SINKHOLE

Written by

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Title Card: Hydraulic Fracturing or 'fracking': a new and environmentally devastating process of extracting natural gas from rock beds deep in the ground, while injecting a combination of up to 600 kinds of chemicals into the Earth...

Over 40,000 gallons of this chemical fluid are used, per fracturing.

These chemical fluids are unregulated and do not require any kind of public disclosure.

EXT. FRACKING SITE. NORTHERN PENNSYLVANIA -- DAY

The FRACKING SITE is set within once rich farmland, now barren. Angry chants and signs reading "Fracking Kills Our Land", as a small crowd of LOCALS protest, while SITE WORKERS prepare to set-off underground EXPLOSIVES.

BOOOOOM! The ground shakes, then settles; everything seems routine.

Across the site, a TECHNICIAN takes readings. Suddenly, he stumbles, finding the ground beneath his feet unexpectedly SOFT.

Bemused, his next step sinks his foot even lower-- a dawning realization as the technician’s expression turns to panic...

He sprints as fast as he can as the ground beneath him begins to give way, the radius quickly rippling outward!

The technician LEAPS as the ground under his feet caves-in, narrowly landing on the cusp of firm ground; now behind him, a GIANT SINK-HOLE spanning a 50 yard circumference.

Moments later, bewildered workers stand on the edge of the precipice, the dark pit seems to swallow light, giving no indication of how deep it goes.

Further into the abyss, until we too are swallowed by the darkness...

MATCH CUT TO:

BLACKNESS.

POV: slowly FADE-UP to a vivid blue sky. TWO BLURRY FACES lean in, their mouths moving, but voices muted, as if underwater.
Then, vision sharpens, sound returns to normal. Yelling and cheers of a SMALL CROWD are heard.

BLAKE
(to POV)
Get up man, come on!
(lower)
This is embarrassing, bro! You can’t start freshmen year like this!

LEAH
Come on, John! Kick his ass! This guy’s a douche-hole!

EXT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: JOHN HALLET (13), lying flat on his back; his left eye already turning purple. Blake and Leah hoist John to his feet, shoving him back into a...

RING OF KIDS: all graduated 8th graders, headed into their freshmen year of high school in the fall.

Waiting for John in the center of the ring is KEVIN RALSTON (13), pre-varsity jock. Knows he’s hot shit.

Weaving throughout the crowd is TAKA IGUCHI (13), a small, feisty Asian boy, hustling his peers and taking bets; tongue as quick as it is sharp. Always wears a back-pack.

Back in the ring, John cowers, literally dwarfed by Kevin’s enormous shadow. John is no match, but worse, has no confidence in himself.

The fight continues: John’s friends cheer him on in vain, as the rest of the crowd screams for more blood. As Kevin pummels, John won’t even try to fight back, just takes the blows.

The fight wraps up; Kevin kicks John’s feet out from under him, sending him to the ground once again.

KEVIN
(sneering)
You’re such a pussy, Hallet!

Kevin laughs and walks away toward applause and cheers. Once again, Leah and Blake lean over John.

LEAH
Holy shit, man! Look at your face!
LEAH VAN GALDER (13), smack in the middle of blossoming from awkward child into pretty young woman, though she is blissfully oblivious. The Peter Pan of tomboys.

BLAKE
John, you alright, buddy?

BLAKE WELLS (13), disproportionately confident, lovably obnoxious. A toothpick always behind his ear; never without his leather motorcycle jacket...even in summer.

John groans. Everything hurts.

JOHN
Just help me up.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- MOMENTS LATER

John begrudgingly watches Kevin Ralston walk away with an entourage of buddies and pretty girls, high-fives all around.

LEAH
Screw that guy. You’ll show that ass-face next time.

BLAKE
Lady. Language!

LEAH
I ain’t no lady.

BLAKE
Clearly.

JOHN
There’s gonna be a ‘next time’?

BLAKE
Guys like us, there’s always gonna be a ‘next time’.

John’s shoulders sink. Nearby, Taka collects and pays out the gamblers in the crowd, then makes his way over to John, Blake, and Leah.

TAKA
(approaching)
“One for the money, two for the bitches, three to get ready, and four to throw the--”
(see's John)
Holy shit! Dude! Your face!
LEAH
I know, right?!

JOHN
Yeah, yeah...

John is in no mood for high spirits.

TAKA
Sorry about your money maker, Johnny. But I come bearing gifts...

BLAKE
Alright, what’s our take?

Taka takes inventory of various items in hand.

TAKA
Well, we got eleven dollars cash... a gift card to ‘Everything Bagels’, and one, very rare, near mint Charizard Ex with energy flame!

He holds up the Pokemon card, proudly.

JOHN
‘The Hell, guys?! You bet against me?

BLAKE
Come on John, don’t take it personally. I mean, blame physics; Kevin Ralston is like, the biggest person on the planet.

John huffs and begins walking away. The others follow.

BLAKE (CONT’D)
Listen, don’t sweat it, man. We’re done with that middle-school shit. Monday, high school starts. No one will care you got your ass kicked.

JOHN
Just leave me alone.

John picks up his step, leaving the others behind.

INT. JOHN’S HOUSE -- LATER

John walks in through the front door, still carrying his defeat. His home is middle-class, sterile, devoid of warmth.
INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

John enters, wordless. His father, RICHARD (45), quiet and meek, sits at the table, reading. A good, but oblivious man; a permanent somberness to him.

Richard finally notices Kevin’s face.

    RICHARD
    John, are you OK?
    JOHN
    Yeah.

John grabs a pack of peas from the freezer.

    RICHARD
    Is it the boys at school?
    JOHN
    Nah. Fell off my bike.
    RICHARD
    (smiling)
    Oh, ok then.

Richard goes back to his paper. John exits.

INT. JOHN’S ROOM -- LATER

John stares at a framed family photo: his dad, MOM, and John (10). His look says it all: mom isn’t around anymore.

He presses the bag of peas to his face, and hangs his head. The quietness is heartbreaking.

    SMACK! Something hits his window. John turns as-- SMACK!... there it is again. He opens his window, leaning out.

On his lawn below are Taka, Blake, and Leah-- Blake holds a bag of bagels.

    JOHN
    Did you just throw a bagel at my window?
    LEAH
    Come on, I got something that will cheer you up!
    JOHN
    I don’t wanna be cheered up.
Blake flings up another bagel, hitting John in head.

BLAKE
Come on, dork! We’re not doing this without you!

JOHN
You bet against me.

LEAH
This will make up for it, I swear!

John smiles: if nothing else, he has true friends.

INT. LEE’S PHARMACY -- LATER

Down the medicine aisle, in the old mom&pop pharmacy, Leah cleans John’s eye using supplies right off the shelf.

JOHN
OW!

Leah coarsely jabs small skin abrasions with a cotton swab.

LEAH
God, you are a pussy.

JOHN
Let’s see YOU take a punch to the face.

LEAH
(suddenly crestfallen)
I have.

John struggles for words, when he is saved:

DEPUTY DAN WELLS (28), local law and Blake’s brother, rounds the aisle, bee-lining straight for John. He sports a tan Stetson hat.

At the same time, Blake and Taka round the other end of the aisle—both with arms full of junk food.

TAKA
Well, howdy there, Sheriff.

JOHN
I’m the deputy, Taka, you know that.

TAKA
Oh right. Just the deputy.
Blake and Taka snicker; they don’t take Wells too seriously.

BLAKE
Mom make you wear that hat?

WELLS
(sharp, to Blake)
Lay off the hat.

WELLS (CONT’D)
(to John)
Word is you were in a fight. I can’t have fighting in my town.

Blake does a decent impression of Alan Rickman:

BLAKE
*Fighting? Fighting is the stuff of boorish thugs and riff-raff.*

JOHN
Please stop doing Alan Rickman. It’s getting really weird now.

BLAKE
I can go back to my Tony Montana phase.

EVERYONE
*NO!*

JOHN
(turn to Wells)
I don’t think it was technically, ‘fighting’.

TAKA
He’s right! Johnny got his ass handed to...
(off John’s look)
Sorry.

WELLS
Don’t get smart. I mean it, whatever you boys need to settle, you do it with words. There are other ways to stand up for yourself.

JOHN
But only one way anyone respects.

WELLS
You need to first respect yourself.
John’s shoulders drop-- he definitely doesn’t do that.

BLAKE
Come on, Dan, lay off. Stop trying so hard to be a dick.

Wells shoots Blake a glare, grabs his elbow, curbing him aside.

WELLS
I get what you’re doing, you’re thirteen, you wanna show off in front of your friends. But this is my job-- you know I wanna be sheriff someday. Outside of the house, you need to set an example to others and start taking me seriously.

BLAKE
You once farted in your hand and clamped it over my mouth.

WELLS
That was a long time ago.

BLAKE
That was Tuesday.

Beat. Wells turns looks at all the rest of the kids.

WELLS
No more fighting.

Wells walks off.

BLAKE
(after)
No more of that hat!

EXT. MAIN STREET -- LATER

The kids walk to a bike rack, un-hitch their bikes.

JOHN
So, where exactly are we going and what is this ‘surprise’?

LEAH
You’ll see.

Taka checks his iPhone.
TAKA
Hey, you guys get the Facebook invite for Jeni Bell’s sister’s party tonight?

LEAH
Jeni Bell’s sister is going to be a senior, why would we be invited to that?

JOHN
Why would we be invited to anything?

BLAKE
We gotta get into that party!

LEAH
You gotta get in to see a therapist.

JOHN
How do you even remotely think they’ll let four eighth-graders into a high school party?!

BLAKE
Former eighth-graders. We can reinvent ourselves in high school now... change who we are!

LEAH
I like us just fine.

TAKA
And I like you, baby.

Leah rolls her eyes.

JOHN
No one can change who they are.

John takes off on his bike, the rest follow.

EXT. TOWN OF ROSCOE -- DAY

Our gang weaves through the streets of ROSCOE: a modest, blue-collar town where the years have been hard.
EXT. TRAIN TRACKS -- LATER

Ditching their bikes by the tracks, the kids head into the woods.

    JOHN
    Are we going where I think we’re going?

EXT. WOODS -- LATER

The gang come upon an old CLUB HOUSE, long since left to the elements.

    TAKA
    Haha! The house that Pixy Stix built. I lost my virginity in there.

    LEAH
    Maybe to your sock.

    TAKA
    What did you think I meant?

    BLAKE
    (re: club house)
    It looks smaller...

    LEAH
    We’re just bigger.

    JOHN
    Man, I haven’t been here since we were ten...

INT. CLUBHOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Cramming in, the four sit on the floor of their old haunt.

    BLAKE
    How were we ever this tiny?

    LEAH
    Remember when we used to think this was a mansion?

    TAKA
    (to Leah)
    Remember when I showed you my dick in here when we were eight?
LEAH
I’m sure it hasn’t gotten any bigger.

Taka moves to unzip his pants; Leah pulls back a fist.

LEAH (CONT’D)
You want me to make it even smaller.

TAKA
Chill, woman, chill...

JOHN
This is great, but what are we doing here?

LEAH
A little organic therapy for what ails you, my friend.

On that, Leah unfurls a zip-lock bag containing about 4oz of MARIJUANA. Taka and Blake cheer.

JOHN
Holy shit!

BLAKE
We’re gonna be in high school, ‘better start acting like high schoolers.

LEAH
We wanted to do it together!

JOHN
I don’t know...

TAKA
First time for everything, Johnny! It’s either with us, or in some creepy guy’s van who picked you up, hitchhiking. At least ours won’t be laced with PCP.

JOHN
Why are those the only two scenarios?

Blake throws his arm around John.

BLAKE
Come on, buddy. Let’s forget all the shit that’s bothering you.
John looks around at his eager friends-- well, when in Rome!

INT. CLUB HOUSE -- LATER

The world’s worst rolled JOINT is timidly passed amongst the group. Blake attempts a weak drag, coughing immediately.

    BLAKE
    Dude, I totally feel it.

    LEAH
    No you don’t. You’re doing it wrong.

    BLAKE
    How do YOU know?

    JOHN
    Where did you even get this?

    BLAKE
    ...I swear, I feel something.

    LEAH
    (answering John)
    Justin, my brother.

Leah is passed the joint.

    BLAKE
    The ‘pride of Roscoe’...

    LEAH
    Hey! That’s my brother.
    (Leah tries to inhale)
    But yeah, he’s a total burnout.

Leah coughs badly. The joint goes to John.

    JOHN
    How are you supposed to even do this?

Taka snatches the joint out of John’s hand.

    TAKA
    Watch and try to learn something.

Taka takes a deep drag, holding it in, suppressing the reflex to cough. Several seconds go by before he exhales.
BLAKE
Now that’s some Obi-Wan shit right there!

TAKA
And that’s how you do it, to it.

JOHN
I don’t even wanna know...

TAKA
Rap music. Everything I know I learned from rap music.

Confidence renewed, the gang try hitting the joint again.

EXT/INT. CLUB HOUSE -- LATER

Various inserts of the circle of friends goofing off, laughing, and generally being high-as-balls.

INT. CLUB HOUSE -- LATER

John and Leah sit alone, devouring bags of chips and cookies. Blake and Taka are elsewhere.

JOHN
You know...

LEAH
What’s that?

JOHN
‘Funyons’ are awesome.

LEAH
(laughs)
You’re high.

JOHN
Haha...yeah.

Beat.

JOHN (CONT’D)
I lied. When I said I hadn’t been here since I was ten. I came here a lot... especially after the funeral. Just sit for hours. I...I just didn’t want to be home. That place is a tomb.
LEAH
I know you did.

JOHN
What? You do?

LEAH
Yeah. I’d come here for the same reason... to not be home. Sometimes I’d come and see you in here first.

JOHN
Why didn’t you ever say anything?

LEAH
Dunno. Sometimes I wanted to... but, I guess I just didn’t.

JOHN
Oh...

LEAH
Yeah.

Suddenly, Blake appears in the clubhouse window.

BLAKE
HEY GUYS!!!

JOHN
Gahhh! Why are you shouting?

BLAKE
AM I SHOUTING? SORRY, EVERYTHING SOUNDS LIKE I’M UNDERWATER.

LEAH
No more drugs for that guy.

JOHN
Where’s Taka?

BLAKE
HE’S NOT WITH YOU?

John dryly looks around the eight foot by eight foot space.

JOHN
Yeah. Doesn’t seem to be here.

LEAH
Shit, everyone have their socks?
BLAKE
WELL, WHERE IS HE?

EXT. TREE LINE -- TWILIGHT

Taka wanders aimlessly through the woods in his own world. Suddenly, he HALTS, staring, disdain washing over him.

TAKA
Son of a bitch...

Moments later, Blake, John, and Leah come running up.

JOHN
Dude, where’ve you been?

TAKA
Check it out...

ANGLE ON: the OMNI-TECH FRACTURE-DRILLING SITE (as seen in the opening). The workers have all gone home.

Equal looks of contempt mirror Taka’s.

TAKA (CONT’D)
These shitheads ruined everything.

BLAKE
Dad’s out of work ‘cuz of these assholes.

JOHN
Whole town is.

LEAH
You know, red water comes out of my facet now because of them? Red. I have to shower at school.

JOHN
You know what would be super awesome? Teaching them a lesson.

TAKA
I’m liking where this is going.

BLAKE
And what lesson is that?

JOHN
Don’t screw with Roscoe...
EXT. FRACKING SITE -- EVENING

As the evening sets in, the gang goes about childishly VANDALIZING the fracking site.

Blake and John push over a row of Port-a-Potties; Leah hurls mud-pies at office-trailer windows. Taka opens his backpack revealing cans of SPRAY-PAINT...

LATER

Blake and Taka stare at something off-screen, arms folded, extremely satisfied.

Leah joins them, looks at her muddy hands-- discreetly wipes them on Taka, then sees what they’re both gazing at.

LEAH
Nice...

Taka smiles smugly. Spray-painted on the cab of a huge fracking drill, in large lettering: Omnitech-- SUCK A PUBE!

JOHN (O.S.)
Hey you guuuuuys!

They turn in the direction of John’s call from the far end of the site.

MOMENTS LATER

The rest join John by the mysterious SINK-HOLE (created in the opening).

BLAKE
Whoa...is that from the drilling?

JOHN
No, fracking is a surgical procedure. My dad learned all about it before they decided not to hire locals. This is something else...

LEAH
How deep do you think it goes?

BLAKE
Only one way to find out: throw Taka in.

TAKA
Har-har...
Taka moves forward, producing a large flashlight from his back-pack, but the powerful beam is swallowed by the dark.

TAKA (CONT’D)
Hellooooooooooo...  

Taka’s voice echoes down. The kids stare into the abyss, transfixed... then,

TAKA (CONT’D)
You guys hear that?

LEAH
Hear what?

TAKA
Listen...

The kids strain their ears. Suddenly, soft at first, then quickly growing louder, closer: a scratching noise.

JOHN
W-What is that?

LEAH
Something’s coming.

TAKA
It’s getting closer...

The kids slowly back away from the edge of the pit, but their eyes remain glued, waiting...

Suddenly, a small shadow emerges on the cusp of the hole. Taka shines a light on:

A CREATURE, about the size of a large raccoon, but covered in short, translucent hair. By its wide-set eyes and small face, it’s clear this is a youngling.

The creature freezes, milky wide-eyes caught in Taka’s beam. It sniffs the air toward the gang.

BLAKE
Uck, gross! What the shit is that?!

JOHN
Is that, like, a mole or something?

TAKA
Yeah, if a mole had sex with an old man’s ball-sack!
LEAH
It’s kinda cute.

BLAKE
Typical girl.

Leah STOMPS on Blake’s foot-- he yelps. She then slowly begins moving towards the creature, hand outstretched.

LEAH
Hey buddy...

JOHN
Leah, what are you doing?! You’re gonna get rabies!

LEAH
It doesn’t have rabies.

JOHN
It doesn’t NOT have rabies.

As Leah approaches, the small creatures cowers, submissively.

LEAH
Don’t worry, I won’t hurt you.

Leah reaches out to pet the creature; it pulls away, but then finally lets Leah pat its head.

LEAH (CONT’D)
Hey there...see, it’s ok.

JOHN/BLAKE/TAKA
Awwwwwww....

LEAH
(turns to the guys)
See...he’s harmle--

Suddenly, the creature CATAPULTS ONTO LEAH’S BACK! She screams, reeling around...but the guys scream even more girly/high-pitch than Leah!

LEAH (CONT’D)
Help me, assholes!

The boys fluster a few more seconds, then--

JOHN
Ok, ok!
John gingerly attempts to help as the creature claws at Leah’s hair; she wiggles out of her top-layer shirt; wraps it around the creature.

LEAH
Here!

Leah frantically jams the balled-up creature into John’s arms. John yelps-- *on reflex, he heaves the creature into a nearby tree-trunk!*

*SMACK!* The creature hits hard, falling to the ground.

The gang cautiously approaches the bundle-- it’s not moving.

TAKA
Is it dead?

John reaches out, peeling back the shirt, revealing: a *BLOODY, PULPY MESS,* the creature’s head completely bashed in! The gang reels back in shock and disgust.

ALL
AWWWWWWWWWWW!!!

LEAH
What did you do?

JOHN
Me?! I saved your life!

LEAH
Pfft, I hardly think so.

John turns to Taka and Blake for validation.

BLAKE
You didn’t have to murder it, John.

Taka just shakes his head in disdain.

JOHN
Unbelievable.

The gang goes in for a second look.

TAKA
What the hell is it?

LEAH
We need to tell someone.

BLAKE
I should report this to my brother.
JOHN
Oh right. Your brother who needs a good bust to help towards that sheriff's badge? Like, busting the kids who trashed this place?

They look back at the vandalized site: ‘oh right’.

JOHN (CONT’D)
So we’re agreed? None of this happened?

ALL
Yes/yup/totally.

LEAH
Well, I can’t go home like this...

Leah is covered in dirt, scratches, and a little blood.

TAKA
I said I’d drop by Cameron’s tonight for a little D&D-- he doesn’t live far-- you can get cleaned up there.

LEAH
Oh god, “Cameron”...

TAKA
Whatever, you guys won’t play D&D with me.

BLAKE
I wonder why?!

As gang begins to walk off, CAMERA PANS slowly back over to the gaping hole; as we approach the CUSP, another noise emanates from its depths, only MUCH bigger...

EXT. CAMERON’S FRONT STEP -- LATER

The door opens, geek-personified Cameron (13) grins widely, dressed in medieval cos-play, like something out of LOTR.

CAMERON
‘What-up, Sir Rowan the Long-Penis!

TAKA
Greetings, Ulric the Motor-Boater!

John, Blake, and Leah raise an eyebrow at Taka.
TAKA (CONT'D)
What, they’re our D&D names.
(to Cameron)
Hope you don’t mind, I brought my
boys--
(off Leah’s glare)
...and one girl. Sort of.

Cameron grins slickly at Leah with misplaced confidence.

CAMERON
S’up, Van Galder, you need some
rescuing?

TAKA
She actually needs to use your
shower.

Cameron’s jaw drops.

CAMERON
(voice cracks)
Oh...um...yeah, ahem. Totally cool.
Come on in guys.

TAKA
(aside to Leah)
I’d check the shower for cameras.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Taka, Cameron and two other friends, ANDY and BRIAN (13) all
in cos-play attire, sit around the kitchen table, a D&D game
in full-swing.

John and Blake dryly observe by the kitchen counter.

CAMERON
...no, no, no. It’s a plus four to
'crit in that situation.

TAKA
Still a bullshit piece of loot.
Doesn’t fit your class either. You
rolled a Mage!

CAMERON
You’re going to end up rolling my
Vorpal Blade from your elf-born
corpse's face!
TAKA
(to Blake and John)
This is why you never DM...

JOHN
Aaaaaand I’m out.

BLAKE
Where are you going?

JOHN
Gonna check on Leah.

BLAKE
Please don’t leave me.

John shrugs as he exits; Blake whips a handful of M&M’s.

BLAKE (CONT’D)
Traitor!

INT. CAMERON’S BEDROOM -- LATER

John knocks, then enters the bedroom. Leah towels her damp hair, dressed in jeans and a t-shirt that says, "Good to Go", with a ‘downward pointing arrow’ beneath the words.

And suddenly John is looking at Leah in a whole new light: without the layers of boyish clothes and dirt washed away, for the first time, Leah looks like a girl!

JOHN
Uh... hi.

LEAH
Oh, hey.

JOHN
You look...better.

LEAH
Thanks.
(re: tshirt)
It’s Cameron’s. You do NOT want to know what he keeps in his sock drawer.

JOHN
(still dazed)
Uh-huh.

Awkward silence.
LEAH
Sooooooo, what’s up?

JOHN
I was just, uh, making sure you were OK.

LEAH
Oh... thanks.

Leah goes back to toweling her hair, as John tries to avoid staring-- but fails.

LEAH (CONT’D)
Yeah?

JOHN
Er, nothing.

LEAH
You’re acting weird.

JOHN
(covering)
It’s probably the weed.

LEAH
Oh, right...

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Blake has somehow gotten convinced to join the game; he reluctantly takes a growing interest, evening wears a cape! He absentmindedly spins a 20 sided die on the table.

BLAKE
So I'll just make a... I don't know, power-mad thunder god. I can do that right?

CAMERON
NO, you can't just “do” that.

BLAKE
You said this game was awesome because you could do anything!

TAKA
You need permission from the Dungeon Master and a whole lot of natural twenties to be a god.
BLAKE
I'm wearing a cape! That should be enough! KNEEL!

The boys start arguing the rules.

EXT. FRACKING SITE -- NIGHT

The vandalized site lays dark and quiet. CAMERA drifts over to the small creature’s REMAINS lying in Leah’s shirt.

FROM WITHIN THE HOLE

POV: rushing toward visible night sky. Moments later, the POV breaks up onto the--

SURFACE

POV rising abnormally high-- much taller than a grown human. SNIFFING SOUNDS as the POV “drops”, as if going down onto four legs. The POV rushes toward the small creature...

WIDE SHOT of the fracking site-- too wide to discern anything specific, but what we HEAR is all too clear:

A guttural, howling cry of ANGUISH no human could make...

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

The boys are still arguing over D&D rules, when the faintest ECHO OF THE HOWL reaches Blake’s ears, who sits closest to the patio door. Blake cranes his head around, not sure if he heard something...

TAKA (O.S.)
Hey-- hey douche-bag...

Blake turns back around.

TAKA (CONT’D)
Ha. You looked. It’s your roll.

Blake hesitates, turns back to the patio door, weary... but hears nothing more; turns back to the game.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS -- LATER

A lone Camaro sits parked next to the train tracks.
INT. JUSTIN’S CAMARO -- CONTINUOUS

Inside the Camaro, JUSTIN (19), Leah’s older, stoner brother; his buddy, CHET (19), sits shotgun, currently blazing up.

Chet offers the joint to Justin, who turns it down, preoccupied with digging through a small tote-bag.

JUSTIN
Dude, how much money do I have?

Chet opens a brown paper sack, reaching in, thumbing a loose stack of bills.

CHET
Looks like $350.

JUSTIN
I’m short on inventory. We should have $400.

Justin casts an accusatory eye at Chet.

CHET
(re: his joint)
Don’t look at me, man. This is my commission, not a stem more.

Justin thinks, something dawning on him.

JUSTIN
Shit! Leah...

CHET
Your sister? She’s like, four years old.

JUSTIN
She’s thirteen. I caught her coming out of my room this morning-- she said she was just borrowing a book.

CHET
You don’t own any books.

JUSTIN
Yeah. I’m realizing that. When I find that little bitch and I’m going to--

WHOOSH! A enormous black SHAPE gallops by the car, but only Chet sees it.
CHET
HOLY CRAPPING SHIT!!

JUSTIN
(startled)
Jesus, what the Hell, man!

Chet begins to point out the window, but the black shape has melted into the night. Chet then looks at his joint.

CHET
Dude, this is some good shit!

INT. CAMERON’S BEDROOM -- LATER

Leah finishes cleaning up; she catches John checking out her butt; John quickly averts his gaze, covering up with a cough.

Leah pretends she didn’t notice, but smiles to herself.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

The D&D game in full swing; Blake is completely immersed now.

BLAKE
Ok, bitches-- I envoke the ‘Time Stop’ spell. BOOM! Hell yeah, I just dropped that shit!

The rest of the table groans.

CAMERON
He catches on fast.

John and Leah enter.

TAKA
Oooooooh! Where have you two been?

JOHN
(aggresive)
Shut-it!

Blake rolls the dice. Lands on the number 20-- more cries from the table.

BLAKE
20! Eat it, you unicorn-sucking chumps! I am your god now...

As Blake prattles on, John and Leah suddenly notice SOMETHING beyond the patio door, behind Blake.
We do not see what they see. The two stare frozen, mouths agape. Blake finally notices their faces.

BLAKE (CONT’D)
What?

Blake turns, along with the rest of the table.

BLAKE (CONT’D)
(nonplussed)
Shit.

Then, Blake dodges out of the way just as--

CRASH!!!! A massive SHAPE shatters through the patio door, plowing through the kitchen table!

At first we only get glimpses of the FORM amidst the melee of scattering kids:

Easily the size of a grizzly bear; deep-set red eyes; pale, pinkish wrinkled skin covered in tufts of the same kind of translucent hair as the small creature earlier.

Then, a guttural ROAR that shakes the entire house-- T-Rex ain’t got shit on this thing!

The beast swings its mighty head from side to side... and we realize its eyes are not searching, rather its NOSE sucks in the air through huge nostrils-- it’s searching for a scent!

Meanwhile, the kids disperse throughout the house, fleeing from this new terror.

SERIES: Visceral, gritty moments of individuals, pairs, or trios of the friends RUNNING, DUCKING, and JUMPING out of the path of the beast as it barrels through Cameron’s house, utterly destroying everything in its path!!

HALLWAY

The beast charges Andy and Brian as they dive around a corner into the

FRONT ROOM

...but instead following their path, the beast BURSTS THROUGH THE DRYWALL of the front room! But, its thick neck gets stuck in the wall’s support frame...

Andy and Brian scream and instinctively start beating back the beast’s snapping MAW with their cos-play prop swords!

HALLWAY
The beast’s body juts out on the other side of the wall; from somewhere above, PAINTBALLS begin pelting the beast’s torso.

ANGLE ON: Cameron perched mid-way on the staircase.

CAMERON
HEY ASSHOLE!

The beast pulls back through the wall, craning its head up. Cameron suddenly realizes he’s only pissed it off more.

CAMERON (CONT’D)
Oh no.

Cameron drops the paintball gun and bombs up the steps as the beast forgets Andy and Brian and gives chase to Cameron.

As the beast ascends, the staircase COLLAPSES under its weight, entangling the beast in a mess of planks. Roaring in frustration, it flops and flounders, trying to gain footing.

ELSEWHERE

John, Blake, Taka, and Leah have re-grouped.

BLAKE
What is that thing??!

TAKA
It’s looking for us!

LEAH
Wha?! How--

TAKA
Look familiar? Like a BIGGER version of that thing John killed earlier?!

JOHN
Don’t blame this on me!

LEAH
Did we kill its baby?!!

BLAKE
Oh, this is fan-TAS-tic!

LEAH
We need to get out of here!

John gets an idea.
JOHN
Come on! I have a plan.

John leads them back through the kitchen...

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

The beast finally twists up-right in what’s left of the staircase; no sooner, ACTION FIGURES bombard the creature from above!

ANGLE ON: Cameron, perched atop the upstairs floor. He hurls his designer action-figure collection at the beast.

ANGLE ON: a SUPERMAN figure in Cameron’s hand.

CAMERON
(to figure)
For Krypton, Kal-El...

With a somber face, Cameron takes deadly aim and chucks the figure, sending ‘Superman’ literally flying toward the beast...

...and bouncing harmlessly off its thick hide.

The beast cranes its head up towards a flummoxed Cameron, then lets loose its loudest ROAR yet, sending Cameron flying backward.

INT. GARAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

John, Blake, Taka, and Leah fall over themselves, cramming into Cameron’s parent’s SUV.

INT. SUV -- CONTINUOUS

John settles into the driver’s seat, Blake shotgun; Taka and Leah are a tangled mess in the back.

BLAKE
Wait, what are we doing?

JOHN
We pull up out front, honk like hell to get that thing’s attention, and get it out of the house. No way it can catch us in this.
BLAKE
Yeah, but do you know how to drive?!

JOHN
Oh. Uh...

LEAH
(rolls her eyes)
Oh my god, we’re going to die.

Taka starts climbing into the front seat.

JOHN
What are you--

TAKA
Move over, I can drive.

JOHN
No you can’t! Since when?

BLAKE
Taka’s butt smacks Blake in the face. John tries to move around Taka, but it’s a mess of bodies and seat-belts.

LEAH
Yup. We’re dead.

JOHN
(to Taka)
Would you just let me move first!

TAKA
You go over my shoulder, I’ll go here.

Several extended beats of this ‘true achievement’ in human coordination. Finally, Taka settles into the driver’s seat, John in the back with Leah.

TAKA (CONT’D)
Ok. Where are the keys?

Beat. Everyone looks at each other...

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

The door to the garage cracks open as Taka peers into Cameron’s kitchen. He zeros-in on a set of CAR KEYS hanging from a hook next to the refrigerator.

Tip-toe’ing across the kitchen, Taka reaches the set of hooks and gently lifts the car keys off. Smiles to himself.
Then, he senses it before he looks up-- and into the RED EYES of the beast now standing right in front of him!

Suddenly, the beast hoists up on its back two legs, towering a good ten feet above Taka; his face drops as he stares back.

TAKA

I promise I will never touch weed again.

The beast roars, crashing back down on all fours, taking out the kitchen counter in the act as Taka bolts for the garage.

INT. GARAGE -- MOMENTS

Taka flies out the door and DIVES through the passenger window! He writhes across Blake’s lap, managing to jam the key into the ignition, cranking it!

BLAKE

What are you doing?!

Still flat across Blake’s lap, feet out the window, Taka slithers down to the gas-peddle, face-first.

TAKA

TAKE THE WHEEL!!

JOHN

Wha--

Taka jams transmission into REVERSE with one hand, then SLAMS the gas pedal down with other.

The SUV peels back wildly as the beast CRASHES THROUGH the wall of the house and into the garage!

The kids scream as the car plows back THROUGH the closed garage door and into the driveway. John reaches up from the backseat to steady the wheel as the car peels back into the street.

John cranks the wheel at the last second to prevent from going into the ditch, but takes out the neighbor’s mailbox.

BLAKE/JOHN/LEAH

BRAKE!!!

Taka hits the brake with his other hand and the car jolts to a halt, throwing everyone around.

Taka finally manages to right-himself in the driver’s seat.
TAKA
(suave)
I’ll take it from here.

BLAKE/JOHN/LEAH

GO!!!

It’s a stretch (re: his short legs), but Taka’s foot slams down on the gas pedal and the car peels out—

-- barely getting out of the way in time to avoid being T-Boned by the charging beast! A near miss!

INT. SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

Taka adjusts the seat as far forward as it can go.

TAKA

So, this is driving...

Leah looks out the back window.

LEAH

How fast does this thing go?

TAKA

Why?

LEAH

You’re going to need to go a lot faster...

Taka adjusts his rear-view mirror as everyone else turns back to see...

ANGLE ON: The beast charging down the street like a freight-train, moments away from--

SLAM!! The beast rams its head into the back of the SUV like a rhino, the force lifting the car off its back wheel. The kids SCREAM.

JOHN

PUNCH IT TAKA!

TAKA

HANG ON!

Taka slams on the gas, gripping the wheel as the SUV quickly pulls away. He hits the radio, blasting a POP SONG.

TAKA (CONT’D)

WHOO-HOOOO!!!!!!
The others join Taka in yelling, but out of sheer terror!

BLAKE
We gotta lose it!

JOHN
Yeah, ‘ya think?!

VARIOUS: Taka takes a number of sharp turns down various neighborhood streets in attempt to out-run/lose the beast.

With each jolting, sloppy turn, the kids oddly seem to forget they are being pursued and instead, start to enjoy the ride as if it were a roller-coaster!

INT. SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

Through the rear window: the beast is no where in sight.

LEAH
I think we lost it...

INT/EXT. SUV/CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

The SUV pulls up to an intersection next to another CAR.

The DRIVER (50’s) glances over at the SUV to see tiny Taka behind the wheel. Taka turns his head, sees the other driver, and breaks into a wide grin, giving the ‘thumbs up’.

Second later, Taka floors it through the intersection, to the bewilderment of the other driver.

INT. SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

Leah looks out through the front windshield.

LEAH
Dude! Kevin Ralston’s house is coming up...

JOHN
So?

Leah just smiles...

EXT. FRONT LAWN -- NIGHT

Kevin Ralston (the bully from John’s fight) and a FRIEND throw a football between each other.
Suddenly, the SUV blazes by-- and an empty SODA CAN pelts Kevin’s face as the SUV runs over his mailbox.

Kevin barely gets a glimpse of Leah leaning out the window, giving him the double birdie as the car speeds past.

LEAH
SUCK IT, PENIS BREATH!

Kevin is too stunned to react, only watches as the SUV’s tail-lights turn the corner.

INT. SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

Blake and Taka high-five Leah.

BLAKE
That was AWESOME!

JOHN
Why did you do that?

LEAH
’Cause that guy’s an asshole. No one fucks with my friends.

John smiles, but knows a girl just stood up for him when he couldn’t.

BLAKE
(to Taka)
Hey, you might want to slow down, I think we lost that thing a while ago.

Taka brings the SUV down to a manageable cruising speed.

LEAH
So what now?

BLAKE
Do we tell anyone about this one?

JOHN
It’s still all going to lead back to us vandalizing the fracking site.

LEAH
It’s Omni-Tech’s fault! All their ‘fracking around probably disturbed the thing to begin with!
TAKA
Well, since we already have a car, let’s roll by Jeni Bell’s place. Remember, her sister’s having that big party.

LEAH
Yes, the one none of us were invited to.

JOHN
After all that’s happened tonight, now you want to go to a party?!

TAKA
Clock’s tickin’, my friend: summer is over in thirty-six hours and being seen at this party will earn us some serious hallway ‘cred. See, that’s like ‘street-cred’, only, you know, because high school’s have hallways...

JOHN
Yes, I got it. And that’s assuming we’d even get in.

TAKA
We roll up in this sweet chariot, we’ll be lookin’ bad-ass! Chicks are gonna be all over our junk.

LEAH
Sounds magical.

TAKA
Be a team-player, Leah. You can be John’s arm-candy...

JOHN
Dude!
   (sotto)
   Not cool!

TAKA
Pfft. Whatever, I’m rollin by that party. ‘Just fought off a mutant bear thing, now I need me some champagne and ho’s. Who’s in?!

BLAKE
IN!

Taka and Blake high-five.
JOHN
(to Leah)
Wanna check it out?

LEAH
Whatever. I’m up for watching you guys get tossed out on your asses.

JOHN
Er, I was actually thinking that maybe you and I could go somewhe--

SLAM!!!! The car spins around a near 360 degrees as the BEAST clips the bumper of the car at full-speed! Inside, the kids scream as they’re tossed around.

The beast turns, heading for their car again!

BLAKE/JOHN/LEAH
(to Taka)
G00000!!11

Taka yells as he slams on the gas again, the car burning rubber as it peels out of the neighborhood.

INT/EXT. SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

Leah looks out the back window, the beast coming up fast!

LEAH
Taka! Go faster!

TAKA
Do you think I’m joy-riding?!

EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

The SUV takes a sharp turn out of the neighborhood and onto a COUNTRY HIGHWAY.

Leah and John dare to look out the back window again... only to see the beast is gone...

BLAKE
Is it coming?!

JOHN
No... where did it...?

LEAH
It’s gone...
BLAKE
Did it give up?

TAKA
Shit-yeah, it did! ‘Cuz I got some Vin Diesel fast and furious shit up in here---

CRUNCH!! The roof nearly CAVES IN as the beast lands on top of the SUV! All-out panic inside!

The beast has a strong hold on the speeding SUV with one claw gripping the roof, it begins POUNDING DOWN with the other. The back windshield blows out under the force, pieces of safety glass flying everywhere!

SMASH! A CLAW punctures through the roof over John's head!

John LEAPS over onto Leah’s side, falling into her and suddenly finds himself with his HAND ON HER BOOB.

John looks at his hand, then at Leah, then back to his hand... and quickly pulls his hand away.

JOHN
Dude, I am SO sorr---

SLAM! The beast’s meaty claw punches completely through the roof, tearing out most of the seat where John just was!

Slam! Slam! Slam! The gape in the roof gets wider with each hit-- glimpses of the beast’s dripping, razor-filled maw snapping down at them.

John and Leah hold each other, screaming.

UP FRONT

TAKA
(to Blake)
Back-pack!!!!

BLAKE
What?!

Taka points desperately to his BACK-PACK at Blake’s feet.

TAKA
Back-pack! In the back-pack!!!

Blake opens the back-pack, digging through; moments later, he pulls out a BAGEL. Holds it up.
TAKA (CONT'D)
NO! The flare-gun!!!

Blake can barely hear Taka over the screams of John and Leah as the roaring beast continues swiping at them.

BLAKE
WHAT?!

TAKA
THE FLARE GUN!

Blake dives back into the back-pack, and produces a coast-guard issued FLARE GUN. He holds it up.

TAKA (CONT'D)
(re: beast)
Shoot it!!

BLAKE
Why the hell do you have a flare gu-

BANG! Blake accidently discharges the flare gun in the car!

The red-hot FLARE bounces off the ceiling and onto the driver's side floor!

Blake and Taka scream! Taka begins SWERVING the car as he tries to avoid his feet/legs from touching the blazing flare.

EXT. SUV -- CONTINUOUS

The beast is whipped around by Taka's swerving, but manages to keep a grip with one claw...

INT. SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

TAKA
YOU IDIOT!!!

In the back, John and Leah are tossed around like rag-dolls.

JOHN
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!?!

SLAM! The beast's claw swipes down through the hole in the roof-- John pulls Leah out of the way at the last second, but the beast rears back, preparing to strike again...

Up front, Blake looks out the windshield-- his eyes go WIDE.
BLAKE
TAKA! LOOK OUT!!

Taka looks up from the floorboard to see he’s drifted into the oncoming lane: A HUGE SEMI-TRUCK BARRELING DOWN ON THEM!

The semi blares its horn-- the SUV only seconds away from head-on impact!

At the last possible moment, Taka JERKS the wheel, swerving out of the semi’s path!

THE SHARP MOMENTUM CATAPULTS THE BEAST OFF OF THE ROOF...

... and INTO THE FRONT GRILL OF THE SEMI-TRUCK! The creature explodes, disintegrating into bloody, goey, gore by the sheer power of force-meets-weight!!!

INT. SUV -- MOMENTS LATER

In the rear-view mirror, the semi slams on its brakes, but Taka has no intention of stopping himself.

TAKA
Holy shit! Did you see that?!

John, Leah, and Blake can’t believe it themselves; nervous laughter as relief slowly wash over them all.

BLAKE
Holy shit...HOLY SHIT! HA!

John and Leah sigh/smile-- then John realizes he’s still sitting in her lap. He quickly moves back to his side.

JOHN
Sorry.

LEAH
Thanks for saving me. I owe you.

JOHN
No big deal.

Up front, Taka and Blake just roll their eyes.

BLAKE
Taka, you saved me. You’re so handsome and dreamy.
TAKA
Blake, your musk is intoxicating. I bet your balls smell like Christmas.

BLAKE
Ok dude, you’re weird.

JOHN
I’m going to kill you both.

BLAKE
Relax buddy! We’re alive!

TAKA
Yeah, thanks to me and my being absolutely awesome!

LEAH
Should we go back?

BLAKE
Nah... that thing’s road-kill. Did you see it practically exploded? Some real ‘Robocop’ shit right there!

JOHN
Taka pull over...

TAKA
What? Why?

JOHN
Just pull over!

Taka pulls off to the side of the road.

JOHN (CONT’D)
Ok, state of the union: In the last three hours, we’ve vandalized a multi-million dollar fracking site, killed two ‘whatever-those-things-were’, destroyed Cameron’s house and totaled his parent’s car...

TAKA
Well, the last two were technically that thing’s fault.

JOHN
This is all gonna catch up with us. And soon. We have to come up with some kind of story...
EXT. CAMERON’S HOUSE -- LATER

Flashing red and blue lights illuminate Cameron’s front lawn.

Two SHERIFF’S CARS, an ambulance, a fire-truck, and a throng of neighborhood onlookers gather on the front lawn.

Cameron, Andy, and Brian, wrapped in blankets, excitedly recall their recent encounter... all at once.

ANDY
And then, it came through the wall and was like, “ROOOOOOAR”!!

BRIAN
But we were like, “Wrong day, wrong guys to mess with ‘mutha ‘fucka’! And we were all like, “Slice! Dice! Ninja!”

CAMERON
And then it tried to come up the stairs, but I went all Gandalf with that shit, “You Shall Not Pass, Bitch!!”

ANGLE ON: Deputy Wells, looking completely bewildered at the three-man act unfolding in front of him.

Moments later, SHERIFF BRONSON (50’s), gruff, Michael Parks type, strides up-- equal bemusement at the Prattling kids.

BRONSON
(re: kids)
Jesus. We should just start charging for tickets. Tour the country with this act.

WELLS
I have no idea what’s happening.
(consults small note-pad)
So far, I’ve only picked-up, ‘Elder’s Fire-Spell, ‘Nards’, ‘Bitch-be-trippin’, and ‘Scourge of Carpathia’...

Cameron silences the other two.

CAMERON
(to Wells)
...I said, it LOOKED like ‘The Scourge of Carpathia’.

Cameron holds up a Magic The Gathering card: an illustration of a monster, but shares similar features to our beast: size, build, and teeth/claws.
BRONSON
Son, you’re telling me, this did that to your house?

CAMERON
Uh, no.
(waves card)
This isn’t real, Officer. But something like it did.

BRONSON
(rubbing his face)
This is why I’m “pro-choice”.

WELLS
I told you, what these kids are smoking these day is stronger.

CAMERON
You want answers? Find John Hallett.

WELLS
Who?

CAMERON
John Hallet, Blake Wells, Taka Iguchi, and Leah Van Galder. That thing went after them. Chased them right out of the house...

WELLS
Blake Wells?

BRONSON
Where do I find these kids?

EXT. FRACKING SITE -- NIGHT

The SUV-- or what’s left of it-- pulls up to the edge of the fracking site. The kids get out.

LEAH
Ok, this is stupid. We’ve risked enough tonight.

John leads as the rest follow.

JOHN
No one’s going to believe us; we get the smaller one to show as proof.

(MORE)
JOHN (CONT'D)
Hell, chances are its some big science-y discovery anyway.
Probably some endangered species.

TAKA
Yeah, they’ll give us all peace-prizes and forget that we trashed this place.

LEAH
I don’t think they give you peace-prizes for that.

JOHN
Well, the other one is road-splatter, so this all we have.

BLAKE
Hey, do you think they’ll give us money? Like a reward?

TAKA
DUDE! We should Ebay that shit to the highest bidder! Then we can buy a G6 and fly around the world with Jeni Bell and some other hot freshman bitches!”

BLAKE/TAKA
“Like a G6, like-a-G-six...nah-nah-nah-now I’m feelin’ so fly, like a G6!”

Blake and Taka badly chant/dance to the ‘Far East Movement’ hit single, while John and Leah forge ahead.

INT. JUSTIN’S CAMARO -- LATER

Justin and Chet are parked on the side of the road, Sheriff Bronson’s cruiser lights flashing behind them.

Bronson strides up to the driver’s side window; as Justin rolls it down, Chet wafts out lingering marijuana smoke out.

JUSTIN
Uh, hey Sheriff. What can I do for--

BRONSON
Justin, do you know where your sister is?
JUSTIN
Um, no. But I wanna know the same thing.

BRONSON
Why is that? You know what she and her little friends have been up to?

JUSTIN
What do you mean?

Bronson’s radio crackles.

WELLS (V.O.)
Chuck, do you read, over?

Bronson raises his radio.

BRONSON
Copy...

EXT. HIGHWAY -- SIMULTANEOUS

Another set of fire-trucks curtain off one lane of the highway; road-flares surround the semi-truck and what looks like the floor of a slaughter house, all over the asphalt.

WELLS
(into walkie)
I’m on highway 251, south of Belvedere road... Don’t know what I’m looking at. A semi truck hit some kind of animal.

BRONSON (V.O.)
Like a deer?

Wells looks down at the ground with a grim face.

WELLS
I don’t think so...

ANGLE ON: the only intact piece of what’s left of the beast: a huge CLAWED APPENDAGE, covered in translucent fur.

EXT. JUSTIN’S CAMARO -- SIMULTANEOUS

WELLS (V.O.)
You find the kids yet?
BRONSON
Working on it. Keep me updated if your situation develops. Out.

Bronson leans back in through the driver’s side window.

BRONSON (CONT’D)
So, take a guess as to where your sister could be. Think real hard.

EXT. FRACKING SITE -- NIGHT
The four kids stand, leaning in, staring down at “us”.

BLAKE
Well, that settles that.

LEAH
Was it still alive?

JOHN
Maybe someone else took it?

TAKA
Is there a “plan B”? Or any other letter?

REVEAL: The four friends looking down, a FLASHLIGHT illuminating Leah’s tattered shirt, absent of the small creature they killed earlier.

TAKA (CONT’D)
Is there another way that we can get rich quick? I’m all about that now.

JOHN
Taka, come on, focus. Who would’ve taken it?

BLAKE
Couldn’t be the cops, they’d still be here and calling Omnitech.

LEAH
Maybe another animal ate it or something? Like a coyote.

John sweeps the surrounding area/ground with the flashlight while the others continue to debate; suddenly, HIS EYES GO WIDE...
JOHN
Uh, guys...

At the same time, the area lights up with flashing red&blue lights. All the kids turn as Sheriff Bronson pulls up.

BLAKE
Oh shit.

TAKA
So busted.

LEAH
Stop being pussies and act cool!

Leah composes herself, Blake and Taka follow suit. John’s eyes remain on the ground.

JOHN
Guys...

Sheriff Bronson strolls up; he notices all the toilet-paper streaming across the site. He shines his own flashlight on the four guilty faces.

BRONSON
(to Leah)
Found your bikes near the train tracks.

TAKA
(whispers)
Shit, our bikes!

Blake elbows him.

BLAKE
Shhh!

BRONSON
And this was in one of your backpacks you left behind.

Bronson holds up the bag of weed. All the kids’ faces go pale, but Leah plays it cool.

LEAH
Those aren’t our bikes, Sheriff.

BRONSON
Really? Then how did you get out here?

Bronson then notices the destroyed SUV.
BRONSON (CONT’D)
What’s this, now?

LEAH
Uh...

BRONSON
And you’re trespassing.
(re: vandalism)
That doesn’t happen to be your handy work, now is it?

ALL
NO!/no way/nigga please/no sir.

BRONSON
You’re all in a lot of trouble.

ON CUE: John glances at the ground again, trepidation starting to show on his face.

BRONSON (CONT’D)
Now before we get into anything else, I need to know what happened at Cameron’s house.

LEAH
Cameron...?

Bronson shines his flashlight right in Leah’s face.

BRONSON
Start talking before you all dig yourselves into a deeper hole...

INSERT
POV from inside the giant sink-hole, only a few yards away. Deep, ominous breathing coming from within...

BACK TO SCENE

BRONSON (CONT’D)
Cameron said something about some kind of animal attack. Said it went after you all. What was it?

The kids look between each other: what’s our story?!

TAKA
Listen, Sheriff Bronson...
BRONSON
Quiet, ‘Short-Round’. I know the racquets you run at your school-- I don’t want any fast-talk. I want the truth...

Bronson sizes up each of the kids, trying to spot the weakest; his flashlight settles on John, who nervously glances back and forth from the ground.

BRONSON (CONT’D)
Hallet, right?

JOHN
Um, yes sir.

John peeks at his friends:
- Blake gives him a reassuring nod and a thumbs-up.
- Leah’s stern glare says, ‘Don’t admit anything!’
- Taka mimes the ‘blow-job’ gesture, trying to get a laugh.

BRONSON
Son, I want you to tell me what happened. Everything.

JOHN
I...er...

Again, John glances at the ground.

BRONSON
The answers ain’t written on your shoes, boy.

JOHN
W-What’s going on...

John looks at his friends, an expression of panic.

JOHN (CONT’D)
What’s going on, is there are two sets of tracks...

He shines his flashlight toward ground.

JOHN (CONT’D)
See, there’s one set, then there’s another...bigger.
ANGLE ON: Two sets of adult animal TRACKS covering the ground. One set, the size of a bear; the other, easily the size of a rhino.

BRONSON
‘This that animal Cameron was jawing on about? Was it a mountain lion? Were you kids baiting a mountain lion, doing some Mtv shit? Gonna post it on Youtube to try to get famous?! Do you know how dangerous--

But the kids have stopped listening to Sheriff Bronson, their uniform gaze fixed above his head, mouths agape.

Off their looks—Bronson stops talking, then he hears it: a heavy, wet breathing. His hand slowly goes for the GUN on his hip...

Bronson slowly turns his head around to see—

JOHN
It’s “daddy”...

ANGLE ON: another beast, similar to the prior, but larger, bulkier, with harder, sharper features.

Suddenly, the beast rears up on its hind-legs—easily twice the size of the first.

This is ALPHA BEAST.

Bronson’s mouth falls open—he already knows this hesitation has cost him his life.

BRONSON
Run.

Bronson quickly tries to draw his gun as the Alpha drops, bearing its jaws right down on his head!

But Bronson rolls out of the way, firing three times into the Alpha—*but the bullets barely penetrate its thick hide!*

BRONSON (CONT’D)
*I SAID RUN!!!*

The kids scream and scatter as Bronson squares off with the Alpha.

WITH THE KIDS

JOHN
Don’t look back, keep running!

BACK WITH BRONSON

The Alpha throws its head, knocking Bronson to the ground, his guns goes sailing. The Alpha closes in on Bronson, who stands up, defiantly.

BRONSON
Eat shit.

The Alpha roars, swiping with its massive claw, sending Bronson’s entrails flying out of him!

EXT. FOREST -- MOMENTS LATER

Lungs burn. Legs pump. Backward glances, eyes praying there is nothing else coming.

Leah drags behind, then stops. John sees her, goes back. He waves Blake and Taka onward.

JOHN
Go! Get to the bikes!
(turns to Leah)
Come on! We can’t stop.

Leah pants sharp, short breaths.

LEAH
I...I...

JOHN
What? I can’t understand--

LEAH
I--n...inhaler.

JOHN
Inhaler? Ok, where’s your inhaler?

Leah just shakes her head as she continues to hyper-ventilate.

JOHN (CONT’D)
You don’t have it?! Where-- crap-- it’s in your backpack.

Leah nods.
JOHN (CONT’D)
We can’t stay here, you have to--

ROOOOORRRRRRRRRR! A deafening roar shakes the forest. John grips Leah.

JOHN (CONT’D)
Oh no...

EXT. FOREST -- MOMENTS LATER

Thud...thud...thud...

Heavy footsteps quake the forest floor. The Alpha beast dips in and out of the moonlit shadows of the forest canopy, its snout sucks in the night air, feverishly searching...

NEARBY

POV: the Alpha canvasing the area about fifty yards out.

EXT/INT. CLUB HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

John and Leah flatten themselves on the tiny floor of the clubhouse. They watch the Alpha through a split in the wall.

Leah tries to control her hyper-ventilating, but to little success. John moves closer, bringing her head to his chest.

LEAH
(through gasps)
What are you...

JOHN
(whispers)
Ssshhh... slow it down. Try to match my breathing...

LEAH
(labored)
What...are you...some kind of...doctor now?

JOHN
(bittersweet)
I used to have asthma too. My mom would do this with me when I was younger. It always worked.
Leah is hesitant, then lets herself sink into John’s embrace; begins to match the rise and fall of his chest. After a few moments, she’s back to normal.

LEAH
Do you miss her?

Beat.

JOHN
She made me feel invincible. She made me feel...big.

They look out through the split in the wall; the Alpha is slowly plodding away in the opposite direction.

The two friends smile, but then realize their gaze is lingering...

...and suddenly, that magical moment when you realize: this is it, this is going to be your first kiss. Then,

LEAH
What is that?

JOHN
Uh, what?

Leah looks down, then looks up at John, her face contorting from delicate to horrified.

LEAH
Do you have... a boner?!

JOHN
I-I-I...

LEAH
Oh, gawd! You perv!

JOHN
Oh, what?! Like, what do you expect? I’m frickin’ thirteen, OK?! It’s just a thing your body does, like when your nipples get hard...
(instant mental image)
Oh damn it!

LEAH
Uck. You’re so gross.

JOHN
What do you think would happen when we’re practically-
John stops himself.

LEAH
UM, practically, what?!

JOHN
Er, nothing, nothing. Ok. I’m sorry.
(genuine)
Please... I’m sorry.

Beat.

LEAH
I can still feel it!!

JOHN
Well, what do you want me to do?!

LEAH
You can start by un-jamming your little buddy out of my--

Suddenly, Leah stops short, so does John.

They both turn their heads to find the long, SNOUT of the Alpha pressed through the window of the clubhouse!

Beat.

John and Leah scream!

The Alpha rears up, bearing down on the clubhouse just as John and Leah scramble out, the Alpha smashing their childhood clubhouse to splinters.

John clambers across the forest floor. The Alpha charges, catching John under the legs with its snout like a bull, tossing him into the air!

John yelps, crashing back onto the ground; he raises his head, coming face to face with the Alpha, thick ropes of saliva cascading from its black maw.

The Alpha inhales sharply, taking in John’s scent; then, as if “confirming it’s him”, roars again, its slavering jaws open wide...

John squeezes his eyes tight, preparing for end--

WHAM! A club-sized tree BRANCH smashes into the Alpha’s nose! The Alpha bellows, flailing back in pain.

John opens his eyes as he’s yanked to his feet by Leah.
LEAH (CONT'D)

RUN!

The two kids tear through the forest, as the Alpha quickly recovers and pursues...

EXT. FOREST -- MOMENTS LATER

John and Leah weave among a thicket of small trees, but the Alpha-- hot on their heels-- plows right through everything.

The two kids reach the bottom of a steep BANK; the country ROAD at the top...

Scrambling on all-fours, they try to scale the incline, but the slippery leaves blanketing the slope offer no traction.

Halfway up, John and Leah both slip and slide back down the incline, right into the path of the charging Alpha, seconds away from trampling them!

John clings to Leah, covering her as the Alpha takes a flying leap, diving straight down at them...

SUDDENLY, FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, A RED-HOT FLARE SAILS THROUGH THE FOREST, CATCHING THE ALPHA IN ITS EXPOSED CHEST!

The Alpha writhes and howls, tumbling off its trajectory, smashing hard into the bank, missing John and Leah.

The two look upward: at the crest of the slope, Taka lowers his FLARE GUN, Blake by his side.

TAKA

Now that’s how you do it, to it.

BLAKE

Please stop saying that.
(to John&Leah)
Hey love-birds! Let’s go!

Not wasting a moment, John and Leah manage to clamor up the incline. Blake and Taka have John and Leah’s bikes waiting; all four begin pedalling as fast as they can down the country road.

TAKA

(to Leah)
Did you let him touch a boob?

Leah reaches out, socking Taka in the arm.
Meanwhile, the Alpha recovers from the flare burn, charging up the hill with a snarl...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

The kids come to a steep, long HILL-- a fortuitous break! Their bikes pick up speed as they catapult downhill.

Then, somewhere in the short distance, a long WHISTLE sounds.

TAKA
(pointing)
LOOK!

A FREIGHT TRAIN-- easily two miles long-- speeding its way across the basin; tracks running across the road ahead.

Suddenly, a ROAR close behind them! The kids glance backwards as the Alpha crests the top of the hill.

BLAKE
OH SHIT!

The kids pedal as fast as they can: IT'S A RACE TO THE BOTTOM: they need reach the base and cross the tracks before the train, or they'll be cut-off, left to face the Alpha!


JOHN
COME ON! FASTER!

About a hundred yards behind them and gaining fast, the relentless Alpha starts closing in...

Without letting up, Taka blindly reaches into his backpack with one hand; he pulls out a full-deck of POKEMON CARDS, casting them into the eddy behind him.

The cards take to the eddy in a blinding swirl, several smacking the charging Alpha in the snout and face, causing momentary break in stride... but it might not be enough!

The train whistle sounds again, the Alpha roaring as if in response.

The kids reach the bottom of the hill, their momentum carrying them toward the train-tracks, but the train has nearly reached the crossing: it's gonna be close!

Another long, deep whistle-- deafening at this range; its single, powerful headlight makes night, day.
John dares to look back--the Alpha is only a few yards behind!

\textbf{BWAAAAAAHHHH!} The whistle blares again as Blake speeds across the tracks first, followed closely by Taka, then Leah...

...John looks behind him: the Alpha, so close, he can feel its huffing, hot stale breath on his neck!

John \textit{stands up on his pedals, cranking as powerfully as he can}...

\textbf{BWAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!!!}

With literally only a couple feet to spare, John speeds across the train-tracks, narrowly missing the ENGINE CAR as it barrels across the junction.

Back on the other side, the Alpha pulls up at the last possible moment; barely avoids getting hit by hundreds of thousands of tons of speeding steel.

Confused, it paces back and forth, trying to find a way across, but there is no end in sight for the train, yet.

\textbf{EXT. TRAIN TRACKS -- MOMENTS LATER}

Back on the other side of the speeding train, John throws up his arms in victory.

\textbf{JOHN}
\textit{Whohoo! That’s right bitch!}

The others cheer and quickly continue down the --

\textbf{EXT. ROAD -- CONTINUOUS}

John pays special attention to Leah, short of breath, again.

\textbf{JOHN}
\textit{You OK?}

Her breathing is labored, but she does not hyperventilate.

\textbf{LEAH}
\textit{(smiles)}
Yeah, thanks.

\textbf{BLAKE}
Dude, \textit{nice move with the cards back there!}
TAKA
I know, right? Like Jack Burton always says, 'It's all in the refle-

SCREEEEEECH!! A CAR comes from out of nowhere, skidding to a halt, right into their path! The others are able to brake in time, but...

SLAM! Taka barrels right into the front end of the car, catapulting him across the hood. He crash-lands a good twenty-feet out.

The driver’s side window rolls down, indignant eyes meet bewildered gazes from the kids.

LEAH
Justin!

Justin’s face says he ain’t messin’ around.

JUSTIN
Get. In.

LEAH
Why--

JUSTIN
You think you could get away with it?

LEAH
Oh. The weed. Well... kinda.

JUSTIN
Get in! Your little friends, too.

BLAKE
But what about our bik--

Justin’s icy death-glare is his answer.

BLAKE (CONT’D)
(overly agreeable)
And we can totally get these later.
Come on guys, lets go!

The kids get in the backseat. Chet sticks his head out his window.

CHE(T
(to Taka)
Hey, Panda Express... you dead?
A short distance away, Taka grumbles as he pulls himself off the ground; fortunately, he landed on his back-pack.

TAKA
I think I have a concussion, assholes.

CHET
Good. Get in.

Taka staggers to the car, gets into the back with the others.

TAKA
(groaning)
Who needs a drink...

Moments later, the Camaro peels out, tail-light disappearing into the night.

EXT. FRACKING SITE -- NIGHT

The red&blue lights of Sheriff Bronson’s car are still flashing as Deputy Wells pulls up.

Wells gets out, expecting to spot Bronson somewhere close-by, but scanning the area, Bronson is no where in sight.

WELLS
(onto walkie) Bronson, come back, over...

Wells hears his own voice as through a walkie; he spots Bronson’s radio lying on the ground. His flashlight beam soon finds BULLET-CASING littering the area.

WELLS
(onto walkie) ‘424’...Deloris, you better get State on the radio.

DELORIS (V.O.)
Copy that ‘424’... everything OK, Dan?

Wells’ flashlight shines on large smears of BLOOD trailing off towards the sinkhole.

WELLS
No. No, it’s not...
INT. JUSTIN’S CAMARO -- LATER

Bad rock music blares as Justin and Chet bob their heads to the beat. Crammed in the back, John, Blake, Taka, and Leah are a mixture of bored, annoyed, and tired.

LEAH
(over the noise)
Can we please listen to something else? Or nothing?!

CHET
Sorry we don’t have any One Direction for you tweens.

JUSTIN
(to Chet)
How do you know the band, ‘One Direction’?

CHET
How do you?

John tries to whisper to Leah across Taka and Blake.

JOHN
What are we doing?

JUSTIN
You little shits are going to come with us on the rest of our runs tonight. Then you’re all gonna find a way to come up with the $50 you owe me, or none of you are going home.

BLAKE
You take Discover?

JUSTIN
Keep it up, smart-ass. You’ll find out how serious I am.

JOHN
Would it sway you in any way that we’ve been running from some kind of huge, rabid monsters all night?

Justin just turns up the volume on the stereo again, and the kids resign to their situation at the moment...
EXT. LOUELLA DR -- LATER

Justin’s car turns onto ‘Louella Drive’, an idyllic, affluent suburban street. They pull up in front of...

EXT. JENI BELL’S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Blake and Taka instantly recognize the house.

BLAKE/TAKA
OHMYGODOHMYGODOHMYGOD!!

Loud music pumps inside, a party in full-swing.

BLAKE
Are you going to Jeni Bell’s place?!

JUSTIN
Yeah. Having some party. Big order.
(to Chet)
I got a few deliveries up the street, too. I’ll be about twenty minutes, so watch these little shits...
(indicates Taka)
...and don’t let ‘noodles’ talk. He’s got a fast-mouth.

TAKA
‘Noodles’? That’s not even trying.

Justin gets out. The kids watch him walk up to Jeni Bell’s door, Taka and Blake especially envious.

BLAKE
We gotta get into that party.

CHET
Keep dreamin’, shit-heads. You better start thinking about ways to get us our fifty-bucks.

A smug smile spreads across Taka’s face.

TAKA
Chet, we’re both business men, so what would you say if I said I could double that fifty bucks in under twenty minutes and all it will take from you is an investment of one-hundred dollars up front?
EXT. JENI BELL’S HOUSE -- LATER

Justin walks away from Jeni Bell’s front door, cutting across the lawn and continues down the street...

...simultaneously, John, Blake, Taka, and Leah, are sneaking around the far-side of the house, towards the backyard.

EXT. SIDE YARD -- MOMENTS LATER

The kids funnel into a single file, slipping between the side of Jeni’s house and the neighbor’s FENCE.

Taka brandishes a hundred dollar bill.

TAKA
Sometimes it’s just ‘tooooo easy.

JOHN
(dead-flat)
Uh, hey...just to jump back in the evening a bit: Does any one care about the fact we were relentlessly pursued by the aforementioned ‘monsters’ for the majority of the evening, and oh-my-god, monsters are real?

It is clear the group’s concerns have moved on to the party.

TAKA
Old news.

BLAKE
I’m in heavy denial.

LEAH
Ok. They clearly weren’t ‘monsters’. Probably some kind of weird wild animal or something. Who knows, who cares. We got away.

JOHN
And what about Sheriff Bronson?

Beat. Everyone stops, stumped.

BLAKE
Ummmm... we find a phone in the house and call in an anonymous tip and hope he’s OK?

Beat.
ALL
Yeah/ok/sounds good to me/cool...

They continue on.

JOHN
Taka, what are you gonna do with that hundred bucks?

TAKA
Lose my virginity tonight, duh.

LEAH
Are you serious?

TAKA
Why? Wanna make a c-note?

BLAKE
John, why do you look like you’re going to your grandmother’s anal bleaching?

JOHN
We don’t belong at this kind of thing.

BLAKE
This is the dopest party of the summer. Didn’t you want to be cool?

JOHN
I mean, yeah... but I don’t want to fake it.

The kids reach the backyard; all stop and stare, looks of awe on their faces. Taka throws his arm around John.

BLAKE
...we’re gonna be in high school, Johnny-boy. Everyone fakes it...

REVEAL--

EXT. BACKYARD -- CONTINUOUS

The party of the summer-- maybe even the decade.

Throng of co-ed teens (all 17/18) engaged in every Republican parents’ worst nightmare: music blasts, bikini-clad girls frolic, all manner of drinking games are well underway-- this is the party we all wanted to go to in high school, times a hundred!
Our esteemed group of social pariahs are confounded at the spectacle-- and clearly sticking out: four years younger than anyone else.

BLAKE
This. Is. Awesome.

Taka sees a SENIOR BOY yank the strings on a SENIOR GIRL’S bikini-- a quick flash of her breasts.

TAKA
Oh thank you God...

The group spots MRS BELL (late 40’s)-- affluent house-wife who tries her best to emulate her daughters’ appearance and style. She holds court with a group of Abercrombie jocks, martini in hand-- ‘Real Housewife’, indeed.

BLAKE
Dude, who’s that old chick. She’s hot.

LEAH
That’s their mother.

As the kids begin to enter, they are blocked by two senior MEAT HEADS.

MEAT HEAD #1
‘The Hell?! Where do you midgets think you’re going?

BLAKE
Uh, I do not believe ‘midgets’ is the preferred nomenclature.

MEAT HEAD #2
You’re real dumb, kid, you know that?

The Meat Heads prepare to bounce the gang, when--

TAKA
(holds up the $100)
Gentlemen, gentlemen... I believe this should make things right.

Meat Head #1 snatches the bill, satisfied.

MEAT HEAD #1
Freshmen scum.
MEAT HEAD #2
Come on, let’s go find an excuse to take off our shirts.

The jocks move on as our gang enters the revelry.

BLAKE
Nice work!

TAKA
And thank you, Chet!

They then spot JENI BELL (13) and a small group of her friends that her older sister has allowed in.

BLAKE
There’s Jeni!

TAKA
We will see her boobs tonight. By this, I swear.

LEAH
Annnnnnd I’m out. Later douches...

Leah saunters off into the party.

JOHN
Nice going!

TAKA
She can show us her boobs, too!

BEGIN SERIES
The DJ drops a hot track and the party double-downs! The kids slowly separate and attempt to blend in.

POOLSIDE
Taka and Blake try beer for the first time; secretly hate it, but win ‘cred with some of the girls, which they like!

KITCHEN
John waits in line for the keg. Two of Jeni’s FRIENDS (13) approach...

GIRL #1
Hey, someone said you fought Kevin Ralston today.

By the looks on their faces, the girls don’t know any of the details; John decides to capitalize on this.
JOHN
Uh...yeah. We had some beef, you know, ‘guy stuff’. No big deal.

GIRL #2
But I heard you lost.

JOHN
(sotto)
“Recreate yourself, recreate yourself...”
(turns back to the girls)
Lost? That’s cute. More like he got in a lucky punch. I saw his junk in the locker room once, and I just couldn’t bring myself to hit a guy with a micro dick.

The girls’ interest peek at this new bit of gossip.

JOHN (CONT’D)
He’s just sad, really...

LIVING ROOM
Blake makes a phone call to the police station; he masks his voice by doing his same impression of Alan Rickman.

BLAKE
Hello. This is... ‘anonymous’. I believe I saw Sheriff Bronson out by the Omni-Tech site; he may have fallen into a rather large hole.
So... yeah.
(unheard response)
Thank you, why yes, people do tell me that all the time!

BACKYARD
- A break-dancing battle starts, ala ‘Step Up’; Taka jumps in out of nowhere and brings the house down!

- John navigates the party (Boogey Nights style), soaking in being apart of the social elite. He finds Leah BICYCLE-BEER JOUSTING. She challenges him; he’s reluctant at first, but then goes for it!

POOL
Taka sits on Blake’s shoulders, playing chicken in the pool with two cute senior girls, but mid-fight, to Blake’s horror, realizes that Taka has a boner, but can’t get Taka off!
EXT. BALCONY -- LATER

Seeking a quiet break from the party, John and Leah sit on the second story balcony of Jeni’s house, overlooking the crowd, legs dangle between the wood bars. Leah is slightly buzzed; John looks especially pensive.

LEAH
Hey, if you didn’t notice, this is a party. Why do you look like peed your pants?

JOHN
This is the closest we’ll ever get, you know.

LEAH
Huh? To what?

JOHN
(re: the party)
To this. To them.

LEAH
Do you really care? Is ‘this’ what you want?

JOHN
I want to not be ‘nobody’. The kid who always gets his ass kicked.
Things are changing. You don’t get it yet: in high school, everything, everything is more important.
Everything is for real. Everything matters. The next four years will define who I am for the rest of my life. And that’s what I’m afraid of.

Leah bursts out laughing.

LEAH
Oh my god, you’re an idiot. Did you just hear yourself? No wonder Kevin wants to beat you up all the time, I feel like punching you now.

JOHN
Thanks.

LEAH
You’re so fucking worried about what these people think of you, people you don’t even like.

(MORE)
LEAH (CONT'D)
You define yourself, dumbass. Why
do you think you need to be
something else, for them?

JOHN
Because I don’t want to be ‘me’,
anymore.

LEAH
Then I was right. You are an idiot.
You don’t need to change. You just
need confidence.

JOHN
(dissmissive)
Yeah, alright.

LEAH
Whatever.
(pause)
You haven’t asked me about what
almost happened back in the woods.

JOHN
When we almost got eaten by the
horrible, horrible creature of the
night?

LEAH
No. The other thing...

It takes John a moment.

JOHN
Like, when almost...

John suddenly gets embarrassed.

LEAH
Almost what? Come on man, this is
what I mean: confidence.

John musters up the courage to scoot a bit closer.

JOHN
I just... tonight...with you...

Leah blinks softly.

LEAH
I know. Me, too.
There doesn’t need to be anymore words; the two teenagers’ faces drift closer, hanging precariously in that moment of anticipation.

Leah coyly bites her lip, a little scared; John holds his breath as he finally goes in for the kill; their lips just begin to brush, when—

VOICE(O.S.)
HEY SHIT-FACE! GET YOUR PUSSY DICK DOWN HERE RIGHT NOW!

John freezes— he knows that voice. Pulling away from Leah, he turns, looking down at KEVIN RALSTON: the bully from earlier that day; fists clenched, teeth grit, a fierce gaze set on John.

The music has stopped: the entire party now stares at John, a deer caught in a hundred head-lights.

Turning to Leah, John is surprised at the oddly reassuring look in her eye.

LEAH
I’m betting on you this time.

KEVIN
Gonna hide up there all night with your little girlfriend, you dickless shit?

LEAH
SHUT YOUR HOLE BEFORE I COME OVER THERE AND FUCK-START YOUR HEAD!

Kevin’s cronies chortle, only pissing off Kevin more. John looks at Leah, dryly.

LEAH (CONT’D)
Think of what else you fought today. Kevin’s an ant.

JOHN
I didn’t fight. I ran.

CLAMP! The two Meatheads come out of no where, grabbing John, yanking him up.

MEATHEAD #1
Come on tough guy, give us a show.
EXT. BACKYARD -- MOMENTS LATER

John is shoved into the circle that’s formed around Kevin. Taka and Blake push their way to the front; Leah joins them.

TAKA
I got 15:1 on Johnny-boy, but no more bagel cards...

Leah elbows Taka in the ribs.

BLAKE
Dude! Not cool!

WITH JOHN AND KEVIN

KEVIN
Heard you were talking shit about me inside. Said you think I got ‘lucky’ when I beat your ass this morning?

John catches the eyes of the two girls he’d been bragging to earlier-- they avert their gaze quickly.

KEVIN (CONT’D)
So, is that what you think? You think I was ‘lucky’?

JOHN
Um, I..er...

KEVIN
Ok, so maybe I got lucky...

Kevin takes off his hoodie, preparing to brawl.

KEVIN (CONT’D)
So, let’s see if my luck runs out this time.

Blake steps out from the crowd.

BLAKE
Come on dude, don’t be a dick!

Taka, following suit.

TAKA
Yeah! Pick on someone your own size...
(off John’s glare)
Ok, poor phrasing, sorry.
Kevin and his friends laugh.

KEVIN
Got everyone standing up for you, except you. You’re pathetic.

LINDSEY BELL (18), Jeni’s older sister and hostess of this party steps out, irate.

LINDSEY
Oh my god, Jeni! I told you, you could invite a couple of your friends!

Jeni Bell points at Blake, Taka, and Leah.

JENI
I don’t know them! Hey, I didn’t invite you losers!

The crowd “boo’s”, turning on all of them-- loudest of all, Jeni and Lindsey’s drunk mother!

Kevin notices glances from the older JOCKS: this is his test. Kevin puffs out his chest

KEVIN
Let me kick his ass, then I’ll boot the rest of ‘em out...
(points to Leah)
Starting with that mouthy bitch!

John shoves Kevin, hard.

KEVIN (CONT’D)
Oooh! Looks like someone’s balls finally dropped.

Everyone laughs. John holds his ground, as Kevin glares.

KEVIN (CONT’D)
(points to his chin)
Tell you what, I’ll give you the first shot. Come on.

John balls his fists, but then freezes up; cannot bring himself to raise them.

KEVIN (CONT’D)
What’s a matter? I’m giving you a free shot!

LEAH
Hit him John!
But John is frozen, terrified.

KEVIN
Oooooh, do you want your mommy?

On Leah, Blake, and Taka: Oh, he did not just say that!

On John: fear mixes with anger; tears begin to well-up.

LEAH
Kevin! You asshole!

Kevin has no clue about John’s mother.

KEVIN
What?!
(turns to John)
Are you...crying? Holy shit! This is just pathetic. You’re about to cry a whole lot harder...

Kevin begins to throw a punch, when he is YANKED back by his collar.

REVEAL: Justin, in no mood.

JUSTIN
(re: John)
If anyone kicking this kid’s ass, it’s going to be me.

Upon seeing the menacing Justin, Taka and Blake try to sneak off, but back directly into Chet: busted!

TAKA
Heya.

BACK IN THE CIRCLE

Justin moves toward John, grabbing him by the neck.

KEVIN
Yo, who the fuck are--

Justin whips a glare at Kevin.

JUSTIN
I’m the God-damn reaper you little bitch. Now shut up or you’re next on my shit list.

Kevin shrinks on the spot: the bully is now the bullied.
LEAH
Justin, let him go! You’ll get your stupid fifty dollars!

JUSTIN
This is not about money. You ripped me off. Then you tried to run. Twice. Now you need to learn the consequences that come with that.

LEAH
What are you, ‘dad’?

JUSTIN
At least I stuck around.

LEAH
(tears)
You’re such a prick.

JUSTIN
Well, I’m all you got. I’m your brother.

LEAH
No. You’re a drug-dealing asshole.
(points to the guys)
These are my real brothers, they’re my real family... and you’re fucking with one of them!

Leah steps up in Justin’s face.

LEAH (CONT’D)
Screw your fifty bucks. You want it, you come take it from me!

John is in awe of this fierce little warrior.

Justin feels the contempt in her eyes; it effects him, but only we sense it.

JUSTIN
I’m not dicking around here.

LEAH
Me neither...

Brother and sister stare each other down, John literally caught in the middle. Then,

WELLS (O.S.)
Neither am I...
Everyone turns to see Deputy Wells stroll-up.

JENI BELL
Oh shit.

JUSTIN
Ah, shit.

TAKA/BLAKE
OH, SHIT!

WELLS
(to Mrs. Bell)
You’re lucky I got bigger things on
my plate tonight. Get everyone out.
Now.

The mother begins shooing party guest out. Taka and Blake try to slip away in the crowd.

WELLS (CONT’D)
Not you two. Justin, take your
hands off the boy.

Justin releases John, throwing his hands up, mockingly.

JUSTIN
Whatever you say, ‘deputy’.

WELLS
You been with these kids all night?

JUSTIN
(smarmy)
No, sir. Just picked ‘em up off
Atwood road ‘bout an hour ago.

WELLS
Then hit the road.

Justin defiantly backs off, but shoots a look to the kids that says, ‘Next time!’ Justin and Chet exit.

WELLS (CONT’D)
Ok, you four...


WELLS (CONT’D)
An anonymous phone call came from
this house, claiming information on
Sheriff Bronson. Deloris said he
sounded a lot like, ‘the bad guy
from Die Hard’.
Wells turns his eyes on Blake. Everyone groans.

**BLAKE**
Well, how do you know it wasn’t really Alan Rickman.

**WELLS**
I was at the Omni-Tech site. There was blood everywhere. Now I’m very serious, you need to tell me exactly what happened...

**INT. LIVING ROOM -- SIMULTANEOUS**
About a dozen of Lindsey and Jeni’s friends still linger, including Kevin.

**LINDSEY**
This is bullshit. Those losers ruined my party!

**KEVIN**
Don’t worry, I’ll make sure they get what’s coming to them...

**THUMP!** Suddenly, SOMETHING BIG AND HEAVY slams into Jeni’s front door, startling everyone.

**JENI**
What the Hell is that?

**THUMP!** The entire door-frame almost separates from the wall.

**KEVIN**
Uh....

**LINDSEY**
Seriously, is someone fucking with me?!

Kevin warily approaches the door...

**THUMP!** Kevin stumbles back, the force almost knocking him over. Freaked-out, everyone waits for another impact...

**EXT. BACKYARD -- SIMULTANEOUS**

**WELLS**
Someone want to start talking? Beginning with what happened at Cameron’s house.
BLAKE
I really don’t think you’d believe us if we--

Off Wells’s stern look.

BLAKE (CONT’D)
Pfft, alright. Ok, so there’s this--

TAKA
(points, nonchalant)
Oh dude, it’s right there, see...

Wells looks over his shoulder in the direction Taka is pointing...

By the driveway, crouching low, menacing as ever: THE ALPHA.

Wells just stares, unable to process what he’s seeing.

BLAKE
Uh, you maybe wanna use your gun, dumbass?

WELLS
Everyone, slowly get behind me.

LEAH
We’re already behind you.

WELLS
Ok, then start walking to the house. SLOW...

Taka begins to take him literally, walking at a comedic snail pace. The creature growls.

WELLS (CONT’D)
Ok, less slow!

As the kids dash toward the house, the Alpha cranes its snout in their direction; a deep GROWL in its throat.

Wells draws his gun; fires into the air.

WELLS (CONT’D)
HEY!

The Alpha swivels its head back to Wells.

WELLS (CONT’D)
Oh crap.
With a snarl, the Alpha CHARGES. Wells takes aim, firing several times, but the Alpha is undeterred.

The Alpha LEAPS, claws extended, bearing down on Wells.

At the last second, Wells ROLLS out of the way-- the Alpha misses, CRASHING INTO THE POOL.

WELLS (CONT’D)

RUN!

Wells and the kids scramble toward Jeni’s patio door, just as Jeni slides it open with a bitchy expression...

JENI
What is going--

SPLOOOOOOOSH! AN ENORMOUS SHOWER OF WATER EXPLODES UP FROM THE POOL, THE ALPHA CATAPULTING OUT WITH A BELLOWING ROAR!

Jeni SCREAMS as she’s pulled inside along with the others. We stay with our kids as they tear through Jeni’s lavish house.

Sounds and backwards glimpses of the Alpha crashing through the patio glass in hot-pursuit, as lingering party-goers scream and scatter.

Jeni’s mom takes little notice of the bedlam, more interested in finishing her martini.

Meanwhile, John leads the charge as they blow by a baffled Kevin. Confused, Kevin watches our kids as they fly out the front door; he looks back to see the stampeding Alpha...

Kevin screams like a 10 year old girl as the Alpha BUCKS ITS HEAD, sending Kevin crashing into the far wall.

The Alpha continues, bursting through the entire front wall of Jeni’s house and out into the front yard...

EXT. JENI BELL’S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Only a few yards ahead of it, our kids and Wells run for his squad car. Taka reaches for the back door-- locked!

Wells fumbles for his keys

BLAKE
Shit, Dan, hurry!

Terrified, Wells accidentally drops his keys.
BLAKE (CONT’D)

SERIOUSLY?!!

...but it’s too late, the Alpha is upon them. Everyone flattens against the squad car, bracing for the end...

The Alpha roars, preparing to lunge when suddenly--

A cacophony of noise and lights: IT’S THE OMNI-TECH CALVARY!

Two black trucks roar up onto the lawn; a dozen Omni-Tech SECURITY PERSONAL rush out, armed with strange weapons.

The guards descend on the Alpha; confused by the lights and sounds, the Alpha bucks and roars (think a hunting party of African tribesmen surrounding a lion).

Wells and the kids watch in awe as the guards expertly use tranquilizers, nets, and cables to bring the Alpha down. It’s all executed impressively fast.

EXT. JENI BELL’S HOUSE -- LATER

The soldiers begin loading the now sedated Alpha into a large covered truck bed.

The operations commander, LANG(50’s), strides up, addressing Wells. The kids listen in.

LANG
You the Sheriff?

BLAKE
No, he’s just the deput--

WELLS
And who are you?

LANG
I’m in charge of site-security for Omni-Tech.

WELLS
(leery)
Packing some heavy duty inventory for security.

LANG
Obviously, we’re dealing with an extremely dangerous animal. We’ve--

WELLS
What the hell is it?
LANG
From the information I’ve been given, it is an endangered subterranean sub-species. Very rare.

WELLS
Information from who?

The commander clocks Wells’s tone.

LANG
Neither of us are scientists, deputy... so, it’s not your concern. However, what is, is getting these kids back to their homes and restoring order to your neighborhood.

WELLS
I thought Omni-Tech was just an energy company. What’s with the private army?

LANG
The company takes its security very seriously, deputy.

Lang’s tone alludes to something much bigger, but we may never know any more.

WELLS
I’ve got more questions, not to mention my superior, Sheriff Bronson, is missing and may be--

LANG
There will be a team of Omni-Tech representatives out here first thing in the morning. They will work closely with you and your town to answer your questions and rectify any damages.

WELLS
But the Sheriff might be--

LANG
Until then, all land and property owned and operated by Omni-Tech is strictly off-limits to local and state-authorities, baring a primary cooperative investigation between Omni-Tech and DOD’s office.
WELLS
DOD? The Department of Defense?
What do they--

LANG
You have your instructions, deputy.
Now if you’ll excuse me.

With a dismissive glance, Lang takes his leave as the rest of his garrison wraps-up.

BLAKE
That guy was a dick.

LEAH
Huge dick.

TAKA
Say that again, only slower.

JOHN
Something’s not right...

Wells and John share a silent look of mutual understanding.

BLAKE
Yeah genius. A twelve foot raging ‘endangered subterranean species’ chased us all night and just about made us its morning crap.

Moments later, the two Omni-Tech trucks drive off, one truck bed now containing the Alpha.

WELLS
Well, I suppose ‘that’s that’, until morning.
(turns to Jeni’s house)
I’m going to get the fire department out here to help with the house.

Jeni Bell stands, bitching hysterically in the gaping hollow of what used to be the front of her house. The rest of our kids can’t help but grin.

WELLS (CONT’D)
You all better get on home.

BLAKE
We can’t, our bikes are all out on Atwood road.
WELLS
(re: car)
Alright, hop in the back, I’ll drive you to get them.

TAKA
Sweet! Shotgun!

WELLS
Oh, Hell no.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- LATER

In the front, Wells battles with Taka’s curious hand reaching through the narrow partition, trying touch all the scanner and computer equipment.

John sits shotgun, staring out the window, despondent.

LEAH
(from the back)
What’s the matter? Sad to be alive or something?

JOHN
The whole school watched Kevin humiliate me...again.

LEAH
After all that’s happened tonight, you’re thinking about that?! Dude, you were about to kick his ass until my loser brother broke it up.

JOHN
I’m just some chump; some small-sack everyone can just pick on.

LEAH
You’re not a chump.

TAKA
She doesn’t speak for all of us.

LEAH
God, shut up! Or you won’t need a cookie to know your fortune!

TAKA
Yes! Finally: originality!
WELLS
(re: off-screen)
Oh my god...
The kids turn, looking out the windows.

ALL
Oh shit...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER
Wells halts the car, everyone staring out at

UTTER DECIMATION
Both Omni-Tech trucks have been over-turned, the bodies of
the Omni-Tech security personal strewn across the entire
area. It’s a massacre. Wells gets out of the car.

WELLS
Stay inside.

BLAKE
Yeah, ‘ya think?

Wells inspects the slaughter. It’s gruesome-- several graphic
eviscerations and decapitations.

Wells shines his flashlight in the back of the truck where
the Alpha was placed: Empty...

INT. SQUAD CAR -- MOMENTS LATER
The kids peer out from all sides.

TAKA
Oh man, I see dead people.

JOHN
I think I see someone. Looks like
he’s alive!

John eagerly opens the front passenger door, hopping out.

LEAH
Are you insane?!

BLAKE
Dude, what the fuck are you
doing?!
EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

A bloody HAND raises into the air, signaling life. John runs up to it: it’s Lang, badly wounded, his other hand is keeping his guts from falling out.

JOHN
Hey, are you OK--

John sees the evisceration.

JOHN (CONT’D)
Oh. Uh...shit, man.

LANG
Don’t be afraid.

JOHN
I gotta say, this is freaking me out a little.

LANG
The light... it’s the light...

JOHN
Huh? What’s, ‘the light’?

Lang’s eyes glaze over and John sees death for the first time, Lang’s final cryptic words resonating.

WELLS (O.S.)
Jesus! JOHN, GET BACK IN THE CAR!

A short distance away, Wells shouts, waving frantically.

John stands up, his gaze shifting to the squad car, his friends wave at him. He waves back...

CLOSER: and John sees their faces, shouting in terror as they point/motion.

A sick realization settles in as John slowly turns around to see THE ALPHA MELTING OUT OF THE NIGHT, plodding toward him.

WITH WELLS

He sees the Alpha descending on John, but he’s too far away! He draws his gun, takes aim -- but it clicks empty!

WELLS (CONT’D)
No...
INT. SQUAD CAR -- SIMULTANEOUS

Stuck in the backseat, Taka, Blake, and Leah pound on the windows, watching in horror. They try to get out, but the back-seat doors of the squad car are locked from the outside.

BLAKE
Run, you stupid asshole! RUN!

LEAH
Oh shit! It’s gonna get him!

TAKA
I can’t watch!

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

John is frozen to the spot. The Alpha reaches John, towering above him, a deep grunt uttering from its throat.

In the distance, Wells screams, trying to get the Alpha’s attention as he dashes up the road.

John looks back at the squad car; locks eyes with Leah.

SLOW MO: John never takes his eyes off Leah, as behind him, the Alpha roars, opening his jaws wide, moving in...

INT. SQUAD CAR -- SIMULTANEOUS

SLO MO(cont‘): Through the windshield, Leah and the others watch the Alpha chomp down on John. Leah mouth opens to scream...

We suddenly are jolted into REAL-TIME: Leah screams becomes piercing as Blake and Taka turn away.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- SIMULTANEOUS

We see the scene again from Wells’s POV: the Alpha takes John into its mouth...

...but it does NOT snap down; instead, it picks up John--like a lioness picking up her cub-- turns, and runs off into the night, carrying John in its muzzle.

Wells slows, watching helplessly as John is carried off.
INT. SQUAD CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Wells gets into the squad car.

TAKA

OH MY GOD IT ATE HIM! IT
FUCKING ATE HIM!

BLAKE

HOLY SHIT MAN! HOLY SHIT!

HOLY SHIT!

WELLS

It didn’t eat him.

Taka and Blake both stop wailing on a dime.

TAKA

Wait, whaaa?

WELLS

It didn’t eat him-- it carried him off in its mouth.

LEAH

Carried him off?! To where?!

WELLS

I think I can guess.

BLAKE

That huge hole!

TAKA

Ah shit man, we gotta go after him! That’s our boy!

WELLS

‘We’re’ not going anywhere. You’re just kids. You’re gonna wait here and I’ll have Deloris come get you.

TAKA

What?! Bullshit, man!

BLAKE

No way in hell!

WELLS (CONT’D)

This isn’t up for discussion, it’s an order.

LEAH

And here’s our order: we’re going to get our friend back. ‘You’ are allowed to come along if you want. This isn’t up for discussion.

Wells looks at the three sets of determined eyes glaring back at him. He knows he’s already lost this fight.
WELLS
You stay close. You do everything I say...

BLAKE
Hell yeah! Now let’s hit up your station and load us up on firepower!

WELLS
First off, I’m definitely not giving any of you guns. Christ. Secondly, Sheriff Bronson is the only one who has the key to the armory.

TAKA
Well, that was stupid.

WELLS
It’ll take the state police at least forty-five minutes to get out here, assuming they’ll even believe me.

BLAKE
John doesn’t have that kind of time! What are we going to do?

ANGLE ON: Leah

LEAH
I know exactly what we’re gonna do...

EXT. KEVIN RALTON’S HOUSE -- LATER

A bruised and banged-up Kevin Ralston opens the front door of his house to find Blake, Taka, and Leah standing on his front step, Deputy Wells behind them.

KEVIN
What the fuck do you want?

LEAH
(stone-cold)
John is in trouble. Big trouble. Get your dad to open his sports store. We need equipment.

KEVIN
Screw you! And my dad’s not even here, he’s out of town.
LEAH
Then you’re going to come open it up for us.

KEVIN
Ha! What makes you think--

LEAH
Because you don’t want to spend the rest of your life being a total dick, Kevin.

KEVIN
Huh?

LEAH
You have a choice: you can drop the shitty attitude and choose to help a kid who has never done anything to you, or you can see how far being a life-long asshole gets you. Believe me, I know how those guys turn out.

Kevin holds his ground, seemingly defiant...

EXT. RALSTON SPORTING GOODS. MAIN STREET -- LATER

Kevin slides back the collapsible metal gate covering his father’s store front; unlocks the door. Wells, Blake, Taka, and Leah file in.

KEVIN
Figures that little dork would’ve gotten himself into something like this.

Blake’s ears prick up.

BLAKE
Come again? Because I watched that ‘little dork’ stand right up to that thing. Just like he stood up to you, both times today.

KEVIN
Pfft. He didn’t ‘stand-up’, he just ‘stood there’.

BLAKE
He’s thirteen, Kevin. His dad is six-foot-five, two-hundred-twenty pounds.

(MORE)
BLAKE (CONT'D)
What do you think John is going to look like by the time he’s a senior? And who do you think he’ll remember giving him shit when he was a freshmen? And PS: your little comment at the party? His mom died last year, dickhead.

Beat.

KEVIN
Let me show you where the baseball bats are...

Kevin eagerly jumps to help.

TAKA
(aside)
Dude, John’s dad is barely taller than I am.

BLAKE
Yeah, I know!

MONTAGE
Classic ‘gear-up’ scene: make-shift weaponry made from a medley of sports equipment. It ain’t no joke: they are able to make very durable, effective weapons and protection.

EXT. RALSTON SPORTING GOODS. MAIN STREET -- LATER

Armed to the teeth and ready for battle, the troops file out of the store toward Wells’ squad car.

KEVIN
Hey, wait up...

Kevin jogs up, wearing a hockey mask and an umpire’s chest-pad.

KEVIN (CONT’D)
I’m coming, too.

LEAH
I thought you didn’t care.

KEVIN
(earnest)
I figured this is partially my fault.

(MORE)
KEVIN (CONT'D)
If I had beat him up enough
earlier, he’d probably be in the
hospital now and wouldn’t have
gotten ‘nabbed by that thing.

Everyone raises an eyebrow. Kevin really believes his logic.

TAKA
Suuuuuure.

Everyone piles into Wells’s car. Leah is about to step in,
when she’s suddenly caught in a pair of headlights. She turns
as Justin’s Camaro pulls up.

LEAH
Oh God...

Leah walks over as Justin rolls down his window.

JUSTIN
(re: her get-up)
Ha! What are you, in some kinda
lesbian roller-derby?

LEAH
What do you want?

JUSTIN
Driving by and saw you all. I don’t
give a shit that you’re still
riding along with Deputy Retard;
just letting you know you’re not
off the hook, and when you finally
come home, there’s gonna be--

LEAH
I may not come home, Justin. In
fact, I probably won’t, because
I’ll most likely be dead in about
an hour. One of my friends is in
trouble and I’m going to go help
him, and probably die trying. But
that’s what I do for my family.

JUSTIN
You...serious?

Leah storms away.

LEAH
Yeah! I am. And I’m sure your pal
Chet there would do the same for
you.
INT. JUSTIN’S CAMERO -- CONTINUOUS

Justin looks over to see Chet smoking out of an APPLE BONG.

CHET
(exhaling)
It’s healthier, cause it filters through an apple.

Justin looks back, watching his sister get into the squad car, a conflicted look in his eye.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Wells pulls out. Taka had overheard Leah’s conversation.

TAKA
Hey, no one mentioned anything about dying!

BLAKE
Look at it this way: at least we won’t have to deal with high school.

INT. SMALL CAVERN -- LATER

John’s eyes blink open, finding himself in darkness. He pulls a LIGHTER out of his pocket. The small flame barely illuminates an UNDERGROUND CAVE.

He begins to cautiously explore. SQUISH -- steps in something slimy. Shines the light on the ground to see he’s stepped in a small pile of POOP.

JOHN
Shit!

John voice is unexpectedly loud in the cave. Suddenly, as if in response, a TINY GROWL... then another tiny growl coming from the opposite side. He puts two and two together.

JOHN (CONT’D)
Shit...

EXT. FRACKING SITE -- LATER

Wells, Blake, Taka, Leah, and Kevin stand, peering down into the black sink-hole, a mixture of trepidation and dread.
BLAKE
He’s down there, huh?

WELLS
Bronson’s blood trail leads down there-- John’s gotta be down there too.

TAKA
Just a quick poll: we’re all sure we like John enough that we’re about to--

Leah turns and swiftly PUNCHES Taka in the nuts.

TAKA (CONT’D)
(squelching in pain)
She touched it!

WELLS
Blake, get the rope. Everyone make sure you’ve got your flashlights handy.
(dramatic beat)
It’s going to get a whole lot darker before the light.

BLAKE
I feel you could’ve come up with something better. I know you have it in you.

WELLS
Shut up, Blake.

INT. SMALL CAVERN -- MOMENTS LATER

Using the lighter, John searches for the source of the two smaller growls. Sounds of movement around him-- he knows something(s) are circling him.

JOHN
Awesome. Exactly how I pictured today was gonna play out.

John’s foot kicks a large rock, he immediately grabs it.

John catches glimpses of two fast moving FORMS scampering across the walls. The forms are maybe the size of baby gorillas, covered in translucent hair.
JOHN (CONT’D)
Great. Siblings.

He raises the rock, his only means of defense.

Suddenly, John’s heel hits something on the ground. He spins around to see: SHERIFF BRONSON’S BODY...or what’s left of it, his major organs were tonight’s appetizers.

John reels back, but then notices Bronson’s UTILITY BELT, still in tact. He quickly grabs a flashlight, mace, and baton. He switches on the flashlight, its powerful beam searching the darkness for

THE TWO CREATURES

We see them in full-light now; creepy as hell and dangerous looking, each crouching behind rocks, ready to pounce. John raises the baton in his other hand.

JOHN (CONT’D)
Ok, you can do this...

With a shrill roar, the first creature LEAPS toward John, jaws snapping...

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN -- ELSEWHERE

On the cavern FLOOR, Wells helps Taka down the final few feet of the rope. The rest have already descended and await the next move. Wells points his beam down a

LARGE TUNNEL

WELLS
This way...

Wells leads, the rest follow, treading cautiously.

TAKA
(to Blake)
Well, this is both horrifying and awesome.

BLAKE
Totally. This time yesterday, did you think you’d be doing something like this?

TAKA
This time yesterday I was humping my pillow. The trick is you fold it over like a taco...
BLAKE
Dude, is there anything you haven’t boned?

TAKA
What, you mean like a girl?

MOMENTS LATER: The tunnel splits—now what?

WELLS
Shit, which way?

LEAH
We split up.

WELLS
That is NOT happening.

LEAH
It’s not, not happening. You take Taka. Kevin and Blake, you’re with me.

Leah heads down one of the tunnels; Blake and Kevin shrug, then follow.

WELLS
Leah! Get back here now!

LEAH
You sound like my father. I didn’t listen to him, either.

Reluctantly, Wells lets her and the others go.

INT. SMALLER CAVERN -- MOMENTS LATER

SCREEEEEECH! John swats at the two small creatures as they trade off attacks. He dodges and weaves, his flashlight strobos erratically, giving us only terrifying glimpses of the assailing creatures.

One lands on his back, biting and clawing at his neck and shoulder. John yells in pain...

INT. TUNNEL #1 -- SIMULTANEOUS

John’s scream echoes down the tunnel. Leah halts the others in their tracks—sounds close.

LEAH
Hurry!
Leah, Blake, and Kevin dash further into the tunnel.

INT. SMALLER CAVERN -- MOMENTS LATER

John staggers, mid-battle between the two smaller creatures.

THWACK! He finally lands a solid hit with the baton, smashing one of the creatures to the ground. He immediately spins and BACKHANDS the second one in mid-air as it leaps for him, sending it crashing into the far wall.

The second creatures whimpers and scampers off down a small hole in the wall.

John turns his attention on the remaining stunned creature laying on the ground. Raises his baton for the death-blow...

...but then he begins to take pity on the creature as it lays whimpering on the ground. John relaxes his guard...

Wrong move. The creature flips up, sinking its teeth into John’s ankle!

JOHN
You little shit!!

John brings down the baton HARD on the creature-- again and again and again, until a bloody pulp is all that remains. He looks at his ankle-- fortunately his high-tops sneaker took the brunt of the damage.

JOHN (CONT’D)
Damnit! These were new you assho--

ROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOR!!!!!

John knows that roar by now: the Alpha, and he’s close. His flashlight finds the only way out: a large gape in the CAVERN CEILING-- it’s high, but within jumping reach.

John tries jumping: it’s pathetic, his fingers come up way short.

JOHN (CONT’D)
Why didn’t I go out for more sports?

ROOOOOOOOOOOAR!

Even closer now. John jumps again, fingers firmly catching and finally manages to hoist himself out.
On his feet, John can hear the loud thumps of the approaching Alpha-- he takes off down one of several tunnel-conduits...

INT. TUNNEL #1 -- MOMENTS LATER

John runs for his life; he shines the flashlight backwards, looking for signs of the Alpha, when suddenly he SLAMS into something...

The flashlight drops to the ground. A high-pitch scream is heard-- sounds like it’s the other small creature!

In a flurry, John grabs the MACE and starts spraying wildly.

LEAH
AHAAAA! WHAT THE FUCK?!

BLAKE
IT BURNS!

More shrill screaming... and we realize it had been Kevin!

In the tangle of flailing bodies, John accidentally sprays himself! Now all four kids are writhing around the tunnel, blinded.

JOHN
Leah?!

LEAH
Yeah, retard! You sprayed all of us!

JOHN
Who’s screaming?

BLAKE
That’s Kevin.

JOHN
Gah!--

Instinctively, John starts to spray MORE!...except, instead of Kevin, he nails Blake.

BLAKE
(screaming)
It’s me you asshole! STOP SPRAYING US!

JOHN
Oh, sorry. What’s Kevin doing here?

KEVIN
Listen, I didn’t have to come.
LEAH
Guys, later, OK?

Leah produces a water bottle; quickly rinses everyone’s eyes.

JOHN
Sorry, I thought you were one of those things.

LEAH
There’s more?

JOHN
Yeah, I think they’re its babies. Mean little shits. We killed the first one earlier, which sent the mother after us, then the father. I just pulverized another one and there’s one more left. Plus dad.

BLAKE
Oh, wonderful.

LEAH
We gotta get out of here, is everyone OK?

Leah shines her flashlight in the face of John and Blake: their eyes/area around their eyes is red, but otherwise fine.

JOHN/BLAKE
Yeah.

She then shines the light on Kevin.

KEVIN
I’m fine.

But Kevin doesn’t look it: his face is red and really puffy.

KEVIN (CONT’D)
(off their looks)
What? What’s wrong?

John, Blake, and Leah stifle their giggles, still very little sympathy for the bully.

BLAKE
Nothing...you look great.

Suddenly, a low, guttural GROWL echoes in the tunnel.

The kids stop laughing, slowly turning their flashlights down the dark tunnel.
**Two EYES catch the beam, popping out of the dark; the Alpha.**

**JOHN**

**RUN!**

The group immediately sprints in the opposite direction!

**INT. TUNNEL #2 -- SIMULTANEOUS**

Wells and Taka quietly tread along, when a NOISE stops Taka: a high-pitch ‘clicking’, like something breathing.

**TAKA**

Did you fart?

**WELLS**

God, you’re so weird.

**TAKA**

I’m serious. Did you hear that?

**WELLS**

No, I--

The clicking/breathing sounds again. Wells and Taka’s flashlights sweep the area for the source.

...Taka then realizes they’re looking in the wrong place, his head craning upward to see a small HOLE in the ceiling...

*The (second) small creature drops out of the hole, RIGHT ONTO TAKA, like the Alien ‘Face-Hugger’. Taka reels back.*

**TAKA**

**HOLY SHIT! HOLY SHIT!**

Wells jumps into the action.

**WELLS**

Hold still!

Taka bucks and struggles with the creature while Wells tries to tear it away, only causing the creature to dig its tiny claws further into Taka’s scalp.

**TAKA**

You’re making it worse!

**WELLS**

I said hold still!
TAKA
AHHHHH! It’s little dick is in my mouth!

Taka purposefully runs full-speed, head-first into the cavern wall, smashing the creature. The creature yelps as Taka rams it again and again.

Suddenly, the creature lets go, and Taka’s face smashes into the cavern wall instead.

TAKA (CONT’D)
(groaning)
Saw that coming.

The creature leaps at Wells, but Wells swats it with a TENNIS RACQUET, sending it flying through the air, right back at Taka, hitting him in the square in the stomach!

TAKA (CONT’D)
GAH!

WELLS
Sorry!

INT. TUNNEL #1 -- SIMULTANEOUS

Leah, Blake, Kevin dash back down the tunnel, with John bringing up the rear-- the Alpha only a few yards behind!

Another FORK in the tunnel ahead-- Leah and the others continue down the same tunnel; John makes the split-second decision to lead the Alpha down the other route.

JOHN
KEEP RUNNING!

John veers down the other tunnel; the Alpha takes the bait.

LEAH
JOHN! NO!

INT. TUNNEL #3 -- MOMENTS LATER

John hauls ass, with only endless darkness ahead, the Alpha barreling down after him.

JOHN
Damnit! Never listen to my instincts!
INT. TUNNEL #2 -- MOMENTS LATER

Wells continues to swat at the smaller creature, but it is too quick. It leaps onto his face, now.

    WELLS
    Ahh! Get it off!

Taka points and laughs.

    TAKA
    How does it feel, now?!

    WELLS
    I’m serious!!

Wells struggles to pry the creature of his face; Taka jumps in, snatching Wells’ TASER off his belt.

    TAKA
    (aiming)
    Hold still!

    WELLS
    (blind)
    What are you doing?!

Taka fires the taser darts into the creature’s back-- a direct hit! The creature screams, seizing; it drops off Wells’ face, fried.

    WELLS (CONT’D)
    Holy shit! Nice shot kid!

    TAKA
    And that’s how you do it, to --

Right then, John bolts PAST them via a connecting perpendicular tunnel they had not seen.

    TAKA (CONT’D)
    Hey, was that--

WHOOOOOSH! The Alpha blows by, pursuing John, CRUSHING Wells’ foot as it passes! Wells crumbles, cries out, clutching his shattered foot.

Taka, leans forward meekly, peering down the tunnel.

    TAKA (CONT’D)
    ...Johnny?

SMACK! The pursuing Leah, Blake, and Kevin collide with Taka and the whole group tumbles to the tunnel floor, onto Wells.
WELLS  
(from under)  
Ok, what the fu--

TAKA
Am I dead?

LEAH
I’m not that lucky.

TAKA
Oh, hey guys.

BLAKE
Someone’s elbow is in my crotch.

KEVIN
That’s not an elbow.

INT. LARGE CAVERN -- MOMENTS LATER

As John runs, the tunnel opens up into an ENORMOUS CAVERN. Water drips from huge stalactites; dozens of small & large POOLS collect on the cavern floor.

Kevin’s flashlight sweeps across the cavern walls, searching for a way out; the flashlight begins to flicker.

JOHN  
Oh shit, no... come on!

John shakes the flashlight in vain as the bulb slowly fades...then, darkness.

Seconds later, a low-growl fills the cavern.

John whips out his lighter; its tiny flame barely illuminates three feet in front of him...and the dripping maw of the Alpha!

The Alpha huffs, almost blowing the flame out. John slowly starts backing away, the Alpha moving forward in turn.

JOHN (CONT’D)  
For what it’s worth, I’m sorry. But your family were total dicks.

The Alpha snarls again, preparing to end this...

The lighter’s reflection off a nearby POOL OF WATER catches the corner of John’s eye...

INSERT: Lang, dying as John watches...
The light...it’s the light.

BACK TO SCENE: a realization in John’s eyes.

JOHN
...the light.

On that, John drops the lighter into the pool of water.

Instantly, FLAMES LEAP UP! The Alpha reels back, painfully blinded from the fire!

John scrambles to evade the Alpha, as the fire continues to spread from pool to pool.

The Alpha recovers and begins precariously leaping and weaving through pockets of flames after John, using its nose.

MOMENTS LATER

Leah, Taka, and Kevin enter the cavern; Blake helps a hobbling Wells. All stare at the firey blaze in the cavern.

Taka dramatically slings his Super-Soaker around his torso.

TAKA
Whoa! Sick!

WELLS
What the Hell is this?

LEAH
It’s the fracking! The gelling chemicals they use to drill contain all kinds of bad stuff like methane and formaldehyde! It’s mixed with the water...

BLAKE
Frackin’ sweet!

KEVIN
(pointing)
Look!

The group zeros-in on John, carefully navigating across the cavern, but the Alpha is gaining on him.

LEAH
We gotta help him!

Taka dramatically slings his Super-Soaker around his torso.

TAKA
Fill me up.
MOMENTS LATER

John reaches the far side of the cavern, dashing across a large pool of water that catches fire only seconds after.

A huge WALL OF FIRE bursts up; John is a bit relieved, as this will surely cut-off the Alpha’s pursuit...

Wrong. John turns to see the Alpha bounding over the wall of fire into safe-territory with him. John scrambles backwards, bumping up against the cavern wall-- the snarling Alpha finally has him dead-to-rights...

TAKA (O.S.) (CONT’D)
HEY, FUZZ-NUTS!!

The Alpha swivels its head; Taka on the other side of the flaming wall.

TAKA (CONT’D)
Ha-ha. You looked.

Taka pulls the trigger on his Super-Soaker, sending a powerful stream of the toxic cavern water shooting out; as it passes through the wall of fire, it catches, sending a firey spray onto the Alpha’s hide.

The Alpha bucks and roars, rolling on the ground.

LEAH
(pointing)
John-- get up there!

John looks to see a RIDGE above him, protruding over the cavern floor about 15 feet-- if it he can reach it, it’ll be safe haven for sure.

With the Alpha distracted, John scrambles up the cavern wall.

CAVERN FLOOR

LEAH (CONT’D)
JOHN! Stay there, we’ll figure something out!

BLAKE
We will?

TAKA
I had the water-gun idea. Someone else’s turn.

LEAH
We gotta kill that thing!
BLAKE
Yeah, I don’t think it likes to die very much.

RIDGE -- CROSS CUT

Having reached the ridge, John seems safe for the moment, watching the Alpha toss and roll on the cavern floor below him. He allows himself a moment of relief...

*Suddenly, the Alpha recovers, LEAPING onto the cavern wall, and to everyone’s horror, easily scales up until, it too reaches the ridge.*

The beast steps out, as John backs away, nearing the cusp or the ridge, a pool of PURE FIRE below.

LEAH
JOHN!

The group is terrified, but is helpless to aid their friend. The Alpha truly has John cornered now. It stalks toward him as the group can only watch in horror.

WELLS
Guys, shut your eyes. Don’t watch...

LEAH
NO!

Then suddenly--

KEVIN
Well, this one’s not gonna be on me.

ALL
What?! Huh?

Kevin grabs Taka’s hockey gauntlets; swipes Blake’s HOCKEY STICK-- causing Wells’s full weight to fall on Blake.

BLAKE
Oaf! Hey!

Kevin lowers his hockey mask over his face; this combined with his umpire’s chest-padding and football shoulder pads makes for some decent protection from the fire.

KEVIN
(turning to Leah)
I’m not gonna be an asshole.
With that, Kevin turns and DASHES INTO THE FLAMES.

RIDGE -- MOMENTS LATER

John’s heels touch the edge of the overhang-- the Alpha, almost upon him-- ROARS, shaking the entire cavern.

Something stirs in John, quickly building; staring down the last few moments of his life, the boy is not facing the Alpha, rather, he faces himself.

The Alpha roars again-- AND JOHN LETS OUT A BELLOWING, PRIMAL SCREAM-- so loud, so powerful, even the Alpha is flummoxed.

    JOHN
    I’M NOT BACKING DOWN! YOU HEAR ME!
    I’M NOT BACKING DOWN! YOU WANT ME??
    COME HERE! COME AND GET ME YOU PUSSY!

The Alpha grunts, as if out of respect. Then ducks its head, preparing to pounce. Suddenly, a shout from below...

    KEVIN (O.S.)
    JOHN!!!

John looks down to see Kevin standing below. As if throwing a shot-put, Kevin spins to gain momentum, then HEAVES the hockey stick upwards...

...John reaches out, almost tipping over the edge, but successfully snatches the hockey stick out of the air.

The Alpha bears down on John, jaws widening to take him in!

John sweeps around and JAMS THE HOCKEY STICK INTO THE ALPHA’S MOUTH, prying it open!

With the hockey stick stuck, the Alpha reels its head wildly, careless of its precarious footing on the cusp of the ridge.

    LEAH
    Hit him John! HIT HIM!

Leah’s words echo in John’s ears; glaring at the wild beast, John furrows his brow, gritting his teeth.

    JOHN
    I am done running from you.

John unleashes a guttural cry, charging the Alpha, dropping his shoulder and ramming into its side, sending the Alpha toppling OFF the ridge, and into the large pool of fire below.
CAVERN FLOOR

The Alpha splashes down, engulfed in flame-- its painful bellows fill the cavern.

Leah, Taka, Blake, and Wells cheer.

LEAH
John, get down from there! Hurry!

John wastes no time in scrambling back down the cavern wall. Kevin meets him at the bottom.

KEVIN
Come on, stay behind me. And hey man, sorry about what I said about your mom.

JOHN
(hesitant, but then)
Thanks. It’s cool.

Kevin leads John through the wall of fire (his body/padding taking the brunt of it). Moments later, the group is reunited.

On the other side of the ridge, the Alpha flails in its death throws, but no one wants to stay around to watch.

Leah tackles John in the hug of his life.

LEAH
Holy shit! John, that was incredible! You did it! You beat that thing!

TAKA
That was AWESOME!

BLAKE
‘Awesome’? That was fucking epic!

WELLS
Good work, John.

KEVIN
(to deaf ears)
Hey, what about me?

JOHN
Come on, we gotta get out of here. This fire is going to spread fast.

Everyone hurries out of the cavern.
INT. PIT. GROUND FLOOR -- MOMENTS LATER

The group stares dauntingly up at the over 50 foot ascent, with only the single rope they came down on.

   BLAKE
   Going down was the easy part, huh.

   TAKA
   Did no one think we’d have to go back up?! I can’t climb that, look at my arms, they’re like hummingbirds’ legs!

   WELLS
   (tries his walkie) Shit, it’s just static this far down.

INSERT: Elsewhere, flames from the cavern start to spread, trailing out into the tunnels.

BACK TO SCENE

Blake is the first to attempt climbing the rope; he only gets about ten feet up, before his arms give out.

   BLAKE
   This ain’t happening. I’m too exhausted from lugging around Deputy Could-Lose-Ten-Pounds.

John peers down one of the tunnels, sees a glow growing in the distance-- THE FIRE IS HEADED TOWARD THEM!

   JOHN
   Guys, we’re running out of time.

A sobering realization begins to set in...

   BLAKE
   Well, we got any more of that weed?

Then suddenly:

   CAMERON (O.S.)
   Helllloooooo?

Everyone looks up, seeing the tiny dot of Cameron’s head against the moonlit sky. Andy and Brian are with him as well.

   TAKA
   Holy shit! Cameron, is that you?!
CAMERON
Yo! Who’s down there?

Everyone shouts at once.

CAMERON (CONT’D)
Oh, hey you guys. Whatcha doing--

EVERYONE
GET US OUT OF HERE!!!

SERIES
- Future engineering major Cameron improvises a pulley system with the rope.

- Succession of each of our group members being lifted out of the pit.

EXT. FRACKING SITE -- LATER

Exhausted, but thankful this horrible day is over, everyone congratulates each other.

WELLS
How did you guys find us?

CAMERON
You didn’t think we’d just let the coolest thing ever to happen in my house just vanish into the night without any proof?

Cameron holds up a small camera.

TAKA
(to Leah)
See, I told you he had cameras.

CAMERON
After the fire-department left, we snuck out and picked-up the trail of destruction and it lead us here.

LEAH
Cameron, I could seriously kiss you.

Cameron eyes well-up with hope.

LEAH (CONT’D)
But I’m not.
Cameron deflates.

LEAH (CONT'D)
I’m saving it for someone else.

She smiles and turns to John. Everyone childishly “Ooooo’s”.

LEAH (CONT'D)
You kicked that thing’s ass!

JOHN
(smiles)
Not by myself.

LEAH
That’s what we’re here for. Don’t ever think you’re alone with anything this stupid world throws at you. And especially, because you have me...

Finally, the two slowly move in for their much delayed kiss...

ROOOOARRRRRRRR!!!!!!!

EVERYONE TURNS, WATCHING IN HORROR AS THE ALPHA CLIMBS OUT OF THE PIT, looking like a demon-dog from Hell!!

The beast is horribly burned; its skin has melted away, revealing bloody, charred muscle and sinew. If it was scary looking before, it’s a mother-fuckin’ nightmare now!

Screams of terror. Cameron shrieks, pauses to take a picture, then continues shrieking.

The beast charges directly at John and Leah as the two cling to each other-- this is really the end!

HONK HONK HONK!!

From out of nowhere, Justin speeds through the group, ramming into the Alpha with his prize Camaro; the front end smashes in as the car catapults the beast back into the FIREY PIT!

Justin and Chet open their doors and roll out of the car right before it, too, topples into the pit.

INSERT: The Alpha slams onto the pit floor; it’s only able to let out a short bellow before the Camaro SMASHES DOWN ON IT.
BACK TO SCENE

An eruption of joy not seen since the celebration at the Ewok Village. Leah runs up to her brother and hugs him; Justin softens as he hugs his little sister back.

JUSTIN
You are my family...

After a tender moment, Leah pulls away from her brother, beaming at him.

JUSTIN (CONT’D)
But you still owe me fifty bucks.

CHET
(re: his joint)
Dude, I am telling you... best shit ever!

Back with group, Leah throws her arms around John’s neck, the two pull close, finally sharing their first kiss.

Looking on, Taka throws his arm around Blake, smiling.

BLAKE
I swear to God if you try to kiss me, I will punch your taint.

WELLS
What the Hell am I going to tell all your parents?!

KEVIN
Hey, who’s gonna pay for all the equipment?

Cameron holds up his camera, triumphant.

CAMERON
Don’t worry, this photo is gonna make us rich!

WITH JOHN and LEAH

The two pull away just for a moment, smile, and kiss again.

TAKA
Yeeeeeah...nice and slow, Johnny, just how she likes it!
Without looking or breaking from their lip-lock, Leah punches Taka in the face!

CUT TO:

1st CODA (as credits roll)

On TV:

NEW ANCHOR
A string of destruction last night that left a gruesome body count in its wake, is thought to be attributed to some kind of wild ‘monster’, that is, at least according to one area youth who snapped this photo of the alleged ‘beast’.

A blurry PHOTO is shown; if you squint, you can kinda see the outline of the Alpha, but really, it could be anything.

On TV: cut to Cameron being interviewed in-studio.

CAMERON
(all one run-on sentence)
...Then, it climbed out of the pit and was like all, ‘Roowooooooaaaar’, but like I said, I personally fought it at my house earlier that night, so I was so not freaked out or scared, seriously, ask all my friends. I was awesome. I wish there were more, so I could find ‘em all and kick more ass! That’s right you *bleep*! You don’t want to mess with this *bleep-bleep-bleep*...Yeah, I will *bleep* your mother too!

(beat)
So, when do I get paid?

On TV: cut to the News Anchor.

NEW ANCHOR
Among the victims is Roscoe Sheriff Chuck Bronson, who died bravely defending a group of local children. Deputy Daniel Wells was sworn in as Roscoe’s new sheriff and had this to say about the incidents...

On TV: cut to Wells being interviewed at the Omni-Tech site.
WELLS
I want answers. We all do. If it means going all the way to the top of Omni-Tech, then that’s how far I’m willing to take it. Needless to say, Omni-Tech is finished in this town!

The camera then pans down to Taka, who stands next to Wells.

TAKA
Jeni Bell, I love you. I’m so sorry we trashed your house. Please give me a second chance to see your boobs!

2nd CODA (after credit roll)

INT. NON-DESCRIPT OFFICE -- DAY

The back of an executive leather chair; an unseen figure speaks on the phone.

FIGURE (O.S.)
Yes, I can assure you sir, the situation has been completely contained; Omni-Tech remains the face of all operations.
(pause)
...no, all information leaks have been redirected through proper channels.
(pause)
Indeed. They are all just small town nobodies. It will all be lumped in with conspiracy theories and Big Foot sightings.
(pause)
Thank you sir. Thank you very much. There’s just one more question that’s been lingering, since the onset of the events...

The leather chair swivels around, revealing BRYAN CRANSTON, or some big actor cameo. He wears a general’s uniform, four stars across the chest.

GENERAL
When will phase three begin?

SMASH TO BLACK