

# THE STRANGER THING

Written by  
Eric Moyer



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### LEGAL DISCLAIMER

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**INT. FLASHBACK - UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - NIGHT**

VECNA is covered in flames as spore snowflakes fall around him.

ROBIN, STEVE and NANCY watch him burn.

ROBIN pelts him with another Molotov cocktail. More flames.

Nancy fires her shotgun four times, backs him up with each shot.

Vecna moans, mouth wide open. And then...

BLAM! One final blast as Vecna breaks through the boarded-up window and falls to the ground below.

**EXT. FLASHBACK - UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - NIGHT**

Vecna's burning body morphs into a whirlwind of sand. It rises into the sky and vanishes into the clouds with a flash of red lightning.

Robin, Steve and Nancy hurry out of the house and stare at the smoldering ground. Vecna's gone.

**ONE MONTH LATER...**

**EXT. HAWKINS - DAY**

The Upside Down still lingers in the real world.

Volcanic smoke. Red fires. Dark clouds. Thunder. Red lightning.

And of course, falling snow spores.

The trees, grass and flowers have died and turned to ash.

A military van approaches a heavily guarded roadblock.

Graffiti covers the WELCOME TO HAWKINS sign.

**INT. MILITARY VAN - DAY**

Eleven leans her head against the window, a blank stare like a depressed kid on a school bus.

Next to her is DR. OWENS. Across is LT. COLONEL SULLIVAN.

**EXT. HAWKINS - DAY**

This is Hell on Earth. The town is destroyed. Looted stores. Buildings burnt down.

A DEMOGORGAN blocks the road. The van speeds up and splatters it into roadkill.

Just ahead, a herd of DEMODOGS feed on a dead soldier on the side of the road.

The DEMODOGS break for the woods as the van approaches.

Down the road, the van screeches to a stop, blocked by dozens of DEMOGORGANS, DEMODOGS and unknown DEMO-HYBRIDS. Like animals escaped from the devil's zoo.

A van window rolls down and an automatic rifle peeks out and sprays the beasts with bullets. Most scatter, the van runs over the ones that remain.

They pass an area where the earthquake broke through, lined with hundreds of armed soldiers, like they're guarding a border.

The van slows at the entrance for LOVER'S LAKE as we pull back and

**BEGIN STRANGER THINGS CREDITS**

Glowing red text over black.

Merges with the title:

**THE THING**

And morphs into:

**THE STRANGER THING**

The title slowly moves toward the screen as we cut to:

**EXT. HAWKINS POLICE STATION - DAY**

An old pick-up truck rumbles into the parking lot. An AC/DC song blasts from the stereo.

**INT. HAWKINS POLICE STATION - DAY**

HOPPER and JOYCE watch from the window with concern.

JOYCE  
Who is this guy?

HOPPER  
An old friend from Vietnam.

JOYCE  
How did he get past the military?

HOPPER  
He is military.

Hopper grabs his shotgun and steps out.

**EXT. HAWKINS POLICE STATION - DAY**

Someone emerges from the pick-up truck. Military pants and boots.

It's the one and only RJ MACREADY, full beard and all.

The sound of an approaching helicopter fills the air.

Hopper waits by the steps. Shotgun in his hand, finger on the trigger. Ready.

In the distance, a DEMODOG runs toward them.

Hopper cocks the shotgun.

HOPPER  
Get back in the truck! Now!

MacReady doesn't listen and calmly walks to the back of his truck, reaches in and pulls out a flamethrower.

The helicopter hovers right over them as the DEMODOG speeds up and growls.

MacReady puts on the propane backpack and aims the flamethrower at the DEMODOG.

CLICK. It doesn't ignite. It's jammed. Keeps trying as Hopper aims his shotgun.

MACREADY  
Oh, come on!

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. And then...

WHOOSH! Flames shoot out just as the DEMODOG reveals its flowery, toothy face and leaps into the air.

The DEMODOG drops in a ball of flames.

The helicopter keeps going and disappears into the horizon.

Hopper lowers his shotgun.

MacReady reaches into his pocket and pulls out a cigarette and lights it with the flamethrower. One swift motion. A total badass.

HOPPER

RJ MacReady. I thought I was gonna have to save your ass again.

MACREADY

More like the other way around.

MacReady turns off the flamethrower as they approach each other. Looks like they're going to fight, but at the last second, they laugh and embrace in a hug.

**INT. HAWKINS POLICE STATION - LOBBY - DAY**

MacReady makes himself comfortable on a chair. Props his feet up on a table. Hopper doesn't care, almost expects it. Joyce is clearly not a fan.

MACREADY

Sorry, I didn't want to say too much over the phone.

HOPPER

How'd you find me?

MACREADY

Saw you on the news.

Hopper laughs.

HOPPER

Of course.

MACREADY

So where's the girl?

Joyce was already concerned. Now she's defensive. Points to the door.

JOYCE

You can leave now.

Hopper motions for her not to speak, answers MacReady.

HOPPER  
She's somewhere safe.

MACREADY  
Safe from what? Isn't she supposed  
to have...  
    (makes quotation marks  
        with his hands)  
...magical powers or some shit?

HOPPER  
I came to an agreement with the...  
    (mimics MacReady with his  
        own quotation marks)  
...government, while they figure  
out a plan.

MACREADY  
Maybe I'm the agreement. Maybe I'm  
the plan.

JOYCE  
I don't trust him, Hopper.

MacReady and Joyce stare each other down. MacReady calmly  
takes one last drag from his cigarette and puts it out on his  
boot.

MACREADY  
Can we talk somewhere private?  
Let's just say I have trust issues  
too. Sorry, missy.

JOYCE  
You've got to be kidding me.

Hopper looks at Joyce and points to the window.

HOPPER  
Keep an eye out.

MACREADY  
And I need to see that freezer we  
talked about, make sure it's big  
enough to transport a body.

Joyce gasps, can't believe what she's hearing. Hopper leads  
MacReady down a hallway.

**INT. HAWKINS POLICE STATION - BACK ROOM - DAY**

An open freezer. Yep, definitely big enough for a body.

Hopper and MacReady unload frozen items. Lots of meat, ice cream and popsicles.

MACREADY

After Vietnam, I worked for Hughes Aircraft as a test pilot. Then got assigned to U.S. Outpost 31 in Antarctica.

HOPPER

I could've used your helicopter skills in Russia.

MACREADY

Russia? What the hell were you doing in Russia?

HOPPER

What were you doing in Antarctica?

MacReady laughs.

MACREADY

Let's save the small talk for later.

HOPPER

Yeah, like, let's talk about why we're transporting a body in a freezer. And whose body?

Hopper removes the last frozen item.

MACREADY

Let's just say the body contains something that might be able to take on this Topsy Turvy or whatever you call it.

HOPPER

Upside Down.

MACREADY

Same thing.

HOPPER

Let me guess. The body's in Antarctica?

MacReady smiles ear to ear, then pats him on the shoulder.

MACREADY

Wow, you're just as smart as I remember, Hopper.



MacReady looks under the freezer.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
Good thing it has wheels. That'll  
come in handy later.

They maneuver the freezer into the hallway.

**INT. HAWKINS POLICE STATION - LOBBY - DAY**

Joyce, arms crossed, watches Hopper and MacReady struggle with the freezer. They stop near the door.

JOYCE  
I'm not helping.

MACREADY  
Speaking of help, we need one more  
person. Someone you trust, that I  
can trust.

JOYCE  
Not me. I have real life  
responsibilities, you know, like  
kids.

MACREADY  
(whispers to Hopper)  
Jesus Christ, what is her problem?

A name immediately comes to Hopper.

HOPPER  
I might know someone.

He turns to Joyce. She reads his mind and sighs.

JOYCE  
You're going to say Murray, aren't  
you?

No words needed. She's right.

MacReady and Hopper grab onto the freezer as Joyce opens the door for them.

**EXT. LOVER'S LAKE - DAY**

A handful of soldiers guard the area near the lake and fiery fault line.

Eleven stands at the edge of the water and extends her hand.

DEMOFISH leap in and out of the water as Eleven closes her eyes. A DEMOFROG hops by.

The water bubbles in the center and the nearby fault line slowly closes.

The soldiers step back as the ground reforms itself. One of them reaches down and touches the freshly sewn soil. He can't believe it.

Eleven turns to Sullivan and Owens as blood drips from her nose.

ELEVEN  
It's closed.

Eleven shoulder checks Sullivan as she heads back to the van.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)  
Next?

Sullivan glances at his shoulder, then at Owens, who smiles like a proud father.

#### **EXT. ROAD - DAY**

Eleven extends her arm and closes the gate in the middle of the road (where Fred died).

She turns and closes the adjoining fault line.

Looks like the soldiers are getting used to this.

More blood drips from Eleven's nose, runs down a patch of dry blood.

#### **INT. EDDIE MUNSON'S TRAILER - DAY**

Just a repeat of the other gates. Extends hand. Gate closes. More blood from the nose.

But there's a difference now...

Eleven looks exhausted, like she hasn't slept in days.

No strength to shoulder check Sullivan as she gently brushes by him.

Owens shrugs.

OWENS  
Looks like she's warming up to you.

Sullivan doesn't laugh, follows Eleven outside.

**INT. VAN - DAY**

Eleven sits across from Sullivan.

ELEVEN

One more gate and I can go back to  
my friends?

SULLIVAN

We're not closing the Creel house  
gate. Not yet.

ELEVEN

What are you talking about?

Eleven turns to Owens, wants an answer.

OWENS

I'm sorry, Eleven.

ELEVEN

But you promised that-

JAB! Sullivan sticks a needle in her shoulder. Owens doesn't  
react, like he knew it was coming.

Eleven holds her hand out to Sullivan as if to hurt him, but  
there's nothing left. She's wiped out.

We see through Eleven's eyes as Sullivan blurs and fades to  
black.

**EXT. FLASHBACK - ANTARCTICA OUTPOST - NIGHT**

Flames everywhere as MacReady sits himself down in the  
charred remains, a safe distance from the fire.

Someone sneaks up behind him. MacReady turns.

It's CHILDS.

CHILDS

You the only one that made it?

MACREADY

Not the only one.

CHILDS

Did you kill it?

MacReady thinks.

MACREADY  
Where were you, Childs?

CHILDS  
I thought I saw Blair. I went out  
after him. Got lost in the storm.

Childs sits down across from MacReady. Holds a flamethrower.  
Lets out a deep breath.

MacReady laughs over the sound of distant crackling fire.  
Holds a gun.

CHILDS (CONT'D)  
Fire's got the temperature up all  
over camp. Won't last long though.

MACREADY  
Neither will we.

CHILDS  
How will we make it?

MACREADY  
Maybe we shouldn't.

CHILDS  
If you're worried about me...

MACREADY  
If we've got any surprises for each  
other, I don't think we're in much  
shape to do anything about it.

CHILDS  
Well, what do we do?

MACREADY  
Why don't we just wait here for a  
little while? See what happens.

They both silently agree. MacReady hands Childs his bottle of  
J&B scotch whiskey.

Childs takes a swig. MacReady watches with interest, then  
laughs.

They continue to stare each other down, until MacReady closes  
his eyes.

But they're not completely closed. We see from his perspective that he's got one eye open just enough to watch Childs. Pretends to be asleep.

A passage of time. Minutes or hours? Hard to tell.

Strange sounds fill the air. MacReady opens his eyes, but keeps still. Not taking a chance with a sudden move.

Childs appears to be asleep, but the sounds are coming from his body: a weird combination of clicking, hissing and snoring.

Whatever he is, he's definitely not human. He's not sleeping, he's hibernating.

MacReady raises his gun. Points it at his own head, ready to end it all.

He stares at Childs, then slowly stands, careful not to make a sound. Creeps toward him.

He places the gun as close to Childs' head as he can, but without actually touching it.

MACREADY (CONT'D)

Sorry, Childs.

MacReady closes his eyes. Pulls the trigger.

CLICK.

MacReady opens his eyes in a panic.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

The gun is empty. He drops it.

Eyes up the flamethrower, but Childs has a solid, frozen grip on it.

Takes a few steps away. Then hurries to the burning fire in the distance, lets the warmth hit his face.

### **BEGIN MONTAGE**

MacReady's military survival skills kick in.

Builds a snow igloo.

Explores areas that weren't destroyed by the fire.

Finds clothing, food and tools.

Builds a radio out of spare parts. Listens and talks into it. Nothing.

And then...

Voices over the radio. Not English though.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
This is RJ MacReady at Outpost 31.  
Can you hear me?

Foreign voices respond.

MacReady grabs a long pole and a shovel, goes outside.

He returns to Childs, who hasn't moved, literally a human popsicle at this point. Still makes those strange sounds though.

MacReady digs in the snow.

A passage of time...

There's a hole right next to Childs, about six feet deep.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
Can't take a chance of anyone  
finding you. Sweet dreams, Childs.

MacReady lowers Childs into the icy grave, careful not to shatter or disturb him.

It's creepy. Childs' eyes are wide open, like he's staring right at MacReady.

MacReady fills the grave with snow until he can't hear the hibernation sounds anymore.

Wedges the J&B whiskey bottle on top. Sticks the long pole in the ground like a marker.

Later...

MacReady stands in the open snow field and waves to an approaching helicopter. There's foreign writing on the side. Looks Russian.

**END MONTAGE**

**EXT. CRUISE SHIP - DRAKE PASSAGE - SOUTH AMERICA - DAY**

A massive cruise ship. Three men lean on the railing and watch the sea.

It's MacReady, Hopper and, of course, MURRAY.

HOPPER  
That's really what happened?

MURRAY  
I call bullshit.

MACREADY  
On what part? The monster or the fact that I survived in Antarctica for weeks?

MURRAY  
All of it.

MACREADY  
Let me get this straight. You've been fighting demons from an alternate universe and you don't believe MY story about an alien shapeshifter?

HOPPER  
So it can just touch you and then replicate you?

MACREADY  
No, it has to fully consume you. And trust me, it's not pretty. It can take the form of anything it consumed in the past, and who knows how many creepy critters it assimilated over the years.

MURRAY  
You could have killed it. Why didn't you?

MACREADY  
Hey man! I told you about the gun, and once Childs was frozen, I wasn't taking any chances. Would you?

MURRAY  
It doesn't make sense. One minute you're...

Murray stops mid-sentence and gags a little bit. Nauseous. His face turns white. Rushes over to the railing and throws up into the sea.

MacReady eyes Hopper.

MACREADY

You sure picked a winner.

MacReady laughs at Murray and heads off to some women lounging nearby.

Hopper moves closer to Murray.

HOPPER

You okay?

MURRAY

I'll be fine. Sorry, never been out to sea this long.

HOPPER

You just have to get used to him. He's not so bad. And for what it's worth, I believe him.

(pauses)

I don't have a choice.

MURRAY

I swear this is the last adventure I'm following you on.

Hopper smirks as Murray wipes the vomit from his chin. They rejoin MacReady.

#### **INT. MAX'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

MAX lies in a hospital bed, still in a coma. A NURSE steps in and claps her hands.

This startles LUCAS, who was sound asleep on a chair.

He sits up and rubs his eyes as the nurse checks Max's vital signs.

NURSE

You should really think about sleeping at home, even for just one night.

Lucas shakes his head in disagreement.

LUCAS

I promised I wouldn't leave her side.

The nurse opens the curtains. Sunlight pours in. Lucas squints.



He grabs his book off the floor: THE TALISMAN by Stephen King. He flips to a folded over page.

After the nurse leaves, DUSTIN, WILL and MIKE burst in. Dustin holds an empty Coke bottle.

LUCAS (CONT'D)  
Where's El?

Just hearing El's name strikes a nerve with Mike. He keeps a strong front, but we see right through it.

MIKE  
Saving the world. Again.

DUSTIN  
Before she left with Dr. Owens, she said to try this.

Dustin places the bottle on the floor and spins it. They all watch.

Lucas looks for some kind of sign from Max. Nothing. The Coke bottle slows to a stop. Lucas kicks it under the bed.

LUCAS  
This is bullshit.

WILL  
Max will be fine. I know it. You know it. We all know it.

Will attempts to place a hand on Lucas' shoulder but he knocks it away. Will does nothing as usual, but Mike's not having it.

MIKE  
What's your problem?

Lucas steps up to Mike, but Dustin breaks it up before it starts.

DUSTIN  
Guys, guys, guys!

LUCAS  
I'm done with all this.  
(looks at Max)  
We both are.

Will looks like he's about to cry as he touches the back of his neck.

WILL  
There's something I have to say.

Mike rolls his eyes.

MIKE  
Not now, Will.

Dustin pulls Mike and Will along. Lucas returns his attention to Max and holds her hand.

**EXT. ANTARCTICA - DAY**

The cruise ship is docked at the port.

MacReady, Hopper and Murray wheel the freezer down a path that leads to a small plane.

**INT. AIRPLANE - DAY**

MacReady fires up the engine on the small plane. Hopper in the passenger seat and Murray behind them, the empty freezer nearby.

MACREADY  
Just like the old days, huh Hop?

Hopper seems nervous.

HOPPER  
Back then, you flew helicopters,  
not planes.

MACREADY  
Not much different. Flying is  
flying, right?

Hopper and Murray hold onto their seats. MacReady senses the nervousness.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
Don't worry, it's a short ride.

The entire plane shakes as it lifts into the air.

**EXT. OUTPOST 31 - ANTARCTICA - DAY**

The outpost appears just as we left it. Burnt to the ground, no sign of activity since.

The plane circles, then lands near the wreckage.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY**

Eleven awakes in a wheelchair, still dry blood under her nose. Her hands and feet are tied, a metal brace locked around her neck.

Eleven sees Owens, but she turns her attention to Sullivan. Stares him down, tries desperately to use her powers, but can't.

SULLIVAN

I don't want to sedate you again.

ELEVEN

Where's Hopper?

SULLIVAN

Don't worry about him. You did your part. Now it's his turn.

ELEVEN

He's in danger. I can feel it.

SULLIVAN

Save your emotions. You're going to need them when it's time to close the final gate.

Eleven glances up at Owens.

ELEVEN

I trusted you. We all did.

Owens can't bear to make eye contact with her. He's ashamed and it shows.

**EXT. OUTPOST 31 - ANTARCTICA - DAY**

The plane sits in the distance.

MacReady, Hopper and Murray stand outside the rubble of Outpost 31.

They all hold shovels. MacReady points to a large snow igloo.

MACREADY

Still don't believe me?

MacReady leads them through the snow.

Sees something reflecting light. It's the long pole he used as a marker, still stuck in the snow.

MacReady rips out the pole and throws it.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
This is the spot.

They all start digging.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
Just be careful. We don't want to  
crack it.

They quickly find the empty bottle of J&B whiskey.

MacReady picks it up and smiles. Pretends to take a swig,  
then tosses it over his shoulder.

A passage of time...

The hole is pretty deep. They've got to be close.

And then MacReady's shovel hits something and makes a loud  
THUNK.

They all take a step back and look at each other, not sure if  
they woke it up or not.

MacReady drops his shovel and falls to his knees. He uses his  
hands to find the edges of the frozen corpse.

Now we can hear the metallic hibernation sounds he spoke of.

This startles Hopper and Murray. They both hold their shovels  
like weapons. They believe him now!

MURRAY  
I've got a bad feeling about this.

MacReady puts his index finger to his mouth, warning them to  
stay quiet.

MACREADY  
(whispering)  
I'll pull the plane up as close as  
I can.

Another passage of time...

The plane is right there with them, the open freezer next to  
the grave.

Total silence as they carefully place Childs into the  
freezer. MacReady latches it shut and they drag it to the  
plane.

**INT. AIRPLANE - DAY**

Back in the air as Murray stares at the freezer next to him.

MURRAY

What happens if he thaws out on us?

MACREADY

Let's put it this way. Our best option would be to plunge the plane straight into the ocean.

MURRAY

But there's three of us, and I know karate.

MACREADY

If that thing wakes up, we have no chance, even if there's a hundred of us. Better to sacrifice our lives and save humanity.

HOPPER

I'm getting used to hearing that.

MacReady turns and looks Murray right in the eyes.

MACREADY

You still think I'm kidding?

No response from Murray as he seems more and more nervous. MacReady points to something up ahead.

MACREADY (CONT'D)

There it is.

They see the cruise ship through the window, still docked in the same spot.

**INT. CRUISE SHIP - DAY**

MacReady, Hopper and Murray wheel the freezer through the hallway, passing random passengers.

MURRAY

Crazy that no one has any idea what we're pushing around here. Why would the military stage an operation like this on a civilian cruise ship?

MACREADY

You really think this is actually a  
cruise ship?

Murray gives a blank stare.

MACREADY (CONT'D)

Not everything is what it seems.  
You should know that by now.

MacReady stops at a guarded door. A sign reads: ICICLE  
BALLROOM.

A soldier nods at MacReady, then opens the door.

**INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

The ballroom has been converted into a military base.

There's a pair of armed soldiers at every set of doors.

Computers everywhere. Dozens of scientists. Some have NASA  
shirts on, others have uniforms that read: MONTAUK AIR FORCE  
or CAMP HERO.

Between loud beeps and conversations, it sounds like a train  
station.

MacReady, Hopper and Murray wheel the freezer through the  
commotion, like nerds at a frat house.

The room grows silent as everyone watches them. Hard to tell  
if they're scared or excited.

A NASA SCIENTIST points to a makeshift sensory deprivation  
tank.

NASA SCIENTIST

Leave it there. Next to the tank.

They leave the freezer where they're told. Hopper stares at  
the sensory tank. Something doesn't feel right.

HOPPER

What's this doing here?

A soldier approaches, leads them to a red door and lets them  
inside.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY**

Yes, THAT interrogation room, now full of armed soldiers.

The soldiers draw their weapons and aim them at Hopper and Murray, but not MacReady.

MURRAY

What the...?

Murray takes a karate stance as Hopper reaches for his gun, but he hesitates and glares at MacReady.

HOPPER

Are you behind this?

MACREADY

I didn't have a choice.

Sullivan calmly enters from another door. Hopper's pissed.

HOPPER

Where is she?!

As if on cue, Dr. Owens pushes out Eleven in the wheelchair. She's still tied to it and the lethal neck brace now has a flashing light.

This guts Hopper. A tear streams down Eleven's face.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

(to Owens)

I trusted you. You promised you would take her somewhere safe after she closed the gates.

MACREADY

No one's safe. Not you. Not us. Not even her.

Hopper turns to MacReady, then slugs him across the face.

HOPPER

This whole thing was one big setup?

MacReady shakes it off. No need to strike back. He deserved it and he knows it.

Sullivan steps up.

SULLIVAN

Call it a setup if you want. I call it a plan. A plan to save the world.

MACREADY

Otherwise we're all dead.

MacReady takes the guns from Hopper and Murray and hands them to a soldier.

MURRAY

Looks like I was right about you  
all along.

HOPPER

So was Joyce.

MacReady whispers something to Sullivan, who agrees to whatever he said.

MACREADY

Let's get a drink. It'll all make  
sense. I'll explain everything.

MacReady holds his hand up to Murray.

MACREADY (CONT'D)

No offense. I need to talk to  
Hopper. Alone.

The soldiers lower their weapons as Hopper seems to calm down.

**INT. BAR - CRUISE SHIP - DAY**

A bartender places drinks in front of MacReady and Hopper.

MacReady waves to a couple of ladies across the bar as Hopper takes a sip from his beer.

HOPPER

Why is El here?

MACREADY

She's the messenger, so to speak. A  
negotiator.

HOPPER

Negotiator for what?

Hopper turns and reaches for MacReady's throat. Macready shoves him back.

MACREADY

Relax. She'll be fine.

HOPPER

I'm supposed to trust you? Now?



MacReady shifts gears. He slides a picture of a baby girl to Hopper.

MACREADY

Her name was Natalie. She only  
lived a year before the cancer took  
her.

This strikes a nerve with Hopper, a bizarre, depressing connection between them.

For a moment, Hopper sees his own daughter, Sara, in the picture.

HOPPER

My daughter died of cancer too,  
lived seven years. Her name was  
Sara.

MACREADY

I know they warned us about that  
Agent Orange powder in Vietnam, but  
I didn't believe their mumbo jumbo,  
until it actually happened.

HOPPER

Neither did I.

MacReady puts the photo back in his wallet.

MACREADY

There's something I didn't tell  
you, Hopper.

HOPPER

Just add it to the list.

MACREADY

I have it too. I'm already dying.  
Don't have much longer.

He has Hopper's attention.

HOPPER

I'm sorry to...

MACREADY

(interrupting)

I didn't tell you for sympathy. Not  
going to bore you with the details.

HOPPER

Then why are you telling me?

MACREADY

Because all my friends died in Antarctica. I've got no family, and the world, well, what's there to say? I've got nothing left to lose, so I volunteered.

MacReady holds up his glass of whiskey.

HOPPER

Volunteered for what?

MACREADY

A suicide mission. I've been on one ever since 'Nam. I'm ready to see my daughter again.

HOPPER

Come on, Mac, let someone else do it.

MACREADY

I'm gonna die anyway. When it's all over, and we win, everyone will remember that RJ MacReady saved the world. They can take my picture and put it in the history books, then my life will actually mean something.

MacReady downs the whiskey and slams the glass on the bar.

MACREADY (CONT'D)

Don't worry. In the end, I'll have my revenge on whatever that thing is that killed my friends. Maybe it can handle cancer, or maybe not.

HOPPER

What does this have to do with El? You still didn't tell me what she's negotiating. And with who?

MACREADY

Sullivan should have explained it to her by now. Once she understands her role, and what's at stake, she'll calm down. You'll see.

HOPPER

She was only supposed to close the gates. I saw the sensory deprivation tank. Why is that here?

MacReady avoids the question and pulls a large wad of cash from his wallet.

MACREADY

I can't take it with me, so...

Hopper grabs MacReady's arm and squeezes tight.

HOPPER

I asked you a question. What's with the tank?

MACREADY

Let's go find out.

Hopper slowly releases his grip. MacReady shakes it off and leaves all of his cash for a tip. Hundreds of dollars.

#### **INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

A scientist adds one more bag of salt to the water of the sensory deprivation tank.

All attention is on Eleven. She sports a full-body water suit. Her neck brace is gone.

MacReady was right. She's much calmer now, almost seems chummy with Sullivan. Almost.

SULLIVAN

Remember what I told you.

Eleven nods in agreement, then glances to Hopper. Gives him an assuring thumbs up. He relaxes a bit.

Sullivan opens the freezer and motions for Eleven to look inside.

She stares at the frozen ice cube that is Childs. Locks eyes with his, seems like he's staring back.

Eleven puts on her goggles and immerses herself into the tank.

Everyone looks on. Sullivan. Owens. Hopper. MacReady. Murray. The soldiers, scientists. The room is tense.

A cameraman adjusts a tripod and turns on a VHS videocamera. A blinking red light.

Eleven floats on her back in the water. Completely still. And then...

**INT. THE VOID - DAY**

Everything is black as we hear the sound of footsteps in shallow water.

Eleven follows a distant voice as it calls out.

VOICE

This is bullshit, Mac. They're  
dead, Mac.

Eleven sees a man tied to a chair, slowly makes her way to him.

It's Childs, looking just as he did in Antarctica, before he froze. He sees Eleven coming, raises his voice.

CHILDS

Get me out of here! Cut me loose!  
Come on, get me the hell out of  
here. Cut me loose, dammit!

Childs rocks back and forth in his chair. Tries to break free from the rope.

**INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

Everyone watches intently. Waiting for something. Anything. Eleven remains completely still, talks softly.

ELEVEN

He's here.

SULLIVAN

Who?

ELEVEN

The man in the freezer.

MACREADY

Childs!

Hopper gives MacReady a glance.

**INT. THE VOID - DAY**

Splash. Splash. Splash. Eleven circles Childs in the water. Their eyes finally meet.

A crackling sound, like bones crunching, followed by the sound of thousands of cicadas.

Eleven stops. Keeps her eyes on Childs, but she's clearly frightened now.

The rope holding Childs to the chair changes into a snake and slithers off of him. It morphs into a slimy tentacle, like an alien octopus.

SNAP! In one swift move, it grabs Eleven and wraps around her. She tries to break free, but can't.

Childs' mouth opens wide, literally peels back like a banana, reveals what's underneath:

A grotesque multi-headed monster with deformed and howling faces.

Some of the screaming heads are MacReady's friends from Antarctica: Blair, Palmer, Bennings and other previous victims we don't recognize.

More bone-crunching sounds as The Thing grows into a towering mountain of guts and slimy goo. Pure terror.

Without warning, another tentacle suddenly spits out of its mouth and latches onto Eleven's forehead.

She doesn't even try to break free. She can't. She closes her eyes, at its mercy.

We see into Eleven's mind for a moment: A psychedelic orgy of bizarre alien images. The stuff nightmares are made of.

#### **INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

Eleven's heartbeat races. She violently shakes in the water. The scientists scramble, not sure what to do.

HOPPER

That's enough! Get her out!

Owens and Hopper lift her from the water and set her on a nearby table.

The scientists rush to her side. They rip her goggles off and hook electrodes to her, check her vital signs.

Hopper and Owens step back and let them do their thing.

Eleven opens her eyes, but they roll into the back of her head, only showing white.

She convulses and flops around like a fish as the scientists struggle to hold her down.

Moments later, her body calms and her eyes return to see Sullivan staring down at her.

SULLIVAN  
What does it want?

Eleven's gaze is one of fear, which says a lot given her experiences over the years.

She takes a few deep breaths, gets her bearings straight, collects her thoughts. Hopper steps in and holds her hand.

ELEVEN  
It's scared and just wants to go home.

SULLIVAN  
What else?

Hopper waves him off.

HOPPER  
Can't you just give her a minute?

ELEVEN  
I'm fine now.  
(to Sullivan)  
Their ships can't handle our atmosphere. That's why more haven't come.

SULLIVAN  
The offer. Did you make the offer?

ELEVEN  
Yes.

Sullivan anxiously waits for more.

SULLIVAN  
And?

Eleven smiles.

ELEVEN  
It accepted.

MACREADY  
Jesus Christ, how exactly did that conversation go?

ELEVEN

It didn't. It was like we transferred thoughts without actually speaking. And it was instant.

That's good enough for Sullivan. He nods to the scientists.

SULLIVAN

Proceed as planned. Have them prepare the shuttle at headquarters and notify the space station.

The scientists buzz around the room with excitement.

**EXT. CRUISE SHIP - DAY**

A soldier watches through binoculars, sees a naval ship in the distance.

A helicopter launches from it and heads their way.

The soldier hurries off.

**INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

The same soldier whispers in Sullivan's ear. He panics and waves some more soldiers to them.

Moments later, they run out of the ballroom.

**EXT. CRUISE SHIP - HELIPAD - DAY**

Those same soldiers point their weapons at the landing helicopter, Russian writing all over it.

GENERAL STEPANOV steps out, along with a hulking, armed guard.

STEPANOV

Gentlemen. We don't want any trouble. You are on international waters with wanted men from Russia. Please lower your weapons in compliance with international law.

The soldiers look to each other for an answer, then reluctantly comply.

Stepanov motions for another person to climb out, but we can't see who it is.

**INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

The soldiers lead Stepanov into the ballroom, the unknown man behind him. Still can't see his face. The beefy guard enters last.

All of the other soldiers draw their guns, but Stepanov doesn't seem to care.

Sullivan angrily steps up to the American soldiers.

SULLIVAN

You walked them right in here?

A soldier nods to the mystery man. And now we clearly see who it is. Hopper suddenly has more interest.

HOPPER

Enzo?

Stepanov nods to ENZO, who takes this as his cue and unzips his jacket. There's a shit ton of dynamite strapped to him. He hangs his head in shame, can't bear to look at Hopper.

Stepanov holds up a blinking detonator for everyone to see.

STEPANOV

Russia is in control of this ship  
right now. Does everyone  
understand?

SULLIVAN

Do you have any idea who I am?

Stepanov laughs.

STEPANOV

You are Lt. Colonel Jack Sullivan.

Sullivan clearly doesn't like the direction this is going.

STEPANOV (CONT'D)

Allow me to introduce myself. I am  
General Stepanov.

Stepanov extends a handshake to Sullivan, but he declines.

SULLIVAN

You are committing an act of war.



STEPANOV

As I've already told your men,  
Colonel, you are on international  
waters, and you are in possession  
of fugitives from Russia.

Stepanov circles Hopper, Murray, then MacReady.

STEPANOV (CONT'D)

How did I get so lucky? Jim Hopper,  
Murray Bauman and RJ MacReady. All  
at the same time. What do you  
Americans say? Three birds, one  
stone?

HOPPER

Two birds.

With a sinister grin, Stepanov laughs as he glares at Hopper.

STEPANOV

You will pay for what you did to  
Grigori in the United States.

Moves to Murray.

STEPANOV (CONT'D)

And you for what you did to my  
prison.

Then points at MacReady.

STEPANOV (CONT'D)

And what you did to my soldiers in  
Antarctica.

Hopper looks to MacReady, who just shrugs in agreement with  
Stepanov. Yeah, he did it.

STEPANOV approaches the freezer.

STEPANOV (CONT'D)

Your friend says you returned to  
Antarctica to dig something up. You  
wouldn't do that unless it was  
something of value. A treasure of  
some kind?

MACREADY

It's a monster. See for yourself.

STEPANOV turns his gun on MacReady and opens the freezer with  
his other hand.

STEPANOV  
Monsters we can handle. You should  
know that by now.

HOPPER  
Takes one to know one.

Stepanov sees the frozen body of Childs. Stares into his eyes  
with a look of confusion.

MACREADY  
Close it. You don't want it to  
melt.

STEPANOV  
Or else?

MACREADY  
We all die.

Stepanov holsters his gun. He sees a flamethrower on the  
floor, picks it up.

STEPANOV  
You're hiding something.

Aims the flamethrower at the open freezer.

SULLIVAN  
You don't want to do that.

Hopper looks to Eleven. Winks at her and makes a motion with  
his hand. She knows what to do.

Eleven aggressively steps up to Stepanov and holds out her  
hand to unleash her powers...but nothing happens.

She just stands there with her hand out, grits her teeth and  
curls her nose.

Stepanov high-fives her hand.

STEPANOV  
Is that how the kids do it in  
America?

Eleven lowers her hand, wants to cry. She steps back with  
Hopper, confused and powerless. Again.

Now Sullivan is really concerned. He backs up.

Stepanov ignites the flamethrower and lights up the inside of  
the freezer.

SNAP! CRACKLE! POP!

The ice melts. Childs' face pushes through. Then his arms, his legs.

Stepanov continues to torch Childs, burns his thawed out skin. More and more, until Childs' body is completely exposed.

Stepanov turns off the flamethrower.

STEPANOV (CONT'D)  
So this is your monster?

Stepanov laughs as he takes a closer look at Childs' earring. He reaches into the freezer and tries to break it off.

WHOOSH!

A tentacle bursts out of Childs and grabs Stepanov. The detonator and flamethrower fall to the floor as the tentacle yanks him into the freezer. The lid closes behind them.

Blood curdling screams seep out. The big Russian guard aims his gun and shouts in Russian, ready to fire.

SULLIVAN  
Do not fire your weapon! We're on a ship!

The Russian guard alternates his gun between Sullivan and the freezer, not sure what to do. More Russian gibberish.

And then the freezer door swings open, nearly comes off the hinges.

Pressurized blood splatters onto the ceiling as something rises.

It's Childs, but his face droops to the side and the deformed head of Stepanov pops out, wails like a banshee.

The Russian guard can't believe his eyes.

A tongue shoots out of Stepanov's mouth and wraps around the Russian guard's neck.

CRACK!

His neck breaks and he slumps to the floor.

The tongue retracts into Stepanov's mouth as Childs' face closes back up like a jigsaw puzzle. Eyes dangle and find their place until he looks like Childs again.

Childs stares at MacReady, who picks up Stepanov's flamethrower.

CHILDs  
I thought I saw Blair.

This sends a shudder through MacReady. He backs away.

CHILDs (CONT'D)  
I went out after him. Got lost in the storm.

Childs lowers himself back into the freezer and closes himself inside, just like a vampire would. Creepy.

As the room calms, Sullivan picks the detonator up off the floor.

Paramedics carry the dead Russian guard away.

Hopper tends to Enzo, removes the explosives and gently sets them down.

Enzo sighs in relief.

ENZO  
I'm sorry. They were following Yuri and I.

HOPPER  
Where is Yuri?

Enzo hesitates.

ENZO  
They took him back to Russia, forcing him to work at a nuclear plant. I think in Chernobyl.

Sullivan listens in.

ENZO (CONT'D)  
There's a ship nearby, ready to attack. And there's a Russian soldier waiting in a copter on your helipad.

Sullivan turns to MacReady.

SULLIVAN  
We might need you to get things started a little earlier than planned.

MacReady lets go of the flamethrower like a mic drop.

MACREADY  
I'm ready. Let's do it.

Hopper glares at him.

HOPPER  
You don't have to do this, Mac.

MACREADY  
You're right. I don't have to do anything. Ever. Again.

MacReady turns to Sullivan.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
I'd like some privacy for this.  
It's something they don't want to see anyway.

Sullivan waves some soldiers over, points to a door.

SULLIVAN  
Take the freezer to that room. Now!

The soldiers seem scared to even touch the freezer. Wouldn't you? But they follow orders and wheel it into the next room.

MacReady and Hopper shake hands, but Hopper pulls him into a hug.

MACREADY  
It will look like me, talk like me,  
and act like me, but remember...

MacReady breaks from the hug and looks Hopper right in the eyes.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
...It's not *really* me.

Murray shakes MacReady's hand. No hug.

MURRAY  
Nice knowing you, I mean, for a day  
or two. Sorry I didn't believe you.  
Good luck with...that.

Sullivan escorts MacReady out of the room. The door slams shut behind them.

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY**

Sullivan shakes MacReady's hand and then they salute each other.

MacReady backs away, then rips off all his clothes until he's butt-ass naked.

SULLIVAN  
What are you doing?

MACREADY  
Don't want my clothes messed up.  
You'll see.

MacReady takes a deep breath, opens the freezer and stares at WHATEVER THAT IS inside.

Tentacles rise.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
My turn, Childs. See you on the  
other side.

A tear forms in MacReady's eye as the tentacles slowly wrap around him and continue into his mouth and down his throat.

MacReady's life flashes before him:

-A toddler on the beach.

-First day of school.

-Being bullied by kids.

-High school graduation.

Sullivan's face says it all. Absolute fear, but he has too much pride to look away. He trembles as more tentacles wrap around MacReady.

-Boot camp in the military.

-Vietnam War with Hopper.

A high pitched shriek combined with the sound of thousands of cicadas.

-Getting married.

-Holding a baby girl in his arms.

-Standing at a small gravestone.

-Arguing with his ex-wife.

Bones crunch as MacReady screams in agony. Blood sprays everywhere.

-First day at Outpost 31.

-Fighting The Thing.

-Surviving Antarctica.

A miniature, deformed head of MacReady pops out of The Thing, next to miniature heads of his friends from Antarctica that died: Childs, Blair, Bennings, Palmer, even the dog.

-At a doctor's office.

-Getting radiation treatment.

-Alone in his apartment.

-Alone at a park.

-Alone at a bar.

-ALONE.

This is the death of MacReady in human form as the assimilation continues.

#### **INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

Everyone watches the door with uncertainty. Other than the screams, you could hear a pin drop.

Eleven joins Hopper. He puts his arm around her.

And then...

The screams stop.

Sullivan steps out, does his best to keep his composure, but clearly shaken.

Moments later, the new MacReady struts out with swagger and a smile.

MACREADY

Did you miss me?

No response. From anyone.

MacReady grabs the dynamite and the detonator.

MACREADY (CONT'D)  
Let's take care of that pesky  
little Russian helicopter, shall  
we?

Sullivan motions to two soldiers. They're not thrilled about being picked, but that's life.

**EXT. CRUISE SHIP - HELIPAD - DAY**

MacReady approaches the Russian helicopter with the dynamite and detonator. The two soldiers keep a safe distance.

The helicopter pilot sees them coming. Points his gun through the glass. But MacReady's soldiers have their guns drawn too. A standoff.

The Russian naval ship moves closer and closer.

MacReady is calm as a cucumber as he opens the helicopter door.

MACREADY  
I need you to drop this off for me.  
Thanks!

MacReady tosses the dynamite inside. The pilot flinches, yells in Russian.

We hear the sound of thousands of cicadas coming from within MacReady.

Fear overtakes the pilot as MacReady roars. He focuses on the weapon pointed at him with laser intensity.

And then something STRANGE happens.

The gun crinkles in the pilot's hand like a soda can. Doesn't even look like a gun anymore.

The Russian screams, drops the gun.

And then something even STRANGER happens.

MacReady TWITCHES his neck.

CRACK!

The pilot's neck snaps, his whole body goes limp.

We haven't seen powers like that since...Eleven.



The soldiers behind MacReady can't believe their eyes, not sure if they should point their weapons at MacReady or not.

MacReady backs away from the helicopter and concentrates.

He extends his arm and the helicopter rocks back and forth.

As MacReady raises his hand, the helicopter lifts into the air.

The soldiers have seen enough. They run back down the platform.

MacReady keeps the helicopter steady with his hand, then winds his arm like a baseball pitcher.

WHOOSH! The pitch! The throw!

The helicopter speeds through the air, heads straight for the Russian ship.

MacReady has his finger on the detonator. Presses the button as the helicopter smashes into the ship.

KA-BOOM!

The Russian ship explodes as MacReady tosses the used detonator into the sea.

MacReady admires his hands, can't believe what he just did.

A trickle of blood runs out of his nose. He wipes it with his hand and looks at it. He's not used to that either.

Watches the burning ship. Holds his hand out again, palm wide open.

As he closes his fingers into a fist, the Russian ship does the same and condenses into a ball of flames. Pulp oozes out of it like he just squeezed an orange.

MacReady swings his arm down and the burning ship sinks into the ocean. Massive bubbles erupt, sends waves toward them. The cruise ship lightly rocks back and forth.

MacReady laughs as he heads down the platform. More blood runs from his nose.

#### **INT. BALLROOM - DAY**

A pissed-off Sullivan talks with the two soldiers that ran off.

MacReady returns.

MACREADY

Good news! The Russians are on  
their way home.

Sullivan storms over to MacReady.

SULLIVAN

What did you do to the girl?! That  
wasn't part of the deal!

Eleven pays close attention as MacReady wipes more blood from  
his nose. Hopper can't believe it.

MACREADY

It wasn't intentional.

Hopper slowly picks up the flamethrower, starts to aim it at  
MacReady, but Eleven knocks it from his hands.

ELEVEN

No!!!

She has everyone's attention.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)

My powers weren't enough to beat  
One. Now we might actually have a  
chance.

SULLIVAN

The plan was always for him to  
fight One, and for you to close the  
gate. How are you going to do that  
now?

ELEVEN

Maybe he can.

MACREADY

I can try.

SULLIVAN

And what if he can't?

ELEVEN

I'll close the gate. Just trust me.

The room is silent. And then...

MacReady claps his hands, creepy applause from a monster.

MACREADY

You heard her. Let's stick to the plan and get back to Hawkins. I'd like to get this over with and go home.

MacReady pumps his fists in the air, tries to excite the somber crowd like a pep rally.

MACREADY (CONT'D)

Come on, everyone! Let's kick some ass!

It slowly spreads. Eleven smiles, then applauds. Then Hopper. Murray. Enzo. And finally, the rest of the room, except Sullivan. Business as usual.

SULLIVAN

We just have one stop on the way, in Kerley County.

HOPPER

What's in Kerley County?

Sullivan is dead serious.

SULLIVAN

Dinner.

For some reason, Hopper doesn't like the sound of that. Neither do we.

**FADE TO:**

### **A MAP OF THE WORLD**

We zoom in on Antarctica as a drawing of a cruise ship moves with a red line across the ocean, just like we would see in an Indiana Jones film.

When it reaches land, the ship changes to a plane and the red line moves again as it navigates through the United States and then zooms all the way in on HAWKINS, INDIANA.

We hear the sound of running water.

### **INT. BATHROOM - UNKNOWN LOCATION - DAY**

Will turns off the sink and stares at himself in the mirror.

Removes his shirt. He's actually pretty ripped, six-pack abs and all.

Someone bangs on the door.

JOYCE (O.S.)  
Will! Hurry up! We're meeting  
Hopper, Jonathan, El and everyone  
else.

Will's smile disappears as he tilts his head and touches the  
back of his neck like he has an itch.

WILL  
What for?

JOYCE (O.S.)  
I don't know. Probably some end of  
the world crap again as usual. You  
know Hopper and El.

WILL  
Mom, I need to tell you something.

JOYCE (O.S.)  
Not now! Get ready!

Will runs his hand through his thick hair. Still the world's  
worst bowl cut.

Takes a few deep breaths. Enough is enough.

Reaches down under the sink and rummages around.

Slaps a pair of scissors on the sink. Then a razor. Then  
shaving cream.

Stands back up. Stares at himself again. Time for a change.

**EXT. PENNHURST MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY**

Sullivan and MacReady exit the hospital with two soldiers.

**INT. MILITARY VAN - DAY**

Sullivan and MacReady climb in, shut the door.

Owens and Hopper tend to Eleven while Murray and Enzo play  
cards.

HOPPER  
Where's the food?

MACREADY  
I already ate.

Hopper still doesn't like the sound of it.

**EXT. HAWKINS - DAY**

The van turns down a road in Hawkins, still a war-torn ghost town.

It's followed by a convoy of armored trucks.

**INT. MILITARY VAN - DAY**

Hopper leans into Eleven and whispers.

HOPPER  
Joyce is doing exactly what you  
asked.

ELEVEN  
Thank you.

Hopper senses that she has more to say. He's right.

HOPPER  
What?

ELEVEN  
I don't want my powers back.

MacReady overhears this and gives her a glance.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)  
I just want to be normal, like  
everyone else.

Hopper hugs her as Owens pulls five Sony Walkman cassette players out of a bag. Back to business.

OWENS  
We looped the same song over and  
over.

HOPPER  
So you made us each a mix tape, but  
with only one song?

Owens nods in agreement.

MACREADY  
I don't understand why we need  
this.

HOPPER  
It'll help protect you against  
Vecna.

ELEVEN  
One.

HOPPER  
Vecna. One. Whatever. His powers  
are weakened by music, particularly  
if the song means something to you.

Owens hands a Walkman to Eleven.

ELEVEN  
You found the one I wanted?

OWENS  
I did. Good choice.

Hopper interrupts.

HOPPER  
Hey! I thought we all agreed she  
wasn't going in.

ELEVEN  
I'm not. I have a back-up plan to  
close the gate. I need it. For me.

HOPPER  
You going to tell us what this back-  
up plan is?

ELEVEN  
No.

HOPPER  
That's what I thought. Just don't  
try going in.

ELEVEN  
I won't. I promise.

Eleven clips the Walkman to her jeans, headphones around her  
neck.

Owens hands MacReady a Walkman. He takes it, but doesn't put  
it on.

OWENS  
I picked something I thought you  
might like based on...well...you'll  
see.

MACREADY  
I don't think I'll need it, but  
thanks.

MacReady dangles the headphones around his neck as Owens  
hands a Walkman to Hopper.

ELEVEN  
What's your song?

Hopper snaps his fingers and does a little dance in his seat.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)  
I know what it is!

Owens hands a Walkman to Enzo. Everyone is curious.

HOPPER  
Well? What is it?

ENZO  
It's for my wife. Our favorite  
American band, Journey.

Hopper laughs.

HOPPER  
Whatever works for you.

MURRAY  
You know, there's a time and a  
place for Journey.

Enzo smiles.

ENZO  
Exactly.

Owens has one last Walkman. Murray holds his hands out like a  
kid on Halloween.

Owens hesitates, looks to Hopper, who takes the Walkman  
instead.

MURRAY  
Isn't that mine?

HOPPER  
Yes...and no.

MURRAY  
What's that supposed to mean?

Hopper hands him the Walkman.

HOPPER

You can have it, but I need you to stay out here with Joyce and the kids.

MURRAY

But I'm the only one that knows karate!

Hopper laughs it off, then gets serious.

HOPPER

If I don't make it out of there, I'm counting on you to look after everyone.

Murray sees the sincerity in Hopper's eyes. He sighs, but gets it.

MURRAY

Ok. Fine.

HOPPER

So what was your song?

MURRAY

Now you want to know my song?

Eleven perks up. She's curious too.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

I'll give you a hint. It reminds me of a girl I met at Disco Karate Night.

HOPPER

Disco? Really?

Eleven pretends to barf as the van screeches to a halt.

**EXT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Military vehicles and soldiers everywhere.

The van doors swing open. Eleven steps out first, as if in slow motion.

Across the street at the playground, she sees Mike among a crowd. She runs to him.

Mike sees her at the last second as she plants a kiss on him.



They hug, but quickly pull away to look into each other's eyes. No words needed.

They hold hands as the others come into focus. Eleven spins around to see all of her friends: Dustin, STEVE, NANCY, ROBIN, JONATHAN, ERICA and even their newest friend, the long-haired pizza shop stoner, ARGYLE.

There's a stack of pizza boxes nearby.

A couple kids are glaringly missing though: Max and Lucas, but everyone knows where they are.

Eleven keeps looking around. There's still one more friend unaccounted for.

ELEVEN

Where's Will?

Someone approaches her. Someone she doesn't recognize. Was he there all along?

It's Will, sporting a freshly shaved head. RIP Bowl Cut.

Eleven lets go of Mike's hand. They all watch as she gently touches Will's bald head.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)

Bitchin.

Will responds by touching Eleven's short hair.

WILL

I figured you'd like it.

Eleven leads Will toward everyone else and pulls them all into a massive group hug.

Joyce and the rest of the parents proudly watch from a distance.

ARGYLE

Power up with some mushroom pizza,  
my dudette.

ELEVEN

No pineapple?

ARGYLE

Nah, mushrooms are straight from  
the Earth.

MIKE

Wait a minute. So are pineapples.

This would normally be a really fun conversation to listen to, but there's more important things going on here.

Sullivan interrupts.

SULLIVAN

It's time.

They all look up at the creepy Creel house, then follow Sullivan.

**INT. CREEL HOUSE - SECOND FLOOR STUDY - DAY**

The place we remember, where Max fell into a coma in Lucas' arms. Looks just as they left it.

Wall to wall soldiers. Barely any room to move.

Sullivan, MacReady, Hopper, and Enzo surround the orange-glowing Upside Down gate that is open on the hardwood floor.

Looks like some armed soldiers are joining them, decked out in military gear and automatic rifles.

Murray awkwardly stands on the sideline like a nerd at a high school dance.

But he's not alone. Joyce and all the kids are there too.

Sullivan steps up.

SULLIVAN

Good luck, gentlemen. We're counting on you.

MacReady nods, then reaches into his pocket and pulls out his miniature whiskey bottle. He chugs it. Every. Last. Drop.

MacReady throws the bottle through the gate.

MACREADY

How bout we get this party started?

SULLIVAN

Remember, try to save some strength to close the gate when you come back out.

MACREADY

Like I said, I'll try my best.

Sullivan moves closer to MacReady and hands him a backpack.

SULLIVAN  
(whispering)  
Make sure you look like MacReady  
when you come back out.

MacReady opens the backpack, removes some clothes, then slings it over his shoulder.

SULLIVAN (CONT'D)  
And stick to the plan.

MacReady laughs.

MACREADY  
Since when does RJ MacReady stick  
to a plan?

Hopper discreetly nods in Eleven's direction. Makes sure she can't hear.

HOPPER  
She can't know the truth. Ever.  
Promise me you'll never tell her,  
even if I don't make it out.

SULLIVAN  
That's one of the reasons I don't  
want her in there.

Hopper isn't sure if he believes him, but has no choice.

Sullivan backs away and shares a mutually nervous look with Eleven.

Everyone stares at the gate, unsure what lies beneath.

Let's see for ourselves...

#### **EXT. UPSIDE DOWN - DAY**

Thunder and red lightning. A concert stage in the middle of nowhere. Spore snowflakes fall on a shadowy figure.

It's a shirtless EDDIE MUNSON. Clearly dead, but somehow alive. Like a DEMOZOMBIE.

A guitar isn't strapped to him, it's sewn on. And like a true rock star, a guitar pick waits in his mouth.

He's halfway through the spoken word intro to a familiar heavy metal song. A dark, sinister drawl.

## EDDIE

Let him who hath understanding  
reckon the number of the beast. For  
it is a human number. Its number is  
six hundred and sixty-six.

Damn right! Any Iron Maiden fan would recognize that as the intro to THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST.

Eddie spits the guitar pick out out of his mouth and catches it with his fingers. He shreds the guitar like never before.

He sticks out his tongue and catches a spore snowflake as he continues to play.

A hole forms in the clouds. More thunder. More red lighting. He's summoning something or someone.

A storm in the sky. Multiple sand twisters merge above the stage.

Eddie plays the guitar like his life, or death, depends on it.

A massive formation of sand slowly drifts down from the clouds. Body parts develop on the descent. Head. Arms. Legs. Wrapped in slithering vines.

It's Vecna. Aka Henry, or Peter, or One. You know who this mofo is. Let's stick with Vecna.

DEMOBATS swarm Eddie like rabid fans.

He grabs one and holds it up in the air. Then...

CHOMP! He bites the head off the DEMOBAT and spits it to the ground. A gnarly sacrifice to impress Vecna.

He suddenly has a bigger audience.

CHRISSY CUNNNINGHAM, in her cheerleader uniform, dances her way to the stage in an imaginary mosh pit.

She's joined by BILLY HARGROVE. His mullet swings to the beat.

Billy grinds on Chrissy. Like Dirty Dancing for the dead.

Chrissy wants no part of Billy. She grabs him by his hair and smashes his head on the stage.

Sorry, Billy! She only has eyes for Eddie.

This fuels the start of a badass guitar solo as Eddie and Chrissy gaze into each other's eyes.

DEMODOGS attack Billy and drag him away with their teeth.

A spectacular light show as red lightning flashes around Eddie. Vecna closes his eyes and absorbs every guitar note into his body.

Vecna lowers himself into the mosh pit, surrounded by the howling DEMODOGS and DEMOBATS that worship him.

Out of nowhere, RONNIE JAMES DIO joins Eddie onstage. No, not the real Dio. Just his hologram. Or maybe it is the real Dio. Who knows?

The skin of Eddie's chest stretches like elastic as he raises his guitar in the air like a lightning rod.

CRACK!

A bolt of red lightning rips right through the guitar and Eddie, lights him up like a Christmas tree.

Eddie lowers the guitar, sticks out his tongue and makes devil horn signs with his hands.

Chrissy rushes the stage and leaps into his arms. They kiss like it's their wedding night.

#### **INT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Everyone watches as MacReady, Hopper, Enzo and the soldiers surround the gate.

MacReady puts his headphones on, hits play on the Walkman.

Bong! The sound of a deep, slow bell.

Bong! There it is again. And another and another.

The guitar kicks in. Then the drums. MacReady's theme song is HELLS BELLS by AC/DC!

Hopper's turn. Headphones on. Hits play. We hear Jim Croce's YOU DON'T MESS AROUND WITH JIM.

And then Enzo.

Slow piano notes, followed by Steve Perry's raspy but beautiful voice.

That's right. It's the time. It's the place. It's OPEN ARMS by Journey.

MacReady looks like a kid ready to jump in a swimming pool.

HOPPER

You might want to go in head first.  
Trust me. I've been in these  
before.

MacReady takes the advice, drops to the floor and reaches into the gate with his hands. Sticks his head inside, then climbs through.

Enzo does the same.

Hopper waves to Eleven, Joyce, Murray and the rest as if he's saying goodbye, but lightens things up with a smile and thumbs-up.

Joyce and Eleven hug as he climbs inside, followed by the armed soldiers.

#### **INT. UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

The gate is in the same exact spot on the floor, but we're in the Upside Down now, a dark and creepy mirror image of Hawkins.

MacReady, Hopper and Enzo help pull the armed soldiers out of the gate.

Even the soldiers wear headphones. Hopper points to his ears, talks loudly.

HOPPER

Make sure you can hear your music,  
but keep it low enough to hear us  
too.

The soldiers adjust the volume on their Walkmans as they all creep through the house.

Floorboards creak. As they turn a corner, they hear growls. Flamethrowers and automatic weapons ready.

A drooling DEMODOG leaps into the air and latches onto a soldier's neck. Blood sprays as he falls to the ground.

The DEMODOG is pelted with a barrage of bullets and flames, and unfortunately, so is the soldier.

Hopper stares at their burnt carcasses.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 (to the remaining  
 soldiers)  
 No man left behind. Take him back.

These soldiers are terrified. Two of them immediately volunteer, pick up the body and hurry back to the gate.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 It's going to get worse outside.  
 Anyone not up for it, now's your  
 chance to leave.

One of the soldiers takes a step back as if to leave, but another soldier holds him back.

They all head down the stairs.

**EXT. UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

*Music Note: When a character is featured, their music plays in the background, sometimes overlapping with the others.*

A flash of red lightning as everyone steps out of the Creel house. The spore snowflakes fall with more intensity.

They walk in slow motion, like the movie Armageddon. Total badasses saving the world.

Hopper is used to the Upside Down, MacReady and Enzo are not.

MACREADY  
 So this is the Topsy Turvy?

Hopper wants to correct him, but no time for jokes. He leads them to the playground across the street.

HOPPER  
 That's our spot.

They stop in the middle of the playground.

One of the soldiers puts his hands on the merry-go-round. Gives it a spin.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
 Let's knock on the door. Fire your  
 guns into the sky.

The soldiers point their guns straight up.

RAT-A-TAT-TAT. Over and over. The sky seems to respond, dark clouds move about.

The gunshots echo across the Upside Down, all the way to:

### **EDDIE MUNSON'S CONCERT**

Eddie plays a killer guitar solo as Chrissy dives off the stage and into the mosh pit.

They hear the gunshots. Eddie abruptly turns his head. Stops playing guitar.

The beasts in the mosh pit do the same as Vecna roars.

Eddie puts his fingers to his mouth and whistles.

Almost instantly, a DEMOHORSE gallops to the stage and Eddie leaps onto it.

### **CREEL HOUSE**

Hopper, MacReady, Enzo and the soldiers wait for what they know is coming.

A soldier points to the sky.

Dozens, make that hundreds, of DEMOBATS head their way.

The soldiers light up the sky with their guns, but it doesn't slow the DEMOBATS. Not at all.

No worries. Hopper, MacReady and Enzo have their flamethrowers ready.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

Wait...

The DEMOBATS squawk as they get closer.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

Wait...

Hopper has this down to a science.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

Now!

All three of them light up their flamethrowers in unison, like Ghostbusters in the Upside Down.

Looks like a massive solar flare. The whole place lights up.

The DEMOBATS fly right into the flames. Some drop instantly, others keep going. All of them shriek.

But the boys don't let up and unleash hell's fire on them.



The surviving DEMOBATS retreat.

But so do the soldiers. Hopper turns around just in time to see them running back into the Creel House.

Only Hopper, MacReady and Enzo left.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
Looks like it's just us now.

MACREADY  
It always was.

Enzo points to something in the distance. Headed straight for them.

It's Eddie on the DEMOHORSE. Eddie snarls as he picks up speed. His sewn-on guitar bounces with every gallop.

The DEMOHORSE opens its flowery, toothy mouth and roars.

They aim their flamethrowers. Eddie sees this and jumps off the DEMOHORSE at the last second, just before it's lit up in flames.

Eddie stands. Pissed off. Stares down his visitors. Locks eyes with Hopper.

They recognize each other.

HOPPER  
Eddie? Eddie Munson?

Eddie calms. Torn. A glimpse of the Eddie we remember.

They all hear, and feel, a demonic roar in the distance.

EDDIE  
You don't have much time. Turn  
around and go back.

Hopper and the gang stand their ground. There is no turning back.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
Go! Now!

Like a magic show, a cloud of smoke engulfs Eddie. When the smoke clears, he's gone.

The thunder and red lightning intensifies.

HOPPER  
Eddie?!

A hole opens up in the sky above them. Time to forget about Eddie.

HOPPER (CONT'D)  
I'm pretty sure he's coming.

ENZO  
Who?

HOPPER  
The big bad boss man.

MACREADY  
Time to throw up my dinner.

MacReady sets down his flamethrower. Takes some clothes out of his backpack, disappears behind a tree.

Bones crack amidst the sound of cicadas.

Moments later, VICTOR CREEL/MACREADY steps out from behind the tree. He looks like Victor did in prison, eyes missing and all.

No headphones, but somehow the AC/DC HELLS BELLS song still plays softly in the back of his mind, as if his brain recorded and looped it.

HOPPER  
Victor Creel?

VICTOR/MACREADY  
Our secret weapon.

HOPPER  
How did you pull that off?

VICTOR/MACREADY  
I told you. Dinner.

HOPPER  
Lovely.

VICTOR/MACREADY  
Don't worry. He volunteered. Just like me.

A fierce tornado of sand forms in the sky. If sand could be angry, this is what it would look like.

The sand slowly forms into Vecna as he lowers himself down from the clouds.

We hear the sound of vines slithering through and around him.  
Or is it DEMOSNAKES?

Vecna stares at Victor/MacReady, but he only sees his father,  
Victor Creel.

VICTOR/MACREADY (CONT'D)  
It's time, son. Time to stop all of  
this.

VECNA  
I'm only just getting started.

Victor/MacReady keeps the charade going. He follows the sound  
of Vecna's snakes, holds his hands out in front of him like a  
blind man would do.

Until they are face to face.

Victor/MacReady places a hand on Vecna's cheek.

He flinches at first, then relaxes and continues to explore  
Vecna's face.

Vecna closes his eyes in a trance, causing Victor/MacReady to  
rise up into the air.

VICTOR/MACREADY  
I love you, Henry. You don't have  
to do this.

This weakens Vecna for a moment, causing Victor/MacReady to  
lower a bit.

But then Vecna snaps out of it and anger fully overtakes him  
as Victor/MacReady rises back up.

CRACK!

Victor's legs bend the wrong way and snap at his knees. His  
feet nearly touch his face.

VICTOR/MACREADY (CONT'D)  
Come home with me, Henry. Please.

Victor/MacReady screams as Hopper readies his flamethrower.

Enzo waits for his cue.

CRACK!

There go Victor's arms. They dangle like dead branches from a  
tree.

Usually that's enough for Vecna, but not this time, not for this. He keeps going as Victor/MacReady's head spins like a scene out of *The Exorcist*.

Vecna waves his hand and pulls Victor/MacReady toward him, his head turned the wrong way.

He makes eye contact with Hopper. Vecna can't see him wink.

Once Victor/MacReady reaches Vecna, he places his grotesque claw hand on his head.

Victor/MacReady's spine snaps as Vecna forcefully turns his head to face him. Touches the empty eye sockets.

VECNA

I wish you could see me right now,  
what I've become.

Vecna laughs, then suddenly stops as eyes form in Victor's empty sockets. It's Victor Creel's eyes.

VICTOR/MACREADY

I can see you, son.

This stuns Vecna as they look into each other's eyes for the first time in many years.

Vecna releases his grip and Victor/MacReady falls to the ground.

Vecna appears to melt into sand particles. Snakes and vines drop off as he lowers himself to the ground and shrinks in size.

The Vecna sand re-forms into something else: a little boy in his Sunday best. Hair parted to the side. It's young HENRY CREEL.

HENRY

Dad?

VICTOR/MACREADY

Son?

Young Henry slowly approaches his father. With tears in his eyes, he wraps his arms around him.

Hopper and Enzo lower their weapons. All they see is Henry's innocent face.

A deformed Victor/MacReady manages to pull Henry into a hug. A visually disturbing, but tender moment.

We hear a weird mash-up of everyone's music, particularly with AC/DC and Journey.

Everything is unusually peaceful, but then Victor/MacReady's hands turn into tentacles and he squeezes young Henry like an octopus.

Could this be over already?

The tears that stream down Henry's cheeks turn to blood. A lot of blood.

Victor/MacReady attempts to squeeze the life out of him, but Henry opens his mouth impossibly wide, unleashing hundreds of miniature MIND FLAYER SAND SPIDERS.

Hopper and Enzo raise their flamethrowers back up, not sure what to do.

It's a sick orgy of intertwined octopus tentacles and black widow spiders.

The spiders attack Victor/MacReady as young Henry instantly grows into the adult Henry, then slowly morphs back to Vecna. A sinister laugh echoes throughout the Upside Down.

Victor/MacReady looks like a folded-up box with feet, struggles to fight off the spiders.

Hopper and Enzo light up Vecna with their flamethrowers.

The spiders return to Vecna and swirl into a sand funnel. One by one, they combine with Vecna to form a much larger MIND FLAYER. And it keeps growing.

More thunder. More lightning. The whole Upside Down is lit up like the Fourth of July.

The MIND FLAYER stomps the ground like a bull. It's pissed.

Bones crunch as Victor/MacReady splits its body in half.

A new creature steps out of its shell, sheds its skin like a snake.

Thousands of squirming worms construct a new body around Victor/MacReady. It now has a mouth full of razor teeth and three glowing red eyes positioned in a triangle.

Then it grows, towers over Hopper and Enzo.

Lets out a roar that would put King Kong to shame. Is this The Thing's true form? We'll never know.

The MIND FLAYER continues to stomp the ground as it keeps growing, circles The Thing like a shark. It's on!

**INT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Will grabs the back of his neck in pain. Buckles over.

Eleven and Mike see this.

MIKE

Will?

Mike puts his hand on Will's shoulder.

Something moves from the back of Will's neck. Under the skin, it moves like a slug. Whatever it is, the bump makes contact with Mike's hand. He flinches and backs away.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Will turns his head and speaks with a demonic voice.

WILL

I tried to tell you guys. You  
didn't listen. None of you.

Will rips off his shirt like a teenage Hulk, shows off his muscles.

This also shows off the strange mass that now moves around his chest.

Joyce screams.

JOYCE

Murray!

Murray watches the mass slither back up Will's neck and under his shaved head. It moves around like it's trying to escape, deforms Will's skull.

A bunch of soldiers aim their guns at Will. All the kids watch in shock, then join Joyce with the screams.

Sullivan holds his hand up, signals to the soldiers to wait.

The mass moves into Will's face, gives him a crazy Toxic Avenger look.

Joyce rushes to Will's aid as Murray jumps in the way of the soldiers.

**EXT. UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Hopper and Enzo take cover at a safe distance.

ENZO  
What do we do?

HOPPER  
Watch.

The Thing forms five gigantic hands, each one grabs a MIND FLAYER leg and rips them all off.

The MIND FLAYER drops with a THUD that shakes the entire universe.

Hopper and Enzo lose their balance and fall to the ground.

It's a massive EARTHQUAKE in the Upside Down.

The Thing rises even more, as it matches and beats the size of the leg-less MIND FLAYER.

The Thing's mouth opens and roars. If the MIND FLAYER had a mouth, it would roar too.

More lightning. More thunder. More snow spores. Even looks like a heavy snowstorm as the ground opens up and rumbles.

**EXT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

BOOOOOOOOOOM! Sounds like thunder, as the earthquake from the Upside Down carries over into the real world.

All at once, everything DEMO converges on the Creel house.

DEMOGORGANS.

DEMODOGS.

DEMOBATS.

DEMOLIONS.

DEMOTIGERS.

DEMOBEARS.

Oh my!

If you can imagine it, you can see it. DEMO-ANYTHING.

But it's like the earthquake doesn't affect these beasts as they pick up speed and charge at the house.

**INT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Inside, the whole house shakes. Windows break. The hardwood floor splits apart.

Everyone loses their balance, falls to the floor.

Except Will. It's like the earthquake doesn't affect him either.

Total disarray. The sound of gunshots and screams outside.

Followed by the sound of the front door being smashed in.

And then the sound of SOMETHING running up the stairs. Make that MANY THINGS, like hundreds of animals all running up the stairs at once.

As everyone stumbles around the room in the midst of the earthquake, the DEMOANIMALS all leap into the gate with perfect balance.

Will has perfect balance too. In all the confusion, he calmly crawls into the gate and disappears.

JOYCE

Will!

Joyce's screams pierce into...

**EXT. UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

All of the animals burst out of the Creel house. Looks like a DEMO-STAMPEDE.

The further they get into the Upside Down, they're color seems to fade.

Hopper and Enzo see them coming and turn their flamethrowers on.

The fire lights up some of the animals, but most get past. Hopper can't believe what he sees.

As the animals run toward the MIND FLAYER, they leap in the air and completely change into sand.

Every swirl of sand lands right on the MIND FLAYER. It grows bigger with each hit.



Almost instantly, the MIND FLAYER doubles in size, towers over The Thing.

In the distance...

Will crawls out of the Creel house on his hands and knees.

He coughs as the mass moves around his entire body with breakneck speed.

Not just an ordinary cough. It's like the call of a beast.

Everything continues to shake as Will looks straight up and opens his mouth real wide.

Particles of sand shoot from his mouth like projectile vomit.

A voice calls out in the distance as we hear the sound of running feet.

HOPPER

Will!

The vomit sand particles swirl in the air around Will as he collapses and goes unconscious.

The sand travels through the air and attaches to the MIND FLAYER.

Hopper scoops up Will and runs with him in his arms, struggles with the worsening earthquake.

DEMOANIMALS continue to sand-smash into the MIND FLAYER. It grows with every hit, until it resembles something else. Something truly horrifying.

The THESSALHYDRA.

That's right, the biggest, baddest boss in Dungeons and Dragons.

A Giant reptilian head sprouts from its torso. It has Vecna's face.

Eight miniature Vecna heads follow and weave around each other like snakes in Medusa's hair.

The Thing keeps growing too, but struggles to keep up with the size of the THESSALHYDRA.

Sand flies at the THESSALHYDRA like it's a sand magnet.

And then it grows a tail at least twenty feet long with a pair of sharp pincers like a scorpion. More like forty feet long.

Now it has a mouth with a massive jaw of jagged teeth that resemble swords.

A hideous beast, even for the Upside Down. A transformer made out of sand.

The THESSALHYDRA doesn't just roar. It screams, wails, and stomps.

The Thing responds with a similar, but much weaker scream. This was unexpected. The tides have turned.

A stare-down between the two monsters as they circle each other like fighters in a boxing ring.

#### **INT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Meanwhile, in the real world, the Creel house still shakes.

Murray lies on his stomach on the floor. A soldier must have dropped a flamethrower in the commotion. Murray eyes it up.

Crawls on his elbows, reaches out and snatches the flamethrower.

Stands up and looks at a terrified Joyce. He nods to her, then runs to the gate. Yells as he leaps, flamethrower in hand.

SULLIVAN

Hey!

POOF! Murray is gone, into the Upside Down.

As the earthquake calms, Sullivan, the military, and the kids all stand back up and try to regain their balance.

#### **INT. UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Murray bounces out of the gate and into the Upside Down, still screaming for a fight.

Takes a moment to put on his headphones. Hits play. The beat kicks in. We all know this song.

It's STAYIN' ALIVE by the BEE GEES.

MURRAY

Eat your heart out, John Travolta.

Murray struts through the house with the swagger of Tony Manero in the opening of Saturday Night Fever.

Even punches and kicks to the Bee Gees beat.

Around the corner, down the steps, then out the front door.

**EXT. UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

It's Disco Karate Night in Murray-town.

WHAM! A disco karate kick here. BAM! A disco karate punch there. All to the beat.

Murray sees something, or someone, running toward him. He lifts his flamethrower, ready to light up whatever it is.

But it's Hopper with Will. Murray lowers his flamethrower and points inside.

MURRAY

Stay with Joyce and the kids. I got this!

Hopper keeps going with Will.

Murray goes back to his disco karate moves like he never missed a beat, sees the battle up ahead.

Murray charges toward the fight, lets out another victory scream.

**INT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Hopper climbs out of the gate, pulls Will with him. Joyce rushes to them and hugs them both like she'll never let go.

Medics practically have to pull Joyce away from Will to tend to him.

Eleven helps Hopper stand up. He brushes himself off as he nods to the rest of the kids that he's alright.

Sullivan turns to Hopper.

SULLIVAN

What's going on in there?

Hopper struggles to find the words, then it clicks.

HOPPER  
Godzilla vs Kong.

Dr. Owens overhears and steps up.

OWENS  
Who's winning?

HOPPER  
They both are.

Sullivan expresses concern.

**EXT. UPSIDE DOWN - CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

Enzo runs toward the THESSALHYDRA and torches one of its legs with his flamethrower.

That just pisses it off.

The THESSALHYDRA returns the favor and whips its tail at Enzo, its pincers slice off the arm holding the flamethrower.

The flamethrower falls to the ground and Enzo onto his back. He screams in agony as the tail picks up his severed arm and devours it.

Enzo tries to climb back up but the THESSALHYDRA snaps its tail at him. He stays on his back and turns his head. All he can do is play dead and watch as he bleeds out from his shoulder.

In a bit of coincidence and irony, Enzo's music plays the chorus from the Journey song.

JOURNEY  
So now I come to you, with open  
arms...

Enzo sees the image of a Russian woman. He extends his one remaining arm out to her, then closes his eyes.

The Thing encroaches, forces the THESSALHYDRA to back away from Enzo.

Murray reaches the battle. He looks like an ant compared to these two monsters. He sees Enzo on the ground. Hides behind a tree, waits for an opportunity.

The fight goes on like a high noon western showdown. Both creatures wait for the other to make a move.

The THESSALHYDRA opens its mouth again, this time revealing a grotesque tongue that resembles a garden hose.

The Thing knows something is coming. Waits for it.

And there it is. Liquid shoots from the THESSALHYDRA's tongue. Not just any liquid. This is ACID. Sprays and completely covers The Thing in one shot.

The Thing feels it. Distorts and bends in odd shapes. Flails its arms and legs, or whatever those are.

Screams in pain and melts like a wicked witch doused with water.

The THESSALHYDRA admires its work as The Thing shrinks in size. Drips down to a gigantic puddle of slithering goo.

The THESSALHYDRA roars in victory and shape-shifts again.

Sand swirls in the air and re-forms back into Vecna at normal size.

A terrified Murray peeks out from behind the tree. His hands tremble, but keeps a grip on the flamethrower.

Vecna steps up to the puddle of goo. Reaches down and wipes a tiny bit onto his finger. Holds it up and watches it move around. He's fascinated by it.

SPLASH! A hand emerges from the puddle, like a hand from the grave.

Vecna waits. Curious. Overconfident in himself and his powers.

The hand squeezes and makes a fist that telepathically holds and chokes Vecna's throat.

Vecna gags, struggles to free himself.

But the goo on his finger comes to life and transforms into a bizarre alien net, like something a Predator would use.

Wraps around Vecna until he's paralyzed, can't move at all.

A second hand rises from the puddle. Then the goo grows into a full human-sized figure. A female figure.

It's Eleven. Or at least it looks like her. Obviously, it's just The Thing, but it doesn't matter. Vecna only sees Eleven.

Vecna's mouth moves like he's trying to talk but can't. He's trapped.

Eleven/Thing flicks a finger at Vecna, allowing him to use his mouth.

VECNA

You wouldn't harm me if you knew  
who I was.

ELEVEN/THING

(in Eleven's voice)

There's nothing you could say that  
would change anything.

VECNA

I'm your-

Another quick flick of the finger. Mouth closed. Case closed.  
Eleven/Thing doesn't give him a chance to finish.

Murray sneaks up to them, feels safe for now.

ELEVEN/THING

(back to MacReady's voice)

Murray, blast him!

It's weird hearing MacReady's voice coming out of Eleven,  
but...

No hesitation. Murray turns on the flamethrower and lights  
Vecna up, just like the kids previously did with the Molotov  
cocktails.

There's one difference this time: the sand can't escape.

Eleven/Thing holds her hand out as if confining Vecna to an  
invisible box.

Sand bounces off the walls of the box, desperately trying to  
escape, but can't.

Blood drips from the nose of Eleven/Thing.

Murray screams in victory as he keeps the flamethrower on,  
looks to Eleven/Thing for direction.

MURRAY

Keep going?

ELEVEN/THING

Yes. Don't stop.

MURRAY

No problem.

Murray steps even closer to Vecna, watches him burn. Sand particles pile up around Vecna's feet.

Eleven/Thing keeps her hand out, a stranglehold on Vecna.

Vecna shrinks in size until his head rests on top of the sand pile.

Eleven/Thing holds out her other hand, and turns her palms inward.

She slowly moves her hands toward each other.

As her hands get closer together, it looks like Vecna's burning face is being squeezed in vice grips.

Murray keeps the flames coming. Sounds like every particle of sand is screaming.

Vecna's head completely caves in and turns to sand as Eleven/Thing's hands meet.

She rubs her hands together as the last remains of Vecna join the pile.

Eleven/Thing motions to Murray. He turns off the flamethrower, jumps up and down and claps his hands.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Yes! Yes! Holy shit, yes! That was awesome!

ELEVEN/THING

We're not done yet.

Murray sees all the blood coming out of Eleven/Thing's nose. Even blood coming out her eyes and ears.

We can see the borders of the invisible box, as stray sand particles move around and try to escape.

Eleven/Thing's right hand literally opens up, looks like the tip of a hose.

She places the hose/hand on the invisible box. She cocks her arm like a shotgun and it fully engages the box.

Sounds like an engine turns on as the sand swirls.

Her hose/hand is exactly what it looks like, a badass intergalactic vacuum.

VROOOOOOM! The hose/hand sucks in the sand particles.

All of the sand particles enter Eleven/Thing's body, her stomach growing.

Murray backs away, unsure what could possibly happen next.

And then the invisible box is empty and the sand is gone, entirely inside Eleven/Thing.

They look at each other.

MURRAY

Can I celebrate yet?

ELEVEN/THING

We're still not done.

MURRAY

What's there left to...

Murray backs off as Eleven/Thing's body contorts. Her head, arms and legs fold in, until she looks like a flesh covered box on the ground. An alien incinerator. A Vecna dumpster.

We hear beeps, like something is counting down.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Ummmm, should I run?

No response. Murray runs anyway.

He doesn't get far as the beeps speed up and...

FLASH! Everything turns white like a nuclear explosion.

Murray leaps to the ground for cover. Turns his head and watches as Eleven/Thing opens her mouth and vomits a pile of smoldering black ash.

As the ash hits the ground, the sky's color shifts from red to yellow. The spore snow stops.

It's like the sun has come out. Ding! Dong! The wicked Vecna is DEAD!

All around Murray, the Upside Down reverts to its original state: yellow tint, volcanic ash, mountains and floating boulders.

But no DEMOGORGANS in sight.

Murray scoops up a bleeding, unconscious Enzo and carries him across the changing landscape.



The Creel house is gone, but the glowing gate remains.

Murray runs to it as we hear the sound of crunching bones and cicadas in the background.

**INT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

First out of the gate is Murray, dragging the unconscious Enzo with him.

Hopper rushes to them but paramedics quickly take Enzo away on a stretcher.

Murray follows. Hopper stays with Joyce and the kids.

All eyes on the gate as...

Someone climbs out. Someone they weren't expecting. It's Eddie Munson!

Dustin sees this, can't contain his excitement.

DUSTIN

Eddie!

Dustin helps a confused Eddie to the paramedics.

And then a young woman climbs out...

It's BARB HOLLAND! She pushes her glasses up on her nose and smiles at everyone.

Nancy can't believe her eyes. Takes a few steps toward her.

NANCY

Barb?

Barb looks around, confused.

BARB

Where am I?

Nancy laughs off the question and pulls her into the biggest hug ever.

The paramedics give them a brief moment, then help Barb away.

Last, but not least, MacReady climbs out.

It's like a homecoming. Everyone cheers and applauds. A photographer takes his picture. One for the history books, just like he wanted.

But the gate is still open and the soldiers keep their guns on it, not sure what could come out next.

SULLIVAN

We need to close it! Now!

He looks to MacReady, who raises a hand in a futile attempt. No chance. The blood pouring from his nose, eyes and ears tells us everything. He's wiped out.

Hopper watches like a proud friend and brother as scientists, not paramedics, whisk MacReady away.

Sullivan turns to Eleven. She holds out her hand to show him. Nothing happens, still powerless, but she holds up her finger, as if telling Sullivan to wait.

Eleven looks around at all of her friends.

ELEVEN

Mike!

Mike turns.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)

I'm not the heart.

MIKE

What?

ELEVEN

I'm not the heart. We all are.

She said that loud enough for the others to hear. She has their attention.

Eleven steps up to the gate, holds her hand out for Mike. He reaches out and holds it.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)

Everyone form a circle!

Eleven puts on her Walkman headphones. Hits play.

Her music starts...

It's HEROES by David Bowie.

Will climbs up from the floor and takes Mike's hand. Then Jonathan takes Will's.

The circle grows. Nancy, Steve, Robin, Dustin, Erica, Argyle.

Then Joyce. Then Hopper, who closes the circle of friends by taking Eleven's hand.

Eleven looks down at her hand. It gives off a soft orange glow. She looks around. Everyone's hand has the same glow.

She closes her eyes as we hear a strange whirring noise.

**INT. MAX'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

That noise is coming from under Max's bed.

It startles Lucas. He peeks under the bed.

It's the empty Coke bottle, slowly spinning on its own. It gains momentum until it's fully spinning.

Lucas knows what's happening. He stands up and looks at Max.

LUCAS

Max?

He holds her hand. Both hands immediately glow.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

I'm here. I'm right here! Fight!

Max's eyes remain closed, but there's movement under those eyelids. A lot of movement!

Max squeezes Lucas' hand. Something happens as he closes his eyes, seemingly falling asleep.

Under the bed, the Coke bottle spins out of control.

And then...

**INT. THE VOID - DAY**

Max walks hand-in-hand with Lucas through the black void. Their feet splash through the water.

Max still wears her hospital gown and neck brace. Struggles to walk with the casts on her arms and legs.

Lucas looks all around.

LUCAS

Where are we?

They hear Eleven's voice in the distance.

MAX

El?

Max rips off her neck brace, then takes a few awkward steps in her casts. Faster and faster. Running hand-in-hand with Lucas through The Void.

Her plaster casts shatter into pieces as they pick up speed. Kind of like Forrest Gump, but so much cooler.

They see the circle of friends up ahead, and also two additional women.

**INT. CREEL HOUSE - DAY**

The David Bowie song grows louder...

Eleven opens her eyes and looks down at her shoulder. There's a glowing hand on it.

Slowly turns to see someone standing directly behind her.

It's Max, who holds Lucas' hand. They all smile at each other.

Another hand on Eleven's opposite shoulder.

Eleven turns.

It's TERRY IVES, her mother.

Tears form in Eleven's eyes.

Terry holds another woman's hand. It's KALI, her lost sister.

Eleven stares into her mother's eyes, who mouths the words: I LOVE YOU.

Everyone's hands glow stronger as we hear the ground move. Eleven keeps her eyes closed.

Somehow, all of the kids can telepathically hear the David Bowie song in their minds.

For a moment, we get another look into

**THE VOID**

Surrounded by black, Max, Lucas, Kali and Terry hold hands with the circle of friends.

They can also hear the David Bowie song.

Their hands glow too, and emit a light The Void has never seen before, until everything is washed out in pure white.

Back to the

### **CREEL HOUSE**

The ground rumbles. Orange liquid bubbles around the gate as it slowly closes.

The hardwood floor bends and forms around the disappearing gate.

And then...

The gate is gone. No trace. Just gone. Like it never existed.

Eleven opens her eyes. They all do.

More applause. More cheers. The kids hug each other. All appears to be over.

### **INT. MAX'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

Max continues to squeeze Lucas's hand and then...

They both open their eyes and stare at each other for what seems like an eternity.

MAX

I'm glad you're here.

LUCAS

Me too.

MAX

You owe me a movie.

Max smiles as Lucas leans in and hugs her.

### **EXT. NASA HEADQUARTERS - DAY**

Owens, Sullivan and his soldiers watch from a distance.

### **INT. SPACE SHUTTLE - DAY**

MacReady climbs into the space shuttle and is greeted by a team of astronauts.

You can tell they're all nervous as he buckles himself in.

**EXT. NASA HEADQUARTERS - DAY**

A countdown, and then the space shuttle launches.

OWENS  
So that's it?

SULLIVAN  
Let's hope so.

They watch until they can't see the shuttle anymore.

**EXT. OUTER SPACE - DAY**

The Earth is surrounded by hundreds, if not thousands, of alien spaceships, as the space shuttle breaks through the atmosphere.

One of the alien ships turns and follows the shuttle until they reach the SPACE STATION.

**INT. SPACE SHUTTLE - DAY**

Through the window, MacReady watches the Earth get further and further away.

He touches the back of his neck with his hand and feels a lump.

MacReady coughs. Then coughs again. A black, slimy slug slithers out of his mouth.

It's not an ordinary Upside Down slug though. It sprouts legs and scurries off like a spider.

MacReady ignores it as his body morphs into The Thing. We're not going to watch this time, but we hear the bones crunch.

**EXT. OUTER SPACE - DAY**

In the background, the space shuttle docks into the station.

Now the thousands of alien ships look more like hundreds of thousands, all lined up along the atmosphere.

The Earth is surrounded.

**INT. BAR - DAY**

Hopper and Murray sit at the half-empty dive bar. Football on the TV. Hopper has a beer, Murray a glass of J&B whiskey.

They both laugh, like they were in the middle of a funny conversation.

HOPPER

So you going to tell me what happened in there? While I was gone?

MURRAY

I thought I saw Blair.

Hopper is confused. About to take a sip of beer, but looks at Murray instead.

HOPPER

Blair? Who's Blair?

MURRAY

I went out after him. Got lost in the storm.

HOPPER

What are you talking about?

A thumping bass goes...

BOOM.

BOOM. BOOM.

A loud beep from the TV as it abruptly cuts to black and then flashes the EMERGENCY BROADCAST SYSTEM logo.

MURRAY

Why don't we just wait here for a little while? See what happens.

Murray slides his glass of whiskey to Hopper, laughs to himself, then looks right at us and smiles.

**THE END**