

Area 52

by  
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Based on  
True Events  
and Corroborated by  
Multiple Eyewitness Accounts

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EXT. DESERT - LATE AFTERNOON

CAMERA POV:

The camera bobbles. It steadies on--

MIKE BECKER and STUART FOSTER, late 20's, standing over a cylindrical contraption, enveloped in wires.

Parched desert and rocks stretch out behind them.

MIKE

Tell me when, Dajuan.

DUJUAN HAWKINS, also late 20's, turns the camera around on himself. He cleans the lens.

DUJUAN'S VOICE

Okay, rolling.

MIKE

Hello. I'm Mike Becker, along with Stuart Foster and Dajuan Hawkins, and this is the trial run of the Paranormal Telemetry Unit, version 1.0. Let's see, the time is currently--

Mike glances at his watch.

MIKE

...1747 hours. Which is 5:47pm regular time.

Stu clips a small, silver obelisk into a receiving port.

STU

Power cell is in.

MIKE

Should we have goggles on?

STU

Here goes history.

He flips a switch on the carapace of the unit.

It shudders as Stu looks to a diagnostic display on his phone. The power sequencing builds to a strained whine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU  
It's getting hot. Like, really  
hot.

DUJUAN'S VOICE  
Shut it down, Mike?

Mike reaches in, but flinches as a blazing arc of blue  
electricity snaps from the PTM. Suddenly--

An electromagnetic pulse ripples over the rocks, as--

The camera POV goes dark.

EXT. DESERT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Mike, Stu and Dujuan run so fast, Stu loses a shoe.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

CAMERA POV:

They dive in Mike's car.

DUJUAN'S VOICE  
Go, Mike! Go!

Mike revs the engine and mashes the pedal as--

Dujuan steadies the camera over Stu's shoulder, through  
the back window.

The horizon erupts with a piercing, white light. As  
contrast returns--

A curling, blue mushroom cloud churns into the sky.

Stu turns back to the camera, mortified.

STU  
We need a cooling circuit.  
Probably shoulda thought of that  
earlier.

**TITLE:**

AREA 52

EXT. SCHOOL SIDEWALK - DAY

TITLE OVER: *First Contact: Valentine's Day, 1992*

As if in a dream, 10 year-old Mike hauls over the sidewalk, a glowing smile drawn from ear-to-ear.

His two best friends, Dajuan and Stuart, also 10, hustle to keep up in a giddy frenzy.

Dajuan wields a Polaroid camera and watches an image emerge on an instant photo.

STU

She totally smooched you, Mikey!

Mike glances from the plush, stuffed bear he holds in his hands to--

A beaming, 9 year-old SADIE MAYFIELD, watching from the school sidewalk behind them.

Dajuan lifts the photo: Sadie's lips smush into Mike's cheek, her crystal-blue eyes illuminating the image.

DUJUAN

Dude, she's such a *babe*.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK - DAY

Mike, Dajuan and Stu scramble through a broken chain link fence and onto a quiet, suburban road.

DUJUAN

Guys. I heard if you kiss a girl on the mouth, you can make a baby.

STU

Babies are wicked expensive. That's what my mom says.

MIKE

Don't worry, I got it all planned out.

They toss their backpacks over a short fence--

MIKE

First, I'm gonna buy a rad car.

*SNAP!* Dajuan takes a picture of Stu tangled on the fence.

EXT. LOT - DAY

Landing on the other side, they pull the packs off the grass and beeline through the lot.

Mike pulls a poem from his notebook as they march through the perimeter fence.

MIKE

Then, I'm gonna read her this--  
*We look at the stars, like pins of  
 light in the sky, in my rad-fast  
 car.*

STU

Woah, where'd you get that?

MIKE

I wrote it during English. It's a haiku.

DUJUAN

So rad. Wish I could write that.

STU

Yeah, I'd pull mad chicks.

Dujuan digs out a dollar bill and a dime from his pack.

DUJUAN

Here, Mikey, I want you to have this. To help buy your car.

Suddenly, the guys freeze. Dujan stuffs the cash into his jeans pocket as--

13 year-old CHAD SAUNDERS grinds his skateboard to a halt. A cadre of knucklehead skaters follow close behind.

CHAD

Sup, Mike.

MIKE

Sup, Chad.

CHAD

Nice teddy bear, gay-boy.

With a crack, Chad spikes his board into his hand.

MIKE

Tell that to my girlfriend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

Ooo.

CHAD

What, Dujuan?

DUJUAN

Nothing--

Chad's knuckleheads surround the guys.

CHAD

You got money? How much?

DUJUAN

What?

Chad shoves Dujuan; his camera clatters to the sidewalk.

CHAD

I said, *how much*. I saw you put it  
in your pocket. How much?

STU

Get a job, Chad.

Chad shoves Stu onto the ground.

CHAD

Sit down, gay-boy. You gonna pee  
your pants, now?

MIKE

Chad--

Chad turns. Mike stands, a few bills outstretched.

MIKE

You can take mine.

Chad grabs the cash and smirks. Suddenly--

He rips the teddy from Mike's hands and hurls it over the  
fence and into a culvert.

MIKE

No!

The teddy bear tumbles deep into the ravine.

CHAD

Happy Valentine's Day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The knuckleheads laugh as Mike runs to the fence. He gazes down into the culvert as the gang skates off.

Mike wedges his toe into the chain-links as Dajuan picks up his camera.

Stu chokes back tears as he joins Mike on the fence.

STU

Mike, what about your car?

MIKE

It's only a car. She'll still mac on me without it.

EXT. CULVERT DITCH - DAY

Mike careens down the embankment, landing ankle-deep in sewer sludge. An avalanche of rocks and dirt spill over the yawning mouth of the drainpipe jutting from the hillside behind him.

As Mike slogs his way over slimy cement moguls, Stu and Dajuan slide into the bottom of the gully.

Climbing to his feet, Dajuan takes another SNAP--

DUJUAN

Ugh. So gross.

The picture captures the deep crevasse of muck and slime.

DUJUAN (CONT'D)

Stu! Mike! Wait up--

STU

Mike! Look...

Stuck in the drainage slop lies the teddy bear. Mike pulls it from the muck as Stu turns to Dajuan--

STU (CONT'D)

We found it!

*SNAP!* A picture of the Teddy.

MIKE

Just a little mud. It'll wash off.

Suddenly, Mike turns--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

*Ping...ping...ping...*A faint electronic signal carries through the trees, emanating from deep inside the woods.

MIKE

You guys hear that?

Stu and Dujuan look to Mike as he moves into the thicket. The boys follow, pushing deeper into the brush.

*Ping...ping...ping...*

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

Wrestling through the underbrush, they break into a clearing, and come face-to-face with--

A small, hovering, cylindrical unit. *Ping...ping...*

STU

What is *that*?

Creeping closer, the boys marvel at their reflections in the alloy sheen, and its suspension just a foot off the ground.

*SNAP!* A picture of the small cylinder.

DUJUAN

How does it do that? Just float like that?

STU

Antimatter. Definitely antimatter.

DUJUAN

Mike--?

But Mike's eyes are on the surrounding woods.

Stu and Dujuan follow Mike's stare to--

A small, SMALL, FLESHY-GREY HUMANOID partially obscured by a fallen tree.

It readies a chromium-alloy gun--

DUJUAN (CONT'D)

Is that a--?

As Dujuan raises the camera, an energy globulet smacks him in the chest, blasting him to the forest floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Another crackling energy globulet rips Stu off his feet, sending him tumbling over the ground.

The humanoid's gun recharges, dispelling a wisp of vapor.

MIKE

No--

But Mike can only watch as a third rivulet of energy whips into his chest, driving him to the ground, frozen.

His eyes shoot to Stu and Dujuan. Both boys lay frozen and horrified, but very much alive. Suddenly--

A guttural snarl emanates from the trees. An emaciated canine slinks from behind a bush, ratty, and lizard-like.

The Chupacabra stalks closer, salivating, when--

A searing laser blast rips from the surrounding plants, cleaving the wretch in half. Mike squeezes his eyes shut as--

The macerated halves flop lifeless to the forest floor.

He cracks his eyes in time to see a slender, inhuman hand placing the teddy in the grass just above his head.

THE VISITOR

{*Lovve.*}

Suddenly, a deep sleep overwhelms Mike.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DUSK

Mike's fingers twitch. With a gasp--

He struggles upright, and turns to scan the empty forest. No sign of the Visitor, or the severed Chupacabra.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Stu! Dujuan!

Nearby, Stu and Dujuan groan to their feet as Mike's gaze drifts to the forest.

STU

Am I...am I still dreaming?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Clutching the teddy, Mike looks to Dujuan's last picture: a blurry snap of the humanoid visitor.

MIKE

I don't think so, Stu.

STU

Pretty sure I'm dreaming...

Dujuan and Mike look to a metallic, clamshell case Stu clutches in his hands.

Inside, rest three small, chrome obelisks; elements of a race far-advanced, and altogether out of this world.

MIKE

Radical.

STU AND DUJUAN

Totally.

FADE TO BLACK :

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - MORNING

TITLE OVER: *Present Day.*

Sitting atop the workbench, Mike and Stu place the finishing screws on the refined, second-gen PTM as a Rex Waters podcast drones in the background.

REX (O.S.)

...and that friends, is *not* easily explained. If the answer is out there, I'm going to find it, and bring you the truth. Because that's the Rex Waters way...

Dujuan unlocks a massive safe with a smart-key, and removes the metallic case bearing the obelisks.

Stu removes an obelisk and clips it into a port, as Dujuan lifts his phone and turns off the podcast.

Stu locks the containment hatch.

STU

Version two, coming along nicely.

They sit and stare at the upgrade.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Okay. Let's power it up.

CAMERA POV:

DUJUAN'S VOICE

I'm rolling.

STU

So, we've increased the power output, and reprogrammed the telemetry software to increase sensitivity in paranormal acquisition.

Mike pushes the microchip into its access port.

STU

In other words, it's bigger and faster.

MIKE

Cooling circuit is in. Unit is armed and ready, Stu.

STU

Commencing power test sequence.

MIKE

Wait, wait. I wanna get behind that table.

Mike pulls goggles over his eyes and ducks behind a table.

Stu punches a code into the side of the unit. With a hum, it leaps to life. Suddenly--

A shockwave pulses through the basement, knocking out the camera, and the lights.

The camera POV goes dark.

BACK TO:

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The lights flicker back to life as Dujuan inspects his camera. They raise their voices over the module's electric activity--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

Knocked it out.

STU

Knocked out my systems, too. Gonna  
reboot.

The PTM hums and crackles as the computers flick to life.

STU

Wow, that's a lot of power.

Mike spins as the door to the basement opens.

MIKE

Shut it off, shut it off.

Sadie, in a sleek pants-suit, makes her way down, coffee  
in hand.

CHANTELL'S VOICE

Sadie, ask them what they're doing  
down there.

SADIE

What are you guys doing down here?

Stu flips a switch, and the module spins to low-power.

SADIE

Mike--

MIKE

We're...rebuilding.

DUJUAN

Sadie, please don't say anything  
to Chantell or Shaniqua about  
this.

SADIE

Dujuan, they're your sisters. They  
already know.

DUJUAN

Seriously, I don't want them  
getting on me about it.

SADIE

I'm going back up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STU

Sadie, you can tell Chantell hi  
for me.

SADIE

We are no longer in middle school,  
Stu.

MIKE

Oh, babe, could you bring us some  
coffee?

SADIE

Sure, I'll bring it right down.

MIKE

That sounds sarcastic.

SADIE

Nailed it, big guy.

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE KITCHEN - SAME

Sadie, stands at the counter filling two coffee mugs.

Dujuan's first sister, CHANTELL, in her own sleek suit,  
puts the final touches on breakfast.

CHANTELL

Sadie, if it were me, I'd put my  
foot down on this nonsense.

SHANIQUA, Dujuan's second sister, replete in nursing  
scrubs, pulls a bottle of OJ from the fridge.

SHANIQUA

Girl, this is your *future*. You  
gotta do what's good for you.

The basement door opens in the hall--

CHANTELL

Speaking of...

Mike sweeps into the kitchen.

MIKE

Hey! Mornin'.

Dujuan follows, lugging a duffel bag with a dangling  
sleeve of golden chain mail. He drops it to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike kisses Sadie. She gives him his cup of coffee as--

Stu pushes into the kitchen, dressed in a Warlock costume. He dives into the fridge.

STU

Who wants pancakes?

DUJUAN

Ooo, me.

He smiles at Chantell as she eyes his costume.

STU

Chantell? Magic pancakes?

CHANTELL

How are you a grown man?

SHANIQUA

Hey. Sit down, Dajuan Ledford Hawkins.

STU

Oh, boy.

DUJUAN

Shaniqua--

SHANIQUA

Sit. Hush yourself.

Dajuan flops into a chair at the kitchen table.

SHANIQUA

Look at you, running around, chasing aliens and almost getting yourself killed.

DUJUAN

Sadie. Help me out, here?

CHANTELL

Don't bring her into this. Who bought this house?

Dajuan sits, speechless.

CHANTELL

And who bought our house across the street, and those cars in the driveway?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dujuan hangs his head.

DUJUAN

I did.

CHANTELL

That's right. You did. So, where is that brilliant, responsible, practical software engineer now?

SHANIQUA

Running around with little wizards, is where.

MIKE

I'm not a wizard.

STU

I'm a warlock.

Chantell spins to Stu.

CHANTELL

And you, Stuart. *This* is what a genius CalTech-Quantum-Scientific-Particle-Doctor looks like?

STU

Particle Physics and Quantum Mech--

CHANTELL

With the potential in this corner of the kitchen, you'd think we could solve world hunger, right?

MIKE

Ladies. You can't blame them. This whole thing, it's my stupid idea.

CHANTELL

And then there's the Pied Piper, running all our little gerbils off the cliff. They follow you, Mike. So, for their sake, it's time for you to wake up and get serious.

MIKE

I am serious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHANTELL

So am I. Which is why I'm telling you, if you keep down this road, one day you might wake up and lose *all of this*.

SHANIQUA

And let's see you write your life story without *her*, Shakespeare.

Sadie kisses Mike on the cheek and shoulders her purse.

SADIE

She said it, not me.

SHANIQUA

It's cause we love y'all. Don't know why half the time, but we do.

The ladies collect their attache cases and purses, and parade to the front door. Stu nods to Dajuan.

STU

Hear that? Chante' called me a genius. She wants me--

CHANTELL

You know what I want?

STU

Wha--I thought you left?

CHANTELL

I want a *man*. Not a hairy man-baby in a cape.

She slams the door as Dajuan guzzles his orange juice, and dives into his duffel bag on the floor.

STU

What's she talking about? Man-baby?

EXT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Mike follows Sadie outside.

MIKE

Hey!

Sadie turns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

So, I had an idea.

He pulls her over to sit with him on the porch banister.

SADIE

Ooo. Ideas are good.

MIKE

It has to do with dinner. It has to do with you.

Mike kisses her cheek.

MIKE

It has to do with me. Champaign. Reservations at 8.

SADIE

Reservations. Music to my ears.

She grabs his hand.

SADIE

You know, I was talking to the girls.

MIKE

Yeah? 'Bout what?

SADIE

About your work.

Mike takes a breath.

SADIE

Hey, it was just an idea. Follow-up for your next, big comic book.

MIKE

Sorry, comic book?

SADIE

Graphic novel, sorry. Best idea, ever, you ready?

MIKE

Okay, hit me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SADIE

You need to do a story of all the stupid crap that you and your best friends go through. Called the Adventures of Mike Becker.

MIKE

Yeah, well people don't like stories where nothing happens.

SADIE

Nothing?! You're kidding.

Sadie presses an errant tuft of hair down on his head.

SADIE

Michael Thomas Becker. You are your own worst enemy. What are you afraid of?

MIKE

That people will find out how scared I am.

SADIE

The great Mike Becker? You've got two friends in there willing to follow you to the ends of the earth.

She smiles.

SADIE

And one out here that'll follow you to the end of the universe.

They kiss.

Chantell and Shaniqua burst from the front door.

CHANTELL

Mikey. Let her go. Some of us have real jobs to get to.

Sadie smiles to Mike, stands and follows the ladies.

Mike looks to a small, black box he holds in his hand. Cracking the clamshell case, he gazes at a modest, yet glimmering engagement ring.

He snaps the box shut.

EXT. DESERT CANYON - DAY

*WHUMP!* The butt of their mechanical contraption hits the ground.

Stu and Dajuan catch their breath and gaze past the mountains, into the sun.

STU

It's a good spot. Open.

Dajuan wipes his brow and punches a code into the unit's touch-interface. It chirps acceptance, and he looks to Mike and Sadie.

Mike, in a sharp suit, leans against his car, studying a schematic manual for the PTM.

Sadie, in a stunning nightgown, sits in the open door, fuming. She watches Dajuan clip a microchip into a small port.

DUJUAN

Cooling circuit is good to go,  
Mike. What's next?

Mike studies a page.

MIKE

Why is this so complicated?  
It's like reading Russian.

Sadie pulls her head from her hands, glaring at Mike.

SADIE

I'm so mad at you right now, I  
can't even make...words.

Mike rifles through the manual.

MIKE

Seriously, it's like War and  
Peace.

(takes a breath)

Okay. Power it up.

With a zealous respect, Stu pulls the small, metallic, clamshell case from his satchel.

He snaps open the case, removes a single, silver obelisk, and clips it into a receiving port on the module.

The guys glance at each other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU  
Power cell is in.

MIKE  
It just says "activate".

SADIE  
Michael, we're gonna be late.

STU  
No, the cell powers the whole unit.

SADIE  
Stu, I said *we are going to be late.*

STU  
Oh. I thought you asked how it worked.

SADIE  
What--?

STU  
Here goes history.

Stu flips a switch on the carapace of the unit. Nothing happens.

Sadie drops her head into her hands.

STU  
Um. That's weird.

He flips the switch again. Still nothing.

STU  
Might be a short somewhere.

DUJUAN  
You wrote everything down, right Mike? Step by step--

MIKE  
Dajuan, next time you can sit at the computer and try to decipher his notes.

A splitting, electric hum shoots from the module. Dajuan stands up and takes a slow step back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DUJUAN

I just jiggled a wire.

STU

Well, the thing's cookin' now.

MIKE

Dujuan, I wouldn't stand that close. It might give you a disease, or something.

DUJUAN

What, like a tumor?

The unit shudders as its power sequencing builds. Suddenly--

A subtle concussion-wave ripples over the rocks like a mirage. The teams' walkie-talkies squeal with feedback.

MIKE

Ouch.

A hologram activates. A sensor sweep pulses through the hologram.

Searching, searching...

DUJUAN (CONT'D)

Yo, Stu. This thing ain't gonna blow up again, right?

STU

No.

DUJUAN

Is it gonna give us a tumor?

STU

Um. No.

Stu thinks a moment. He takes a step back.

SADIE

Hey, guess what, guys? There are no aliens.

STU

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SADIE

Yeah, sorry Stu. No such thing.  
There are no aliens. That's it.  
Waste of time.

DUJUAN

Technically, this is a paranormal  
investigation. They don't have to  
be just aliens.

MIKE

Sadie--

SADIE

Okay. Let's suppose there are  
aliens--

DUJUAN

Paranormals--

SADIE

...and your little 'National  
Inquirer' thing here works?

STU

It's been tested.

SADIE

What happens when a--

DUJUAN

Paranormal entity.

SADIE

...shows up?

Stu looks to Dujan.

DUJUAN

We're gonna capture it.

SADIE

And then what?

DUJUAN

Study it.

SADIE

You're going to study it.

She turns, glaring at Mike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SADIE

You're going to study it? I'm leaving.

MIKE

Sadie, this is calculated. This place is super-charged with activity.

Sadie jumps out of the car and turns down the dirt road.

MIKE

Guys, keep going with the scan.

The guys watch Mike follow her through the dirt.

EXT. DESERT - DIRT ROAD - DAY

Sadie tromps through the dust as Mike catches up.

MIKE

Sadie, come on. Stu's spent weeks getting this ready.

SADIE

I don't care how long he spent.

Mike follows.

MIKE

He's been calculating and listening.

SADIE

To whom, Mike? Listening to whom?

MIKE

Sources. Viable sources that confirm possible--would you not run away from me, please?

SADIE

First, it was aliens, which I could deal with, because you would just stare into telescopes. But, now you've moved on to ghosts--

MIKE

Para--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SADIE

And don't you *dare* say paranormal, because the only thing paranormal here is how I keep dealing with this nonsense.

MIKE

Sadie, this is my mission.

SADIE

Oh, don't get me started on your mission. I don't even want to know where that came from.

MIKE

You know where it came from.

Sadie stops, aghast.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What?

SADIE

I'm wearing a dress, Mike. You told me this was supposed to be a special night, but now I'm walking home. In this dress.

She turns back to the road, heaving.

MIKE

I like your dress.

Suddenly, Mike's walkie-talkie squawks.

STU (O.S.)

Alpha, Alpha! Come in Alpha!

Mike pulls out his walkie.

MIKE

Go, Bravo Team.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Stu and Dajuan stare at a blip spiking the hologram's interface.

STU

We've got a definite proximity reading here, Dajuan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

Um, Alpha, Stu's calling a definite proximity reading--

STU

It's really close.

Suddenly, a twig snaps.

Frozen in fear, Dujuan barely eaks out a raspy whisper.

DUJUAN

Ten-fourteen. I repeat, ten-fourteen.

EXT. DESERT - DIRT ROAD - DAY

Mike freezes.

MIKE

Ten-fourteen? It's a ten-fourteen!

Mike scrambles after Sadie.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Sadie! Sadie! It's a ten-fourteen!

Mike grabs her hand and pulls her back towards the car.

SADIE

What? What are you talking about?

MIKE

Alien! They've had an encounter!

Mike and Sadie run back to the car, Mike screaming into his walkie.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Enroute, Bravo. Alpha is enroute.

They reach the car, and Mike pushes Sadie into the open door.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Get in! You'll be safe.

SADIE

Mike wait!

MIKE

Lock the doors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SADIE

Where are you going? Don't leave.

Mike gives her his walkie.

MIKE

Keep this. Channel 3.

SADIE

Mike!

MIKE

I'll be back. Sadie.

SADIE

What?

Sadie locks eyes with Mike, terror furrowing her brow.

MIKE

Stay here.

Mike slams the door and runs off.

EXT. DESERT - ROCK FORMATION - DAY

Mike tears around a corner to find Stu and Dujan staring at the ground.

MIKE

What is it?

He grinds to a halt. At their feet, imbedded in the soft sand, is a line of strange footprints.

STU

Footprints.

DUJUAN

Definitely paranormal.

MIKE

Look at that.

STU

What're you thinking, Mike?

MIKE

Hard to say. Small troll. Gnome, maybe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dujuan snaps a picture with his phone. Suddenly, up ahead, something pushes through the bushes.

MIKE

Quick! Down!

The guys dive behind rocks.

Mike's eyes lock with the receiver a dozen yards off; the ping pulses over the hologram.

INT. CAR - DAY

Sadie sits in the car messing with the walkie.

SADIE

(into the CB)

Mike? Stupid thing.

Static.

SADIE

Mike?

EXT. DESERT - ROCK FORMATION - DAY

Another twig snaps close to the guys' location.

DUJUAN

It's getting close.

STU

What do we do? Incapacitate it?

DUJUAN

I dunno.

STU

You're the weapons expert.

DUJUAN

I'll see what I got, but I'm out of tranq-darts.

Dujuan dives into his survival-pack.

MIKE

Okay, I'm just gonna brainstorm some stuff, throw it to the wall and see if it sticks. What if we dig a series of pit traps?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

With leaves and dirt over it?

MIKE

Yeah, like fake ground--

STU

Okay, but how long will that take?

MIKE

Couple of days. Right, we don't have a couple of days. Okay, I'm gonna keep flowing. Tripwire with a snare system.

STU

Tripwire...

MIKE

Rig a simple pulley.

Dujuan pulls a tattered fishing net from his pack.

MIKE

I'm still brainstorming, but I like the idea of a tripwire.

DUJUAN

What if we just stuff it into this net?

Mike and Stu glance at each other.

STU

It's a good idea.

MIKE

Who's gonna stuff?

DUJUAN

I'll stuff.

STU

No, wait. I'll stuff.

DUJUAN

But I'm the weapons--

STU

No, Dujan. I've gotta do this. I need to conquer this. I'll call if I need back up.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STU (CONT'D)  
(Stu looks to Mike)  
Mike, where's your walkie?

MIKE  
I gave it to Sadie.

STU  
You gave it to...ok. Stick with  
Dujuan. Use his walkie. But if you  
talk, make sure you say your name  
first. You're still Alpha,  
alright, Mike? Make sure you say  
that before you talk, otherwise I  
can't tell you apart.

Stu eyes the adjacent boulder.

STU  
Alright, cover me.

MIKE  
With what?

Stu creeps from behind the rock and moves downrange.

DUJUAN  
I'm the weapons expert.

MIKE  
I know.

STU  
Start working on that tripwire,  
just in case.

He settles behind a crop of rocks only a few feet ahead.  
Stu steels himself for the ambush.

Taking a deep breath, Mike leans in to Dujuan's walkie.

MIKE  
Stu? Stu!

Stu turns, just a few feet ahead.

STU  
Mike! I said to use your call-  
sign.

MIKE  
Oh, shoot! I forgot.

Mike speaks in Dujuan's radio.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE

Bravo? Come in, Bravo. It's Alpha.

STU

Nevermind. I can tell it's you.

MIKE

It's just up ahead, to your...

Mike works out the ticks on a clock.

MIKE

10 o'clock? To your left. You ready?

STU

Mike, am I gonna die?

MIKE

Go! Go!

Screaming, Stu leaps out of the bushes, net spread wide. He lunges and--

Crashes into a thicket of brush. After much thrashing about--

A startled BUNNY RABBIT shoots from the bush and tears up the adjoining hill.

STU

Back up, I need back up!

The guys freeze.

DUJUAN

Woah! A bunny rabbit?!

MIKE

Is that it?

STU

What?! Oh no--

DUJUAN

It's only a bunny, Stu.

Stu grips his leg, gasping for air.

STU

Medic! Medic!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DUJUAN

Man down! I'm on it.

Dujuan hustles to Stu and crashes next to him. Mike follows, listless.

STU

I'm hit. How bad? How bad is it?

Stu pulls up his pant leg. He's got a nasty raspberry with little beads of blood.

STU

Dujuan, don't cut these pants. I like these pants.

DUJUAN

I'm working on it. I'm working on it. Mike, hold him down.

But Mike just stares at the footprints.

MIKE

Bunny footprints. They look like little shoes.

STU

It's infected, I can feel it. Staff infection.

DUJUAN

I've got some Neosporin in here somewhere.

Dujuan dumps his pack and administers triage.

STU

Dujuan, I need you to check for gangrene. I don't want to lose the leg. Smell it.

DUJUAN

We should get him to a hospital.

Dujuan leans over Stu, and puts a hand on his head.

STU

Mission's over, buddy. We're going home.

Mike kicks a rock and gazes over the mountains.

INT. CAR - DAY

Sadie continues to fiddle with the walkie.

SADIE

Mike? Mike, this isn't funny,  
where are you?

The radio only crackles as she glances into the rearview. She gasps.

Behind the car, a furry mass vanishes behind a boulder.

She whips her head around, scanning the rocky canyon face through the back windshield. She lifts the radio--

SADIE

I swear. If you boys are messing  
around with me, I will turn  
warrior-princess in this desert,  
and hunt you down.

But behind the car rests only desert and rocks. Then--

Movement out of the driver's side window. She catches only a partial contour of--

A BEHEMOTH APE, gazing at her from between a crop of boulders. Instantly, it ducks away.

Entranced, Sadie opens the door. She steps out onto the dirt.

MIKE (O.S.)

But, there *has* to be a way.

Suddenly, the men burst through the scrub-brush. Stu and Dajuan lug the module as they beeline to the car.

STU

I'm not saying it isn't possible,  
it's just gonna take a ton of  
testing to recalibrate.

Mike pops the car's trunk as Dajuan and Stu drop the unit inside. His attention turns to Sadie standing alone at the front of the car.

MIKE

Hey. You alright?

She turns from the empty desert. Mike steps close and reaches for her hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She glances to the rocks, and Mike follows her gaze.

SADIE

Yeah. I'm just...

She trails off. Mike hugs her.

Dujuan smiles, watching Mike and Sadie embrace. Suddenly, he freezes. His eyes lock on--

A MASSIVE SHAPE lurking in the shadows of the canyon. Unblinking, he raises his phone and--

CLICK! The shutter snaps as the furry giant vanishes.

MIKE

I'm sorry. I completely messed up the night with this.

SADIE

Look at you. You're filthy.

Sadie smiles. She kisses him.

Dujuan spins from the rocks to Stu watching Mike and Sadie.

DUJUAN

Did you see that?

STU

What? No. I mean, I was just looking over in that direction when they started, you know, but...

Mike and Sadie return to the car.

STU

I wasn't staring. Just want to make that clear.

They pile in.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - LATER

The sun hangs low as Mike pilots the car over the desert road. Sadie gazes out the passenger window watching rocks and desert give way to trees and green.

Dujuan and Stu sit in the back seat. They scroll through Dujuan's camera-photos.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

See? There.

STU

Oh, yeah!

Stu stares at the phone.

DUJUAN

Can you even see it?

STU

Hey, just because I can't see it,  
doesn't mean it's not there.

DUJUAN

It does take a trained eye.

STU

I mean, that's just science.

Sadie turns from the window.

SADIE

I'm sorry I'm so hard on you  
sometimes.

MIKE

What? No way, no apologizing. Not  
after a stunt like today.

They smile.

SADIE

I just hate seeing you...

MIKE

What? Fail?

SADIE

You're this amazing writer, Mike.  
And I want you to use it in a  
direction that will benefit you.

MIKE

More than writing tech manuals for  
paranormal telemetry?

STU

Which we will publish, by the way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SADIE

See, that's what I've been thinking all along. That chasing aliens and ghosts--

DUJUAN

*Paranormal entities.*

SADIE

Dujuan, I'll murder you.

Dujuan returns to the photos.

SADIE

That all of this was a waste of time. But it makes you happy. You light up when your machine tells you that something's lurking in the shadows. You're like a kid.

A smile pulls over Mike's face.

DUJUAN

Yo, Mike. Check our six.

Dujuan turns to the back windshield as Mike looks to his rearview.

On the road behind them, Mike catches glimpses of a black SUV keeping pace around the turns.

DUJUAN

It's been following us since we got out of the state park.

SADIE

And why would it be following us?

Stu and Dujuan share a glance.

SADIE

Stu. Why would it be following us?

STU

I don't know! Maybe they picked up our...

SADIE

*Our what, Stu?*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STU

Pulse. Electromagnetic Pulse. When we power up the module, it sends out a pretty mean EMP, and it's not *exactly* legal.

SADIE

Seriously? Well turn it off.

STU

They might not even be following us in the first place.

MIKE

One way to find out.

Mike mashes the gas pedal. The speedometer pushes past 70.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

Mike's car whips around a bend as--

INT. MIKE'S CAR = SAME

Every eye in the car watches the road behind. Empty.

MIKE

Guess that answers that.

DUJUAN

Uh oh.

Behind them, the black SUV powers around the bend.

STU

They're still behind us.

Mike glances to Sadie. Fear furrows her brow as he slows the car and pulls the wheel.

STU

Mike, what're you doing?!

EXT. FOREST ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

Mike's car grinds to a stop on the gravel shoulder.

INT. MIKE'S CAR

Mike turns to his crew.

MIKE

Best case scenario, they'll just fly right by and we'll see who's driving.

DUJUAN

Probably a hit squad.

SADIE

What?

STU

Or, they'll stop and we'll get arrested for terrorism.

MIKE

Relax. No one's getting arrested for terrorism.

Dujuan peers out the back, scanning the empty road.

DUJUAN

I don't get it. They were right behind us.

Suddenly, a shadow in the forest adjacent catches Mike's attention.

STU

Sadie, is an EMP terrorism? I mean, from a lawyer's perspective.

SADIE

Mike?

Mike opens the door of the car and slowly climbs out.

SADIE

Where are you going?!

EXT. FOREST ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

Mike stands next to the car, studying the surrounding forest. Something moves through the trees.

*Ping. Ping. Ping...*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike turns to the trunk of the car. The PTM's muffled proximity alert cuts through the hush of the forest.

Slowly, Stu, Dajuan and Sadie emerge from the car. The PTM's *pings* climb in frequency, as Mike crosses the road.

SADIE

Mike.

But Mike continues to the treeline. He spins in the direction of a snapping twig within the woods.

Dajuan raises his phone and snaps a bevy of images.

Suddenly, grinding tires and muffled explosions whirl the crew around as a black SUV explodes from the trees behind them.

The SUV careens onto the road and--

SMASHES into the trunk of Mike's car. The weight of the SUV bashes the car off the shoulder into the runoff ditch.

STU

No!

Stunned, Mike and the team watch the black SUV squeal off, crunching over broken glass and shattered plastic.

DUJUAN

Hey!

Dajuan takes off after the SUV on foot as Mike sprints over the road to Sadie.

MIKE

Sadie! You okay?

They embrace as they look at his mashed vehicle.

SADIE

Mike, what if we had been in the car?

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Dujuan pounds down the street after the SUV. He snaps a picture before the vehicle tears around a corner.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Stu runs up from the other side of the road, breathless.

STU

Mike, the PTM! It's in the trunk.

Mike turns and locks eyes with Sadie.

MIKE

Sadie, listen to me. Back up.

SADIE

What? Why, Mike?

Mike turns Sadie to the other side of the road, and joins Stu in a scramble to the disabled vehicle.

MIKE

Back up, behind the trees. Go!

SADIE

Okay, I'm going. I'm in a dress,  
for the love of--what's wrong with  
you two?

Mike reaches the car. He peels open the mangled trunk lid, revealing the pulverized wreckage of the PTM.

Stu dives in as Mike rips super-cooled ribbons of metal and plastic away from a metal casing.

MIKE

Still frosty--

STU

Containment unit is intact.

With a pneumatic hiss, Stu pries open an installation port revealing the small, power obelisk.

STU

And, power cell is intact.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stu collapses against the car. Mike turns to Sadie and waves.

MIKE

Oh, I'm in trouble.

SADIE

*Michael Thomas Becker.*

Sadie screams her way across the street, livid.

SADIE

Who do you two think you are? The Bomb Squad?

MIKE

Sadie, Stu and I--

SADIE

No. No talking. I talk. You morons need to understand that others in this world are affected by your decisions. Not just you. Which means, in the future, if you're deciding between living a long life with your family or diffusing a nuclear bomb in the trunk of the car, you need to decide *not* to diffuse the nuclear bomb in the trunk of the car.

MIKE

C'mon. It's not a nuclear bomb.

STU

Well...

Dujuan returns, heaving.

DUJUAN

Got their plate.

He braces himself on his knees as he holds up his phone: a blurry image of the license bearing a government seal.

Mike flinches as Sadie smacks him in the arm.

SADIE

Well, here we are standing next to a car bomb. This is fun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIKE

We should probably call a tow truck. And the police.

Sadie digs her phone out of the car.

STU

Let's just think about this for a second. I'm not saying it's a bad idea, all I'm saying is that if they find our PTM, it's all over. It will no longer be ours.

SADIE

Stu, it's not even a discussion.

STU

Again, I'm not *against* involving the police. I just want that on record. I like the police. I just think they won't really understand why we have antimatter in the trunk of a crushed vehicle. Then, the FBI gets involved, and suddenly, we disappear into some detainment camp as terrorists.

Mike moves to the driver's door and reaches in. He cranks the key, and the car engine leaps to life.

MIKE

Hey. It works.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

A vast meadow sprawls wide, choked with the fog of war. Above, rise surreal, snow-capped mountains.

A broadsword rings from its scabbard, as--

Sir Dajuan the Pendragon, in full battle armor, leads a charge of knights headlong into battle.

His broadsword is swift and true, cleaving the ranks of a dark, barbarian army.

By his side, Stuart the Warlock fends off sword and axe with searing lightning bolts from his fingertips.

As the warring tides clash in metal and might--

CUT TO:

EXT. MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

*The real world.*

Dujuan and Stu beat other dorks with pool noodles in the chaos of a Live Action Role Playing battle.

On the sidelines, Mike watches from a lawn chair. In his lap, a sketchbook; its pages are blank.

Mike pulls his out his phone.

INT. LAWFIRM SADIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Sadie sits with Chantell, reviewing case files. Sadie's phone buzzes, and she picks up.

SADIE

I was wondering if you'd call.  
How're you doing?

MIKE (O.S.)

Good, good.

EXT. MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

Mike watches Stu peg a LARP-dork with tennis balls.

STU

*Lightning bolt! Lightning bolt!*

MIKE

Listen, I've been thinking a lot about what you and the girls said, and I'm ready to get serious. I want to make you proud of me, and I'm going to prove that the future is gonna be *our* future.

SADIE (O.S.)

Wow. Mike, that's awesome.

INT. LAWFIRM - SADIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sadie stands from her desk as Chantell cocks her brow.

SADIE

And...it's kinda hot. So, where are you right now?

EXT. MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

Dujuan slaps a LARPer in the face with a noodle.

MIKE

I'm gonna plead the fifth on that.

SADIE (O.S.)

Ooo, smart move, Becker.

MIKE

Call you later?

SADIE

Definitely. Love you.

MIKE

Love you back.

Mike hangs up the phone and gazes out over the sprawling battlefield of dorks.

STU

Protect the Pendragon! Only he can  
lead us to victory! *Lightning  
bolt!*

He looks to his sketch pad. Suddenly, his pen whips over the page: *A.S.A.P.*

CUT TO:

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Sir Dujuan the Pendragon dislodges his sword from the ribs of a slain barbarian.

SIR DUJUAN

Advance, brothers!

With another deft stroke, he levels another marauder, then freezes.

DUJUAN

What're you doing here, *Todd?*

CUT TO:

EXT. MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

*The real world.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TODD, robed in black, stands with his friends STEVE and WILL, and a gang of cling-on-dorks flanking behind.

Todd and his crew bear an uncanny resemblance to Mike, Stu and Dajuan, respectively.

TODD  
Heard you had some car troubles.

DUJUAN  
What did you say?

WILL  
Hope you didn't lose anything important--

TODD  
Will, shut up, dude. Lemme talk.

Stu approaches.

STU  
Seriously, Todd. Did you see what happened?

On the sidelines, Mike stands from his chair as Todd smiles and turns to his friends.

TODD  
I say we finish these losers.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

The barbarian warriors lift a bevy of automatic weapons.

STU  
No.

Mashing the triggers, the barbarians unleash a rage of lead, chiseling through armor and flesh. But--

Sir Dajuan whips his broadsword into a fury, knocking bullets out of his path in a blaze of sparks.

Stuart zaps a swath of bullets in mid-flight with a fistful of lightning, when suddenly--

Mike strolls into the fury.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Hey, Todd. Listen, can I get your phone number for my insurance company?

But Todd the Barbarian only raises his weapon, and fires.

MIKE

Maybe you saw something?

Mike stands, completely unaffected by the raging torrent of bullets thundering from the machine gun.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEADOW - CONTINUOUS

*The real world.*

Todd and his crew spray Nerf darts at Mike. He stands, unamused, as Stu bats the projectiles away with his hand.

MIKE

Were you following us, Todd?

TODD

Relax, I was on reconnaissance.

STU

Trying to steal our tech, bro?

TODD

You wish. Like you've got anything worthy.

STU

Says the tool working at Best Buy. How's that working out for you?

TODD

Repair department, genius.

He high-fives Will, but leaves Steve totally hanging.

TODD

Maybe you need to bring your busted up, middle-school, science project by so I can throw it in the trash--

Stu lunges, but Mike holds him back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Hey, save it for the field, Stu.  
Save it for the field.

Mike turns to Todd.

MIKE

Nevermind, Todd. Just walk away.

Todd turns with his friends.

TODD

Say hi to Sadie for me.

MIKE

What? Hey, Todd, lemme see that  
Nerf gun real quick.

Stu and Dajuan hold back Mike.

MIKE

You *hack*.

CUT TO:

GOOD N' SLEEPY MATTRESS COMMERCIAL:

Gaudy, free-licence music spools over still images of  
Good n' Sleepy's mattress inventory.

REX WATERS, oozing smarm, overlays the images.

REX

Looking for extra-terrestrial  
prices? Good 'n Sleepy Mattress  
Discounters are closing their  
doors forever. Thousands of  
discounted mattresses, store wide.

Rex points to another still image mattress.

REX

Delux Twin Microfiber box spring--

A UFO flies in, zapping prices with a laser. *Pew pew!*

REX

--half off! Ultra-soft Queen size  
with quilted pillow-top, 70% off!

The UFO returns. *Pew! Pew!*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REX

So hurry down to Good n' Sleepy  
Mattress Dicounters, today--

CUT TO:

INT. LAWFIRM - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Sadie and Chantell watch the commercial on a TV,  
unimpressed.

REX

...because these deals are outta  
this world. I'm Rex Waters, and I  
approve this message...of getting  
a good night sleep.

*Pew! Pew! Pew!*

The TV goes black as Sadie and Chantell turn to--

Rex Waters and his gaggle of lawyers seated at the table.

SADIE

So, you're telling me that you  
never agreed to have your likeness  
used in this commercial?

Rex nods.

REX

Usurp of my celebrity, far as I'm  
concerned. I never agreed to this.

Chantell leans over and whispers to a quaint, Asian  
couple sitting at the table.

SADIE

Well, it looks like you were in  
full agreement, appearing in their  
television commercial. You  
accepted payment to appear.

Rex's lead lawyer holds up a finger.

LEAD LAWYER

A subsidiary company, working on  
Rex's behalf, but without Rex's  
knowledge, received payment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REX

Hey, I'm trying to be a good guy,  
here, and not drag this to court.  
But, unless you produce a contract  
with my signature, I'll have no  
choice.

Sadie shoots a glance to Chantell.

EXT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Mike's smashed car sits in the driveway.

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - OFFICE - EVENING

Mike joins the crew in the home office at Dujuan and  
Stu's computer array, vaguely reminiscent of NORAD.

Dujuan sits at a dual-monitor, munching on a candy bar  
and whisking through images from the day.

DUJUAN

I'm telling you, something was out  
there with us.

He selects an image of the desert.

DUJUAN

I stared right at it. There.

He enlarges a section of rocks. A fuzzy, brown smudge  
darkens the edge of a boulder.

Sadie gasps, then recomposes.

Mike, Stu and Dujuan turn and stare at her.

MIKE

What is it?

SADIE

Nothing. What?

MIKE

Why did you make that noise?

SADIE

What? I went *pfft*. Like, oh  
*please*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

'Cause, if you saw something, you can tell us.

SADIE

I know.

Dujuan turns back to the screen.

DUJUAN

Okay. So, I looked over a few other images from where we got wrecked.

He enlarges an image of the forest.

DUJUAN

Nothing to the casual observer, right? Watch this.

He clicks a negative pass; black-spaces within the image flare white-hot. He points to a white blob in the corner of the image.

DUJUAN

That's a head. Eyes. Ears. Can't tell me that's a tree.

Everyone stares.

STU

Oh, right! And that's the arm--

DUJUAN

Nope, that's a tree. But look--

He moves the two images next to each other.

DUJUAN

It's got the same form. Same dimensions. It was following us.

SADIE

Oh, really. Following us.

STU

I know, right? So, photo-evidence by itself? Amazing, but inconclusive. Agreed?

SADIE

Oh, that's agreed, yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STU

I too thought our evidence was inconclusive, until I noticed *something*.

CUT TO:

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Stu leads Mike and Dujuan to the remains of the PTM splayed over a stainless steel workbench.

STU

Look at this. Blows my mind.

Stu swings a diagnostic monitor over the table.

MIKE

Wait. Is it...*still working?*

STU

Yes. It's still transmitting.

He squelches a waveform on the monitor.

STU

It's been emitting an active, low-frequency this whole time. Like a dog whistle.

MIKE

And you think it's been attracting something?

STU

I don't just *think*, Dujuan's got *pictures*. We're on to something.

SADIE

You boys need to get a grip.

Sadie turns to head upstairs as Mike's gaze drifts to the Rex Waters poster hanging on the workshop wall. *Out There.*

MIKE

She's right.

SADIE

Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

We need help. Who else is out there that can give us the support? Who else live, breathes and eats paranormal activity?

She follows his eyes.

SADIE

Nope. Don't you dare--

MIKE

We need Rex Waters.

SADIE

No, Mike. I'm in the middle of a lawsuit with this slimeball, and it's a total conflict of interest. You will *not* contact him, do you understand me?

Mike takes a breath.

MIKE

Um. Yes?

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - NIGHT

A collection of decaying mobile homes scattered over acres of an appliance graveyard. A radio antennae spikes from the roof of the largest trailer.

REX (O.S.)

Here's how I see it. Billions of stars in the galaxy. Some of those stars might develop intelligent life. And some of that life might develop interstellar travel--

INT. WATERS COMPOUND BROADCAST TRAILER - SAME

Cigar smoke curls around Rex as he speaks into a broadcast microphone.

REX

Even at our own, conventional speeds, the Milky Way could be completely traversed in about a million years.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REX (CONT'D)

That would still leave billions of years for life to arrive in our little corner of the galaxy. Now, fellow travelers--

ELISE, Rex's fresh-faced intern, enters. She leans against the doorway, listening.

REX

I'm a betting man. And odds are, we are currently the hosts of extraterrestrial, intergalactic visitors. Now. Anyone care to argue with mathematics?

Elise glances over to Rex's technicians; Todd, Steve and Will sit at a mixing board. She smirks.

REX

I'm Rex Waters, and I'll see you somewhere, *Out There*. Good night.

Rex pushes away the mic, and hits the music cue. He kicks his feet up and pulls on his cigar.

TODD

And, we're out. Great show.

REX

Elise, I need some whiskey.

ELISE

You're going to want to see this.

INT. REX WATERS LOUNGE - MINUTES LATER

Elise, Rex, Todd and his friends surround a computer. They're swept into the sad world of amateur videography.

ASAP PROMO:

Music starts, as does the overuse of dissolves.

Mike emerges over a surreal, alien landscape.

MIKE

Have you ever pushed your brain to the edge of human thought, and found yourself wrestling with eternity?

Graphic composite. A second Mike appears in-frame.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECOND MIKE

*...eternity...*

MIKE

Our vast universe, and we can only  
imagine what lies beyond, locked  
in the deepest vaults.

SECOND MIKE

*...questions without answers...*

MIKE

Join in this journey of discovery  
into the untapped realm of  
paranormal investigation. We are--

Snap zoom. It misses.

MIKE

*...the Association for the Study  
of Anomalous Phenomena.*

SECOND MIKE

*...ASAP...*

SCHLOCK MONTAGE: Dujuan's photographs. Cube spins.

MIKE

Dujuan Hawkins.

TITLE OVER: *Weapons Specialist & Hardware Design*

Dujuan somersaults in the grass.

MIKE

Stuart Foster.

TITLE OVER: *Quantum Physicist & Software Development*

Stu, in a white lab coat, turns from a computer screen  
and removes a pair of glasses.

MIKE

And Mike Becker.

TITLE OVER: *Mission Director*

Mike wields a flashlight and some bad Kung Fu.

SECOND MIKE

*...ASAP...*

Glory shot: a reject A-Team.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIKE

We are ASAP. And we are ready.

Rex sits, amused.

REX

Who are these guys?

ELISE

They emailed the show. They want to partner with you. They...

Rex drains a finger of whiskey.

REX

What?

ELISE

They say they've built a machine that can contact the paranormal, and they want to meet.

Todd sniffs.

TODD

Becker.

REX

You know these guys?

TODD

Same school, growing up. But eventually, there wasn't enough room for two of us. Two geniuses pitted against each other in intellectual combat.

Will bites his tongue and glances to Steve.

TODD

They'd build their prototypes, we'd build ours. Some would work, others wouldn't, but it was the thrill of the game.

WILL

Ours would never work.

TODD

Shut up, Will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELISE

This machine they have. Todd saw it operate.

Rex eyes them, and takes a drag of his cigar.

REX

Where was this?

TODD

Out in the desert. I was running some of my own experiments with weather patterns. I can show you sometime, if you'd like--

REX

Nope.

TODD

Right. Just a thought.

REX

You were spying on them.

Todd gives an uneasy glance to Elise.

REX

I'm impressed Todd. Very impressed.

Todd lights up.

REX

So, in your *expert* opinion. Should I be intrigued?

TODD

They may have something. Or maybe not. But the FEDs got involved...

REX

(suddenly very interested)

The FEDs?

TODD

Yeah. They smashed into Mike's car. They must have been trying to destroy the machine.

Rex rolls his cigar between his fingers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

TODD

You know, I've got some of my own  
paranormal science designs that  
you and I could explore--

REX

Elise. Set a meeting with this  
ASAP.

Rex chomps his cigar and spins his chair to the window.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - BROADCAST TRAILER - DAY

Mike, Stu and Dajuan lug the PTM through the endless  
appliance graveyard.

Dajuan surveys a rotting, iron refrigerator.

DUJUAN

I guarantee you, one of these  
fridges is the lift down to his  
secret bunker.

STU

Just carry the thing, D.

Elise flings open the door to the double-wide trailer.  
Stu freezes.

ELISE

Hello, gentlemen. Mr. Waters is  
expecting you.

Stu can't pull his eyes away.

INT. WATERS COMPOUND - BROADCAST TRAILER - DAY

Mike and Rex shake hands.

MIKE

It's an honor, sir. We're huge  
supporters of the show.

REX

So, you're the boys behind ASAP.

Rex motions for them to sit. The guys cram onto a couch  
in Rex's office.

ELISE

Coffee?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU

I'll have one, thanks.

Elise smiles, her eyes catching Stu's.

REX

Your video got you in the door, so good for you. But, right now, I only see a coupla kids splashing around in the deep end with the big sharks. *Wow me.*

A smile pulls across Mike's face.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - JUNK YARD - DAY

Nearby, some alpacas mill in their pen, as Stu and Dujuan place the PTM in the dirt.

STU

A much as I love the science of it, it's much more fun to see it in action.

REX

Son, MIT, 5 years at JPL, and a level 5 security clearance should tell you I'm not afraid of a little science.

Elise and Rex watch Dujuan punch in the power sequence.

STU

Hold onto your hats.

The PTM powers up.

With an electric crack, the EMP whips over the junk yard.

REX

Concussion wave! But no damage?

STU

EMP.

A ping originates on the hologram display.

DUJUAN

Bingo. We've got one.

REX

What am I looking at?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU

Not quite sure, sir. It's always a bit of a mystery.

Suddenly, the alpacas bleat into a frenzy as the chickens scramble for safety.

A wailing sob lifts over the junk yard.

ELISE

Did you hear that?

REX

Someone just ran through my alpacas.

DUJUAN

Or *something*.

REX

Sure. We'll see.

Rex turns to the guys.

REX

You either have the real deal, or you're pulling a pretty fast con. Works either way, really. What are you proposing?

MIKE

A partnership.

REX

A partnership?

MIKE

We need support, funding, a network. So we're reaching out.

REX

If I do decide to jump in the bathtub with you, we'll be using my contacts, my networks, and my experience. Which means, if you do this, I want to come up with a name that's got a ring to it. Can't go around calling it the paranormal GPS machine, or whatever it was.

Rex stares at the PTM on the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REX

I'll call it the Ghost Box.

DUJUAN

It's technically a paranormal--

REX

Since this is my job, 24-7, I'll bring you boys on as a collaborative entity. Any fees associated will be negotiated in good faith, let's say. Deal?

Mike looks to Stu and Dujuan.

MIKE

We'll run that by our lawyer.

REX

A lawyer? Listen, before you bring lawyers into this, ask yourself--

Rex takes a step at Mike.

REX

What's stopping me from knocking you off, taking the thing for myself, and making gobs of money without three walking liabilities getting paid-out for *my* work?

A smile rifles over Rex's face.

REX

I'm kidding. It's a joke. I'd never screw you guys.

Mike glances at Stu and Dujuan.

REX

Think about it. I can bring you guys to the moon, just lemme know, ASAP. Heyyy--

The guys share an uncomfortable laugh.

DUJUAN

Sir, I look forward to seeing the rest of your facility. Your *entire* facility.

He points down, winking. Rex just stares.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - JUNK YARD - DAY

Mike pops the car trunk. As Stu and Dajuan lift the PTM, Elise runs up.

STU

Elise!

She hands Stu a piece of paper.

ELISE

Text me. Anytime.

STU

Right on.

Stu smiles and climbs into to the car. As the guys pull away--

Another squabble in the alpaca pen spins her around.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - ALPACA PEN - DAY

Elise approaches the pen, and gasps.

Several chickens lie dead, stripped of their skin.

She looks to the guys' dust cloud as they exit the compound.

INT. WATERS COMPOUND - BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE - DAY

Panicked, Elise pushes through the door of the trailer.

REX

Elise--

In his office, Rex stands staring out his window at the alpaca pen, a chrome .38 by his side.

REX

Call the President of the Expo.  
I've got an idea.

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Doorbell. Stu pulls open the front door to Elise standing in the doorway.

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The lights flip to life as Stu and Elise tromp down the stairs. She hits the basement floor, enchanted.

ELISE

It's like living in an Asimov novel.

Her eyes land on the safe. She looks to Stu--

He lifts the smart key from its hook, and opens the safe.

Elise's eyes go wide as she peruses--

Exotic tools for the pulse rifle. Slews of thumb drives in storage racks. Photos. Catalogued blueprints.

ELISE

May I?

Stu nods as Elise slides out a blueprint of the PTM.

STU

We can recreate every equation, every circuit.

ELISE

I feel like I'm looking right into a dream.

She turns, and kisses him.

ELISE

This is for you.

She holds out an envelope. From inside, Stu removes a lanyard, reading: *Quantum Expo [Presenter]*.

STU

Elise! Really?!

INT. LAWFIRM - HALLWAY/CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Mike makes his way down the hallway as his phone rings.

MIKE

Stu.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU (O.S.)

Buddy, pack your best shoes,  
because we are presenting at the  
Expo. With Rex Waters.

MIKE

Really?! What? Wait. That's  
tomorrow!

STU (O.S.)

We're good to go. I'll take care  
of everything on this end--

Mike peeks through the conference room windows. Sadie and  
Chantell sit with the quaint Asian clients.

STU (O.S.)

You just gotta take care of it on  
your end.

MIKE

Right.

STU (O.S.)

Meaning Sadie.

MIKE

I know, Stu.

STU (O.S.)

It's exciting, right? I can't even  
breathe.

MIKE

See you at the house.

Mike hangs up and gives a gentle knock at the conference  
room door. Sadie looks up, startled.

SADIE

Mike?!

EXT. CAFE - DAY

A hostess seats Mike and Sadie in an outside cafe.

Flowers adorn the table.

SADIE

Now *this* is how I like my lunch.

The waitress drops a pair of mimosas. Sadie beams.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SADIE

Mike...what's got into you?

MIKE

Hey, if they had Medals of Valor for Having Stupid Boyfriends on the menu, believe me. I would've had that waiting, too.

Sadie smiles as Mike gathers his gumption.

MIKE

I've been doing a lot of thinking, about how I'm always doing everything the wrong way.

SADIE

Mike, it's not the wrong way. It's just...you.

MIKE

Well, I'm finally going to choose the right way.

SADIE

...Yes?

MIKE

Which is why I wanted to let you know that we've been invited to present at the Quantum Expo.

Sadie stares at Mike.

SADIE

What?

MIKE

With Rex Waters.

She puts her glass back on the table.

SADIE

I gotta admit, I thought you were going a different direction, here.

MIKE

Sadie.

SADIE

Guess it doesn't surprise me, I'm such an idiot to think that you were going to--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She fights tears.

MIKE

Sadie, I wanted to be--

SADIE

What? Honest, Mike? How about doing what you promised you'd do?

MIKE

I know.

SADIE

You promised me that you wouldn't involve yourself. Now, you went behind my back and put everything that I've worked for in jeopardy. Everything.

She gathers her purse.

MIKE

This wasn't how this was supposed to go.

SADIE

Guess you ruined that, too.

Sadie walks out as a waiter approaches with the black ring box and two champagne flutes on a silver platter.

Mike eyes him as he places the champagne on the table.

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The PTM cracks to life as Stu slides on a pair of infra-red goggles over his face.

POV - INFRA-RED: the PTM glows yellow and white.

STU

No, it looks good. All the heat signatures are normal.

Dujan copies diagnostics from the PTM's monitor.

STU

No leakage.

DUJUAN

Okay, we're getting into a higher power band, now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, a *ping* flashes over the holographic display.

Dujuan looks to Stu.

STU  
Well, now hold on--

POV - INFRA-RED: behind the white glow of the PTM, a dark opening, a cool spot, yawns over the back of the basement.

STU  
Dujuan, get over here.

DUJUAN  
What?

STU  
Now.

Dujuan jumps from his chair and joins Stu.

The ping continues.

STU  
Gimme your watch.

Dujuan removes his digital watch as Stu pulls back the infra-red goggles. He sets the stop-watch, and pulls the goggles back over his face.

The ping intensifies.

DUJUAN  
You're hearing these pings, right?

But Stu steps forward--

POV - INFRA-RED: He tosses the watch at the cool spot.

The watch passes through the air, and lands behind the workbench on the other side.

The ping multiplies to three as Stu pulls off the goggles.

The ping flashes again, this time arranging seven individual icons in the hologram topography.

DUJUAN  
Are you seeing this, Stu?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STU

*Shut it down. Shut it down.*

Dujuan punches a code on the side of the machine, and as sudden as it leapt to life, it falls silent.

Stu runs to the workbench and reaches for the wristwatch.

DUJUAN

Did you see that? How many were there?

Stu pulls the watch from behind the bench.

DUJUAN

Stu?

STU

Stu holds up the watch.

STU

6 hours. The watch was back there for 6 hours.

DUJUAN

What do you mean?

The basement falls into a hush.

STU

What I mean, Dujuan, is that your watch just went through time travel.

Stu hands him the watch. Dujuan just stares.

DUJUAN

6 hours. We should probably double-check the data--

Suddenly, slow footsteps creak over the kitchen floor above.

They freeze. Listening.

DUJUAN

Is Mike home?

A low moan tumbles through the floorboards.

Dujuan motions to ascend the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Stu shakes his head as Dujuan grabs a flashlight from the workbench.

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Creeping out of the basement door, they step into the hallway; it's dark and quiet.

The guys make their way to the kitchen, and--

*Click.* Mike flips on the lights.

They never see the slender, ghoulish man standing by the fridge.

They cross to the hallway.

The Slender Man slides into the shadows. Then--

A faint cry.

Dujuan swings his flashlight through the hallway, into the living room, following the sobs--

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The guys step into the living room. Something snivels as Mike reaches for the light--

*Click.* They freeze.

A small girl, no older than 5, startles and scrambles onto a chair. She's been crying.

The guys approach slowly. As they get closer, the girl raises her head. Suddenly--

She screams. Her mouth twists into a ghastly, gnarled horror, much larger than it should be. She jumps off the chair and runs up the wall, when--

Something whips by the window, outside.

Dujuan watches the little girl crawl out the doorway, upside down, as--

Mike and Stu rush to the window. Slender Man stands in the shadows of their neighbor's house, peering in the window.

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

John and his wife wash the dinner dishes at the sink as their six-year-old daughter, CAILYN, finishes some ice cream.

She sees the ghoulish, white face at the window and gasps.

EXT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE FRONT PORCH/SIDE YARD - MOMENTS LATER

The guys burst from the porch and dart to the side of the house.

Slender Man spins from the window and disappears into the back yard as John, their neighbor, bursts from the front door of the house, catching Stu and Dujuan in the side yard.

JOHN

Dujuan?

DUJUAN

John! Hey, man. Sorry, we're just checking on some...plumbing problems.

JOHN

Gotcha. Cailyn said she saw something outside, so I came outside to check.

DUJUAN

Oh, hope we didn't scare her?

JOHN

She's fine. Said she saw a ghost, of course.

STU

Ha. Oh...those kids, right?

A screech of wheels, and a vehicle crash spins them all to the road.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD ROAD - CONTINUOUS

A mailman steps out of his wrecked mail truck. Several neighbors emerge from their houses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The mailman rubs his head as Stu, Dujuan and John run up.

JOHN

You okay, Bill?

MAILMAN

Something ran in front of my truck. I don't know what...

He trails off as another hysterical neighbor scrambles up to the small group.

NEIGHBOR

I saw it, too! Running through our yard--

The neighbors rise in panic.

NEIGHBOR

A bear, but not quite a bear--

MAILMAN

It was on two legs--

NEIGHBOR

More like a wolf--

Stu gazes at the smashed mail truck.

STU

That's a new one.

Dujuan turns and glances up the side of their house.

DUJUAN

You little bastard.

A skeleton in black crawls up the siding, onto the roof. As Dujuan goes after it, Stu presses his phone to his ear.

STU

Mike. Emergency meeting. This is not a drill.

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT

Mike dumps an armful of power tools on the workbench.

MIKE

Gentlemen. We need to finish what we started.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Stu and Dujuan assemble the power tools at the workbench. Behind them, a board lists the names of their paranormal entities.

MIKE

Our neighborhood is full of monsters. Monsters that we've released.

EXT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BACK YARD

Time is liquid as they spill from the basement, lugging tools and lumber to the backyard shed.

MIKE

And now, it's time for us to protect the ones we love. It's time for us to set it right.

Nails, screws and braces reinforce the shed.

MIKE

Gentlemen, we have a responsibility, as men. As scientists. As ASAP. If we're going to change the world, we start right here.

New wood covers the structure; it's an inescapable box.

Stu yanks a hammer from the toolbox.

STU

Just tell me what to hit.

DUJUAN

Actually, we're already done, Stu.

STU

Oh.

MIKE

Follow me, boys.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S HOUSE - FOYER - DUSK

Doorbell. Their neighbor John opens the door to Mike, Stu and Dujuan on his front porch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MIKE

Hey, John. You've got a  
construction company, right?

INT. GIRLS' HOUSE - KITCHEN

The girls sip tea around the kitchen counter.

Over their shoulders, and through the kitchen windows,  
Mike and Stu tear over the grass with bait-nets.

SADIE

I was so blind.

CHANTELL

It's not your fault. You've been  
in love with him your entire life.

Outside, Dajuan struggles with his jammed pulse rifle as  
Stu wags a steak in the air. A shadow leaps from the  
bushes with a rake-wielding Mike in pursuit. They crash  
into the shrubs, out of sight, as--

Sadie turns and gazes outside.

CHANTELL

There's almost 20 years of  
investment there.

SADIE

You're right.

She turns back to the girls, as--

Mike tears from the shadows and tackles Slender Man. Stu  
drops to help Dajuan with the jammed pulse rifle.

SADIE

But am I stupid for taking it all  
time? All of this nonsense? It's  
all he thinks about.

She wipes a tear away.

Outside, Stu cleans the cooling circuit and slaps it back  
in the rifle. Mike stands down range. Suddenly--

Dajuan rips off a blast from the pulse rifle, downing the  
werewolf. Mike whips a bag over the head of the Slender  
Man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SADIE

Does he think about our future at all? Doubt it. But, he's smart, funny, and he's got enough charisma to run for Emperor of the Universe.

SHANIQUA

He's an idiot if he doesn't see what he's got.

CHANTELL

And you gave him something to think about, girl.

SHANIQUA

You know what you're gonna do? Let him cook in it.

Mike drags the bagged beasts over the grass.

EXT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE BACK YARD - NIGHT

They drop the monsters into the yard shed.

MIKE

Boys, it's gonna be a long night.

They slam the door and padlock it.

MONTAGE:

INT. BASEMENT

Stu strikes *Wolfman* and *Slender Man* from the ghoulie-board as Mike lifts his old Teddy Bear. He smiles--

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE

The ghastly, little girl follows the dancing Teddy it into a dark closet, and--

*KLACK!* Mike emerges with a full, doggy traveling-crate. Dujuan strikes *Annabelle* and from the list.

INT. BASEMENT

The PTM's imaging flashes, and Stu makes notes. Dujuan lines up duct tape, garden sheers, rubber hose and wooden stakes.

EXT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Stu sits in the darkness on a blanket, flashlight in hand. The skeleton slinks down from the roof of the house.

Strike: *Bloody Mary. Poltergeist. Annoying Witch.*

The skeleton reaches for Stu, and--

*SNAP!* A spring-net envelops the skeleton. The guys emerge from the bushes and collect the wrapped ghoul.

The shed doors slam shut and-- All goes black.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

The black underbelly of the tilt-bed diesel raises, revealing--

The tool shed. It rests in the middle of the forest, surrounded by peace and green.

Faint growls and snarls of the ghouls emanate from inside as Mike, Dujuan and Stu un-clip the thick tow-cable.

The guys stop and consider the new shed in the woods. Dujuan claps a hand on Mike's shoulder.

DUJUAN

Let's go change the world.

EXT. GIRLS' HOUSE - DAY

Sadie steps from her house. Her eyes lock on a strange plumbing crew loading boxes into the back of their van.

EXT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

The vehicle pulls away from the boys' driveway as--

Sadie makes her way to the front door of the house.

It's wide open.

SADIE

Mike...?

INT. DUJUAN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT

Sadie reaches the bottom of the basement landing. She stops cold.

Missing computers, monitors, and hardware leave barren gaps in the ransacked workshop.

Her eyes rest on a gaping hole where the technology safe used to be.

SADIE

Oh my God.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER MAIN HALL - DAY

Countless dorks pack the convention room seats.

CROWD

Rex! Rex! Rex! Rex!

INT. CONVENTION ROOM BACKSTAGE - DAY

From the wings Mike, Stu and Dujuan peek at the crowd through the thick stage curtain.

STU

I'm gonna warn you guys. I will probably pee my pants in a minute.

The guys turn back, upstage, to run the final diagnostics of their PTM.

Rex and Elise emerge behind them. Rex balances a whiskey.

REX

This is where the money is, can you smell it?

They turn from the PTM as a flurry of wardrobe and makeup personnel attend to Rex.

REX

Better make sure all your little tricks work.

MIKE

They're not tricks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REX

Hey. I like you. So all I'm gonna say is this--

The lights dim, evoking a roar from the crowd.

Rex leans in to Mike.

REX

Don't make me look like a wanker out there.

CUT TO-

Lasers whipping through the darkness. Fog dumps from the stage as music pounds over the walls.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen! Your Galactic Supermind, your Supreme Leader! Rex Waters!

CROWD

Rex! Rex! Rex! Rex!

Rex appears on stage to a thunder of applause. He takes center stage, bathed in light.

REX

Fellow travelers!

Another roar from the crowd.

The guys fidget, behind the reveal-curtain, upstage.

REX

We are under the watchful eye of forces we do not yet see. But, what if I told you that the paranormal, beings from another dimension, are real?

The audience cheers.

REX

And what if I told you that I can prove it to you here, today? Would you believe me?

The crowd erupts in applause. He smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REX

Well, I've promised you truth, and  
truth is what I will deliver.  
Please welcome, the Association  
for the Study of Anomalous  
Phenomena.

With this, ASAP's SCHLOCK MONTAGE from their amateur  
video flashes over the big screens.

MIKE (V.O.)

Dujuan Hawkins! Stuart Foster!  
Mike Becker!

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - PARKING LOT

Sadie pulls into a parking spot near the back door of the  
convention center. She collects her purse--

INT. CONVENTION ROOM - BACKSTAGE

Mike rifles through a massive pack of note cards.

CUT TO-

On screen, the Glory Shot: Team ASAP.

MIKE (V.O.)

We are ASAP. And we are ready.

The audience roars as Rex turns to the wings.

REX

Fellow travelers. I bring you  
ASAP.

CUT TO-

THE WINGS

Elise blows a kiss to Stu, and the guys step onto stage.  
The auditorium erupts in flashes from countless camera  
apps, as--

Elise steps close to the PTM. She's joined with Todd,  
Steve and Will.

CUT TO-

Rex sits the guys in three high-chairs on stage.  
Microphones pair with each chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REX

Gentlemen--

The PTM flashes onto the big screens.

REX

This is what I call your Ghost Box, but you call your--

MIKE

Paranormal Telemetry Module, or PTM.

REX

A machine that detects paranormal activity? Come on.

MIKE

I understand the skepticism, Mr. Waters. But, we believe we can answer all your questions with proven, scientific conclusions.

REX

Well, we're all ears.

MIKE (O.C.)

See, every time we turned it on, we seemed to attract paranormal activity, which made us think that our PTM worked like a paranormal bug light.

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER BACK DOOR - DAY

Sadie hurries to the back door of the convention hall. Suddenly--

Elise and the three men, now in black ski masks, burst from the door, carting the PTM down the stairs.

She watches as they pack the PTM into a cargo van.

The crew piles in as the last man lifts his ski mask. Sadie freezes as the man kisses Elise.

SADIE

Freaking Todd.

Todd and Elise jump in the cab of the van and peel out of the parking lot.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

Center stage.

MIKE

...but, after more tests, we found the bug light theory was actually a misinterpretation. That, in fact, our PTM was essentially *creating* the paranormal activity.

REX

Did I hear you right? Your machine *makes* ghosts?

A thrilled murmur roils through the crowd. Mike smiles.

MIKE

It doesn't *make* ghosts, exactly.

Mike turns to Stu.

STU

Science has known about naturally-occurring wormholes for a long time. As they open and close, they disrupt the dimensions around it. As the dimensions fluctuate, the possibility of allowing things through increased.

DUJUAN

Think of other dimensions as big soap bubbles. Lots of soap bubbles can touch, but they still share a membrane. But with some soap bubbles, that membrane vanishes, and the stuff inside gets all mixed up.

Mike's phone buzzes. He steals a glance: *Sadie*. He sends the call to voicemail.

STU

Our PTM just replicates the effects of the naturally-occurring wormholes that remove those dimensional membranes.

REX

Membranes separating dimensions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Right. And it wasn't long before we found that it could do something much greater.

REX

Go on.

Mike turns to Stu.

STU

We believe we've found time travel to be possible.

A wave of excitement courses over the audience as Rex sits, stunned.

REX

Your machine? Time travel?

The guys nod.

REX

With all due respect, the greatest minds on Earth can't even get close. How could you three crack the secret?

MIKE

Oh, we had help.

REX

From?

MIKE

That's classified.

The audience revels in the snub as Mike's phone buzzes. Again, it's Sadie. Again, he sends the call to voicemail.

REX

Well. Seeing is believing. And regardless of the outcome, I'm sure it'll be quite a show.

MIKE

Absolutely.

Rex turns to his audience.

REX

Fellow travelers. Are we ready for evidence? Are we ready for truth?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REX (CONT'D)

Are we ready for the greatest  
discovery in the history of  
mankind?

The crowd goes wild as Rex sweeps his arm to the curtain  
behind them--

REX

Behold, time travel.

As the curtain pulls away, the audience leans in. But  
fascinated faces in the crowd turn to bewilderment. Mike  
turns upstage--

The PTM is gone.

Rex stands, anger burning behind his eyes.

REX

Where is it? Where's the thing?

Mike stands, flabbergasted.

REX

Hey. Tell me this is a big joke.

Mike's phone buzzes again. Sadie. He lifts it to his ear.  
Before he can speak--

SADIE (O.S.)

Mike, listen to me. Todd stole  
your machine.

Mike gazes out to the audience, stunned. Rex covers his  
mic with his hand.

REX

Don't you *dare* do this to me.

MIKE

Wha--?

SADIE (O.S.)

I saw him take it.

MIKE

Where are you?

SADIE

At the Expo. In the parking lot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Dujuan and Stu watch as Mike runs off the stage. The auditorium churns into a bedlam of boos and catcalls.

REX

You *frauds!*

INT. SADIE'S CAR - DAY

Sadie pulls the wheel to pass another vehicle.

SADIE

I'm following them, Mike. I'm actually in my car following them.

MIKE (O.S.)

You're *what?!*

SADIE

I know. Not the best idea, but I didn't know what else to do.

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - BACK DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Mike bursts from the back door of the convention center. Stu and Dujuan follow.

MIKE

What are you *doing?* I don't even know what's going on.

DUJUAN

Who is it? Is that Sadie?

Mike puts the phone on speaker.

SADIE

Well, if you idiots would answer your phones. I've been calling you for an hour.

STU

She's right. 6 missed calls.

SADIE

Mike, they broke into your lab.

The guys freeze.

MIKE

What do you mean, they broke in?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU

Sadie, wait. What did they take?

SADIE

All of it. The safe, everything.

Stu slumps against a car. Mike takes the phone off speaker.

MIKE

Sadie, where are you?

INT. SADIE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

She pulls the wheel down a dusty road, following far behind the van.

SADIE

The edge of town. I have no idea where I am. God, Mike. What am I doing?

MIKE (O.S.)

Send me a pin.

SADIE

I can't right now, it's dangerous.

She passes a faint road sign.

SADIE

Wait. Nolan Springs. 8 miles away.

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The guys sprint through the parking lot.

MIKE

Nolan Springs. Rex.

SADIE (O.S.)

No. He wouldn't be that stupid?

MIKE

Stay put. I'm coming after you.

They reach their car to find all four tires slashed.

DUJUAN

They thought of everything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Not everything.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Mike pilots the car down the road on the rims, as slabs of frayed rubber slap the road.

He waves at the pile-up of cars behind him to pass.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - DAY

Sadie scurries through the perimeter of the compound, keeping to the piles of rusting appliances.

Just ahead, Elise and Todd's crew lug the PTM through the compound.

They vanish inside one of the large mobile homes speckled throughout the sprawling compound.

INT. DUJUAN'S CAR - DAY

Mike grips the wheel as the grinding asphalt fills the cabin. His phone rings.

MIKE

Sadie!

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND BROADCAST TRAILER - DAY

Sadie, crouched behind a large fridge, watches Will and Steve exit the trailer.

SADIE

They just moved your machine  
inside one of the trailers.

MIKE (O.S.)

What are you doing, walking up to  
their door?

INT. DUJUAN'S CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Dujan leans in to the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

Sadie, listen. You're running recon. We need locations of the high-value targets.

MIKE

No, we don't. You need to sit still and wait for us.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - BROADCAST TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

SADIE

Guys, Todd's got a small army out here.

Will and Steve move to the open van. As they close the door, Sadie catches a glimpse of--

SADIE

I've got eyes on the safe, Mike!

STU

The safe!

DUJUAN

Sadie, do you see my plasma rifle anywhere?

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - BROADCAST TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Todd stands, with a cadre of his goons, pointing the plasma rifle at Sadie.

MIKE (O.S.)

Sadie?

Todd takes the phone out of Sadie's hand and hangs up.

TODD

Hello, Sadie.

INT. WATERS COMPOUND - AUXILIARY TRAILER - DAY

Sadie slams into a chair.

SADIE

Ow, *Will*.

Will and Steve step back, startled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILL

Sorry, Sadie.

TODD

Shut up, Will. She's our prisoner.  
Don't apologize.

WILL

Sorry, Todd.

SADIE

So, have you guys even thought  
this through? What are you going  
to do now, keep me here forever?  
*Kill me?*

Todd steps forward, clutching the pulse rifle. He sneers.

TODD

Maybe.

SADIE

Todd. This is kidnapping, do you  
get that? Federal prison.

TODD

Hey, you're Rex's problem, now. We  
did our job.

SADIE

So, you're stealing Mike's stuff,  
again. What are you, back in 10th  
grade?

TODD

Ooo, someone's bitter I won the  
scholarship.

SADIE

Well, since you won with Mike's  
paper, it didn't make him bitter,  
it just made you expelled.

TODD

That was never proven.

She shakes her head.

SADIE

What are you getting out of this,  
Todd?

He pulls out the smart key from around his neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TODD

Everything in the safe. Rex can  
keep the PTM, as far as I care--

The dull throb of chopper blades shakes the building.

TODD

...I can build a thousand of 'em.

Todd spins to the door.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - LANDING ZONE - DAY

Todd and Elise shield their eyes from the rotor wash as  
Rex's Robinson R22 touches down.

The blades slow as Rex jumps from the copter. He scurries  
to Todd and Elise, yelling over the blade noise.

REX

Where's my machine, Todd?

TODD

In your trailer.

They make their way to the trailer, shielding their eyes.

TODD

You won't believe who dropped by.

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - BROADCAST ROOM/OFFICE/WAITING  
ROOM - DAY

Rex bursts into the broadcast trailer with Todd and Elise  
in tow. He makes his way to the office.

REX

No one else gets in. Including  
Police. I want a perimeter around  
here at all times.

TODD

We're all ready.

REX

Good. Remember--

Rex approaches the PTM on the floor of the office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REX

When this thing fires up, you and your people get big money.

Rex eyes the device.

REX

I'll admit, I've been obsessing about this thing. I mean, I want it all. The spectacle, the show. That's what people will pay to see. It'll be paranormal madness.

Rex drives his glare at Todd.

REX

I want you to turn it on.

TODD

It needs an initiation sequence. But, I can give it a shot.

As Todd leans in, a crack of light flashes behind them, making them jump. They freeze, glancing down the hallway to the waiting room, where they can hear a wretched thumping.

They turn to Todd at the PTM.

TODD

I didn't touch it.

CUT TO-

INT. WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Todd, Elise and Rex step in to find disembodied arm and partial torso, burned and severed. The arm, with nerves firing, wriggles on the floor.

The crew stares, horrified.

REX

Get that thing outta here.

Todd winds a roll of paper towels around it, and lifts the arm out of the trailer.

REX

What the hell was that?

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND PERIMETER GROUNDS - DAY

Dujuan's vehicle grinds to a halt next to Sadie's car on the far perimeter of the trailer park.

MIKE

She's gotta be close.

Mike, Stu and Dujuan pile out of the car.

DUJUAN

So, Sadie, the PTM, and the safe.  
Three high-priority targets,  
right?

MIKE

Well, that makes it sound like  
you're flying a drone strike.

Dujuan pops the trunk of the car.

DUJUAN

No, I mean we have to work the  
scale. Priority one, two, three.

MIKE

Priority one. Sadie.

DUJUAN AND STU

Agreed.

Dujuan loads a backpack. Bolt cutters. Rope. Field glasses.

STU

Okay, but do we split up, and each  
go after a single target? Or do we  
have strength in numbers?

MIKE

Strength in numbers. Always.

STU

He's right.

DUJUAN

Strength in numbers.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - PERIMETER GROUNDS - DAY

POV - FIELD GLASSES: Todd's army, scattered through the compound.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN (O.C.)

There.

An auxiliary trailer on the edge of the sprawling compound.

Two of Todd's crew stand guard outside the door.

ANGLE ON BERM

Mike, Dujuan and Stu peer over a berm, overlooking the compound below. A hole in a chain link fence yawns behind them.

Dujuan hands the binoculars to Mike.

DUJUAN

I'll lead. I've met them all before on the battlefield, so I know their tactics.

The bright snap of a pistol hammer spins them around.

They turn to see Todd, brandishing the pulse rifle. A group of dorks stand at his side, armed with knives and hunting rifles.

TODD

The Pendragon and his warlock shall bow before me.

Todd glances to Mike.

TODD

Hello, Mike.

MIKE

Hello, Todd. You're just as dorky as ever.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - DAY

Todd and his foot men drag Mike, Dujuan and Stu into the middle of the compound as Elise emerges from the main trailer to meet them.

STU

Elise?!

TODD

Take him to Rex.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU

Wait, what are you doing? You were helping us. You were *nice* to me.

She kisses Todd, as Stu looks on, horrified.

ELISE

I'm playing for the winning team. Sorry, Stu.

STU

Todd is *not* the winning team. Guys? Guys!

Elise and a cadre of footmen drag Stu through the sea of forsaken appliances, towards the broadcast trailer.

DUJUAN

We'll be back for you, Stu.

TODD

Don't count on it.

STU

You know what, Todd? Your *mom* can count on it, okay?

INT. WATERS COMPOUND - AUXILIARY TRAILER - DAY

Sadie hears commotion as the door flings open.

SADIE

Mike!

MIKE

Sadie--

Will and Steve stand as Mike rushes in to hug Sadie. Three footmen enter with Todd in tow.

MIKE

Are you okay? Did they hurt you? What did they do to you?

SADIE

Nothing.

Mike turns to Will and Steve.

MIKE

You bastards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Before they can respond, Mike is upon them, a fist firmly planted on Will's eye. Will grabs his face, when suddenly, Steve's shirt whips over his face. A fist finds his nose as--

The first footman lifts his hands to defend, but Mike wraps an arm around his head and grabs the nose of the second footman, slapping him to the ground by the nostrils.

The third footman can barely respond before his own nose is splattered by a fist, and his shirt goes over the head of the first footman. A lightning fast knee sends both men to the floor in a sniveling heap, as--

Mike grabs Todd's ear and mashes his face into the wall.

SADIE

They didn't do anything to me. I'm fine.

MIKE

Oh.

Dujuan stares at Mike, stunned, as Todd whimpers.

DUJUAN

Geez, Mike. Freaking ninja.

SADIE

Dujuan, the key.

The smart key swings from Todd's neck. With a *snap*, Dujuan pulls the ball-chain apart.

Sadie rummages through Todd's pocket and pulls out the tiny handcuff key.

Dujuan and Sadie pull apart their cuffs.

She kisses Mike.

SADIE

Freaking ninja.

Suddenly--

FOOTMAN 1

Back up! Back up!

MIKE

Dang it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A footman enters from outside, rifle drawn.

FOOTMAN 2

Do it! Back up!

MIKE

Double-dang it.

Another footman enters. Mike releases Todd's face from the wall and raises his hands.

Todd grabs the pulse rifle off the ground and swings it around on Mike, Dajuan and Sadie.

TODD

Where is it? The key!

*Click.* His eyes lock on Sadie.

There, on her wrist is a perfect cuff, commingled with the smart key.

TODD

I will use this. I will use it to shoot you, if you do not give me the key.

She raises the tiny handcuff key.

SADIE

Well, these cuffs aren't coming off. Not today, at least.

TODD

No. Wait!

Sadie swallows it.

Todd kicks an office chair at Mike and Dajuan. He points at the handcuffs in Dajuan's hand.

TODD

Thread it through.

Dajuan pushes the cuffs through a molded, metal armrest.

TODD

Lock yourselves together. Do it!

Mike and Dajuan each pass an arm through the arm rest loops on both sides of the chair, and clasp a wrist in the cuffs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TODD

I'm taking her with me, until I  
have time to cut it off.

He grabs Sadie and wrestles her to the door.

DUJUAN

You can't get those cuffs off.  
They're made of tempered--

TODD

Wasn't talking about the cuffs.  
I'm talking about her arm.

He forces her out the door.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - AUXILIARY TRAILER - DAY

Todd drags Sadie away from the trailer. Will follows,  
holding his bloody nose.

WILL

Todd, you want us to keep watch?

TODD

What are they gonna do? Escape  
wearing an office chair?

Will turns to Steve.

WILL

We should keep watch.

Steve nods, wiping blood off his face.

INT. WATERS COMPOUND AUXILIARY TRAILER - DAY

Dujuan stretches his leg over a desk. His foot barely  
brushes up against the loop of his backpack strap.

MIKE

D, please tell me you've got an  
idea on how to get us out of here.

DUJUAN

Working on it.

He hooks his foot in the bag strap, and pulls.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND AUXILIARY TRAILER - DAY

*Whump!* Will turns as Steve stands. They look to the door of the trailer.

INT. WATERS COMPOUND AUXILIARY TRAILER - DAY

Dujuan and Mike sit chained through the office chair, as Will and Steve enter.

They see Dujuan's backpack open, lying on the ground. Suddenly--

*Snap! Snap!* Tranquilizer darts whip into their necks. Will and Steve crumple to the floor as Dujuan unzips another compartment in his bag.

With a *clink*, Dujuan frees them from the handcuffs.

MIKE

You've got a handcuff key?

DUJUAN

Yeah, I've got a bunch of em.

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE/WAITING ROOM - DAY

The Footmen, dragging Stu, follow Elise into the office.

REX

Just the man I wanted to see.

Rex sits, turning the infra-red goggles over in his hands. The PTM sits on the floor in front of him.

REX

I'll admit, I've been obsessing about this thing. I mean, I want it all. The spectacle, the show. That's what people will pay to see. It'll be paranormal madness.

Rex stands, the butt of his .38 revolver poking from his belt.

REX

Now, that time travel element. That was a new one. A shocker. Great part of the show, by the way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rex places the goggles on a nearby desk.

REX  
I want to know how this thing works.

STU  
Antimatter.

REX  
Impossible.

STU  
I can draw you a picture, but it won't make any sense.

REX  
Oh, to a lowly mind like myself? Do I have to remind you where--

STU  
You flunked out of MIT. And you certainly weren't at JPL. Maybe during a field trip, but...

Rex pulls the gun from his belt.

REX  
Okay, genius. Why don't you take me to school.

STU  
Not a good idea.

REX  
Sorry?

He advances the chamber. Stu glances to Elise.

STU  
It's a sequential system, so it has a process. First--

Rex kneels beside the module.

STU  
You have to unlock the unit. Which is...when I had the initial idea. So, 01.14.93.

Rex hunts for the keypad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STU

The keypad. Left side. Your other left.

REX

There's three different keypads on this thing, so let me know which one you're talking about.

STU

I told you, the one on the left.

Elise rolls her eyes.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - AUXILIARY TRAILER - DAY

Mike and Dajuan slink from the trailer and post behind a collection of derelict ovens.

They watch Todd hustle through the rust graveyard with Sadie, raising the alarm.

Footmen scattered throughout the property scramble over.

DUJUAN

Priority one. You ready?

MIKE

Ready.

DUJUAN

We're going right up the middle.

Dajuan sprints to a length of metal pipe sticking out of an old water furnace. Dajuan wraps his hand around the pipe, and closes his eyes.

DUJUAN

It is not I who calls upon this sword. But destiny.

As he wrenches the pipe from the furnace--

FLASH TO:

EXT. SURREAL MOUNTAIN WATERFALL - DAY

The flawless blue steel rings from the stone. Its hilt, forged in highly-wrought gold, gleams in the sun as--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sir Dajuan the Pendragon turns to the field of battle, where savage warriors encroach with instruments of evil.

BACK TO:

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - AUXILIARY TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

*The real world.* Mike watches as Dajuan clobbers a string of dorks in pursuit.

CUT TO-

Todd, running with Sadie. He turns and raises the plasma rifle--

SADIE

Dajuan!

Todd fires a globule of plasma, grazing Dajuan's head and slapping into an old, ceramic bathtub.

As he lifts the rifle for another shot--

FLASH TO:

EXT. SURREAL MOUNTAIN WATERFALL - DAY

A searing shard of light burns by the Pendragon. Unhindered, he roils through the battlefield, felling any that choose to oppose him.

The Pendragon turns to Mike.

SIR DUJUAN

Press forward!

BACK TO:

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - CONTINUOUS

*The real world.* Mike's eyes lock on Sadie. He sprints forward as Dajuan clubs an aggressor in the gut.

He springs over piles of debris, and several footmen run to intercept.

As Mike lunges off a washing machine--

FLASH TO:

EXT. SURREAL MOUNTAIN WATERFALL - DAY

The Dark Ninja plants his foot in the face of an approaching barbarian. With fists as fast as the wind, he wrecks the few warriors that dare challenge.

He glimpses ahead. Todd the Barbarian Lord, and the fair Maiden Sadie aren't far. He breaks into a sprint, as--

Sir Dujuan joins him, running at his side.

DUJUAN

Freaking ninja, dude!

Dragging Sadie, Todd the Barbarian Lord turns and fires another volley of blazing light from his weapon.

SADIE

Help me!

The glowing bolts of light chisel through the trees--

BACK TO:

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - PERIMETER GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

*The real world.* Todd tries desperately to fire again, but the rifle spews a jet of superheated vapor.

DUJUAN

It's overheated, you knob.

As Todd ditches the plasma rifle on the ground, a van slides to a halt. The doors swing open--

Will and Steve, still groggy from the tranquilizers, pull Sadie into Todd's SUV.

MIKE

Sadie!

The van peels away in a plume of dirt.

MIKE

I need a vehicle. C'mon, I've got an idea.

Mike continues pursuit as--

Dujuan pulls the overheated rifle from the sea of bodies writhing behind them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOOTMAN 3

Geez, Dajuan, You broke my finger!

DUJUAN

Sorry, fellas. But this just got real.

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE/WAITING ROOM - DAY

The cooling fan for the PTM whirs to life. Rex reads off the diagnostics monitor.

REX

Aux power. Internal cooling.  
Software config--

STU

Now, you need to link the power supply. It's independent.

REX

Wait. So, that's--

STU

Would you please just--

Stu holds his zip-tied hands out. Rex nods, and one of the Footmen clips the ties.

STU

Thank you.

Reaching across the unit, Stu snaps a series of switches and punches in a code.

REX

Another code.

STU

My mom's birthday. I'll write all this down, I guess. You might want to stand back.

ELISE

Why, what's it gonna do?

STU

Nothing, it's just surprising, is all. Everyone ready?

Rex and Elise nod. Stu gazes at the machine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU

Me too.

He flips the ignition switch, and the PTM roars to life.  
With a crack, the EMP ripples through the trailer.

ELISE

Wow--

Suddenly--

An exterior explosion rattles the trailer.

REX

What--?! What was that?!

Rex motions to Elise as he runs to the window. She pulls  
a thick chain and padlock from a box--

REX

No. No. No.

ELISE

What is it?

Rex turns and darts from the door of the trailer.

ELISE

Against that desk, now.

STU

Oh, come on. Really?

As Stu moves to the desk--

He slips the PTM's cooling circuit into his pocket.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - BROADCAST TRAILER/LANDING ZONE -  
DAY

Elise scrambles outside to see the Robinson R22 in  
flames.

Rex, red with rage, screams into his phone.

REX

Is this you, Todd? Did you blow up  
my chopper?

INT. TODD'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Todd swings the van between mountains of appliances.

TODD

Why would I want to blow up your  
chopper?

REX (O.S.)

Where are you?

TODD

I'm outta here. Whatever this is,  
I'm done. I got what I came for.

REX (O.S.)

You ungrateful, little--

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE/WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike and Dajuan burst through the door.

MIKE

Stu!

STU

Guys!

They drop to pull at the chain binding his wrists and  
ankles to the desk.

STU

Where's Sadie?

MIKE

They have her. She's in the van.

STU

With the safe?

Mike tries to uproot the desk.

STU

Mike. Priority one and two,  
together in the same place. You  
gotta go. You gotta go get her.

MIKE

Dajuan, what's in your bag?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

Nothing useful. But, we came through the shed. There's a saw. I'm going to get the saw, and take off your arm, and your leg. It's the only way--

STU

Listen to me. There's no time.

Stu holds up the microchip.

DUJUAN

Is that--?

STU

The cooling circuit. I pulled it.

Mike and Dujan shoot a look to the humming PTM.

DUJUAN

Stu. It can't stabilize. If that thing runs without the circuit--

STU

Dujan, we didn't build this thing to let evil have its way.

Mike moves to look out the window.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - PERIMETER GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

Todd's van roars out of the compound.

STU

Mike. I can't stress this enough. Your future, and the future of the human race are in that van.

Stu extends the cooling circuit to Dujan.

Dujan takes it, and looks to his plasma rifle. He ejects the fried circuit, and slaps in the new one.

He hands the rifle to Mike.

Mike charges the rifle, and it hums to life with electromagnetic precision. He jumps to the back door of the trailer--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUJUAN

Mike.

Hand on the door knob, Mike turns.

DUJUAN

You're a freaking ninja.

MIKE

Get him outta here, D.

Dujuan nods, as Mike slips out the back door.

EXT. BROADCAST TRAILER - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Mike makes his way around the perimeter of the building. His eyes lock on his target: a small, open-face warehouse with several parked ATVs.

EXT. BROADCAST TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Rex directs the few footmen left, dousing the flames.

ELISE

Where's Todd?

REX

Looks like the wanker bailed on you.

Engine screaming, Mike's ATV shoots past the chopper wreckage.

Rex gives chase, pulling his .38 from his belt. He rips off a shot, but it misses as Mike tears off the property.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

Todd pilots the van through the forest roads.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Mike cuts the distance through the trees, closing on the van. As he cranks the ATV and charges down a hill--

CUT TO-

A massive log. Mike loops a line around the wood, jumps back on the ATV and guns the engine.

INT. TODD'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Todd wheels the van around the corner, suddenly coming face to face with Mike, and a log stretched over the road.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Todd locks the breaks on the van, and it slides, uneventfully, into the log. *Whump*.

Mike springs into the trees.

INT. TODD'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Todd and his crew scan the Forest, but all is silent.

Sadie shakes her head.

SADIE

Give it up, Todd. Becker gets you every time.

TODD

All of you get out. Move that tree out of the way.

Todd glares at Sadie.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Will and Steve jump from the side doors of the van. Two other footmen spring from the rear.

Suddenly--

Two plasma rounds sear the air and slap Will and Steve into the side of the van.

INT. TODD'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

Todd watches, horrified, as his friends slide down the van windows, paralyzed.

He spins to the back windows, where--

One footman catches another energy bolt in the chest, sending him into a ditch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The last footman flies over the hood of the van after a plasma shot to the back of the head.

Todd stares into the trees, terrorized.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Todd kicks open the drivers door of the van and steps out with a hunting rifle. He screams into the trees--

TODD

Always a step ahead, aren't you,  
Mike?

MIKE

Let her go, Todd.

Todd spins around as Mike approaches, rifle at ease.

TODD

Just looking to screw me over, any  
way you can.

MIKE

Doing a pretty good job of it by  
yourself.

TODD

You were always smarter, always  
had the girl, always had friends.  
What about me? Where was my girl?  
Where were my friends?

SADIE

You could've had all those things.

Todd turns to Sadie, standing outside of the van.

SADIE

But, you just ditched your girl at  
Rex's. And there are your friends.  
Unconscious in a ditch.

TODD

Oh, don't blame this on me.

MIKE

Gotta quit treating people like  
trash, Todd.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TODD

You're right. Well, maybe just one more time.

Todd tries for his rifle, but--

Mike is too fast.

A glowing plasma round hits Todd square in the chest. Before he hits the ground--

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - LATER

*Thump.* Todd falls to the forest floor in a paralyzed heap, still steaming from the plasma burn.

Sadie watches as Mike steps from Todd to the small shed in the woods, and removes the lock.

Todd can only moan as Mike and Sadie retreat, and rumble away in the van down the dirt path.

The door of the shed cracks open as a horrific collection of monster appendages emerge from the darkness.

Todd can hear the slithering and gurgling as the horrors approach--

But he can't scream.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - LANDING ZONE - DUSK

Down to a smoulder, the chopper fire belches white smoke.

REX

Okay, everyone. Give it up. It's done. We'll let the insurance--

But a horrifying scream stops him in his tracks.

Elise turns to commotion out by the auxiliary trailer, where one of Todd's crew-mates lies stripped of his skin.

ELISE

Rex--

REX

The machine. It's still on.

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE/WAITING ROOM - DUSK

Dujuan turns from the window.

DUJUAN  
They're heading back.

Stu stares at the PTM. Its diagnostic screen displays the heat index danger zone. It passes into a yellow-band as a klaxon sounds.

STU  
It's in meltdown.

Dujuan runs over to the desk and tries to pry it from the ground.

STU  
Dujuan, stop. There's nothing we  
you can do.

DUJUAN  
No. I won't stop.

STU  
If you were ever my friend, you  
would go, right now.

DUJUAN  
I can't. I can't go.

CUT TO-

Rex, Elise and five footmen push through the door down the long hallway. They scramble to the office.

CUT TO-

The office door. Rex and his crew enter, finding Stu right where he left him. The PTM roars discontent in the middle of the floor.

REX  
Stu--

Dujuan's finger pulls a closet door shut.

REX  
What's going on.

STU  
It's on overload.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REX

What does that mean?

STU

It means the Penning Trap that holds the antimatter will fail.

REX

What?

STU

Then, take out a city block. Maybe three.

Suddenly--

A horrific wail freezes everyone in the room. Their gaze passes down the hallway to--

A gnarled shadow, crawling into the trailer, sobbing.

REX

What the hell is that?

Its black eyes and decaying flesh can barely be seen as it streaks to one of Rex's footmen and mauls him in an adjoining office.

But it doesn't stop. The terror emerges from the office and catapults through the hall, tearing apart two footmen unlucky enough to be in its path.

REX

God!

Rex dives into his office with Stu, and grabs the door. Elise, caught on the outside of the office, spins with terror in her eyes--

ELISE

Rex!

But he slams the door as the murky haze of death turns its vapid gaze at Elise--

She pounds on the door, as Rex watches through the plexi-glass windows into the hallway.

ELISE

Rex. Please, open the door. Rex.

STU

Rex! What are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CUT TO-

The closet. Dajuan squeezes his eyes shut as the banshee pounces on Elise, rending her skin from bones.

CUT TO-

Rex collapses under the window.

STU

You monster.

The PTM's diagnostic screen flickers red as--

Rex scrambles to his feet and snatches the infra-red goggles off his desk.

STU

What are you doing?

REX

I've always said I'm gonna make history. Just never knew it was gonna be today.

Rex flips the goggles over his eyes--

CUT TO-

POV - INFRA-RED: The PTM's heat signature blazes bright white. Within the superheated corona: a flickering, cool hole in the space-time dimension and the calm of the broadcast office, beyond. However--

The PTM's remaining antimatter struggles to keep open the path to the past.

REX

How far back does this go?

STU

Don't do it, Rex. It's unstable. The ramifications--

REX

Or what? Stick around here at ground zero?

Rex steps closer to the throbbing PTM.

REX

See ya on the other side, kid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Rex springs out, but the rift fails.

Time/space collapses, severing Rex in half. As the remains of Rex tumble to the floor--

The rest of his body travels back to only *hours earlier*.

Dujuan bursts from the closet and opens the door to peer down the hall.

STU

Dujuan. Go.

Dujuan scrambles over to Stu and grabs the back of his neck.

DUJUAN

I can still get you out.

STU

D. You need to take our work further. We're not done here. Now, *go*.

Gritting his teeth, Dujuan races toward the trailer's back door.

The banshee, tearing ligaments from one of the footmen, in an adjacent alcove, lunges--

But Dujuan bursts out of the back door. The banshee returns to the hunt as--

Stu's eyes fall on his next horror. Elise, half skinned, crawls through the door.

STU

Elise? No--

She drags herself closer. Shaking, she hands the padlock keys to Stu.

ELISE

I'm sorry...

She expires.

EXT. BROADCAST TRAILER - NIGHT

Dujuan reaches the open-faced garage, and kick-starts an ATV.

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE/WAITING ROOM

Stu, free of the chains, rummages over the nearby desk for his phone. Finding it, he ducks just before the hunting banshee passes by.

He pushes the power button. Dead from the EMP.

Stu looks to Elise's body. Diving to her body, he recovers her phone from the jacket pocket. Stu glances down the hall to the roving Banshee and pushes the power button--

STU

Come on.

It flashes to life.

INT. TODD'S VAN - NIGHT

Mike's phone flashes with its caller ID: *unknown*.

He lifts the phone to his hear, but before he can speak--

STU (O.S.)

Mike!

MIKE

Stu!

STU (O.S.)

Mike. The PTM. It's on meltdown.

MIKE

Then, power it down, Stu. Cut the power supply.

Sadie covers her mouth.

STU (O.S.)

It's a reaction. You can't stop it.

MIKE

Then, you have to run.

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE/WAITING ROOM

From the window, Stu ducks under the gaze of the banshee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STU

I can't. It's impossible.

MIKE

Try, Stu. You've got to try--

He chances a peek around the desk, and finds the exit to the room blocked--

And the Banshee staring right at him.

STU

Oh God--

The nightmare wails, crawling straight toward him. Stu looks to the PTM--

As ribbons of electricity arc over its housing--

CUT TO:

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Dujuan screams as he guns his ATV at an overturned bathtub. The ATV careens off the tub, sending them airborne.

INT. BROADCAST TRAILER - OFFICE/WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The ATV smashes through the wall and crashes to a halt across the office.

As the dust settles, Stu can barely make out Dujuan buried beneath a chalky mountain of drywall and laminate.

STU

Dujuan! Hey--

He grabs Dujuan's collar and hoists him to his feet.

STU

Let's go. Look at this--

DUJUAN

Yay.

They run toward the gaping hole in the trailer wall as time turns to liquid. The Banshee lunges at them as they pass through the hole to--

The outside of the trailer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Their feet hit solid ground as thick arcs of blue electricity curl up the trailer's structure.

As they run, the night is silent, as if leaving the mayhem far, far behind. The crisp crunch of gravel is the last thing they hear before--

A blinding light.

The trailer buckles, splintering under a seething vacuum as it collapses in on itself. Then, an atmospheric concussion wave engulfs the trailer park in a ball of white flame.

INT. TODD'S VAN - NIGHT

Mike's phone line goes dead.

SADIE

Mike--

EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

The van slides to a stop in the middle of the street, and Mike jumps onto the street.

Sadie watches as the horizon heaves with a superheated fireball churning skyward.

EXT. WATERS COMPOUND - NIGHT

Mike and Sadie pull the van to the lip of a blast crater 100 feet wide, yawning over the leveled property.

They jump from the van.

SADIE

Oh my God, Mike...

Hopeless, they gaze over the smouldering graveyard of appliances, when suddenly--

Stu and Dajuan throw open a massive refrigerator door, and struggle to sit up.

SADIE

Stu! Dajuan!

MIKE

How? How is this possible?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sadie and Mike run to embrace their friends, pulling them from the wreckage.

DUJUAN

Wow. I feel blown up.

They look out at the blasted compound.

STU

Everything. It destroyed everything.

Mike turns to Sadie and hugs her.

SADIE

We made it.

MIKE

Yeah, we did. Let's go. Everyone load up, we're going home.

Sadie and Stu break off to the side of the van, but--

As Mike takes a step forward, a volley of bullets slaps the ground around him. The gunshots echo over the compound--

SADIE

Mike?!

DUJUAN

Down!

Dujuan pushes Stu behind a junk pile as bullets chew into the dirt and metal.

The barrage continues. Everywhere Mike goes, bullets chop into the ground, forcing him to stop.

SADIE

Mike! Stop! Stand still--

Suddenly, a swarm of laser dots appear all over Mike's chest.

SADIE

No! You said you wouldn't hurt him.

MIKE

Sadie, what did you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Before she can answer, a team of black SUVs slide to a halt behind their van.

Black Operatives spill from the vehicles and pounce on her, pulling her head into a black cover.

MIKE

Sadie! No--

Another team tackles Mike to the dirt. He watches as Sadie's ring box bounces over the ground.

As the Black Ops press his face into the soil, all Mike can see is--

Sadie's ring box only inches from him. But, all goes dark as they throw a black bag over his head.

As the teams wrestle Sadie and Mike into the SUVs--

Dujuan and Stu poke their heads from behind the junk piles. They watch as the last agent surveys the devastation--

Agent Chad Saunders.

STU

It's freaking Chad.

He climbs in his vehicle, and the SUVs tear out of the compound, just as--

Stu and Dujan emerge from the shadows. Stu collects the ring box, as--

Dujuan catches the emblem on the back of the SUVs' number plates.

DUJUAN

They've been on us the whole time.

Dujuan runs to the van and jumps in the driver's seat. Stu follows.

STU

What are we doing?!

DUJUAN

This just turned into a rescue operation.

As Stu and Dujan tear off in their van, a dark figure emerges from the shadows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He is Agent Moore.

He lifts a sleeve-mic up to his mouth--

AGENT MOORE  
They're on the move.

CUT TO BLACK.

END TITLES.

KICKER:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

A black covering rips away from Mike's head. He winces from the light reflected in a glimmering metal room.

His eyes adjust, and seated across from him is--

MIKE  
Sadie?!

His eyes move to the other side of the table.

MIKE  
Chad?! What the hell, Chad?

Chad sits, with heavily armed Compass Agents in every corner of the room.

CHAD  
Mike. I know you have a lot of questions. For now, I just want you to listen.

MIKE  
Your *mom* wants me to listen--

Mike leaps from his chair, squirrels over the table, and body-tackles Chad onto the ground.

SADIE  
Mike! Stop it!

The agents pull him off, and spin him around. Suddenly--

Mike freezes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Through the windows before him, a deep, underground facility amassed with other-worldly technology stretches beyond sight.

Chad stands and straightens his tie.

CHAD

Like I said, I just want you to listen...

MIKE

My brain hurts.

He faints against the glass.

CUT TO BLACK.