

FADE IN FROM BLACK:

EXT. HAYDEN'S FERRY, OHIO - TWILIGHT

Establishing shots of a rural Ohio town. An old steel bridge, an elementary school, an abandoned factory, and a town square, all looking like they are from the 80's, even though it is modern day. A beat-up-looking town sign welcomes visitors to town.

Several houses look in disrepair with abandoned cars out front. Kids laugh and play at a nearby playground.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

A construction crew digs the foundation for a new bridge along the river's edge. A backhoe digs into the ground. There is a loud screech and a flash of light as the backhoe hits something metal. A FOREMAN (50) steps forward.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN

Whoa, whoa. Shut it off! Shut it off!

A WORKER (30) hops down into the open hole. The foreman and the crew stand over the edge and inspect a large twisted hunk of what appears to be metal.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN (CONT'D)

What is it?

Part of the object now appears to be slightly cracked. Steam pours out.

WORKER

Looks like some of meteor or metal deposit or something.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN

Come on up out of there. We'll have to get the crane to get it out.

The workers slip metal cables under the metallic object and lift. We pull up out of the hole and above the river's edge to where a group of twelve-year-old boys are riding their bikes.

EXT. WOODS - TWILIGHT

The kids weave in and out of each other's paths, and then throw their bikes down into the grass.

EXT. HIDDEN CEMETERY - TWILIGHT

They push and argue and sneak into an old cemetery, which is their hangout. They sit on some old tombstones and trade comic books and pull up videos on their phones.

TYLER

Hey look at this. Collision on the interstate. It's nasty.

He holds out his phone, showing the others.

KID2

Is that someone's arm? That's gross.

Eli, the youngest, keeps reading his comic.

TYLER

You wanna see?

Eli brushes him off, eyes on his comic.

ELI

It's getting late. I have to be getting home.

TYLER

You're such a baby.

ELI

Am not. Just don't want to be yelled at by my mom.

Eli grabs his bike and pedals off.

EXT. WOODS - TWILIGHT

Eli pedals through the woods, riding down a path of overhanging trees. A strange hum pierces the air and then there is a flash of white light.

The bicycle lies on the ground, its front wheel still spinning. There are only empty clothes and shoes where the boy's body should be. From off-camera, someone SCREAMS.

JONAS O.C.

Okay. And...action.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE, HALLWAY - TWILIGHT

SOUND OF WATER RUNNING. A hand-held camera creeps along a narrow hallway. Menacing music plays in an homage to 80's horror films.

INT. BATHROOM - TWILIGHT

Behind a shower curtain, someone hums to themselves as they bathe. A stalker in a hockey mask steps closer and closer.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE, HALLWAY - TWILIGHT

The stalker slowly opens the bathroom door and enters. The stalker throws open the shower curtain to reveal SAMMY (20), a skinny young man with large glasses and a pink shower cap.

The stalker begins laughing and lifts up their hockey mask, revealing a young woman, HANNAH (20.)

JONAS

Cut.

We are in the middle of an amateur horror production. JONAS (19) shakes his head in frustration. His best friend, a young African-American woman named MAX (20), lowers the boom-mic.

SAMMY

Wait, why are we cutting?

HANNAH

Yeah, that was great!

JONAS

You can totally see two guys are laughing...

HANNAH

I'm sorry. I didn't expect him to have a pink shower cap on. It was pretty funny.

Jonas grabs the shower cap angrily.

JONAS

You're not even supposed to be wearing that. This is supposed to be serious, like *Friday the 13th* or *Nightmare on Elm Street*.

SAMMY

Having a killer strike on Leap Year is a bit of a stretch. It's one of many concerns I have with this script.

JONAS

What other concerns do you have?

Hannah, Max, and Sammy all share a look.

SAMMY

Don't get so upright. Do you want a shoulder massage or anything?

JONAS

No. Can we please finish this scene and move on?

Sammy motions over to where Hannah and Max are both on their phones. Jonas's phone alarm begins to ring.

JONAS (CONT'D)

I've got to go.

SAMMY

But what about the scene?

JONAS

You're going to have finish without me.

SAMMY

Do you mind if we try out a couple ideas? Like when I finally die, can there be alot of blood? Like more blood than would be humanly possible?

HANNAH

I've got a five gallon bucket of I've been waiting to try out.

Jonas sighs.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - TWILIGHT

Jonas steps outside and pauses, reaching down to adjust his prosthetic right foot. He climbs on his bike and rides toward town.

EXT. HAYDEN'S FERRY - TWILIGHT

On his bike, Jonah passes the old bridge, then an abandoned hairspray factory, then the town sign which looks like it is from the 80s, and then he enters the town square.

In the middle of the town square, workers set up a stage for an upcoming public event. There is a banner that says "Celebrating our historic past and infinite future."

JONAS

"Infinite?" Do they know what that word even means?

He rides a little further, pulling into a dingy strip mall. From his backpack, Jonas pulls on a black golf shirt that says *Family Time Video* on the front.

EXT. STRIP MALL - NIGHT

Inside the store it is like a 80s time capsule with out of date displays from various 1980s movies. Mr. Maddux (65) is the grizzled owner and is kneeling over a box, going through a pile of video cassettes he has imported from abroad.

MR. MADDUX

You're late.

JONAS

Only if you're talking about this particular time zone.

MR. MADDUX

What was that?

JONAS

Nothing. I'm sorry. We were in the middle of filming something...

MR. MADDUX

We got another box of used videos from China. Looks like they're all Julia Roberts. Do you remember that era? She was incredible. Lit up the silver screen.

JONAS

I can't believe you can actually still buy these.

MR. MADDUX

Are you kidding me? People love VHS.

(MORE)

MR. MADDUX (CONT'D)

If you wait around long enough,  
everything makes a comeback. Like  
vinyl. Here, let's put these in the  
drama section by year, then by  
popularity.

JONAS

Okay, sounds good, Mr. Maddux.

Jonas begins putting out the used movies on the shelf.

MR. MADDUX

You know what, on second thought,  
let's give Ms. Roberts her own  
section. Let's do all her movies by  
year, then by genre, then  
alphabetically by title.

JONAS

(murmuring to himself)

Okay, this is why no one can find  
anything...Only a town like this  
one could ever support a place like  
this.

MR. MADDUX

What was that?

JONAS

Nothing.

Jonah gets to work using Mr. Maddux's strange filing system.  
The door opens and Max enters. She is wearing a black shirt  
like Jonas.

MAX

Hi, Mr. Maddux.

MR. MADDUX

Max. One hour early. I love it.  
That's what I expect from an  
assistant manager.

Max comes over and helps unpack the box.

JONAS

(whispering)

You didn't tell him yet?

MAX

Not yet.

JONAS

Aren't you planning on leaving in a month?

MAX

I don't know when exactly. I'm still saving up and figuring things out. (beat) You should plan on leaving too. The only reason this place has managed to stay open is because everyone in this town refuses to accept they're a part of the twenty-first century. That and the always-popular adult-only section.

Both of them laugh.

JONAS

How did the rest of the shoot go?

MAX

You know Sammy. It became pretty slapstick. Running around and falling in blood. Then Hannah got some blood in her eye and had to stop filming.

JONAS

We're never going to finish.

MAX

Who cares? It was just supposed to be for fun.

JONAS

I know but it was also supposed to be my ticket out of here.

MAX

Come on. You're going to transcend your lack of prospects by making a low-budget horror movie? There's hundreds all over the internet...

JONAS

There's some social criticism in there as well.

MAX

You need to wake up and put an actual plan together and start saving your money instead of spending it on fake knives and blood. I'm telling you, once I have enough money saved, I'm out of here.

JONAS

Where are you even going to go?

MAX

Anywhere. Cleveland. Or Chicago. I really don't care. There's nobody under the age of 50 in this town. There's no job. There's definitely no culture...

JONAS

I wish I was like you. I wish I could just pick up and leave.

MAX

Your future is passing you by. You can either be part of or be completely forgotten here.

Jonas cellphone rings. He looks at it.

JONAS

Sorry, it's my mom. (beat) Hey, Mom, what's up?

EXT. PHARMACY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jonas' mom, MEGAN (47), stands in a parking lot, speaking on her phone. She takes off her pharmacist jacket and walks toward her hatchback.

MEGAN

I finished early tonight. Do you want me to come pick you up?

JONAS O.C.

No, I'm not done for another two hours. Besides I have my bike.

MEGAN

Okay, well I'm going to go get some dinner going.



INT. FAMILY TIME VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

Jonas holds his phone.

JONAS  
Thanks. See you.

He hangs up. Max smiles at him.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
What?

MAX  
You and your mom are really close.  
It's cool.

JONAS  
It's cool but...it's a little  
overwhelming sometimes. Ever since  
my dad...

Jonas stops himself. Max notices his hesitation.

MAX  
I mean that makes sense. All you  
have is each other now.

JONAS  
Yeah, but she's always checking up  
on me. I think she just wishes I  
could be a kid forever. I swear she  
comes in and checks on me at night.

MAX  
No.

JONAS  
I'm serious. And so I feel bad even  
thinking about leaving her here all  
alone.

MAX  
You can't live in the past, Jonas.  
Nobody can.

JONAS  
But you can always try.

EXT. TOWN LIMITS - NIGHT

A circular white light zooms from the woods and spins along  
the power lines on the outskirts of town.

Like a ball, the light bounces and then hits the town sign before splitting into several small lights.

The lights reform into a ball which zooms along the electrical line all the way into town.

INT. FAMILY TIME VIDEO STORE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jonas turns the sign for the store to closed and turns off the lights. Max sits at the counter, watching the end of *Poltergeist*.

MAX

The scariest thing about this movie is the TV. And the toy clown.

JONAS

What are you talking about? The scene with the pool and the bodies, it gave me nightmares for a month.

MAX

What you can't see is always scarier than the real thing.

JONAS

I guess.

Jonas knocks on the door that leads to the back room.

JONAS (CONT'D)

All done out here, Mr. Maddux.

Mr. Maddux is sitting in his office chair, watching an old black and white horror movie.

MR. MADDUX

How'd we do tonight?

JONAS

Not so bad. Someone came in and rented all eight Harry Potter movies. Didn't have the heart to tell them they could stream them all. Max and I are going to lock up.

MR. MADDUX

Good job. Make sure you two are here early tomorrow for inventory.

JONAS

Is that tomorrow?

MR. MADDUX

Eight am.

JONAS

Great.

EXT. FAMILY TIME VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

Barry (48) Max's dad comes picks her up in a sedan. He waves at Jonas.

JONAS

See you tomorrow.

MAX

See you.

Jonas pedals toward home.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Megan warms up a plate for Jonas in the microwave. He eats standing at the counter.

JONAS

Frozen meatballs again?

MEGAN

I thought they were your favorite.

JONAS

They are. Just not every night.

Megan digs into her purse and places a pile of condoms on the counter.

MEGAN

Here. These are for you and your friends.

JONAS

That's really weird, mom.

MEGAN

Actually, you're nineteen, Jonas. Now's the time you should be enjoying yourself. You know, hooking up, that kind of thing.

JONAS

Oh my gosh. Please stop talking.

MEGAN

Did you give any thought to taking your driver's test?

JONAS

I'm still not ready.

MEGAN

No problem. No rush. Oh, and these came in the mail, too.

She hands several college brochures to Jonas.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

You didn't tell me you were still thinking about college.

JONAS

I was just looking at some film schools in Cleveland and Chicago...seeing what's out there.

MEGAN

I don't know if we can afford something like that right now.

JONAS

I know. I didn't think it would hurt to look.

MEGAN

Do you mind taking out the garbage when you're done?

Jon nods as he flips through a brochure.

EXT. JONAS' HOUSE, BACKYARD - NIGHT

Still reading a brochure, Jonas opens the garbage can lid and puts the garbage in the can. He then pauses and throws the brochures into the trash.

He stands before the garage and notices the door is slightly open. He glances around and then lifts the garage door up.

Inside is his father's ruined 1980's red Trans-Am. The front windshield is cracked and the passenger side is smashed-in. He walks over and places his hand on the cracked driver's side window.

Out of the corner of his eye, there is a flash. He turns and sees the ball of light floating near the fence at the edge of the backyard. Jonas takes a step forward.

The light hovers, shifting into an oblong shape, and then disappears over the back fence, leaving behind a trail of white dust. Jonas calls out:

JONAS

Mom!

But there is no answer. Jonas takes a step forward and finds a dead rabbit near the fence. It has been drained of life, the color sucked from its body. It is now covered in a powdery white substance. Jonas takes out his phone and immediately records it.

INT. JONAS' ROOM - NIGHT

Jonas hurries into his room and calls Max.

MAX

What? What is it? You know it's pizza night.

JONAS

Check out this video I just sent you.

MAX

What is it?

JONAS

Just check it out. I'll wait.

MAX

This is not you jumping off your roof and pretending your leg fell off. Because I've seen that a hundred times already.

JONAS

No. Come on, just take a look.  
(beat) Did you watch it yet?

MAX

I don't even know what I'm looking at. Is it a shoe or something?

JONAS

No. It's a rabbit. I found it in my backyard. It looked like something ate it. And there was this light...

MAX

Light? Wait, what do you think it was?

JONAS

It kind of looked like *Close Encounters*. I didn't get a really good look.

MAX

Probably a coyote. Or a fox. We get all the time in our yard.

JONAS

No, it was white and glowing.

MAX

It could have just been a car going by.

JONAS

No, it was like floating...

MAX

You need to spend less time watching 80's horror movies. Your brain is turning to mush.

JONAS

Whatever. Talk to you later.

Jonas lies in bed and watches the video he made again.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

The white light floats into a hollow trees and throbs. A deer approaches, sniffing suspiciously. Then there is a flash.

INT. JONAS' ROOM - MORNING

A Wolfman alarm clock goes off. Jonas wakes up and realizes he's late again.

JONAS

Shit!

EXT. FAMILY TIME VIDEO STORE - DAY

Jonas pulls up on his bike and unlocks the door in a hurry.

INT. FAMILY TIME VIDEO STORE - DAY

Jonas turns on the lights and opens on the register. He puts *Evil Dead* on the store's VCR and monitor.

He goes over to the adult-only room and refuses to enter, reaching his arm inside to turn on the light, making a disgusted face. As he does, he notices a strange draft that is blowing on the posters inside the adult-only room.

JONAS

That's weird.

He holds his hand out, trying to see where the air is coming from.

JONAS (CONT'D)

It's cold. Where's it coming from?

He slowly enters and tries to figure out where the cold air is blowing from. The electronic bell on the door rings.

Max enters and puts two cups of coffee on the counter.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Hey.

MAX

Hey.

JONAS

Where do you want me to start?

MAX

I'll start with romance, you take suspense-horror.

Jonas nods and moves to the horror section. He writes the titles down on a clipboard and then glances up at Max.

JONAS

Okay, best scream, from a 1980's horror movie actress?

MAX

Wow. Okay. How about Robbi Morgan in *Friday the 13th*?

JONAS

Amanda Wyss in *Nightmare on Elm Street*?

MAX

Yeah, she's great. Best death scene ever.

Jonas looks over at Max.

JONAS

See. Aren't you going to miss talking about horror movies when you go?

MAX

Not really. But I do like getting paid to do nothing. Plus, I'm going to have to get a Netflix subscription now and find some way to pay for it. By the way, look at this movie we got in as a special-order from Japan.

JONAS

What is it?

MAX

Another one of Mayor Hanson's.

Max pops the cassette into the player and both of them watch it on the monitor. In the middle of the first scene, set at a high school, their mayor walks in, playing the role of the school's principal.

MAX (CONT'D)

He's so bad. Do you want to go put this one in his section?

JONAS

Sure.

Jonas walks over and adds the movie to the mayor's own section.

MAX

You know nobody ever rents these?

JONAS

I think he just likes knowing they're here.

Max holds up a video box of *Fright Night*.

MAX

Okay. Greatest 80's horror movie of all time. This one and *Lost Boys*.

JONAS

Nothing is scarier than the end of *Friday the 13th*, Jason jumping out of that lake...



MAX

That's the best horror ending of all time.

JONAS

Everything was better back in the 80's. Everything's that come after has been a reboot or a total rip-off. There's something pure and innocent about them, even when terrible things are happening.

MAX

I think it has to do with the aesthetic. Like the way the way houses look, the appliances and everything. You know, like how even toasters looked different.

The electronic bell dings and Hannah enters, looking worried.

MAX (CONT'D)

Hey Hannah. What's wrong?

HANNAH

Something weird is going on at my house. My little cousin's been missing since yesterday.

MAX

Wait, what happened?

HANNAH

My cousin's been gone all night and he's only twelve and the cops aren't doing anything all because they know my family, my brother. My aunt is going nuts. I've driven around town like a hundred times and I can't find anything.

Max looks over at Jonas.

MAX

We can help. This place doesn't technically open until eleven.

HANNAH

Really?

JONAS

Sure. Come on.

Jonas puts a sign in the store's window: "Be Back Soon."

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

The kids climbs into Hannah's brother's van, which has an airbrush painting of a naked woman riding a Pegasus on the side.

INT. HANNAH'S VAN - DAY

Hannah drives, Max sits up front, the boys go in the back.

MAX

Your brother doesn't mind you driving this?

HANNAH

He doesn't know. I mean he's still got three more years with good behavior. But last time I went to see him he asked me to bake a cake with a file in it.

MAX

Kind of love that.

HANNAH

Not if he's your older brother and supposed to be taking care of you.

INT. HANNAH'S VAN - DAY

Hannah pilots the van through town.

MAX

So where does your cousin usually hang out?

HANNAH

I'm been by all his usual spots. The park, that old plant, even the library, but there's nothing.

MAX

They ever go by the hidden cemetery, like we used to?

HANNAH

Nah, they're too scared. I frightened that kid with too many stories.

MAX

Let's go check it out.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The kids climb out of the van and start down a dark, forest path.

MAX

I always thought this was the scariest part in town. The whole thing about the children disappearing back in the 1860s...

JONAS

I did a report about it junior year. 99 children disappeared in a fire, working at some kind of factory. And there were no bodies to bury...

MAX

(speaking in spooky tone)  
Right and because there were no bodies their spirits were left to roam the town...

They walk along the road that leads near the highway and Hannah spots her cousin's red bicycle.

HANNAH

Look.

The kids all run over, look at the bike, and see his empty shoes.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Oh no. Oh no.