



Written by

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OVER BLACK

LIGHTNING STRIKES, flashing picture to life of a--

SOAKED ROAD - NIGHT

Heavy rainfall pelts a rusted manhole cover-- we hear the sewage water rumble below, churning like a raging river.

FLASH. We're blinded by headlights cresting the hill ahead, spotlighting the metal hatch.

CRRRRRRR. The heavy lid grinds against gravel, being pushed open from the inside... and just before we get a glimpse of--

WOOSH-- the car passes over it...

Only now the cylindrical cover is off, laying flat next to the exposed black hole it usually protects.

THUNDER RUMBLES as water cascades in. We push in on it until--

SPLASH! Further down the street, that car turns onto a potholed road, accelerating up a winding drive.

LIGHTNING FLASHES, silhouetting a spooky house on the hill. SHRIEKS reverberate from inside its walls--

BOY'S VOICE (O.S.)
LEAVE ME ALONE!

INT. KITCHEN

Hands scuffle over control of a knife.

Someone grabs the handle. Lifts the blade up high... and at its apex the steel glints. Deadly sharp.

BOY (O.S.)
NOOOOO!

LIGHTNING CRACKS, like a starter pistol, initiating the dagger to be thrust downward-- hard.

THUNK. Followed by a blood-curdling SCREAM.

INT. FOYER

LAURIE HENDERSON(40s) bursts through the door, nearly tripping over the family's sleeping cat.

LAURIE
 Argh-- Shadow! Quit layin' there!

Shadow darts off into the darkness of a nearby room.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
 Boys! What has gotten into--

As she turns the corner... she sees it-- the unthinkable...

That BLADE protruding out the gut of her youngest son, JACK(14, but could pass for eleven), pure innocence; pleading with his mom through glassy eyes.

She B-lines for him, but as she gets closer we realize... this is no domestic dispute, we just had a bad angle... the KNIFE is actually lodged into a PUMPKIN Jack is holding.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
 C'mon Richie, cut it out!

The eldest Henderson boy, RICHIE(17), trouble, pulls the knife out of the pumpkin.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
 Thank you.

... Richie stabs again, even deeper into the gourd.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
 Richard Henderson!

RICHIE
 What? You said to
 (with a devious grin)
 "cut it out"
 (off Laurie's look)
 What? I'm helping.

LAURIE
 Just be careful.

JACK
 No--Mom?! He didn't even wanna
 carve pumpkins.

LAURIE
 Shockingly enough I'm with your
 brother on this one. That knife is
 too dangerous, sweetie. Let him do
 it.

RICHIE
 You're welcome.

JACK
 Argh-- I'm not a little kid. I can
 do it!
 (reaches for the knife)

Richie stiff arms Jack's forehead, keeping him at bay.

RICHIE
 Jack cut himself.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Richie!

LAURIE
 What!? Let me see.

Jack hides his band-aided finger.

Laurie presses the issue, an overprotective mother and nurse,
 still donning scrubs from her shift.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
 Come here.

She opens the cabinet. Grabs hydrogen peroxide.

JACK
 I'm fine.

LAURIE
 If it gets infected, we might have
 to cut it off.

RICHIE
 (raises the knife)
 I'll do it!

Jack shakes him off-- Lurches over to the sink.

JACK
 It's just a scratch.

It's more than a scratch, but not stitches worthy. Laurie
 eyes him, *give me your hand*.

Jack reluctantly holds his finger over the sink.

LAURIE
 That's my brave little man.

JACK
 I'm not little-- but you're right,
 I am pretty brave.

LAURIE
 Just like your father.

Laurie holds up the peroxide. Jacks looks at it timidly. Steels himself... nods ready.

She levels the bottle, liquid pain seconds from flowing out--

JACK
Waitwaitwait!

She pauses.

LAURIE
What?

JACK
Is it gonna sting bad?

RICHIE
(scoffs)
So brave.

Meanwhile, Richie has been analyzing the pumpkin's stenciled pen marks, the blueprint to the jack-O'-lantern's design.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Triangle eyes? BOORING.

JACK
You better not!

LAURIE
Richie, quit tormenting your brother.
(to Jack)
Now hold still.

She pours the peroxide on the cut. Jack SEETHES in pain while Richie carves his own design into Jack's pumpkin. Adding insult to injury.

Jack's audible agony blends with a similar SCREAM of an unseen MONSTER...

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Frankenstein (1931) plays in black and white on the projector screen. The lights are off. It's movie day.

ON SCREEN: An ANGRY MOB sets a MILL on fire. Inside the mill, the MONSTER sacrifices himself to save his creator, VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN from the fire.

Jack slouches in his chair at the back of the class, bored. His eyes wander, clocking JESSICA(14). The projector's glow angelically lights her. Jack's crush for forever.

She feels his stare. Slowly turns her head to return his gaze, but Jack diverts his eyes back to the screen.

ON SCREEN: *The monster CRYs OUT in fear as the mill goes up in flames with him inside. It's sad. But then...*

LAUGHTER from TEEN JOCKS interrupt the film.

The alpha, BILLY MYERS(16, held back) and his yes men: PATRICK and BIG JOE snicker at the on screen torment, mocking the monster's shrieks with sexual MOANS and GROANS.

BILLY
AHHH AHFFFH AHFFFH!

The bullies join in, cackling. The class is loving that crude teen boy humor... everyone besides Jack.

<p>PATRICK Good one, Billy.</p>	<p>BIG JOE (deepest voice for 15) Ha Ha Ha. Good one.</p>
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Their cool teacher, MR JOHNSON apathetically shushes them.

The movie ends. The lights flick on. The projector screen retracts up, revealing on the chalkboard: "MR J SUCKS EGGS"

MR JOHNSON
Read it and weep.

The class LAUGHS. Billy and his cronies discretely perform their group handshake. Jack rolls his eyes.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)
You like tricks, huh?-- Well here's
a treat.

Mr Johnson erases the graffiti and writes "POP QUIZ" in its place. The class's laughter turns to groans.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)
Relax it's a verbal quiz, everyone
gets the same grade.
Now that you all have seen the
movie *and* read the book... right?

The class murmurs doubt. Billy texts behind his paperback of *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*.

He hits send and simultaneously every person in the class gets a VIBRATION in their pocket... everyone besides Jack.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

So what lead Victor to conjure his monster?

One hand shoots up, it's Jessica, the idol student.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Jessica.

JESSICA

His ambition.

MR JOHNSON

Go on.

JESSICA

Well Victor wanted to prove to everyone how smart he is.

She can feel her classmates judging her teacher's pet-ness.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

But I think his arrogance got the better of him and that was ultimately his downfall. Or like whatever.

MR JOHNSON

"A" plus Miss Wallace. Okay and who can tell me the antagonist of the story?

(silence)

Bueller?... Bueller?-- "*Farris Bueller's Day Off*"? Seriously nothing? All these streaming services and-- anyways, C'mon guys. Who's the bad guy?

Billy texts under his desk incessantly. Jessica's phone blows up with messages.

Billy makes flirty eyes at her, *check your phone*. She feigns disinterest, loving the chase.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Mr Myers. Care to take a stab at it? No pun intended.

He lied. Mr Johnson waits for his pun to land, it does not.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)
 "Halloween"?!-- you kids are too
 busy with your dang tiktaks don't
 have time for the classics? I
 digress, Mr Myers?

BILLY
 Pass.

Billy sends Jessica some more texts. She finally caves and
 checks her phone. Jack peeks over her shoulder and sees the
 text: "Costume Party @9 My House"

MR JOHNSON
 Or perhaps you would rather discuss
 the suction-able nature of eggs in
 Mrs Chambers office?
 (off Billy's look)
 Humor me. Best guess. Who's the bad
 guy?

BILLY
 Uhhh... Frankenstein?

Jack chuckles in the back. Billy doesn't like this.

MR JOHNSON
 Some say. Any other guesses?
 Mr Henderson?

Jack sharpens up.

JACK
 The monster.

BILLY
 That's what I said!?

JACK
 Two different guys.
 (sotto)
 Dumbass.

Billy heard that. He's fuming.

MR JOHNSON
 Why is the monster the antagonist?

JACK
 Well, I mean, I don't really think
 he is necessarily. But I know it's
 the right answer.

TEACHER

Why is that?

JACK

I mean, yeah the monster messed up. But if it wasn't for Victor he wouldn't even be in this mess. Plus everyone else was such a dick to him--sorry-- who could really blame him for doing all that bad stuff?

Jessica sneers at this.

JESSICA

"Bad stuff"? You mean like killing a baby?

JACK

I mean, yeah-no. That was bad, but he did save that one lady from drowning so--

JESSICA

Sooo that cancels out killing a baby?

JACK

Uh, that's not what I'm saying--

JESSICA (CONT'D)

So what are you saying?

JACK (CONT'D)

I just think that-- I don't know-- maybe uhh--

Jack is stunned, he wants to talk to her, but not like this.

Tearing through the awkward silence--

BILLY

Wait. So you're tellin' me Frankenstein isn't even Frankenstein?!

Jessica turns back around in her chair, over *it*. Jack slouches, he blew it.

MR JOHNSON

See class. Stories, like life, aren't always simply right versus wrong. They can be both depending on perspective.

(MORE)

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

So as you continue your studies, I encourage you to challenge your fellow classmates, respectfully. You'll be amazed by what you can learn from each other.

BILLY

Mr J. Since there's no right or wrong answers, like you said. That means I'm actually passing, right?

MRS JOHNSON

... Now. For the fun part.

Mr Johnson retracts the projector screen another notch revealing on the board: PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST

He cuts off the lights.

The students all excitedly reach under their desks to grab their jack-O'-lanterns, however Jack looks a bit reluctant to reveal his creation...

OVER BLACK

Piercing through darkness, a match ignites. The flame causing shadows to dance wickedly across Mr Johnson's face.

He reaches into his own jack-O'-lantern, lighting his carving of Frankenstein's monster.

MR JOHNSON

Welcome goblins and ghouls.
Prepared to be schooled. This is the *history* of jack-O'-lanterns...

The students groan, *not another lesson*.

Mr Johnson grins, inserting a cassette tape labeled "spooky ambiance" into a music player-

He creeps around the room, lighting each students' jack-O'-lantern. Each carving more sinister than the last.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

We all know Halloween of course. The time in the liturgical year dedicated to remembering the dead, saints, martyrs, and all the faithful departed.

Many of the STUDENTS are spooked, including Jack. He puts his head down.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

The evening that wandering spirits
and the souls of the damned roam
the earth. And on this harvest moon
night, you can be sure to expect
the thinnest veil between the
living and the shadows.

Jessica is also feeling uneasy and guilty about the flak she gave Jack. She looks to him, but his head is down, so she looks to Billy instead, who's unfazed by the ghost talk.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

So we carve these gourds with
grotesque and sinister faces in
hopes to ward off the evil spirits,
demonic entities, *the things that
go bump in the night--*

Billy bounces his eyebrows and winks at Jessica. She playfully rolls her eyes.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

--from our homes on this twilight
of All Hallows eve... October
thirty first... Tonight.

Mr Johnson lights the final pumpkin. Jack's pumpkin.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Jack-O'-lanterns. Our spiritual
guardians. Our solemn protectors.
(blows out the match)

The class takes this in, a long morose silence... Then an outburst of laughter kills the moment. It's Billy of course.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Mr Myers now what is so funny you
had to spoil my speech?

BILLY

(laughing)
Look at Jack's pumpkin!

Billy points to Jack's jack-O'-lantern...



The class erupts with laughter.

MR JOHNSON
 Now class settle--
 (starts to chuckle...)

All laughing but Jack.

The bell RINGS.

Jack grabs his pumpkin and takes off to anywhere but here when he--- *TRIPS... SPLAT!*

Landing on his jack-O'-lantern, kinda crushing it. His shoe laces intricately knotted to his chair.

Billy and his goons hit their handshake. The class laughs Jack out of the room. So mortified, he left his shoes behind.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Frayed dirty tube socks pedal round and round.

Jack's pumpkin sits in the front basket of his bicycle, looking up at him, like a newborn in a stroller. Jack glances down, embarrassed by his creation.

JACK
 What're you all smily about?

BARKBARKBARK! Jack freaks out.

Clocks a snarling DOG sprinting after him! *Oh fuck!* But at the last second, its leash reaches full taut at the edge of the yard. Halting the mutt's chomping teeth.

Jack pedals on, glancing back at the barking mutt. *Stupid.*

He turns to get his eyes back on the road when--

UNCOVERED MANHOLE! *Double fuck!* Swerves, nearly crashing! He steadies the reigns and locks his vision back on the road.

Phew! Shakes his head at the dangers he narrowly dodged. Looks down at the pumpkin... still smiling back at him.

Jack speeds past a stretch of elegant homes decorated in elaborate Halloween decor. Behind a gated driveway is Billy, Patrick and Big Joe getting in a GOLF CART. Jack pedals as fast as he can, hoping they didn't see him.

He's in the clear, letting out a sigh of relief. The further he rides reveals less well to do homes tucked away behind dense forest. We're getting closer to Jack's house.

SPLAT!... *What was that?...*

SPLAT! SPLAT! Eggs hit the pavement closer and closer to Jack. He turns to see the golf cart gaining on him!

BILLY

Oh Jackey! Think you forgot something!

PATRICK

Don't ya want your kicks?

Billy holds up Jack's sneakers he left behind, but Jack isn't falling for this trap, he pedals faster.

JACK

Keep em!

Billy smirks-- loves the thrill of the hunt.

BILLY

Oh we got a runner.

PATRICK

Well technically he's pedaling so--

BILLY

Shut up. How we lookin' Big Joe?

BIG JOE

Target acquired.

BILLY

On my command. Ready...?

The golf cart is fashioned with a homemade egg launcher slingshot. Patrick chambers another egg, while Big Joe pulls back with all his might.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Aim...

Billy reaches in his pocket for... A VAPE PEN. He takes a big pull. Exhales.

BILLY (CONT'D)

FIRE!

Big Joe releases, THWOOP, launching a slow-mo egg hail Mary, a perfect spiral tracking directly for Jack's back, there's no way it could miss.

Jack closes his eyes, accepting his fate... then WOOSH-WOOSH, Jack diverts, almost instinctually, dodging the egg. SPLAT!

His eyes go wide with shock, *how did I do that?!--No time to think*, he regains his balance and pedals faster.

Back on the golf cart-

BILLY (CONT'D)

Miss! Damnit! Reload!

PATRICK

Would it kill ya to say please?

(off Billy's look)

We're trying alright, it's tangled!

Big Joe, intertwined in the slingshot.

Billy floors it, nearly sending Patrick and Big Joe flying off the cart.

Jack's stamina slows as the road steepens. He looks back to see the bullies really gaining on him.

He stands to gain maximum torque, peddling his absolute hardest. Sweating bullets. Despite his best effort, it's not looking good for Jack.

He looks back to get eyes on the bogey, but the golf cart is gone? *Weird*.

CRASH! Into Jack. He swerves, regaining his balance. The golf cart is riding next to him! The bullies ram him again.

BILLY

Pull over!

Jack can't do that. If only he can get to the top of the hill, the downslope might get him home scot free.

I/E. SCHOOL BUS - SAME TIME

The HISS of the bus's air brakes.

KIDS reluctantly step off the bus dressed like *The Wizard of OZ*: DOROTHY, TIN MAN, SCARECROW and COWARDLY LION.

DOROTHY
But you missed our stop.

TIN MAN
Yeah, our stop was back there.

The crusty old BUS DRIVER gives an unconvincing smize.

BUS DRIVER
Follow the yella-brick road.

She shuts the bus door in their faces and peels off.

EXT. ROAD - SAME

Back to the action, Jack pedals for dear life, while Billy pulls the cart away, creating distance to..

BILLY
When I ram, grab him!
(sotto)
Nobody calls me a *dumbass*.

Patrick overhears this, but wasn't supposed to.

PATRICK
Yeah, nobody calls you a *dumbass*,
Billy.

BILLY
Shut up, *dumbass*.

PATRICK
Sorry.

INT. BUS - SAME

The driver crests the hill and sees out the windshield the golf cart and bike's "fast and furious" chase up ahead.

While we're viewing from this perspective, we realize this intense chase is actually low speed and anticlimactic...

The driver, unamused, lays on the HORN.

EXT. ROAD - SAME

Billy cuts his wheel hard towards Jack. They brace for impact... but then they all hear the HORN!

Both parties look back to see the SCHOOL BUS approaching behind them. The bullies postpone their attack.

BILLY

Dammit.

JACK

Oh thank God.

Jack sighs relief, even laughing at the bullies.

The bullies reluctantly accept defeat. The golf cart and bike slow their speeds, riding alongside each other.

BILLY

You're so lucky.

PATRICK

Yeah, you're so lucky, Jack!

BILLY

Pat, I got this!

JACK

Aww is mommy and daddy arguing again?

(re: Big Joe)

Not in front of the baby.

Jack belly laughs at his own joke. Then the bus passes around them without stopping, crossing a double yellow line to do so, speeding away over the hill.

Jack's laughter slows. Silence. GULP. The bullies look to each other with diabolical grins, then slowly turn, locking eyes with Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)

Shit.

EXT. ROADSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Close on Jack's feet standing in his dirty socks.

He reluctantly steps into something... CRUNCH-SQUISH. Then his other foot. CRUNCH-SQUISH. Egg yoke oozes out of the vents of his sneakers.

The three bullies each crack an extra egg on Jack's head for good measure. Then peel out on their cart laughing.

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE, FRONT PORCH - DAY

A miffed Jack sets his unimposing pumpkin on the front stoop.

INT. JACK'S HOUSE, FOYER, KITCHEN - DAY

Jack enters, tossing his backpack to the floor.

His steps are WET and CRUNCHY from the egg in his shoes.

Laurie hears this from the kitchen as she preps dinner.

LAURIE

Take your shoes off sweetheart!

(yells upstairs)

Richie, c'mere!

Jack takes his shoes off, leaving them by the front door. He mopes through the foyer and up the stairs, leaving behind gross egg foot prints with each step.

Shadow takes notice of the ooze and investigates, lapping up the mess with her tongue.

Richie, dressed like a Greaser, leather jacket and all scampers down the stairs, face-timing.

RICHIE

(to his phone)

Hang on one sec babe. I wanna see yours.

On FaceTime, a GIRL dressed as Sandy from *Grease* does a spin. Richie checks her out, but then slips on the egg gook Jack tracked up the stairs.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Ew. Gross. What is that?

GIRL (ON THE PHONE)

Wow thanks, Jerk.

RICHIE

No not you, babe! Ya look great.

I'll call ya back.

In the kitchen, Laurie dumps a bag of candy into a bowl.

LAURIE

Before you take your brother trick
or treating, make sure you put the
bowl out on the porch.

Richie grabs a handful of candy from the bowl. He jams the
sweets into his leather jacket pocket.

LAURIE (CONT'D)

Richie?!

RICHIE

What? You said put the bowl on the
porch, you didn't say anything
about the candy.

LAURIE

Alright Eddie Haskell.

RICHIE

Who?

LAURIE

Never-mind. Go ahead get a stomach
ache. You can spend your night in
the ER with me.

Richie puts a few pieces back.

LAURIE (CONT'D)

And when you leave make sure you
turn the lights off. I don't need
any trick or treaters peeking
inside. This place is a mess. How
many times do I have to tell you
boys to pick up after yourselves?

As Laurie tidies up, unbeknownst to her, a DARK FIGURE
outside wipes past the kitchen window, headed towards the
front door...

Richie grabs the bowl of candy and makes his way to the

FOYER

Each corner of every connecting room a potential hiding spot
for that dark figure: the living room, dinning room, the
stairs... Richie turns and opens the front door revealing...

NOTHING. No dark figure, not that Richie was even aware of it
in the first place. He steps outside.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

A brisk fall breeze WHISTLES a haunting tune. The sun sets as YOUNG FAMILIES trick or treat at neighboring houses.

Richie sets the candy down on the welcome mat right next to where Jack's jack-O'-lantern should be... but it's missing.

As Richie raises back up from setting the bowl down, behind him is...

SPLAT! An egg splatters all over Richie's leather jacket.

BILLY (O.S.)
(laughing)
Direct hit!

Billy and his gang peel out on their golf cart. Richie gives chase, but only makes it as far as the end of the driveway.

RICHIE
You little shits! You're dead! This
is custom Italian leather, costs
more than all three of your lives
combine!

As the bullies ride off over the hill, Richie takes a beat, popping his collar.

RICK
(sotto)
Better run.

Behind him, the FRONT DOOR is wide open.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

SOMEONE'S POV. Their vision partially obstructed by a mask... It lurks through the foyer and into the kitchen.

LAURIE
Richie close the damn door, you're
lettin' bugs in!

Laurie is on her hands and knees cleaning up the mess on the floor with paper towels. Her back turned, vulnerable.

She unrolls and RIPS off the last of the paper towels, only the cardboard tube remains.

THE MASKED POV stalks closer...

A SHADOW engulfs her from behind. Feeling it over her she spins--

RAHHH! Laurie is unfazed.

It's Jack dressed in a MUMMY COSTUME made from toilet paper.

LAURIE (CONT'D)
Adorable, sweetie!

JACK
No mom, it's supposed to be scary.

LAURIE
It is sweetheart, I just wasn't ready!

JACK
That's the whole point.

LAURIE
I'm sorry, do it again. I'll turn back around.

JACK
Forget it.

Richie meanders in with egg dripping from his jacket. He clocks the paper towel roll. Empty. Rips a piece of toilet paper off Jack's costume and wipes the egg off his jacket.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey!

Laurie opens the fridge to show the boys.

LAURIE
I made you baked ziti. Now all you have to do is pre-heat to 375, should only take about 15-20 minutes or so. Then, the most important step-- listening? Make sure you turn the oven off.

RICHIE
Which one turns it off?

She considers this... opts to reach in her purse. She hands Richie some cash. He jams it into his jacket pocket.

LAURIE
Order pizza. Don't be out too late, alright? Freaks come out at night.

She pinches Jack's cheek and hustles out for work.

JACK
When do you want to go?

RICHIE
I'm not.

Richie scampers upstairs. Jack follows, pleading-

JACK
What? You have to, mom said-

RICHIE
I don't care what mom said.

JACK
Richie, c'mon-

RICHIE
You're old enough to go by
yourself.

JACK
I know that, I just-

Jack doesn't have any friends to go with, but he's too
ashamed to tell Richie this, so he says nothing.

RICHIE
Look I'll drop you off at that
swanky ass neighborhood passed
Crenshaw. Don't say I never did
nothin for ya.

JACK
You literally haven't.

RICHIE
I haven't? Oh you think I cracked
this egg on myself? Or did I get
caught in the crossfire between you
and that Myers douche?

Jack doesn't have a response.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Thought so... Ya know, pro tip, if
you don't stand up to your bully,
he's just gonna keep making your
life hell.

JACK

A bully giving advice on dealing with other bullies. How meta.

Richie flicks him on the temple.

RICHIE

See it's because you say stupid shit like that. Ya sound like a fucking nerd. Stop it. And you might actually get some friends to hangout with.

JACK

Ya know we should really have these heart to hearts more often big bro.

RICHIE

Well without dad around, someones gotta do it. Be ready in ten or I'll leave your ass.

Richie shuts the bathroom door in Jack's face.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richie takes his leather jacket off and hangs it on the door.

The shower SQUEEKS on.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jack loafs into his room, rips off his mummy costume, kicks his egg socks into the corner.

His room is a nerd-haven, video games, a fully assembled Millennium Falcon lego set and classic movie posters.

On his dresser is a framed photo of himself, Richie and his mother photographed with CORPORAL JOHN HENDERSON, his father. *We're not sure if he has passed or just on deployment, but either way Jack sure does miss him.*

And next to the photograph is a FISH TANK, home to his single little gold fish, TANK.

He sprinkles in some fish food. Tank gulps each flake.

JACK

Looks like it's just us, Tank.

Tank's bulged guppy eyes stare blankly back at him. Blinks. Swims away, leaving Jack completely alone. *Or is he..*

The door CREAKS open behind him... but he doesn't notice.

Sound rustles behind him. Jack spins around revealing...

Shadow licking the egg off his dirty socks.

JACK (CONT'D)
Get outta there!
(Shadow MEOWS)
Fine, you can eat too.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Jack pours dry catnip into a bowl. Shadow eats.

He gazes out at the lively Halloween night. TEENS in costumes roam the streets. Jack can't help but feel left out.

He clocks the candy bowl on the stoop. Mostly empty wrappers.

Then it hits him... his jack-O'-lantern is missing!? He walks down the steps to look, *maybe it it fell and rolled off?*

INT. HOUSE, UPSTAIRS HALL BATHROOM - NIGHT

The bathroom is foggy, some condensation escapes through the cracked window...

We hear Richie WHISTLING a song behind the shower curtain.

IN THE SHOWER

Psycho-like: Water sprays as Richie shampoos, unsuspecting... CRASH.

Richie jumps. Pulls back some of the curtain and tries to look, but shampoo seeps into his eyes. He desperately wipes the suds away, but through blurred vision he sees--

Just the bathroom... His sight sharpens. Clarity confirming, it's nothing. Still a bit on edge and in the nude, ones most compromising state, he calls out-

RICHIE
Jack?.. Was that you?.. I'll kick
your ass.

No response...

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Ja-

BANG-BANG-BANG like an earthquake on the bathroom door!
Richie yelps!

JACK (O.S. BEHIND THE DOOR)

Richie, where'd you put my
pumpkin?!

Richie composes himself.

RICHIE

Don't you mean our pumpkin?

JACK (O.S.)

Just tell me.

Behind the curtain, Jack's silhouette appears in the bathroom rummaging through cabinets and hampers looking for-

RICHIE

Thought ya didn't like the jack-O'-
lantern?

JACK (BEHIND THE CURTAIN)

I mean... I don't. It's just my
teacher said they ward off evil
spirits and--

RICHIE

You believe in that crap?

CUT TO:

Jack sits and pouts on the stairs, mid conversation--

JACK

No. I mean-- I don't know. It
doesn't matter. Just-- what did you
do with it?

CUT TO:

Richie in the shower.

RICHIE

I didn't touch it.

Richie rinses his face, paying no mind to...

Jack's silhouette in the curtain... He stops searching for his pumpkin, and stands upright, only this shadow is tall, much taller than Jack...

CUT TO:

Jack still sitting on the top step... definitely not in the bathroom.

JACK

Did mom?

RICHIE (O.S.)

How the hell would I know?... Ya know who probably took it? Your little egg friends.

JACK

They're not my friends.

RICHIE (O.S.)

I was yoking.

(laughs)

Get it? Cuz they throw eggs.

Jack doesn't laugh.

CUT TO:

Richie in the shower.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Oh c'mon. Nobody like a tough crowd. No wonder you don't have any friends. Learn to laugh, dude.

In the curtain the dark figure creeps closer... each step drowned out by the running water.

Richie reaches down to turn off the shower... SQUEEK.

The silhouette inches nearer, slowly reaching its sharp Freddy Kruger like hand up to the delicate fabric... bladed fingers centimeters away from piercing the sheer curtain...

WOOSH! Richie retracts the shower liner...

NOTHING is there. He rips his towel off the hanger.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jack looks around his room for costume inspiration, eyeing a poster on his wall of Han Solo wielding a blaster.

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - SAME

Richie wipes fog off the mirror so he can check himself out.

He GARGLES mouth wash and spits in the sink. He lowers to take a sip from the faucet... standing directly behind him in the mirror is...

NOTHING, no dark figure.

He jumps in his jeans, fitted white t-shirt, and greases his hair back like Danny Zuko. The final touch is his leather jacket, he reaches for it, but it's not hanging on the door where he left it.

He looks around, but can't find it. All that remains are a few empty candy wrappers on the floor... He clocks that the window is open wider than he remembers leaving it, but doesn't think much of it. Closes it shut.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Richie bursts in, rifling through Jack's stuff.

JACK
Ever heard of knocking.

RICHIE
Ever heard of not touching my shit?

JACK
Ain't that the pot calling the
kettle black.

RICHIE
...for real bro, you gotta quit
talkin' like that. Your virginity
depends on it.

Richie clocks Jack's costume, Han Solo inspired.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Speaking of virginity. What's with
the vest?

JACK
(it's cool)
Star Wars?

RICHIE
Not helping.

JACK
Han Solo? The most badass outlaw in
the galaxy?

RICHIE

Aaand it's up to me to carry on the Henderson name. Where's my jacket?

JACK

I don't know what you're talking about.

RICHIE

Don't play dumb you perv, why you coming in the bathroom while I'm showering in the first place?

JACK

What?

RICHIE

Just gimme my jacket. I don't have time.

Jack rolls his eyes. Richie checks the time on his phone.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Fuck. I'll deal with you later.

He storms out. When the door closes Jack sees his own reflection in the mirror.

He looks self-conscious, takes off his vest.

VROOM from down in the driveway. Jack looks out his window as Richie peels out in his '78 Mustang.

JACK

Asshole.

Jack rips his pillow case off his pillow.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME, FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

DING DONG! The back of KIDS heads wait at a door.

KIDS

Trick or Treat!

A sweet ELDERLY WOMAN answers with a bowl of candy.

It's the kids from the bus dressed as Dorothy, Tin Man, Scarecrow and the Cowardly Lion.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Adorable. Well don't be shy, help yourselves!

The kids all reach in the bowl and take a few pieces each. The old woman grins, but then a much BIGGER ARM enters the bowl, reaching over the kids taking all the treats... startling everyone.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Oh my well save some for the--
 (clocks how big he is)
 Ya know what it's fine. And who are
 you supposed to be big fella?

He's so tall that we don't fully see this big kid's costume, he just stays silent as the old lady and kids grow uneasy.

DOROTHY
 (whispers)
 He's not with us.

ELDERLY WOMAN
 Well... um, alright, Happy
 Halloween.

The kids run off, creeped out.

The big kid saunters away, his back to us, lanky sporting a leather jacket and hood.

The old woman closes her door.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Weird fuckin' kid.

EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD - NIGHT

Jack rides his bike scoping out houses to hit for candy. He sees The Wizard of Oz kids leaving the old lady's house.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME, FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

DING DONG!

JACK
 Trick or Treat.

He waits for a beat, then the porch lights shut off.

Jack pouts off the steps, bumping into someone...

JACK (CONT'D)
 Oops, sorry, excuse me.

It's Jessica dressed as Elsa from *Frozen*.

JESSICA
You're good... Jack?

JACK
Oh hey, Jessica... what-- what's up? Or should I say Cinderella?

JESSICA
Elsa.

JACK
Duh.

JESSICA
Vestless Han Solo?

JACK
Yeah! How did you..?

JESSICA
(re: Jack's toy gun)
DL-44. I know a Rebel when I see one. Where's Chewie?

He could marry her right now.

JACK
He's parking the Millennium Falcon. Umm so what are you doing? I mean you're obviously trick or treating, but isn't Billy's party soon?

JESSICA
Eh I wasn't completely sold on it. Might swing by. I don't know. You going?

JACK
I don't think so.

JESSICA
Their loss, plus more candy for us. Besides I'm taking my sister around. Tradition.

A LITTLE GIRL(10) dressed as Anna from *Frozen* comes running back from the front step.

JESSICA'S LITTLE SISTER
I said trick or treat, but no one came.

JESSICA

It's okay, bug. We'll try the next house.

JACK

Wait-- here.

Jack reaches in his pillow case and gives her some of his candy, smooth move.

JESSICA

That's really sweet, what do you say?

LITTLE GIRL

Smell my feet!

She runs off to the next house with other TRICK OR TREATERS. Jessica hangs back.

JESSICA

Not too far!

(to Jack)

She's learning. Thanks, you didn't have to do that.

JACK

Well, I feel bad for being a jerk in class.

JESSICA

Let it go.

JACK

Ha! Nice. *Frozen.*

JESSICA

We're even. I just get really passionate about Mary Shelley is all. That's my girl.

Jack doesn't know how to close.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Well maybe I'll see you at the party later.

Jack watches Jessica catch up to her sister, guiding his eye to a peculiar figure in the distance.

A MAN with a brimmed hat donning a trench coat..watching him? There's an uneasiness, like the only still body in a moving crowd... just staring fucking back at him.

Then the crowd thickens and TRENCH COAT is gone. Jack tries to locate him, but gets swept away in the crowd himself.

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER - NIGHT

Richie pulls his Mustang into an old school Drive-In movie theater showing a marathon of monster movies.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG

Richie and his girlfriend, NANCY(17) a sweet girl out of Richie's league but no one has told her this, sits shotgun dressed as Sandy from *Grease*.

They pull up to the ticket counter where an ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT is costumed as a Colonel Sanders.

RICHIE
Evening Colonel.

The old man stares at him blankly.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
I like your costume. But I love
your biscuits even more.

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT
What's was that?

Colonel turns to hear better revealing his hearing aid.

NANCY
That's a not a costume...

Richie sharpens up.

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT
Well sonny, that'll be twenty
smackaroos.

Richie pulls out his credit card. The sign says "CASH ONLY".

RICHIE
You take cash app?

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT
Yes, cash.

RICHIE
No, umm like Venmo? Zelle? Apple
Pay? PayPal?
(beat)

(MORE)

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Never mind, old school, that's cool. Babe do you have... Ope! Mother Laurie spotted me.

An awkward beat as Richie scours through his pockets only to remember...

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Dang, it's in my jacket.

Nancy reaches in her purse and pulls out a twenty. Richie relays the money to Colonel Sanders. Checks it in the light.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG, BACK ROW - MOMENTS LATER

The couple looks for a parking spot.

RICHIE

Ya see anything?

NANCY

Maybe if you weren't so late.

RICHIE

I was looking for my jacket, babe.

NANCY

Right.

He spots a CONVERTIBLE in a spot with their break lights on. Rolls down his window.

RICHIE

Y'all leaving?

The car rocks back and forth, its break lights pulsate.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Yo y'all headin' out?... Yoooo?

A TEEN COUPLE, dressed as vampires sit up from their reclined car seats, makeup smeared across their faces.

VAMPIRE BOYFRIEND

Nah we're stayin.

They go back to making out. Richie continues searching for a parking spot.

NANCY

See their costumes? *They* coordinated.

RICHIE

Babe! Danny got hot sometimes.
Didn't always have his leather
jacket on.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Jack tosses his sack of candy in his bike's basket. Pretty good haul, but he's not done yet. Looks out at the sea of houses, deciding on his next when--

A few houses down... sees Trench coat lurking around. Even on Halloween night, this character looks up to something.

Jack ducks behind a brick mailbox column and watches--

Trench coat checks if the coast is clear and... Steals the jack-O'-lantern off the porch and scurries to his rusted TRUCK, tossing the contraband in the bed.

Jack saddles his bike to go investigate.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Jack coasts down the road, slyly approaches the parked truck. Trench coat is at the porch, scoping out the next pumpkin.

Jack lifts a tarp covering the truck bed... inside: nearly a hundred jack-O'-lanterns. *Weird.*

Trench coat is back! Jack ducks and scoots around to the other side, avoiding detection. Trench coat drives off.

MOMENTS LATER

Jack bikes, following the truck down the street, turning with it onto Crenshaw Road, the street with the gated community.

The truck is an old work vehicle, its tailgate lists a telephone number. Jack snaps a picture of the bumper when--

HONKS behind him.

JACK

Argh- go around.

Jack checks over his shoulder, it's no car... it's the golf cart, with three Ghost Faces from *Scream*, chasing him down. Again.

JACK (CONT'D)

Ah c'mon.

Jack skirts onto the sidewalk to throw them off. He pedals down the hill weaving in and out of TRICK OR TREATERS.

The cart gives chase, SKKRT'ing onto the sidewalk, gaining fast. Kids jump out of the way, sending trick or treat baskets flying into the air. *Watch it, asshole! Jerks!* Candy rains down from above.

In the cart, Billy, Patrick and Big Joe raise their masks, taking hits from Billy's vape and passing around a gatorade bottle... they're wasted, high and howling at the moon!

BACK ON THE SIDEWALK

The trick or treaters pick themselves up off the pavement, gathering their stray candy when--

That big weird mysterious hooded leather jacket kid appears, helping pick up the candy.

WITCH GIRL

Thanks.

Except he's not helping, he takes the candy for himself and wanders off.

WEREWOLF BOY

Hey! That's ours!?

(he's gone)

dick.

BACK TO THE CHASE

Jack cycles through yards, dodging decorative tombstones, skeletons and witchy animatronics, etc.

The golf cart rides after him, demolishing everything in its path. They run over a skeleton. It explodes, sending boney limbs flying in every direction; an arm lands in Patrick's lap, ew. He tosses it out.

Billy goes full throttle. Patrick and Big Joe hold on for dear life, worried.

PATRICK

Uhh, Billy? I don't think--

BILLY

-I don't pay you to think!

Patrick looks to Big Joe.

PATRICK

Are you getting paid?

Big Joe shrugs.

EXT. MR JOHNSON'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Mr Johnson, the teacher, dressed as *Frankenstein's* monster, hands out candy to those *Wizard of Oz* kids.

MR JOHNSON

And some for you... where's Toto?

Dorothy stares blankly at him.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Ya know, Dorothy's dog, "*Toto*, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore" from the movie...

SCARECROW

What movie?

MR JOHNSON

Screwin' with me scarecrow? Try sayin that ten times fast-- *The Wizard of Oz* of course.

TIN MAN

What's that?

MR JOHNSON

Wait-- you don't even know what you're dressed up as?

They all shake their head, *no idea*.

COWARDLY LION

Simba?

DOROTHY

I wanted to be Harley Quinn.

SCARECROW

Our mom picked out our costumes.

TIN MAN

For Facebook.

On the sidewalk, the kid's mom, KAREN, iPhone in hand, tries to take the perfect selfie with her fall Starbucks drink.

Mr Johnson hears some commotion down the street coming for his yard... it's Jack being chased by the bullies.

WOOSH-WOOSH. They narrowly avoid Karen. She spills her drink.

KAREN

Argh-- Not my pumpkin spice latte!

Mr Johnson recognizes his students...

MR JOHNSON

Jack?

JACK

Mr Johnson! Help!?

MR JOHNSON

I'm off the clock, kid.

Mr Johnson and *The Wizard of Oz* kids watch Jack and the golf cart ride out of sight. *That was weird.*

Mr Johnson directs his attention back to the kids.

MR JOHNSON (CONT'D)

King size Reeses to whoever can
tell me who I am. Go.

He's painted green like Frankenstein's monster.

TIN MAN

Hulk.

Mr Johnson deflates. Gives Tin Man the candy bar.

MR JOHNSON

Close enough.

BACK TO THE CHASE

Jack pedals, clocking a tree up ahead with a cluster of HANGING GHOSTS, he ducks, sliding right underneath them.

PATRICK

Look out!

THUD-THUD-THUD! Billy hits them all, the ghosts' white sheets get wedged in the golf cart's window blocking his view.

The ghost's animatronic arms start flailing and their sound box malfunctions, BOOING over and over.

Jack uses the diversion to ramp off a tombstone, landing back onto the street. *He did it, lost them!*

Back on the golf cart, Billy can't see with the ghosts still stuck on the windshield.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Go right! He went right!

Billy turns hard onto the road, back on the hunt.

Jack looks back, *they won't quit.*

He looks forward, *oh no.* A "Dead End" sign.

Then he clocks up ahead, the **uncovered manhole** he nearly hit earlier. A plan forms.

He pedals hard and fast, straight for the hole as the wise words of his big bro echo in his head:

 RICHEL (V.O.)
*If you don't stand up to your
bully, he's just gonna keep making
your life hell.*

 BILLY
Don't just sit there, do something!

Patrick and Big Joe try to remove the ghosts.

While the bullies are preoccupied, Jack lines his path up with the uncovered manhole and ensures the golf cart is directly behind him.

The bullies remove the ghosts. Billy can see. He grips the wheel hard. Eyes locked on Jack. Floors it.

Jack's determined eyes... Billy's fierce eyes... *They deliver the next line simultaneously in a split screen.*

 BILLY (CONT'D)
Trick or treat--

 JACK
Trick or treat--

...

 JACK (CONT'D)
Asshole.

At the last moment, Jack swerves out of the way of the uncovered manhole. The golf cart has no time to react. BOOM!

The golf cart flips, sending the bullies flying through the air, crashing onto the pavement. The cart barrel rolls into a nearby street lamp.

SCREEECH! Jack power slides to a stop, waiting for the dust to settle with bated breath.

The bullies lay there for a moment, groaning. Jack can't believe that actually worked.

They dust themselves off, slow to their feet. Billy cracks his neck, then his knuckles, takes a hit of his vape pen, seemingly unfazed.

JACK (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Is this kid the T-800...

Jack GULPS, but then centers himself, it's now or never. He lowers his kickstand. Dismounts his bike. Grabs his sack of candy. Spins it like nunchucks.

BILLY

You should've ran while you had the chance.

Patrick and Big Joe finally get to their feet and take formation behind Billy.

PATRICK

Yeah, you should've--

BILLY

I got this!

JACK

I'm done running.

Billy laughs at Jack's last stand.

BILLY

Your funeral.

JACK

Ya know, Billy, I almost feel sorry for you.

Billy and the bullies inch closer.

BILLY

Oh yeah, why's that?

JACK

Because your golf cart's fucked.
And Daddy's not gonna like that.

The golf cart is upside down, slightly smoking and bent up against the street lamp which flickers.

BILLY

What do you say fellas, let's carve
us up a jack-O'-lantern.

Billy draws a switch blade, things just changed.

Whoa...? PATRICK BIG JOE
Uh, dude?

Jack steps back.

JACK

Billy...

Billy is blinded by drunken rage.

JACK (CONT'D)

Look, I'm sorry, I'll pay for the
damage. Just take a beat, man.

Billy lurks closer. The broken street light flickers, sending
the boys in and out of blackness.

JACK (CONT'D)

You probably hit your head, you're
not thinking straight. You could
have a concussion. My mom's a
nurse, we should go get you checked
out.

Behind the cover of darkness, Billy stalks terrifyingly close
with each strobe of the damaged street light.

Alright, Billy you had your PATRICK BIG JOE
fun. Let's just go to the party,
man.

Billy has a crazy look in his eyes. Jack backs up another
step, tripping over his bike, tumbling to the pavement.

He cowers in fear behind his pillow case full of candy.

Billy slowly raises the knife, readying to take a swipe at
Jack. That street lamp flickers in and out... in and out,
like a flashing drum roll...

Jack winces. Slams his eyes shut. Accepts his fate... Billy
rears back and... SLASHES, slicing a tear in Jack's pillow
case, causing a few pieces of candy to spill out.

He SLASHES again! This time grazing Jack's cheek. Blood beads
up and dribbles down his face.

With trembling fingers, Jack touches his skin and looks at his hand. Blood.

Patrick and Big Joe turn white as ghosts. They did not sign up for this, retreating into the night.

BILLY

(to his crew)

Fine! Go! I don't need you pansies
anyways. I don't need anyone! I'll
do it all myself.

Billy rears back his blade for one final blow then...

ZOOOOP. TOTAL DARKNESS, the street lamp went out.

In the pitch black a LOW END RUMBLE SWELLS, like the bowels of a guttural monstrous GROWL that murmurs in the darkness.

The street lamp zaps back to life. Petrified, Jack and Billy look around, but nothing is there...

GRAHHHHH!

Billy spins around, towering over him is a HOODED MONSTER with fiery eyes. This thing ROARS a damning shriek right in his face. Billy pisses himself, SCREAMS BLOODY MURDER, drops his KNIFE and flails away like a bat out of hell.

The monster shoots daggers at Billy as he disappears over the hill. The monster directs his attention to Jack... who took this moment to scurry off into the nearby woods.

WOODS

Jack sprints without clear direction. Just away and as fast as possible-- trips, tumbles down an embankment.

Adrenaline coursing through his veins, he jumps to his feet, still gripping his pillow case full of candy. He escapes deeper into the woods, head on a swivel for the monster.

BACK AT THE STREET

The monster bends down to the pavement, inspecting the candy that fell out of Jack's bag. The monster grabs a lollypop, curiously unwraps it. SNIFFS. Devours it in one bite.

Billy's knife lays in the pile of candy.

He picks up the blade and stands, towering seven feet tall. The sharp blade glimmers in the street lamp. He sniffs it. Considers a bite when... CHILDREN LAUGH in the distance.

He turns to find the sound, causing his hood to fall revealing...

This is that big weird hooded kid... in fact... this is...

Jack's missing jack-O'-lantern, as a head on a humanoid body, with an emoting carved out face, full of life and expression. Not to be confused with a kid wearing a mask.

He wears Richie's LEATHER JACKET and some jeans he must've swiped from Jack's house. His body is made up of tendrils and leaf-like protrusions; kinda like *Groot* from *Guardian's of the Galaxy*. We'll call him MONSTER. And Monster loves candy.

Monster sniffs the air. Turns to a trail of candy leading into the woods. He follows it.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jack tip toes through the woods, cautious not to alert the monster. He listens closely for any sign of the creature, but all he hears is the chirp of CRICKETS and CICADAS.

He moves quietly and quickly through the woods...

CRACK! Something hit the ground near him, he spins around searching for the sound through the trees.

Unbeknownst to him, it's the rip in his trick or treat bag, dropping candy with each step. He presses on.

ANOTHER PART OF THE WOODS

Monster follows the trail of candy, picking each piece up and eating it. He trudges into darkness. Knife in hand. Like a hungry serial killer.

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER - NIGHT

SCREAMS from the audience. The dim projector screen streams a horror classic.

Richie pulls his Mustang into a spot in the back row, the one time you'd prefer to be in the front row at a movie...

RICHIE

Here we are.

NANCY

(not perfect)

Perfect.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG (PARKED)

Richie parks the car and hangs the MOVIE SPEAKER over his window. The film's audio kicks on with a haunting score.

RICHIE

Spooky.

The speaker glitches out, Richie smacks it back alive, but then the sound fades out for good. Broken.

Nancy looks to the screen, they're so far away they might as well be watching it on their phone.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

It's not like we were gonna watch it anyways.

Richie reclines their seats and makes his move, kissing her passionately. Her eyes are open.

In the Mustang's rearview mirror, the monster trudges past...

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER, PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Behind the back row of cars... we follow the broad shoulders of the monster as it lumbers past the aisle of cars.

He drags a farmer's pitchfork, scoring a path in the dirt.

AT THE SNACK BAR, VAMPIRE BOYFRIEND buys some food.

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT

Enjoy the film.

VAMPIRE BOYFRIEND

Thanks gramps. Keep the change.

He heads back to his vehicle, passing by the seven foot tall monster. Taking a pregnant pause to look up at the creature.

VAMPIRE BOYFRIEND (CONT'D)

(beat)

Stilts?! Nice touch, man. Great costume.

The monster watches him get into his convertible.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG - NIGHT

A heated make-out session, but Nancy pulls away.

RICHIE
Babe, what's wrong?

NANCY
I just really wanted a cute picture
of us in our costumes.

RICHIE
We will. Many as ya like. Do a
whole photoshoot.

NANCY
But without your jacket, people
won't get it.

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER, BACK ROW

THE PITCHFORK DRAGS through the dirt towards the cars.

The scene turns eerie as the monster lumbers towards his
target: the vampire couple's convertible.

The monster towers over the unsuspecting couple, taking a
beat to stare down at them. His jack-O'-lantern scowl glows
fiery hot, more sinister than when we first met him.

The vampire couple shares popcorn, cozied up watching the
movie. The film's scary audio loudly blares over the speaker
hanging from their car door.

SCREEEECH! The couple jumps, but it was just a jump scare
from the film. They laugh it off.

The monster is gone.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG (PARKED)

RICHIE
Nance, it's just a jacket. That's
not something to be upset about. We
have to appreciate the things we do
have. We have our youth. We have
our health. Like there's literally
people in third world countries
that are starving and-- and that--
don't have wifi or--

A GUT WRENCHING SCREAM from somewhere! Nancy alerts up.

AT THE TICKET BOOTH, the Elderly Theater Attendant barely
heard that scream. He looks up to locate the commotion...

His old eyes squint. Wipes his glasses and looks down the row of cars, witnessing... ACTUAL MURDER... but his sight is so blurry he has no idea.

Just out of focus, but clear enough for us to see: The monster viciously stabs his pitchfork into the convertible, over and over again. The couple SCREAMS for help!

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT

Ahh, young love.

CLOSE ON SPEAKERS in various other cars as the movie's audio drowns out the couple's cries for help.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG (PARKED)

SCREAMS persist. Richie's movie speaker is broken, so they're hearing everything.

NANCY

What is that!?

Nancy looks up to locate the screams. All she sees are rows of cars calmly watching the film.

RICHIE

It's just the movie. Chill. Listen babe, can we talk about this, I just really think--

NANCY

I need to use the restroom.

RICHIE

Oh perfect, snag us some snacks while you're up?

Nancy slams the door shut.

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER - BACK ROW

Nancy heads for the snack bar, passing by car after car of LOVING COUPLES enjoying each other's company. She's jealous.

WACK! Not paying attention where she was going, she finds herself looking up at the monster, real blood smeared all across his pumpkin face... *but how would she know?*

NANCY

Sorry. Excuse me.

Nancy looks up at the monster.

NANCY (CONT'D)
That's a great mask... Wow you're
really tall.

Is she flirting with him?

The monster just stares back at her. Feeling the awkwardness,
Nancy carries on to the snack bar.

She passes the vampire couple's convertible... blood smeared
across the dash, their lifeless bloodied bodies leaned
against one another.

Nancy misses this, strutting calmly past, one of those things
where you wouldn't notice unless you were looking for it.

At the **SNACK BAR**, She pulls out her purse.

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT
On the house.

NANCY
Aw thank you.

He can't help but smile at her vintage poodle dress.

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT
Love your Sandy costume. Takes me
back in time. I used to be a bit of
a Greaser myself.

NANCY
Tell me about it, stud.

Nancy winks, takes her snacks, in a better mood after that
wholesome interaction.

THE BACK ROW OF PARKED CARS

Nancy, with pep in her step, passes parked car after parked
car, surely she'll discover the dead couple this pass.

NANCY (CONT'D)
(singing *Grease* to herself)
A wop ba-ba lu-mop a wop bam boom!
We go together like...

She walks right past the vampires' convertible. Oblivious.

She approaches the Mustang, but Richie is gone.

Looks left and right, no sign of him, but she doesn't seem
too worried.

Sets the drinks on the roof of the car, freeing up a hand to open the passenger door.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG (PARKED) - CONTINUOUS

She settles in, eats some popcorn. Thirsty, remembers her drink on the roof and blindly reaches out the window...

SOMETHING GRABS HER ARM!! Startled, tries to free herself.

Richie laughs. Grabs the drink off the roof and takes a sip.

NANCY
Screw you, Dick.

RICHIE
It's Halloween babe, gotta expect a trick every once in a while.

Richie climbs in the driver's side.

NANCY
Yeah well- don't expect any treats.

RICHIE
Aww c'mon, I was just havin' a little fun. I'm sorry babe.

NANCY
Where even were you?

RICHIE
Aw ya missed me? -- Took a leak.

FRONT OF THE DRIVE-IN THEATER

The monster lumbers passed the projector, causing his shadow to engulf the screen, pissing off a lot of MOVIE PATRONS that make their frustration known: *"Get out of the way! Move!"*

Cars HONK, but the monster doesn't care. He just watches the screen, studying it.

The film rolls JAWS. The shark descends into the ocean as the monster disappears into the nearby woods.

EXT. NIGHT SKY - ABOVE THE WOODS

The full moon hovers above the treetops. The woods are vast and dense.

EXT. WOODS

Jack cowers behind a trunk... Sees a clearing up ahead, breaks for it, praying the monster is not around.

He bursts out of the foliage, into his own backyard.

INT. JACK'S HOUSE

Jack locks the door behind him.

KITCHEN

Jack rushes to the butcher block. Unsheathes the knife he accidentally cut himself with during his jack-O'-lantern carving. He sees his reflection in the blade as it glimmers a sharp ring. Ready for battle.

REEAAAARRRR! Startled. Drops the knife. *Perhaps he's not ready for battle.* That noise came from outside.

He hits the deck, scooting low towards the window... Musters up some courage, hesitantly lifting his head to peek...

Jack sees the monster in the front yard tormenting his cat perched up in the tree.

EXT. FRONT YARD TREE

Shadow HISSSES, swiping her claws at the monster, keeping it at bay, but the monster dodges.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN Jack cowers behind the sink.

JACK
Oh no, oh no...

Torn on what to do. Thinks... Has a plan.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM CLOSET - SECONDS LATER

Jack yanks a pull chain. The closet light shines on.

Reaches behind some old clothes revealing a lever action BB GUN with a sniper scope.

JACK'S ROOM

He pushes open his bedroom window.

DOWN IN THE YARD

Shadow takes another swipe at the creature, this time her claws connect with the monster's orange flesh. Hurting him.

JACK'S ROOM

Jack saw that.

JACK

Good girl, Shadow. Hang on!

Jack struggles to cock the lever action. He hears Shadow MEOW for help, inspiring him to pull the lever with all his might. CLICK!

Plops the rifle against the window frame. Tucks the stock into his shoulder. Rests his cheek against the gun. Big inhale... Peers through the scope. Exhale.

POV THROUGH THE RIFLE'S SCOPE

Steadies his shaky aim. Lines up his crosshair with the monster's big bright orange face. An easy headshot.

Sweat beads up on Jack's forehead and drips down his temple. Time slows as he rests his finger on the trigger... FIRES!

DOWN IN THE YARD

PEW! The shot is not close, it's like it wasn't even from the same movie.

JACK'S ROOM

Flustered, Jack desperately reloads another shot. Shadow's life depends on it.

YARD

Shadow hangs on for dear life from the slender tree limb.

The monster's scowl softens. This is the first time we really see his true face, the original cute design Richie carved... He's just trying to help.

The monster's new demeanor puts Shadow at ease.

His vine legs instantly grow him taller. Now eye to eye with Shadow.

The monster helps Shadow safely to the ground.

His legs retract him back down to normal height.

Shadow MEOWS, *thank you*. Monster grunts back, *you're welcome*. SNEEZES! Apparently allergic to cats.

The front door CREAKS open behind them. Jack cautiously approaches. Gun still drawn, just in case.

JACK (CONT'D)
...She likes you.

Shadow PURS up against Monster's legs.

JACK (CONT'D)
See. Shadow is a good judge of character. She can't stand my brother, Richie... Good enough for Shadow, good enough for me too.

Jack tosses his rifle to the ground, in truce.

PEW! The rifle inadvertently fires! The bullet WIZZES past Monster and Shadow. Shadow darts for the house.

JACK (CONT'D)
Sorry!!

Jack and Monster. Alone. This is a little weird. Jack scans Monster from viney feet to big orange head.

JACK (CONT'D)
So you're like, a *real* monster, huh?

Monster, shrugs, *I guess so*.

Jack must have a million questions...

JACK (CONT'D)
Works for me. Wanna come inside and play some video games?

Monster grunts, *sure*.

NOTE: The monster never actually speak, just kinda grunts.

They walk up to the house, but Monster stops when he sees some of Jack's candy he had dropped on the ground, picking up every piece, savoring each bite.

JACK (CONT'D)
You like candy, huh? There's lots more where that came from.

INT. JACK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Monster sits on the bed, way too big for it. He devours Jack's trick or treat candy.

Jack turns on his gaming monitor.

JACK

I can't find my other controller, but we can switch off though, I don't usually have anyone to play split-screen with so.

Jack turns around, but Monster is gone...

JACK (CONT'D)

Monster?...

(locates him)

Oh that's Tank, my gold fish.

Monster stares at Tank. Tank stares back.

JACK (CONT'D)

It's funny. I don't know why they call em "gold" fish. Looks pretty orange if ya ask me. Like you. Ya know, you're kinda like twins.

Monster bends down, inching his face as close to the glass as possible. They do look a like. Monster tilts his head, wonders: *Am I a fish too?*

JACK (CONT'D)

You're not a fish though, least I'm fairly certain you're not. You're a pumpkin. Actually a jack-O'-lantern

Jack pauses his game and types in Google: "what are pumpkins"

JACK (CONT'D)

I'm Jack by the way, forgot to say. I don't have to call you monster if you don't want. You have a name?

Monster shrugs, *I don't know*. The search results pop up.

JACK (CONT'D)

Well, debates over, looks like you're a fruit. Wow, I can't believe that, I was always thought they were vegetables.

Monster pulls up a seat, looking at the computer.

JACK (CONT'D)

And more specifically "a mature winter squash of the species and varieties in the genus *Cucurbita*." Or however you say that. Can I call you *Cucurbita*?

Monster tilts his head, *I don't really like that.*

Jack takes a beat to think of a better name. He has it.

JACK (CONT'D)

Squash.

Monster perks up, grunting approval. He tries to say it the best he can, *sQuAaaH*.

JACK (CONT'D)

Yeah, Squash. It's perfect, it kinda reminds me of Sasquatch.
(off Squash's look)
Oh he's like this urban legend, super tall. I bet you two would get along. If we could find him... Hey what are you doing?

Squash is on Google images of pumpkins, scrolling, intrigued. Pumpkins in fields, in wheel barrows, on porches... There's different looking ones, all shapes and sizes. Some with blemishes and bumps, others white, yellow, orange, rotten...

JACK (CONT'D)

See anything ya like?

Squash sees a photo of another jack-O'-lantern. The classic triangle eyes and half moon smile. He clicks it.

The web page populates with thousands of other jack-O'-lantern pictures. Squash is in awe, there's so many just like him. He scrolls through, astonished.

JACK (CONT'D)

Pretty cool, huh? Oh check her out.

Jack directs the cursor to one of those expertly carved jack-O'-lanterns resembling Marilyn Monroe. Squash's carved out eyes widen and his internal flame rages brighter.

JACK (CONT'D)

Easy there big guy, gonna burn my house down!

Squash calms down and grunts an apology.

JACK (CONT'D)
 No you're good, as far as I'm
 concerned this is your house too.
 Mi casa es su casa, Cucurbita!
 (off Squash's look)
 I'm just messin' with you Squash.
 It's what friends do. They tease
 each other.

Squash clicks a photo in the browser. A site pops up for
 Barry Patch Farm, the local pumpkin patch.

Squash points at it and grunts loudly!

JACK (CONT'D)
 Huh? Barry Patch Farm? That's right
 down the road.

Squash confirms, grunting louder. Points at himself.

JACK (CONT'D)
 You're from Barry Patch Farm?!

Squash grunts, *yes*.

JACK (CONT'D)
 I got *my* jack-o'-lantern from Barry
 Patch Farm! That's crazy! What are
 the chances?!

Squash grunts, amazed by the coincidence. Shrugs *Where is it?*

JACK (CONT'D)
 What?... Oh my jack-o'-lantern?
 Someone stole it off the porch...
 Dang, I bet y'all woulda really hit
 it off...

Jack's wheels start to spin... he has the realization.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Holy shit...
 What if you're brothers?!

They erupt, minds blown, dancing around the room like a
 couple of idiots.

Squash bumps into the nightstand, knocking over Jack's family
 picture.

Squash picks up the frame, looking at Jack's family.

JACK (CONT'D)
 That's us Hendersons. My brother
 Richie. My mom Laurie, dad John.
 And You met Tank and Shadow.

Jack notices Shadow's claw marks on Squash's face.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Ooo, sorry about that. She's
 usually better with strangers.
 Probably just thought you were a
 mean monster.

Squash points to Jack's cut on his cheek from Billy's knife.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Oh this? *Real* monster did this.

Squash grows angry, the protector in him.

JACK (CONT'D)
 No it's alright. I'm used to
 getting picked on by Billy.

Squash ROARS, pulls out Billy's knife. Ready to protect his
 new friend.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Woah woah woah! It's just a
 scratch! Here. I'll hold onto that.

Jack calmly takes the knife, retracts the blade, puts it
 safely in his pocket.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Geez hot head. Might want to work
 on your temper. Since you're so big
 and scary. People might get the
 wrong impression. No offense.

Squash grunts, *none taken*.

JACK (CONT'D)
 We'll work on it. Ya know I wish I
 was more like you.
 (re: cut on his face)
 Think mine makes me look scary like
 you?

Squash sullen, he doesn't like being scary.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Hey, what's the matter? Being scary
 isn't a bad thing!

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Least no one will mess with you. We all have our strengths-- and weaknesses. Maybe I could take some pointers from you? And if you want to be less--uh terrifying- well I'm your guy. What do ya say? Team up?

They shake on it. DOORBELL RINGS! Squash looks confused.

JACK (CONT'D)

That's just the doorbell. Grab your candy, follow me. This'll be your first lesson!

Squash senses something bad, but he grabs the candy off the bed and reluctantly follows Jack out of the room.

We push past them through the window. Parked in the street: the truck and trench coat, silhouetted by the street lamp.

INT. FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Squash stands nervously in the doorway holding a bowl of candy.. Jack hides around the corner, encouraging him.

JACK

I'm right here! You got this.
(thumbs up)
Remember, smile!

Squash practices his smile. It's really creepy...

JACK (CONT'D)

Soften it.. Chin down a little.

Squash smiles a little less, still creepy.

JACK (CONT'D)

Perfect!

RING of the doorbell. Squash takes a deep breath. Opens the door. Jumps out and smiles.

AHHHHHH!!! KIDS scream and run away. Squash looks to Jack, demoralized.

JACK (CONT'D)

You were a little quick is all.
It's alright, you'll get the next one.

Squash hangs his head low.

JACK (CONT'D)

Hey C'mon. Are you a pump-CAN!? Or
a Pump-CAN'T?!

(off Squash's sad look)

Don't do that. Listen, Michael
Jordan was cut from his high school
basketball team. Steve Jobs was
fired from Apple. Van Gogh only
sold one painting in his life, well
he did [*tongue click*] himself. But
that's not the point, the point is,
no one's great their first time.

Squash is motivated.

JACK (CONT'D)

Now let's get friendly.

Squash works on his smile in the hallway mirror.

MONTAGE OF SQUASH GIVING OUT CANDY TO TRICK OR TREATERS

--SUPER HERO TRICK OR TREATERS walk up to the house.

Squash whips open the door. Soft smiles.

"AHHHH!" Kids run off.

Squash shuts the door. Jack pats him on the back and
demonstrates to open the door slower. Squash nods, *got it*.

--FOOTBALL TRICK OR TREATERS jog up to the house. The door
CREAAAAAKS open very slowly...it's somehow even more creepy
than last time. Squash slowly lifts up his head, the football
players are shaking in their cleats. Squash grins big.
"AHHHH!" They run off. Jack face palms.

--Jack corrects Squash's posture to not hunch his back.
Squash stands up straight.

--Jack shows him how to laugh. Squash tries, but his chuckle
is more like an evil cackle. But it will have to do.

--Door opens. Squash laughs. Kids run off.

Jack shakes his head and hand to "cut the laugh" like the
Jonah Hill meme at the Oscars.

--Door. Smile. Scream. Run... Door. Smile. Scream. Run...
Door. Smile. Scream. Run...

--Shadow lays on the porch, head bobbing back and forth like
she's watching a tennis rally.

I/E. FRONT PORCH FOYER - NIGHT

A group of PRINCESSES twirl up to the door.

Jack covers his eyes, this is gonna be bad.

Squash composes himself. Opens the door, the girls are a little hesitant. Squash gives a genuine offering of candy.

A beat. Then a little PRINCESS steps forward.

PRINCESS

Trick or Treat, smell my feet give
me something good to eat...

Jack's eyes burst open, he can't believe what he's hearing, it's happening, he silently celebrates, fist pumping the air!! He whisper-shouts to Squash--

JACK

That's your cue!

Squash is stiff like a robot, trying hard not to mess this up. He places the candy in the princesses' baskets.

PRINCESS

...give me something good to eat,
if you don't I don't care. I'll
pull down your underwear.

Squash steps back into the doorway in disbelief.

ALL THE PRINCESSES

Thank you!!!

The princesses leave. Squash waves goodbye to them. Jack slams the door shut.

A beat.

They erupt, celebrating! Squash throws all the candy in the sky. Jack air guitars, they high five, chest bump, like their team just won the Super Bowl.

JACK

YOU WERE GREAT!!

Squash is bashful taking the compliment.

JACK (CONT'D)

WHAT A PRO! And when you dropped in
the candy. BOOM! Literal mic drop.

Squash grunts, *aww thanks.*

JACK (CONT'D)
You killed it!

Squash grunts, *killed?! His face grimaces.*

JACK (CONT'D)
Oh no! Not literally, "kill", it's a good thing. Figure of speech. No you were freakin awesome!

He nudges Jack's shoulder, *I had a good teacher.*

JACK (CONT'D)
Nooooo, I was just standing there. Seriously, it was all you bro. We gotta go celebrate!

Squash shakes his head, *no.* Jack is taken back by this...

Points to Jack, *your turn!*

JACK (CONT'D)
Me?!

Squash nods, *yes "you".*

JACK (CONT'D)
Oh man... I don't know... It's already pretty late and--

Squash encourages him. He yanks on his sleeve, *c'mon!*

JACK (CONT'D)
We *could* use some more candy... alright.

Squash jumps for joy! He eagerly ushers Jack out the front door to go do some scaring--

WACK! They slam into the back of something solid on the

PORCH

They regain their footing... glaring up at...

TRENCH COAT MAN. His face cast in shadow from his cowboy hat.

JACK (CONT'D)
Ummm. Aren't you a little old to be trick or treating, partner.

Trench coat stays silent, stoic. He stares a hole through Squash who returns the glare.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Welp, this is weird. Dude, if you
 want candy, we're fresh out. Try
 next door. C'mon Squash.

Jack locks his door. Pulls Squash away from trench coat, who stands there like the Terminator, eyeing them leave.

PITTER PATTER from above. It's shadow, climbing in the rafters of the porch. She HISSES at trench coat.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

The night is still young. TEENS trick or treat, hijinks afoot. Jack and Squash walk and talk on the sidewalk.

JACK
 So weird. Who was that guy?

Squash shrugs, *I don't know*. Shamefully puts on his hood to cover his head, Jack stops him.

JACK (CONT'D)
 You don't have to do that.
 Especially tonight. Look around!

Squash sees all the different trick or treaters in masks.

JACK (CONT'D)
 See? You'll blend right in-- you'll
 actually stand out, you have like
 the coolest costume of everyone.

Squash removes his hood, regains his confidence. They walk a few beats scoping out houses.

Squash grabs Jack's hand, urging him to follow.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

They wait outside a quaint home for the coast to clear... then Squash scampers up to the house.

Jack hides behind a tree to observe.

Squash KNOCKS on the door and while he waits for the HOME OWNER to come, he turns to Jack with a cocky smirk, *watch this*.

Jack shakes his head, *show off...* then Jack's eyes bust open, his jaw hits the floor.

BACK ON THE FRONT PORCH, Squash's body is gone. Just his pumpkin head sits still on the floor by the welcome mat. He transformed down to look like an ordinary jack-O'-lantern.

On the ground, Squash winks to Jack then freezes still as the door opens behind him.

The HOME OWNER peers her head out, confused.

HOME OWNER
Hello?... Dang ding dong ditchers.

She slams the door.

Jack pops out belly laughing from behind the tree. Squash, back in his human-like form, runs up to him. They high five.

JACK
Alright, I'll admit, that was a pretty cool parlor trick.

Squash bows. Then points to him and grunts, *your turn*.

EXT. ANOTHER HOUSE - NIGHT

Jack timidly steps up to the doorbell. Looks back to Squash, *I don't know about this*.

Squash peers out from behind cover with a thumbs up.

Jack timidly looks up at the house. It's dark inside, their night over. In fact, this house has zero decorations, making it's feelings towards the holiday very clear.

ON THE PORCH, Jack does a quick stretch, then squats into a runners stance. He extends his arm and pointer finger out to the doorbell and... DING DONG! Jack dashes, but slips on the welcome mat...

IN THE YARD, the family DOG alerts awake. BARK-BARK-BARK.

Jack takes off, down the porch and walkway, the dog cuts him off in the yard, heading right for him.

JACK
Shit! This is *your* house?!

Jack sprints as fast as he can, but this yard is large and he's not that fast.

Squash needs to save his friend. Thinks fast, holds up his hand, instantly growing his viney pointer finger to two feet. SNAPS it off with his other hand.

BACK IN THE YARD, the dog BARKS, salivating, gaining on Jack like a heat seeking missile. Jack peeks over his shoulder.

JACK (CONT'D)
Bad dog! Ahhhhh!

A LOUD WHISTLE. Jack looks up, it's Squash waving his broken finger as a stick, ready to play fetch. Rears back and hurls the stick across the yard.

The dog takes the bait, redirecting to chase down the stick.

Jack dives for safety, tackling Squash. Causing CASH to fly out of Squash's leather jacket, fluttering through the air, it's the money Laurie gave Richie for pizza.

Jack lays on his back in the grass desperately trying to catch his breath. Then he starts to laugh uncontrollably.

Squash joins in with his jolly monstrous laugh! The new friends roll around in the grass laughing their asses off. The beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Jack clocks the money on the ground. Gets an idea.

JACK (CONT'D)
All that running's got me starving.
You hungry?

Squash's stomach GROWLS.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Jack pedals. Wind in his hair. Feeling alive. Lets go of the handle bars. Stretches his arms out, embracing the night.

In the basket sits Squash in jack-O'-lantern form, he looks up at Jack, smiling. Squash grows thin vines out of his stem and grabs onto the handle bars, steering from the basket.

Jack looks down, amazed. Realizing Squash was in control while the bullies were chasing him earlier in the day.

Squash steers while Jack garners up the courage to stand. They speed past TRICK OR TREATERS that watch in amazement.

The bike picks up speed down the hill, Jack's arms still sprawled out. He shouts, WOOOOO!

INT. LOCAL DINER - NIGHT

An old fashioned diner decorated for Halloween. Costumed CUSTOMERS fill the booths and bar top.

Jack inserts quarters in an old JUKEBOX. He selects: *Smashing Pumpkin's - 1979*. The chill rock begins our

MONTAGE OF FRIENDSHIP

A WAITRESS dressed as Little Red Riding Hood passes the bar top, seating THREE LITTLE PIGS and BIG BAD WOLF. They spin in their chairs impressed by the huge platter she's carrying.

IN A BOOTH, Jack and Squash are starving. The waitress sets down an assortment of desserts. They must have ordered the entire menu. Lastly, she sets down a slice of PUMPKIN PIE.

Squash grabs his fork and lunges for a bite, but Jack pulls the pumpkin pie away. Shakes his head, *you don't want that*.

Jack slides him some ice cream and cobbler instead.

TIME LAPSE. *All the food gets devoured.* Only empty dirty dishes remain. They're stuffed. Jack drops some cash on the table and they're out the diner door with a CHING.

--EXT. DINER -- They walk up to the bike rack. Jack swings his leg over his bike. Nods to Squash to get in the basket, but he can tell Squash wants to drive...

--EXT. ROAD -- Squash pedals fast with Jack sitting on the handle bars. Jack's a little timid, but a smile creeps in every once in a while. Squash pedals faster!

--INT. JACK'S ROOM -- Squash plays *Call of Duty* on the gaming monitor, wearing a headset barely fitting his pumpkin head.

Squash jams buttons while Jack coaches him to shoot the enemy players, but he gets shot and killed. Squash RAGES!

ON SCREEN: The level restarts, CAPTAIN PRICE(50s) a burly in game character, cool as hell, smokes a CIGAR in the cut scene before the mission starts. Jack gets an idea.

--INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- Jack tries to buy *Swisher Sweets*, but the CASHIER looks at him like, *no way kid*.

Squash strolls in. Seven feet tall. The gas station attendant promptly sells them the cigars.

--EXT. CEMETARY -- Jack and Squash sit leaned up against a tombstone smoking. Squash blows Os, it's impressive. Jack tries, but COUGHS uncontrollably.

Squash pats him on the back and grunts, *watch this*. He deeply inhales then blows the smoke out of his eyes, nose and mouth, creating a jack-O'-lantern face of smoke in the air.

--INT. HAUNTED HOUSE -- Squash, loving every second, guides a terrified Jack through a haunted house. CREATURES jump out, scaring Jack, while Squash laughs at each jump scare.

They reach the end of the haunted house, Jack catches his breath, proud he concurred his fear.

They pose for a picture with MONSTERS outside of the Haunted House. Jack loosens up, making a scary face at camera.

--INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- Jack and Squash are back. They place a large pack of toilet paper on the counter. The worker reluctantly rings them up.

--EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE -- The night is winding down, streets barren. Jack conceals his identity with a bandanna over his mouth. Squash puts on his hood. They take turns throwing rolls of toilet paper over a big tree in this front yard.

The houses flood lights shine on! The home owner, Mr Johnson (the teacher), in his bath robe, bursts out of the front door, chasing them off his lawn.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Jack walks his bike down the street with Squash.

JACK
Did you see the look on Mr
Johnson's face?

Squash laughs, mocking Mr Johnson.

JACK (CONT'D)
Classic. I hope he couldn't tell it
was me, I can't fail lit.

Squash flashes his zippo lighter.

JACK (CONT'D)
"Literature", but that's lit too.

Jack checks their toilet paper inventory in his basket.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey, we still have like six rolls
left. Who should we hit next?

Squash points out a big house up ahead.

Jack looks up and immediately stops in his tracks. Turns around to walk the other direction. Squash presses on a few feet before realizing Jack bailed.

Squash catches up with Jack, stopping him for answers, *what's wrong?*

JACK (CONT'D)

I can't.

Squash shrugs, *why?*

JACK (CONT'D)

(gulps)

Jessica Wallace.

Squash turns back around to see what all the fuss is about.

JACK (CONT'D)

Wow, okay. Real subtle, dude. Stop it! Is she looking? She's looking isn't she?

Squash spots Jessica and her friend SARAH talking. Jack pulls Squash's gaze away.

JACK (CONT'D)

You saw. Happy? Now let's go.

Jack tries to walk off, but Squash holds him back. He shakes his head and grunts, *no*.

JACK (CONT'D)

C'mon, Squash. Drop it. I know this one house that gives out party packs of sour patch kids, the watermelon kind.

Squash considers, but shakes it off and points to Jessica.

JACK (CONT'D)

OkayOkay! Put your finger down. Look, I know you're kinda new to manners, but it's not polite to point.

Squash points, *go*.

JACK (CONT'D)

I'm going! Dang. Here, hold my bike.

Jack turns towards the girls, feigns a confident step forward and... turns back around.

JACK (CONT'D)
Nope. Can't do it.

Squash encourages him grunting, *yes you can*.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm just not cool, Squash. I'm not like you, man. I mean look at you, you're tall. Mysterious. Lil scary. You have a leather jacket. You're like Damon Salvatore and I'm just... Jack.

Squash mimes dribbling a basketball and shooting a ball like Michael Jordan.

JACK (CONT'D)
You're right.

Squash takes off his leather jacket. Puts it on Jack. Instantly cooler. And with new found confidence struts up to the girls.

Squash watches from a far like a proud dad.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey Jessica.
(clears his throat and lowers his voice)
I mean, Hello Jess. Sarah.

SARAH
(sarcastic)
Cool jacket.

JESSICA
You changed costumes.

JACK
Yeah, oh this old thing? Vintage.

Jack pops his collar. The girls giggle.

Jack tries to find the words. It's getting awkward.

JACK (CONT'D)
Sooo did you score any good candy orrrrr?

Squash encourages Jack with two thumbs up.

SARAH

Who's that guy? Staring at us... he
your friend?

JACK

Who?

Jack turns to see Squash waving at them. Jack shoots him a look to *quit it*. Squash diverts his wave in a random direction, landing on a nearby DEVIL and ANGEL.

ANGEL

Hell yeah, bro!

DEVIL

Sweet costume, brotha!

Squash finger guns, effortlessly cool.

Then the squad of little princesses from earlier walk by, giving Squash high fives and fist bumps.

JACK

Oh yeah, that's-- my-- cousin.
Visiting from-- Germany.

SARAH

My sister studied abroad in Munich,
she said Oktoberfest is lit
everyone gets like totally wasted.

JACK

Totally.

SARAH

Is he like older? He's really tall.

JACK

Yeah, he's umm uhh- twenty two--

SARAH

Can he get us alcohol?

JACK

What?

SARAH

For the party... my sister was
gonna pick us up some, but we told
her not to worry because Billy was
gonna get some with his fake, but
no one has heard from him like all
night. And my sister's like already
out gettin hammered sooo that would
be like asking too much ya know?

JACK

Right. Well I don't know if his ID
like works here in America so--

Off Sarah's look.

JACK (CONT'D)

I mean, pshh yeah, that shouldn't
be an -- yeah definitely. We can
get you alcohol. Course. I got you.
Consider it done-zo.

SARAH

Fire! You're a life saver. And tell
your cousin I'll totally Venmo him.

Sarah notices some of her FRIENDS down the street. She runs
to them.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Jess, let's go.

Jessica hangs back. Just her and Jack now.

JESSICA

Sorry. She's a lot.

JACK

It's cool.

JESSICA

You have the address? Here I'll
just give you my number.

JACK

(freaking out on the inside)

Okay.

Squash watches Jack close, he's so proud!!... but his vision
begins to blur?... he's dizzy?... Spins around. It's TRENCH
COAT! Holding a syringe he just injected Squash with.

Squash puts up a fight, but he's fading fast. They struggle.
Squash passes out. Trench coat guides Squash into his truck.

Back with the Jack and Jessica-

JESSICA

Sent. I guess I'll seeya in a bit.
(likes him)

Bye.

She joins her friends. Jack is frozen, but as soon as she
turns her back. He punches the air. Sprints to go tell

JACK
 Squash!
 (...)
 Squash?... SQUASH?!

No sign of him, just a crowd of trick or treaters. He panics.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Excuse me, have any of you seen a
 guy dressed in a pumpkin mask?
 Kinda tall?

Patrons shake their heads, no. He spots the devil and angel.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Hey, did you see the pumpkin head
 dude?

ANGEL
 Hell yeah!

DEVIL
 That dude's awesome!

JACK
 Did you see which way he went?!

DEVIL
 I think he went--

ANGEL
 What's in it for us?

Jack checks his pockets, pulls out Billy's knife, lint, some
 candy and loose change...

JACK
 I have like sixty two cents...

They are frozen in fear of the knife.

DEVIL
 Woah dude! We'll tell you!

JACK
 Huh? I also have a blue jolly
 rancher--

ANGEL
 He got in this old truck,
 that's all I know, I swear!

DEVIL
 Don't hurt us!

They run away, frightened. Jack's confused. Then realizes
 he's holding the knife.

JACK
Oh shit!

He pockets the knife. Looks down to see some stray candy scattered on the ground. Checks it for clues, scans around aimlessly, lost on what to do next.

DING! A text from

JESSICA
 (text message)
 Sarah wants White Claw. Lime plz.
 thx [heart, pumpkin, dancing emoji]

Jack sighs, he's screwed. Jessica types again. DING, it's a selfie. Jack nearly faints.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 (text message)
 For my contact pic ;) <3
 (new text msg)
 Send me one to use for yours.

He opens his camera roll, remembers the pic of the truck he took earlier. Zooms in to the phone number. A lead! Dials it.

RINGS... voicemail.

VOICEMAIL
 Howdy there, thank you for calling
 Barry Patch Farms. Sorry we missed
 your call. Our operating hours are--

Hangs up.

EXT. BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Billy's parents are rich. House is decorated to the nines.
 MUSIC blares from the

BACK YARD

Orange string lights dangle over the porch, hovering the bright blue heated pool. AQUAMAN cannonballs while others in costumes dance to the music.

Patrick and Big Joe sit around a bonfire passing a vape. They seem off, still spooked from the stunt Billy pulled.

PATRICK
 Billy text you back?

Big Joe checks his phone, shakes his head, *no*.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
 Shit. I'm freakin out Big Joe,
 FREAKIN OUT!

Big Joe hands him the vape, Patrick hits it. The party is getting impatient.

AQUAMAN
 Where's Billy with the booze? I'm
 thirsty as Fuuuuuuuuuuuck

A COP walks down the porch steps... *Fuck.*

COP
 Why don't you save some for the
 fishes, Arthur.
 (off Aquaman's scared look)
 I'm gonna need to see some ID.

The cop pushes him in the pool, party back on. This is SHERIFF MYERS, Billy's dad, he approaches Pat and Big Joe--

SHERIFF MYERS
 Hey boys, I have to step out for a
 minute. Don't let anyone drown
 while I'm gone, alright? You seen
 Billy?

PATRICK
 Yes sir-- umm, he'll be right back.

Jessica and her friends walk up.

JESSICA
 Is everything alright, sheriff?

SHERIFF MYERS
 Sure it's just some pranksters. You
 all have fun. Boys, tell Billy to
 give me a call when you see him.

PATRICK
 Yes sir.

SOMEONE'S POV watches the sheriff leave, stalking the party from beyond the fence...

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jack picks his BB Gun out of the grass. Slings it over his shoulder.

Shadow hops onto the porch banister to see what's going on.
MEOW.

JACK
I'll find him, Shadow. Don't worry.

Jack mounts his bike and rides off down the road.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

A low mist hovers the road like a nightmare. Jack pedals, eyes peeled for his friend. He follows the full moon, his only source of light.

The road is dark an eerie. The wind howls, swirling fallen leaves into the foggy atmosphere.

Up ahead a few hundred yards, jack sees something behind the thick haze. A TALL DARK FIGURE in the middle of the road. Jack pedals faster.

JACK
SQUASH?!

The fog thickens... then dissipates, the dark figure is gone.

Jack SCREECHES to a halt, looks around for any sign.

JACK (CONT'D)
Squash?!... Squash!? Where are you?

Looks down. A single candy wrapper in the road. Picks it up. Analyzes it.

Just up ahead a sign reads "Barry Patch Farms Next Left"

JACK (CONT'D)
Coming buddy.

Jack's ear's tilt up. Hearing distant SIRENS.

A police cruiser crests the hill behind him. It passes Jack and turns right toward

EXT. DRIVE-IN THEATER - NIGHT

Cop cars, an ambulance and firetruck. Blue and red flashes.

It's a bee hive of activity. COPS interview SCARED PATRONS.

The police cruiser we just saw pulls onto the scene with Jack coasting in on his bike close behind.

EXT. TICKET BOOTH - NIGHT

Sheriff Myers exits his car and gets brought up to speed by a young DEPUTY. They walk and talk.

Jack keeps his distance, but follows within earshot.

DEPUTY

Two victims, deceased teens.
Multiple lacerations. Can't locate
the murder weapon. But judging by
the wounds it looks to be some type
of steel rod or uhh-- pitchfork.

Sheriff ducks under caution tape and peers inside the bloody convertible, nearly losing his lunch.

SHERIFF MYERS

Jesus Christ. This Godforsaken
holiday. Talk to the witnesses?

DEPUTY

None, sir.

SHERIFF MYERS

What? Full parking lot and you're
telling me no one saw a slash.

DEPUTY

Eyes were on the screen. Movie
drowned out any cries for help.

SHERIFF MYERS

Who found the bodies?

DEPUTY

Old guy. Owns the lot. He gave us a
statement. Already ruled him out.

Deputy points to the TICKET BOOTH where Colonel Sanders gives a BORED COP his testimony.

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT

I hadn't seen that much blood since
'Nam. Ya know, sport, back in my
day...

Back to Sheriff Myers and the deputy.

DEPUTY

He hasn't been much help.

SHERIFF MYERS

Alright. Wrap this up, run patrols through the night and get these kids home.

A timid Richie and Nancy approach.

RICHIE

Excuse me, officer.

DEPUTY

Yes son. You're all free to go. We have everyone's contact we'll reach out if we have any further questions.

RICHIE

Yes sir, I just wanted to say, ya see-- my girlfriend here-- which I don't know how important this actually is or if at all but, she wanted me to tell you--

NANCY

Sir, there was this weird dude in a pumpkin mask. Gave me the ick.

DEPUTY

The "ick"?

NANCY

A walking red flag.

The deputy is not understanding, but Sheriff Myers gets it.

SHERIFF MYERS

Like a funny feeling. Had a bad vibe.

NANCY

Exactly.

Off the deputy's look.

SHERIFF MYERS

(to the deputy)

I have a teenager.

DEPUTY

And you said pumpkin mask, huh?

Jack stays incognito, but his ears perk up to "pumpkin mask".

RICHIE
Sorry officers, I tried to tell her-

NANCY
No! He was like eight feet tall.
And I'm sure as hell not the only
one who saw this freak. He blocked
the projector for like the whole
third act of Jaws.

DEPUTY
Well it's not a crime to be tall.
Or spoil an overrated movie. So.
Thank you, we'll be in touch.

NANCY
But..

SHERIFF MYERS
Get home. Get some rest.

Sheriff and the deputy walk off. Nancy glares at Richie.

RICHIE
What?

NANCY
You didn't back me up at all?!

RICHIE
What?! "Back you up"? Sorry, but
excuse me Nancy Drew for not
wanting to insert myself with false
leads into an ongoing double
homicide investigation.

NANCY
It's probably murder.

RICHIE
Whatever. Ya know typically the
killer likes to get involved, so
thanks! We're probably like their
top suspects now-

JACK (O.S.)
HEY GUYS!

Richie jumps out of his socks. It's just Jack.

RICHIE
What the hell are you doing here?
About gave me a damn heart attack.

NANCY
(mocking Richie)
"gotta expect a trick every once in
a while"

Richie shakes that off. Sees Jack's cut across his face.

RICHIE
What the hell happened to your
face?
(then)
Is that my jacket?!

JACK
You said you saw a guy in a pumpkin
mask, right?

NANCY
Yeah.

JACK
What kind of pumpkin mask? Did it
look *good*?

NANCY
I don't know, what do you mean?

JACK
Like did it look store bought or--

RICHIE
Had Spirit Halloween written all
over it.. Now gimme my jacket back!

NANCY
Shut up, Richie.
(so serious)
No. The mask almost looked...
real.

The confirmation Jack needed.

JACK
I gotta tell you guys something.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG (PARKED) - MOMENTS LATER

Jack sits in the backseat of the car, Richie in the driver
seat and Nancy sits shotgun.

RICHIE

You're telling me. You met a magic talking pumpkin man and y'all been going around town trick or treating, doing stupid shit. And now he's been kidnapped by some dude in a trench coat who you think works for the pumpkin patch. So you want our help to go rescue him. AND you're somehow certain your "friend" has nothing to do with this other pumpkin man that just murdered two kids in cold blood.

A beat.

JACK

He can't talk. Pretty much just grunts.

RICHIE

Okay.

(beat)

Babe, now that I have my jacket back we can take that picture.

NANCY

Little late for that.

RICHIE

Ahh c'mon, Jack can take it, you can just crop around all the caution tape. Throw on filter. Perfect night, right?

JACK

Hello?! Sooooo? Are you gonna help?

RICHIE

Listen, I don't know what got laced in your candy, but you're lucky I'm driving your ass home and not telling mom you toilet papered Mr Johnson's house.

JACK

I'm telling you the truth!

RICHIE

And I'm telling you I don't care.

Richie starts the car.

JACK

Fine, let me out. I'll save Squash myself.

RICHIE

That's cute, you named it. You're not going anywhere, I'm taking you home.

JACK

No! Stop, let me out!

NANCY

Richie, what if he's telling the truth?

RICHIE

How am I the bad guy here? Sorry for not wanting to let my dumbass little brother wonder around an active crime scene with a deranged killer on the loose. We're going home. End of discussion.

Jack is nearly in tears. He pleads.

JACK

Richie. The one time I actually need you to be my big brother. Please.

Richie lets that soak in. Chooses the responsible option.

RICHIE

We're going home.

A COP walks past the car. Jack screams--

JACK

HELP! I'm being kidnapped! HELP!

RICHIE

FINE. You little shit.

Richie unlocks the car door and Jack climbs out.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Go ahead, get murdered by a psycho pumpkin, see if I care.

Richie throws the car in reverse, and peels out.

JACK

Wait! My bike?!

His bike wedged in the trunk is driven out of sight.

Jack is left with just his BB gun.

INT. RICHIE'S MUSTANG (DRIVING) - NIGHT

Richie is getting read the riot act.

NANCY

You should be there for him.

RICHIE

Nance, you heard his story. He's stuck in fairytale land. Magic pumpkins? What is this, Cinderella? If he wants to play make believe with his imaginary friends, so be it. But we don't have to participate in his delusions.

NANCY

Well it's just that, sure, maybe you don't have to, but maybe you should... You know why he plays make believe with imaginary friends?

RICHIE

Cause he has no real ones?

NANCY

Harsh. I mean kinda... And ever since your dad--

RICHIE

Can we not?

NANCY

All he has is you.

Richie ponders this.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jack types in his MAPS APP: "Barry Patch Farms". A short cut appears up ahead.

JACK

Half a mile, not bad.

As he puts his phone away he accidentally bumps "directions".

SIRI
Continuing walking directions to
Barry Patch Farm...

Jack frantically tries to turn down his phone.

JACK
Not now Siri! We have to be quiet!
There's a murder-pumpkin on the
loose.

SIRI
I found this on the web for "We
have to be quiet there's a muder-
pumpkin on the loose"

He cancels Siri. Continues on through the creepy woods, head
on a swivel for Squash or the killer... DING!

JACK
I'm so dead.

He silences his phone, but checks this new text from Jessica:
"Heyyy do you think you're gonna swing by??"

Jack types, unsure of how many "Ys" to use: "Heyyyy OTW"

Jessica types back "Can't wait"

Jack looks worried, trudges on through the woods.

EXT. BILLY'S BACK YARD - NIGHT

Back at the party-- Jessica types on her phone, sitting
around the bonfire with Sarah, Patrick and Big Joe.

SARAH
What are you all smiley about?

JESSICA
Nothing.

PATRICK
(re: Jessica texting)
Is that Billy?

JESSICA
No.

Patrick and Big Joe are worried.

SARAH
ETA on alc?

JESSICA
He's coming.

SARAH
Thank gawd... I'm bored, Jess come
get in my TikTok.

PHONE INTERFACE OF TIK TOK WHILE THE GIRLS FILM

Sarah sets her phone up near the pool. Clicks record.
3...2...1 DING! They start lip syncing and dancing to Michael
Jackson's *Thriller*. DING! Sarah checks the recording.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Oh my God, my hair, no. We have to
go again.

SOMEONE'S POV FROM BEHIND THE GATE watches the girls. Sarah
hits record. 3,2,1. Dancing. Sarah checks again.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Wait, you look cute. But what is up
with my costume? Ugh. One more.

BACK ON THE PHONE. 3,2,1. Dance. Checks the video.

JESSICA
Good?

SARAH
This lighting is honestly trash,
but I'll work with it... Wait.

JESSICA
I'm not dong it again.

Sarah looks closer at her video. Something is blurry in the
background...

SARAH
What is that?

She zooms in, it looks like... someone...

CLANK! The gate bursts open! Sarah SCREAMS, steps back,
falling into the pool!

SARAH (CONT'D)
My phone!! Get me some rice!

Billy emerges from the gate. Sarah drips out of the pool.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Billy, I swear to gawd you better pray my iCloud is synced.

Except Billy wasn't joking around. He's emotionless. Dirty...

JESSICA

Billy? You good?

PATRICK

Where the hell have you been? We've been covering for your ass all night!... Hello?! Now ya got nothing to say?

Billy stays silent... Shouts--

BILLY

Party's over! Everyone out! Now!

The crowd funnels out. Patrick and Big Joe start to leave--

BILLY (CONT'D)

Not you idiots.

INT. BILLY'S HOUSE - SHERIFF MYERS'S STUDY - NIGHT

The room is dim. Walls filled with law enforcement accolades.

Billy rummages through his father's desk.

PATRICK

What are we doing in here? Your dad said to call him. Billy you really need to--

Billy opens a hidden drawer housing a REVOLVER. Pulls it out.

BILLY

This is the last time I'm gonna tell you Patrick. Shut the hell up.

Patrick clocks the shiny piece. Gulps.

PATRICK

Shutting up.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Billy leads them down the street. Pat can't take it any more.

PATRICK
 Alright, I tried. Where we goin?

BIG JOE
 I'm gonna have to side with Pat on
 this one.

BILLY
 Well, when you two pansies left me
 for dead. Something bad happened.
 Really bad.

Patrick and Big Joe look to each other, *oh no*.

PATRICK
 No... Billy what did you do?
 You didn't... Ughh.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
 What did you do to Jack?!

BIG JOE
 I ain't hiding no body!

BILLY
 What?! No you idiots. Jack's fine.

They've reached the scene of the crime. The golf cart is
 stuck upside down, wedged against the lamp post.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 Help me.

Billy tries to free the cart, but needs more man power to
 flip the cart back over.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 Well don't just stand there? C'mon.

PATRICK
 I'm not gonna be a part of hurting
 anybody.

BIG JOE
 Same.

Patrick and Big Joe turn back.

BILLY
 Nobody's gonna get *hurt*.

Billy motions them to "Come on". Big Joe and Patrick help
 flip the cart back over. Billy hops in, turns the key, the
 cart is slow to start, but it works.

BILLY (CONT'D)
But someone is gonna *die*.

Patrick and Big Joe are terrified.

EXT. WOODS OUTSIDE OF BARRY PATCH FARM - NIGHT

Jack pulls back some leaves, revealing the entrance to Barry Patch Farm. A sign reads "NO TRESPASSING"

On the side of a building, Jack clocks a surveillance camera aimed directly at the entrance.

JACK
Definitely hiding *something*.

Jack levels his scoped BB gun, holds his breath, aims at the camera's lens... PEW! Misses badly.

Reload. Aim. Shoot. Miss. Reload. Aim. Shoot. Miss.

The lens of the surveillance camera shimmers in the flood light. Unscathed.

Jack looks around realizing there are in fact, multiple cameras all over. Reconsiders his approach.

Jack finds a side entrance guarded by a rusted chain link fence. He looks up at the tall barrier. Tosses his gun over.

He climbs, foot slips, it's a struggle, but he's scaling it.

At the top of the fence, metal wobbles, Jack loses his balance. AHHH! SPLASH! Lands in a farm animal's drink trough. A penned GOAT BAAAs. Jack shushes him.

INT. BARRY PATCH FARM

Jack sneaks through shadows past a greenhouse and shed.

Scans the area: a cornfield in the distance, grain silos, a pasture full of livestock.

Up ahead there's a clearing with a sign: "Pumpkin Patch"

Jack creeps in for a closer look.

PUMPKIN PATCH

There are plenty of loose vines, but no pumpkins.

JACK (CONT'D)
Sold out, huh?

Further inspection reveals some char and burn marks in the soil. *That's odd.*

CREAAAAK. Jack hides behind a rolled up hay bail. He peeks around it spotting--

Trench coat's truck parked next to the BARN. And there he is, Trench coat and his FARM DOG exiting the barn.

The big metal barn doors shut behind them. Jack tries to see inside, but can't get a good look.

He leans on the hay bail to get a better look, and sure enough the hay bail rolls forward a few feet, CRASH, knocking over the sign for the pumpkin patch.

The dog BARKS. Jack hits the dirt, holding his breath. Trench coat alerts up, but can't seem to locate the noise.

Jack SIGHS, *phew, that was close.*

Trench coat locks the barn with a high tech passcode system that feels way too sci-fi for this farm.

The truck REVS to life, the lights shoot toward Jack. He ducks again.

The lights turn away. Trench coat drives off. Jack watches him leave the farm and turn onto the main road.

Jack takes this opportunity to investigate, but then clocks the farm dog posted up on watch.

Jack grabs a stick off the ground, remembering how Squash handled this last time. Rears back and chucks it!

The dog watches the stick fly through the air, but couldn't care less. GROWLS... hightails it at Jack.

Jack jumps on top of the hay bail. It teeters. Then starts to roll! Like a logroller, Jack flails while running in place to keep his balance as the dog BARKS and nips at his ankles.

JACK (CONT'D)
Good Dog! Good doggie!

BOOM! The hay bail collides with the barn. Jack falls off. SPLASH! Landing in another drink trough.

JACK (CONT'D)
Seriously?

He sloshes out. Tail wagging, the dog licks his face.

THE BARN

Jack brushes himself off. Steps up to the keypad. Thinks.
Tries 1,2,3,4 enter. Nope. Thinks again.

JACK (CONT'D)
What would a pumpkin thief pick?

He has it.

JACK (CONT'D)
(presses 10-31)
October 31st.
(enter)

Nope. *Dang-it.*

He closes his eyes and jams random numbers, enter. Nope.
Argh. Time for a new plan.

Jack scouts the perimeter for another entrance. No windows.
No back doors. Nothing. He's back at the keypad. Thinks.

JACK (CONT'D)
Evil lairs gotta hide a spare key.

He clocks the dog going somewhere... hidden under a table is
a DOG DOOR. Tight fit, but it'll have to do. Jack gets on all
fours and peeks his head inside.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Jack is half in, looks around. It's literally a secret lab.
He whisper-shouts --

JACK
Squash?! You in here?!

The dog trots up and licks Jack's face.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey boy, you seen Squash?

Jack tries to crawl in the rest of the way, but his foot gets
stuck... Tries to free himself... **YANKED BACK OUTSIDE!**

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

CRACK of a beer can.

NANCY
He should be back by now.

Richie takes off his leather jacket, tosses it on the couch and plops down next to a distressed Nancy.

RICHIE

Well it might take him a while to
find something that doesn't exist.
So...

He hands her a beer. CREAAAK of wood bending under heavy footsteps. Coming from the front porch.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

And there's Jack Skellington now.
(shouting playfully)
Find your magic pumpkin?

No response.

NANCY

Did you lock the door?

Nancy nudges him to go check.

FOYER

Richie peers through the window, looks left and right, but no one's there. Richie locks the door.

RICHIE

(must've been the)
Wind.

LIVING ROOM

He sits back on the couch and gets re-situated. Nancy curls up next to him, but they're both feeling uneasy.

NANCY

Would you just call him?

RICHIE

If it will put your mind at ease,
my little pumpkin pie.

NANCY

Don't.

Richie calls Jack. Straight to voicemail.

RICHIE

(fake laugh)
Little shit, must've blocked me.

DING DONG! They jump!

They calm down, *it's just the doorbell after all.*

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Trick or Treaters.

NANCY
This late?

Richie creeps up to the door. He peeks outside...

I/E. FRONT DOOR, FRONT PORCH

It's... Billy, Patrick and Big Joe. Richie's temper rises. He opens the door.

RICHIE
If it isn't the three rotten eggs.

BILLY
We need to talk to Jack.

RICHIE
Not gonna happen. Look no one makes fun of my brother except me. So get the hell off my property.

Richie goes to slam the door in their face when--

BILLY
Wait we're not here to cause any trouble... We're here to--

Billy looks back at his friends.. never apologized before--

PATRICK
What Billy's trying to say is--

BILLY
Shut up Patrick... I'm here to apologize. Or whatever. Is he okay?

RICHIE
"Okay" Why wouldn't he be?
Something happen?

Billy sullen. Shadow the cat shows up, weaving through the legs of the bullies. Rubbing up on their legs as cats do.

BILLY
Listen, there's something weird going on tonight and--

Patrick clocks the cat. His allergies act up...

PATRICK
 (holds back a sneeze)
 Aaa-Aaaa-Aaaaa...

Richie looks at him annoyed.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
 Aaaaaaaaaa
 (sniffles)
 It's gone. Sorry.

RICHIE
 Shadow, leave them alone.

Shadow tiptoes up to the PUMPKIN on the step. PURS.

BILLY
 Like I was saying, I tried calling,
 but he didn't pick up. Can I please
 talk to him?

Richie considers their request then-- ACHOO!

Billy spins around shooting daggers at Patrick.

PATRICK
 Wasn't me.

The sneeze came from nowhere... They look around confused.

CLOSE ON the pumpkin on the ground, for only us to see: It's
 SQUASH, hiding in his jack-O'-lantern form, desperately
 trying to hold back another...

ACHOO!

BIG JOE
 Gesundheit?

SQUASH INSTANTLY GROWS TO SEVEN FEET TALL! They all SCREAM!
 Squash SCREAMS! The bullies and Richie plow into the house!

LIVING ROOM

The boys jump over the couch, cowering behind Nancy.

NANCY
 What's going on?!

Squash enters the house, cautiously.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 Oh shit.

The humans are stunned... they stare at Squash, Squash stares back. No one moves a muscle.

Billy is shaking. Fumbles in his pocket. He pulls out his revolver and points it at Squash.

RICHIE
Holy shit, dude?!

Richie pulls the hammer back, but before he can pull the trigger. In an instant. Squash's arm grows, like Mr Fantastic, reaching across the room- disarming Billy.

The humans are even more terrified now. Caught like deer in headlights. Squash tries to calm the situation, but accidentally points the gun at them. They SCREAM in terror.

Squash remembers Jack's advice on how to be friendly. He straightens his posture, causing him to stand even taller... He smiles at them. It's sooo fucking scary.

PATRICK
WE'RE GONNA DIE!

The humans all start to cry. Shadow interrupts the chaos with a MEOW, rubbing up against Squash.

RICHIE
Shadow, are you crazy? Get away from it.. Ya know what? You want her, take her! Just leave us alone!

PATRICK
Please don't eat us! I don't wanna die!

BILLY
He's still a virgin!

PATRICK
Like that hardly matters?! -- But it is true, if it helps!

BILLY
Shoot us. Just make it quick, monster! Do your worst!

PATRICK
No! Please, I'll do anything! Look at me, I probably don't even taste good. I'm all skin and bones. Eat Big Joe!

Everyone looks to Big Joe. Who hasn't said anything substantial all movie--

BIG JOE

It's just Joe! I'm sick of everyone calling me "Big" Joe. My name is Trey Joseph Bradford. And I'm only in the 70th weight percentile for boys my age... And I wanna be a singer.

PATRICK

(still crying)

I'm sorry... Joe. I didn't know you sang.

BILLY

He's actually really good.

BIG JOE

Thanks Billy. That's the nicest thing you've ever said to me.

BILLY

Guys, there's a lot of things I wish I would've said.

PATRICK

Like what?

BILLY

Patrick, you're my best friend and I'm sorry I yell at you so much. You don't deserve that. And I love you. Both of you.

PATRICK

I love you guys.

JOE

Yeah, love you too.

Nancy is the first to catch on that Squash is harmless.

NANCY

Sorry to interrupt the bromance. But pretty sure he's chill. Think he woulda done something by now. I mean just look at him.

Shadow climbs on Squash. Sits on his shoulder, licks his face. Squash SNEEZES again.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Bless you.

RICHIE

Do. You. Come. In. Peace?

Squash nods, *I guess.*

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Do you want to eat us?

Squash shakes his head, *no.*

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Do you--

NANCY

Ignore him. You're Squash, right?
Jack's friend.

Squash smiles a genuine soft smile.

NANCY (CONT'D)

We've heard a lot about you. I'm
assuming you don't talk much.

Squash shakes his head, *no.*

RICHIE

Where's Jack?

Squash GRUNTS GIBBERISH, trying to explain.

The kids look lost trying to follow along. Nancy thinks.

NANCY

Squash, have you ever played
charades?

MOS MONTAGE OF SQUASH COMMUNICATING THROUGH CHARADES

The kids sit around the couch asking questions.

QUICK SHOTS of Squash basically reenacting the entire movie up to this point. It's funny for us, but also impressively accurate and efficient.

The teens all watch, nodding their heads. Following along.

END OF MONTAGE

RICHIE

You escaped from a secret lab?!

Squash nods, *yes*. Billy has a realization.

BILLY

Wait. So earlier tonight, that was you in the road?

Squash nods, *yes*.

BILLY (CONT'D)

But you didn't see me in the woods?

Squash shakes his head, *no*.

NANCY

What happened in the woods?

Billy looks shaken. Lifts up his shirt, revealing four long cuts scraped down his back... QUICK FLASHES of BILLY'S TRAUMATIC EVENT: WOODS. RUNNING. PITCHFORK. SLASH.

The teens all grimace at the wounds.

RICHIE

So if there are two *monsters*- no offense.

(off Squash's look)

Based on my math. We have one. So that leaves us with, one additional missing monster.

PATRICK

Yeah that checks out.

Billy is still counting on his fingers.

RICHIE

Right... Okay. So the way I see it there's two scenarios. One, Jack's kidnapped by this mad scientist and we gotta go save him. Or two, Jack's fighting the Monster alone and--

BILLY

And Probably dead.

RICHIE

(shakes that off)
And needs our help.

PATRICK

Or Three. His phone died. He befriended Thing Two and they'll both be here any minute now to watch Hocus Pocus and wind down.

EVERYONE

Shut up, Patrick!

RICHIE

This is serious. This is my little brother we're talking about. Alright everyone gather round. I got a plan.

PATRICK

Umm, guys... a quick word.. in private?

(looks at Squash)

We'll just be a sec.

Squash gestures and grunts, *take your time*. The teens huddle.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Love the "Go Team, Go", but shouldn't we just call Billy's dad?

BILLY

No. No cops. This is personal.

RICHIE

You wanna try to explain all this to the boomers? Be my guest.

NANCY

We already went to the cops.

PATRICK

But we have proof now?

NANCY

They'd pin it all on Squash and probably sentence him to a life of hard labor and invasive scientific testing. Jack wouldn't want that.

RICHIE

And sorry to keep getting all strategical on you guys, but if we're looking at the roster here. I'd like to keep one giant monster on our team if we're going up against another giant monster.

NANCY
Yeah good point.

BILLY
I barely made it out the first
time, we're gonna need Squash
firing on all cylinders if we wanna
stand a chance against this guy.

PATRICK
How do we know we can trust him?
Like how do we know we're not just
hand delivering this evil mad
scientist guy his missing pet?

They all collectively look to Squash who is busy playing with
Shadow, smiling and laughing. And sneezing.

NANCY
Calculated risk.

Patrick still isn't convinced.

RICHIE
We're doing this. But if you wanna
go home. That's your choice. But
friendly reminder, there is a
killer monster on the loose.

Patrick considers this.

PATRICK
I'm just gonna call my mom to come
get me. I'll be with y'all in
spirit.

Patrick exits the huddle to call his mom.

BILLY
Bitch. What about you Big Joe? I
mean Joe!

JOE
I ain't got nothing else goin on.

They do their bully handshake.

RICHIE
Alright squad, here's what we do.
First we need to--

Patrick's conversation with his mom cuts into their planning--

PATRICK (O.S.)
 Mom, can you come pick me up?...
 They wanna go monster hunting...
 I'm being serious... Can't you
 just...

Patrick mopes back into the huddle.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
 My schedule opened up.

RICHIE
 (to Squash)
 Star player, get in here.

Squash joins the huddle. They all look up to him, a little intimidated, but happy he's on their side.

Squash gives Billy back his gun. The ultimate sign of trust. They're ready now.

QUICK "GEAR UP" MONTAGE

They grab everyday house hold items to build their arsenal.

KITCHEN. Joe. Knives and a frying pan.

CLOSET. Nancy. Bug spray and a Zippo lighter.

SHED. Richie. Weed killer backpack sprayer.

GARAGE. Patrick. Bike helmet, hockey pads, football shoulder pads, soccer shin guard, etc.

LIVING ROOM. Squash grabs Richie's leather jacket off the couch and throws it on. Richie thinks about saying something, but decides to allow it, giving him a *looks good* thumbs up.

GOLF CART. Richie. Holsters his gun and checks the tautness of the golf cart's sling shot. BOING! Ready to go.

INT. BARN/ EVIL SCIENTIST LAB - NIGHT

Jack is guided into the barn by trench coat. Flips a switch.

DOOSH. DOOSH. DOOSH. The layers of large space is lit up.

This looks like a cross between a honky-tonk and the Death Star. Jack's eyes wander around the lab. Test beakers, farm equipment and science stuff. But no sign of Squash.

BRAM! Security system alerts. Trench coat checks the monitors: A Mustang and golf cart pull in the front gate.

OVER SECURITY FOOTAGE, the teens and Squash surround the barn's entrance like a SWAT team, wielding their makeshift weapons.

Richie chews bubble gum and sticks it on the security camera's lens. It goes dark.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Richie and Billy stand silent, ready to breach the front door. Richie gives Billy some military hand gesture commands, but Billy just looks confused.

Richie shakes his head, *never mind*, silently counts down with his fingers: "Three..." Billy grips his revolver. "Two..." Joe and Pat thumbs up. "One..." Squash and Nancy, nod *ready*.

RICHIE
BREACHING!

Richie rears back to kick the door in, but it's pulled open from the inside. He falls at the feet of Trench coat!

He hops up, ready to fight.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Where is he?!

Trench coat calmly steps outside. His heavy boots crunch under gravel.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Tell us where Jack is. Or you leave
us no choice.

Billy aims the revolver.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Just give us back my brother and no
one else has to get hurt!

Trench coat stays silent. It's tense. Everyone eyes each other, *what now?* Richie decides to go off script.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
We know all about your evil plan...
You and your little pumpkin monster
factory here! Well the jig is up,
pal.

Nancy and the rest of the team look at each other, *where's he going with this?*

RICHIE (CONT'D)
 Yeah we know! And we're here to
 stop you and your army of pumpkin
 minions from enslaving us all and
 turning every day into Halloween!

All look confused, *what did he just say...?* A young voice
 echoes from inside the barn:

JACK (O.S.)
 Richie?

RICHIE
 Jack?!

Jack hesitantly steps out of the barn, perfectly fine. Or so
 it seems. He stands next to Trench coat.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
 Are you okay? Did he hurt you?

JACK
 What? No, I'm fine.

BILLY
 I heard about this, Sherlock Holmes
 Syndrome.

Joe and Patrick nod, *oh yeah we've heard about that.*

JACK
 (to Richie)
 Wait, why are you with Billy?

BILLY
 Oh. I can answer that. We're here
 to rescue you bro, and apologize.
 It's a rescue-pology.

Jack's taken back by that statement. Then--

RICHIE
 Did this freak brainwash you?! Did
 you brainwash my brother?!

JACK
 What?! NO! It's me. I'm okay!
 Everyone, just lower your
 (what are those...)
 weapons?

RICHIE
 Wait... are you two in on it
 together?

(MORE)

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Jack, is this all part of your plan?! To get back at us for being jerks to you.

JACK

No-No! There's no plan?! Just calm down alright?!

TRENCH COAT

Perhaps I can provide some color.

Trench coat man, takes another step into the light. He slowly removes his cowboy hat and for the first time we see his face. It's...

THE OLD OWNER OF THE DRIVE IN MOVIE THEATER?!

Just a bit more Einstein looking... balding with white hair and round rimmed glasses.

RICHIE

I don't get it.

NANCY

I'm confused too.

BILLY

Me three.

PATRICK

I had my money on Mr Johnson.

JOE

Same.

Squash grunts confusion also.

INT. BARN/ LAB - MOMENTS LATER

The whole squad sits around the lab. Still confused.

RICHIE

Why didn't you answer your phone?

JACK

I don't have any missed calls.

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT

The lab. The walls are steel, good luck getting a signal in here.

NANCY

I don't understand, you were with us at the drive-in basically all night? How did you...

ELDERLY THEATER ATTENDENT

Drive-in? Over off Batesville road?
(the kids nod)
You must be talking about my twin brother, Larry... I'm BARRY.

RICHIE

Alright, Barry! Make it make sense.

BARRY

Of course. I can clear some things up...

Barry approaches Squash, looking up at him, mesmerized.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Hello, again. I apologize for earlier. The syringe was only precautionary. I was not privy to your hospitable nature. Certainly not like the other.

RICHIE

Glad we're all reacquainted. On with it old man. From the beginning.

NANCY

(that was rude)
Richie.

BARRY

Very well. As you might have guessed, I'm a bit of a scientist-

RICHIE

Mad scientist, apparently.

NANCY

Richie, don't tell him to get on with it and then just keep interrupting. Sorry Barry. You were saying.

BARRY

It's quite alright, I understand the frustration. Anywho, let's see... Ah yes, the year was umm-- 1976.

(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

I began my studies in biochem and agriculture at the University of--

RICHIE

Sorry, last time. Maybe not that far back. Continue.

JACK

Just tell them what you told me.

Barry composes himself. This is his life's work after all.

BARRY

Along with handling the day to day operations of the farm, I have also dedicated countless years and resources to expanding on our knowledge and understanding of horticulture. Pushing the boundaries. Unlocking limitless potential and growth in the field-- and fields.

We see FLASHES of his past experiments growing plants.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Studies show, as a species we soon will face a global food crisis, with food insecurity rising at an alarming rate. My studies include intense experimentation in the agricultural sciences with the sole purpose of increasing crop yield year after year. Even with the advancements in pesticides and GMOs, myself and many modern agriculturalists have struggled to move the needle, but this season I finally had my breakthrough.

RICHIE

English, Doc. Get to Monster pumpkin part.

BARRY

Very well...

(clears throat)

I was working in the lab late one night. When my eyes beheld an eerie sight--

Everyone rolls their eyes, groaning.

BARRY (CONT'D)

What- What is it now?

JACK

It's a song. Don't worry. Keep goin.

BARRY

I'm not familiar with it. Anyways, I was testing a new growth serum on my pumpkins. Uninspiring lab results, business per usual but then. Something went--

RICHIE

--something went horribly-horribly-HORRIBLY wrong. We know.

BARRY

Or quite the opposite. Unintentional as it may, let's be clear, we have nothing short of a miracle in our midsts.

Barry smiles at Squash, amazed by his creation.

RICHIE

Yeah, it's a real miracle, doc.

NANCY

Two of our classmates lost their lives tonight.

BARRY

And a terrible loss indeed. However we cannot dwell on one bad apple.

RICHIE

Don't tell me you got more fruits and veggies running around in the back.

BARRY

No, in fact, the existence of my creations had not been brought to my attention until tonight when I discovered Gourd wandering the property via security footage.

NANCY

Gourd?

BARRY

The first creature to spawn.

JACK

Cool name.

Squash rolls his eyes, *not that cool*.

BARRY

Squash is very fitting as well. It has a smile to it.

Squash grunts, *thank you*.

NANCY

Speaking of... "Gourd".
Do we have any idea where he is or what he's up to?

BARRY

I'm quite puzzled. I have been driving all over God's green earth searching for him. He's quite illusive.

NANCY

Great. So what do we do now?

BARRY

I'm open to suggestions.

RICHIE

What do you mean? You're the scientist. You're supposed to have a plan.

BARRY

I'm simply a humble observer. I hypothesize. Test. Record and analyze the data. Which then informs my next move. However at the moment we're in a bit of a holding pattern.

RICHIE

Listen, Einstein. I don't know how else I need to spell it out for you, but there's a monster loose in our town because of you whether you intended it or not. So we're gonna have to do a little better than "observe". OK?

BILLY

Yeah, or we're gonna kick your ass.

BARRY

I don't know what you expect. It's not safe. We should lay low and save the heroism to the authorities.

NANCY

What? So you suggest we just wait and do nothing?

RICHIE

So you're telling me you don't have any anti-reverse-monster serum? Or pumpkin-exterminator three thousand? A kill switch?

BARRY

You're welcome to help yourself to the shed. I believe I have an old weed wacker collecting dust.

BILLY

That's it. I'm gonna kick his ass.

Big Joe holds Billy back.

BARRY

I apologize, the stress is quite overwhelming. If you'll excuse me I must step outside for a smoke of my vapor pen. The nicotine will subvert my anxiety. Candy apple. Quite tasty. Feel free to continue your planning. Don't mind me.

BILLY

Ooo I love candy apple, it's straight fire, actually can I get a hit?

BARRY

By "hit" you mean, the vapor pen? Yes. As long as you promise not to assault me.

BILLY

Bet.

BARRY

Rats, I need to locate a new cartridge, one moment.

Barry rummages through his drawers.

NANCY

Billy stay. You've already come in contact with Gourd. I think it would be best if we aligned on what we're up against.

RICHIE

Jack, you've spent the most time with these things. What do you know?

Jack thinks.

JACK

Barry, do you have any paper?

BARRY

Of course.

Barry grabs some paper out of a side drawer and finds his extra vape cartridge.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Eureka!

Barry heads outside to vape.

INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

The team huddles around. Jack draws a crude map of the area on a piece of paper.

JACK

Okay. So here's the drive-in.

NANCY

Gourd's last known location around eight o'clock.

JACK

(draws more)

Here's Briar Woods, connecting my house, Billy's house, the drive-in and the farm. Crenshaw Road runs straight through it all.

(draws more)

So we're here.

RICHIE

Wait, what's that?

Jack's awful drawing of...

JACK
That's you.

RICHIE
That looks nothing like me. My
muscles are way--

NANCY
Now is not the time!

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

Barry leans against the barn, listening to the kids inside bickering. Takes a long hit of his vape, blowing a big cloud of smoke into the sky.

BARRY
Glad I never had children.

He scratches his farm dog's head. Panting happily.

But then the pup tucks its tail and whimpers away... no clear reason why.

INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

The map is littered with candy signifying important landmarks, players and movement, like a map in a war room.

JACK
Okay, so it looks like this thing
likes to move in the shadows.

NANCY
On brand for monster. They have any
soft spots?

Richie starts to feels Squash for "soft spots", Squash shoos his hand away.

Jack remembers.

JACK
Shadow scraped Squash's face. And
he's allergic to her-- I think.

NANCY
Allergies. Check. What else?

JACK

Well, we know they can shape shift
and regenerate limbs.

Nancy writes that down.

Oh! And they're obsessed with
candy.

NANCY

Sweet tooth, huh?

Nancy thinks... gets an idea.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Well if we can't find him. Maybe we
can bring him to us.

Patrick doesn't like the sound of that.

BILLY

PATRICK

How?

WHY?!

NANCY

This thing may be a fruit, but he's
a predator first. Like a shark that
can sense a drop of blood in the
ocean a mile away. Except in our
case--

BILLY

(pounds his fist)
I can get you blood.

NANCY

No. Not blood.

Jack catches on.

JACK

Sugar.

Nancy nods, "yes".

EXT. BARN

Barry sends another puff of vape smoke into the atmosphere.
It dissipates into the moonlit sky.

SOMEHWERE WITH GOURD

Gourd lumbers through the shadows with labored deep breaths. He stops and smells a big whiff of the air. Follows his nose.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Jessica and the girls are walking home, the streets are barren. Sarah vapes.

JESSICA
You're addicted.

SARAH
Better than cigs.

JESSICA
I don't think "better" really works-

A police cruiser putters over the hill. Its spotlight blinds the girls.

MEGAPHONE
Please return to your homes immediately. Baldwin county is administering a mandatory curfew at sunset until further notice.

The squad car stops them.

JESSICA
Sheriff Myers.

SHERIFF MYERS
Hey girls, we need you guys home ASAP. Hunker down.

JESSICA
So I take it everything is not alright.

SHERIFF MYERS
Afraid not.

JESSICA
Well we're just up the road so.

SHERIFF MYERS
Hop in.

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

Barry smokes and scans the farm. Eerily calm and quiet.
He clocks the sign for the pumpkin patch on the ground.

PUMPKIN PATCH

Barry fixes the sign. Proudly looks up at it.
The kids storm out of the barn.

JACK

Barry, we're gonna try to lure
Gourd here. We think he's drawn to
sugar.

BARRY

Good hypothesis. Their additional
extremities and kineticism
certainly require more fructose to
be broken down and--

NANCY

And we need access to some of your
farm equipment.

BARRY

Of course, to capture the beast. I
believe we could trap him in the
green house. Let me just--

RICHIE

I don't think the mission is to
catch Gourd. We need to stop him
before he hurts anyone else.

BARRY

The community has suffered a great
loss, but make no mistake,
destroying Gourd will only ensure
their deaths be in vein. We need to
research. Study him. Squash as
well.

Squash doesn't like the sound of that.

Barry reaches in his lab coat pocket. Pulls out a green
glowing radioactive vial labeled: Monster pumpkin serum.

BARRY (CONT'D)

And replicate this success. Think
of the application! Sustainable
energy, food security.

(MORE)

BARRY (CONT'D)

All the good we can do. These creatures will be the key to a better future. The world will see in time.

BILLY

Dude, I hate to break it to you, but you'll be in jail.

BARRY

On what charges? What evidence is there against me or the creatures? Did they swab and find my fingerprints? Or perhaps they discovered a pumpkin seed at the scene of the crime?

JACK

Barry, you don't feel responsible for any of this?

BARRY

Of course I do, and I intend to own it. This discovery will put my name in the history books with the likes of Einstein, Oppenheimer, Darwin-- Not to mention the proprietary nature of this all. Movies, television shows, action figures, theme parks, you name it! The possibilities are limitless. And you can all be a part of it.

The team looks at Barry cross-eyed.

RICHIE

Told y'all. Mad scientist.

JACK

Barry, we can't let you do that.

Barry cackles like a mad man.

BARRY

Who intends to stop me?

Barry takes a hit of his candy apple vape, blows it into the air. He holds up the glowing green vial. *The future!*

SHINK!!!... Barry looks down, 4 blades protrude his chest, his lab coat soaks with crimson red.

Everyone looks petrified, *what the fuck just happened?!...*

Barry is impaled by a pitchfork. Coughs up blood, collapses dead. The vial drops out of his hand, shatters in the dirt.

The smoke in the air from Barry's vape dissipates revealing Gourd 100 feet away. He just javelin tossed the pitch fork.

GOURD

At least ten feet tall now, lumbering toward the barn. Sniffs the air, inhaling the vape's aroma, energizing him.

WITH THE TEENS

Scared as hell, watching as Gourd closes in on them.

NANCY

Guys. What's the plan here?!

Everyone is frozen, unsure of what to do.

RICHIE

Battle stations!!

PATRICK

What?! We didn't get that far?!

Everyone starts running around aimlessly, until Nancy notices-

NANCY

Wait! Look.

Squash is walking out to Gourd. To face him.

JACK

Godzilla versus Mechagodzilla.

WITH SQUASH AND GOURD

Squash walks up to Gourd and stops. A standoff. Squash wears the leather jacket, a few feet shorter than Gourd.

Squash tries his new friendly smile. Gourd stares back at him. Born pissed off.

Squash realizes the smile isn't working and tries another approach. He starts "talking" to Gourd, but it just sounds like gibberish grunts to us.

WITH THE TEENS

RICHIE

What's he saying?

PATRICK
 (translating)
 Please- don't-- kill-- my human
 friends.

RICHIE
 You can understand them?!

PATRICK
 Yeah I'm fluent in pumpkin.
 (off Richie's look)
 No, I'm just GUESSING!

BACK WITH SQUASH AND GOURD

Squash reaches out his hand to shake. A compromise met. Gourd considers it.

WACK! Gourd clocks Squash hard with a punch to the sternum. Squash goes down, skidding across the dirt road, dust flying.

TEENS shocked.

RICHIE
 Whatever he said. I don't think he
 liked it!

Jack sprints to check on Squash. He's hurt, having trouble getting up. Jack tries to help him up, but Squash is heavy.

JACK
 You alright Squash?!

Squash grunts, *felt better*. Jack tries to lift him up, but he's dead weight. And Gourd is coming.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Come on! Getup-Getup!

Richie watches, horrified. He rushes over to help.

RICHIE
 Upsy-daisy big fella.

Even with both of them they struggle to pull Squash up.

The farm dog rushes over and gets between Gourd and the teens. He GROWLS and BARKS at Gourd.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
 Good dog!

Gourd pauses... SCREAMS A MONSTEROUS SHRIEK at the mutt. The pup whimpers away.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Bad dog.

Gourd is only feet away now. They're as good as dead. Richie tries to buy them some time.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Did anyone ever tell you that
orange really brings out the flame
in your eyes?

Gourd stops confused. His jack-O'-lantern eyes burn evil.

PAF! Gourd flicks Richie out the way-- skips once off the pavement... and goes limp.

Gourd's shadow engulfs Jack and Squash. He's ready to finish them off-- he rears back with his thorny jagged vine arm...

WACK! Gourd is popped in the face by a rock...

BILLY (O.S.)

Hey Gourd!

Reveal **BILLY**, **PATRICK** and **JOE** with the golf cart sling shot.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Not so tough without your fork,
huh?

Gourd even more pissed. Starts coming for them now. Billy tries to start the golf cart... but it won't go.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Guys, another shot... PLEASE?

Patrick loads a big rock into the slingshot, Joe pulls back and sends another rock flying at Gourd. It grazes him barely.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Another?!

Billy desperately tries to get the cart to start. Bangs on the dash.

PATRICK

You're gonna flood it!

BILLY

It's electric!!

They shoot another rock. Gourd catches it, tosses it over his shoulder. He's almost there.

One last key turn. BEEEEEEEEEP! They reverse through the corn, driving blind. Gourd gives chase.

PATRICK
Where are you going?!

BILLY
I don't know!

WITH THE OTHERS: JACK and **NANCY** help **RICHIE** to his feet.

JACK
You alright?

Richie is limping and bloody, but running on adrenaline.

RICHIE
It'll hurt later. Let's get him up.

All three together lift Squash-

RICHIE (CONT'D)
On three. One. Two. Three.

He is up, back in the fight.

JACK
You ready?

Squash's face turns mad. His flame burns hot inside his head.

NANCY thinks of a strategy, looks around... clocks a red GAS CAN by an old tractor.

NANCY
Gimme a lift?

RICHIE hobbles to his Mustang. REVS to life. Drives to Nancy.

RICHIE
Get in!

Nancy hops in with the gas canister and rolls down her window. Richie drives the perimeter of the cornfield as Nancy pours the gas out around the border.

I/E. BARN - NIGHT

JACK and **SQUASH** sprint into the **BARN**. Up on the wall is a CHAINSAW. Squash grabs it, his vines grow and intertwine with the handle.

Jack slings on the weed killer backpack sprayer.

EXT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

BRUM-BRUM-BRUM-BRUM-BRRRRRRR! The chainsaw roars to life. Squash and Jack burst out of the barn doors. A couple of badasses ready for a fight.

EXT. CORNFIELD - NIGHT

Cornstalks move like the wake of a speed boat.

Billy drives through the corn, blind and bumpy. They're outrunning Gourd. But the cart begins to slow.

PATRICK

Why are you stopping?!

BILLY

I'm not!

The cart slows to a stop. Corn stuck in the wheel well. They abandon ship.

They look down the path of corn they just cleared. A dark alley of corn... Gourd emerges from the shadows.

Looking for an escape, surrounded by corn. They opt to push through the stalks, it's thick and difficult to navigate, but they eventually break through into a clearing.

Separate clearings. Each realizing the cornfield is actually--

A CORN MAZE.

AERIAL SHOT of the corn maze. The three friends panic and split up, each running a different route. Gourd gives chase, navigating the labyrinth, like Pac-Man chasing ghosts.

Pull back further to see the maze's design is a jack-O'-lantern pattern. The Mustang drives around the perimeter.

RICHIE and **NANCY** park the Mustang near **JACK** and **SQUASH** at the entrance of the corn maze. Richie and Nancy hop out. CLINK! Nancy opens her Zippo lighter's lid.

JACK

Wait! I think they're still in there!

SCREAMS echo from inside the corn.

NANCY

Definitely.

Nancy shuts the lighter. Richie clocks Squash's chainsaw arm.

RICHIE

Woah! Hell yeah, sweet arm bro!

Richie goes for a high five. Squash lifts up his chainsaw hand, but realizes he better not... opts for his safe hand instead.

IN THE CORN MAZE

JOE turns a corner, sprints down a straight away, looking over his shoulder.

Somewhere else in the maze, **PATRICK** also takes a turn and sprints, looking over his shoulder.

WHAM! They run into each other, tumbling to the ground.

PATRICK

Ouch? What the hell Joe? Watch where you're--

Joe covers Patrick's mouth. SHUSHES him. They slowly back into the corn to hide.

GOURD lumbers down their aisle. But they stay low hidden in the corn. Holding their breath. Gourd passes by... Each step booming like a tremor.

Once Gourd is out of sight.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Holy shit, I think I'm having a panic attack.

JOE

Pat, you gotta chill.

They take a few steps backwards into the corn. Patrick has his eyes shut.

PATRICK

Don't tell me to chill. I didn't even wanna be here. We're lost. We're gonna die in this corn, man.

BIG JOE

Open your eyes.

Patrick opens them, they're out of the maze.

BILLY is lost in the maze. Takes a turn, dead end. Turns back. New turn, or was that the old turn? Dead end. Dead end. Another Dead end.

BILLY
Shit. Shit. Shit.

PATRICK and **JOE** meet up with **SQUASH, JACK, RICHIE** and **NANCY** at the entrance of the corn maze.

RICHIE
Where's the golf cart?

PATRICK
Gave out. Where's Billy?

JACK
We thought he was with you.

JOE
He was right behind us...

NANCY
He's still in there?! But where's
Gourd?!

GOURD hunts in the maze. Done playing cat and mouse. He grows himself tall enough to see over the stalks. Spots Billy.

BILLY is at a dead end. Looks up and see's giant Gourd staring down at him.

BILLY
Uhhh, guys?! HELP!!

REST OF THE TEAM at the entrance hears Billy's scream. They look up and see's Goliath Gourd sky-scraping over the corn.

RICHIE
Found Gourd.

They all scream trying to distract Gourd... It's not helping.

EVERYONE
Billy, we're over here!...
Over here!... Follow our voices!

BILLY backs into the dead end. Gourd inches towards him, standing between Billy and his only way out.

Billy plants his feet, pulls out his revolver, levels it. Takes a deep breath. Aligns his iron sights.

BILLY
Round two. Bitch.

POW! He shoots Gourd... he barely even flinches. Billy shoots again, and again and again. But Gourd just powers through.

REST OF THE TEAM hears MORE GUNSHOTS, they duck low. The shooting stops...

RICHIE
Did ya get him?!

... We hear Billy SCREAM. That's a *no*. Jack rushes into the corn maze.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
Jack, what the hell are you doing?

JACK
Sixty seconds, light it up!

Richie tries to limp in after Jack, but Nancy pulls him back, he's too hurt. Squash rushes in after Jack instead.

BACK WITH BILLY. He fumbles to reload. Gourd is almost there, his shadow casts over Billy. He looks up to Gourd, *fuck*.

JACK(O.S.) (CONT'D)
Gourd.

Jack bursts through the corn in super hero like fashion. Aims the weed killer spray... Gourd pays Jack no attention, turning to finish off Billy once and for all. Rears back his jagged-thorn-vine arm...

Jack SPRAYS the weed killer. It doesn't sound cool like a gunshot, but it BURNS and SEERS Gourd, who GROANS in agony! It's not killing him, but it's hurting him.

Gourd turns to Jack, his more immediate threat.

JACK (CONT'D)
Billy, get out of here!

Billy gets up and sprints out.

BILLY
You too! C'mon!

JACK
Right behind you, just go!

Jack backs up, spraying Gourd until his mist runs out.

Gourd just keeps coming. Jack tosses the empty weed killer and pulls out the knife.

Gourd's vines regenerate. As if that was all for nothing.

Gourd looks down at the puny knife. Jack holds his ground, a real David v. Goliath moment.

REST OF THE TEAM waits with bated breath. Billy rushes to join the others at the entrance of the corn.

Nancy's iPhone timer is at 45 seconds and counting.

NANCY

Come on, Jack.

JACK is backed into another dead end. Gourd takes a swipe at him, but Jack ducks out of the way and STABS Gourd in the leg. It doesn't do anything. But it was a valiant effort.

Gourd kicks Jack to the ground. Jack tries to get up, but Gourd rears back for a final blow when-

Squash's chainsaw ROARS to life. He jumps out of the corn and saw's Gourds leg off at the knee. This hurts GOURD, who ROARS in pain, dropping to the ground.

Squash helps Jack up. Gourd is huge, so it's taking time for his leg to grow back.

Jack and Squash use this opportunity to make a run for it. Jack rushes ahead, while Squash is bigger and a tad slower...

BOOM! Squash falls hard like tree.

On the ground, Gourd grew his vine arm out, tripping Squash.

REST OF THE TEAM. Nancy's timer is well past time. She reluctantly flips on the lighter.

RICHIE

Give-em another minute.

NANCY

But Jack said--

RICHIE

He's coming!

They wait... and wait... then from inside the corn-

JACK (O.S.)

Do it!

Nancy lights the corn on fire. It spreads fast around the perimeter. Jack jumps over the fire, and into his brother's arms, Richie hugs him.

RICHIE

Holy shit bro. You're crazy, ya know that? Where's Squash?

Jack looks back, waiting for Squash...

JACK

He was right there. Squash?!..
SQUASH?!

Jack tries to rush back in, but Richie won't let him go, the fire is already burning way too hot.

AERIAL SHOT: The border of the corn maze burns, creating a fiery boxing ring. The fire spreads, outlining the maze's pattern of the jack-O'-lantern. Gourd and Squash face off in the center, heavy weight main event style.

SQUASH and **GOURD** size each other up. Circling like boxers in the ring. Fire rages around them, forcing them closer.

Squash is smaller and limber. Gourd is bigger and meaner.

Gourd looks overconfident, swings first, but where Squash may lack in size, makes up for in speed. He dodges and lands an impressive blow. Knocking Gourd back.

As the corn burns, natural pockets of sight lines form allowing the teens to watch. They cheer on their monster!

BILLY

Squash 'em, Squash!

Squash surprised himself with his first blow. Hears the teens cheering for him, showboats to them with a smirk.

Gourd gathers himself and if he looked mean before, he's pissed now.

Squash is still busy celebrating, distracted... BOOM! Gourd tackles Squash like a battering ram. They explode out of the fiery corn, landing in a clearing. They wrestle on the ground, both on fire.

The **TEENS** watch on, wanting to help. Jack clocks a bucket next to the drinking trough he's fallen in twice.

Gourd and Squash are slow to their feet. Squash is weak from the fire, but Gourd somehow enjoys the burn, igniting him.

Gourd fakes a punch, Squash falls for it. DOOSH! Gourd lands a huge uppercut. Squash falls to the ground in agony.

Squash struggles to get up, the embers sting. He looks up to Gourd, who ROARS, the full moon behind him, rooting him on.

SPLASH! Jack soaks Squash with a bucket of water, cools him off. His vines drink up.

JACK

Get up, champ! Smash this pumpkin!

Squash nods his head, gets up and REVS his chainsaw arm.

"Tonight, Tonight" by *Smashing Pumpkins* plays. The inspiring punk rock track scores Squash's second wind.

He swings the heavy chainsaw at Gourd, misses, but backs him up against a GRAIN SILO. Squash punches with his normal arm, BOOM! Evening up the fight. He swings again, but Gourd ducks, ripping a hole in the silo, grain avalanches onto Squash.

Squash tries to dig himself out of the grain, but he's in deep. Gourd takes this opportunity to retreat. The **TEENS** rush to Squash's aid. They dig him out.

They free Squash, but look up to see Gourd has retrieved his pitchfork.

Squash get ups, pushes the teens aside, ready to face Gourd. It's a new fight, weapon on weapon. They dash at each other, their blades CLINK in the middle, like Jedi's lightsabers.

The teens watch on, amazed.

RICHIE

Epic.

BILLY

Insane.

Squash and Gourd go back and forth, leaning into each other to gain the upper hand, but Gourd sheer strength wins him leverage, knocking Squash's chainsaw arm out of the way.

Gourd kicks out Squash's legs, sending him to the ground. Right before he can get up..

SHINK! Gourd stabs Squash's chainsaw arm into the ground with his pitch fork. Keeping hime down.

JACK

No!

The teens watch on, terrified, this looks like it could be it. Jack tries to go and help, but Richie holds him back. Jack breaks free, rushing to grab his BB gun on the ground.

Gourd steps on Squash's chest, keeping his arm pinned down with the pitch fork. Squash flails, desperately trying to get Gourd off of him.

The teens hear SIRENS. They look up as a police car screams through the entrance of the farm.

PATRICK

Oh thank God.

Gourd lifts his foot up, hovering it high over Squash's pumpkin head. Squash watches Gourd's foot raise up. It eclipses the moon's light, *this is it*. Gourd's ready to stomp Squash's lights out.

The COP car SCREECHES to a halt. Gourd turns his attention to-

Sheriff Myers, he swings open his door, using it for cover. Gourd unearths his pitchfork, but stays standing on Squash.

SHERIFF MYERS

Drop your weapon! Now!

INT. COP CAR Jessica and Sarah sit in the backseat, on their phones, liking pictures on instagram. They look up at the commotion--

SHERIFF MYERS (CONT'D)

(to Gourd)

Put it down! Now!

Gourd javelin throws his pitchfork right at Sheriff Myers. He ducks behind cover. The girls look up through the windshield to see a pitchfork coming right for them, they SCREAM!

SHINK! Glass SHATTERS! The pitchfork is embedded in the door frame and windshield.

Away from the chaos, **JACK** levels his BB gun.

THROUGH JACK'S SCOPE: Gourd laughs maniacally, raising his foot to stomp on Squash. Jack lines up the headshot.

Holds his breath, this is it... he squeezes the trigger.

POP! Gourd's hit, he SHRILLS in agony. Jack did it! Shot him in the eye. Gourd stumbles back, stepping off Squash, who takes this moment to get up.

Gourd reaches for his face, blinded in one eye. He totters around. Squash rears back his chainsaw, ready to take Gourd's head clean off--

POP! POP! POP! Squash goes down.

JACK
NOOOOOOOOOOO!

Sheriff Myers lowers his pistol. Gourd takes this pause in the action to retreat into the burnt cornfield.

All the teens watch on, heartbroken. Jack rushes over to his friend, laying with him on the ground.

Jack holds up his pumpkin head.

JACK (CONT'D)
Squash?

Squash's orange shell is shot, cracked completely open. Ragged breaths fuel his dimming light.

JACK (CONT'D)
Stay with me buddy! You can't die!
(calling out)
Help?!
(to Squash)
My mom's a nurse, she can patch you
right up, Okay? You just gotta hang
on, alright?

Squash groans, his flame flickers.

JACK (CONT'D)
We're getting you help. Please
don't die. You just need candy.
We'll get you some, okay? You want
some?

Squash groans a bit louder.

JACK (CONT'D)
That's good, Squash. Stay awake,
buddy.

Squash groans a littler louder, and for the first time, he mutters something audibly--

SQUASH
Friend.

A single tear falls down Jack's cheek.

JACK
Best friend.

And with that, Squash's flame goes out.

JACK (CONT'D)
No... Squash?

Squash is gone. Jack breaks down.

JACK (CONT'D)
No-no-no-no. Help! Please.
Somebody! Help.

Richie consoles his brother. Jack hugs him, weeping into his chest.

Everyone watches on, disheartened. Some squad cars, a fire truck and ambulance pull into the farm. FIRE FIGHTERS get to work putting out the corn maze.

EXT. BARRY PATCH FARM - DAWN

Jack, a little banged up, sits on the bumper of the ambulance, some minor cuts and bruises are dressed.

Richie hobbles over, arm in a sling. He sits next to his brother and drapes the infamous leather jacket over Jack.

RICHIE
I'm really sorry about Squash.

Jack sits there silently, but appreciative of the gesture.

RICHIE (CONT'D)
I didn't know you could shoot like that. Dad would be proud.

The farm dog returns, tail wagging, licks Jack on the cheek.

Jack smiles at them, laughs. Just then their mother pulls up, she rushes over!

LAURIE
Boys! Are you alright? Oh my God, what happened?

She just hugs them both. Over her shoulder, Jack clocks Joe, Patrick and Billy talking.

JACK
I'm fine, mom. Give me a sec.

Jack approaches his bullies in mid conversation.

PATRICK
All I'm saying is I'm never eating corn on the cob again.

Jack rides his paper route. Tosses one to the driveway of Mr Johnson, who's outside with a ladder trying to get the toilet paper out of his tree.

Jack tosses another paper.

INT. JACK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

The farm dog happily gets acquainted to Shadow who jumps up onto the window sill to get away. She looks out to see Jack rolling in on his bike.

Sitting on the window sill is a small planter.

From the soil a single leaf sprouts.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

CLOSE ON that UNCOVERED MANHOLE. A car speeds over top of it. A single thin vine reaches up from inside the manhole and slowly closes the cap.

THE END