

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 through an otherwise quiet street.

A two-story house sits at the end of a dimly lit residential cul-de-sac. Every window is dark except one -- an upstairs corner room where FLASHES OF LIGHT pulse in sync with the ray gun sounds.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

In silhouette, we can barely make out 10-year-old **TRESSA "SCOOTER" MURPHY** -- half-Black, half-Irish, all attitude -- as she tears around her dimly lit bedroom -- DUCKING behind furniture, VAULTING over her hope chest, DIVING across the bed.

With each blast from her toy laser gun, the room STROBES with color, giving us flickering glimpses of the girl in action. She calls out in her best tough-guy voice:

SCOOTER

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

She fires again. In the flash, we catch a quick image of her nemesis -- EMPEROR GALAX, a formidable space alien looming in the corner.

The room goes dim. Silent. Then a high-pitched WHINE revs up, filling the space with sound.

Scooter levels her ray gun at her "prisoner."

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

Don't move! You're under arrest,
Galax, and you're comin' with me!

She FIRES and LUNGES like a linebacker at "Emperor Galax." They both go TUMBLING and CRASHING to the ground, INTO THE CLOSET, with a TREMENDOUS NOISE.

The bedroom door OPENS. Scooter's mother, **DIANE (Black, early 40s, the kind of tired that comes from twelve-hour hospital ER shifts and a daughter who never sleeps)**, stands in the doorway wearing her nurse's scrubs, BACKLIT by the hallway light, COUGHING through plumes of dust.

DIANE

Tressa Ann Murphy! You knock it off this instant!

More dust billows into the air.

SCOOTER

Nice try, but your paralyzing nerve gas won't free you this time, Galax!

Diane flicks on the light.

"Emperor Galax" is revealed to be an OLD UPRIGHT VACUUM CLEANER. A wooden clothes hanger has been duct-taped to the handle, supporting a garish plaid sport coat. The vacuum handle is topped with a hockey mask, decorated with pipe-cleaner and tin-foil antennae to create an alien-like effect.

In the tussle, the vacuum hose has come loose and is WHIPPING around, spewing dust throughout the room.

As Scooter continues to wrestle with the "Emperor," Diane calmly UNPLUGS the vacuum from the wall. The MOTOR GRINDS TO A HALT.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scooter lies on the floor of her closet with the vacuum "Emperor Galax" on top of her, amidst a tangle of cords, hangers, stuffed animals, and heaps of clothing. Peering out from beneath a sweater draped over her head, she protests:

SCOOTER

Aw, Mom! I just about got Emperor Galax in custody! Why'd ya have to go and ruin it?

DIANE

Do you have any idea how late it is?

SCOOTER

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

With the lights on, we can now see Scooter's bedroom -- and it's a riot of color. Rainbow string lights drape across the ceiling. Rainbow decals cover the closet door.

A hand-painted rainbow banner reads "SCOOTER'S HQ." Every surface pops with bold, clashing colors -- this kid's personal style is loud, proud, and utterly her own.

Scooter STRUGGLES, still buried under the tangled mess. We can see she's dressed in a wild get-up of assorted items to look like a combination astronaut and western marshal: a "Star Wars-style" SPACE HELMET, closely-cropped PURPLE HAIR peeking out beneath it, a FAUX-LEATHER COWBOY VEST with an embroidered RAINBOW across the back, a TIN STAR BADGE, a kid's WESTERN-STYLE GUN BELT AND HOLSTER holding her plastic ray gun, JEANS, and a pair of MOON BOOTS.

She is quite a sight.

She's nicknamed "Scooter" because her singular mode of transportation is a WELL-WORN RAZOR SCOOTER she rides everywhere.

DIANE

Listen, Tressa. The fate of your butt depends on how fast you get yourself into bed and go to sleep.

SCOOTER

Aw, Mom!

DIANE

Look! I just pulled a twelve-hour shift at the ER, and it was a full moon sort of night. I've seen and done things a mother shouldn't have to! I don't have the strength to fight your pushback. Besides, tomorrow is Friday, and you have a math exam.

Diane helps "unravel" Scooter from the tangled mess. She lifts her to her feet and pats her gently on the back.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Now get to bed, Ms. Marshal.

Scooter strips off her Space Marshal costume and crawls under the covers in her street clothes. Diane exits and closes the bedroom door behind her. The hall light goes out beneath the door. We hear footsteps recede down the hallway, then a distant bedroom door closes.

A beat.

Hearing her mother's door shut, Scooter stealthily slides out of bed.

She tiptoes to her desk and switches on her desktop computer. The monitor casts a blue glow across her rainbow-decorated walls.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Seated at her computer, Scooter starts to BLOG about her "daring" encounter with the evil Emperor Galax.

The words appear on screen as we hear her voice, talking quietly to herself:

SCOOTER (V.O.)

(whispering, as she types)
Tonight was my closest attempt yet
to catch that evil space varmint,
Emperor Galax.

She pauses from typing.

Her desk is strewn with several boxes of COOKIE CADET COOKIES -- "Skinny Mints," "Peanut Butter Poppers," "Doodle-Wackers," and "Cosmic Macaroons."

She ravenously swallows a couple of cookies, then takes a long SLURP from a tumbler-sized "Saturn Burger" soda cup to wash them down. Returning to her blog, she mumbles as she types:

SCOOTER (V.O.)

If it hadn't been for some
intergalactic outside interference,
I'd have taken that varmint into
custody and his attack plans
would've been foiled.

Scooter wolfs down another cookie, takes a sip of soda, and returns to her keyboard.

The final typed sentence fills the monitor in all caps:

EARTH WOULD BE SAFE ONCE AGAIN!

Scooter leans back, cracks her knuckles, and keeps typing.

SCOOTER (V.O.)

(whispering, as she types)
The pursuit was brutal, loyal blog
readers. Galax released his
Disintegrator Wasps -- giant chrome
insects with laser eyes and a bad
attitude -- but your Space Marshal
wasn't fazed.

She pauses, pops another cookie in her mouth, and chews thoughtfully. Her eyes drift to a HAND-DRAWN STAR MAP taped to the wall beside her monitor. It's an elaborate creation -- constellations connected by colored yarn, each one labeled in Scooter's messy handwriting: "Galaxia," "The Forbidden Nebula," "Outpost Zeta-9," "DO NOT ENTER (seriously)."

She traces a finger along the yarn from Earth to Galaxia, mouthing distances to herself.

SCOOTER (V.O.)

I tracked the varmint across three star systems, dodging asteroid fields and navigating the Sulfur Swamps of Kepler-22b. My trusty scooter held up like a champ, even when I had to jump it over a river of molten lava on the dark side of Jupiter's fourth moon.

She reaches for a SKETCHPAD buried under cookie boxes and flips it open. The pages are filled with detailed drawings -- aliens of every shape and size, some with tentacles, some with too many eyes, all meticulously labeled. "Galax's Royal Guard -- weakness: ticklish." "Slime Serpent of Andromeda -- allergic to peanut butter." "Brain Beetles -- very smart but very slow."

She picks up a colored pencil and adds a few strokes to a half-finished sketch of a new alien -- something with wings and a snout like an anteater.

SCOOTER (V.O.)

I've identified a new species in Galax's army. Codename: Snork Troopers. Approximately four feet tall, terrible breath, armed with Freeze Wands. Weakness: unknown. Investigation ongoing.

She holds the sketch at arm's length, squints at it critically, then adds a tiny rainbow patch to the creature's shoulder.

SCOOTER (V.O.)

Note to self: even evil aliens could use a little color in their lives... This is Space Marshal Tressa Murphy, signing off from Sector Seven. The universe is counting on me, and I will not let it down.

She cracks her knuckles one more time, takes a deep breath, and types a final line with a dramatic flourish. It fills the monitor, underlined twice:

THE UNIVERSE IS IN GOOD HANDS.

Scooter leans back in her chair, satisfied. Through the bedroom window behind her, the night sky is vast and still.

But not empty.

Outside the glass, a DRONE hovers silently. A stenciled identification number -- "#A113" -- is visible on its chassis. It has been watching her the entire time.

The drone TURNS and ZOOMS over the neighborhood rooftops, streaking across the countryside with incredible speed before vanishing into the darkness.

EXT. NSG COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

The #A113 drone descends toward the NSG (National Spying Group) COMPLEX -- an immense, heavily fortified government compound in a secluded rural location. The facility is a beehive of activity: hundreds of comparable drones zoom in and out from every direction.

The drone glides past a sign:

"NSG HEADQUARTERS: PEEPERS AND CREEPERS CAMPUS."

On the ground, NSG WORKERS stream in and out of the massive headquarters building, unfazed by the swarm of drones darting around them.

INT. MAIN SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NSG - CONTINUOUS

Drone #A113 continues through the front doors, down a corridor, zooming over and around busy pedestrians, and into a cavernous room where **THOUSANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN SURVEILLORS** sit before glowing monitors. The room is dimly lit by the collective glow of the screens.

Dozens of drones zoom about, hovering and docking onto ports at random monitoring stations. Every screen is active with incoming surveillance transmissions -- ordinary citizens being screened. Small thumbnail images and biographical data scroll alongside each feed.

Drone #A113 slows, descends, and docks on the desk of NSG surveillance employee **T. DIRWELL**. His monitor reads "Authorization S&P Level 7." His desk is cluttered with Star Wars action figures.

INT. DIRWELL'S MONITORING STATION - NSG - CONTINUOUS

DIRWELL (geekish, mid 20s) is bored senseless. Elbow on desk, cheek resting on his palm, glasses reflecting the endless stream of data.

Then something catches his eye. He sits up. Cleans his thick glasses. Leans into the screen. His eyes scan back and forth, and a big grin spreads across his face.

DIRWELL

Hey, MALACARNE! That wacky Murphy kid is back online! Check this out!

MALACARNE, (also geekish, 20-something, and equally bored), seated nearby, leaps to his feet and hurries over. The two men lean into the screen, reading Scooter's blog. They both CHUCKLE.

MALACARNE

Man, this kid has got some wild imagination!

DIRWELL

Emperor Galax, again! Where does she come up with this stuff?

MALACARNE

And those attack plans for Earth! What a goofball!

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.

EXT. ISG COMPOUND - MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

Instead of "NSG," three futuristic symbols resembling "ISG" mark the entrance.

STRANGE-LOOKING ALIEN GUARDS patrol the gate while ASSORTED ALIENS stream in and out of the buildings. Futuristic drones dart in every direction.

INT. ISG COMPOUND - MAIN SURVEILLANCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Inside, the layout mirrors the NSG -- but the workers are a peculiar mix of alien species seated before futuristic 3D holographic screens. Instead of watching citizens, they're monitoring the NSG workers on Earth.

Holographic images of the Earth surveillors rotate above each console, accompanied by biographical data and streaming feeds of the conversations being intercepted.

We come to rest at the station of **DRULE** -- a slimy, gelatinous, slug-like alien. His name plate identifies him. A LARGE SIGN taped to his monitor shows a salt shaker inside a red circle with a slash: "NO SALT ZONE."

On Drule's desktop, a holographic 3D image of NSG worker T. Dirwell rotates slowly.

Just like his Earthly counterpart, Drule looks completely bored -- cheek resting on the "palm" of his tentacle-like hand. His singular, oversized eyeball reflects the screen's glow.

Suddenly, his eye WIDENS. He leans in close. Uses his anteater-like tongue to wipe his eye clean, blinks twice. His pupil enlarges as he focuses.

DRULE

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

FLEEBISH (O.S.)

Again?

DRULE

And she says she's going to capture
our supreme leader, Emperor Galax!

The entire room goes DEATHLY STILL. Every alien turns toward Drule.

FLEEBISH -- another bizarre-looking alien -- quickly levitates and floats over to Drule's station. The two read Scooter's blog entries, pointing at the screen in mounting panic.

FLEEBISH

What does she want with our fearless leader?

DRULE

I don't know, but she mentions the plans to attack Earth. That's not good.

FLEEBISH

We must bring this to the Royal Council immediately!

INTERCUT - NSG/ISG SURVEILLANCE ROOMS

DIRWELL

I've got just two questions for that kid.

MALACARNE

Yeah...What are you taking... and where can I get some? It can't be natural.

The two surveillors FIST-BUMP and chuckle.

DIRWELL

Ya think?

They turn their attention back to the screen.

High above the surveillance floor, a windowed office overlooks the entire operation. **CHIEF JASON MARKLEY**, the head of the NSG, stands at the glass, surveying the sea of monitors below. He turns and takes a seat behind his desk.

INT. OFFICE OF CHIEF JASON MARKLEY - NSG - CONTINUOUS

The office is sleek -- stainless steel, glass, marble. Three behemoth screens dominate Markley's desk. Two display closed-caption transcripts of Dirwell and Malacarne's conversation. The third shows Scooter's blog text captured by drone #A113.

Markley watches intently as the name "EMPEROR GALAX" is highlighted in red and begins to FLASH on the screen.

He shifts in his chair. His expression darkens.

CHIEF MARKLEY

(to himself)

Galax? This can't be good.

He snatches up his phone.

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

He slams down the receiver.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CHIEF MARKLEY'S OFFICE - NSG - NIGHT

A massive floor-to-ceiling door opens in the distance, throwing a shaft of light across the darkened office. The shapely silhouette of VERONICA WEBSTER strides through. The door shuts behind her, with an echo.

Veronica Webster is the top field agent for the NSG.

Slick, self-assured, and a femme fatale of the highest order. She wears a black leather jumpsuit with red angular side panels, a black leather trench coat, and skyscraper stiletto heels -- yet she moves with the grace of an acrobat. Her long, talon-like RED FINGERNAILS match her EQUALLY RED LIPSTICK, which stands in stark contrast to her pale skin. Her canine teeth are slightly prominent, just enough to suggest something... not quite right.

Her heels CLICK on the marble floor as she crosses the vast office, passing through alternating pools of shadow and light.

She reaches the desk and stands at its edge, staring at Markley, who has his back to her, listening to his phone headset.

Veronica leans on his desk. She taps her red fingernails on the surface. Once. Twice.

Then she reaches over and depresses the button on Markley's phone console, disconnecting his call.

Markley swivels around, tears off his headset, and tosses it onto the desk. He smirks up at her.

CHIEF MARKLEY
Gee. I hope the President isn't too
upset that I hung up on him.

Veronica stares at him without a flicker of emotion.

VERONICA

He'll get over it. You called for me?

CHIEF MARKLEY

You took your sweet time getting here.

VERONICA

You're right. I did. Get to the point.

Markley leans forward.

CHIEF MARKLEY

I have an assignment for you, Veronica.

Veronica leans across the massive desk until she's eye to eye with him. She GRABS his necktie and YANKS it, pulling his head over the desk to within inches of her face. She sneers.

VERONICA

That's "Ms. Webster" to you.

As she speaks, her two prominent canine teeth catch the light.

CHIEF MARKLEY

As you wish, Ms. Webster.

(Stares and pauses)

You do know the agency offers free anger management counseling to all employees.

She releases his tie. Markley regains his composure and settles back in his chair.

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)

This assignment requires someone with your rather... unique skills.

Markley rises and slowly walks around the desk, coming to a stop behind Veronica. She remains perfectly still, staring straight ahead.

His mouth hovers just inches from her ear as he whispers:

CHIEF MARKLEY (CONT'D)

I know you won't let me down.

VERONICA

Have I ever?

She shifts her eyes toward him.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

And Jason, darling... either take a step back or invest in some breath mints.

Markley slowly retreats. He discreetly blows into his hand to check his breath. It's bad. He winces.

Turning back to Veronica:

CHIEF MARKLEY

The fate of the entire world depends upon this assignment.

VERONICA

So. Why else would you call for me?

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

Two neighborhood kids -- **BRIAN** (12, an Asian-American, Katie's older brother; a bit nerdy, clumsy, and slightly overweight) and **KATIE** (10, also Asian-American, but more athletic, brighter, and from the deeper end of the gene pool than Brian) -- walk up the driveway to Scooter's house. They drop their bicycles and continue up the walkway. Both wear backpacks, ready for school. Brian rings the doorbell.

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

Diane answers the door. She's still in her nurse's scrubs from the night shift, coffee mug in hand.

DIANE

Hi, guys. Tressa should be down any second.

She turns and 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 oozes from her mouth. Cookie crumbs are everywhere.

DIANE (O.S.)

Tressa! Did you hear me? It's time
for school!

This time, she hears it. Half-awake, Scooter wipes the drool from her face, brushes a mountain of cookie crumbs from her shirt, and grabs her RAINBOW-EMBROIDERED BACKPACK.

INT. STAIRWAY - SCOOTER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Scooter nearly breaks her neck barreling down the stairs.

INT. FRONT DOOR - SCOOTER'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She greets her friends with breathless energy.

SCOOTER

Hey, guys! Let's go!

She starts for the door, but Diane grabs her backpack strap and pulls her back.

DIANE

Wait just a minute, young lady. You
know the drill.

Diane bends down, tapping her index finger to her own cheek, and holds the pose.

SCOOTER

Mom!

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

DIANE

That's better.

The three kids head out the door. Diane calls after them cheerfully:

DIANE (CONT'D)

You kids be careful and have an
awesome day!

She closes the door.

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

As the threesome exits, Scooter snaps open her well-worn Razor scooter.

Brian and Katie immediately start teasing her. Katie taps her own cheek, imitating Diane:

KATIE

Wait a minute now, young lady, you know the drill!

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

KATIE (CONT'D)

You kids be careful and have an awesome day!

All three crack up laughing.

Brian shoves Katie playfully. She shoves him back harder.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Ow! Mom said no roughhousing before school, Brian!

BRIAN

You started it! You always start it.

Together, they begin their journey to school.

EXT. SCOOTER'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

Katie and Brian pedal their bikes while Scooter glides alongside on her Razor scooter.

They pass a UTILITY POLE. Tacked to it is a handmade "LOST PET" poster with a photo of a poodle named "SCRUFFY."

The three ride on. The poster lingers behind them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - CONTINUOUS

The trio continues toward school.

BRIAN

Hey, Scooter. I read your dopey "Space Diary" blog entry last night. Wow, what a cosmic crock!

SCOOTER

What are you talking about?

KATIE

Almost capturing some alien dude
named Emperor "Gas-X."

(beat)

In your bedroom? Gimme a break!

SCOOTER

It's GALAX, you doofus! Not Gas-X!
GALAX!

BRIAN

Yeah, I almost fell out of bed and
trashed my iPad laughing at that
one!

KATIE

When are you gonna grow up?

SCOOTER

Aw, you guys need to WISE up!

She looks skyward as she rides, gesturing to the vast expanse
above.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

You two have no idea what's out
there!

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

KATIE

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

SCOOTER

Hey! A lot of famous and
intelligent people believe that
aliens exist. Like Einstein, for
example.

BRIAN

That may be, "Einstein"... but I
bet none of them ever crashed their
scooter into a pothole.

Scooter reacts slowly, unaware of what's ahead.

SCOOTER

Pothole? What are you talking abou--

Too late. Her Razor scooter NOSEDIVES into a large, rain-
filled pothole.

Scooter goes FLYING over the handlebars and SPLASHES down hard. Brian and Katie swerve around the hazard and stop, howling with laughter.

BRIAN

Good job, Einstein! Looks like "E"
equals "MC" CRASH!

KATIE

Real genius move, Scooter!

Scooter picks herself up, muddy and soaked, and retrieves her scooter. As she wipes herself off, she spots the school bully, **CHUCK**, standing near the entrance.

Behind Chuck, the school's billboard reads:

**"GLEN KEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL" "Our Students Are Drawn to
Excellence" "Prom Theme: Under the Sea"**

CHUCK -- who, despite being in middle school, sports an amateurish felt-tip-pen homemade tattoo reading "NEVER NO REGERTS" on his forearm -- is in the middle of roughing up a second-grader named **MIKEY**. Mikey is small, fragile-looking, wearing oversized glasses, dwarfed by an enormous backpack. Chuck has him by the backpack straps, dangling a foot off the ground.

CHUCK

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

Mikey is petrified. He can barely respond.

MIKEY

(stuttering)

M-m-m-my Mom packed for me today.

He holds up a distinctively aromatic, grease-stained brown paper bag under Chuck's nose. 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 the bullying and decides to intervene. She knows she's no physical match -- Chuck is twice her size and picks on her at every opportunity. Out of dislike, he calls her "Pooter."

While cleaning herself off from the pothole, she calls out:

SCOOTER

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

Chuck perks up at the question and DROPS Mikey unceremoniously. Mikey lands on his oversized backpack like a turtle flipped on its shell, legs flailing, unable to right himself.

CHUCK

(to Scooter)

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

SCOOTER

Wrestlin', huh? In that case, YOU are definitely a big square root of four.

Chuck blinks. Tries to work it out. His lips move as he struggles to count on his fingers.

CHUCK

A big square root of four, eh?

SCOOTER

Let me give you a hint, Chuck. That makes you a BIG Number Two!

CHUCK

That makes me a big Number TWO?

SCOOTER

Louder, Chuck! I can't hear you. What did you say?

CHUCK

(yelling)

I said, that's right! I'm a big Number TWO!

The **CROWD OF STUDENTS** within earshot erupts with laughter and pointing.

STUDENT #1

He said he's a Number Two!

STUDENT #2

He sure looks like a Number Two!

STUDENT #3

And he kinda smells like one, too!

The students continue to laugh as they disperse. Scooter retrieves her Razor scooter and heads for the school entrance.

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. They head inside -- as does everyone else.

Everyone except Chuck.

CHUCK
(finally getting it)
Number two?..... HEY!!!

Too late. Scooter and Mikey are already at the doors. Chuck yells after them:

CHUCK (CONT'D)
You're dead meat, Pooter! You hear me? DEAD MEAT!

EXT. ENTRANCE - GLEN KEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

As Chuck turns to enter the building, a hand SHOOTs out from the shadows and YANKS him off his feet.

It's Veronica Webster.

Just as Chuck had done with Mikey, Veronica now holds Chuck suspended about six inches off the ground with amazing ease.

Chuck's worn-out, muddy tennis shoes dangle in the air. His face is drenched with sweat, eyes wide with terror.

Veronica's beautiful, cold face hovers about a foot from his.

VERONICA
How's it going, Chucky, my little porcine friend?

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

VERONICA
Not yet. But we're going to become very good friends.
(beat)
Looks like you're sweating a bit, sweetie.

CHUCK

Yes ma'am. I'm just a bit uncomfortable right now. How 'bout you?

VERONICA

Oh, I never break a sweat. I just glow. But I can break a lot of other things.

Chuck tries a sheepish joke, glancing at Veronica's talon-like fingernails gripping his jacket.

CHUCK

...Like a fingernail?

Veronica TIGHTENS HER GRIP. Chuck MOANS.

VERONICA

How about I break your flappin' pie hole, funny man?

She leans in close and smiles -- a sinister smile. Her fang-like canine teeth are very prominent.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Do I have your attention now?

CHUCK

(stuttering)

Y-y-y-yes, ma'am.

VERONICA

Good boy. Because we need to have a little talk about your relationship with one Ms. Tressa "Scooter" Murphy.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. SCOOTER'S CLASSROOM - FIVE MINUTES LATER

The classroom door swings open. **MRS. GILPIN** is mid-lesson. **CHUCK** limps in -- sporting a freshly blackened eye, torn T-shirt, hair a mess, and missing one shoe.

MRS. GILPIN

Chuck. You're late again!

CHUCK

Yeah. I know.
(under his breath)
I almost didn't make it at all.

He limps toward his desk. As he passes Scooter, he stops. Points at her. But there's no menace now -- only fear.

CHUCK (CONT'D)

You stay away from me, Murphy, you
weird little troublemaking freak!

He practically scurries to his seat in the back of the room.

Scooter has absolutely no idea why Chuck now has a black eye or why he's suddenly terrified of her.

KATIE

(whispering to Scooter)
What's that all about?

SCOOTER

Not a clue.

EXT. PLANET GALAXIA - DAY

The mysterious alien world hangs in deep space, ringed with strange atmospheric bands.

EXT. GALAXIAN GENERAL COUNCIL BUILDING - DAY

An imposing structure of alien architecture dominates the planet's capital city.

INT. GALAXIAN GENERAL COUNCIL CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Inside the chamber, several **ALIEN ADVISORS** -- a wide variety of bizarre creatures -- sit around a massive conference table. A group of consummate, fearful, "yes" men.

The doors open. **EMPEROR GALAX** enters, accompanied by **TWO HUGE BODYGUARDS**.

The entire group of advisors **JUMPS** to its feet and stands at **RIGID ATTENTION**.

GALAX

Why have you summoned me to the
Council chamber?

He takes his seat at an ornate, throne-like chair at the head of the table. A bodyguard poised on either side.

GALAX (CONT'D)

You've interrupted my hot stone massage and my loofah bath. This had better be important.

He surveys the assembled advisors with undisguised disdain.

GALAX (CONT'D)

And while we're on the subject of things that had better be important -- can someone explain why I keep getting the same advisors? I specifically requested the upgraded models.

The advisors shift uncomfortably in their seats.

ADVISOR #1

We ARE the upgraded models, Your Fearsomeness.

GALAX

(yawns)

Then I want a refund.

He snaps his fingers. The Bodyguard produces a small mirror. Galax examines his reflection, adjusting the angle of his ornate crown.

GALAX (CONT'D)

I had a spa day scheduled for this afternoon. A full rejuvenation -- mineral bath, tentacle massage, exfoliation of all seven dermal layers. Do you have any idea how long it took me to get that appointment?

ADVISOR #2

We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience, Your Radiance.

GALAX

"Inconvenience" doesn't begin to cover it. My pores were just starting to open.

He hands the mirror back to the Bodyguard.

GALAX (CONT'D)

And another thing. Who approved the temperature in this chamber? It's like a meat locker in here. I have a very delicate constitution.

ADVISOR #1

We'll have maintenance adjust it immediately, sire.

GALAX

See that you do. The last advisor who let me catch a chill is now decorating the bottom of the Sulfur Swamps.

(beat)

Lovely place for a vacation, actually. Not so lovely for a permanent residence.

He settles deeper into his throne, crossing his legs with imperial languor.

GALAX (CONT'D)

Now. You've dragged me away from my rejuvenation, the temperature is unacceptable, and my lunch is late. This had better be catastrophically important or several of you will be exploring new career opportunities. In the Sulfur Swamps.

ADVISOR #1

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

Galax holds up a hand to silence him, then turns to a large **BODYGUARD** standing nearby.

GALAX

Why am I not looking at my lunch?

The Bodyguard snaps his fingers. An **ALIEN CHEF** scurries in carrying a large charcuterie platter of exotic bug-like critters -- some of which are still moving. He places the tray before Galax, bows, and departs.

Galax leans over the tray and inhales deeply, savoring the aroma.

GALAX (CONT'D)

Ah, I just love sushi day.

He snatches one of the squirming morsels from the tray. It wriggles and writhes as he pops it into his mouth. We hear a CRUNCH with every chew.

GALAX (CONT'D)
(mouth full)
So fresh. So tasty. So full of
life.

A faint SQUEAL from inside his mouth. He winces slightly.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Oooh! But with just a little "bite"
to it. Love it!!!

He finishes chewing, swallows, and his bodyguard dabs the corner of his mouth with a napkin. Galax surveys the platter for another morsel.

GALAX (CONT'D)
As you were saying.

ADVISOR #1
Sir, you are in grave danger.

GALAX
I doubt that.
(taking a huge inhale)
The meal seems fresh.

ADVISOR #1
No, Your Highness. There are
indications that an intergalactic
Space Marshal may already have
secret information about our plans
to invade Earth.

ADVISOR #2
We must devise a plan that will
maintain your safety while
eliminating any threats.

Off-screen: the telltale CLICKS of electronic texting.

GALAX
(His attention is
diverted)
Just a moment.

Galax turns his gaze to one of his advisors, who is busy TEXTING on a tablet-like device, completely checked out of the meeting.

GALAX (CONT'D)

What did I tell you about texting
at the table?

The **TEXTING ADVISOR** tries to hide the device behind his back.

TEXTING ADVISOR

I... I... I wasn't texting.

Galax sighs, then casually extends one hand, palm up, toward his Bodyguard. The Bodyguard reaches into his coat and places a sinister-looking RAY GUN into Galax's waiting hand.

Without hesitation, Galax aims at the texting advisor and fires.

BZZAP! A flash of light engulfs the advisor -- and he VANISHES. His empty chair rocks slightly. A wisp of energy dissipates where he sat, leaving only a mound of smoldering ash.

GALAX

(matter-of-factly)

"Unfollowed."

ADVISOR #3

Wow! That's what I call "getting
ghosted"! Hee-hee-hee!

Hearing the terrible joke, Galax unemotionally swings the ray gun and fires again.

BZZAP!

Advisor #3 vanishes in a flash, also leaving a mound of ash.

Galax waves the ray gun casually and addresses the remaining group.

GALAX

Anyone else feeling 'glib'?

He takes a slow, deliberate scan around the table.
Uncomfortable silence. Nobody dares move.

GALAX (CONT'D)

My. Is it me, or is it getting
spacious in here? Remind me to
speak with staffing.
(chuckles to himself)

Dead silence.

GALAX (CONT'D)

I said, "It sure is getting
SPACIOUS in here."

(beat)

What? I get nothing for that?

The remaining advisors begin to laugh nervously.

REMAINING ADVISORS

Ha... ha... ha... ha... ha!

ADVISOR #5

Good one, your Royal Jovialness!

Without even looking, Galax fires the ray gun sideways.

BZZAP!

Advisor #5 vanishes. More ash. The laughter stops instantly.

GALAX

Butt-kisser.

(to himself)

There's always one in every crowd.

He puts down the ray gun and turns his attention back to his lunch. He sorts through the remaining "delectables" on his tray. Several of them have already 'escaped' and crawl across the table.

GALAX (CONT'D)

Now, where were we?

(beat)

Oh, yes. Something about some Space-
something-or-other jeopardizing our
attack plans.

ADVISOR #1

A Space Marshal, your Ruthlessness.
With the attack date only weeks
away, we simply cannot put our
years of planning at risk.

ADVISOR #2

I agree, Your Viciousness.
Something must be done quickly.

GALAX

I'll tell you what must be done
quickly... get me more of these.

(holding up a critter
morsel)

They're scrumptious!

Galax bites into another critter, tastes it, and grins as some liquid oozes from the corner of his mouth.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Oooh, cream-centered. My favorite.

He finishes chewing, swallows, licks his fingers clean, and continues.

GALAX (CONT'D)
But, fear not! I have just the plan in mind.

ADVISOR #4
We knew you would, sir!

ADVISOR #6
Absolutely! You da man!

Galax grabs the ray gun and fires twice in rapid succession.

BZZAP! BZZAP!

Both advisors vanish. Once again, just two mounds of ash.

GALAX
If there is one thing I hate worse than groveling, it's sarcasm.

He considers for a moment.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Hmmm... Send for Lindvall.

The two remaining advisors GASP.

REMAINING ADVISORS
(collectively)
Gasp! Murmur-murmur-murmur.

GALAX
Lindvall is our top operative... a master of disguise... and the most feared assassin in the entire universe. He'll know what to do...

Galax looks sharply toward the chamber doors and POINTS.

GALAX (CONT'D)
LOOK! There he is NOW!

The two remaining advisors SCREAM and DIVE under the conference table.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Just kidding!

He savors the moment.

One advisor composes himself and climbs back into his seat.
The other -- the EMBARRASSED ADVISOR -- fearfully peeks over the edge of the table.

EMBARRASSED ADVISOR
I think I pulled a muscle.

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

He aims the ray gun at the Embarrassed Advisor.

BZZAP!

Gone. Flash of light. Empty chair. Mound of ash.

GALAX
(to himself)
Downsized... and it also avoids a
nasty workers' comp claim.

He turns to the one **REMAINING ADVISOR** still seated at the table. Every other chair is now conspicuously occupied only by smoldering mounds of ash.

GALAX (CONT'D)
We will send Lindvall to Earth to
make sure this Space Marshal does
not divulge anything to the
authorities. Problem solved.
(a beat, glaring at the
remaining Advisor)
Unless YOU'D like to make an 'ASH'
of yourself, too?

REMAINING ADVISOR
Understood, your Brutalness!

GALAX
Excellent...Meeting adjourned!
Notify housekeeping. Oh, and get me
some new advisors and a handful of
grovelers. My aim is a bit off.

As Galax rises from his throne and strides toward the exit with his bodyguards, a housekeeper enters the scene armed with a "dust buster" vacuum and frantically begins to clean away each pile of ashes from the seats

GALAX (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Okay, now, who's got my hot stones
and loofah ready?

DISSOLVE TO:

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

Veronica Webster rockets out of the NSG main gates on her supercharged BLACK AND RED MOTORCYCLE, banking onto the road that winds through the dark countryside. She accelerates hard, headlights cutting through the night.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

In a flash, Veronica's motorcycle blazes past a DEPUTY SHERIFF'S CAR parked in the darkness just off the road. The two officers inside ACTIVATE their lights and siren and give chase.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Veronica checks her rearview mirror. Flashing lights. She exhales sharply.

VERONICA

(to herself)

Oh, come on.

She slows and pulls to the shoulder.

EXT. ROADSIDE - COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The two **DEPUTY SHERIFFS** -- a classic Mutt-and-Jeff pair -- approach as Veronica dismounts her bike. She carefully removes her helmet and shakes out her hair.

VERONICA

Good evening, Deputies. What seems
to be the problem?

DEPUTY #1

Well, well. Look what we've got
here. A real Hell's Angel, isn't
she, Kevin?

DEPUTY #2

10-4, Randy. Emphasis on Angel.

DEPUTY #1

We clocked you at over eighty miles an hour, little lady.

DEPUTY #2

That's reckless driving in my book.

VERONICA

Really? You've actually read a book?

DEPUTY #1

What?!

DEPUTY #2

What's a pretty little thing like you in such a hurry for?

VERONICA

Don't you two goobers have a doughnut shop or a banjo festival to be at somewhere about now?

The two much-larger Deputies move in closer, trying to intimidate her. DEPUTY #1 pulls out handcuffs and clicks the ratchet.

DEPUTY #1

I think the only thing that's gonna get the point across to this sweet young gal is a trip to the grey-bar hotel.

DEPUTY #2

You'll like it. Three hots and a cot, darlin'.

They each grab one of Veronica's arms.

Veronica doesn't resist. She simply smiles -- that sinister smile.

VERONICA

(matter-of-factly)
Big mistake, fellas.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. ROADSIDE - COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

The two Deputies are handcuffed to each other, wrists-to-wrists, stuck back-to-back on opposite sides of a tree trunk. Their patrol car sits nearby, lights still flashing.

In the distance, Veronica's motorcycle does a WHEELIE and disappears down the road.

DEPUTY #1

(screaming)

Hey! Come back here! Where are you going?

DEPUTY #2

Uh, Randy? Speaking of "going"...

(beat)

Uh...I've really gotta be.

DEPUTY #1

Jeez, Kevin! I told you to go before we left the station.

EXT. SATURN BURGER DRIVE-THRU - NEXT DAY

SATURN BURGER. "They're Out of This World!"

What customers don't know is that Saturn Burger's drive-thru order speakers are actually ALIEN SURVEILLANCE TERMINALS, secretly operated by Emperor Galax's advance invasion forces. As unsuspecting customers place orders, the aliens electronically capture their images, addresses, phone numbers, and personal data without anyone being the wiser.

Atop the building, a large tower supports a replica of the planet Saturn. Dozens of identical Saturn Burger locations dot the city.

A **SOCCER MOM** in an oversized SUV -- license plate "2HOT4U" -- pulls up to the menu board. The menu board features a large graphic featuring the "New 'BLACK HOLE BURGER' Combo."

The Soccer Mom has her coffee in one hand, cell phone in the other, and **FOUR TEENAGE GIRLS**, all texting furiously.

SOCCER MOM

(into phone)

...And so, Ashley, the store clerk goes, "I can't give you a cash refund, 'cuz you've worn the dress, but I can do a store credit."

A garbled, monotone voice CRACKLES from the speaker:

SATURN BURGER EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

(monotone)

Welcome to Saturn Burger, where everything is out of this world. Would you like to try our new "Black Hole" burger... where not even the flavor escapes?... Can I take your order?

SOCCER MOM

(into phone)

Hold on a sec, Ash.

(to speaker)

I need five Saturn Bur--

Mid-sentence, EVERYONE IN THE SUV FREEZES as a grid of LASER BEAMS emits from the fiberglass burger atop the menu sign, rapidly scanning every occupant.

As quickly as it happens -- it's over. Activity resumes.

SOCCER MOM (CONT'D)

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

SATURN BURGER EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

Will that complete your order?

Soccer Mom adjusts her rearview mirror, checking her reflection. She pats the skin under her chin.

SOCCER MOM

(to herself)

Oh, what the heck. Who am I kidding?

(to speaker)

And give me one Big Bodacious Blast-Off Bucket of Molten Meteorite Chili-Cheese Fries with Solar Scorch Sauce on the side! ...And lots of napkins, honey.

INT. BACK ROOM - SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

In a hidden back room, a **MULTI-TENTACLED ALIEN** sits before an entire wall of monitors. Each screen displays a 3D representation of the SUV's occupants alongside their personal data:

SOCCER MOM: 43, dyed blonde, 17.69% silicone, narcissist, loves BRAVO reality television.

HAILEY: 15, cheerleader, academically challenged.

CAITLIN: 14, boy-obsessed, needs braces.

MEGAN: 13, insecure, terrible acne, sharp as a doorknob

MADISON: 12, clueless, thinks unicorns are real.

BOLD FLASHING TEXT across the monitor screen:

"SUBJECT DATA CAPTURED - CAPTURE VALUE: 89.6%"

EXT. SATURN BURGER DRIVE-UP WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Soccer Mom pulls up to the pick-up window. Using its tentacles, the **ALIEN** operates a life-sized **PUPPET** of an acne-faced teenage Saturn Burger employee. The puppet hands over a huge sack of food.

PUPPET

(voice cracking)

No charge, ma'am. Come again!

SOCCKER MOM

Oh, how sweet.

She drives off, convinced the "employee" was hitting on her.

SOCCKER MOM (CONT'D)

(to daughters)

Did you see that, girls?

(into her phone)

Ash? Hey! Guess who's still got it, baby!

HAILEY pipes up from the backseat, remaining focused on her texting:

HAILEY

Yeah. Right, Mom. You're sooo "hot."

SOCCKER MOM

Shut up, Hailey!

Her voice fades as the SUV disappears down the street.

EXT. SATURN BURGER DRIVE-THRU - CONTINUOUS

Next up: a smarmy **SALES REP** in a flashy convertible. Midlife crisis personified. Also on his cell phone.

SATURN BURGER EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

Welcome to Saturn Burger, where everything is out of this world. Would you like to try our new "Black Hole" burger... where not even the flavor escapes?... Can I take your order?

SALES REP

(smarmy)

Hey, Walt Kelley here. How's it goin'? Yeah, dude, let me have--

He FREEZES mid-sentence. The laser grid scans him. Done in an instant.

SALES REP (CONT'D)

--a Black Hole Burger with extra jalapenos, a small Orion's Orbital Onion Rings, and a Pluto Pitcher of unsweetened iced tea. Gotta watch the old waistline!

INT. BACK ROOM - SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

His captured data appears on the monitors:

IQ of 79, sales representative, smarmy & two-faced, trained groveler, obsessed with looks, likes sushi and karaoke, Lifetime Channel movies, lives with his mother.

IN BOLD FLASHING TEXT:

"SUBJECT DATA CAPTURED - CAPTURE VALUE: 92.7%"

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GLEN KEANE MIDDLE SCHOOL - MID-AFTERNOON

End of the school day. As the bell rings, Scooter, Katie, and Brian burst through the doors, grab their bikes and scooter, and race toward the Saturn Burger a few blocks away.

INT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The joint is packed with students -- the after-school hangout. Scooter, Brian, and Katie push through the crowd.

INT. SERVICE COUNTER - SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

The counter area bustles with activity. Among the crowd is Chuck, the bully.

Behind the counter, the Saturn Burger staff wear their tacky polyester uniforms. From the waist up, they look human enough. From the waist down -- hidden by the counter -- their alien bodies are anything but. They're all Galaxian mutant operatives in 'human' disguise.

Scooter, Brian, and Katie approach the counter. Waiting for Scooter is Veronica Webster -- now IN DISGUISE, wearing a stained gaudy polyester Saturn Burger uniform, hairnet, paper hat, horn-rimmed glasses, and a "MADGE" name tag. She's a far cry from the typically lethal Veronica Webster.

VERONICA (AS MADGE)

(cheerfully)

Here's your usual, doll.

She already has a tray of Scooter's standard order ready and places it on the counter.

SCOOTER

Wow! Great service! But can I get--

Veronica places four ketchup packets on the tray.

VERONICA (AS MADGE)

--four ketchups on the side? Of course!

She smiles pleasantly.

Scooter thinks it's a bit odd, but takes the food and hurries to join Brian and Katie at a nearby table.

INT. DINING AREA - SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

The dining area is a carnival of space-themed kitsch. Saturn-shaped MENU BOARDS hang from the ceiling on wires, rotating slowly. The booths are upholstered in purple vinyl with silver piping. FIBER-OPTIC STARS twinkle across the ceiling tiles. A massive mural of an astronaut eating a cheeseburger while floating past Saturn covers the far wall. Every table has a miniature rocket ship condiment caddy holding ketchup, mustard, and something called "Cosmic Sauce."

The place is packed with kids from school, backpacks slung everywhere, trays piled high. The noise is tremendous.

Scooter, Brian, and Katie wedge themselves into a corner booth. Scooter digs into her food while Brian takes a bite of his burger and immediately makes a face.

BRIAN

Dude. Is this supposed to be a burger or a hockey puck?

He lifts the bun and peers underneath it suspiciously.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Pretty sure this thing just growled at me.

KATIE

That's what you get for ordering the "Black Hole Burger." It says right on the menu -- "so dense, not even light can't escape."

BRIAN

Yeah, and neither can the taste. Because there isn't any.

He takes another bite anyway and shrugs.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(Under his breath)

Think I just chipped a tooth.

KATIE

(to Scooter)

So. I 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 claimed 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

It was the size of a bathtub.

SCOOTER

The point is, my blog has real followers now. I'm up to four hundred and twelve.

KATIE

Four hundred and twelve people who need better hobbies.

SCOOTER

(with great dignity)
Those 412 people understand that the Space Marshal is the last line of defense between Earth and total galactic annihilation.

BRIAN

And yet, she still can't pass a math test.

Scooter stuffs a handful of fries in her mouth and points at them both excitedly.

SCOOTER

(chewing)
Oh boy! It's the weekend! You know what that means!

Brian and Katie exchange a look. They respond in unison WITH UNDERWHELMING FAKE ENTHUSIASM:

BRIAN & KATIE

Don't tell us. We know.

BRIAN

More "Aliens Versus the Marshal."

KATIE

(faking a yawn)
Yippee.

SCOOTER

(excitedly)
You bet! Tonight's gonna be great!

BRIAN

Hey, Scooter, it's been a long week. On top of everything, I totally flunked that math test.

KATIE

Brian, you're one-of-a-kind...an Asian 'flunky'.

She takes a long sip of her soda and turns to Scooter.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Seriously, Scooter...let's give it a rest for a night. Or a month.

SCOOTER

You guys gotta be kidding!

BRIAN

I don't think she is. And neither am I.

SCOOTER

But there's gonna be a full moon tonight. It'll be awesome. Let's all meet here at closing time.

Nearby, both Veronica Webster and a refined-looking gentleman -- **LINDVALL** -- are within earshot.

LINDVALL, the **GALAXIAN OPERATIVE** sent to Earth by Emperor Galax, is disguised as a businessman; suit, tie, cufflinks, the works. Seated at a nearby table, he makes notes in a small notebook as he eavesdrops.

Scooter, Brian, and Katie finish their meals and head for the exit. Across the dining area, Veronica (still as Madge) is bussing tables.

She spots Chuck in the corner, seated alone and gorging on burgers and fries like he's headed to the "gas chamber".

She walks over.

INT. CHUCK'S TABLE - SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

Veronica (as Madge) GRABS Chuck's tray and DUMPS his half-eaten meal straight into the trash.

Chuck looks up in disbelief.

CHUCK

Hey! What the--?

VERONICA (AS MADGE)

You've had enough, sweetie.

She removes her paper hat and glasses and gives Chuck a cold, hard stare -- so he recognizes her.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I think you're done, Chuckie.

She flicks the bill of Chuck's baseball cap upward with one talon-like fingernail, snapping it off his head. It tumbles to the floor.

Chuck does a double-take -- and his eyes go WIDE as he realizes who she is. His attitude changes immediately.

CHUCK

Yes ma'am. I was thinking maybe I should drop a few pounds anyway.

He forces a pathetic grin.

VERONICA

Good call. No need to put any more strain on your waistband.

Veronica pats him on the head, then walks away, tossing her "Madge" disguise in a trash receptacle. She exits the restaurant, mounts her motorcycle, and ROCKETS out of the parking lot.

Lindvall remains seated for a moment, making final notes. He places the notebook in the breast pocket of his suit coat and calmly exits the restaurant.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Scooter, Katie, and Brian meet in the driveway.

Scooter is in her full Space Marshal outfit. Katie and Brian look like they're going trick-or-treating -- dressed in crude homemade alien costumes.

Together the three depart for the just-closed Saturn Burger. Scooter rides her Razor scooter; Brian and Katie pedal their bikes.

They pass the same utility pole. Two handmade posters now hang there -- the original "LOST: SCRUFFY" poodle poster, and a new one: "MISSING: CUDDLES" with a photo of a cat.

The three ride on. The posters linger.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

They arrive at Saturn Burger, now dark and closed for the evening. Several exterior spotlights illuminate the large replica of Saturn, spinning slowly atop the building, making it look as if the planet hangs suspended in the night sky.

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

Across the street from Saturn Burger sits the vast warehouse and storage facility. The surrounding neighborhood is industrial -- large warehouses, narrow alleyways, dark streets littered with wooden packing crates, all dimly lit by overhead street lamps.

A perfect environment for a glorified game of hide-and-seek.

SCOOTER

Okay. We all know the rules of the hunt, right?

Brian and Katie nod, rolling their eyes.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

You guys are the evil aliens and there's a huge bounty on your heads for-- (waiting for it) for--

She pauses, waiting for their response.

BRIAN & KATIE

(in unison, monotone)
--"hideous crimes against the universe."

SCOOTER

And I am the Space Marshal, sworn to track you down and take you into custody!

(beat)

Now get goin', varmints!

Brian and Katie reluctantly mount their bikes and ride off into the dark streets.

Scooter waits, giving them time to hide. She bounces on her toes, adjusting her badge and holster.

Then -- the distant ROAR of a motorcycle engine, growing louder.

Veronica Webster comes riding up behind Scooter on her motorcycle. She skids to a halt, parks, and strides confidently toward the girl.

VERONICA

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

Scooter, fully 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

Well, actually, I may be of service to you.

SCOOTER

In what way? You into cosplay?

(beat)

You wanna be an alien and play in our game?

VERONICA

Oh, I want to play, all right. But not tonight.

Veronica taps her index finger on 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. At your service. But my friends call me "Scooter."

VERONICA

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

Hearing the name, Scooter's eyes go WIDE. Her jaw drops. Her Razor scooter clatters to the ground.

SCOOTER

GALAX?! I knew it!

EXT. ROOFTOP - FAR END OF THE BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall stands atop a building several blocks away. He peers through a handheld INFRARED SURVEILLANCE SCANNER, observing Scooter and Veronica in conversation below.

At his feet: a sizeable leather case. A red LED glows on its surface. Biohazard emblems adorn the sides.

EXT. STREET NEAR SATURN BURGER - CONTINUOUS

Through Lindvall's scanner, Scooter and Veronica appear as thermal silhouettes, data scrolling alongside: biometric readings, distance calculations, tracking coordinates.

Off in the distance, Brian's voice echoes:

BRIAN (O.C.)

Hey, Scooter! What gives?

Katie and Brian can be seen riding their bikes back from the far end of the street, approaching Scooter and Veronica.

KATIE

Yeah! You didn't even come looking for us! Some hot-shot Marshal YOU are!

As they draw closer, Veronica moves quickly.

VERONICA

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

SCOOTER

But wait--

VERONICA

I'm the only one you can trust and the only one who can save you.

She eyes Brian and Katie getting closer and mounts her motorcycle.

SCOOTER

What are you talking about?

VERONICA

No time. I've got to go. If you really want to capture this Galax fellow, meet me here tomorrow night, inside that warehouse.

She points toward A. Rachnid's Warehouse.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Eight o'clock. And come alone.

She fires up the motorcycle. Turns to look at Scooter one last time. Then she "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 dark visor, revs the engine, pops a wheelie, and VANISHES down an alleyway into the shadows.

SCOOTER

(to herself, in awe)

Wow. Galax.

EXT. ROOFTOP - FAR END OF THE BLOCK - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall continues observing through his scanner. On its small display, Scooter's thermal signature pulses. Data streams: coordinates locked, biometrics captured.

Katie rides into the scanner's field of view, blocking Scooter from Lindvall's line of sight.

Lindvall lowers the device, frowning.

EXT. STREET NEAR A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Katie pulls up and confronts Scooter angrily.

KATIE

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

Scooter is so deep in thought about Galax that she seems to be in a trance. She doesn't even hear Katie.

Katie grabs Scooter by the shoulders and shakes her.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Hey! I'm talking to you!

SCOOTER

What? Huh?

KATIE

What's wrong with you?

SCOOTER

Wrong? Oh, nothing. Katie, I'm sorry. I just... can't share it right now.

KATIE

Can't share it? 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 and pulls her close. She looks straight into her eyes.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Look, we've shared a lot of stuff
between us. A lot of secrets. And I
trust you. So I know you'll tell me
when the time is right.

SCOOTER

Katie, you know I will. I've just
got to sort out a few things.

Scooter tries to pull away, but Katie holds on. She turns her head and taps her own cheek.

KATIE

Wait a minute now, young lady. You
know the drill.

Scooter smiles. She leans in and gives Katie a peck on the cheek -- the same goodbye ritual as Diane's.

SCOOTER

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

The moment is broken as Brian angrily pedals into the scene and skids to a halt. Out of breath.

BRIAN

What the heck! You two messing with
me?

KATIE

Shut up, Brian. Something came up.

BRIAN

Something came up?! I'd still be
out there hiding in the dark if I
didn't get bored out of my mind!

KATIE

Just relax, doofus. Scooter has her reasons. Besides, it's getting late. We gotta get home.

She turns to Scooter.

KATIE (CONT'D)

You gonna be okay?

SCOOTER

Sure. I'll be fine. I'll be right behind you. I just want to collect my thoughts.

KATIE

Okay. See you tomorrow.

BRIAN

Don't waste your breath, Katie. I'm going home. C'mon.

Brian and Katie ride off on their bikes, leaving Scooter alone near the alleyway.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Scooter stands alone in the dim light, lost in thought. In the far distance, atop the building, Lindvall's silhouette is barely visible.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LINDVALL'S VANTAGE POINT - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall raises his scanner and locks onto Scooter's thermal signature. No obstruction this time. He reads the biometric data streaming across the display: heart rate, body temperature, identity confirmed.

He lowers the scanner and reaches for the small leather case at his feet. He taps a sequence on its surface code panel. The GREEN LED illuminates. The top of the case SPRINGS OPEN.

A swarm of HUNDREDS OF TINY NANO-DRONES erupts from the case like angry bees. Each one carries a small, visible NEEDLE-LIKE STINGER at its base, capable of injecting a paralyzing agent on contact.

The nano-drones HOVER for a moment, acquiring their GPS bearings and locking onto their target. Each one's small LED indicators are flashing randomly, then suddenly they're all in-sync. Then they TAKE OFF -- descending toward Scooter in the street below, like a deadly comet.

LINDVALL

Go do what you do best, my deadly beauties.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Unaware of the approaching danger, Scooter hops onto her Razor scooter and pushes off, heading for home.

The swarm of nano-drones descends on her from above.

As Scooter turns a sharp corner, several drones can't adjust their course. They SLAM into the side of a trash dumpster and shatter on impact.

The remaining drones HOVER, REGROUP, and RESUME pursuit.

EXT. ENTRANCE - ABANDONED CAR WASH - CONTINUOUS

Still oblivious, Scooter takes a shortcut through an abandoned automatic car wash. She weaves nimbly between the hanging felt strips and giant spinning brushes. Behind her, dozens of nano-drones fly straight into the mechanisms and become hopelessly entangled.

EXT. EXIT - ABANDONED CAR WASH - CONTINUOUS

Scooter emerges from the far end, unscathed.

A moment later, a single nano-drone catches up and STRIKES the back of her helmet with a loud CLACK. The helmet absorbs the impact. The drone ricochets away in a tiny ball of sparks and flame.

Scooter touches the back of her head.

SCOOTER

Man! The mosquitoes must be huge this season!

She pushes on, expertly maneuvering her scooter down the street, her zigzag path making it nearly impossible for the handful of remaining drones to follow.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LINDVALL'S VANTAGE POINT - CONTINUOUS

Lindvall watches through his scanner as drone after drone fails. Only a few remain in the air.

He taps the recall sequence on the case's panel. The surviving nano-drones break off their pursuit, reverse course, and descend into the case. The lid snaps shut. The RED LED re-illuminates.

Lindvall picks up the case. His expression is unreadable. He turns and disappears into the darkness.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - SATURDAY MORNING

Early Saturday morning. Sunlight spills across the Murphy house at the end of the cul-de-sac. Everything looks perfectly normal -- sprinklers running, a neighbor retrieving the morning paper, a jogger passing on the far sidewalk.

Katie and Brian walk up the driveway side by side. Brian yawns, his hair still matted from sleep. Katie moves with purpose, her jaw set. Neither bothers to knock. They push through the front door and head straight upstairs.

INT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

They reach Scooter's bedroom door and knock.

The door CREAKS open barely an inch. Suddenly, two hands shoot out from the darkness inside, GRAB Katie and Brian by their collars, and YANK them into the room.

Scooter SLAMS the door shut and throws her back against it like she's barricading a fortress. Her eyes are wide and darting. The curtains are drawn. The room is dim.

BRIAN

What the --?

KATIE

Is that any way to say "good morning"?

Scooter raises a finger to her lips. She speaks in a tight, urgent whisper.

SCOOTER

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 the room to her bedroom window and peeks through the closed curtain. She scans the street below -- the sidewalk, the neighbor's front porch, the parked cars. Her gaze lingers on a black sedan at the far end of the cul-de-sac. After a moment, it pulls away. She exhales.

Katie steps closer. She studies Scooter's face -- the dark circles under her eyes, the way her hands keep fidgeting with the hem of her vest. Katie's irritation softens into something closer to concern.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Hey. Seriously. You look terrible.
Did you sleep at all last night?

SCOOTER

Not really.

KATIE

You're scaring me, Scooter. And I
don't scare easy.

Brian shifts his weight from one foot to the other. He crosses his arms, trying to look tough, but his voice cracks slightly when he speaks.

BRIAN

Yeah, well, you're scaring both of
us. I rode my bike over here at
seven in the morning on a Saturday,
so whatever this is, it better be
real.

SCOOTER

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

She looks at them both -- her two best friends in the world -- and for a moment her tough-kid mask slips. Underneath it is a ten-year-old who is genuinely, deeply frightened.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

It has to do with last night.

KATIE

Last night? Does this have
something to do with that lady on
the motorcycle?

Scooter nods slowly. She glances toward the window again, then back.

SCOOTER

She's a spy. At least I think she's a spy. And she says it involves Emperor Galax.

KATIE

Galax?! That made-up guy from your blog?

BRIAN

That Galax dude is just a figment of your slightly demented imagination! Isn't he?

Scooter hesitates. She looks at the floor, then back at her friends. Something in her expression has changed -- doubt mixed with a strange, new certainty.

KATIE

ISN'T HE?

SCOOTER

Apparently not. I'm supposed to meet her tonight at the old warehouse. Eight o'clock. She warned me to come alone. Said it was national security.

BRIAN

Tonight, at eight? Alone? I don't think so!

SCOOTER

But she said she was the only one I could trust.

KATIE

Well, she obviously didn't know about us.

SCOOTER

But as a matter of fact, she did. She told me your lives were in jeopardy.

A long beat. Brian and Katie look at each other. A silent conversation passes between them -- worry, exasperation, but underneath it, loyalty. The kind that comes from years of shared adventures, shared secrets, shared everything.

Katie gives Brian a small, almost imperceptible nod. Brian runs a hand through his messy hair, sighs through his nose, and nods back and pushes his glasses back up into position.

BRIAN

Not without us, you don't.

KATIE

After all, what good would the
Space Marshal be without her two
best "aliens"?

Scooter looks like she might protest.

SCOOTER

Guys, I can't ask you to --

KATIE

You're not asking. We're telling.

BRIAN

Whatever this is -- spy lady,
Galax, national security, whatever --
- you're not walking into it alone.
That's not how we do things.

KATIE

Yeah. Haven't you heard...We're
inscrutable.

(beat)

We'll see you at eight.

For just a moment, Scooter's tough-kid bravado cracks, and we
see genuine, overwhelming gratitude.

SCOOTER

Thanks, guys. I mean it.

As Brian and Katie reach the bedroom door, they turn back.

BRIAN

And don't do anything stupid before
then!

KATIE

Yeah! As difficult as that may be
for you!

Katie gives Scooter a quick, firm nod -- a look that says
I've got your back -- then they exit the bedroom. Their
footsteps recede down the hallway and the stairs.

Scooter stands alone in the quiet room. She takes a deep
breath and moves to her computer desk, sweeping aside an
avalanche of empty Cookie Cadet cookie boxes, wrappers,
crumbs, and Saturn Burger drink cups.

She reaches for the power button – but before her finger can touch it, the monitor FLICKERS TO LIFE on its own. Static, then a crisp video-call image of VERONICA WEBSTER. Her smile is razor-sharp.

VERONICA

Well, well, well. It seems our Space Marshal isn't very good at keeping secrets.

Scooter jerks back in her chair.

SCOOTER

But how did you – the computer was off!

VERONICA

Oh, I've been watching.
(a beat, savoring it)
That tender little moment between you and your friend? Just precious.

Scooter pales.

SCOOTER

What do you want?

VERONICA

Let's skip to the important part.
(closer to camera)
You've dipped your toe into MY pond now. And if you even stub that toe, I will know about it.

Scooter swallows hard.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

If you care about your best girl and her dopey brother at all, you'll be at the warehouse tonight.
(ice-cold)
Alone.
(beat)
Or I won't be held responsible for what happens to them.

Scooter leans in, desperate.

SCOOTER

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

VERONICA

Finally, we agree on something.

The image of Veronica BLINKS OUT, instantly replaced by two SCHOOL YEARBOOK PHOTOS – BRIAN and KATIE, frozen in happy smiles.

Scooter's hand reaches toward the screen–

Both photos suddenly BURST INTO DIGITAL FLAMES, curling and blackening until they're nothing but scrolling ASH on the monitor.

Scooter sits there, lit by the dying glow.

SCOOTER

(quiet, to herself)

What have I done?

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. VERONICA WEBSTER'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - AFTERNOON

An upscale high-rise apartment building catches the afternoon sun, its mirrored glass façade reflecting the skyline. Veronica Webster rides her motorcycle into the underground parking structure.

She parks, pulls off her helmet, shakes out her dark hair, and walks through the dimly lit garage to an elevator. She presses the button. The elevator arrives with a soft chime and the doors slide open. She steps inside. The doors close.

INT. PENTHOUSE LEVEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors open on the top floor. Veronica steps out into a long hallway. Her heels echo on the polished floor as she walks toward a set of double doors at the far end.

Halfway there, another apartment door opens. An **ELDERLY LADY** steps out with a SMALL DOG named **GRACIE** on a leash. The instant Gracie catches sight -- or perhaps scent -- of Veronica, the dog goes absolutely BERSERK. It BARKS uncontrollably, straining against the leash with every ounce of its small body, its legs SCRABBLING on the floor tile.

ELDERLY LADY

Oh my! Gracie! Where are your manners?

She tugs the leash. Gracie ignores her completely, pulling harder.

ELDERLY LADY (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry. I don't know what's come over her. She never acts this way around people.

VERONICA

(saccharin)

What a little sweetheart.

Veronica bends down, extending a manicured hand toward the dog. Gracie lunges, teeth bared, snapping at Veronica's fingers-- but Veronica pulls back with startling, almost inhuman reflexes. The bite misses by a hair. Gracie YELPS in frustration and strains even harder against the leash.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(straightening up, her
smile never wavering))

Feisty. I do admire that in the small ones.

Something in Veronica's tone makes the Elderly Lady pull Gracie a little closer. She hurries toward the elevator, practically dragging the agitated dog behind her.

Veronica watches them go. Her pleasant expression fades to something altogether different -- cold, calculating, appraising. Then she turns and continues to the double doors at the end of the hall.

INT. VERONICA WEBSTER'S PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Veronica unlocks the door and enters. She flicks on the lights to reveal an upscale apartment decorated in highly stylized, futuristic furniture. Everything is sleek, minimal, expensive.

But the most striking feature is the motif. Every design element -- the wall hangings, the room dividers, the light fixtures, the accent pieces, even the pattern on the area rugs -- incorporates WEB-LIKE PATTERNS AND DESIGNS. Elegant and architectural at first glance, but unmistakably arachnid once you really look.

INT. PANTRY - VERONICA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Veronica approaches a set of large pantry doors. Ornate handles. Dark wood. She pauses for just a moment, and a small smile crosses her face.

She swings both doors open wide.

Inside is not a pantry in any conventional sense. It is a walk-in space, floor to ceiling, filled with silk-spun COCOONS. Dozens of them hang from metal racks that line both walls and extend to the back, each one suspended by glistening threads. They are of various sizes -- some no bigger than a breadbox, others disturbingly large, roughly the size and shape of a human being.

All of them sway gently in the air from the pantry doors opening. Several RUSTLE with subtle movement, as though whatever is inside them is shifting. Alive.

Veronica steps inside, walking slowly between the rows. She surveys the display the way a collector might admire a climate-controlled wine cellar -- with pride, with ownership, with anticipation.

VERONICA

My beautiful collection.

She holds the pose for a beat, then straightens up. She takes one last, satisfied look at her collection, steps out, and closes the pantry doors behind her.

The sound of the latch CLICKING shut is the last thing we hear.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Scooter scrolls through the comments on her latest blog post. She reads one aloud:

SCOOTER

(reading)

"Dear Space Marshal: I am a 47-year-old man who lives with three cats and a parrot named Captain Beaksworth. Your blog is the highlight of my week. Please never stop. Signed, Gerald from Tucson."

She stares at the screen.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

Gerald, buddy... you have no idea what you're signing up for.

She closes the laptop. The room goes dark.

FADE OUT.

INT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S LIVING ROOM - THAT EVENING

The television is on, tuned to the local news. Scooter pauses at the bottom of the staircase, one hand on the banister, backpack slung over her shoulder. A NEWS ANCHOR catches her attention.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)

...and 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 reading

"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."

Scooter stares at the screen. A chill runs through her. Her grip tightens on the backpack strap.

SCOOTER

(to herself, barely a
whisper)
Fourteen people...

She clicks off the TV.

EXT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dusk is settling over the neighborhood. The streetlights are beginning to flicker on. Scooter steps outside, reaches into her backpack, pulls out her Razor scooter, snaps it open, and pushes off down the street.

She rides past a UTILITY POLE. Three handmade posters are tacked to it now, layered one over the other: a missing poodle, a missing cat named "CUDDLES," and a missing ferret named "FLASH." Scooter slows as she passes them, her eyes lingering on the desperate, hand-drawn lettering. Then she pushes off harder and picks up speed, her expression grim.

EXT. THE SOCCER MOM'S HOUSE - EVENING

A cheerful suburban house. Well-lit porch. Potted geraniums flanking the front steps. A minivan in the driveway with a "SOCCER MOM ON BOARD" bumper sticker.

A pair of BLACK VANS glide to a stop at the curb, engines idling. Side doors slide open in precise unison. **FIVE COLLECTORS** -- large men in identical black suits and wraparound sunglasses -- step out and approach the house in tight formation. Their movements are coordinated, mechanical, practiced.

One Collector reaches the front door and rings the bell.

The SOCCER MOM partially opens the door, cell phone pressed to her ear, mid-conversation.

SOCCER MOM

Hang on a minute, Ashley.

She listens to Ashley's response, holding up one finger to the Collectors as if they're solicitors who can wait.

SOCCER MOM (CONT'D)

(into phone)

No way, Ash! He did not!

She opens the door fully and addresses the Collectors with the practiced impatience of a woman who has dealt with too many door-to-door salespeople.

SOCCER MOM (CONT'D)

May I help you?

The five Collectors push past her without a word and enter the house.

INT. THE SOCCER MOM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

SOCCER MOM

What do you think you're doing?

(to herself)

Worst sales approach ever.

One Collector draws a futuristic WEB-GUN and aims it directly at her. The Soccer Mom barely reacts. She holds up her index finger -- the universal "just a sec" gesture -- and turns back to her phone.

SOCCER MOM (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Ashley. Hey. I'm gonna have to call you back, hon.

Behind her, **FOUR TEENAGE DAUGHTERS** sit in a row on a large sofa, thumbs flying across their phone screens, completely oblivious to the five armed intruders standing in their living room.

They don't even glance up.

The Collectors aim their weapons. They FIRE simultaneously. A spider web-like substance erupts from the guns in thick, sticky ropes. It wraps around the Soccer Mom and all four teens in seconds, encasing each in a silk cocoon. The cocooned figures topple to the floor, still faintly moving inside their wrappings.

From within the teen cocoons: the unmistakable sound of keyboard CLICKS. Still texting.

From the Soccer Mom's cocoon, we hear a MUFFLED RINGTONE. A beat. Then, incredibly, her muffled voice:

SOCCER MOM (CONT'D)

(from inside her cocoon)

Ashley? ASH! Oh my God, you will NOT believe what just happened. I'm like... wrapped in something. It's actually kind of a cute fabric -- very silky.

(beat)

What? No, I can NOT take a selfie right now, Ashley!

One of the Collectors pauses, looks at the cocoon, and shakes his head slowly.

EXT. THE SOCCER MOM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The five Collectors exit the house single-file, each carrying a cocoon over his shoulder. They march to the waiting vans with military precision, dump their cargo into the vehicles, pile in after them, and the vans accelerate away, disappearing into the growing darkness.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE SMARMY SALES REP'S MOTHER'S CONDO - EVENING

A small residential condo. Decorative flag by the door. Garden gnome on the porch. A black van SCREECHES to a stop out front. The door slides open and two COLLECTORS exit, carrying the same style weapons.

From inside the condo, we hear **TWO VOICES** singing along to karaoke music. They are... not talented. They are absolutely butchering Sonny and Cher's classic *"I Got You, Babe"*

VOICES (O.S.)

(singing, noticeably off key)

"They say we're young and we don't know. We won't find out until we grow..."

(gaining misplaced confidence)

"Well, I don't know if all that's true, 'cause you got me, and baby I got you."

The Collectors ring the doorbell. The singing continues, undeterred.

VOICES (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(singing, very off-key)

"BABE... I GOT YOU BABE... I GOT YOU BABE..."

They ring again. And again. Finally the singing stops and the **SALES REP'S MOTHER** opens the door. She is small, cheerful, and completely unafraid of two enormous men in black suits standing on her porch.

SALES REP'S MOTHER

Oh, my goodness. You must be here to see my son. He's a Sales Rep, you know.

Both Collectors nod silently.

SALES REP'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Here's his card.

She extends a business card with a proud flourish. One Collector instinctively reaches out his massive hand. She places the card gently onto his palm. He stares at it. Then he CRUSHES it in his fist and lets the crumbs of paper fall to the ground.

SALES REP'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Won't you come in? We were singing
karaoke together.

The two Collectors step inside.

INT. THE SMARMY SALES REP'S MOTHER'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

There, seated on the sofa in a pair of ADULT ONESIE PAJAMAS covered in a teddy bear print, is the SMARMY SALES REP. He holds a karaoke microphone in one hand and a mug that reads "WORLD'S GREATEST SON" in the other. He speaks into the mic.

SMARMY SALES REP

(through the karaoke
speaker, with echo and
reverb)

Hey! How's it goin', guys? I'm Walt
Kelley. Care to karaoke? -- It's
oldies night!

He extends the microphone toward the nearest Collector.

The Collector stares at the microphone. A long, uncomfortable beat. Then, to everyone's surprise, the Collector slowly takes the microphone. His partner looks at him in disbelief.

The Collector raises the mic to his lips and, in a deep, rumbling monotone:

COLLECTOR

(singing, barely on key)
"I... got you... babe."

His partner SLAPS the microphone out of his hand. It hits the floor with a SQUEAL of feedback. The singing Collector straightens his sunglasses, embarrassed.

SALES REP'S MOTHER

Oh, how wonderful! A baritone!
Walter, we finally found you a duet
partner!

The Collectors waste no time after that. Two blasts of web-gun fire and both Walt and his mother are wrapped in cocoons before he can hit another note.

From inside the mother's cocoon, a muffled voice:

SALES REP'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

(muffled, from inside her
cocoon)

Walter, dear! Is it just me...

(MORE)

SALES REP'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
or are these extended car warranty
people getting more aggressive?

EXT. THE SALES REP'S MOTHER'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

The Collectors carry their cargo to the van, toss the cocoons inside, climb in, and the van SCREECHES away into the night.

EXT. ANOTHER SUBURBAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A quiet residential street. In the foreground, two metal TRASH CANS sit at the curb. Piled in one of them: several crumpled SATURN BURGER BAGS and empty drink cups.

A Collector's black van rolls into frame, blocking the trash cans from view. We hear the van door SLIDE OPEN. Footsteps on pavement. Then, in the distance, a DOORBELL. A DOOR OPENING. A moment of silence. More footsteps. Muffled thumps.

Then the van door SLAMS SHUT.

The van ROARS away, its turbulent departure sending the Saturn Burger trash tumbling out of the cans and across the street.

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

The rear loading dock of the warehouse is a hive of activity, lit by harsh flood lights that carve pools of bright white out of the surrounding darkness.

Black vans arrive and depart in a well-coordinated rotation -- one pulling in as another pulls out. Dozens of Collectors move with assembly-line efficiency, carrying cocoons of assorted sizes and shapes from the vans into the warehouse. The operation is disturbingly smooth. This is not their first time.

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

Inside the main room, the scale of the operation becomes clear. HUNDREDS of cocoons hang from the rafters and from industrial metal racks, row after row, stretching back into the darkness of the warehouse. Like some grotesque forest of silk stalactites. Collectors move among them, suspending still more cocoons, filling in gaps, making room.

A low, collective HUM of muffled breathing fills the space.

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

Brian and Katie approach the warehouse on their bicycles, pedaling slowly down a narrow alleyway. The decades-old, three-story building looms beside them, taking up nearly an entire city block. Its brick walls are dark with soot and age.

They stop in the shadow of a dumpster near a fire escape ladder that zig-zags up the side of the building. Katie looks up at the building and swallows hard.

KATIE

How are we going to get in there?

Brian pulls a small flashlight from his pocket and aims the beam upward. An OPEN WINDOW sits just off the second-floor fire escape platform, its frame dark.

BRIAN

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

KATIE

Then what do we do once we're inside?

BRIAN

I'm still working on that part of the plan. Just trust me.

KATIE

I don't know who's goofier -- you, or that whack-job Scooter.

Brian grabs the lowest rung of the fire escape ladder and tests it with his weight. It holds, though it groans.

BRIAN

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

KATIE

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

BRIAN

Noted.

Brian starts climbing. Katie takes a last look down the alley -- empty -- and follows.

They reach the second-floor platform. The metal grating flexes slightly under their feet. Brian moves to the open window and peers inside. The loft beyond is dark, cluttered with wooden crates and dusty cardboard boxes. No movement. No sound except the muffled activity from somewhere deeper in the building.

Brian signals Katie. One at a time, they ease through the window, lowering themselves inside. The floorboards CREAK faintly. They freeze. Wait. Nothing.

INT. WAREHOUSE LOFT - NIGHT

They crouch in the darkness, letting their eyes adjust. The loft is vast -- much bigger than it appeared from the outside. Wooden crates are stacked in uneven towers, some reaching nearly to the ceiling. Cardboard boxes with foreign shipping labels line the walls. A fine layer of dust covers everything. The air smells of old wood, machine oil, and something else -- something faintly sweet and chemical that neither of them can identify.

From somewhere deep below, they hear the LOW HUM of machinery.

Katie tugs Brian's sleeve. Along the far wall, a row of small COCOONS hangs from a pipe. One TWITCHES. Then another.

Brian clamps a hand over her mouth to keep her from gasping.

BRIAN

(barely breathing)

Don't look at them. Keep moving.

They crawl on hands and knees through the maze of crates, staying low, keeping their weight distributed to minimize the creaking. Halfway across the loft, Brian raises a fist. Katie freezes.

Below them, through a gap in the floorboards, a COLLECTOR passes directly underneath. Close enough to count the threads on his suit. Close enough to hear his breathing.

COLLECTOR

Perimeter is clear. Standing by for the Marshal's arrival.

He moves on. Katie lets out a slow, silent breath.

They reach the edge of the loft. Below: the warehouse entryway, lit by bare industrial bulbs. Corridors branch in every direction. Cocoons line the walls.

Veronica paces below, her heels CLICKING on concrete. Two Collectors stand behind her like statues.

INT. WAREHOUSE ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Veronica turns to the Collectors.

VERONICA

This "Space Marshal" should be here any moment. You make yourselves scarce while I chat with her. Once I've gotten her information, she's all yours.

The Collectors melt into the shadows.

EXT. STREET LEADING TO THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Scooter rides under intermittent streetlamps, her Razor scooter clicking over the cracked pavement. The warehouse looms ahead, dark and massive against the night sky.

She arrives, folds her scooter, stashes it in her backpack. Adjusts her tin star badge. Takes a breath. Knocks three times.

The heavy warehouse door CREAKS open. She steps inside.

INT. WAREHOUSE ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Dim light. Concrete floors. The faint hum of something mechanical deep within the building.

Veronica emerges from the darkness, heels clicking.

VERONICA

Why, Marshal. I'm so glad you could make it.

SCOOTER

You make it kind of tough for me to say "no."

Veronica circles behind Scooter and catches her backpack strap, tugging her back. She taps her own cheek, mimicking Diane's ritual with chilling precision.

VERONICA

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 packing crate and gestures for her to sit. Veronica circles behind her like a predator.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

You have no idea how important you are. But first, tell me everything you know about Emperor Galax and his plans.

Scooter is filled with a rush of importance. Finally, an adult who takes her seriously.

SCOOTER

I started tracking that varmint months ago. He's pure evil and it's my sworn duty as Space Marshal to stop him.

VERONICA

Quite a way to put it. Tell me more.

INT. WAREHOUSE LOFT - NIGHT

Above, Katie carefully pulls out her phone.

KATIE

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

BRIAN

(whispering)
Make sure your flash is off.

She raises the phone, frames the shot -- Veronica and Scooter below, perfectly lit -- and her fingers fumble. The phone tips forward. She grabs for it. Misses.

INT. WAREHOUSE ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

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

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

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.

VERONICA

You wait right here. Don't even twitch!

She **SPRINTS** up the metal staircase, heels ringing on every step.

INT. WAREHOUSE LOFT - NIGHT

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

BRIAN

Not that way! Follow me!

They reverse course and sprint across the loft.

Below, Scooter hears Veronica charging up the stairs. She grabs her backpack and **BOLTS** through the front doors into the night.

Brian and Katie reach a freight elevator -- an old, industrial cage with a heavy safety gate. Brian **HEAVES** up the gate -- it **STICKS** for a terrible second, rust grinding against rust. Katie throws her weight into it. The gate **SHRIEKS** open. They pile in and **YANK** it down behind them.

Katie slams the **DOWN** button. The old elevator **GROANS**, shudders, and begins its slow descent.

Veronica reaches the gate just as the elevator drops below floor level.

Her red fingernails SLASH through the metal slats, swiping at them like talons. Brian and Katie press against the far wall. The elevator drops below her reach.

VERONICA

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

INT. WAREHOUSE GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

The elevator shudders to a halt. They sprint toward a heavy door marked "COLD STORAGE."

The door is industrial-grade, reinforced. Brian throws his shoulder into it. Bounces off. Katie adds her weight. Together they push. It opens with a SCREECH of rusted hinges.

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

INT. COLD STORAGE - NIGHT

HUNDREDS OF COCOONS hang from floor to ceiling, suspended from metal racks in precise rows. Many are unmistakably human-sized. From every single one: tiny puffs of frozen breath, like a gallery of sleeping ghosts.

KATIE

(barely a whisper)
Oh no... Brian.

She spots labels on the racks -- numbered tags affixed with wire. P-18, P-19, P-20, P-21... She files the system away, her eyes moving quickly, memorizing.

BRIAN

Don't look. Just move.

They hear Veronica's footsteps getting closer, echoing through the corridor. They plunge through the forest of cocoons, pushing past swaying bundles, trying not to touch them, failing.

Veronica arrives at the cold storage doorway. She sees their path marked by gently swinging cocoons. She doesn't follow. Instead, she PULLS the massive door shut with a BOOM. Snaps the padlock.

INT. COLD STORAGE - NIGHT

The overhead lights flicker. Katie and Brian crouch behind packing crates, shivering, breath ragged, visible in great clouds.

KATIE

There's another door over there.

She points across the room. A steel door marked "LOADING BAY ACCESS."

They scramble for it. Brian grabs the handle, THROWS it open - and SLAMS directly into a COLLECTOR standing on the other side.

The Collector reaches for his weapon. Brian spots a FIRE EXTINGUISHER mounted on the wall. He rips it free and BLASTS the Collector full in the face with white chemical spray. The Collector staggers backward, clawing at his eyes.

Brian SWINGS the heavy steel canister with everything he's got.

CLANK!

The Collector drops like a felled tree. Out cold.

KATIE

Ooh. That's gonna leave a mark.

BRIAN

Good! Come on!

They step over the unconscious Collector and bolt into the alley.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

From somewhere inside the warehouse: the ROAR of a motorcycle engine. The warehouse door EXPLODES outward. The rider tears onto the street in a controlled skid, headlight slashing through the darkness, pursuing Scooter.

An energy blast strikes a dumpster as Scooter zips past on her Razor scooter. SPARKS erupt. The metal WARPS, coated in crystallized energy. Designed to immobilize, not kill. Not yet.

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 vanishes into the residential neighborhood, zigzagging through backyards and side streets.

The rider staggers up from the wreckage and steps into a streetlight's pool of light. The face SHIFTS -- Veronica's features MORPH, skin rippling like liquid, bones rearranging beneath the surface, until Lindvall, the Galaxian operative, emerges in her place.

He aims a device at the downed motorcycle. It crackles, sparks, and dies.

Lindvall stands in the glow of the ruined bike, seething.

INT. SCOOTER MURPHY'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Scooter FLIES through her bedroom door, SLAMS it shut, and throws her back against it. Chest heaving. Hands shaking. She leaves the room dark.

She crawls to the window on hands and knees. Peeks through the curtain. The cul-de-sac is empty. No black sedan. No motorcycle.

She stumbles to her desk and reaches for the power button -- but before her finger can touch it, the monitor FLICKERS TO LIFE on its own. Static, then a crisp video-call image of VERONICA WEBSTER. Her smile is razor-sharp.

VERONICA

Well, well, well. It seems our
Space Marshal isn't very good at
keeping secrets.

Scooter jerks back in her chair.

SCOOTER

But how did you -- the computer was
off!

VERONICA

Oh, I've been watching.
(a beat, savoring it)
That tender little moment between
you and your friend? Just precious.

Scooter pales.

SCOOTER

What do you want?

VERONICA

Let's skip to the important part.
(closer to camera)
You've dipped your toe into MY pond
now. And if you even stub that toe,
I will know about it.

Scooter swallows hard.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

If you care about your best girl
and her dopey brother at all,
you'll be at the warehouse tonight.
(ice-cold)
Alone.
(beat)
Or I won't be held responsible for
what happens to them.

Scooter leans in, desperate.

SCOOTER

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

VERONICA

Finally, we agree on something.

The image of Veronica BLINKS OUT, instantly replaced by two
SCHOOL YEARBOOK PHOTOS -- BRIAN and KATIE, frozen in happy
smiles.

Scooter's hand reaches toward the screen --

Both photos suddenly BURST INTO DIGITAL FLAMES, curling and
blackening until they're nothing but scrolling ASH on the
monitor.

Scooter sits there, lit by the dying glow.

SCOOTER

(quiet, to herself)

What have I done?

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Scooter sits rigid in her desk chair, breathing hard. Then
something in her shifts. She pulls her laptop closer and
starts typing furiously.

ON SCREEN: She's cross-referencing Saturn Burger locations with the city's missing persons map. Red dots cluster around every franchise. Her eyes widen.

SCOOTER

(to herself)

They're not random. Every missing person lives within three blocks of a Saturn Burger.

She screenshots the map, saves it to a hidden folder labeled "EVIDENCE," and keeps digging.

INT. SCOOTER'S TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

The old oak tree stands at the property line between the two yards. Its thick branches support a weathered treehouse about twelve feet up.

Inside, the treehouse is small but lived-in. Three beanbag chairs. A milk-crate table. A string of dead Christmas lights are thumbtacked around the perimeter. A poster on the wall reads "SCOOTER'S COMMAND CENTER" in purple marker.

Katie and Brian are already inside. Scooter drops the latch on the door and checks every gap, every knothole, making sure they're sealed in.

KATIE

(softly)

Okay. Tell us everything.

SCOOTER

Short version? Spy lady works for the bad guys. There's a warehouse full of people wrapped in cocoons. And they're coming for us next.

BRIAN

What's the plan?

SCOOTER

She wants to meet me again tomorrow night. Saturn Burger. Right after closing. Alone.

KATIE

Again with the "alone"?

SCOOTER

This time we go in with a real plan. I'm the distraction. You two are the rescue team.

KATIE

(to Brian)

I memorized the cocoon numbering system. P-20 and P-21 -- that's you and me if we get caught.

BRIAN

If anyone touches my sister, I'll --

KATIE

Easy, tough guy. Save it for the goons.

SCOOTER

So. Are we doing this?

KATIE

I'm in. But if I end up inside one of those pods, I'm blaming you.

BRIAN

Same.

SCOOTER

Fair enough. Huddle up.

The three kids lean in close, heads nearly touching, whispering their plan.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. VERONICA WEBSTER'S PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Veronica reclines in a stylized easy chair -- ornate, web-patterned, suspended from the ceiling by glistening cords. She holds a sleek remote control and points it at the massive wall-mounted screen.

Emperor Galax appears.

EMPEROR GALAX

Good evening, Veronica.

VERONICA

Same to you, Emperor.

EMPEROR GALAX

You played your part most exquisitely this afternoon with Markley.

VERONICA

Thank you, sir. I don't think that idiot has any idea that we've met before, or that I work directly for you.

EMPEROR GALAX

I agree. He is quite clueless about our arrangement, and that is exactly how I like it. Once his usefulness has run its course, you may do with him as you see fit.

(beat)

Assuming that appeals to your particular appetite.

VERONICA

"Appeals" is putting it mildly, Emperor. Really more of a craving. Nothing will give me greater satisfaction once our takeover is complete.

EMPEROR GALAX

(sharply, his face
pressing closer to the
camera))

OUR takeover?

VERONICA

My mistake, Emperor. YOUR takeover.

Galax's expression makes it clear this is not a mistake he will tolerate twice.

The doorbell RINGS.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(to Galax)

I have to go, your Highness.
Someone is at the door.

EMPEROR GALAX

Wait! I'm not fin--

Veronica hits the button. The screen goes dark.

VERONICA

What a royal pain.

She rises from the suspended chair and crosses the apartment to the double doors.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Who is it?

From the other side of the door, Lindvall speaks in a perfect imitation of the Elderly Lady's voice:

LINDVALL (O.S.)

(as the Elderly Lady)

It's me, dear. Your neighbor down the hall. I need your help -- there is something wrong with Gracie, my dog.

And then, seamlessly, Lindvall produces a perfect imitation of Gracie's sorrowful WHIMPER from behind the door.

VERONICA

(under her breath)

I hope it's fatal.

(calling out)

Just a moment.

She opens the door. The Elderly Lady stands alone in the hallway, looking small and worried.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Where's your dog?

LINDVALL

(still in the old woman's voice)

Oh, she's right here, dear.

In a flash, Lindvall pulls a HANDGUN from behind his back and aims it directly at Veronica's forehead.

Now in the dog's voice:

LINDVALL (CONT'D)

Bark. Bark bark bark.

He SHOVES Veronica backward. She stumbles and falls to the apartment floor, landing hard.

INT. VERONICA WEBSTER'S PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

As Lindvall steps across the threshold, his disguise melts away. The Elderly Lady's face ripples and MORPHS -- features sharpening, body elongating, until the real Lindvall stands in the apartment. Tall, angular, dangerous. The handgun stays trained on Veronica without wavering.

LINDVALL

Well. For someone supposedly at the top of her game, you made that very easy.

Veronica picks herself up from the floor. She brushes off her sleeves. She is remarkably, unnervingly calm.

VERONICA

I'm flattered by the personal visit.

LINDVALL

Enjoy it while it lasts.

VERONICA

Oh, but you've saved me a lot of trouble. Coming all this way. Now we can have a proper conversation.

LINDVALL

This isn't a social call.

VERONICA

It never is with your type. So. What brings you to my door, besides your charming personality?

LINDVALL

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

VERONICA

I don't have much yet. I plan on getting most of it later tonight.

LINDVALL

Your boss Markley feels you are now --

(beat)

How did he put it? Extremely "expendable."

VERONICA

(not even slightly rattled)

Is that a fact?

LINDVALL

That's a fact. Here's another one. When I show up to handle the Murphy kid, she'll think she's meeting with you.

VERONICA

Impressive. You've done your homework.

LINDVALL

After I take care of you, the Murphy kid is next on my list.

Letting his guard slip for just a moment, Lindvall turns his back to Veronica and takes a step deeper into the apartment, looking around at the web-patterned décor with casual curiosity.

LINDVALL (CONT'D)

Nice place you have here, Veronica.
It's a shame you won't --

In an instant, the room TRANSFORMS. Behind Lindvall, in the shadows, Veronica's silhouette SWELLS -- her limbs multiply, her form expands and reshapes, growing massive and alien. Eight legs. Glistening body. Multiple eyes catching the light. A **GIANT SPIDER** rises silently behind the unsuspecting assassin.

Before Lindvall can even begin to turn, the spider STRIKES.

The effect is instantaneous. Lindvall's entire body goes RIGID, every muscle locking at once. His gun falls from frozen fingers and clatters to the floor.

And then the silk comes. Thick, glistening strands erupt from the creature and spiral around Lindvall with terrifying speed -- his arms, his legs, his torso, his neck. Layer after layer, wrapping him in seconds. He doesn't fall so much as he is encased where he stands, transformed from a dangerous operative into a motionless, silk-wrapped cocoon in the space of a few heartbeats.

The cocoon stands upright for one frozen moment. Then it TOPPLES to the apartment floor with a heavy, muffled THUD.

The spider silhouette CONTRACTS, shifts, and reshapes. Limbs retract. The mass shrinks. And Veronica Webster steps back into the light, fully herself again. She adjusts a strand of hair behind her ear, as though she has just finished a minor household chore.

VERONICA

You've just made my point for me.
Guns are so overrated.

She looks down at the cocooned Lindvall on her apartment floor. She nudges the cocoon with the toe of her stiletto heel. It doesn't move.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Well. That's one loose end wrapped up nicely.

She steps over the cocoon and walks toward her kitchen.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I do love a tidy workspace.

She pauses in the hallway and catches her reflection in the polished surface of a decorative mirror. For a moment, the mask drops entirely. The woman staring back is not an operative. Not an asset. Something older. Hungrier. Her canine teeth become more prominent.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(to her reflection)

The Emperor thinks he's acquiring a planet. But planets change hands. And the hand that wraps the silk... controls the web.

She adjusts a strand of hair, and the mask slides back into place. The predator becomes the professional once more.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. NSG COMPLEX - LATER THAT NIGHT

The NSG Headquarters building sits behind high fences and guard stations, floodlit and imposing. Veronica drives her motorcycle past the guards at the main gate without slowing. They wave her through. She parks at the front entrance, pulls off her helmet, and walks confidently up the stone steps and through the main doors.

INT. CHIEF JASON MARKLEY'S OFFICE - NSG - NIGHT

Markley is working late. The office is dim, lit by his desk lamp and the blue glow of a computer screen. Papers and reports are spread across his desk. He is alone.

The office door opens. The silhouette of Veronica Webster appears in the doorway. The rhythmic CLICK of her footsteps on the marble floor announces her approach.

Markley looks up from his paperwork.

CHIEF MARKLEY

What brings you here at this hour?

He returns his attention to his work, shuffling pages.

Veronica reaches his desk. She doesn't sit. She stands opposite him with perfect posture and an energy that is new -- focused, deliberate, all business. No warmth. No small talk. This is a woman with an agenda.

VERONICA

I've been doing some thinking.
About you. About your future.

That gets him. Markley sets his pen down and looks up over the top of his reading glasses.

CHIEF MARKLEY

My future?

VERONICA

This takeover plan is going to succeed. We both know that. The question is -- what happens to you when it does?

Markley leans back slightly, intrigued despite himself.

CHIEF MARKLEY

I know exactly where I'll stand.
Right where the Emperor wants me.

VERONICA

And you're satisfied with that?
Taking orders forever? Following
someone else's playbook for the
rest of your career?

She walks slowly around the side of his desk. Not seductive. Strategic. Like a chess player circling the board.

CHIEF MARKLEY

I'm nobody's errand boy.

VERONICA

Of course you're not. That's
exactly my point. You're a leader,
Markley. The man who delivered an
entire planet to Galax should have
a real seat at the table. Not a
folding chair in the back of the
room.

Markley studies her. He's suspicious -- but he can't deny that what she's saying appeals to something deep inside him. Something hungry.

CHIEF MARKLEY

What exactly are you suggesting?

VERONICA

An alliance. Your authority and connections. My unique talents. Partners. Equals. The Emperor gets his planet, and we sit at the top of the food chain.

She comes to a stop behind his chair. Markley turns his head, trying to track her movement.

CHIEF MARKLEY

And what's in it for you?

VERONICA

Power. Same as you. The difference is, I'm honest about wanting it.

Markley closes his eyes. A slow, ambitious smile spreads across his face.

CHIEF MARKLEY

Partners. I like the sound of that.

VERONICA

(standing directly behind
his chair, her voice low
and deliberate)
I thought you might.

Markley's eyes are still closed, savoring the moment.

And then we see it -- a brief WINCE of pain across Markley's face. His expression freezes. His eyes flutter open, glassy and unfocused. His body goes slack in the chair, arms dropping to his sides.

Behind him, a tiny STINGER retracts from Veronica's index fingernail, withdrawing from the base of Markley's neck.

Two Collectors materialize silently from the shadows at the edges of the room. They step forward, draw their web-guns, and FIRE -- encasing the unconscious Markley in layer after layer of cocoon webbing until he is completely, utterly unrecognizable. Just another silk-wrapped bundle.

The two Collectors hoist the cocoon between them and carry it toward the office door.

Veronica watches them go.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Take him to the warehouse. Put him with the others in my private collection.

The Collectors exit with their cargo.

Veronica stands alone in Markley's empty office. She looks at his desk -- his papers, his lamp, his coffee mug still warm. All the trappings of authority. She picks up his nameplate, reads it, and sets it back face down.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Partners.

She smiles to herself and walks out.

EXT. NSG COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

The black van carrying the cocooned Markley races past the gate and onto the main road, taillights disappearing into the night.

A beat later, Veronica exits the same gate on her motorcycle. She accelerates hard, pops the front wheel up in a wheelie, and blazes down the road -- a dark figure against the darker sky, triumphant and untouchable.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. MURPHY HOUSE - KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING

Morning light floods the small kitchen. SCOOTER, BRIAN, and KATIE sit at the kitchen table, inhaling stacks of pancakes. Syrup drips from forks. Glasses of orange juice half-empty.

DIANE hums softly at the stove in a fluffy bathrobe, spatula in hand, flipping another golden pancake onto a serving plate. A fresh pot of coffee steams beside her.

BRIAN

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

DIANE

Thank you, Brian. Secret's a pinch of nutmeg.

She sets the plate down and studies the three of them over her coffee mug. Something's off. They're too quiet. Too focused on their food.

DIANE (CONT'D)

You three have been awfully quiet this morning. That usually means trouble.

Katie freezes mid-bite, fork suspended. Under the table, Scooter KICKS her shin.

KATIE

(flinching)
Ow!

SCOOTER

Us? Trouble? Never.

Brian reaches for the syrup bottle and knocks it over. He grabs it -- but not before syrup pools across the table and drips onto his lap.

BRIAN

YEOW! That's hot!

He leaps to his feet, dabbing at his jeans with a napkin. Diane calmly hands him a damp dish towel.

DIANE

Careful. That's real maple. It can get pretty sticky.

They wolf down the rest and bolt from their chairs, dishes clattering.

SCOOTER

Gotta go, Mom!

They dash out the back door. SLAM. The screen door bounces twice.

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

DIANE

(to herself)

I hope they find something interesting to do.

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EXT. FIFTH PRECINCT POLICE STATION - LATER

A squat brick building with a tired flagpole out front. An American flag hangs limp in the still air.

Scooter, Brian, and Katie park their rides -- scooter and bicycles -- against the railing and push through the heavy glass doors.

INT. FIFTH PRECINCT POLICE STATION - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A large uniformed cop, SERGEANT O'MALLEY, reads a newspaper behind an imposing front counter.

His meaty hand fishes blindly into a box of "KRISPY KARB DOUGHNUTS" and snags one. It disappears behind the paper. Crumbs rain onto the counter.

SCOOTER

Excuse me, SIR!

O'Malley folds down his paper. Crumbs ring his mouth. Heavy Irish accent, muffled by a mouthful of doughnut.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

What brings you three fine citizens to my humble precinct?

SCOOTER

We want to report a crime.

KATIE

Spying!

BRIAN

James Bond kinda spying!

O'Malley sets down the paper and peers over the counter at them. His expression is patient but skeptical.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

James Bond! Well, that is exciting.
(beat)
Did either of you two actually hear any spy business?

KATIE

Well... not exactly.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

So Ms. Scooter's the only one?
(leaning forward)
And has your friend ever been prone to telling "whoppers"?
Exaggeratin'? Purple unicorns?

SCOOTER

It's the truth! The fate of the world rests on -- it all has to do with Emperor Galax!

O'Malley blinks.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

And who is this Emperor "Reflux"?

SCOOTER

It's GALAX! And Galaxia is out there -- in deep space somewhere. There's a warehouse full of people wrapped in cocoons and men in black suits and a lady spy on a motorcycle and --

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

Cocoons! Men in black! Motorcycles! A lady spy?

(chokes on his coffee)
He mops his uniform with the newspaper, struggles to his feet, and points a thick finger toward the doors.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY (CONT'D)

That's it! I've heard enough malarkey! Try the FBI, the CIA, or the blessed Cookie Cadets! Quit wasting my time!

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

KATIE

(under her breath)
Busy getting ready for a massive coronary, doughnut breath.

They shuffle toward the exit.

EXT. FIFTH PRECINCT POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

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

BRIAN

Now what, Scooter?

SCOOTER

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

Brian's arms cross. Katie won't meet her eyes.

BRIAN

(sharper than usual)
Maybe Sergeant Doughnut-Hole was right. Maybe it IS a bunch of malarkey.

KATIE

Brian and I never heard your lady spy say a word. We just heard about it from you.

SCOOTER

You guys don't believe me?

A beat. The silence is worse than any answer.

KATIE

We need a break, Scooter. A real one.

Brian and Katie mount their bikes. Katie looks back -- not angry. Tired.

BRIAN

See ya around.

They pedal away.

SCOOTER

Guys!!! GUYS!!!

The bikes disappear around the corner. The street goes quiet. Scooter stands alone on the sidewalk.

She looks down at the TIN STAR BADGE pinned to her vest. Her fingers trace its edges. For the first time, 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 (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Some Space Marshal. I dragged them into this -- and I can't even drag them out.

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

INT. VERONICA'S PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - DUSK

The sky outside the floor-to-ceiling windows burns orange and purple. Veronica sits in her web-patterned chair, phone to her ear.

VERONICA

Jacoby? Those two kids. Tonight.
Done by seven. Don't fail me.

She ends the call and sets the phone down with a decisive
CLICK.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(to herself)
With no more interference, I'll
have that little buckaroo all to
myself.

She crosses to the window and watches the sun sink below the
rooftops. A thin smile.

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

A modest two-story house on a tree-lined street; next door to
Scooter's home. Porch light on. Two bicycles lay in the
driveway.

A BLACK VAN screeches to a stop at the curb. Two COLLECTORS
exit -- large men in identical black suits and sunglasses.
They move with mechanical precision up the walkway.

They ring the bell.

KATIE (O.S.)

Listen, Scooter. If that's you, do
yourself a favor and go home!

A heavy KNOCK.

Katie YANKS the door open.

KATIE (CONT'D)

I SAID, GO --

Her eyes go huge. The Collectors barge past her without a
word. The door SLAMS shut behind them.

From inside: a MUFFLED SCREAM. A CRASH. Then silence.

Moments later, the front door opens. Two Collectors emerge,
each carrying a COCOON -- one larger, one smaller. They load
them into the van with practiced efficiency.

Doors SLIDE shut. Engine ROARS. The van disappears into the
gathering darkness.

The porch light flickers. The house is empty.

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scooter sits at her desk, eyes red, posture hunched. Through her window -- TIRES SQUEALING. She hurries to the glass and presses her face against it. A black van speeds away, taillights shrinking into the dusk.

Her stomach drops.

SCOOTER
(barely a 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 sits at the top of the page:

"THE UNIVERSE IS IN GOOD HANDS."

Scooter stares at it, shaken.

SCOOTER
(under her breath)
Some hero. I'm the one who put them
in danger.

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

ON SCREEN: A fresh post begins to populate, 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 and just looks at the words.

One breath. Two.

SCOOTER
(quiet, deciding)
No more pretending.

She hits ENTER.

The post WHOOSHES live.

MONTAGE - COOKIE CADETS MOBILIZE:

INT. VARIOUS BEDROOMS / KITCHENS / LIVING ROOMS - EVENING

Cell phones BUZZ and PING across the city in rapid succession.

A **FRECKLED CADET** sits cross-legged on her bedroom floor, surrounded by textbooks. Her phone lights up. She reads the message. Her eyes go wide. She slams her textbook shut with a BANG.

A **TALL CADET** at a kitchen table mid-dinner glances at her phone under the table. She 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.

INT. VARIOUS BEDROOMS - EVENING

Hands yank open closet doors. Cookie Cadet uniforms fly off hangers.

A **CADET** pulls a DUFFEL BAG from under her bed and unzips it with purpose. She loads it with military precision: boxes of Skinny Mints, Peanut Butter Poppers, Doodle-Wackers -- stacked tight, labels out, like ammunition in a bandolier.

ANOTHER CADET tests the strength of her COOKIE CADET SASH by wrapping it around both fists and SNAPPING it taut. It holds. She nods. Coils it and stuffs it in her bag.

A **THIRD CADET** deftly uses her COOKIE CADET SASH like a whip (ala Indiana Jones), cracking it over her head three times in quick succession. Each "crack" snaps away individual stuffed animals seated on the edge of her bed. 100% accuracy.

A **FOURTH CADET** adjusts her BERET (that looks like a giant chocolate chip cookie) in the bathroom mirror. Tilts it left. Tilts it right. Tilts it again. Locks eyes with her own reflection. Perfect.

She pulls on BLACK COMBAT GLOVES -- snaps the wrists tight -- and CRACKS HER KNUCKLES, one hand at a time.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - EVENING

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

Cadets MOUNT THEIR BICYCLES in a wave -- kickstands flipping, pedals churning, tires hitting pavement in formation.

They ride in packs, berets low, duffel bags strapped across their backs, cutting through the dusk like a pint-sized peloton.

EXT. COOKIE CADET TROOP HEADQUARTERS (CHURCH PARKING LOT) - EVENING

A beat-up **PASSENGER VAN** idles under a flickering streetlight. The sliding door is open. Engine rumbling.

The **TROOP LEADER** -- a no-nonsense woman in a khaki vest covered in merit badges -- stands at the door with a **CLIPBOARD**, checking names off as each Cadet arrives.

TROOP LEADER

Name. Rank. Cookies packed.

ARRIVING CADET

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

TROOP LEADER

Roger that! In! Move!

The Cadet dives into the van. The next one steps up instantly.

SECOND CADET

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

TROOP LEADER

That's the spirit! In!

Cadets pour in with military speed -- each one called, confirmed, and loaded in under two seconds. The Troop Leader doesn't look up from her clipboard. She doesn't need to. Precision at its best.

The last Cadet scrambles aboard. The Troop Leader slaps the side of the van **TWICE**. The door **SLIDES** shut.

She walks to the driver's seat. Climbs in. Adjusts her rearview mirror. A dozen determined faces stare back at her.

TROOP LEADER (CONT'D)

Buckle up, ladies. Nobody sells more cookies than Troop 514. And nobody messes with our customers. **LET'S MOVE OUT!!!**

She FLOORS it. Tires SQUEAL. The van FISHTAILS out of the parking lot and rockets into the night.

END OF MONTAGE.

EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - EVENING

The warehouse looms against the darkening sky. Black Collector vans stream into the rear delivery area, headlights cutting through the gloom.

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

Scooter finds a side door. She tests the handle. Unlocked. She slips inside.

INT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Dark. Vast. But alive with activity.

Scooter climbs a rusted metal ladder to a catwalk high above the warehouse floor. Below, Collectors shuttle fresh cocoons alongside HUNDREDS of others -- row after row, hanging from industrial racks like suits in a dry cleaner's.

She crawls along the catwalk on hands and knees, staying low.

Below, two Collectors -- **JACOBY** and **MORSE** -- approach **MACHEK**, a burly Collector with a clipboard and a pen behind his ear.

MORSE

Here's those two kids from Cedar Lane. Webster's orders.

MACHEK

(checking his list)
P-20 and P-21. They're Webster's personal specimens, so don't let anything happen to 'em.

(lowering his voice)
Just FYI...Galax's plan has been moved up. Less than twenty-four hours before the invasion.

From her vantage point, Scooter processes what she's heard. Her knuckles go white on the catwalk railing.

SCOOTER

(to herself)
They've got Brian and Katie.

(MORE)

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

(beat)

And it's all my fault.

She reaches into her jeans pocket and pulls out the TIN STAR BADGE. Holds it up. The dim warehouse light catches its surface -- scuffed, dented, a child's toy.

She turns it over in her fingers. Remembers pinning it on for the first time. Remembers Brian and Katie rolling their eyes. Remembers Diane shaking her head with a tired smile.

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

Real people. Real danger.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Real or not... they need me.

She pins the badge back on. Presses it flat against her vest. Holds her palm over it for one long beat, as if making a vow.

Then she moves.

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

The Saturn Burger is closed for the night. Exterior sign lights blaze, casting garish shadows across the empty parking lot. The giant SATURN REPLICA on the roof rotates slowly.

Scooter approaches. Backpack over one shoulder. Badge on her vest. She pulls on the doors -- unlocked.

She cautiously steps inside.

INT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Dim overheads cast eerie shadows across the empty booths and tables. Chairs are stacked on some tables. The fryers are cold. The place smells of old grease and floor cleaner.

VERONICA WEBSTER sits at a corner table in the gloom. Perfectly still. Waiting.

VERONICA

At last. Just you and me.

SCOOTER

Just you and me.

Scooter walks to the table. Sets her backpack down. Doesn't sit.

VERONICA

No buddies. Just straight talk
between us gals. Right, Marshal?

Scooter's speech slips into her cowboy drawl -- an old habit,
a comfort.

SCOOTER

That's right, ma'am, but I ain't no
--

(catches herself)
I'm not a Marshal. I'm just a kid.

VERONICA

From what I've read, you're the
roughest-toughest hombre to ever
battle this Galax fellow.

SCOOTER

That's what got me into this
trouble. I made the whole thing up.
Started blogging my fantasy
adventures, got a following -- kids
at school, sci-fi nuts, thirty-year-
old guys living in their mother's
basements. Needed an alien name for
my adventures, and I found one.

VERONICA

"Found one"?

Scooter puts her backpack on the table and unzips it.

SCOOTER

See? Proof.

She pulls out a partially-rusted, one-gallon can of "GALAX"
brand insect and bug killer. On the label: the image of a
large dead BLACK WIDOW SPIDER.

Veronica LURCHES back. Her chair SCREECHES across the tile.
She recoils as if the can were a live grenade.

VERONICA

What's THAT?!

SCOOTER

Bug spray. Found it in our garage.
"Galax" insect poison.

(MORE)

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
(turning the can so the
label faces Veronica)
For killing spiders.

A bead of FLUORESCENT-GREEN SWEAT oozes from Veronica's temple. It trails down her cheek and drips onto the table.

Scooter stares at the green droplet. Something clicks behind her eyes.

VERONICA
Put that away! NOW!

SCOOTER
(not moving)
Are you... sweating green?

VERONICA
GET THAT AWAY FROM ME!!!

Veronica stands violently, KNOCKING her chair across the room. It SHATTERS against the wall.

And then she begins to TRANSFORM.

Her arms elongate, joints popping and cracking. Her hands spread into jointed appendages. Her canine teeth morph into glistening FANGS. Six additional legs ERUPT from her torso, ripping through her leather jacket. A dagger-like STINGER emerges from her swelling abdomen. On its center: the RED HOURGLASS of a black widow.

VERONICA is now a MUTANT BLACK WIDOW SPIDER -- ten times her human size. She fills half the restaurant. Her cluster of eyes lock onto Scooter.

Every instinct screams RUN.

Scooter's hands shake. Her knees lock. Her breath comes in short, shallow gasps.

But she looks the monster dead in its cluster of eyes. She grabs the can of bug spray and SHOVES it in her backpack.

SCOOTER
(barely a whisper)
Be brave. Be brave. Be brave.

Then she RUNS for her life.

A thick stream of WEBBING seals the front doors before she reaches them. She SKIDS and pivots.

A frantic chase erupts through the restaurant. Veronica fires web-blasts and stinger strikes. Scooter DUCKS behind tables, SLIDES across the counter on her belly, DEFLECTS a stinger with her backpack.

She VAULTS over the condiment station. A stinger SMASHES through the napkin dispenser where her head was a half-second ago. Ketchup and mustard EXPLODE.

Scooter scrambles behind the serving counter. Dead end.

Cornered.

The spider advances, massive legs clicking on the tile floor. The stinger arcs high. Draws back. Lunges.

Scooter holds her backpack across her stomach, closes her eyes, and BRACES.

The stinger strikes DEAD CENTER.

The sound of metal PUNCTURED.

As the stinger retracts, a BLAST of liquid -- Galax insect killer -- SPRAYS from the punctured can inside the backpack.

Veronica SCREAMS -- AN INHUMAN, PIERCING SHRIEK that rattles every window in the building.

VERONICA

Ahhhhhhhhh! It BURNS!!

The spider WRITHES and CONVULSES, destroying the restaurant interior. Tables SPLINTER. Light fixtures CRASH. The condiment station EXPLODES.

Scooter races to the front doors, tears away the webbing with both hands, and HURLS her backpack at the thrashing spider. The remaining poison SPLASHES across Veronica's body.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Ahhhhhhhhh! AHHHHHHH!

Scooter, covered in webbing and ketchup and sweat, BURSTS through the doors into the night.

EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A MASSIVE CONVOY -- vans, SUVs, station wagons, a church passenger van with a dented bumper, even Cookie Cadets on Big Wheels -- arrives like the cavalry. They SCREECH to a halt in a ragged semicircle.

Doors FLY open.

An ARMY OF GIRLS in Cookie Cadet uniforms STORMS out -- berets on, duffel bags swinging, faces set with determination. Dozens of them. Then dozens more.

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - NIGHT

National Guard vehicles arrive. Humvees. Troop transports.

The leader: **LIEUTENANT MORGAN**, five-foot-nothing, helmet two sizes too big, sliding over her eyes every few seconds. Her only weapon -- a chrome WHISTLE she wears around her neck.

She blows it with reckless abandon.

LIEUTENANT MORGAN
TWEET!!! Gimme a perimeter around
the warehouse! NOW!! BATTLE
STATIONS!

INT./EXT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cookie Cadets FLOOD through the warehouse doors and immediately OVERWHELM the Collectors.

Total chaos ensues, like someone kicked over an angry ant hill.

A **TINY CADET** KICKS a Collector in the shins so hard he hops on one foot, howling. Two more Cadets PELT him with a barrage of Skinny Mints until he drops.

One **WESTERN CADET** RIDES THE BACK of a Collector like a wild bronco, using her merit badge sash as reins and waving her beret like a bareback rider, as he runs wildly into stacked crates.

A **FIERCE COOKIE CADET** stands on an overturned crate, directing her squad like a tiny special ops commander.

FIERCE COOKIE CADET
Skinny Mints -- FIRE!

A BARRAGE of cookies pelts a Collector from three directions, like rounds from a machine gun. His hands go up in surrender.

The **SMALLEST CADETS** -- can't be older than six -- stretch a JUMP ROPE across a corridor at ankle height. A fourth cadet waves Cosmic Macaroons like bait.

TINY CADET

Hey, mister! Free samples!

A Collector charges. Hits the rope. Goes down FACE-FIRST into shipping crates. The tiny Cadets PILE ON HIM like birds on a wire.

Two Collectors attempt a last stand near the cold storage. But a WAVE of Cadets surges from three directions -- some riding on hand dollies, others swinging from cocoon racks like little Tarzans; even one operating a forklift.

The cornered Collectors look at each other. Drop their weapons. Sit down on the concrete floor, with hands on the tops of their heads. Total surrender.

CORNERED COLLECTOR

I didn't sign up for this.

OTHER CORNERED COLLECTOR

I LOVE those cookies!! Don't tell anyone!

A Cadet marches up and SLAPS a sticker on his forehead: "**I GOT CLOBBERED.**" She hands them sleeves of the cookies, and they SMILE in appreciation.

Lieutenant Morgan appears in the warehouse doorway, whistle between her teeth.

LIEUTENANT MORGAN

TWEEET! All hostiles accounted for and subdued! No cadet casualties reported!

Remaining Collectors flee into the custody of the Guard outside, hands raised, covered in cookie crumbs and shame.

INT. A. RACHNID'S WAREHOUSE - COLD STORAGE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Scooter pushes through the heavy cold storage door. A BLAST of freezing air. Her breath turns to white vapor.

HUNDREDS of cocoons hang from floor to ceiling. Soldiers and Cadets work side by side, cutting people free. Freed prisoners blink in the harsh light, shivering, confused but alive.

Pets tumble out of smaller cocoons -- a GOLDEN RETRIEVER licks a soldier's face, a TABBY CAT grooms itself as if nothing happened.

Scooter surveys the aftermath. Cadets gather around her.

SCOOTER

Thanks, everyone. You really saved the day.

Two Troop Leaders rush over and HUG her.

COOKIE CADET LEADER #1

Great idea putting out the call on your blog.

COOKIE CADET 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.

She reaches up and pulls at the webbing on P-20. Tears it with her fingers, rips it with her teeth. Brian TUMBLES to the floor -- dazed, disheveled, blinking.

She attacks P-21. Katie spills out, hair matted with silk, shivering.

Scooter throws her arms around both of them. Fierce. Tight. Not letting go.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

Brian! Katie! I thought I'd never see you again!

A long moment. Nobody speaks. Katie's voice, when it comes, is smaller than usual.

KATIE

We're sorry. We should've believed you.

BRIAN

We were the fools, not you.

SCOOTER

Forget it. You're here. That's all that matters.

Katie pulls a strand of webbing from her hair and flicks it away.

KATIE

So do we believe you now?
 (looking around at the
 warehouse, the cocoons,
 the soldiers))
 Yeah. I'd say we believe you now.

BRIAN

What happened while we were in
 those things?

SCOOTER

Giant spider, can of bug spray, two
 hundred Cookie Cadets.

BRIAN

...I have so many questions.

CRASH!!!

SHARDS OF GLASS rain down from the skylights. The crowd
 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 that shakes the building.

Her cluster of eyes sweeps the room. Locks on Scooter.

She fires a WEB-BLAST. It misses Scooter by inches and seals
 a doorway shut.

SCOOTER

There! Grab those!

She points to abandoned Collector WEB-BLASTER GUNS scattered
 on the floor. They each grab one.

Scooter positions herself at twelve o'clock. Katie at four.
 Brian at eight.

A 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 spider WOBBLES. 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. Eight legs coiled to strike.

BRIAN

RUN!

They FLEE.

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 of the demolished restaurant, breathing hard. Brian and Katie skid in from opposite directions. Above them, the giant SATURN REPLICA on the roof tilts at a dangerous angle, mounting bolts groaning.

Scooter looks up. Looks at her friends. The plan lands.

SCOOTER

(fast, breathless)

She thinks she's above everybody.

(a small, fierce grin)

Let's see how she likes being
underneath it.

KATIE

How?

Scooter points: roof, Saturn sign, mounting bolts, asphalt.

SCOOTER

Brian -- you're the trigger. Get on that roof and find the busted bolts. When I say drop, you drop it.

BRIAN

Got it.

SCOOTER

Katie -- second lure. If she splits her attention, we lose. Keep her eyes on us.

KATIE

And you?

SCOOTER

I'm the bait.

Brian and Katie share a look. Then nod.

BRIAN

Backup, not brakes.

They scatter. Brian SCRAMBLES up a fire escape toward the Saturn replica. Katie ducks behind a planter, web-blaster ready. Scooter takes the center of the parking lot. Back against the wall. A perfect target.

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The spider rounds the corner. Sees Scooter, alone, framed beneath the teetering Saturn logo. Eight legs unfold. Eight eyes narrow.

VERONICA

(a 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.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)
(shouting up)

NOW, BRIAN! DROP IT!

Veronica's stinger SLAMS into the wall above Scooter's head, embedding deep into the brick. Mortar CRACKS.

On the roof: BRIAN drives a length of pipe into the last failing mounting bolt. POP. The Saturn replica WOBBLES.

Katie FIRES a web-blast across Veronica's eyes -- blinding her.

KATIE

EYES UP HERE, SPIDER!

Veronica RIPS her stinger free, rears back for a killing blow. Scooter dives and rolls.

A MASSIVE SHADOW passes over the spider. She 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 GEYSER of fluorescent-green spider guts ERUPTS in every direction -- a towering column of slime that rains down across three city blocks, drenching everything and everyone.

Scooter lies flat on the pavement, arms over her head. Green slime drips from every surface.

She lifts her head. Wipes slime from her eyes.

The Saturn logo is embedded in the asphalt. Beneath it: a spreading pool of neon green.

IT'S OVER.

EXT. AREA BETWEEN SATURN BURGER AND WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE:

A) **LIEUTENANT MORGAN**, DRENCHED in fluorescent-green slime from head to toe, raises her whistle to her lips. TWEET. A SLIME BUBBLE inflates from the whistle's bell and POPS, splattering her chin.

B) **TWO NATIONAL GUARDSMEN**, coated in green slime, lean against a Humvee.

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1

I hate that whistle.

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #2

Yeah. It blows!

He offers an open box of cookies.

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1

Cookie?

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #2

Ooooh! Peanut Butter Poppers! My faves!

C) The **SOCCER MOM**, slimed head to toe, stands on the sidewalk, phone pressed to her ear. Behind her, her **FOUR DAUGHTERS** sit on a curb, texting -- green thumbs flying.

SOCCER MOM

No, Ashley. I think I look hot in green!

HAILEY, the oldest, doesn't stop texting.

HAILEY

Yeah. Right, Mom. You're soooo "hot."

SOCCER MOM

Shut up, Hailey!!!

D) **CHUCK** wanders through the chaos, dazed and dripping green, bumping into people, still holding up two fingers.

CHUCK

I'm number TWO! I'm STILL number TWO!

E) **WALT KELLEY** and his **MOTHER**, both drenched, stand in the street sharing a warm embrace.

MOTHER

Let's go home, son. I'll make you
some nice warm cocoa, and we can
fire up the karaoke machine.

WALT KELLEY (SALES REP)

With little marshmallows?

F) **MRS. GILPIN** sits on the curb, soaked in green slime,
calmly grading student exams through slime-splattered
bifocals. She marks Chuck's paper 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 above
50.

She flips to the next paper. An unreadable green smear.
Shrugs. Gives it an A.

G) The **ELDERLY LADY** from Veronica's building sits on a bench
with **GRACIE** the dog in her lap, both green. Gracie shakes
slime off her ears. 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.

H) **SERGEANT O'MALLEY** stands in the middle of the street,
uniform dripping green, doughnut box tucked under his arm. He
surveys the mayhem -- the slimed soldiers, the Cookie Cadets,
the freed prisoners, the flattened spider, the embedded
Saturn logo.

He bites a slime-coated doughnut. Chews slowly.

SERGEANT O'MALLEY

I'm gonna need a bigger cup of
coffee.

A little person dressed as a **LEPRECHAUN**, covered in slime and
webbing, wanders into frame. He stops near Sergeant O'Malley,
and they make eye contact. There is a long, silent pause, and
then

LEPRECHAUN

(to O'Malley; in a heavy
Irish Brogue)
Erin go Bragh!

The "Leprechaun" plants a vicious "kick" on Sergeant O'Malley's shin and wanders off. O'Malley GRIMACES in pain.

END OF MONTAGE.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - AERIAL VIEW - CONTINUOUS

Across the city, Saturn replicas atop every remaining Saturn Burger location begin to HUM. They rotate. Spin faster. One by one, they LIFT OFF like UFOs -- rising into the darkness, accelerating, vanishing into the night sky as points of light among the stars.

THE EARTH IS SAVED.

EXT. SATURN BURGER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

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, nearly tripping on a merit badge sash.

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 -- the warehouse with its doors blown off, the Guard vehicles, the Cookie Cadets, the freed prisoners wrapped in blankets -- and says nothing for a long beat.

Then something shifts in her face. Not shock. Not anger. Recognition.

DIANE

(quiet)

I thought your Space Marshal stories were just a way to escape.

(beat)

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?
(beat)
Brave?

Scooter stares at her mother. A long beat. Then a small, tired, triumphant smile.

She steps forward and taps Diane's cheek with one slime-covered finger.

SCOOTER
You know the drill first, 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.

A nearby NATIONAL GUARDSMAN, dripping slime, makes a face. Diane doesn't even glance at him.

DIANE
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. She holds on tight.

Brian and Katie watch. Katie has tears she'll deny later. Brian finds something fascinating on the ground. It's a sleeve of cookies.

He tears it open and offers one to DIANE.

BRIAN
Cookie, Mrs. "M"?

KATIE
I'll say one thing. You gotta admit -- that took a lot of "guts."

They all look at the green splatter zone. Brian groans.

BRIAN
You showed that spider who's boss.

SCOOTER

I'm the idiot who got us into this mess.

KATIE

Yeah, but look around.

As Katie describes the situations, we see the corresponding visuals:

KATIE (CONT'D)

Freed prisoners reuniting with families... Cadets celebrating... trading merit badges.... Pets finding owners... Even a beat-up station wagon of THIRTY-YEAR-OLD NERDS handing out water bottles.

(a beat)

Most important. You saved US. Maybe the WHOLE WORLD.

SCOOTER

I had a lot of help.

BRIAN

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-slimed cheeks.

Katie wipes her mouth.

KATIE

Yuck! You taste like bug.

Brian swipes slime off Scooter's face and TASTES it.

BRIAN

Weird. Tastes like chicken.

KATIE

Idiot.

(to Scooter)

I hope you've learned a valuable lesson.

SCOOTER

Oh, I have. Believe me.

She puts an arm around each of them. The three of them walk away through the slime-soaked street.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

Can't WAIT to blog about this tonight.

BRIAN AND KATIE

WHAT?!!!

INT. SCOOTER'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The room is quiet. Warm lamplight. The rainbow string lights glow softly across the ceiling.

Scooter sits at her computer, freshly showered, hair still damp. Cookie Cadet boxes, a Saturn Burger soda cup, crumbs on the keyboard.

The door opens. Diane leans in, silhouetted by the hallway light.

DIANE

Don't stay up too late, sweetie.

SCOOTER

Just one more mission report, Mom.
Then dreamland.

Diane smiles -- warm, knowing. She closes the door. Footsteps recede.

Scooter turns back to the glowing 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.

INTERCUT: Across the city, Saturn replicas atop every remaining Saturn Burger lift off into the night sky -- points of light vanishing among the stars.

Back in the bedroom. Scooter's fingers fly across the keys.

ON SCREEN, the post finalizes -- one last line, in big bold letters:

"THE SPACE MARSHAL WILL RETURN."

She clicks Enter. The comment counter is already ticking upward.

Scooter leans back, pops a cookie in her mouth, and stares out the window at the vast, still night sky.

Not empty. Never empty.

She smiles.

FADE OUT.

"SOMEWHERE ACROSS THE GALAXY..."

INT. GALAXIAN GENERAL COUNCIL CHAMBER - NIGHT

The council chamber is in shambles. The conference table has been FLIPPED. Chairs are scattered. Scorch marks from ray gun blasts pepper 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.

Around him: empty chairs. ALL of them. Not a single advisor remains. One chair rocks gently. A wisp of energy dissipates.

He replays the footage. Winces.

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! It VAPORIZES.

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 of --

He stops. Composes himself. Smooths his robe. Adjusts his
crown. Examines his reflection in the ray gun.

GALAX (CONT'D)
I REALLY need a spa day. But first,
a replacement for Veronica Webster.

ATTENDANT
Replacement, Your Malevolence?

GALAX
She was a shapeshifting spider with
the subtlety of a house fire.
Squashed by her own logo.
(beat)
No more spiders. No more
infiltration. No more fast food
franchises.

He strides to a SECONDARY CONSOLE and waves his hand. A vast
DATABASE of alien operatives materializes -- hundreds of
holographic dossiers, each species more terrifying than the
last.

GALAX (CONT'D)
(scanning)
So...this little earthling wants to
play Space Marshal?

His eyes land on a PARTICULAR DOSSIER. Whatever he sees makes
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's face.

The Attendant takes three steps backward.

ATTENDANT
S-sire... that one is...
uncontrollable.

GALAX
That is precisely the point.

He pops a fresh "sushi" critter into his mouth. CRUNCH. Chews slowly, eyes locked on the holographic monstrosity.

GALAX (CONT'D)
I'll give her a nemesis she can't
outsmart, can't outrun, and most
certainly...

He leans forward. His crown catches the blue light.

GALAX (CONT'D)
...one she cannot squash with a
sign.
(to the Attendant)
Cancel my spa day.

The Attendant's jaw drops.

GALAX (CONT'D)
This time, I'm handling things
personally.

He strides toward the exit. At the doorway, he pauses.

GALAX (CONT'D)
Oh -- and find out what a "Cookie
Cadet" is. And order me a case of
those Skinny Mints.
(beat)
I hear they're delicious.

He exits. The massive doors SLAM behind him.

HOLD ON the holographic creature rotating in the empty
chamber. It SNARLS -- even as a projection, the sound is bone-
rattling.

The Attendant, alone, stares at it.

ATTENDANT
I'd better stock up on advisors,
too.

SMASH CUT TO
BLACK.

SCOOTER MURPHY WILL RETURN

THE END