter. We read your dopey
Space Diary last night. Wow, what a
cosmic crock.

KATIE
Almost capturing some alien named
Emperor "Gas-X." Gimme a break.

SCOOTER
It's GALAX, you doofus! GALAX!

BRIAN

Whatever - I almost fell out of bed laughing.

KATIE

When are you gonna grow up, Scooter?

SCOOTER

You guys need to WISE up.
(gazing up into the sky)
You have no idea what's out there.

Katie makes the "crazy" gesture -- finger circling her temple.

KATIE

You have no idea what's in there. A whole lotta crazy.

SCOOTER

Oh, yeah? Well, Einstein believed in aliens.

BRIAN

Maybe. But I bet Einstein never crashed a scooter into a pothole.

SCOOTER

Pothole? What are you talking about -
-

Too late. Her scooter NOSEDIVES into a rain-filled pothole. She goes FLYING and SPLASHES down hard. Brian and Katie swerve past, HOWLING.

BRIAN

"E" equals "M.C. CRASH"!

Scooter picks herself up, muddy and soaked, retrieves her scooter, and spots the school bully, **CHUCK**, up ahead.

Behind Chuck, the billboard:

GLEN KEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL
Our Students Are Drawn to Excellence.

CHUCK -- despite being in middle school, sports an amateur felt-tip (and misspelled) TATTOO on his forearm reading **"NEVER NO REGERTS"** -- has a pint-sized second-grader named **MIKEY** dangling by his backpack straps, a foot off the ground.

CHUCK

Gimme your lunch money, twerp, or I'll pound ya!

MIKEY
(stuttering)
M-my mom packed for me today.

He holds up a grease-stained bag. Chuck RECOILS from the smell.

MIKEY (CONT'D)
You can have my anchovy and Dijon mustard sandwich. It's my favorite, but I don't mind.

Scooter sees it. She knows she's no physical match -- Chuck is twice her size. Out of dislike, he calls her "Pooter." She hesitates -- just for a beat -- glances at her friends already halfway to the doors. Real-world duty vs. Marshal impulse. Marshal wins.

SCOOTER
Hey, Chuck! Did you study for the math test today?

Chuck perks up. UNCEREMONIOUSLY DROPS Mikey, who lands on his oversized backpack like a turtle flipped on its shell.

CHUCK
Nah! Me and my pop was watchin' wrestlin'. What's it to ya, Pooter?

SCOOTER
Wrestlin', huh? In that case, YOU are definitely a big SQUARE ROOT OF FOUR!

Chuck blinks. Confused. Lips moving as he counts on his fingers.

CHUCK
A big square root of four...?

SCOOTER
Louder, Chuck! What did you say?

CHUCK
(yelling)
I'm a BIG NUMBER TWO!

The **CROWD OF STUDENTS** ERUPTS with laughter.

STUDENT #1
He said he's a Number Two!

STUDENT #2
And he kinda smells like one, too!

Students disperse laughing. Scooter helps Mikey up, shooing **SEAGULLS** off his anchovy sandwich. They head inside.

Everyone except Chuck.

CHUCK
(finally getting it)
Number two? HEY!

EXT. ENTRANCE - GLEN KEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

Mikey, still on his back, is now covered with **SEA GULLS** tearing apart his paper lunch bag and devouring his anchovy sandwich. Scooter SHOOS the gulls away and helps Mikey to his feet.

Mikey, upright at last, hugs his flattened lunch bag to his chest and looks up at Scooter like she hung the moon.

MIKEY
Nobody ever does that. For me, I
mean. Mostly people just... don't
see me.

Scooter crouches to his eye level. No drawl. No badge-tapping. Just a kid talking to a smaller kid.

SCOOTER
Yeah. I know all about that.
(beat)
Space Marshal rule number one.
Everybody gets seen.

Mikey nods, solemn as a deputy, and trots off, still followed by a small group of Sea Gulls. Scooter watches him go -- then glances at the school doors, where her own two friends went inside without waiting for her.

The laughter is gone. The lot is empty. High above, something small hums past and is lost in the glare.

As CHUCK turns to enter, a taloned hand SHOOTs out from the shadows and YANKS him off his feet. It's Veronica Webster.

Just as Chuck had done with Mikey, Veronica holds him six inches off the ground with amazing ease. His face is drenched with nervous sweat.

VERONICA
How's it going, Chucky?

CHUCK
(stuttering)
D-d-do I know you?

VERONICA
Not yet. But we're going to become
VERY good friends.

She TIGHTENS her grip. He MOANS.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Do I have your attention, Number
Two?

CHUCK
Y-y-yes, ma'am.

VERONICA
Good boy. We need to have a serious
little chat about your relationship
with one Ms. Tressa "Scooter"
Murphy.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. SCOOTER'S CLASSROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Class is in session and **MRS. GILPIN** is mid-lesson. Chuck
LIMPS in -- fresh black eye, torn T-shirt, missing one shoe.

MRS. GILPIN
Chuck. You're late again.

CHUCK
Yeah. Something important came up.
(under his breath)
I almost didn't make it at all.

He LIMPS past Scooter. Stops. Points. No menace this time --
only fear.

CHUCK (CONT'D)
You stay away from me, Murphy, you
weird little troublemaking freak.

He scurries to the back of the room. Scooter has NO idea why
Chuck now has a black eye.

KATIE
(whispering)
What's that all about?

SCOOTER
Not a clue.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GALAXIAN GENERAL COUNCIL CHAMBER - DAY

Several **ALIEN ADVISORS** -- a wide variety of bizarre creatures -- sit around a massive conference table. They look remarkably like the aliens in Scooter's sketchbook. Fearful "yes" men.

The doors open. **EMPEROR GALAX** strides in, flanked by **TWO HUGE BODYGUARDS**. The advisors JUMP to attention.

GALAX
(arrogant, indignant)
Why have you dragged me into this chamber?

He drops onto his ornate throne.

GALAX (CONT'D)
You interrupted my hot stone massage and loofah bath. This had better be catastrophically important.

He scans the advisors with disdain. SNAPS his fingers. A Bodyguard produces a small mirror. Galax checks his reflection, adjusts his crown, and hands it back.

ADVISOR 1
Sir, one of our monitoring stations has intercepted information that you may be at imminent risk of capture --

Galax raises a hand. Turns to a Bodyguard.

GALAX
Why am I not looking at my lunch?

The Bodyguard SNAPS. An **ALIEN CHEF** scurries in with a platter of bug-like critters, some still moving.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Ah. I just love sushi day.

He plucks a wriggling morsel. CRUNCH.

GALAX (CONT'D)
(mouth full)
Fresh. Tasty. Full of life.

A faint SQUEAL from inside his mouth. He winces, swallows.

GALAX (CONT'D)
As you were saying.

ADVISOR 1
Sir, a Space Marshal on Earth has
uncovered our invasion plans.

ADVISOR 2
She has bragged about capturing you
and ruining our attack.

Off-screen: rapid CLICKS of electronic texting.

GALAX
Just a moment.

He turns to a TEXTING ADVISOR, sneaking a look at a tablet.

GALAX (CONT'D)
What did I tell you about texting
at the table?

TEXTING ADVISOR
I... I wasn't --

Galax SIGHS. Extends his hand. A Bodyguard drops a sinister RAY GUN into it. **BZZAP!** The advisor VANISHES. A small mound of ash remains.

GALAX
(matter-of-fact)
Unfollowed.

Dead silence.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Anyone else feeling glib?

Silence.

GALAX (CONT'D)
My. Did someone just resign without
giving a two-week notice?

Nervous laughter erupts.

ADVISOR 5
Good one, Your Royal Jovialness!

Without looking, Galax FIRES sideways. BZZAP! More ash.

GALAX
(to himself)
Butt-kisser. There's always one in
every crowd.

He sets the ray gun down, pops another critter, thinks.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Send for Lindvall.

The remaining advisors GASP.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Lindvall is our top operative.
Master of disguise. Most feared
assassin in the universe. He'll
know precisely what to do.

He dramatically POINTS at the doors.

GALAX (CONT'D)
LOOK! There's Lindvall NOW!

The remaining advisors SCREAM and DIVE under the table.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Just kidding.

The advisors sheepishly climb back. Galax casually AIMS the
ray gun at one, the **EMBARRASSED ADVISOR** peeking over the
table edge.

EMBARRASSED ADVISOR
I think I pulled a muscle.

GALAX
(chuckling)
Just the mention of Lindvall's name
can have that effect.

BZZAP! Another mound of ash. Only one advisor remains.

GALAX (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Downsized. Avoids a nasty workers'
comp claim. Win-win.

Galax turns to the **LAST REMAINING ADVISOR**.

GALAX (CONT'D)
 We'll send Lindvall to Earth to
 make sure this Space Marshal never
 talks. Problem solved.

LAST REMAINING ADVISOR
 Understood, Your Brutalness.

GALAX
 Excellent. Meeting adjourned. I'm
 late for my loofah exfoliation and
 hot stone treatment.

He rises, then pauses. Turns.

GALAX (CONT'D)
 Do you know what I hate most about
 Earth?

LAST REMAINING ADVISOR

What's that, your Vindictiveness?

GALAX
 Not their satellites. Not their
 movies. Not even that weird thing
 with pumpkin spice.
 (beat)
 It's that one puny little kid keeps
 acting like I'm -- beatable.

He strides out with his Bodyguards. A **CREW OF HOUSEKEEPERS**
 rushes in with tiny vacuums, frantically sucking up mounds of
 ash.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NSG COMPLEX - 2:00 A.M.

Veronica rockets out of the NSG main gate on her supercharged
 BLACK-AND-RED MOTORCYCLE, banking hard onto a dark country
 road. We follow as she winds through the dark countryside,
 her headlight cutting through the night.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Veronica's motorcycle BLASTS past a DEPUTY SHERIFF'S CAR.
 Lights and siren SNAP ON.

Veronica sighs. Pulls to the shoulder. Kills the engine. Removes her helmet. **TWO DEPUTIES** climb out -- a "Mutt and Jeff" duo.

DEPUTY #1
Well, well. What do we have here?

DEPUTY #2
Ma'am, we clocked you at over eighty. That's a big no-no in these parts.

VERONICA
Really? So is a burned-out taillight... yet here we are.

DEPUTY #1
Little fast for a school night, isn't it, sweetheart?

DEPUTY #1 (CONT'D)
Ma'am, we clocked you at over eighty. That's a big no-no in these parts.

VERONICA
Don't you two have a donut store opening to supervise somewhere?

DEPUTY #1
A night in the county jail might slow you down.

They move in closer, trying to intimidate her. DEPUTY #1 pulls out his handcuffs, RATCHETING them for effect.

VERONICA
(matter-of-fact)
Big mistake, fellas.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. ROADSIDE - LATER

The two Deputies are handcuffed to each other, wrists-to-wrists, stuck BACK-TO-BACK on opposite sides of a tree trunk. Patrol car lights still flashing.

In the distance, Veronica's motorcycle POPS a wheelie and disappears down the road.

EXT. SATURN BURGER DRIVE-THRU - NEXT DAY

What customers don't know: the DRIVE-THRU KIOSKS at every Saturn Burger location are ALIEN SURVEILLANCE TERMINALS. As customers order, aliens capture their images and personal data.

A big fiberglass SATURN spins atop the restaurant building.

A **SOCCER MOM** in an oversized SUV -- plate "2HOT4U" -- pulls up to the order kiosk. Coffee in one hand, cell phone in the other. **FOUR TEEN GIRLS** (sisters) in back, all texting.

SOCCER MOM

(into phone)

So Ashley, the clerk goes, *"I can't give you a cash refund 'cuz you wore the dress, but I can do store credit."*

SATURN BURGER EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

(voice cracking)

Welcome to Saturn Burger. Would you like to try our new Black Hole Burger -- where not even light can escape?

SOCCER MOM

(to phone)

Hold on, Ash.

(to speaker)

I need five Saturn Bur --

Mid-sentence, EVERYONE IN THE SUV FREEZES as a grid of LASER BEAMS fires from the fiberglass burger atop the kiosk, scanning every occupant. Over in a flash. Everyone UNFREEZES.

SOCCER MOM (CONT'D)

-- ger Cosmic Combo Meals. All five with large Diet Constellation Colas. And make sure they're all DIET.

INT. BACK ROOM - SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

A **MULTI-TENTACLED ALIEN** sits before a wall of monitors. Each screen displays a 3D image of every SUV occupant with scrolling personal data:

SOCCER MOM: 43, dyed blonde, 17.69% silicone & filler, acrylic nails, narcissist, loves *BRAVO* reality TV, Residence: 1910 Raymond Lane.

HAILEY: 15, cheerleader, academically challenged, secretly picks her nose.

CAITLIN: 14, boy-obsessed, needs braces, hates pickles.

MEGAN: 13, insecure, terrible acne, needs a nightlight to sleep.

MADISON: 12, clueless, intellect of a box of rocks, thinks unicorns are real.

The alien's tentacle hovers over the last line of Madison's file. It reads: **"AFRAID OF THE DARK."**

For just a moment, the alien hesitates. Chuckles and saves the file anyway. A MESSAGE APPEARS IN BOLD FLASHING RED TEXT ON THE SCREEN:

"SUBJECT DATA CAPTURED -- CAPTURE VALUE: 89.6% -- SCHEDULE COLLECTION PROCEDURE IMMEDIATELY"

The monitors go dark one by one. Somewhere deep in the building, a freezer door CLANGS shut.

EXT. PICK-UP WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Soccer Mom pulls to the pick-up window. The hidden ALIEN operates a life-sized **PUPPET** of an acne-faced teen employee. The PUPPET hands over a massive sack.

PUPPET
(voice cracking)
No charge, ma'am. Come again.

She drives off, convinced the "employee" was flirting.

SOCCER MOM
(into phone)
Ash? Guess who's still GOT IT, baby.

HAILEY
(never looking up)
Yeah. Right, Mom. You're sooo "hot."

SOCCER MOM
SHUT UP, Hailey!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GLEN KEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL - MID-AFTERNOON

End-of-day bell. Scooter, Katie, and Brian burst through the doors, grab their rides, and race for the Saturn Burger a few blocks away.

INT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Packed with students. Scooter, Brian, and Katie push through.

Behind the counter, staff wear tacky polyester uniforms. From the waist up, they look human enough. From the waist down -- hidden -- their alien bodies are anything but. All Galaxian mutant operatives in "human" disguise.

Waiting for Scooter: **Veronica in DISGUISE** -- stained polyester uniform, hairnet, paper hat, horn-rimmed glasses, "**MADGE**" name tag. Cheerful. A far cry from the femme fatale.

Scooter approaches the counter to order.

SCOOTER

I'll have...

VERONICA (AS MADGE)

(cheerfully)

Here's your usual, doll.

She places a tray of Scooter's standard order on the counter, along with four ketchup packets.

SCOOTER

Wow. Great service. But can I get --

VERONICA (AS MADGE)

-- your four ketchups on the side?

Already there.

She points to the packets and smiles pleasantly. Scooter thinks it's a bit odd but hurries to join Brian and Katie.

INT. DINING AREA - SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

Space-themed kitsch. Saturn-shaped MENU BOARDS rotate slowly from wires. Purple vinyl booths. FIBER-OPTIC STARS twinkle across the ceiling. Every table has a rocket-ship condiment caddy.

The three wedge into a corner booth. Brian bites his burger and makes a face.

BRIAN

Dude. Is this a burger or a hockey puck?

KATIE

That's what you get for ordering the Black Hole. *"So dense, even light can't escape."*

BRIAN

Yeah. Neither can the taste.

KATIE

Hey, Scooter. Read your blog this morning. Another thrilling installment of the Scooter Murphy Space Diary.

SCOOTER

You liked it?

KATIE

I liked the part where you "barrel-rolled through an asteroid field on your scooter." You can barely barrel-roll through the school parking lot.

SCOOTER

Hey! That pothole was practically invisible.

BRIAN

(mouth full)

It was the size of a bathtub.

SCOOTER

Four hundred and twelve followers now. Three hundred and six of them are Cookie Cadets.

KATIE

Four hundred and twelve people who need better hobbies.

SCOOTER

(with great dignity)

Those three hundred and six moved eleven thousand boxes of cookies last spring. Door to door. In the rain.

BRIAN

Okay, that part is actually terrifying. There's just a lot of this blog following I really don't understand.

SCOOTER

(with great dignity)

They understand the Space Marshal is the last line of defense between Earth and total galactic annihilation.

BRIAN

Sounds sorta' stupid to me, Scooter. No offense.

KATIE

And yet she still can pass a math test -- unlike someone we know.

Scooter shoves fries in her mouth, points at both of them excitedly.

SCOOTER

(chewing)

It's the weekend! You know what that means!

Brian and Katie exchange a look. In unison, UNDERWHELMING FAKE ENTHUSIASM:

KATIE

Don't tell us. We know.

BRIAN

More "Aliens Versus the Marshal."

KATIE

(fake yawn)

Yippee.

BRIAN

It's been a long week. I flunked that math test. I think I'd just like to chill.

KATIE

Yeah. Let's give it a rest for a night, Scooter. Or a month.

SCOOTER

You gotta be kidding. Full moon tonight. Meet me here at closing.

Nearby, Veronica (as Madge) is within earshot. So is a refined-looking gentleman -- **LINDVALL**, the Galaxian operative -- disguised as a businessman. Tailored suit. He makes notes in a small notebook as he eavesdrops.

Scooter, Brian, and Katie finish and head for the exit. Across the dining area, Veronica spots **CHUCK** in a corner, alone, gorging on burgers.

Veronica walks over and GRABS Chuck's tray, DUMPING his half-eaten meal in the trash. Chuck looks up in disbelief.

VERONICA (AS MADGE)
You've had enough, sweetie.

She removes her paper hat and glasses. Cold stare. Chuck's eyes go WIDE. She leans in, nose to nose.

VERONICA (AS HERSELF) (CONT'D)
You're done, Chuckie.

She flicks the bill of his cap off with one talon-nail. It tumbles to the floor.

CHUCK
Y-yes ma'am. I was thinking maybe I should drop a few pounds anyway.

Veronica pats his head, walks away, tosses her disguise in a trash can, mounts her motorcycle, and ROCKETS off.

Lindvall makes final notes. Places the notebook in his breast pocket and calmly exits.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - COOKIE CADET TROOP 514 - LATE AFTERNOON

Cracked asphalt behind a small brick church. A dented **PASSENGER VAN**, "**TROOP 514**" hand-lettered on the door. Folding tables. A painted banner: "**FIRST IN. LAST OUT. MOST BOXES SOLD.**"

Two dozen **COOKIE CADETS** stand in four ranks. Sashes squared. Berets -- each a giant felt chocolate-chip cookie -- set at precisely the same angle.

Facing them: **TROOP LEADER DELGADO**, forties, a khaki vest so heavy with merit badges it hangs like body armor. Silver whistle. Posture you do not learn in a church basement.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
Troop! Inventory check!

TWENTY-FOUR duffels hit the pavement in unison. Zippers RIP. Cookie boxes come out stacked in tight columns.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO (CONT'D)
 (pacing the line)
 Skinny Mints are your workhorse.
 Peanut Butter Poppers are close
 quarters. Doodle-Wackers --

CADETS
 (in unison, bored)
 -- are for emergencies only!

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
 Because?

CADETS
 (unison)
 Because nobody says no to a Doodle-
 Wacker!

Delgado stops in front of Scooter, who stands at the head of the second rank -- sash bristling, moon boots polished, scooter parked at a perfect right angle to her heels.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
 Murphy. Top seller, fall. Top
 seller, spring. Squad leader, Table
 Two.

SCOOTER
 Yes, ma'am.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
 Sash drill. Show me.

Scooter UNCOILS her merit sash, SNAPS it taut between both fists, then CRACKS it overhead like a bullwhip. Three cracks. A paper cup on a table a few feet away FLIPS, bounces, and lands upright.

The ranks go quiet. Impressed.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO (CONT'D)
 (almost a smile)
 Gunnery Sergeant Delgado, United
 States Marine Corps, retired, does
 not impress easily. Consider her
 impressed.

She turns to the troop and raises her voice.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO (CONT'D)
The Cadet Text Chain protocol.
Explain it to me.

FRECKLED CADET
One texts five. Five turns to
twenty-five. Twenty-five to the
whole city, ma'am.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
Response time?

CADETS
(unison)
Eleven minutes!

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
I want nine! We did it in nine at
the Founder's Day parade, and I
intend to die holding that record.

Laughter rolls down the ranks. Delgado lets it run, then
kills it with one look.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO (CONT'D)
Last item. Watkins.

A **SAD CADET** steps forward holding a handmade poster:

***A ferret. "MISSING!" -- FLASH. Very friendly. Answers to a
squeaky toy."***

WATKINS
(trying not to cry)
He got out Tuesday. He never gets
out.

Nobody laughs. Two dozen kids look at the asphalt.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
(quieter)
Troop 514 does not lose things.
Cadet Murphy, you ride that whole
neighborhood on that contraption of
yours. Eyes open.

Scooter takes the poster. Folds it once, carefully, and
slides it into her vest pocket, behind the tin star.

SCOOTER
Yes, ma'am. Eyes open.

Delgado blows the whistle. The ranks **BREAK** into ordinary
shrieking children.

As Scooter glides off across the lot, Delgado calls after her.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
Murphy. Anything out there gets
strange -- anything at all -- you
call the Chain. That's what it's
for.

SCOOTER
(grinning, over her
shoulder)
What could get strange?

Delgado watches her go. Then, out of an old habit she has
never been able to break, she scans the tree line. Nothing
there. She climbs into the van.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
(to herself)
Semper Fi!

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Scooter, Katie, and Brian meet in the driveway. Scooter in
her full Space Marshal outfit. Katie and Brian in crude
homemade alien costumes -- like trick-or-treaters.

They pass the same utility pole. THREE posters now, layered:
"**LOST: SCRUFFY**," a new one reading "**MISSING: CUDDLES**," a cat -
- and the Watkins' ferret - "**FLASH**".

Scooter SKIDS to a stop. She pulls Watkins' folded poster
from her vest and holds it up beside the pole. Same block
letters. Same desperate underlining.

She takes out her phone and PHOTOGRAPHS all three posters.
Then the pole. Then the street sign on the corner.

KATIE
What are you doing?

SCOOTER
Three pets. Three streets. Four
blocks.
(beat)
Nothing takes three pets off one
block, Katie. Not a coyote. Not a
car.

Brian and Katie trade the look they save for when Scooter is being weird in a way that turns out to be right.

They ride on. The posters flutter behind them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Saturn Burger is dark and closed. Exterior spotlights illuminate the SATURN atop the building, making it look like it hovers in the night.

EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE & STORAGE - NIGHT

Across the street: a vast three-story warehouse. Dark alleys. Packing crates. Perfect for a glorified game of hide-and-seek.

SCOOTER

You guys know the rules. You're the evil aliens, and there's a huge bounty on your heads for --

She waits.

BRIAN AND KATIE

(unison, monotone)

-- "hideous crimes against the universe."

SCOOTER

Correct! And I am the Space Marshal, sworn to track you down and take you into custody! Now get goin', varmints!

Brian and Katie ride off into the dark. Scooter BOUNCES anxiously in her moon boots, adjusting her badge and vest.

Then -- the ROAR of a motorcycle. Veronica Webster rides up, SKIDS to a halt, removes her helmet, and strides toward Scooter.

VERONICA

Why, howdy, Marshal. Might I get a word with you?

Scooter, fully immersed in her 'game' character, tips her helmet in "cowboy" style and hooks her thumbs into her gun belt. Full Marshal persona.

SCOOTER
 Why, certainly, ma'am. How can I be
 of service?

VERONICA
 Actually, I may be of service to
 you.

Veronica TAPS Scooter's tin star badge.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
 You are the world-famous Tressa
 Murphy -- Space Marshal, aren't
 you?

Scooter's ego inflates like a balloon.

SCOOTER
 Yes ma'am. My friends call me
 Scooter.

VERONICA
 Tell me, Scooter -- are you
 familiar with someone named Emperor
 Galax?

Scooter's eyes go WIDE. Her jaw drops. Her scooter clatters
 to the ground.

SCOOTER
 GALAX?! I knew it!

EXT. ROOFTOP - FAR END OF THE BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall stands atop a distant building. He peers through an
 INFRARED SCANNER at Scooter and Veronica. At his feet: a
 leather case. Red LED glowing. Biohazard emblems on the
 sides.

He studies the infrared images. Scooter's a warm, bright red.
 Veronica's an icy, cold blue.

EXT. STREET NEAR SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

Off in the distance:

BRIAN (O.S.)
 Hey, Scooter! What gives? What's
 keepin' ya?

KATIE (O.S.)
 Some hot-shot Marshal YOU are!

Veronica moves quickly.

VERONICA
 Marshal. This is a matter of
 national security. Your life and
 your friends' lives are in danger.

SCOOTER
 But -- how?

VERONICA
 I'm the only one you can trust. If
 you really want to capture this
 Galax fellow--meet me here tomorrow
 night. Inside that warehouse. Eight
 o'clock. Come alone.

She fires up the motorcycle. Turns back one last time.
 "Parrots" one of Scooter's own catchphrases:

VERONICA (CONT'D)
 Remember -- the fate of the entire
 world depends upon you, Marshal.

She flips down her visor, POPS a wheelie, and VANISHES down
 an alleyway.

SCOOTER
 (to herself, in awe)
 Wow... Galax.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LINDVALL'S VANTAGE - CONTINUOUS

On Lindvall's scanner, Scooter's red thermal signature
 pulses. Crosshairs centered, Coordinates locked. Biometrics
 captured. Then Katie rides into frame, blocking his line of
 sight. Lindvall LOWERS the device, frowning.

EXT. STREET NEAR WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Katie SKIDS up, angry.

KATIE
 What's the big idea, dork? Were you
 gonna leave me out there all night?

Scooter is so deep in thought about Galax, she doesn't hear.

KATIE (CONT'D)
 Hey! I'm talking to you!

SCOOTER

What? Huh?

KATIE

What's wrong with you?

SCOOTER

Nothing. I just... can't share it right now.

KATIE

With me?

SCOOTER

Especially with you. Not yet. You've gotta trust me.

KATIE

Trust is a two-way street.

Katie takes Scooter's hand, pulls her close, looks straight into her eyes.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Tressa. I tease you because I'm scared. Scared you'll leave me for your imaginary universe.

SCOOTER

(quiet, real)

I never thought my stories could hurt anybody, Katie. Especially not you.

Katie holds on. Then turns her head and taps her own cheek.

KATIE

You know the drill.

Scooter smiles. Leans in, plants a peck on Katie's cheek -- the same ritual as Diane's.

SCOOTER

Thanks, Katie. I know you're always there for me.

Brian pedals in, out of breath.

BRIAN

You two messing with me?

KATIE

Shut up, Brian. Something came up.

BRIAN
 Something came up? I'd still be out
 there hiding with the RATS!

KATIE
 Just relax, doofus. Scooter has her
 reasons.

She turns to Scooter.

KATIE (CONT'D)
 You gonna be okay?

SCOOTER
 I'll be fine. I just want to
 collect my thoughts.

KATIE
 I understand. See you tomorrow.

Brian and Katie ride off, leaving Scooter alone. In the far
 distance, atop the building, Lindvall's silhouette.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LINDVALL'S VANTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall's scanner LOCKS onto Scooter. No obstruction now. He
 reaches down, taps the case's keypad sequence. GREEN LED. The
 lid SPRINGS open.

A SWARM of HUNDREDS OF TINY NANO-DRONES erupts from the case,
 BUZZING like angry bees. Each carries a needle-like STINGER.
 Their LEDs blink randomly, then SYNC. They DIVE toward
 Scooter.

LINDVALL
 (to himself)
 Go do what you do best, my deadly
 beauties.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE THE WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Scooter hops on her scooter and pushes off. The swarm
 DESCENDS from above.

Scooter cuts a sharp corner. Several drones can't adjust --
 SHATTER against a dumpster. Others strike RATS in the
 garbage. **THREE RATS DROP DEAD** instantly.

The remaining drones REGROUP and PURSUE.

EXT. ABANDONED CAR WASH - CONTINUOUS

Scooter takes a shortcut through an abandoned car wash. She WEAVES through a maze of huge spinner wipers and hanging brushes. Behind her, dozens of drones fly straight into the mechanisms and TANGLE.

Scooter emerges out the far end, UNSCATHED.

A single drone catches up and STRIKES the back of her helmet. CLACK! The helmet absorbs the impact. The drone RICOCHETS off in a ball of sparks.

Scooter touches the back of her head.

SCOOTER

Man! Mosquitoes must be HUGE this season.

She pushes on, expertly zigzagging home.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LINDVALL'S VANTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall watches drone after drone fail. He TAPS the recall sequence. The survivors reverse course, descend into the case. Lid snaps shut. RED LED. Mission failed.

Lindvall picks up the case. His expression, unreadable. He disappears into the darkness.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - SATURDAY MORNING

Sunlight spills across the cul-de-sac. Sprinklers running. A jogger passing.

Katie and Brian walk up the driveway side by side. Brian yawns, hair matted. Katie moves with purpose. They push through the front door and head straight upstairs.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

They knock. The door CREAKS open an inch. Two hands SHOOT out, GRAB them by the collars, YANK them inside.

Scooter SLAMS the door and throws her back against it. Curtains drawn. Room dim. Her eyes are wide and darting.

BRIAN

What the --?

KATIE

Is that any way to say "good morning"?

Scooter raises a finger to her lips.

SCOOTER

(whispering)

Shhh. Not a word.

BRIAN

(dropping to a whisper)

What is going on with you?

KATIE

(Whispering)

Yeah. You're acting crazier than usual.

Scooter crosses to the window and PEEKS through the curtain. A black SUV at the far end of the cul-de-sac pulls away. She EXHALES.

Katie steps closer. She studies Scooter's face -- dark circles under her eyes, hands fidgeting with her vest hem. Her irritation softens into concern.

KATIE (CONT'D)
You look terrible. Did you sleep at all?

SCOOTER
Not really.

Katie leans in closer and takes a quick SNIFF.

KATIE
Whew! And you could really use a shower.

Katie grabs Scooter by the shoulders.

KATIE (CONT'D)
You're scaring me, Scooter. And I don't scare easy.

BRIAN
Yeah. I came over here at seven on a Saturday. Whatever this is, it better be real.

SCOOTER
It's real. I think. I don't know what's real anymore.

She looks at both of them. Her tough-kid act slips. Underneath: a ten-year-old, genuinely frightened.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
It has to do with last night. And Emperor Galax.

BRIAN
That made-up guy from your blog?

SCOOTER
Apparently, it's not 'made up'. I'm supposed to meet her tonight at the old warehouse. Eight o'clock. Alone. National security.

BRIAN
Alone? I don't think so.

KATIE
She obviously didn't know about US.

SCOOTER
Actually, she did. She said your lives are in danger.

A long beat. Brian and Katie look at each other. A silent conversation -- worry, exasperation, loyalty. Katie gives Brian a small nod. Brian sighs and nods back.

BRIAN
You're NOT going WITHOUT us.

KATIE
What good would the Space Marshal
be without her two best "aliens"?

SCOOTER
Guys, I can't ask you to --

KATIE
You're not asking. We're TELLING.

BRIAN
Whatever this is -- you're not
walking into it alone. That's not
how we do things.

Brian and Katie FIST BUMP. For a moment, Scooter's bravado cracks -- pure gratitude.

SCOOTER
Thanks, guys. I mean it.

They exit. Footsteps recede.

Scooter stands alone. She moves to her desk, sweeps aside Cookie Cadet boxes and Saturn Burger cups, and reaches for the power button --

-- but before her finger touches it, the monitor FLICKERS TO LIFE on its own. Static. Then a crisp video-call image of VERONICA WEBSTER. Razor-sharp smile.

VERONICA
Well, well. Seems our Space Marshal
isn't very good at keeping secrets.

Scooter JERKS back.

SCOOTER
But -- the computer was off!

VERONICA
Oh, I've been watching.
(savoring it)
That tender moment with your
friend? Just precious.

Scooter pales.

SCOOTER

This is my fault. I never should've dragged them into this --

VERONICA

Finally, we agree on something. If you care about your best girl and her dopey brother, you'll be at the warehouse tonight. ALONE. Or I won't be held responsible for what happens to them.

The image BLINKS OUT. It's replaced by TWO SCHOOL YEARBOOK PHOTOS -- Brian and Katie, frozen in happy smiles. Scooter's hand reaches toward the screen --

-- and both photos BURST INTO DIGITAL FLAMES, curling into charred ASH.

Scooter sits in the dying glow.

SCOOTER

(anguished)

What have I done?

She stares at her blog dashboard. Cursor blinking over "New Post." Her hand hovers over "DELETE ACCOUNT." One click. Erase the Space Marshal. Erase Emperor Galax. Erase all of it.

Her finger trembles above the mouse.

Then her eyes catch something on the desk beside the keyboard. The **FOUR OF KETCHUP PACKETS** from yesterday's tray.

She picks one up. Turns it over. **"SATURN BURGER."**

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

(slowly)

She knew my order.

She sits up straighter.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

I never told her my order. Never told her my name either. Or Katie's. Or Brian's.

She pushes the mouse away from "DELETE ACCOUNT" and opens a blank document instead. Types a header in capitals: **"CASE FILE -- WHO KNOWS MY ORDER?"**

She digs the sketchpad out from under the cookie boxes, flips past the aliens to a clean page, and starts a list in messy purple marker.

"1. SHE KNEW MY ORDER. 2. SHE KNEW MOM'S CHEEK THING. 3. SHE KNEW ABOUT BRIAN AND KATIE. 4. MY COMPUTER TURNS ON BY ITSELF."

She CIRCLES ITEM ONE. Three times.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Everything she knows about me, she
got off a burger.

A tear is still drying on her cheek. She wipes it away with the back of her wrist, not gently, and reaches for her helmet.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SATURN BURGER DRIVE-THRU - SATURDAY, LATE MORNING

The fiberglass SATURN turns lazily overhead. Three cars idle in line. Three orders placed. Three vehicles scanned.

In the hedge beside the menu board: three heads, flat on their stomachs in the mulch. Scooter has her phone up, filming the kiosk.

BRIAN

(whispering)

Remind me why I'm the one who has
to --

SCOOTER

Because you're the only one of us
tall enough to look like you can
drive.

Brian sighs, stands, brushes mulch off his knees, and walks up to the ordering speaker in his dad's enormous sunglasses and a bucket hat.

SATURN BURGER SPEAKER (V.O.)

(voice cracking)

Welcome to Saturn Burger. Would you
like to try our new Black Hole
Burger?

BRIAN
 (deepening his voice)
 Yes. Hello. My name is...
 Bartholomew Merslag.

In the hedge, Katie puts her face directly into the mulch.

KATIE
 (muffled)
 Bartholomew Merslag?

BRIAN
 I would like one small water,
 please.

A beat. Then the fiberglass Saturn TILTS, and a GRID OF RED LASERS fires down over Brian, sweeping him head to toe.

Brian FREEZES mid-sentence, perfectly rigid, sunglasses sliding down his nose.

From the hedge, Scooter's phone records every second of it.

The lasers snap off. Brian UNFREEZES mid-word, as though nothing happened at all.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
 -- no ice.

The window slides open. A PUPPET-STIFF EMPLOYEE hands out a cup and a receipt.

PUPPET EMPLOYEE
 (voice cracking)
 No charge, Mr. Kwon. And happy
 early birthday.

The window slides shut. Brian stands very still.

He walks back to the hedge and holds out the receipt. Scooter takes it, reads it, turns it so Katie can see.

ON THE RECEIPT, below the order:

**"BRIAN KWON. AGE 12. GLEN KEANE MIDDLE. MATH: FAILING.
 ALLERGY: BEES. FEAR: BEES."**

BRIAN
 (very quietly)
 I told the box my name was
 Bartholomew Merslag.

KATIE
 Scooter. It knew his face.

Scooter stops the recording. Looks at the phone. Looks up at the spinning Saturn.

SCOOTER
It's not a restaurant. It's a
camera with a menu.

She pockets the receipt like it's made of gold.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - COMPUTER ALCOVE - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Fluorescent hum. A row of ancient public terminals. Scooter at one, Brian and Katie flanking her, a stack of printouts growing beside the mouse.

ON SCREEN: the county property records portal. She types:
"A. RACHNID."

She hits 'Enter' and immediately...

RESULT: **"A. RACHNID WAREHOUSE AND STORAGE -- OWNER OF RECORD:
WIDOW HOLDINGS LLC."**

KATIE
Widow Holdings?

Scooter clicks through. A scanned filing fills the screen. She reads the officer line aloud.

SCOOTER
"Sole officer and registered agent.
V. Webster."

Katie sits down hard in the next chair.

BRIAN
She OWNS it? The lady who told you
to meet her there owns the
building?

Scooter scrolls to the lease payments. Every month, same amount, same source.

ON SCREEN:
**"LESSEE: U.S. GOVT -- NATIONAL SPYING GROUP -- PROCUREMENT
ACCT 11-4477."**

SCOOTER
(quiet)
The government's been paying her
rent.

She opens a second window -- the city's missing-persons map -- then a third, the Saturn Burger locations page. She drags one on top of the other.

The red dots and the little Saturn pins LAND ON TOP OF EACH OTHER. Fourteen dots. Fourteen restaurants.

Then she adds her own three photographs. Scruffy. Cuddles. Flash. She marks them in purple.

The purple marks form a tight ring. Not around a restaurant. Around the warehouse.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
The pets went first. Tuesday,
Wednesday, Thursday.

KATIE
Before any of the people.

SCOOTER
Because you don't start with
people. You start with something
nobody files a report about.

A long silence. Brian's hand goes to his mouth.

BRIAN
They were practicing.

Scooter hits PRINT. The ancient printer GRINDS. She gathers the pages, squares them, and writes across the top sheet in purple marker: "EVIDENCE. PROPERTY OF T. MURPHY. IF FOUND, GIVE TO A GROWN-UP WHO LISTENS."

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The kids cross the main floor, Scooter hugging the folder to her chest.

A **MAN IN GRAY** stands at the end of the aisle, studying a rack of bus schedules he has no use for. Tailored suit. Refined. Perfectly still.

He turns as they pass, and his face opens into a warm, practiced smile. He produces a leather billfold and flips it open. A badge. Official-looking. Just slightly wrong.

MAN IN GRAY
Tressa Murphy?

Scooter stops. Brian and Katie stop behind her.

MAN IN GRAY (CONT'D)
Detective Bingham. Fifth Precinct.
Sergeant O'Malley sent me -- he
says three kids came in with a
story about a warehouse.

Scooter's arms tighten around the folder.

SCOOTER
We haven't been to the police yet.

A flicker. Barely anything. The smile holds.

MAN IN GRAY
Then I'm early. Lucky for both of
us. Why don't you let me carry that
downtown for you.

He extends a hand. Scooter looks at it.

The skin along his knuckles RIPPLES. Once. Like water
disturbed underneath a sleeve.

Scooter's mouth goes dry. She does not scream, and she does
not run. She smiles up at him instead -- wide and dumb and
ten years old.

SCOOTER
Sure, Detective. Can you hold my
scooter a moment?

She holds out the scooter. He glances down at it -- one half-
second of confusion --

-- and Scooter SLAMS the fire door bar behind him. The ALARM
SHRIEKS. Sprinklers WHUMP on. The library ERUPTS.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
GO!

They BOLT through the stacks, folder shielded under Scooter's
vest, and out the loading door into daylight.

Behind them, in the chaos of water, bells, and people
fleeing, the Man in Gray does not chase. He stands perfectly
still in the downpour, water flattening his hair, and takes
out a small LEATHER NOTEBOOK. He writes one line. Closes it.
Returns it to his breast pocket.

MAN IN GRAY
(to himself, almost
admiring)
Ten years old.

He walks out through the fire exit without hurrying.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND THE LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The three of them press against a brick wall, soaked, chests heaving. The alarm bells fade behind the fire door.

KATIE
His hand. Scooter, his HAND --

SCOOTER
I know.

BRIAN
That was NOT a detective.

SCOOTER
No. Maybe NOT even HUMAN.

Katie slides down the wall and sits in a puddle without caring.

KATIE
(shaking)
He knew your name. He knew the
sergeant's name. He knew we hadn't
gone in yet.

Scooter opens the folder. The pages are dry. She exhales.

SCOOTER
Which means the file matters. You
don't send a fake cop for a kid's
homework.

She looks at both of them. Something has changed in her face.
Not bravado. Purpose.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
I'm going to that warehouse
tonight. Not because she told me
to. Because that's where the people
are.

Brian and Katie say nothing. Katie is still staring at her own hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VERONICA WEBSTER'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - AFTERNOON

An upscale high-rise catches the afternoon sun. Veronica rides into the underground garage, parks, and heads to an elevator.

INT. PENTHOUSE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Veronica exits into a long hallway. Her heels echo. Halfway down, an apartment door opens. An **ELDERLY LADY** steps out with **GRACIE**, a small dog on a leash.

The instant Gracie sees -- or scents -- Veronica, she goes **BERSERK**. **BARKING**, **SCRABBLING**, straining at the leash.

ELDERLY LADY

Gracie! Where are your manners? I'm so sorry. She **NEVER** acts this way around people.

VERONICA

(saccharin)

What a little sweetheart.

Veronica bends down, extending a manicured hand. Gracie **LUNGES**, teeth bared. Veronica pulls back with almost inhuman reflexes -- the bite misses by a hair.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(straightening)

Feisty. I do admire that in the small ones. I could just eat her up.

Something in Veronica's tone makes the Elderly Lady pull Gracie closer and hurry to the elevator. Veronica watches them go -- her pleasant expression fading to something cold, calculating.

INT. VERONICA WEBSTER'S PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sleek, futuristic. Everywhere: subtle **WEB-LIKE PATTERNS**. Wall art. Light fixtures. Rugs.

INT. PANTRY - VERONICA'S PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Veronica approaches a set of large pantry doors. She pauses, small smile. Swings them open.

Inside is not a pantry. Floor to ceiling: **silk-spun COCOONS**. Dozens of them, hanging from metal racks -- some no bigger than a breadbox, others human-sized. All sway gently. Several RUSTLE with subtle movement. Alive.

VERONICA

Such fragile creatures, these earthlings. So much noise and bravado. And in the end... just savory, silk, and silence.

She walks between the rows like a collector in a wine cellar.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(softly, to the basin)

Galax wants a planet. Flags. Parades. A chair with his name on it.

(running one nail along the rim)

I want a nursery. Eight million eggs in the first season. Nine billion earthlings who never learn to look up.

She tucks a loose thread of silk into the basin's edge, tidy as a mother smoothing a crib sheet.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

He can have the planet. I'll take everything that lives on it.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - LATE SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Slanted gold light. Scooter asleep sitting up, back against the bed frame, purple marker still in her fist.

Spread across the floor around her: the printouts. The property filing with "**V. WEBSTER**" circled four times. The Saturn Burger map. And taped to the closet door in a careful grid -- images of **FOURTEEN FACES** clipped from the newspaper. Beneath them, in her handwriting: "**STILL MISSING.**"

Beside those, three handmade posters. Scruffy. Cuddles. Flash.

The door opens. DIANE, in scrubs, hair damp, keys in hand, twenty minutes from a twelve-hour shift.

She stops in the doorway.

She takes in the grid on the closet door. The fourteen faces. Her daughter asleep on the floor in the middle of it with marker on her fingers.

Diane crouches. Reads one printout. Then another. Her face does something complicated.

Her eyes drift to the framed photo on Scooter's shelf -- a much younger Diane in her Army Combat Uniform, aid bag over one shoulder, squinting into desert sun, her arm around a soldier whose name tape reads MORGAN.

She looks back at the closet door.

DIANE
(barely audible)
Baby. What are you doing.

Scooter stirs. Blinks. Sees her mother on the floor holding her evidence.

SCOOTER
(instantly awake, grabbing
for the pages)
Mom -- that's -- it's for a
project.

DIANE
It's for a project?

A long beat. Diane does not let go of the page.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Tressa. I've worked nights for
eleven years. I know what a scared
face looks like at four in the
morning, and I'm looking at one.

Scooter's chin comes up. The drawl comes out. Armor.

SCOOTER
I'm not scared. Space Marshals
don't get scared.

Diane closes her eyes a moment. When she opens them she picks exactly the wrong thing to say, and says it anyway.

DIANE
Then maybe it's time the Space
Marshal took a night off.

It lands wrong. Scooter's face shuts like a door.

SCOOTER

Right. Sure.

Diane stands. Straightens her scrub top. She wants to try again and doesn't know how, so she reaches out and tucks a strand of purple hair behind her daughter's ear instead.

DIANE

I'm on till seven. Doors locked.
Phone on.

She taps her own cheek. Holds the pose. Waiting.

Scooter looks at the carpet. Doesn't move.

Diane lowers her hand. Nods once, small, like something was taken from her that she won't be mentioning.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Okay. Message received.

She goes. The stairs creak. The front door closes.

Scooter sits alone among fourteen faces and says it to the empty room, too quiet and too late for anybody to hear.

SCOOTER

I am, though. I'm really scared.

Out in the hallway -- at the bedroom door Diane left open two inches -- DIANE IS STILL THERE. Back against the wall. Keys in her fist. She heard it.

She takes out her phone, steps into the doorway, and photographs the closet door. Fourteen faces. Three pets. One map with a warehouse in the middle of it.

Then she leaves for real.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SOCCER MOM'S HOUSE - EVENING

A cheerful suburban house. Porch light on. The "2HOT4U" minivan in the drive.

TWO BLACK VANS glide to a stop. Side doors slide open in eerie unison. **FIVE COLLECTORS** in black suits and dark sunglasses march up the walk, **WEB-GUNS** ready.

The doorbell rings. The Soccer Mom answers, cell phone at her ear. The Collectors fill the doorway.

SOCCKER MOM
 (into phone)
 Hang on, Ashley.
 (to Collectors)
 May I help --

They sweep past her inside. Door SLAMS.

From within: rapid WEB-GUN BLASTS. Heavy THUMPS. And under all of it, absurdly, the continuing TAP-TAP-TAP of teen texting.

SOCCKER MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (muffled)
 Ashley? You will NOT believe what
 just -- NO, I cannot take a selfie
 right now!

A BLAST. A THUMP. The texting stops.

SOCCKER MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (no longer performing --
 just a mother)
 Hailey. Hailey, honey, get behind
 me.

A fifth BLAST. A fifth muffled THUMP. Then nothing at all.

The door opens. The Collectors exit single-file, each shouldering a wriggling COCOON. Inside the smallest one, a phone screen still GLOWS through the silk, lighting it from within like a paper lantern. It buzzes once. "ASHLEY: hello???"

A Collector shoulders it into the van with the other cocoons. The vans pull away, leaving a porch light burning over an open door and a dropped coffee cup.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ANOTHER SUBURBAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A quiet street. Two overstuffed TRASH CANS overflow with SATURN BURGER BAGS and cups at curbside.

A BLACK VAN rolls into frame, blocking the cans from view. We HEAR a DOORBELL. A door OPENING. Muffled WEB-GUN BLASTS. THUMPS.

A long pause, and then...

The van door SLAMS. It ROARS away, leaving Saturn Burger trash tumbling across the street in its wake.

CUT TO:

INT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT EVENING

The TV glows with LOCAL NEWS. Scooter pauses on the stairs, one hand on the banister, backpack over her shoulder, caught by the **ANCHOR'S VOICE**.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)
Police are asking for the public's help tonight. In the past seventy-two hours, at least fourteen residents across three neighborhoods have been reported missing.

The screen shows a MONTAGE of photos -- smiling faces, family portraits, a school picture -- next to a graphic:

GROWING MYSTERY: WHERE ARE THEY?

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV) (CONT'D)
Among them: a local family of five, a retired postal worker, and a mother-son pair from Elm Grove Condominiums. In each case, authorities report no signs of forced entry. Police are calling it "unprecedented."

A chill runs through Scooter. Grip tightens on the backpack strap.

SCOOTER
(barely a whisper)
Fourteen people...

She clicks off the TV.

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - LATER

Darkness has settled. Scooter steps outside, snaps open her Scooter, pushes off.

She rides past the same utility pole. Three handmade posters, layered. Scruffy. Cuddles. Flash.

She slows. Reaches into her vest and takes out Watkins' folded copy -- the twin of the one stapled to the wood.

She flattens it against the pole, smooths it with her palm, and presses a fresh staple in with her thumb.

SCOOTER
(to the poster)
Sit tight, Flash. I know where you
are.

She pushes off harder. Grim.

EXT. REAR LOADING DOCKS - A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Harsh floodlights carve pools out of the dark. Black vans pull in and out in precise rotation. Collectors move with assembly-line efficiency, hauling cocoons from vans into the warehouse.

INT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - MAIN STORAGE - CONTINUOUS

The scale hits: HUNDREDS of cocoons hang from rafters and metal racks, ROW after ROW into the darkness. A grotesque forest of silky stalactites. Collectors weave among them, hanging more.

EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - SIDE ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Brian and Katie approach on bicycles down a narrow alley. The building looms three stories high. They stop in the shadow of a dumpster near a FIRE ESCAPE LADDER.

KATIE
How are we going to get in there?

Brian aims a flashlight upward. An OPEN WINDOW just off the second-floor platform.

BRIAN
Fire escape. Open window. Easy in
and out.

KATIE
Brian, she was crying when we left
her. Actually crying. Scooter
doesn't cry.

BRIAN
Stay close. No noise. Whatever
happens in there, we stick
together. Got it?

KATIE
Got it. But for the record, I hate
this plan.

They climb.

INT. WAREHOUSE LOFT - CONTINUOUS

Once on the landing, they ease through the window and CROUCH in the dark. The loft is vast -- wooden crates stacked in uneven towers, fine dust everywhere. Below, muffled SOUNDS OF ACTIVITY.

They CRAWL through the maze on hands and knees. A COLLECTOR passes directly below them, seen through a gap in the floorboards -- close enough to hear his breathing.

COLLECTOR
(into handheld radio)
Perimeter is clear. Standing by for
the Marshal's arrival.

He moves on. Katie exhales silently. They reach the edge of the loft.

Below: the warehouse entryway. Bare industrial bulbs. Corridors branch. Veronica PACES, heels CLICKING on concrete. Two Collectors stand behind her like statues.

INT. WAREHOUSE ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

VERONICA
(to Collectors)
This "Space Marshal" should be here
any moment. Make yourselves scarce.
Once I've gotten her information,
she's all yours.

The Collectors melt into the shadows.

EXT. STREET LEADING TO THE WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Scooter rides under intermittent streetlamps. The warehouse looms.

She arrives, folds her scooter into her backpack, adjusts her badge, breathes. Knocks three times.

The heavy door CREAKS open. She steps inside.

INT. WAREHOUSE ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Veronica emerges from the shadows, heels CLICKING.

VERONICA
Marshal. So glad you could make it.

SCOOTER
You make it kind of tough to say
"no."

Veronica CIRCLES behind Scooter, catches her backpack strap, tugs. Then TAPS her own cheek, mimicking Diane's ritual with chilling precision.

VERONICA
Come now, Tressa. You know the drill.

SCOOTER
How did you --
(beat)
No way. I'd rather die.

VERONICA
(under her breath)
That could be arranged.

She steers Scooter to a crate. Circles behind her like a predator.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You have no idea how important you are. To me. To your friends. To the world. We're quite alike -- strong, powerful women with a destiny to lead.

A week ago that line would have inflated Scooter like a balloon. Tonight she lets it. She widens her eyes on purpose. She is ten years old, she is acting, and she is not bad at it.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Tell me everything you know about Emperor Galax and his plans.

SCOOTER
(laying it on thick)
Been trackin' that varmint for months, ma'am. Three star systems. He's got a whole invasion fleet parked behind the moon.

VERONICA
Behind the moon.

SCOOTER
Dark side. Can't see it from here.
That's the genius of it.

Veronica studies her. Writes nothing down. Something in her posture eases -- she has decided this child is exactly as naïve and stupid as advertised.

Which is when Scooter starts asking the questions.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
Ma'am? Whose warehouse is this?

VERONICA
Does it matter?

SCOOTER
It's just, national security and
all. Seems like the government
would own it.

A pause. One beat too long.

VERONICA
The government leases it.

SCOOTER
(bright, helpful)
From who?

Veronica's smile arrives a half-second late. And Scooter's eyes flick past her -- to the metal racks in the corridor beyond, and the stenciled labels marching down them. P-14. P-15. P-16. And a clipboard hanging from a nail: numbers in one column, names in the other.

VERONICA
A holding company. You wouldn't
know it.

SCOOTER
Try me.

For one second -- the first time tonight -- Veronica Webster looks at the child in front of her and is not sure what she is looking at.

VERONICA
(recovering, cold)
Tell me more about the fleet,
Marshal.

INT. WAREHOUSE LOFT - CONTINUOUS

Above, Katie carefully pulls out her phone.

KATIE
(whispering)
I'm gonna get a picture. We need
proof.

BRIAN
(also whispering)
Make sure the flash is off.

She raises the phone, frames the shot -- and her fingers fumble. She grabs. Misses.

INT. WAREHOUSE ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

CRASH! The phone EXPLODES on the concrete at Veronica's feet.

Both snap their heads up -- Katie's face visible over the loft railing for one terrible second before she jerks back.

BRIAN (O.S.)
Let's get outta here!

KATIE (O.S.)
At least the flash was off!

Veronica GRABS Scooter by the vest, YANKING her off her feet.

VERONICA
I told you to come ALONE!

SCOOTER
I DID!

Veronica SHOVES her down and SPRINTS up the metal staircase, heels ringing with every step.

INT. WAREHOUSE LOFT - CONTINUOUS

Brian and Katie run for the window -- but a MASSIVE SILHOUETTE fills the frame. A Collector, standing guard.

BRIAN
Not that way! Follow me!

They reverse and sprint across the loft. Below, Scooter hears Veronica charging up the stairs. She grabs her backpack and BOLTS through the front doors.

Brian and Katie reach an old FREIGHT ELEVATOR -- industrial cage, heavy safety gate. Brian HEAVES the gate up. It STICKS. Katie throws her weight. The gate SHRIEKS open. They pile in and YANK it down.

Katie SLAMS the DOWN button. The elevator GROANS and begins its agonizingly slow descent.

Veronica reaches the gate just as it drops below floor level. Her red fingernails SLASH through the metal slats like talons. The elevator drops beyond her reach.

VERONICA

You can't run from me, children.
Not in MY house.

INT. WAREHOUSE GROUND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The elevator shudders to a halt. They sprint toward a heavy door marked "COLD STORAGE." Brian throws his shoulder. It opens with a SCREECH.

A BLAST OF FREEZING AIR. Their breath turns to white vapor.

INT. COLD STORAGE - CONTINUOUS

HUNDREDS of cocoons hang from floor to ceiling.

KATIE

(whisper)

What are those things?

She spots labels on the racks -- P-18, P-19, P-20, P-21 -- and a clipboard hanging beside them, numbers in one column and names in the other. She can't stop, and she can't take it, so she does the only thing left. She says them out loud to burn them into her memory.

KATIE (CONT'D)

(running, whispering)

P-eighteen, nineteen, twenty,
twenty-one. P-eighteen, nineteen,
twenty, twenty-one.

BRIAN

Don't look. Just move.

They PLUNGE through the forest of cocoons. Veronica arrives at the doorway, sees swaying bundles marking their path, but doesn't follow. She PULLS the massive door shut with a BOOM. SNAPS the padlock.

The kids scramble to a steel door marked "LOADING BAY ACCESS." Brian THROWS it open -- and SLAMS directly into a **COLLECTOR** on the other side.

The Collector reaches for his weapon. Brian spots a FIRE EXTINGUISHER, rips it free, and BLASTS the Collector in the face with chemical spray. Then SWINGS the canister with everything he's got. CLANK! The Collector drops.

KATIE

Ooooh! That's gonna leave a mark.

BRIAN

Good. Come on.

They bolt into the alley.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The ROAR of a motorcycle engine. The warehouse door EXPLODES outward. A rider TEARS onto the street in a controlled SKID, pursuing Scooter.

The rider AIMS and FIRES an alien-looking weapon. An energy blast strikes a dumpster as Scooter zips past on her scooter. SPARKS FLY. Crystallized energy. Designed to immobilize, not kill.

Scooter cuts hard into a narrow alley. The motorcycle tries to follow -- too sharp. It goes SLIDING into a wall of trash cans. CRASH!

Scooter SKIDS to a stop twenty feet into the dark and turns back, because she has to know.

The rider STAGGERS up and steps into a streetlight's glow. The helmet comes off. And the face SHIFTS -- "Veronica's" features MORPH, skin RIPPLING, bone sliding, until a tall, angular man stands in her place.

The man from the library. The gray suit. "Detective Bingham."

Scooter, flat behind a dumpster, presses both hands over her own mouth.

SCOOTER

(into her palms, barely a
sound)

There's two of them. There's two of
them.

LINDVALL aims his handgun at the downed motorcycle. It crackles and dies. He stands in the glow, seething -- then walks away down the center of the street, unhurried.

Scooter waits until the footsteps are gone. Then she creeps out to the wreck.

Scattered across the asphalt: glass, a cracked visor -- and a small LEATHER NOTEBOOK, thrown clear, lying open in a puddle.

She picks it up. Shakes the water off. And runs.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Scooter FLIES through her bedroom door, SLAMS it, presses her back against it. Chest heaving. Hands shaking.

She fumbles for her desk. The monitor FLICKERS on by itself. Veronica's face fills the display.

VERONICA

You sure know how to show a girl a good time. But I told you to stay put.

SCOOTER

Stay -- so you could shoot me?

VERONICA

Shoot you? I don't carry a weapon. I've been trying to HELP you.

SCOOTER

What did you do with my friends?

VERONICA

Your friends are safe. And soon they will be very secure.

(smirk)

Change of venue. Saturn Burger. Tomorrow night. Right after closing. And tell no one. There is no one you can trust. ABSOLUTELY NO ONE.

The image vanishes.

Scooter sits in the silence. Then her jaw sets.

She empties her pockets onto the desk. The evidence folder. The library printouts. Watkins' poster. And the wet leather NOTEBOOK.

She opens it under the desk lamp. Most pages are covered in dense, spidery ALIEN SCRIPT -- but every few lines, whoever wrote it lapsed into English, the way anybody does in their own handwriting.

ON THE PAGE, in tight capitals:

**"SUBJECT: T. MURPHY, 10. BLOG = ONLY VERIFIED TRACK ON
EMPEROR. HANDLER ASSIGNED: WEBSTER, V."**

She turns the page. Her hands go still.

**"PER CHIEF M. MARKLEY, NSG: WEBSTER NOW EXPENDABLE. SEQUENCE -
- WEBSTER FIRST. MURPHY SECOND."**

SCOOTER

(whisper)

She's on the list too.

Another page. A rough anatomical sketch -- eight legs, an hourglass marking -- and beneath it three lines she reads twice.

**"WEBSTER, V. -- CLASS-4 RACHNID. NOT HUMAN. VULNERABILITY:
ORGANOPHOSPHATE AEROSOL. COMMON. EARTH RETAIL."**

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

Organo -- what?

She types it into the search bar. Results load. She reads. Her mouth slowly opens.

ON SCREEN: a product photo. A rusty one-gallon can, brand name in cheerful cartoon letters.

"GALAX INSECT AND BUG KILLER."

On the label, a dead **BLACK WIDOW SPIDER**.

Scooter looks at the screen for a long, long moment.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

(to herself)

...I named him after bug spray.

She drags the missing-persons map alongside the Saturn Burger locations. Fourteen red dots. Fourteen little Saturns. The purple ring of the pets closing around the warehouse.

She screenshots it all into the folder labeled "EVIDENCE." Then she picks up the phone.

She dials the number printed inside the notebook's cover. Four rings. A recorded voice.

NSG SWITCHBOARD (V.O.)
 You have reached the Office of the
 Chief, National Spying Group. Leave
 your message after the tone.

Scooter takes a breath and does the bravest, most boring thing anyone has done in this story so far. She files a report.

SCOOTER
 (careful, precise)
 My name is Tressa Murphy. I'm ten.
 The warehouse at Rachnid and Ninth
 is owned by Widow Holdings, the
 only name on the paperwork is V.
 Webster, and your agency pays her
 rent out of procurement account
 eleven, forty-four, seventy-seven.
 (beat)
 There are hundreds of people
 hanging in that building, mister.
 She's not working for you. And
 somebody wearing a detective's face
 tried to take my homework in a
 library today. I'm NOT happy!

She hangs up. Sits back. Her hands are shaking -- but the folder is closed and labeled, and for the first time in two days she looks like a person with a plan instead of a person being chased.

She texts Katie and Brian with a separate, desperate message.
"Tonight. The treehouse. Urgent!"

INT. SCOOTER'S TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

The old oak stands at the property line. Its thick branches support a weathered treehouse twelve feet up. Inside: three beanbags, a milk-crate table, a poster reading **"SCOOTER'S COMMAND CENTER"** in purple marker.

Katie and Brian are already inside. Scooter drops the latch and checks every knothole, sealing them in.

KATIE
 Scooter. That warehouse thing. It
 was way too close. I'm still
 shaking.

BRIAN
 Who was that thug who almost nabbed
 us?

SCOOTER

That's the thing. It wasn't a thug.

She turns the milk crate around. Taped to it, in order, is everything: the map, the property filing, the fourteen faces, the three pet posters, and the open notebook.

A command center. An actual one.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

(pointing, fast)

One. Saturn Burger scans your face when you order and prints your secrets on the receipt. Brian's got the receipt.

BRIAN

I'm allergic to bees, and now the government knows.

SCOOTER

Two. Every missing person lives near a Saturn Burger. Three. The pets went first, in a ring around this warehouse, three days before any person did. Because they were practicing.

Katie has gone very quiet.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

Four. Webster owns the warehouse. Five. Her own people want her dead, and the one they sent is some sort of shape-shifter. Can wear anybody's face. Including hers. Including a detective's.

She flips the notebook open to the sketch of the spider.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

And six. She isn't a lady.

Brian leans in. Reads it. Leans back.

BRIAN

Okay. I want to say something, and I need you not to be mad at me.

SCOOTER

Say it.

BRIAN

I believe you. All of it. That's the problem.

Katie hasn't looked up from the map.

KATIE

My brother knocked one of them out with a fire extinguisher tonight, Scooter. And they didn't chase us. They just let us go.

SCOOTER

I know.

KATIE

Why didn't they chase us?

Nobody has an answer for that. The treehouse creaks in the wind.

SCOOTER

(steady)

Tomorrow morning we take all of it to the police. A real report with a number on it. And then, however that goes --

(beat)

I'm going into that building for those people.

She closes the notebook.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

I'm not asking either of you to come.

Brian and Katie look at each other. Neither of them says "we're coming."

That silence is new. All three of them hear it.

INT. VERONICA'S PENTHOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Veronica reclines in a stylized hanging chair, all web patterns and gleaming cords. She clicks a sleek remote.

EMPEROR GALAX appears on the wall screen.

EMPEROR GALAX

Good evening, Veronica.

VERONICA
Evening, Emperor.

EMPEROR GALAX
You played your part nicely with
Markley. Quite a performance.

VERONICA
Thank you, sir. I doubt that
clueless man suspects I work
directly for you.

EMPEROR GALAX
Once he's no longer useful, you
may... tidy things up.

VERONICA
Cleaning up messes is my specialty.

A pause. Galax picks something out of his teeth.

EMPEROR GALAX
And when the fleet lands? What is
it you actually want, Veronica?
Everyone wants something.
Territory. A title. A statue.
(a beat)
Some gift cards, perhaps?

VERONICA
(pleasantly)
Hatching rights.

EMPEROR GALAX
I beg your pardon?

VERONICA
You take the planet, Emperor. Fly
your flag. Make your speeches. I
want one clause in the treaty.
Exclusive breeding license, planet-
wide, in perpetuity.
(beat)
Nine billion of them. Eight million
of me. Every spring.

Galax LAUGHS -- genuinely delighted.

EMPEROR GALAX
Granted! What do I care what eats
the livestock?

VERONICA
I thought you'd see it my way.

The doorbell RINGS.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I have to go, Your Highness.

EMPEROR GALAX
Wait! I'm not fin --

She hits the button. Screen goes dark.

VERONICA
I clean up everyone's messes and
still get treated like the hired
help.
(to the dark screen)
Enjoy your flag, Emperor. Flags
eventually come down. Regimes fall.

She crosses to the double doors.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Who is it?

From the other side, Lindvall speaks in a PERFECT IMITATION
of the Elderly Lady's voice:

LINDVALL (O.S.)
(as Elderly Lady)
It's me, dear. Your neighbor.
Something's wrong with Gracie.

He produces a perfect imitation of Gracie's sorrowful
WHIMPER.

VERONICA
(under her breath)
I hope it's fatal.
(calling out)
Just a moment.

She opens the door. Lindvall (as the Elderly Lady) stands
alone, looking small and worried.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Where's your dog?

LINDVALL
(still as old woman)
Oh, she's right here, dear.

In a flash, Lindvall pulls a HANDGUN and aims at Veronica's
forehead. Now in the dog's voice:

LINDVALL (CONT'D)
Bark. Bark, bark, bark.

He SHOVES Veronica backward. She FALLS to the floor.

INT. VERONICA'S PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall steps across the threshold. His disguise **MELTS AWAY** -
- features sharpening, body elongating, until the real
Lindvall stands. Tall. Angular. Dangerous. Handgun steady.

LINDVALL
Well, Webster. For someone
supposedly at the top of her game,
you made that very easy. Your gun,
please.

Veronica picks herself up. Brushes off her sleeves.
Remarkably, unnervingly calm.

VERONICA
Guns are highly overrated. And,
look at me.

She runs her hands top to bottom over her sleek bodysuit.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Where, exactly, would I hide it?
(an arrogant smile)
But I'm flattered by the personal
visit.

LINDVALL
Galax sent me. He wants everything
about the Murphy kid. Every detail.

VERONICA
I don't have it yet. I'll get most
of it tonight.

LINDVALL
Your boss Markley feels you are now
-- how did he put it --
"expendable." After I take care of
you, the Murphy kid is next.

Letting his guard slip, Lindvall **URNS HIS BACK** to Veronica
and takes a step deeper into the apartment, looking at the
web-patterned décor with casual curiosity.

LINDVALL (CONT'D)
Nice place. A shame you won't --

In an instant, the room TRANSFORMS. Behind Lindvall, Veronica's silhouette SWELLS -- limbs multiply, form expands and reshapes, growing massive. Eight legs. Glistening body. Red hourglass marking. Multiple eyes. **A GIANT BLACK WIDOW SPIDER** rises silently behind him.

LINDVALL (CONT'D)
--be around to enjoy it.

Before Lindvall can turn, the spider STRIKES with its DEADLY STINGER. His entire body goes RIGID. The gun falls from frozen fingers.

Silk erupts from the creature, spiraling around Lindvall with terrifying speed -- arms, legs, torso, neck. Layer after layer. He doesn't fall so much as become ENCASED where he stands, transformed from operative to motionless silk-wrapped cocoon.

The cocoon TOPPLES to the floor with a HEAVY THUD.

The spider silhouette CONTRACTS. Limbs retract. Veronica Webster steps back into the light, fully herself. She adjusts a strand of hair.

VERONICA
Like I told you. Guns are so overrated.

She NUDGES the cocoon with her stiletto. It doesn't move.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
One loose end wrapped up nicely.

She crouches and runs a talon down the front of the cocoon, slitting the silk over the breast pocket. Two fingers slide in. Come out empty.

She checks again. Patient, at first. Then not.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Where is your little book?

She stands. Looks at the door. And for the first time in this apartment, Veronica Webster looks genuinely unsettled.

She catches her reflection in a decorative mirror. For a moment, the woman staring back is not an operative. Something older. Hungrier. Her canines more prominent.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
 (to her reflection)
 The Emperor thinks he's acquiring a
 planet. But planets change hands.
 (leaning closer to the
 glass)
 Nobody takes the nursery. And the
 hand that wraps the silk...
 controls the web.

She adjusts a strand of hair, and the stoic mask slides back
 into place.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. CHIEF MARKLEY'S OFFICE - NSG - NIGHT

Markley works late. Dim office. Papers spread. He's alone.

The door opens. Veronica appears. The CLICK of her heels on
 marble announces her approach.

CHIEF MARKLEY
 What brings you here at this hour?

He doesn't look up. He's holding a printed transcript, and he
 taps it twice against the blotter.

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)
 Funny thing. Somebody left a
 message on my private line earlier
 this evening.

Veronica stops walking.

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)
 (reading)
*"Widow Holdings. Sole officer, V.
 Webster. Procurement account
 eleven, forty-four, seventy-seven."*

He sets the page down.

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)
 It was a little girl, Veronica. A
 ten-year-old with a bedtime reading
 my agency's account numbers into my
 voicemail.

For a long moment Veronica says nothing at all. Then she
 laughs once, with nothing funny in it.

VERONICA
So...she got into the county
records.

CHIEF MARKLEY
She got into MY records.

VERONICA
(almost to herself)
I have been handling that child
like a pet. That was careless of
me.

She reaches his desk. She doesn't sit. No warmth. No small
talk.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I've been thinking. About you,
Matthew. About your future.

Markley sets his pen down.

CHIEF MARKLEY
My future?

VERONICA
This Galax takeover will succeed.
We both know that. The question is
what happens to you when it does.

CHIEF MARKLEY
I don't follow.

VERONICA
A powerful man, like you -- will
you be satisfied taking orders
forever? Someone else's playbook
for the rest of your career?

CHIEF MARKLEY
What are you suggesting?

VERONICA
An alliance. Your authority. My
unique talents. Partners. Equals.
Top of the food chain.

She stops behind his chair.

CHIEF MARKLEY
Partners. I like the sound of that.

VERONICA
(low, deliberate)
I thought you might.

Markley closes his eyes, savoring the moment.

A brief WINCE of pain. His expression FREEZES. Eyes flutter open, glassy and unfocused. His body goes slack.

Behind him, a tiny STINGER retracts from Veronica's index fingernail.

She looks at him a moment. The slack face. The pen still in his fingers. The framed photo on his desk of a wife and a golden retriever. Something almost like courtesy passes over her, and she reaches out and closes his eyes with two fingers.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You did want to be partners. In a sense, you will be.

Two Collectors materialize from the shadows, draw web-guns, and FIRE -- encasing the unconscious Markley in cocoon webbing.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Take him to the warehouse. My private collection.

The Collectors exit with their cargo. Veronica alone. She picks up Markley's nameplate. Sets it FACE DOWN.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Partners?
(she chuckles and smirks)
I don't think so.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**FADE IN:****INT. MURPHY HOUSE - KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING**

Morning light floods the kitchen. Scooter, Brian, and Katie sit at the table inhaling pancakes. Syrup drips.

Diane HUMS at the stove in a fluffy bathrobe, FLIPPING another golden pancake. Fresh coffee steaming.

BRIAN
(mouth full)
These pancakes are amazing, Mrs. M!

DIANE
Secret's a pinch of nutmeg.

KATIE
Thanks for having us over. With Mom and Dad out of town, we've kind of been on our own, food-wise.

DIANE
You two are always welcome.

She studies them over her coffee mug. Something's off. Too quiet. Too focused on their food.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Tressa. You've been awfully quiet this morning. That usually means trouble.

SCOOTER
No trouble, Mom. It's the weekend. Don't wanna waste a minute.

KATIE
You know. So much fun to have. So little time.

They wolf down the rest and BOLT. Dishes clatter.

SCOOTER
Gotta go, Mom!

The screen door SLAMS twice.

Diane stands alone in the quiet kitchen, sipping her coffee, staring at the empty backyard.

DIANE
 (to herself)
 I hope they find something
 interesting to do.

EXT. FIFTH PRECINCT POLICE STATION - LATER

A squat brick building. A tired flag. Scooter, Brian, and Katie park their rides against the railing and push through the doors.

INT. FIFTH PRECINCT - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A large uniformed cop, **SERGEANT O'MALLEY**, reads a newspaper behind the counter. One article headline reads:

"Two County Sheriffs Made Captives by Motorcycle Menace."

His meaty hand fishes into a box of **"KRISPY KARB DOUGHNUTS."** Crumbs rain everywhere.

SCOOTER
 Excuse me, SIR.

O'Malley folds down his paper. Powdered sugar rings his mouth. Heavy Irish accent, muffled by doughnut.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY
 And what brings you three fine
 citizens to my humble precinct, on
 this glorious morn?

Scooter sets the folder on the counter and squares it with both hands, the way Delgado squares an inventory.

SCOOTER
 I'd like to file a report, please.
 Fourteen missing persons. One
 address.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY
 (charmed, not listening)
 Would you now?

He keeps chewing. Scooter opens the folder and turns it to face him.

SCOOTER
 That's the county deed for the
 warehouse at Rachnid and Ninth.
 That's the lease. That's the
 missing-persons map off your own
 department's website.

She lays the drive-thru receipt on top.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
And that's my friend's private
medical information printed on a
hamburger drive-thru receipt.

O'Malley stops chewing. He actually looks. His eyes move down the page, and something behind them flickers -- a cop's reflex, thirty years of service, buried under a lot of doughnuts.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY
(slower)
Where'd you get the deed, darlin'?

KATIE
The library.

BRIAN
Legally. Public access.

Then Scooter says the next part, and she can hear herself losing him while she says it.

SCOOTER
Sergeant, the warehouse is full of
cocoon, protected by a bunch of
huge thugs in black. The woman who
owns that warehouse isn't a woman.
She's a dangerous spy who rides a
motorcycle. And there's a man who
can change his face into anyone...
anytime.

Scooter holds up the evidence folder.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
He tried to take this folder off me
yesterday. He said he was one of
yours. Detective Bingham.

Beat. O'Malley looks at the ceiling and exhales through his nose.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY
There's no Detective Bingham in
this precinct.

SCOOTER
I KNOW. That's the whole --

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

A warehouse of cocoons. Big thugs in black. A man who changes his face? And a lady spy on a motorcycle? And rooms full of hangin' cocoons! Saints preserve us!!! Quit talkin' rubbish!

SCOOTER

It's not rubbish. It's all in the folder!

He turns beet red, rises to his feet, presenting an imposing figure, and leans over the desk, POINTING a thick finger at the doors.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

That's it! I've heard quite enough of this made-up MALARKEY! Try your tall tales on the FBI, the CIA, or the blessed Cookie Cadets. I'M BUSY.

A spray of doughnut crumbs PELTS the kids. Katie wipes her face.

KATIE

(under her breath)

Busy getting ready for a triple bypass for clogged arteries, doughnut breath.

Scooter doesn't move.

SCOOTER

Give me a case number.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

Pardon?

SCOOTER

You have to give me a number if I file. It's on the sign. Right there.

She points. There is, in fact, a laminated sign.

O'Malley looks at the sign. Looks at the ten-year-old. Something in the set of her jaw makes him sigh, drag a pad over, and scratch out a few digits.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY
 Twenty-two, dash, oh-four-nine-one.
 There. You're on the bloomin'
 books, lassie.

He tears it off and slides it across the counter with two fingers. Then -- gruffly, because he does not care to be the sort of man who does this -- he picks up her folder, flips it closed, and drops it in the wire basket marked "INTAKE" instead of handing it back.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY (CONT'D)
 Now, OFF WITH YA'! Go home. Lock
 your door. And while you're at it,
 say hello to your friends 'Big
 Foot"... "The Easter Bunny"... and
 all the wee little "Leprechauns"
 for me.

Sergeant O'Malley sits and disappears behind his newspaper.

Scooter takes the slip of paper. She folds it once and tucks it behind her tin star.

EXT. FIFTH PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

They huddle at the bottom of the steps. Scooter's shoulders sag.

SCOOTER
 (half to the sky)
 They're watching everything, and
 they still don't see it.

Katie has been holding her own elbows since they came outside. Now she lets go.

KATIE
 Scooter. I need to say a thing, and
 I need to say all of it before you
 talk.

SCOOTER
 Okay.

KATIE
 I believe you. Every word. Brian
 believes you. We were IN there. I
 saw hundreds of people hanging from
 a ceiling in a freezer and I am
 going to see it every time I close
 my eyes for the rest of my life.

Her voice is steady. Her hands are not.

KATIE (CONT'D)
That's why we can't keep going.

SCOOTER
Katie --

KATIE
They know your name. Your name is
ON your blog. Your street is in
your blog. My brother's FACE is in
your blog. And last night they had
us -- had us, in a freezer, behind
a locked door -- and they let us
walk out of there.

BRIAN
(quiet)
People don't let you go because
they're nice. They let you go so
they can follow you home -- to get
you later.

Scooter opens her mouth. Nothing arrives.

KATIE
So here's what I want. Take the
blog down. Tonight. Every post.
Then we sit in your kitchen with
your mom, and we wait for grown-ups
with guns to handle all of this.

SCOOTER
(barely)
Nobody's coming, Katie. That's what
today WAS. I did it right. I
brought the papers. Showed the
evidence. I got the number. And
nobody is coming.

KATIE
NOBODY'S COMING! That's the ANSWER!
That's what I've been trying to --

She stops. Presses the heels of her hands into her eyes.

KATIE (CONT'D)
(small)
I'm not brave, Scooter. I've been
faking it since I was six because
you're brave, and I'm done faking.
I'm scared, and I want to go home.

A long silence. Scooter nods slowly. She understands it completely, which is the worst part of it.

SCOOTER
Then go home.

KATIE
Come with us.

SCOOTER
I can't.

KATIE
(breaking)
Why NOT?

SCOOTER
Because I've got P-eighteen,
nineteen, twenty, twenty-one stuck
in my head, and you're the one who
gave me those numbers. Every one of
them is somebody's kid.

Katie stares at her. Then she mounts her bike, hard, and
doesn't look back. Brian hesitates one second longer.

BRIAN
It's not that we don't believe you.
Say you know that.

SCOOTER
I know that.

BRIAN
Say it back to me tomorrow, and
I'll believe you meant it.

He rides after his sister.

SCOOTER
Guys! GUYS!

The silence is worse than any answer.

As they ride off, Brian and Katie talk quietly.

BRIAN
Katie, remember when we promised
we'd never let anyone make us
invisible? Scooter sees us. She
always has.

KATIE
(wiping her face)
I know. I'm not walking away
because I stopped believing her.
(beat)
I'm walking away because I didn't.

The bikes disappear around the corner.

Scooter looks down at the TIN STAR BADGE pinned to her vest.
Her fingers trace its edges. Her hands tremble.

She unpins it. The pin catches on a thread. She has to work
it free. The badge sits in her open palm. Small. Dull. A
child's toy.

SCOOTER
(quiet)
Maybe I fooled myself into thinking
I was protecting Earth. When the
truth is, I was scared no one would
care if I disappeared.

Her fingers close around the badge.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
Some Space Marshal I am. I dragged
my friends into this mess -- and
now I can't even drag them out.

She shoves the badge deep into her pocket and walks away,
head down, pushing her scooter instead of riding it.

INT. VERONICA'S PENTHOUSE - DUSK

The sky burns orange and purple. Veronica sits in her web-
patterned chair, phone to her ear.

VERONICA
(to a Collector)
Kelly. Those two meddling kids I
told you about? Tonight. Done by
seven. Don't fail me.

She SLAMS the phone down.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
(to herself)
With no more interference, I'll
finally have that bizarre little
buckaroo all to myself.

EXT. BRIAN AND KATIE'S HOUSE - 7:00 P.M.

A modest two-story next door to Scooter's. Porch light on. Bicycles in the drive.

A BLACK VAN screeches up. **Two COLLECTORS** -- large men, black suits, sunglasses -- move up the walkway with mechanical precision. They ring the bell.

KATIE (O.S.)
Listen, Scooter! If that's you, do
yourself a favor and go home!

Heavy KNOCK. Katie YANKS the door open.

KATIE (CONT'D)
I SAID, GO --

Her eyes go HUGE. The Collectors BARGE in. The second GRABS Katie's hoodie, lifts her off the floor. Door SLAMS shut.

INT. BRIAN AND KATIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brian on the sofa, engrossed in a video game, doesn't notice his sister suspended by her hoodie.

KATIE
Uhhh... Brian?

BRIAN
(focused on game)
Not now, Katie! I'm at Level 30!

While Katie DANGLES from the Collector's grip, the other Collector deftly puts a fist-sized hole in the wall-mounted TV.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
(incredulous)
What the --?

EXT. BRIAN AND KATIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

From inside: MUFFLED SCREAMS. WEB-GUN BLASTS. Then SILENCE.

Moments later, two Collectors emerge, each carrying a COCOON -- one larger, the other a bit smaller. They load them into the van with practiced efficiency. Door SLIDES. Engine ROARS. The van disappears.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scooter at her desk, eyes red. Through her window -- TIRES SQUEALING. She hurries to the glass, watching the black van speed away, taillights shrinking.

Her stomach drops.

SCOOTER
(whisper)
No...

She returns to the desk. Her fingers hover over the keyboard.

ON SCREEN: her old blog entries scroll past. Drawings of ray guns. "Emperor Galax." Past "missions." One line at the top of the page:

"THE UNIVERSE IS IN GOOD HANDS."

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
(under her breath)
Some hero. I'm the one who put them
in danger. This ends tonight!

Her cursor blinks over the old line, then drops to a new post window.

ON SCREEN, character by character:

***"THIS IS NOT A DRILL. I NEED EVERY COOKIE CADET IN THE CITY.
TONIGHT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE. BRING EVERYTHING!"***

She sits back. Looks at the words. One breath. Two.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
(deciding)
No more pretending.

She hits ENTER. The post WHOOSHES live.

INSERT -- THE SCREEN:

Under the post, the follower counter sits exactly where it has sat for six months. "412."

Then a notification stacks on top of it. Then another. Then the whole column starts to move.

***"WATKINS reshared this." -- "JENNINGS reshared this." --
"TROOP 514 OFFICIAL reshared this." -- "TROOP 207, TROOP 33,
TROOP 88, TROOP 412 reshared this."***

The counter rolls. 412. Nine hundred. Three thousand one hundred. Fourteen thousand. It does not stop.

A comment loads at the top:

"CADET TEXT CHAIN ACTIVATED. NINE MINUTES. GO."

Beneath it, a grown-up's account:

***"This is the little girl who noticed my Scruffy's poster.
Sharing to the whole neighborhood group."***

MONTAGE - COOKIE CADETS MOBILIZE:

Cell phones BUZZ across the city -- and keep buzzing. In kitchens. In cars. In a church basement. In a hospital break room.

A **FRECKLED CADET** on her bedroom floor, surrounded by textbooks. Phone lights up. Eyes wide. She **SLAMS** her textbook shut with a **BANG**.

A **TALL CADET** at a kitchen table mid-dinner glances at her phone. Reads it. Drops her fork with a **CLATTER**. Pushes back her chair.

TALL CADET'S MOM
Where do you think you're --

The front door **SLAMS**.

HANDS YANK closet doors. Cookie Cadet uniforms fly off hangers.

A **CADET** pulls a **DUFFEL** from under her bed and loads it with military precision: Skinny Mints, Peanut Butter Poppers, Doodle-Wackers -- stacked like ammunition.

ANOTHER CADET tests the strength of her sash by wrapping it around both fists and **SNAPPING** it taut. She nods. Coils it. Stuffs it in her bag.

A **THIRD CADET** uses her sash like Indiana Jones -- three cracks over her head. Each snap flicks stuffed animals off her bed. 100% accuracy.

A **FOURTH CADET** adjusts her **BERET** (designed as a giant chocolate-chip cookie) in the mirror. Perfect. She pulls on **BLACK COMBAT GLOVES** and **CRACKS HER KNUCKLES**.

Garage doors **FLY OPEN** up and down the block like dominoes.

Cadets **MOUNT** their bicycles in a wave -- kickstands flipping, tires hitting pavement in formation, cutting through the night like a pint-sized peloton.

INT. COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - E.R. BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Vending machine light. Half a sandwich. DIANE, scrubs, hair up, eleven hours into twelve.

Her phone BUZZES on the table. She glances at it. Then picks it up.

ON HER SCREEN: the blog. *"THIS IS NOT A DRILL. I NEED EVERY COOKIE CADET IN THE CITY. TONIGHT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE. BRING EVERYTHING." Posted by Tressa "Scooter" Murphy."*

Diane stands up so fast her chair goes over.

She swipes to her photo roll. There it is. The closet door. Fourteen faces. Three pet posters. A map with a warehouse in the middle of it.

She looks at the photograph. She looks at the blog. She does the arithmetic every parent dreads, and gets an answer she cannot argue with.

She pulls up a contact she has not called in nine years. It rings twice.

DUTY OFFICER (V.O.)

(filtered)

One Seventy-Fifth Battalion, staff duty, Sergeant Pike speaking.

DIANE

This is Specialist Diane Murphy, sixty-eight whiskey, separated in twenty-seventeen. I need Lieutenant Morgan. She's in your S-3, and her mother and I carried a litter together outside Kandahar.

DUTY OFFICER (V.O.)

Ma'am, it's nine at night --

DIANE

Sergeant. I'm an emergency nurse at County Memorial. In seventy-two hours, this city has reported fourteen missing persons with no forced entry at any scene. An open police report, number twenty-two dash oh-four-nine-one, Fifth Precinct, names one single address. I am holding photographs of that address.

(beat)

(MORE)

DIANE (CONT'D)
And my ten-year-old is on her way
to it right now. Alone!

A pause on the line. Paper shuffling. A chair scraping
somewhere far away.

DUTY OFFICER (V.O.)
(all business now)
Say that address again, ma'am.

Diane closes her eyes.

DIANE
A. Rachnid Warehouse and Storage.
Corner of Rachnid and Ninth.

She hangs up, grabs her keys, and is already running when she
shoulders through the break room door.

EXT. COOKIE CADET TROOP HEADQUARTERS - EVENING

A beat-up PASSENGER VAN idles under a flickering streetlight.
The TROOP LEADER DELGADO -- khaki vest covered in merit
badges -- stands with a CLIPBOARD.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
Name. Rank. Cookies packed!

ARRIVING CADET
Jennings. Outside Supermarket Table
Leader. Four boxes of Skinny Mints,
six Doodle-Wackers.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
Roger that. IN. MOVE.

SECOND CADET
Watkins. Senior Door-to-Door
Specialist. Six boxes of Peanut
Butter Poppers and a take-no-
prisoners attitude!

TROOP LEADER DELGADO
That's the spirit. IN.

The last Cadet scrambles aboard. The TROOP LEADER DELGADO
slaps the side of the van TWICE. Door SLIDES shut.

She adjusts the rearview. A dozen determined faces stare
back.

Delgado's phone is wedged in the dash mount, a call already
connected. She keeps her eyes on the road.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO (CONT'D)
 (into the phone)
 Morgan. Gunny Delgado, here. Yeah.
 Yeah, I know what time it is.
 (beat)
 A nurse named Murphy just called
 your duty desk. When it lands on
 your lieutenant's desk -- believe
 her. Her kid has been right about
 everything for three days and
 nobody in this city has listened to
 a word of it.

She ends the call.

TROOP LEADER DELGADO (CONT'D)
 Buckle up, ladies. Nobody sells
 more cookies than Troop 514. And
 NOBODY messes with our customers.
 LET'S MOVE OUT!

Tires SQUEAL. The van FISHTAILS and rockets into the night.

END OF MONTAGE.

EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - SIDE ENTRANCE - EVENING

Scooter finds a side door. Unlocked. She slips inside.

INT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dark. Vast. Alive with activity.

Scooter climbs a rusted metal ladder to a catwalk high above
 the warehouse floor to observe. Below, Collectors shuttle
 fresh cocoons alongside HUNDREDS of others -- row after row.

Below, two Collectors -- **KELLEY** and **JAECKS** -- approach
MACHEK, a burly Collector with a clipboard.

KELLEY
 Those two kids from Cedar Lane.
 Webster's orders.

MACHEK
 (checking his list)
 P-20 and P-21. Webster's personal
 specimens. Don't let anything
 happen to 'em.
 (lower)
 (MORE)

MACHEK (CONT'D)
 FYI, Galax's plan has been moved
 up. Less than twenty-four hours
 before invasion.

Scooter processes. Knuckles white on the railing.

Below her, hanging from a nail beside the racks, is the
 clipboard she clocked last night. Numbers in one column.
 Names in the other.

SCOOTER
 (under her breath)
 P-twenty and P-twenty-one. Cold
 storage. Second aisle.

She shifts the weight of her backpack. Inside it, wrapped in
 a school sweatshirt so it won't rattle: a rusty one-gallon
 can.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 They have Brian and Katie. And it's
 all my fault.

She reaches into her pocket and pulls out the TIN STAR BADGE.
 Holds it up. The dim light catches its scuffed, dented
 surface.

She turns it over. Remembers pinning it on. Remembers Brian
 and Katie rolling their eyes. Remembers Diane's tired smile.

A cocoon below her TWITCHES. A muffled sound from inside --
 someone breathing. Real people. Real danger.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 The Marshal was a mask. But the
 badge... maybe the badge was
 practice.

She pins the badge back on. Presses it flat. Holds her palm
 over it for one long beat. A vow.

Then she moves.

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Closed for the night. Dim overheads. Chairs on some tables.
 Grease and cleaner in the air.

Veronica sits alone at a corner table in the gloom. Waiting.

Scooter ENTERS.

VERONICA
At last. Just you and me.

SCOOTER
Just you and me.

Scooter approaches, backpack over one shoulder. She doesn't sit.

VERONICA
No buddies. Just straight talk
between us gals.

Scooter slips into her cowboy drawl -- then catches herself.
Drops it.

SCOOTER
Let's get one thing straight,
ma'am. I'm not a Marshal. I'm just
a kid.

VERONICA
Funny. Your blog says otherwise.
Roughest, toughest Marshal in the
galaxy.
(beat)
You know the difference between you
and the grown-ups, Scooter?
(leans in, fangs catching
light)
You create imaginary monsters. We
send invoices.

SCOOTER
I made most of it up. The Space
Marshal. The fleet behind the moon.
All of it.
(beat)
Emperor Galax, though. Him I didn't
make up. Him I found.

She unzips her backpack.

VERONICA
All of it? Made up?

Scooter pulls out a rusty one-gallon can of "GALAX" brand
INSECT AND BUG KILLER. On the label: **a dead BLACK WIDOW
SPIDER**.

Veronica LURCHES back. Her chair SCREECHES.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
What is THAT?

SCOOTER
Bug spray. Found it in our garage.
"Galax" insect poison.
(turning the label)
For killing spiders. I just needed
a name for my villain.

Scooter shakes the can.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
A man in a gray suit wrote down
what you are, ma'am. Class-four
alien. He wrote down what you're
scared of, too.
(beat)
He shouldn't have dropped his
notebook.

VERONICA
(very quietly)
...Lindvall.

SCOOTER
Is that his name? He tried to be a
detective. He was bad at it.

And there it is -- the thing Veronica Webster has never once
felt in this building. She glances, involuntarily, at the
door behind her.

A bead of FLUORESCENT-GREEN SWEAT trickles down Veronica's
temple. Scooter notices.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
Are you... sweating green?

VERONICA
Put that AWAY! NOW!

SCOOTER
Why? Does it "bug" you?

VERONICA
GET THAT AWAY FROM ME!

She stands so violently her chair SMASHES against the wall.

And then she TRANSFORMS -- arms stretching, extra legs
bursting from her torso, fangs extending, red-hourglass
marking, a lethal STINGER emerging from her abdomen.

Veronica becomes a GIANT MUTANT BLACK WIDOW SPIDER, filling
half the restaurant and forcing Scooter back.

Scooter's knees buckle. She clutches the rusty can. Forces a whisper:

SCOOTER
Be brave. Be brave. Be brave.

She stuffs the can back in her pack, turns, and RUNS.

Before she can reach the doors, webbing BLASTS from the spider, sealing the exit. Scooter SKIDS, PIVOTS, BOLTS deeper.

A wild chase. Scooter DUCKS a stinger strike. SLIDES across the counter. VAULTS the condiment station. Another missed strike, sending ketchup and mustard EXPLODING.

Scooter DIVES behind the serving counter. Dead end.

The spider advances, legs clicking. The stinger arcs high. LUNGES.

Scooter shields herself with her backpack.

The stinger SLAMS into the pack. METAL PUNCTURES. A BLAST of GALAX INSECT KILLER SPRAYS from the ruptured can, drenching the stinger.

Veronica SCREAMS -- a piercing SHRIEK that rattles windows.

VERONICA
Ahhhh! It BURNS!

She THRASHES, destroying tables. Scooter CLAWS the webbing from the doors, HURLS her backpack at the writhing spider. More poison SPLASHES.

Scooter, dripping in ketchup and webbing, BURSTS through the doors.

EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Across the street, a ragged CONVOY SCREECHES to a stop -- vans, SUVs, a dented church bus, Cookie Cadets on Big Wheels, dozens on bicycles.

Doors fly open. An **ARMY OF GIRLS** in Cookie Cadet uniforms POURS out, berets on, duffels swinging, faces determined.

NATIONAL GUARD vehicles arrive -- Humvees, troop transports. **LIEUTENANT MORGAN** -- five-foot-nothing, helmet too big -- jumps down from a Jeep and blows a CHROME WHISTLE.

LIEUTENANT MORGAN
 (through whistle blast)
 Give me a perimeter around that
 warehouse! MOVE!

Guardsmen deploy on the double.

INT./EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cookie Cadets FLOOD inside and SWARM the Collectors like an angry ant colony.

A **TINY CADET** KICKS a Collector in the shins. He hops, howling.

TWO CADETS PELT him with Skinny Mints like machine gun rounds until he DROPS.

A **WESTERN CADET** rides another Collector like a bronco, using her merit sash as reins, wrapped around his neck.

On a crate, a **FIERCE CADET** commands:

FIERCE CADET
 Skinny Mints -- FIRE!

A BARRAGE of cookies from three angles strikes the Collector. Hands up. He SURRENDERS.

The **SMALLEST CADETS** stretch a JUMP ROPE across a corridor. One waves a box, temptingly.

TINY CADET
 Hey, mister! Free samples!

A **COLLECTOR** charges, TRIPS, FACE-PLANTS into crates. The tiny Cadets PILE ON, flailing fists of fury.

INT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - COLD STORAGE - CONTINUOUS

Scooter pushes through the door. BLAST of freezing air. Her breath turns to vapor.

HUNDREDS of cocoons from floor to ceiling. Soldiers and Cadets work side by side, cutting people free. Freed prisoners blink in the harsh light, shivering but ALIVE.

Scooter pushes past the human-sized cocoons to the smallest rack of all, at the very back, where the labels start at P-01.

The first specimens. The practice run.

She tears P-01 open herself. A muddy **POODLE** staggers out, shakes, and sneezes. P-02: a fat **TABBY**, deeply unimpressed. P-03 is smaller than the others and barely moving at all.

Scooter tears it open with both hands. A **FERRET** slides limp into her palms -- then wriggles, indignant, and bites her thumb.

SCOOTER
(laughing, wrecked)
Hi, Flash!

She tucks him inside her vest, head poking out at the collar, and only then starts scanning the big racks for P-20.

All around her, soldiers and Cadets cut people free. Freed prisoners blink in the harsh light, shivering, but ALIVE.

LEADER #1
They need sugar -- and they need it
NOW!

LEADER #2
You heard her, ladies. Let's CARB-
LOAD these people!

A **CADRE of COOKIE CADETS** spring into action, handing out cookies to every one of the COCOON SURVIVORS. After a moment of ravenous consumption, the improvement is immediate.

The chaos subsides. The Cookie Cadets gather around Scooter.

SCOOTER
Thanks, everyone. You really saved
the day.

Two **COOKIE CADET LEADERS** rush over and HUG her.

LEADER #1
Great idea putting the call out on
your blog.

LEADER #2
No way we'd let anything happen to
our best cookie customer.

SCOOTER
Nice to know I still have a
following.

She turns and SCANS the numbered rack labels. P-16... P-17... P-18... P-19...

There. P-20 and P-21. Two cocoons, side by side, still remain on the racks.

Scooter TEARS at the webbing on P-20. Brian TUMBLES to the floor, dazed, blinking.

She attacks P-21. Katie spills out, hair matted with silk, shivering.

Scooter throws her arms around both. Fierce. Tight.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
Brian! Katie! I thought I'd never
see you again!

KATIE
(smaller than usual)
We're so sorry. We should've
stayed.

SCOOTER
You were right to be scared. I was
scared the whole time.

KATIE
Yeah, but you went anyway. That's
the part I keep --

She can't finish it.

SCOOTER
Forget it. You're safe, and we're
together. That's all that matters.

Katie pulls webbing from her hair.

KATIE
(looking around at the
cocoons, soldiers)
Hundreds of people, Scooter. You
were right about hundreds of
people.

SCOOTER
Three hundred and eighty-six, to be
exact. I counted the clipboard. One
giant spider. A can of bug spray.
And two hundred Cookie Cadets.
Quite a night.

BRIAN
I have so many questions. What
about --

CRASH!!!

SHARDS OF GLASS rain down from the skylights. Everyone SCREAMS and SCRAMBLES for the exits.

Scooter, Katie, and Brian remain, crouching, covering their heads.

Veronica -- still in spider form, battered, burned, RAGING -- drops into the warehouse on a strand of web. She hits the floor with a BOOM.

Her cluster of eyes sweeps the room. Locks onto Scooter. She fires a WEB-BLAST -- misses by inches, seals a doorway shut.

SCOOTER
There! Grab those!

She points to abandoned Collector WEB-BLASTERS on the floor. They each grab one.

They spread out. Scooter at twelve o'clock. Katie at four. Brian at eight. A crossfire triangle.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
On three! One -- two -- THREE!

They FIRE simultaneously. Three streams of webbing catch Veronica in a CROSSFIRE, wrapping her massive legs. The top-heavy spider WOBBLER. Tips. Falls on her side with a tremendous CRASH.

KATIE
That oughta hold her!

For a moment the spider lies still. Legs TWITCHING.

Then, with a HERCULEAN effort, she FLEXES. The webs STRETCH. STRAIN. SNAP -- with a furious ear-splitting SHRIEK.

Veronica rises. Bigger. Angrier.

BRIAN
RUN!

EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Scooter, Brian, and Katie BURST from the warehouse doors.

SCOOTER
SPLIT UP! Meet at the Saturn
Burger!

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Scooter SLIDES around the corner. Brian and Katie skid in from opposite directions. Above them, the giant SATURN REPLICA TILTS at a dangerous angle, still rotating, mounting bolts GROANING due to the earlier destruction of the restaurant.

Scooter looks up. Looks at her friends. The plan lands.

SCOOTER
(breathless)
She thinks she's above everybody.
(a fierce grin)
Let's see how she likes being
underneath it.

KATIE
How?

Scooter points: the roof, the unstable Saturn sign, broken mounting bolts, asphalt.

SCOOTER
Brian -- you're the trigger. Get on
that roof. Find the busted bolts.
When I say drop, you drop it.

BRIAN
Got it.

SCOOTER
Katie -- second lure. If she shifts
to Brian, we lose. Keep her eyes on
us.

KATIE
And you?

SCOOTER
I'm the bait.

BRIAN
If that thing comes down wrong,
you're right under it.

SCOOTER
(scared but steady)
I know. But I put everyone in
danger. If someone has to stand in
the bullseye, it should be me.

Brian and Katie share a look. Then nod.

They scatter. Brian SCRAMBLES up a roof ladder. Katie DUCKS behind a planter, web-blaster ready. Scooter takes her position in the parking lot. Back against the wall. A perfect target.

The spider rounds the corner. Sees Scooter, alone, framed beneath the teetering Saturn logo. Eight legs unfold. Eight eyes narrow. Slowly stalking her prey.

VERONICA

(slow, awful smile)

Did you really think you could beat me with a toy and a troop of cookie girls?

Scooter's hand drifts to the tin star badge on her vest. Her chin comes up.

SCOOTER

No.

(quiet, then steel)

I beat you with the one thing you never had. People who believe in me.

Veronica LUNGES. Stinger first.

The stinger SLAMS into the wall above Scooter's head, embedding deep into brick. Mortar CRACKS.

On the roof: BRIAN drives a length of pipe into the last failing mounting bolt. POP! The Saturn replica WOBBLES.

Veronica RIPS her stinger free, rears back for a killing blow.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

You said we were alike. Strong. Powerful. Women with a destiny.

(up to Brian)

NOW, BRIAN! DROP IT!

Scooter DIVES and ROLLS as a MASSIVE SHADOW passes over the spider.

Veronica LOOKS UP.

VERONICA

Oh, NO --

SPLAT!!!

The multi-ton Saturn replica SMASHES down on Veronica like a cosmic flyswatter. SQUASHED LIKE THE BUG THAT SHE IS.

A massive GEYSER of fluorescent-green spider guts ERUPTS in every direction -- a towering column of slime raining down across three city blocks, drenching everything and everyone.

Scooter lies flat on the pavement under a blanket of slime. She lifts her head. Wipes slime from her eyes.

Just inches from her, the Saturn logo is embedded in the asphalt. Beneath it: a spreading pool of neon green.

IT'S OVER.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - SATURN BURGER - LATER

Emergency lights spin. The ruined restaurant smolders. Scooter, Katie, and Brian sit on the curb, wrapped in EMT blankets.

They say nothing for a beat, just breathing.

SCOOTER

When I saw you guys left me at the police station, I was afraid --

She stops, choked.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

-- I thought I'd never see you guys again.

KATIE

I was so afraid. Afraid of where things were headed. Afraid I might lose you. I'm so sorry, Scooter. I let my fears overwhelm me.

SCOOTER puts one arm over both of them, pulling them close.

SCOOTER

Yeah, well, we're all still here. Together. That's the part that means the most.

They lean into the hug, just kids again.

MONTAGE - THE AFTERMATH:

A) **LIEUTENANT MORGAN**, DRENCHED in green from head to toe, raises her whistle. TWEET. A SLIME BUBBLE inflates from the bell and POPS on her chin.

B) **TWO NATIONAL GUARDSMEN**, coated in green, lean on a Humvee.

GUARDSMAN #1
I hate that whistle.

GUARDSMAN #2
Yeah. It blows.

He offers an open box of cookies.

GUARDSMAN #1
Cookie?

GUARDSMAN #2
Ooooh! Peanut Butter Poppers! My faves.

C) The **SOCCER MOM**, slimed head to toe, phone pressed to her ear. Her FOUR DAUGHTERS on the curb, texting -- green thumbs flying.

SOCCER MOM
No, Ashley. I look HOT in green.

HAILEY
(never stops texting)
Yeah. Right, Mom. You're sooo "hot."

SOCCER MOM
SHUT UP, Hailey!

D) **CHUCK** wanders through the chaos, dazed and dripping, still holding up two fingers.

CHUCK
I'm number TWO! I'm STILL number TWO!

E) **MRS. GILPIN** sits on the curb, soaked, calmly grading exams through slime-splattered bifocals. She marks Chuck's paper F-minus with a red pen that barely works through the goo.

MRS. GILPIN
Well, Chuck. Bad news -- you still failed. Good news -- your test score matches your IQ. Just barely above 50.

F) The **ELDERLY LADY** on a bench with GRACIE the dog in her lap, both green. Gracie SHAKES slime off. The Elderly Lady kisses Gracie's head.

ELDERLY LADY
There's my brave girl. I always
knew that awful woman was no good.

Gracie BARKS, then SNEEZES out a glob of slime.

G) **SERGEANT O'MALLEY** stands in the middle of the street, dripping green, doughnut box under his arm. He surveys the mayhem -- slimed soldiers, Cookie Cadets, freed prisoners, flattened spider, embedded Saturn logo.

He bites a slime-coated doughnut. Chews slowly.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY
I'm gonna need a bigger cup of
coffee. And a prescription for
Lipitor.

Just then, a **LITTLE PERSON DRESSED AS A LEPRECHAUN** and covered with web and slime, walks up to Sergeant O'Malley.

The two lock eyes. The size contrast is huge.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY
Faith and begorrah! Do my eyes
deceive me? What's this?

THE LEPRECHAUN
Your worst nightmare, fatso!

The "leprechaun" gives Sergeant O'Malley a swift kick in the shin, causing O'Malley to yell in pain.

H) A CORDONED STRETCH OF SIDEWALK has become a reunion line. A folding table. A hand-lettered sign in purple marker:
"LOST AND FOUND -- ASK FOR MURPHY."

A small **BOY** in pajamas gets his poodle back and sits right down on the curb with it. An **OLD MAN** takes the tabby in both hands and says nothing at all.

Then **CADET WATKINS** comes through the crowd at a dead run, sash flying, and Scooter lifts Flash out of her vest and hands him over.

WATKINS
(into the ferret's fur)
You never get out. You NEVER get
out.

Watkins looks up at Scooter, unable to speak, and settles for a rigid Cookie Cadet salute. Scooter returns it. Both of them are entirely green.

Behind them, the three handmade posters are taped to a Humvee door, and someone has drawn one enormous purple check mark across all three.

END OF MONTAGE.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - AERIAL VIEW - CONTINUOUS

Across the city, SATURN REPLICAS atop every remaining Saturn Burger begin to HUM. They ROTATE. SPIN FASTER. One by one, they LIFT OFF like UFOs -- rising, accelerating, VANISHING into the night sky as points of light among the stars.

THE PLAN IS DEFEATED...THE EARTH IS SAVED!

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

SCREECH of tires. A car door SLAMS. DIANE marches through the chaos in hospital scrubs, hair wild -- stepping over debris, sidestepping a slime-covered golden retriever.

She stops. Spots Scooter. Green from head to toe. Standing before a demolished restaurant, a flattened spider the size of a delivery truck, and a Saturn logo embedded in the street.

Diane takes it all in -- warehouse doors blown off, Guard vehicles, Cookie Cadets, freed prisoners -- and says nothing for a long beat.

Then something SHIFTS in her face. Not shock. Not anger. Recognition. She rushes to Scooter. Mother and daughter lock eyes.

DIANE

(quiet)

I thought your Space Marshal
stories were just a way to escape.
Turns out... they were your
training.

Scooter's lip trembles. She wipes green from her cheek.

SCOOTER

I didn't want you to see me like
this.

DIANE
(a small, watery smile)
Like what? Brave? Strong? Real?

SCOOTER
(quiet, honest)
I was scared if you knew, you'd try
to make me stop.

DIANE
Baby. I want you alive way more
than I want you "normal." And I see
who you really are now. I couldn't
be prouder.

SCOOTER
Mom. Who called the National Guard?

Diane looks past her at the Humvees, the floodlights, the
soldiers handing out blankets.

DIANE
I did.

Scooter stares at her.

DIANE (CONT'D)
(gently)
I heard you last night, baby.
Through your door. You said you
were really scared.

SCOOTER
(barely)
You heard that?

DIANE
I hear everything. I just didn't
know what to do about it until I
read your blog.

She tucks a strand of green hair behind her daughter's ear.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Then I made one phone call and said
your name, and grown-ups started
moving. That's all I ever had to
do.

Scooter steps forward and TAPS her cheek with one slime-
covered finger.

SCOOTER
You know the drill, Mom.

Diane stares at this slime-covered, purple-haired, ten-year-old mess of a kid. She bends down and KISSES Scooter's slime-covered cheek. When she straightens, her lips are green.

DIANE

But you ARE going to explain every single detail. Every. Single. Detail.

SCOOTER

I will, Mom. Promise.

Diane pulls Scooter into a fierce hug, slime and all. She doesn't care.

Brian and Katie watch. Katie has tears she'll deny later. Brian finds something fascinating on the ground -- a sleeve of cookies.

BRIAN

I'm starving.

He RIPS it open and offers one to Diane.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Cookie, Mrs. M?

KATIE

I'll say one thing. That sure took a lot of "guts."

They all look at the green splatter zone.

BRIAN

You showed that spider who's boss.

SCOOTER

I'm also the idiot who got us into this mess.

KATIE

Yeah, but look around.

As Katie describes, we see the visuals: freed prisoners reuniting with families... Cadets celebrating... trading merit badges... pets finding owners.

KATIE (CONT'D)

You saved US. Maybe the whole world.

SCOOTER

I had a lot of help.

BRIAN
(wiping goo)
I could use a shower. And more of
your Mom's pancakes.

KATIE
Let's get outta here.

Scooter grabs them both.

SCOOTER
Haven't you forgotten something?

She taps her cheeks with her index fingers.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
You two know the drill.

Brian and Katie smile. Each leans in and plants a KISS on
Scooter's green-slimer cheeks.

KATIE
(wiping her mouth)
Yuck. You taste like "bug."

BRIAN
(tastes slime)
Weird. Tastes like chicken.

KATIE
Idiot.

Katie takes hold of Scooter's hands and DRAWS her close.

KATIE (CONT'D)
I hope you've learned a valuable
lesson.

SCOOTER
I have. Even though the universe is
big and scary -- it's way less
scary when your friends refuse to
let go of your hand.

Scooter EMBRACES Katie warmly as Brian looks on.

BRIAN
Hey. For the record -- I believed
you. When it mattered.

Scooter puts an arm around each of them. The three walk away
through the slime-soaked street.

SCOOTER
(under her breath)
Can't WAIT to blog about this.

BRIAN AND KATIE
WHAT?!

SCOOTER
(quieter, real)
Not to make me feel important. To
make sure the next kid knows
they're not crazy. Telling the
truth is how I protect you now.

Brian looks at Katie. Katie looks at Brian. Slow nods.

KATIE
Okay, Marshal. Blog away.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The room is quiet. Warm lamplight. Rainbow string lights glow softly.

Scooter sits at her computer, freshly showered, hair damp. Cookie Cadet boxes and a Saturn Burger cup still on the desk.

The door opens. Diane leans in, silhouetted.

DIANE
Don't stay up too late, sweetie.

SCOOTER
Just one more mission report. Then
dreamland.

Diane crosses the room and puts her hand on Scooter's shoulder.

DIANE
Baby, you don't need to be a Space
Marshal for people to see you. I
see you. Your friends see you. You
just gotta see yourself.

Diane leans down. Taps her cheek.

DIANE (CONT'D)
(quiet)
You know the drill.

Scooter leans in for a peck -- but Diane pulls her into a full hug instead.

DIANE (CONT'D)
 No. Not that one. The other drill.
 The one where you scare me half to
 death -- and then somehow save the
 day anyway.

Scooter sinks into the hug, teary but proud.

Diane closes the door as she exits. Footsteps recede.

Scooter turns back to the screen. She types.

SCOOTER (V.O.)
 (as she types)
 Mission report: turns out the
 universe really was in good hands.
 I just had to believe it. And ask
 for help. And show up when the
 people I love needed me. Marshal-in-
 training. Signing off.

ON SCREEN, the post finalizes -- one last line, big bold
 letters:

THE SPACE MARSHAL WILL RETURN

She clicks Enter. The comment counter is already ticking
 upward. First comment loads: ***"Way to go, Marshal. -- from a
 Cookie Cadet who was there."*** Second: ***"You believed us when
 nobody else did."*** Third: ***"The universe IS in good hands."*** The
 number keeps climbing.

Scooter leans back, pops a cookie in her mouth, and stares
 out the window at the vast night sky.

Not empty. Never empty.

She smiles.

FADE OUT.

MEANWHILE...SOMEWHERE ACROSS THE GALAXY...

INT. GALAXIAN GENERAL COUNCIL CHAMBER - NIGHT

The council chamber is IN SHAMBLES. The conference table
 FLIPPED. Chairs SCATTERED. Scorch marks on the walls.

A HOLOGRAPHIC SCREEN shows Earth news footage -- the Saturn
 Burger sign crashing down, Cookie Cadets celebrating, green
 spider slime everywhere.

EMPEROR GALAX stands before the screen. Crown askew. Royal robe half-draped. In one hand, a half-eaten squirming critter. In the other, his ray gun, still smoking.

The **LAST REMAINING ADVISOR** stands nearby.

Galax replays the footage. Winces. Replays it again anyway, the way a man presses a bruise.

GALAX
My years of planning. My Saturn
Burgers. My surveillance network.
My invasion fleet. My ENTIRE Earth
operation --

He turns. Eyes wild.

GALAX (CONT'D)
-- UNDONE by a CHILD!

He FIRES at the flipped table. BZZAP! VAPORIZED.

GALAX (CONT'D)
A child with PURPLE HAIR and a
SCOOTER! Not a military. Not a
government. A ten-year-old girl and
her little cookie-selling army.

The LAST REMAINING ADVISOR observes all of this with great interest, being the only creature in the universe currently safe from anything.

GALAX (CONT'D)
(to no one)
Do you know what it took to build
that plan? To teach nine thousand
Glaxians to work a deep fryer --
for minimum wage? To get an entire
species to hand me their own faces
and life details for free, in
exchange for a hamburger?

He touches the frozen image of the flattened Saturn logo.

GALAX (CONT'D)
And Webster. She was the finest
instrument I had. I spent years
making that creature useful.
(beat -- and it costs him)
That child took something from me.
I want it written down somewhere
that she took something real.

He straightens. Smooths the robe. Adjusts the crown. The mask goes back on -- but it doesn't sit quite the way it used to.

GALAX (CONT'D)
I really could use a manicure and a spa day. But first, a replacement for Veronica Webster.

LAST REMAINING ADVISOR

Replacement, Your Malevolence?

GALAX
She was a shapeshifting spider, but with all the subtlety of a house fire. Squashed by her own logo. Time to step it up. No more spiders. No more infiltration. No more fast food.

He strides to a SECONDARY CONSOLE and waves his hand. A vast DATABASE of alien operatives materializes -- hundreds of dossiers, each species more terrifying than the last.

GALAX (CONT'D)
(scanning)
So. This little earthling wants to play Space Marshal, does she? Well -
- let's dance.

His eyes land on a PARTICULAR DOSSIER. His thin lips curl into a slow, delighted smile. He taps it.

The dossier EXPANDS, filling the room with a holographic projection of SOMETHING MASSIVE. Something with TEETH. Blue light washes over Galax.

The Advisor takes three steps backward. Frightened.

LAST REMAINING ADVISOR

S-sire. That one is... uncontrollable.

GALAX
That is precisely the point.

He pops another "sushi" critter into his mouth. CRUNCH. Eyes locked on the projection.

GALAX (CONT'D)
 I'll give her a nemesis she can't
 outsmart. Can't outrun. And most
 certainly --

He leans forward. Crown catches the blue light.

GALAX (CONT'D)
 -- one she cannot squash with a
 sign.
 (to the Advisor)
 Cancel my spa day. There's work to
 be done.

The Advisor's jaw drops.

GALAX (CONT'D)
 This time, I'm handling things
 personally.

He strides toward the exit. Pauses.

GALAX (CONT'D)
 Oh -- find out what a "Cookie
 Cadet" is. And order me a case of
 those "Doodle Wackers." I hear
 they're fabulous.

He exits. The doors SLAM.

HOLD ON the holographic creature as it rotates in the empty
 chamber. It SNARLS -- even as a projection, the sound is bone-
 rattling.

The LAST REMAINING ADVISOR surveys the destroyed chamber. He
 begins to type on a tablet.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

LAST REMAINING ADVISOR (V.O.)
 (typing in sync)
 I'm gonna need a mop, a hazmat
 suit, some new advisors... and
 maybe a really good therapist.

SCOOTER MURPHY WILL RETURN

THE END